EDUCATION FOR MUSLIM CHILDREN IN THE UK: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF SOME ISSUES ARISING FROM CONTRASTING LIBERAL AND ISLAMIC APPROACHES TO CONTEMPORARY PROBLEMS

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PREFACE

I certify that this dissertation is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration. Where another author has been quoted or otherwise referred to, this is indicated in the course of the text.

I further declare that this dissertation is not substantially the same as any that I have submitted for a degree or diploma or other qualification at any other university. No part of my dissertation has already been or is being concurrently submitted for a degree or diploma or other qualification. The dissertation is, however, on a related topic to my M. Phil. thesis which was submitted to the University of Cambridge in 1985, and published in an expanded version the following year under the title *The Case for Muslim Voluntary-Aided Schools: some Philosophical Reflections.* The main arguments of the M. Phil. thesis are summarised in the last section of Chapter Eight of the present dissertation, and brief references to it elsewhere in the dissertation are indicated by the reference '(Halstead, 1986)'.

I further certify that the dissertation does not exceed the prescribed limit of 80,000 words.

Finally, I acknowledge with warm gratitude the advice and support of my supervisor at the University of Cambridge Department of Education, Mr T. H. McLaughlin, throughout the period of writing.

SUMMARY OF DISSERTATION:

EDUCATION FOR MUSLIM CHILDREN IN THE U.K: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF SOME ISSUES ARISING FROM CONTRASTING LIBERAL AND ISLAMIC APPROACHES TO CONTEMPORARY PROBLEMS.

BY J. M. HALSTEAD

An analysis of contemporary trends in the education of Muslim children in the U.K. indicates that in the 1960s and 1970s there was a strong emphasis on meeting the special needs of Muslim children, but these needs were neither defined by the Muslim community nor based on any framework of Islamic values. More recently, some educational providers have sought to respond at least to some Muslim demands, and a notion of accountability to the Muslim community is developing in some quarters.

Accountability, however, implies rights, and rights are usually understood from within a liberal framework of values. On a liberal view, the rights of Muslim parents to bring up their children in their own religion and the rights of the Muslim community to educate Muslim children in keeping with distinctive Islamic beliefs and values are constrained by the claim that the autonomy of the child must be vouchsafed in any form of educational provision. There is clearly a deep-seated clash of values between Islam and liberalism. From a sketch of fundamental Islamic values, an Islamic view of education may be developed which is in disagreement with liberal education particularly on three points: the need for critical openness, the need for personal and moral autonomy and the need to negotiate a set of agreed values if any common educational system is to be achieved. The search for sufficient common ground between liberals and Muslims is unsuccessful because Muslims insist on building their education around

a set of religious beliefs which liberals believe schools have no business to reinforce, while liberals offend Islamic principles by insisting that religious beliefs, like all beliefs, must always be considered challengeable and revisable and should therefore be presented to children in a way which respects the ultimate freedom of individuals to make choices for themselves. The only way out of this impasse in practice is for liberals to back down from their insistence on a common education for all children, and to accept that Muslims should be allowed their own denominational schools. The danger that the Muslim community may become isolated and socially vulnerable may be reduced through increased co-operation with other faith communities, especially Christians.

The dissertation thus consists of three intertwining strands: multi-culturalism in educational policy; applied social philosophy, especially relating to rights and liberal education; and Islamic theology. It begins with an examination of contemporary practice, moves to an analysis of the issues and principles underlying that practice, and then finally returns to practice with recommendations made in the light of the preceding discussion.

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PART THREE: THE ISLAMIC WORLD VIEW.

PART FOUR: EDUCATION FOR MUSLIM CHILDREN IN THE U.K: POSSIBILITIES.

PART ONE

EDUCATION FOR MUSLIM CHILDREN IN THE U.K: PROBLEMS, PRACTICE AND PRINCIPLES.

CHAPTER ONE

EDUCATION FOR MUSLIM CHILDREN IN THE U.K. : THE PROBLEMS

The question of what sort of education should be provided for Muslim children in the U.K. has become one of the biggest issues facing educational decision makers at the present time. The problem is a recent one, for it is only in the last thirty years that a Muslim community of any significant size at all has existed in the U.K., and only in the last ten years or so that demands for educational change have been voiced seriously by Muslim parents and leaders.

There are still no accurate figures of the numbers of Muslims in the U.K. A total of one-and-a-half to two million is often mentioned (cf McDermott and Ahsan, 1980, p 11), but this may be an over-estimate. What is not in dispute, however, is the fact that the Muslim community is the fastest growing of all religious, racial or ethnic minority groups in the U.K. The Central Statistical Office estimates that the number of Muslims has risen from 400,000 in 1975 to 750,000 in 1983 and to 900,000 in 1989 (CSO, 1989, para. 11.8), making them the third largest religious group in the U.K., after Anglicans and Roman Catholics.

The Muslims, of course, are only one of several groups of immigrants to arrive in this country over the last 150 years. Earlier groups, such as the Irish, the Jews and the East Europeans, were expected to integrate and become assimilated into British culture as quickly as possible and were generally welcomed to the extent that they were prepared to conform (cf Halstead, 1988, ch 1). On the whole, they learned to do this, and gradually became almost indistinguishable from the indigenous population. Thus when Muslims began to arrive in significant numbers from the Indian sub-continent

from the late 1950's onwards, to supply a demand for cheap and compliant labour, it was assumed that if they stayed in the U.K. - and many came originally with the intention of returning to their country of origin in due course - they too would gradually integrate. It has taken some time for it to become apparent that Muslims may not, in fact, follow the pattern of previous waves of immigrants.

Some of the characteristics of the Muslim community which mark them out as distinct from the indigenous population are naturally the same as those of earlier immigrants: the use of unfamiliar languages and corresponding inadequate grasp of English; the emotional and other links with their place of origin; the strong emphasis on family and community loyalty; the initial desire to maintain their distinctive culture; and the tendency to be concentrated at the lower end of the scale in housing and employment (or, more recently, unemployment). Other distinguishing characteristics, however, may prove more difficult to cast off. In common with more recent waves of immigrants such as the West Indians, the Hindus, the Sikhs and the Vietnamese boat people, the vast majority of Muslims in the U.K. have a racial origin and skin colour which make them immediately distinguishable from the indigenous white population and which can easily form the basis for prejudice and discrimination. The lack of a common European culture, as seen in their dress, diet, music, habits of bargaining and many other areas of behaviour, makes their 'foreignness' more noticeable. The practice of arranged marriages among Asians has ensured that there has been virtually no intermarriage with other communities. In many of the larger British cities, Muslims and other Asians have set up a whole network of small businesses which serve to make their communities more self-contained. As Shepherd points out,

> *The complete range of commercial facilities available is one reinforcer of the separateness of the South Asians. There is little need for contact with the host population except in the areas of education and employment, and it is*

thus easier to maintain identification with cultural roots.

(1987, p 264)

Undoubtedly, however, what binds the Muslim community together most strongly and marks them out as separate from the indigenous population is their religion.

Islam presents itself as a complete way of life. Religion for the Muslim is essentially a matter of following the divine law (*shari'a*), which contains not only universal moral principles, such as justice or charity, but also detailed instructions for every aspect of human life, both relating to God (e.g. the obligation to pray, fast and perform the pilgrimage to Mecca) and relating to fellow human beings (e.g. the commendation of hospitality, or of female modesty). This commitment (or submission) to the divine law, which is based on the Qur'an and the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, provides the unifying element in the community of believers, both worldwide and within the U.K. It also lies behind all the requests and demands made by Muslim leaders to secular authorities in the U.K., including requests for *halal* meat to be provided for Muslims in schools and hospitals, and demands for the banning of The Satanic Verses by Salman Rushdie, which is considered blasphemous. The various educational demands made by Muslims, which are set out in Appendix One, also stem from their concern that educational provision for their children should be in harmony with their distinctive beliefs as Muslims. This concern has led to a variety of outcomes, from the insistence on single-sex education at secondary level, to the establishment of a number of independent Muslim schools, to the call for separate Muslim voluntary-aided schools, and to the continued practice of sending Muslim children to mosque schools in the evenings and at weekends for supplementary religious instruction.

How far the commitment to live strictly in line with Islamic principles is a reality in the lives of ordinary Muslims in the U.K. is a matter for empirical investigation. My own fieldwork (Halstead, 1988), suggests that many Muslims would rather accept the authority of the local *imam* (religious leader) when making decisions about how to live, than their own independent judgement. Not everyone adopts such an uncritical approach, however; in her research on the Mirpuri villages in Bradford, Saifullah Khan (1975) blames the imams for damaging the chances of integration by their emphasis on the fundamental religious principles and traditions of Islam. In 1987, a programme on Pennine Radio in which Asian teenagers from Bradford aired their views on life in Britain, seemed to confirm her findings: one claimed that politicians were making integration more difficult by making concessions to Muslim demands, and that the provision of *halal* meat in schools was a 'political stunt', while another maintained that many Muslims were not particularly interested in 'multi-million pound mosques which the community could not afford'. Others claimed to be engaged in the process of educating their parents in Western values, and that they themselves are learning to combine the best qualities of both cultures - respect and an ability to question (cf Telegraph and Argus, 26 September 1987). However, the imams could have no power and influence in the Muslim community if there were not significant numbers who accepted their religious authority, and it is clear that there are many Muslims in the U.K. who seek to live their own lives in accordance with Islamic principles and values and who believe that they should bring up their children to share the same values. Kitwood and Borrill (1980) have shown that although Muslim adolescents in Bradford experience conflict between rival value systems, the primary loyalty of most of them is still to their own families and Islamic culture. And many Muslim parents believe that the preservation of this loyalty is one of the main purposes of education.

My own research (Halstead, 1988, pp 13-19) has shown that Muslims in the U.K. are typically brought up in large families living on a low income in sub-standard and overcrowded housing and that they commonly experience the kind of disadvantages

associated with an inner-city upbringing (cf Wedge and Prosser, 1973; Murphy, 1987; West, 1987). Poor qualifications and the experience of discrimination ensure that they are at or near the bottom of the pile in the search for employment. In addition to the pressures arising from the struggle to find their own identity between conflicting cultures, they often have to cope with direct experiences of racism at the same time. Not unexpectedly, Muslim parents look to education as a way of solving such social and economic problems and of ensuring a better economic future for their children than they have had themselves.

To sum up, there are two basic principles which many Muslim parents and leaders in the U.K. consider essential for their children's education: first, access to the opportunities offered by a general education, which include living as full British citizens without fear of racism or other forms of prejudice, competing in the employment market on an equal footing with non-Muslims, and, more generally, enjoying the benefits of modern scientific and technological progress; and secondly, the preservation, maintenance and transmission of their distinctive Islamic beliefs and values, which will help to shape the identity of Muslim children, give them a rootedness and stability as they grow up and provide the foundation for a harmonious Muslim community in years to come. Leaving aside for the moment the question of whether these two aims are themselves compatible, I want to consider briefly how they relate to the goal of social integration. This is often regarded as a crucial educational aim in the West, because it is seen as the only way of creating social stability, harmony and bureaucratic efficiency in a pluralist society, and of facilitating the development of common values and moral understanding between the various groups in society. The first Muslim aim would appear in itself to be in complete harmony with the goal of social integration: education would be used to remove any barriers (such as inadequate English or cross-cultural understanding, or the experience of racism or other forms of prejudice) which might prevent them from competing on equal terms with their indigenous peers in the employment market and elsewhere. It is not difficult to see, however, that the second

Muslim aim is pulling in a quite different direction than social integration; for in seeking to preserve their own distinctive beliefs and values, Muslims are not only emphasising their differences from other groups in society, but are also challenging what liberals would see as fundamental values in our contemporary society, such as personal autonomy and critical openness. Indeed some Muslims see the need to protect their children from the undesirable influences of the broader society (cf Husain and Ashraf, 1979, p 40). I have discussed the apparent incompatibility of the aim of 'preserving religious or cultural identity' and the aim of 'achieving social integration' in more detail elsewhere (Halstead, 1986, pp 5 ff), but two examples will serve to illustrate the problem here. The first is the practice of some Muslim parents of taking or sending their children on extended trips to the Indian sub-continent (cf Halstead, 1988, p 40f). No doubt such trips help their children to develop a greater awareness of their cultural and religious roots, but equally the trips may hold back their development of the English language and other skills they require if they are to participate fully in the political, social and economic life of the U.K. The second example is the question of co-education, which is widely perceived in this country to have educational advantages. However, the Muslim belief that boys and girls should not mix freely after puberty has made single-sex schools, particularly for Muslim girls, one of the most persistent demands of the Muslim community. The conflict between 'preserving cultural identity' and 'achieving social integration' as educational objectives appears to be a fundamental one (Schofthaler, 1984, p 11), and there would seem to be occasions where the one objective can be promoted only at the expense of the other. It is with this incompatibility of educational aims and with the conflicting values that lie behind the incompatibility that I am primarily concerned in the present thesis.

The ramifications of this conflict would no doubt provide a fruitful field for sociological research, and such an approach may well represent the conflict in terms of a struggle of power and interest between a dominant majority and a dominated minority. Weber (1968, p 342) sees social closure (Schliessung der Gemeinshaft) as a way of

excluding groups who do not conform in language, religion and customs from social, political and economic advantages. The dominant group resents the non-integrated minorities (such as immigrants) and seeks to consolidate its own power and control at their expense (cf Schutz, 1964), but the minority group might turn the social closure to its own advantage by making the ensuing minority group solidarity a source of strength; in this case, social closure would be resisted by the dominant group. The case of the Muslims as so far described seems to fit this analysis closely. Economically deprived and discriminated against in housing, employment and other areas, the Muslims have found strength and solidarity in their distinctive religious beliefs and values; but, perhaps because of fears that such group solidarity would undermine the cohesion of the broader pluralist society, the Muslims have been discouraged by the dominant majority from using education to reinforce their own distinctive beliefs and values.

In the present thesis, however, I am not so much concerned with the underlying motives and power struggles at work in the disagreements between the Muslim minority and the indigenous majority in the U.K. Rather, I am concerned with the actual arguments used by each side. For in such a debate about educational goals, a way must be found of weighing one set of claims against the other; otherwise, the debate may end up merely as a process of assertion and counter assertion (cf MacIntyre, 1981, p 8). My approach, therefore, will be broadly philosophical, rather than sociological, and I intend to examine, from a standpoint of applied social philosophy, the main issues that lie behind the question of educational provision for the Muslim community in the U.K. This will involve both the mapping out of what Ryle (1949, p 11) calls the 'logical geography' of relevant concepts such as needs, accountability, rights, autonomy, the public interest, community, pluralism, religious beliefs and values, critical openness and democracy, and a comparison between Islamic educational ideals and those prevalent in contemporary British education, with a view to discovering what common ground there is and what fundamental differences. It is hoped that the thesis will not only (to use Gribble's terminology: 1969, p 3) make a 'few inroads' into the 'jungle of

unanalysed verbiage' about the education of Muslims in the U.K. and place a few signposts at strategic points where none existed before, but will also by a clarification of the underlying issues be able to point to certain courses of action as being more justifiable and appropriate to the present situation than others.

* * * *

An appropriate starting point is to look at four possible ways of resolving the conflict between social integration and the preservation of cultural identity as educational aims. There is, of course, a whole spectrum of possible approaches to the problem, but the four I have chosen form interesting contrasts and serve to highlight the central issues. Two of the approaches are extreme, two more moderate; two are drawn from a Muslim perspective, two from a Western; two conclude that social integration is of prior value and two the preservation of cultural identity. The two extreme approaches I have called assimilationism and isolationism.

Assimilationism is based on the idea that 'the responsibility for the adaptations and adjustments involved in settling in a new country lies entirely with those who have come here to settle' (Honeyford, 1982b). If immigrants or minority groups seek to preserve intact their own social customs, manners and behaviour, religious and moral beliefs and practices, language, aesthetic values and leisure activities, this is seen as likely to stand in the way of their progress. Minorities are thus encouraged to turn their back on their own culture and to become absorbed by the majority culture. Indeed, so far as they refuse to do so, this is sometimes thought to justify inferior treatment and discrimination. I have suggested elsewhere (Halstead, 1988, pp 145-7) that this insistence on assimilation may be a form of racism. Certainly, to insist on cultural conformity without good reason is a form of domination and oppression, but because cultural differences often go hand in hand with racial differences, hostility towards a racial group often finds expression in hostility to that group's 'alien' culture. It is not

uncommon to find that members of ethnic minorities who turn their back on their own distinctive culture and who conform to the cultural values and expectations of the majority are treated with respect, whereas those who retain their cultural differences are treated with racial hostility. The demand for assimilation is associated particularly with the political philosophy of the New Right. Thus Casey (1982), writing in the first issue of The Salisbury Review, argues that the presence of different cultures in a single country is likely to cause unacceptable social divisions. He claims that this problem can only be overcome by the assimilation of minority groups, but if they resist assimilation, the only 'radical policy that would stand a chance of success is repatriation'. It is not only right-using Conservatives, however, who see assimilation as the answer to the problem of immigrant or religious minorities who do not share the values of the majority. Writing from a liberal perspective, Raz (1986, p 423-4) argues that if the life offered to the young in such communities is too impoverished,

> *assimilationist policies may well be the only humane course, even if implemented by force of law.*

Isolationism is the refusal of a minority group (in this case, the Muslims) to make any concessions to the fact that they are living in a society where the majority do not share their own beliefs and values. Though isolationist tendencies among the Muslim community in the U.K. have already been noted in the present chapter (living in ghetto communities, continuing to use mother tongues, engaging in socially exclusive leisure activities, maintaining traditional patterns of food and clothing, marriage within the community, making the mosque the centre of community life, and so on), it seems unlikely that complete isolation could ever occur. Indeed, it is hardly compatible with the first aim of education mentioned earlier, of coming to live as full British citizens. Muslims in the U.K. still typically interact with the broader society to a greater or less extent in education, (except for the few who attend independent Muslim schools), employment and political and commercial activity. Perhaps isolationism is best

understood as a state of mind. The case of Abdullah Patel in the early 1970s illustrates this isolationist attitude. He objected on religious grounds to the placement of his daughter Kulsumbanu in a co-educational upper school, and despite very strong pressure to conform from the local education authority, he kept her at home until she reached school-leaving age. When asked whether his strict Qur'anic stance would damage Bradford's hopes of integration, he replied:

> *Integration was never possible ... Co-existence, yes, but integration is the dream of an idealist. Our cultures, religions are too far apart. When the British were in India, did they integrate?*
>
> (quoted in Yorkshire Evening Post, 3 December 1973)

Muslims in the U.K. are frequently depicted in the British press as isolationists, though not necessarily always with complete justice. Selbourne (1984; 1987, p 115) fiercely attacks what he sees as the reactionary, undemocratic and anti-social Muslim imams who 'are trying to hang on to ... the village Islam of a quarter of a century ago', Pedley (1986) writes of the dangers of 'monocultural self-imposed apartheid', and Honeyford frequently criticises the 'purdah mentality' of Muslim parents who refuse to conform to the values of the indigenous population whether in morality, in dress or in ways of expressing their ideas (1983a, 1983b, 1984).

Honeyford sometimes seems to imply in his articles that assimilationism and isolationism are the only real possibilities when it comes to a fundamental conflict of educational values. On one occasion, he writes about a Muslim father who tried to withdraw his daughter from swimming lessons on religious grounds. Honeyford saw this as a direct clash over educational principles:

> *I had to run a school which was obliged both from conviction and legal necessity to ensure equal opportunities for girls. And denying a little girl the*

> *right to swim clearly isolated our principles ... I had no right to restrict her human possibilities in the way her father wanted.*
>
> (1987)

Honeyford sees such a situation in terms of a straightforward conflict between basing educational decisions on a 'purdah mentality' (that is, on isolationist principles) and seeking to liberate children from the restricting cultures of their parents and thereby encouraging them to assimilate the values of the broader society. When he uses the metaphor of the school as a 'cultural bridge' (1983b), he appears to envisage that the traffic on it is travelling only one way, from the 'purdah mentality' of the home to the traditional culture and values of British society.

But there are more moderate paths between the two extremes of assimilationism and isolationism, two of which will now be discussed. The first involves the application of long-established liberal educational principles to the comparatively new social situation of pluralism in the U.K. It is multi-cultural education. The second involves the willingness of Muslims to participate fully in all areas of British life and culture, so long as they are able to retain, and transmit to their children, their fundamental Islamic values and beliefs, though in cases of conflict, the latter are considered to be of prior importance.

The term 'multi-cultural education' is commonly used in two distinct senses. The first refers to the attempt in schools to respond positively to the cultural requirements and sensitivities of children and parents from minority groups, though liberals would add that this is justifiable only in so far as it can be achieved without contravening fundamental educational objectives as they understand them. The second refers to the sort of education which is considered appropriate for all children if they are to be adequately prepared for life in a pluralist society. The first is grounded on the wish to demonstrate respect for the religious and cultural beliefs of the minority groups. It may

be seen in the conscious avoidance of putting children in the position where they are expected to act in a way that is contrary to their deeply held beliefs; it therefore includes matters of clothing and diet, the observation of religious festivals, and so on. More positively, it may involve making educational use, for children from minority groups, of the cultural identity and experiences which they bring to their school; hence it will seek to make use of pupils' mother tongues. The second is based on a positive view of cultural and religious diversity as a source of enrichment and breadth of perspective. It entails encouraging all children to develop a spirit of enquiry in relation to other cultures, an openness to and sympathetic understanding of a variety of ways of looking at the world, a willingness to enter into the spirit of different civilisations and societies, and a sensitive respect for those with different religious beliefs and cultural values from their own.

These two senses of multi-cultural education are of course closely connected and inter-dependent. In particular, schools can hardly encourage children to respect other beliefs and cultures (type two) if they do not demonstrate such respect in their own dealings with ethnic minority pupils (type one). However, the distinction remains a valid one in a number of ways. The first type is possible only for schools which contain children from minority groups, whereas the second is considered by its advocates to be just as important for schools with no such pupils. Multi-cultural education of the first type has been campaigned for, sometimes quite passionately, by various minority groups, including Muslims; multi-cultural education of the second type, however, has not generally been campaigned for by minority groups (cf Swann Report, 1985, p 238), but has been devised as a rational response to the educational requirements of our contemporary pluralist society.

Multi-cultural education in both senses is closely linked to the search for racial justice. A desire to avoid the cultural domination associated with assimilationism has clearly provided a significant impetus to multi-cultural education of the first type.

Similarly, the wish to discourage racism, prejudice, bias and ethnocentricity has been a major factor behind the development of the second type. Even critics of multi-cultural education acknowledge this. Those on the left often see it as having similar aims to anti-racist education, though watered-down and ineffective in comparison; those on the right, including Honeyford, criticise it for damaging the possibility of social integration by accentuating both cultural and racial differences. Supporters of multi-cultural education, however, argue that it is clearly in the interests of the state to show respect towards the religious and cultural beliefs of minority groups and to avoid any appearance of majoritarian domination, for this will encourage the minority groups to develop a sense of loyalty to the broader community, and social harmony and cohesion will be increased.

Similarly, it is appropriate for the state to demonstrate the justice, tolerance and celebration of diversity which it expects its component groups to show towards each other. It is in the interests of children to be encouraged to develop a coherent self-identity, and not to be put in a position where the values they are presented with in school are in serious conflict with those they have encountered at home. A strong argument can therefore be developed that multi-cultural education of the first type is in the interests of both the broader society (by encouraging social stability) and in the interests of the individual child (by providing a more stable base for a consistent self-concept to develop). The aim of the concessions involved in this type of multi-cultural education is not to 'inculcate an uncritical acceptance of any conception of the good life' (Ackerman, 1980, p163), which would, of course, be unjustifiable on a liberal view, but to provide children with continuity and stability and to avoid unnecessarily disorienting them.

The second type of multi-cultural education, which seeks to prepare children for life in a pluralist society by encouraging them to respect those whose beliefs and values differ from their own, to see diversity as a source of enrichment, and to be open to a

variety of ways of looking at the world, is even more in line with a liberal view of education. As Parekh (1985) points out, if children never get beyond the framework of their own culture and beliefs (even if these are shared by the majority in their country), they are unlikely to develop lively, enquiring minds, imagination or a critical faculty. A mono-cultural diet is likely to breed 'arrogance and insensitivity' among children from the majority culture and 'profound self-alienation' and a distorted self-concept among minority children. Multi-cultural education, on the other hand, is

> *an education in freedom - freedom from inherited biases and narrow feelings and sentiments, as well as freedom to explore other cultures and perspectives and make choices in full awareness of the available and practicable alternatives. Multi-cultural education is, therefore, not a departure from, nor incompatible with, but a further refinement of, the liberal idea of education. It does not cut off children from their own culture. Rather, it enables them to enrich, refine and take a broader view of it without losing their roots in it ... if education is concerned to develop such basic human capacities as curiosity, self-criticism, capacity for reflection, ability to form an independent judgement, sensitivity, intellectual humility and respect for others, and to open the pupil's mind to the great achievements of mankind, then it must be multi-cultural in orientation.*
>
> (Parekh, 1985, p 22f)

In the same article, Parekh dismisses the view that multi-cultural education is necessarily based on cultural relativism, as has been implied by Scruton (1986) and others. Parekh argues that different cultures have a right to be understood in their own terms, and that they need to be explored sympathetically, not judged superficially on the basis of the norms and values of another culture; but this is not to claim that they are above all criticism and judgement. The debate about cultural relativism is, of course, an extended one (cf Warnock, 1979; Cooper, 1980, pp 138 ff; Walkling, 1980; Zec,

1980, etc.), but the onus clearly lies with those who want to argue that multi-cultural education is based on relativist assumptions to attempt to justify their view. Parekh further points out that even if a culture is ultimately judged to be defective, this must not be taken to mean that its adherents are less deserving of respect as human beings or have a weaker claim to basic human rights.

Thus, without necessitating an acceptance of cultural relativism or claiming that different cultures cannot be criticised and evaluated, multi-cultural education in both senses provides a serious attempt to resolve the conflict between social integration and the preservation of cultural identity. It is integrationist to the extent that it stresses the need for a common educational experience for all children and that it is committed to the search for a framework of agreed values which will help to encourage a sense of belonging to the broader community. In its tentative vision of the future, the Swann Report (DES, 1985, p 8) goes so far as to say:

> *We are perhaps looking for the assimilation of all groups within a redefined concept of what it means to live in British society today.*

But this 'redefined concept' includes the belief that members of minority groups should be free to maintain their distinctive cultures and lifestyles within the limits mentioned above and that children from minority groups have a right not to be put in a position in schools where they are expected to act contrary to their own beliefs and values. Multi-cultural education is thus a rational response to the presence of ethnic minorities in the U.K., based on the values of freedom, equality and justice. It does not lack attachment to history and tradition, for its roots can be traced through the long history of liberal education.

The final way of resolving the conflict between social integration and the presentation of cultural identity that I want to consider is a moderate Islamic approach.

It rejects isolationism and indeed encourages Muslims to participate in all areas of British life and culture, so long as they are free to retain their distinctive religious beliefs and values and transmit these to their children. Thus Ashraf writes,

> *In two or three generations a group of Muslims will emerge who will be British in their use of English, in some of their customs and conventions, even in their love of English literature, but they will be Muslims not only in their positive absolute values, but in those values that are completely anti-modernist and anti-secularist.*
>
> (1986a, p vi)

It is noteworthy that in some respects this approach is more integrationist than liberal multi-culturalism, for whereas the latter allows, and even encourages, the maintenance of mother-tongue teaching, the Islamic approach is happy to allow English to take over completely as the language of day-to-day communication both within and outside the Muslim community. Indeed, in many areas of culture, Muslims are happy to absorb British customs and conventions. But they insist on distinguishing, in a way that many contemporary sociologists do not, between 'culture' and 'religion'. 'Culture' on an Islamic view encompasses all the customs, patterns of behaviour, human institutions and lifestyles of a society, whereas 'religion' is based on divine revelation and hence has a fixedness which is quite alien to culture. On the approach under discussion, Muslims are happy to accept any kind of cultural change except where the culture is directly linked to religious principles. Thus it is quite acceptable for a Muslim to wear Western clothes so long as they do not breach the principles of decency and modesty prescribed in the Qur'an and the *hadith*. But Muslims do not accept that religion should itself be treated as one of a possible range of cultural options open to the individual child. For Muslims, religion is the basis of the unity, indeed the very existence, of the community of which, by birth and upbringing, they are a part. They

believe that the interests of the individual child do not exist in isolation from the group. For the Muslim community religion provides

> *A comprehensive viewpoint from which perspective on other areas of life is gained. Other domains are not adequately grasped until they are assimilated into the religious outlook.*
>
> (Strike, 1982b, p 88).

Such a view, of course, has potentially very profound educational consequences. It may involve rejecting the autonomy of the academic discipline, which has traditionally been cherished in liberal education. It may also involve a reassessment of the meaning of personal and moral autonomy; if it means simply that one consents oneself (autos) to be bound by a rule (nomos), this would be quite consistent with a religious perspective on education, but more commonly held liberal concepts of autonomy would not (see below, Chapter Eight).

Muslims who adopt this approach have shown no reluctance to accept the minimum set of common values (including a basic social morality and a common system of law and government) without which there could be no society at all, or to accept that these should occupy a prominent place in public education. However, they believe that all values have roots in religion and that it is only through an exploration of 'those fundamental absolute values which all religions share' (Ashraf, 1986a, p vi), that an adequate conceptualisation of 'shared values' can be reached. A major Muslim anxiety is that liberal multi-culturalism (as typified in the Swann Report, for example) is seeking to establish a set of foundational agreed values which are secular rather than being grounded in religion, and then to base a common education for all children on these values. The anxiety is hardly likely to be diminished by the claim by one liberal that the price minorities must pay for general toleration in a pluralist society is 'the acceptance of a public order at odds with (their) fundamental ideals' (Crittenden, 1982,

p 50). The anxiety is likely to turn to despair when Muslims find their own presence in the U.K. being used by liberal educationalists to justify policies quite alien to their wishes. This last point has been explored in more detail elsewhere (Halstead and Khan-Cheema, 1987), but for now one example will suffice. Both before and after the 1988 Education Act, the presence of Muslim and other non-Christian children in our schools has commonly been used as a major argument (for example, in the Swann Report, 1985, pp 497, 519) against the continuation of a compulsory daily act of collective worship. However, many Muslim organisations have made it clear that they do not wish to see any diminution of religion in schools and do not wish school worship to be discontinued, merely to be adapted so that it does not conflict with the different faiths represented in schools (cf Khan-Cheema et al., 1986, pp 13, 16).

The fight to give religion a more central place within a common system of education must seem like an uphill task for even the most optimistic Muslim, and therefore the possibility of establishing Muslim voluntary-aided schools is being examined by an increasing number of Muslim organisations. The aim of such schools would not be to take another step towards isolationism, any more than existing Catholic or Anglican voluntary schools isolate their own pupils from the broader society, but to provide perhaps the only means of allowing the Muslim community to preserve what it sees as the most essential element in its identity - the Islamic religion - while at the same time preparing Muslim children to play a full part in the broader British community (cf Ashraf, 1988b; Halstead, 1986, p 15 ff).

For the sake of brevity, I shall call the last two ways (as discussed above) of seeking to resolve the conflict between the need for social integration and cohesion on the one hand and the right of minority groups to preserve their own culture on the other, the liberal perspective and the Islamic perspective. Although they have both been described as moderate approaches, there is clearly strong opposition between them. There is considerable evidence, for example, that many Muslims would like to have the

same choice which is available to Catholics, Anglicans, Jews and others, to send their children to a county school or to a voluntary-aided school, but this is strongly opposed on the liberal perspective. In response to the Muslim request, the Swann Committee has urged a reconsideration of the whole dual system of education (DES, 1985, p 514), and this appears to imply a belief that the system is no longer justifiable and should be abandoned (cf Dummett, 1986, p 13). The argument seems to be that there are no grounds under present legislation to refuse Muslims permission to establish such schools; but the existence of Muslim voluntary-aided schools may strongly militate against the kind of pluralist society envisaged by the committee, by encouraging socially divisive attitudes in minority groups and racism in the majority; therefore the best course of action is to reconsider the whole legislation. Haldane (1986, p 164), however, has drawn attention to the irony of this proposal as far as Muslims are concerned:

> *How could it satisfy the Muslim wish for their own religious schools, to be required to send their children to secular institutions? And what view should they form of a society that would respond to their expression of deep attachment to tradition by casting off its own inheritance?*

It is with this clash between liberal and Islamic approaches to the education of Muslim children in the U.K. that I am concerned in the present thesis. From a liberal point of view, the crucial questions are: how far, if at all, do minority groups like the Muslims in the U.K. have the right to expect education to reinforce their own distinctive beliefs and values with regard to their own children? What 'concessions' can justifiably be made to Muslim demands? From an Islamic point of view, the questions are: is it in fact possible in a secular society for children to be educated in a way which enables them to remain loyal to their religion? Can sufficient common ground be found with non-Muslims for a workable common education for all children

to be set up? And from the point of view of educational policy, Lustgarten (1983, p 98) highlights the crucial question:

> *How within the overarching political unity, are conflicts engendered by the co-existence of diverse, and at times opposed, cultural values and ways of life to be resolved?*

* * * *

Although the present thesis is being written from a broadly philosophical perspective, or perhaps because of this, it seems important to start with an examination of contemporary practice in order to ensure that the issues under discussion in the remainder of the thesis are actually central ones to the education of Muslim children in the U.K. The first stage of my research therefore consists of an empirical investigation of the educational provision made by one local authority for its Muslim community. Bradford was chosen for this case study for a variety of reasons. First, a clear majority (probably over 85%) of its 'immigrant' children (i.e. those whose ethnic origin is other than from the U.K.) is Muslim (CBMC, 1984a, p 52); thus any special provision for the education of ethnic minority communities in Bradford is primarily designed with Muslims in mind. Secondly, Bradford has for a number of years enjoyed a reputation as a pace-setter among local authorities in the field of race relations and multi-cultural policies (Allen, 1970, pp 102, 123; Spencer, 1983; Morris *et al.*, 1984; Pedley, 1986). Thirdly, there are now a number of schools in Bradford where Muslim children form a large majority. The intake of children to Drummond Middle School in September 1984, for example, was 125 Asians (the vast majority Muslims of Pakistani origin), two indigenous whites and one West Indian, and this is by no means untypical of certain inner-city areas of Bradford. Fourthly, the problems arising from the presence of a substantial minority of Muslims in a British city have been focussed particularly clearly in Bradford; the city's Muslims, for example, have played a major part in the protests

against Salman Rushdie throughout 1989. Finally, the research was carried out at the time of the Honeyford affair, which, I have argued elsewhere (Halstead, 1988), highlights in a unique way some of the problems of educational provision for Muslim children in the U.K. In one respect the Muslims of Bradford are perhaps not typical of the broader Muslim community in the U.K., for whereas in the U.K. as a whole there are large numbers of Muslims of Turkish Cypriot, Arab, Iranian, Bangladeshi and central African origin, the vast majority of those in Bradford originate either from Pakistan or the Mirpur district of Kashmir. Thus they are united not only by religion but also by ethnic origin. However, this atypicality is not seen as a disadvantage for the purposes of the present thesis. For whereas ethnic origin is a vital consideration in matters relating to the maintenance of ethnic culture and language, it is not a particularly significant factor in considering principles such as the rights of minority communities and the place of religion in education.

The findings of this first stage of my research have already been published (Halstead, 1988), and instead of repeating them in their entirety in the present thesis, I intend merely to make reference to them where appropriate to my argument, as indeed I have done in the present chapter. In Chapter Two of the thesis I shall look more closely at contemporary educational provision for Muslim children in the U.K., with a view to elucidating the principles on which it is based. The rhetoric of such educational provision is almost always couched in terms of 'meeting the special needs of Muslim children, or of the Muslim community'. However, the way these 'special needs' have been defined seems to have changed within the last decade. Previously, they had been defined by the non-Muslim majority in line with Western liberal value assumptions: I shall argue that the mainly benign paternalism of such an approach may be viewed as a kind of racism, in that it denies Muslims the freedom to determine for themselves the pattern of their own and their children's lives. More recently, however, there has emerged a greater willingness for educational decision-makers to consult directly with minorities such as the Muslims. While political self-interest has no doubt sometimes

played a part in such consultation, it appears that what is emerging is a new belief that educational decisions should take account of the wishes and beliefs of minority communities such as the Muslims. The emerging notion of educational accountability to minority communities is itself problematic, however, and in Chapter Three I examine a number of possible models of accountability, which I seek to apply to the Muslim situation. If it is accepted that educational decision-makers should be responsive to the wishes of the Muslim community or of individual Muslim parents, this implies that Muslims have certain rights. But what is the basis of these rights? If it is claimed that the basis lies in fundamental liberal values, do not those same values also presuppose a particular approach to the education of children? Is it possible to lay claim to the rights which liberalism accepts as justifiable while rejecting a liberal view of education? How are liberals to respond to a minority group such as the Muslims who do not fully share the fundamental liberal values? How far do Muslim rights extend in this case, and how are the limits to those rights determined? Are there any circumstances in which such a group can or should be compelled to act against their conscience or fundamental beliefs?

Part Two seeks to examine these questions from a liberal perspective. Chapter Four provides a brief sketch of fundamental liberal values, and seeks to show how the notion of 'rights' fits into this framework. This then forms the basis for a discussion in Chapter Five of the rights of Muslim parents to bring up their children in their own religion and in Chapter Six of the rights of the Muslim community to use education to preserve, maintain and transmit its fundamental beliefs and values intact in a non-Muslim society. In Chapter Five it is argued that on a liberal view parents can claim certain paternalistic rights in connection with their children, but that these rights are constrained by considerations of the public interest and the need to promote the personal autonomy of children. The effect of these constraints is that although parents may be justified in bringing up children in an environment of religious belief, they are not justified in seeking 'to inculcate an uncritical acceptance of **any** conception of the good life' (Ackerman, 1980, p 163). Chapter Six examines a liberal view of pluralism. The

freedom of the group is subject to two major constraints: first, priority must be given to taking on the shared values of the broader society, since without these the stability and cohesion of society as a whole would be in danger of fragmenting; and secondly, the freedom of the individual to chose his or her own way of life must be respected. This has profound consequences for education: children need to be taught the shared values of society and to appreciate the diversity of life-styles and backgrounds which make up our society, but apart from that it is seen as preferable on a liberal view for children to learn to question their assumptions, to grapple with conflicting world views and to engage in rational debate, rather than passively accepting the beliefs and values of the group into which they happen to be born. In so far as Islam is a fundamental religion which values the **acceptance** of a particular conception of the good more highly than autonomy or critical openness, it is clear that the constraints which liberalism places on Muslim rights are problematic for Muslims.

Just how large is the rift between the liberalism and Islam can only be appreciated by a much closer examination of the Islamic world view and this is provided in Part Three. Chapter Seven outlines an Islamic framework of values and compares and contrasts this at several key points with a liberal framework. Chapter Eight then applies the Islamic values to education and begins to sketch out a distinctively Islamic perspective on educational aims, teaching, school ethos and the curriculum, with religion at the very heart of the educational experience. The main liberal criticisms of this approach to education are considered: first, that to transmit religious beliefs in a way which does not leave them open to critical evaluation is a form of indoctrination; and secondly, that to seek to confirm children in the culture into which they were born involves a failure to respect their personal and moral autonomy. As a response to the liberal critique, the Islamic view of education is re-expressed in terms that are more accessible to liberals, and this suggests that some sort of dialogue between Muslims and liberals is possible in spite of their very different world views. Chapter Nine attempts to take the process of dialogue further, to see if sufficient common ground can be found

on which to construct an agreed common system of education. The search for common ground breaks down, however, over both the liberal insistence that no community has the right to prejudge the truth of their own claims on behalf of their children and that children must be encouraged to recognise the essentially challengeable nature of all religious belief; and the Islamic insistence that critical openness is not an appropriate approach to fundamental religious beliefs and that any proposed common system of education that is based either on secular principles or on religious neutrality is unacceptable.

After standing back from (or perhaps above) questions of practical educational policy in Parts Two and Three in order to obtain a bird's eye view of the network of concepts and principles involved, we can now turn again in Part Four with an enriched understanding of what is involved to questions of educational policy and practice. The attempt to match policy and practice in a given situation to underlying principles seems to me to be an important part of the philosopher's task, though there is an apparent reluctance in much contemporary British philosophy of education (though not, for example, in American, or indeed classical, political philosophy: cf P White, 1983, p 6f) to dirty one's hands with empirical matters by suggesting ways of applying general principles to concrete contemporary problems. The problem I have been concerned with in this thesis is how educational conflicts engendered by the existence of diverse, and sometimes opposed values and ways of life are to be resolved. There is a dilemma for liberals if they are unable to persuade Muslims to share their educational convictions: either they can insist on resolving conflicts with their own framework or premises (which would be tantamount to imposing an alien set of values on an unwilling minority); or they can tolerate the co-existence of a version of education which is in conflict at crucial points with the liberal version. I argue in Chapter Ten that there are compelling reasons, both in principle and in practice, why liberals must opt for the latter alternative. The liberal task therefore becomes one of ensuring that if Muslims are to be allowed a place on the religious side of the dual system of education, this does

not pave the way towards the isolation of the Muslim community. The thesis concludes with several suggestions of ways in which the danger of Muslim isolationism may be avoided; the most important of these is greater educational co-operation between Muslims and Christians.

It is hoped that two underlying structures will be recognised in the present thesis. The first is that each of the four parts of the thesis explores a separate issue or set of related issues and in seeking to resolve one particular question ends up raising a further set of questions and thus leading on to the next part. The second refers to the structure of the thesis as a whole. It is written in the belief that an investigation of the specific, practical problems of educational provision for Muslims in the U.K. will lead us, pretty quickly and directly, to questions of concept and fundamental philosophical principles, and that conversely the careful examination and analysis of the underlying issues will point the way, fairly unambiguously, to certain kinds of practical action. Indeed, as will soon become apparent, this statement has become an overall plan for the thesis.

CHAPTER TWO

EDUCATION FOR MUSLIM CHILDREN IN THE U.K. : CONTEMPORARY PRACTICE

The present chapter is based on the findings of my research into the provision of one local education authority - Bradford - for its Muslim pupils. The most immediately striking feature of the situation is its complexity. First, Muslim pupils may have a range of different educational needs and problems resulting, for example, from experiences of racism, conflicting cultural demands or a poor grasp of English. Which particular needs are closest to their experience may vary from pupil to pupil. Sometimes one need is highlighted in the media or in educational research, sometimes another. The situation is made more difficult by the necessity for policy to take account of fundamental clashes of principle, as between the right of children not to be trapped in a restricting culture and the right of parents at least to ensure some degree of continuity between what their children learn at home and what they learn at school. These difficulties are clearly open to a variety of possible solutions, and the situation is further complicated by the not uncommon changes of policy on the part of the Bradford Council and the significant opposition to some of these policies from sections of the teaching profession. On top of this comes the activity of a large number of pressure groups among the city's Muslims, often pulling in different directions and sometimes making conflicting demands. The intervention of white activists adds still further complications, either by seeking to win the Muslims to their particular cause (as in the case of Workers Against Racism; see Halstead, 1988, pp 30, 125), or by totally opposing a provision decided on by the Council (as in the case of the opposition of animal rights activists to the provision of *halal* meat in schools: see Appendix One). The net result is a situation of such complexity that it is easy to get bogged down in detail or to end up succumbing to bias or preconceptions in the representation of events

and policies. What is needed is some way of accurately mapping out the issues to give direction to our thinking and to prevent us from wandering aimlessly in this largely uncharted jungle.

I have attempted to provide this initial analysis in three stages. The first involves the provision of a chronology of all the major events in Bradford in the last twenty-five years relating to the city's educational provision for Muslims and other ethnic minorities. The second is an analysis of the specific educational demands made by Muslims in Bradford and the detailed and varying policies agreed by the local authority in response to those demands. The third seeks to draw out the principles underlying Bradford's developing policies towards its Muslim community.

The first stage, consisting of a chronological survey of all the main events involving the education of Muslims in Bradford and Council policies, together with sociological and other surveys and full details of the Honeyford affair, is based on as many of the available printed sources as possible: Council publications and unpublished documents, local and national newspaper articles, educational research and other reports on the situation in Bradford published in books and journals, reports by headteachers, educational advisers and the city's Director of Education, and policy statements and press releases from ethnic minority and other pressure groups. This strong emphasis on documentary evidence has been balanced by the personal experience of teaching in Bradford for twelve years during the period under discussion, and by interviews and informal conversations with many of the personalities involved. This first stage provides the raw data needed for stages two and three, but since the chronology is not itself directly relevant to the developing argument in the present thesis, I have not included it here. It has, however, already been published elsewhere (Halstead, 1988, pp 231-284), with a full list of sources and references.

The second stage is an attempt to analyse the main educational demands of Muslims in Bradford. On the basis of the chronology, ten issues have been identified as the major concerns of the Muslim community in the last twenty years: the teaching of Islam in state schools; the retention of single-sex schooling; the abandonment of mono-cultural education; the cessation of the policy of dispersal; the provision of mother-tongue teaching; permission for extended trips to the Indian sub-continent; the development of anti-racism policies in education; the establishment of Muslim voluntary-aided schools; the provision of *halal* meat in schools; and the removal of Ray Honeyford from the headship of Drummond Middle School. These ten demands are described in more detail in Appendix One. In each case a brief note is provided on the arguments for and against the Muslims' demands, and the LEA response and ensuing problems are also described.

The final stage moves from analysis to interpretation of data. It seeks to bring to light underlying patterns and trends in educational provision for Muslim children and to show what fundamental values, beliefs and principles underpin LEA policies. It is only with this third stage that the present chapter is concerned. There appear to be two distinct phases in Bradford's educational provision for Muslim children. I shall call them the Integrationist Phase (which was dominant, historically, from the early 1960s to about 1981) and the Accommodationist Place (which has dominated policy in Bradford since about 1981), and each will now be examined in turn.

* * * *

Bradford's policies in the Integrationist Phase appear to have been based on the principle of acting in the public interest. What was perceived to be the primary interest shared by every member of the public equally was the peaceful co-existence of the various groups that made up the broader society in Bradford - in other words, the avoidance of racial and cultural tensions. This was to take priority over considerations

such as what might be of benefit to individuals as individuals or as members of minority groups. In the Integrationist Phase it was taken for granted that the best way to achieve what was in the public interest (i.e. peaceful co-existence) was through the integration of minority groups such as the Muslims into the social, political and economic life of the broader community. Cultural and religious differences were not ignored, but neither were they encouraged; they were tolerated in general (even to the extent of allowing instruction in Islam to be carried on in schools) so long as they did not conflict with the goal of social integration.

It would be untrue to claim however, that local authority policy in this phase was as fully assimilationist, or as oppressive in intention, as it is sometimes portrayed. The policy of dispersing ethnic minority pupils throughout the city's schools to ensure that no school had more than 33% of immigrant children (commonly known as 'bussing'), which was introduced in 1964 in accordance with DES guidelines, is a case in point (see Appendix One). In Bradford's case at least, it seems hardly fair to describe the policy as a measure intended 'to disrupt the education of indigenous children as little as possible', as the Swann Report (DES, 1985, p 195-6) seems to suggest. Indeed, had such been the intention it could have been achieved more effectively by allowing the unchecked growth of 'ghetto schools', which did indeed grow quickly once the policy was phased out in 1980; if that had happened, indigenous parents would not have found their own children being refused places at local schools in order to make way for Muslims and other ethnic minority children who were being bussed in. The primary justification for 'bussing' was in terms of the public interest: through increased contact, pupils of different cultures would come to understand each other better and learn mutual tolerance; and if they could learn to live in harmony in school, this might carry through to adult life. What was wrong with 'bussing' was not the intention which lay behind it (to benefit the whole community by promoting mutual understanding and tolerance and to benefit minority children by giving them the best possible introduction to British culture and the English language), but the methods used (which involved

discrimination: only minority children were 'bussed') and, more fundamentally, the way the benefits accruing from the policy were conceived. Behind the talk of mutual understanding and tolerance lay a serious imbalance of power. Virtually all the cultural adaptations and transformations were expected from the side of the minority groups like the Muslims.

The goal of social integration is ultimately related to the values of fairness and equality, and the equal treatment of all people, irrespective of race, colour or religion, became one of the directing principles of Bradford's educational policy. But equality of treatment was understood in the Integrationist Phase to mean treating all pupils the same; the only justification for different treatment was to facilitate identical treatment later in the pupils' school career. This was the rationale behind the establishment of the Immigrant Language Centres in Bradford in 1965, to help minority pupils to gain the proficiency they needed if they were to compete later in the state schools on an equal footing with indigenous children.

The case of Abdullah Patel, which has already been mentioned in Chapter One, provides a good illustration of the way the principle of equality of treatment was applied in the Integrationist Phase (cf Halstead, 1988, p 47-8). Patel objected on religious grounds to the placement of his daughter in one of Bradford's co-educational upper schools, and requested transfer to a girls' school. The local authority refused, a subsequent appeal to Mrs Thatcher at the DES was turned down, and when Patel insisted on keeping her at home rather than send her to a mixed school, he was put under strong pressure to conform, being served with an attendance order and taken to court by the local authority. What this case illustrates is that in the Integrationist Phase the local authority was not prepared to make exceptions in general educational policy on cultural or religious grounds. To make an exception for parents such as Patel would be to undermine doubly the Council's policy of treating all pupils the same: he wanted Muslims to be treated differently from non-Muslims, and girls differently from boys. If

there were sound educational reasons for a policy such as co-education in the first place, however, and if the policy had been agreed by the democratic decision of the Council, then it was considered justifiable to compel parents to conform. Indeed, the Council could defend such compulsion in terms of protecting the rights of individual children to equality of treatment, as well as in terms of the promotion of the public interest.

In addition to the principle of acting in the public interest and the principle of treating all pupils equally, there was a third main principle behind educational policy for children from minority groups such as the Muslims in the Integrationist Phase. This was the principle of 'meeting the special needs' of minority children. Many of the changes that were made in educational provision in Bradford to take into account the growing number of ethnic minority school children were financed under Section 11 provisions, which provided grants from central government under the terms of the 1966 Local Government Act to meet (currently) 75% of the costs of providing for the 'special needs of immigrants' (cf Willey, 1984, pp 93-5; Troyna and Williams, 1986, pp 66f, 108f, 118). It has been frequently pointed out, however (for example by Dearden, 1966, pp 14-18; Gribble 1969, pp 80-86; Hirst and Peters, 1970, pp 32-36), that behind any statement of needs lie certain assumptions about what is valuable or desirable. For to need something implies not only that one has not got that thing, but that to obtain it would be to achieve something that is regarded as desirable. It is thus appropriate, as Dearden (1968, p 16) points out, 'to look behind statements of needs to the values that are guiding them, for it is here that the issue substantially lies'. What appears to be the case in the Integrationist Phase is that the needs (and the 'problems') of ethnic minority children were being defined by the indigenous majority. The value system on which educational decisions and judgements were based was often alien to the minority groups affected by the decisions.

I have suggested elsewhere (Halstead, 1988, pp 151 ff) that the policies of the Integrationist Phase, though not intentionally oppressive, may be viewed as racist in some sense. In fact, two different types of racism may be distinguished, which I have called Paternalistic Racism and Colour-Blind Racism. Paternalistic Racism refers to the process whereby the freedom of minority groups, whether racial or religious, is defined or restricted by generally well-intentioned regulations that are drawn up by the majority. It is based on the assumption that the white majority has the right to interfere in the lives of minorities for their own good and the power to define that good. As Kirp (1979, p 64) points out,

> *In all the discussions over the proper place of race in educational policy, non-white voices have seldom been heard. The government undertook to act in the best interests of a silent constituency. It acted for the racial minorities rather than with them, and in that sense was truly paternalistic.*

More recently, a minority group leader in Bradford has commented:

> *The current race relations policy appears to be based on the assumption that white people have a natural right to set the agenda for black people. Such an assumption has more in common with the perpetuation of colonial relationships than the creation of racial harmony.*
>
> (Courtney Hay, quoted in Yorkshire Post, 13 June 1987).

Paternalistic Racism can be seen, for example, in the practice of 'bussing' black children (but not white) to ensure a racial mix in local authority schools, and in some forms of positive discrimination and tokenism, especially where these are intended as a way of placating agitators, defusing protect and maintaining tolerance and social stability without tackling the underlying injustices experienced by minority groups (cf Nixon, 1985, p31). It may often be benign, as in the establishment of special language

centres for ethnic minorities, and may actually bring considerable advantages to minority groups. Whether or not the paternalism has a harmful outcome, however, and whether or not it is consciously used by the white majority to reinforce their own privilege, Paternalistic Racism can be viewed as oppressive of racial and religious minorities in two ways: it denies them the freedom to determine for themselves the pattern of their own future lives; and it implies (sometimes in a rather subtle way) the superiority of the white people who make the decisions. In sociological terms, Paternalistic Racism is thus principally concerned with social control (cf Dhondy, 1978; Mullard, 1980, p 18).

Colour-Blind Racism, which grows out of the refusal to acknowledge relevant differences between races, focusses primarily on race and colour rather than on religion and culture, but the principle is the same in both cases, as the example of Abdullah Patel which was mentioned above shows. Evidence gathered for the Swann Report shows that many people believe that recognising differences between racial groups is racially divisive and may 'constitute a major obstacle to creating a harmonious multi-racial society' (DES, 1985, p 26). On these grounds, official policy in the U.K. (and in America: cf Glazer, 1983, p 126f) has sometimes self-consciously played down the significance of race. In 1973, the DES discontinued the practice of gathering statistics on pupils' ethnic or racial origins. Willey (1984, p 95 f) examines the arguments for and against this practice. For similar reasons, many teachers have deliberately sought to make no distinction between black and white pupils, but rather to treat them all equally (cf Little and Willey, 1983). However, the Swann Report concludes that such 'colour-blindness' is

> *potentially just as negative as a straightforward rejection of people with a different skin colour since both types of attitude seek to deny the validity of an important aspect of a person's identity.*
>
> (DES, 1985, pp 26-7).

The problem may go further, since treating racial groups equally without distinction is usually understood as treating them the same, and treating them the same usually implies treating them in accordance with assumptions based on accumulated white experience. In this sense, equal treatment can become a vehicle for white domination. 'Colour-blindness' thus not only leads to undesirable outcomes (the disadvantaging of black people by marginalising their distinctive needs, experiences and identity), but may also involve racial injustice. It is not a new idea (indeed, it can be traced back to Aristotle) that there can be injustice in treating people the same when in relevant respects they are different, just as much as there can be in treating them differently when in relevant respects they are the same. Recently, however, empirical research by feminists has illustrated the effects of this principle: in equal opportunity situations such as co-education, males are generally able to dominate because the terms in which the initial situation is defined are male-oriented and take little account of relevant differences between males and females (cf Spender and Sarah, 1980; Deem, 1984; Mahoney, 1985). In the same way, when a 'colour-blind' approach is adopted to any social policy in this country, white people are usually able to dominate because the common experiences are defined in terms which white people can more easily relate to than blacks and which tend to bolster the white self-image at the expense of the black. Thus even if the books which all the children at a school are expected to study are chosen for purely educational reasons, the fact that they all happen to be written by white people is likely to convey the hidden message that white people are cleverer or that what they write is more significant - the more so if similar messages are picked up in other school subjects and activities. As well as the danger of damaging the self-concept of ethnic minorities through such hidden messages, the 'colour-blind' approach may deny the relevance of the distinctive experiences of minority groups, such as the fact that they are on the receiving end of racial abuse and harrassment. 'Colour-blindness' falls down because it is based on an idealistic principle (that all people are equal), which may be valid *sub specie aeternitatis* but which fails to take account of the contingent facts of racial inequality and disadvantage in our present society.

Undoubtedly one of the factors which led to the phasing out of integrationism in favour of accommodationism was the growing realisation that cultural domination, however unintentional, was undesirable and unjust.

* * * *

What distinguishes the Accommodationist Phase of Bradford's educational provisions for its minority communities is a much greater willingness to take the religious and cultural values and beliefs of communities such as the Muslims seriously. A new concept of integration emerged in Bradford's Race Relations Policy Statement of 1981, which did not 'assume a supremacy of one culture into which others would be easily assimilated', but which aimed instead at the creation of 'a society in which there is a co-operative and peaceful living together based on mutual respect for differences'. The Council was now committed to ensuring that 'so far as is compatible with individual needs, the provision of services will at all times respect the strength and variety of each community's cultural values'. The proviso contained in the phrase 'so far as is compatible with individual needs' once again begs the question of who is to adjudicate these needs and on what basis of values; this will be discussed more fully shortly. But what is significant here is that Bradford's policies had ceased to be based on the need to **promote** the public interest as directly as possible, and instead merely acknowledged the necessity to avoid things that were **against** the public interest. This opened the way for policies to develop based on the freedom of individuals and groups to pursue their own good with like-minded people, so long as they respected the rights of others to do likewise. A letter distributed to all Council employees in 1981 pointed out that 'we no longer expect minority communities to integrate and change their ways to suit us', and that 'every section of the community has an equal right to maintain its own identity, culture, language, religion and customs'.

The guidelines issued by Bradford Council in 1982 regarding the education of pupils from ethnic minority groups were based on two fundamental beliefs, both of which had been set out in the policy statement on race relations the previous year. The first was that all sections of the city's population had an equal right to the maintenance of their distinctive identities and loyalties of culture, language, religion and custom, and that so far as was compatible with individual needs, the authority's provision of services should respect the strength and variety of each group's cultural values. The second was that all children in Bradford were entitled to equality of treatment, equality of opportunity and equality of services and should be offered a shared educational experience. Together, these beliefs gave rise to the following statement of the aims of education in Bradford:

1. *To seek ways of preparing all children and young people for life in a multi-cultural society.*

2. *to counter racism and racist attitudes, and the inequalities and discrimination which results* (sic) *from them.*

3. *To build on and develop the strengths of cultural and linguistic diversity.*

4. *to respond sensitively to the special needs of minority groups.*

The Authority recognises the organisational difficulties of achieving these aims, while at the same time responding to the individual needs of children, and safeguarding the rights of parents under the terms of the 1944 Education Act. Nevertheless, it is convinced that, with sensitivity and a sympathetic understanding of cultural and religious issues, the educational needs of ethnic minority children can be met within the one educational system and within the framework of a common school curriculum.

(City of Bradford Local Administrative Memorandum (LAM) No. 2/82).

No doubt many causes contributed to this change in policy. There had been civil disturbances in Toxteth, Bristol, Brixton and Southall in the summer of 1981 (cf Jacobs, 1986, ch 6; Cashmore and Troyna, 1983, p 172 ff) and in Bradford itself twelve youths were arrested in July 1981 after the discovery of a crate of petrol bombs they had made. Complaints against un-Islamic practices in schools, such as mixed swimming, were becoming increasingly vociferous, and Muslim demands, especially for single-sex education for Muslim girls, were better publicised. Powerful pressures groups like the Commission for Racial Equality were beginning to have an impact on policy. Not least, the protracted trial of the Bradford Twelve (which ended in the acquittal of all the defendants), brought to light many of the legitimate grievances and constant fears of the ethnic minority groups in Bradford (cf A Wilson, 1981, 1982; Pierce, 1982; Leeds Other Paper (LOP), 1982).

What is more difficult to assess is how much political opportunism there was in the new policies. It is true that the voting power of the minority groups was now sufficiently large to have an impact on local elections, particularly since Bradford was a hung Council. Morris *et al* (1984) argue that the inclusion of racism on the education policy agenda by some Conservative councillors was a clear attempt to attract the black vote, and quote an unnamed Conservative councillor:

> *Any political party that tells you that it's doing things for purely altruistic reasons is either a fool or a liar. Clearly both political parties or three political parties are looking to take a chunk of the black and Asian vote. Speaking as a Conservative, I am realistic in realising that at the moment my party is not receiving a great number of Asian votes.*

Selbourne (1985) similarly describes the 'many layers of hyprocrisy' which lay behind the 'public facade of local Labour's righteous crusade for mutual respect among

the West Riding's races'. On the other hand, there is also evidence to suggest that the local political parties were not merely involved in a scramble for the ethnic minority vote. The race relations policy statement had all-party support, and such disagreements as there were over specific provisions (such as whether *halal* meat should be provided in schools) were not along party lines. Neither is there any evidence to suggest that the policies were motivated by the political radicalism which was apparent, for example, in some London boroughs. It may well be that the development of the new policies had as much to do with a genuine desire to act in justice and fairness to minority groups as with political manoeuvrings.

Whatever considerations lay behind them, however, the policies were generally presented to the public as a practical response to a practical situation. Peter Gilmour, the Conservative Chairman of Bradford's Educational Services Committee at the time the policies were approved, drew attention to their pragmatism:

> *They're just realistic. One in six of our children come from Asian families. By the turn of the century it will be one in three. The parents are ratepayers. It is the simple duty of the Council to try to satisfy their needs.*
>
> (quoted in Cross, 1984).

The policy changes ushered in as a result of the new emphasis on respect for the cultures of minority groups fall into two main categories. The first is positive, involving the incorporation of elements from minority cultures, particularly Islam, into the curriculum of the common school, in an attempt to broaden and enrich it and make it more acceptable to the minority communities, particularly the Muslims, by taking account of their beliefs and values. For example, a new multi-faith RE syllabus was published in June 1983 after extensive consultation between Muslims, Christians, Jews, Hindus and Sikhs. It also includes positive attempts to encourage racial tolerance understanding and respect through a variety of anti-racist policies and statements. Since

1983, there has also been a conscious drive to appoint more school governors from ethnic minorities. The second category involves an increased number of concessions to the Muslim community, such as the retention of the two remaining single-sex schools in spite of the previously announced intention to go fully co-educational; the provision of *halal* meat, now extended to all schools where there are more than ten Muslim children; the provision for separate PE and swimming lessons for boys and girls; permission for Muslim girls to wear a school uniform and sports kit in keeping with Islamic notions of modesty and decency; the teaching of minority languages such as Urdu as official school subjects; permission to withdraw from assemblies, RE and sex education; and permission to attend Friday prayers led by an Imam in or out of school and to be absent from school on religious festivals. The guidelines provided by Bradford Council in 1982 in fact granted ethnic minority parents more rights than they had ever had before, but it is worth noting that the roots of both categories of change may be traced back clearly to the Integrationist Phase: the first major concession granted to a minority group was the granting of permission in 1972 for Muslim children to receive instruction in their own faith in secondary schools; and even earlier, in 1970, a commmittee was set up to revise Bradford's RE syllabus, to ensure that it reflected the variety of faiths in the city. The change of direction from the Integrationist to the Acommodationist Phase was thus perhaps not so abrupt as I have implied.

The Accommodationist Phase involves a recognition of the difficulty of developing an educational policy based solely on the public interest in a pluralistic society where different groups each have their own concept of what sort of education is in the best interests of the child. The aim is to avoid putting minority children into situations where they are required to act in conflict with their parents' beliefs and values, and to present a positive image of their faith and culture to all children in the district. It is based on the hope of retaining the commitment of the minority communities to the principle of common schooling and the continued acceptance of the

right of the local authority to make final decisions on educational matters. Such a policy inevitably makes demands on the indigenous population, however; they might find traditional modern language options in schools reduced in order to make room for Urdu, or the traditional emphasis on Christianity in RE reduced to make room for the study of Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism. In order to overcome possible tensions resulting from these changes, the local authority has begun to put less emphasis on the mere **toleration** of cultural differences and more on the need to welcome them as culturally enriching. The problem here, of course, is that the celebration of diversity sits rather uneasily with commitment to a particular set of cultural or religious values and beliefs. Accommodationism, as the Swann Report has shown, requires that a commitment to fundamental shared values, including the value of pluralism, should take priority over a commitment to specific religions or cultural values; and such a scheme of priorities is not likely to commend itself to Muslims or other minority groups. There are also those among the indigenous population who doubt that such a policy can work, or is even desirable, and in expressing such doubts, Honeyford seems to have had considerable popular support (see Appendix One).

The rhetoric used to persuade people of the importance of the educational provisions introduced during the Accommodationist Phase still involves the invocation of the principle of 'meeting the special needs of ethnic minorities'. Councillor Ajeeb, Bradford's first Muslim Lord Mayor, is quoted as saying:

> *What we want is accommodation of our cultural needs, expecially in the educational system.*
>
> (Selbourne, 1984, p 136).

And the use of the term 'needs' by the Chairman of the Educational Services Committee and in the Local Administrative Memorandum No. 2/82 has already been noted. But the 'needs' are no longer defined, as they were in the Integrationist Phase

by the indigenous majority on the basis of values that are not shared by the minority groups. On the contrary, there is very considerable evidence that in assessing the needs of the minority groups, direct account is now being taken of their wishes and of the values that underpin those wishes. This is seen in three ways: first, the demands of minority groups such as the Muslims are being taken seriously, and concessions are being made in response to those demands, even in the face of the opposition of sections of the indigenous majority to the demands. Thus it was agreed to provide *halal* meat for school dinners for Muslims (i.e. meat slaughtered in accordance with Islamic law), in spite of strong opposition from local animal rights campaigners. Secondly, there is a greater willingness to consult directly with Muslims in the preparation of policy: this can be seen in the way the new RE syllabus was developed. Thirdly, Muslims are increasingly being encouraged to participate directly in the process of educational decision-making; this results in particular from the appointment of more ethnic minority teachers and school governors, particularly in inner-city schools (though such appointments are not being made as quickly as many Muslims would like: cf Halstead, 1988, p 53).

It must be acknowledged that to talk of cultural concessions to minority groups does itself involve the adoption of a cultural (and some would say a racist) stance. For what is seen by the indigenous population as a cultural concession **to** Muslims (for example, the provision of *halal* meat in schools) may be seen by Muslims as no more than ceasing to demand a cultural concession **from** them (i.e. forcing their children to eat only vegetarian dishes at school dinners). This merely draws attention to the difficulty of establishing cultural norms in a multi-cultural context. But in acknowledging the right of minority groups such as the Muslims to pursue their own good, so long as this does not conflict with the public interest or the rights of others, and in providing for these rights to be put into practice, the local authority seems to be acknowledging some sort of accountability to the Muslim community.

The exact nature of this developing nation of accountability to the Muslim community, however, is by no means clear. Peter Gilmour, in the speech quoted earlier in the present chapter, seems to see the accountability in terms of a recognition of the rights of Muslim children and parents as consumers. Elsewhere, however, it is interpreted as strictly legal accountability. It is claimed in the Local Administrative Memorandum No. 2/82, for example, that the new policies are mainly merely a clarification of existing legal rights, such as the right of parents to withdraw their children from worship and RE lessons, as allowed in the 1944 Education Act. This is not the whole truth, however, for in some cases the legal position has deliberately been left unclarified (as in the question of extended visits to the Indian sub-continent by Muslim children); in others, the law has not always been enforced (as in the case of breaches of planning regulations by Muslim supplementary schools, or the Muslim practice of keeping their daughters at home in order to protect them from un-Islamic influences); while in others the Council appears to have made a moral judgement when faced with conflicting rights (for example, when Muslim demands for the provision of *halal* meat in schools were strongly opposed by animal rights campaigners, or when Racism Awareness Training courses were instituted with the overt aim of changing the attitudes of Council employees). Clearly, **moral** considerations tempered the interpretation of **legal** rights in the Council's decisions about educational provision for Muslim children. The involvement of Muslims directly in the process of educational decision-making adds yet another dimension to the developing notion of moral and legal accountability.

The Honeyford affair, which is discussed briefly in section ten of Appendix One and more fully in Halstead (1988), highlights in a unique way some of the problems of educational provision for the Muslim community and some of the difficulties with the notion of accountability to a minority community such as the Muslims. It raises questions such as: what happens when the beliefs and aspirations of a minority group are not compatible with those of the broader community? To which group is a

headteacher primarily responsible? More fundamentally, what values should a school promote in a multi-cultural society? Is it a school's business in any way to preserve minority cultures? Honeyford's controversial articles (1982b, 1983a, 1983b, 1984), which led to the protracted campaign against him, seem to be attempting to criticise not only the cultures of minority groups in the U.K. and the multi-cultural and anti-racist policies developed in Bradford and elsewhere, but also the idea that the LEA should assume so much responsibility for what goes on in schools. Implicit in the notion of moral and legal accountability which lies behind the LEA policies of the Accommodationist Phase is the idea that headteachers are merely employees paid to put LEA policy into practice and that they should do little off their own initiative. Peter Gilmour, Chairman of Bradford's Educational Services Commitee, is quoted as saying, 'We expect our heads to comply' (The Times Educational Supplement, 16 March 1984, p 9), while Mike Whittaker, the Council's Policies Development Officer, commented, 'We're simply not allowing teachers to run their schools as they see fit' (quoted in Selbourne, 1987, p 105). Honeyford, however, argues - and he has the weight of a good deal of support from liberal educational theory - that the head should have a substantial degree of autonomy in the running of the school, and that accountability consists of professional responsibility, plus a willingness to offer an account of one's actions when this is requested, for example, by the school governors. In his guide for probationary teachers, Honeyford writes,

> *An aspect of the job which is immensely prized by teachers is that of professional autonomy. There is a feeling of independence and individuality for the teacher in an English classroom which few vocations can match. Teachers are particularly fierce when it comes to what they should teach, how they should operate, and who should evaluate their performance.*
>
> (1982a, p158).

If we flesh out his views a little, we find that he stresses a relationship of trust between the various parties involved in the educational experience, rather than one of compulsion; he stresses the professional judgement of the individual teacher, rather than the following of externally imposed rules; he stresses the common needs and rights of **all** children (including the right to be treated as an **individual**), rather than the rights and needs of particular groups; and he stresses the autonomy of teachers, not their status as employees. In brief, his view of accountability is not very different from that widely supported by many liberal educationalists and taken for granted by a large section of the teaching profession. In Chapter Three I argue that although this notion of professional accountability works well under a system of Integrationism, it appears to break down under a system of Accommodationism, for a variety of reasons. On the one hand, a headteacher can easily get caught up in clashes between rival pressure groups as they battle to establish a pecking order of influence on local authority decisions. On the other hand, the professional accountability model leaves the door open for unconscious cultural bias, for all too often we find that the autonomous decisions of headteachers turn out to be '**our** judgements as to the worth of elements of **their** culture' (Harris, 1982a, p 227). Minority groups cannot take it for granted that the decisions and value judgements which form part of the everyday duties of the head of a common school will be in harmony with their own distinctive values. If minority groups are to have confidence in the decisions, it is clear that an agreed structure of rules and values is needed, together with some system of calling the decision-makers to account if the rules are not adhered to. In the protests against Honeyford's articles, another approach to accountability emerged that was more in line with this idea that a head can be called to account by parents and the local community. Indeed, it was not only Honeyford himself who was called to account for expressing opinions that were considered divisive, insulting and provocative and for behaving in what some considered a professionally irresponsible manner; the Council and the Directorate of Educational Services were also called to account for failing to take prompt action against a head accused of directly contravening the spirit of the Council's policies on race

relations and multi-cultural education. In the end it was direct action by the parents and other members of the mainly Muslim local community in making the smooth running of Honeyford's school impossible, that forced the Council and Honeyford, irrespective of the rights and wrongs of the case, to agree on a package which took him away from the school for good.

One of the important issues to come out of the Honeyford affair is thus the question to what extent the providers of education should be responsive to the wishes of parents and the local community, especially when those wishes are in conflict with either the wishes of the broader community or with policies agreed by democratic procedures, rational debate or professional expertise. In Honeyford's case, he was trapped between conflicting educational demands and expectations, and found it impossible to please all the parties at the same time. The Drummond Parents' Action Committee which was set up to campaign for Honeyford's dismissal never claimed to represent the views of the broader community; indeed, the 600-signature petition it gathered looked very weak compared to the 23,000 signatures collected in support of Honeyford. But what it **did** claim to represent - and the evidence in support of the claim is very strong - was the views of the majority of parents and members of the community immediately surrounding Honeyford's school (most of them Muslims). And on that basis it claimed the right not only to a say in decisions affecting the school, but to an effective veto of decisions it did not like.

The concept of accountability that emerges here thus focusses primarily on the wishes of the parents and local community. In contrast to the notion of professional accountability that is implicit in Honeyford's writings, it stresses the contractual accountability of a head to the LEA, and the accountability of both to parents and the local community, who may in extreme cases take matters into their own hands directly. In contrast to the notion of moral and legal accountability that is reflected in Bradford's policies in the Accommodationist Phase, on the other hand, it denies that representatives

of the broader community should have the final say in matters affecting the education of minority communities. It is no longer enough for the authorities to take account of wishes and beliefs of minority communities; now they are liable to be called to account if they contravene these wishes.

The Honeyford affair appears to be the first real eruption that has been brought to public attention of the problems of educational provision for the Muslim community, and it draws attention to two crucial underlying issues: the question of minority rights and the question of shared values. The question of minority rights is raised in considering whether a minority community has the right in any circumstances to demand the dismissal of a head who has the support of the broader community, whether a minority community has the right to demand concessions some of which may be considered ridiculous by the majority, whether a minority has the right to demand that the education of its young should proceed along different lines from those approved by the majority, and so on. Behind these specific issues lie more general questions about the basis on which the rights of minorities in a democratic system are determined, what the rights actually are and how far they extend, what principles should determine the resolution of clashes between the majority and the minority, and how these principles should be applied in the specific case of the educational demands of Muslims in the U.K. The question of shared values is raised because unless there is a common framework of values shared by all the groups that make up our present-day society, then the attempt to provide a common educational experience for all pupils seems certain to entail to a greater or less extent the imposition of the values of one group on another. If there is no common framework of shared values, then there is no room for teacher autonomy, or indeed for the autonomy of the LEA, for neither would provide sufficient guarantee that pupils were not being influenced against their parents' values and beliefs. If there is no common framework of shared values, the members of minority groups can hardly be expected to be enthusiastic about a common system of education at all. It thus becomes a matter of vital concern to establish just how far the values and

educational goals of Muslims in the U.K. are compatible with those of the broader society and to decide what should be done in cases where the two sets of values are not compatible. Most of the rest of the thesis will in fact be concerned with these two underlying issues of minority rights and shared values.

Before these two issues are approached directly, however, the concept of accountability needs a more structured examination than has so far been provided. In fact, accountability is one of the few areas where some sort of attempt has been made in the last few years to match philosophy of education and educational practice (e.g. Sockett et al, 1980; Elliott et al, 1981a, Kogan, 1986). Chapter Three will thus examine these attempts, outline current theories of accountability, and assess their relevance and value to the demands made by Muslims regarding educational provision for their children.

CHAPTER THREE

EDUCATION FOR MUSLIM CHILDREN IN THE U.K. : THE PRINCIPLE OF ACCOUNTABILITY

Towards the end of Chapter Two it was argued that Bradford's innovative multi-cultural policies, which have subsequently proved very influential on both the Swann Report and the policies of other LEAs, were based on a belief in the right of all interested parties, including minorities such as the Muslims, to have their wishes and needs **taken into account** in educational planning and decision-making. This notion of accountability, however - and in this thesis I am concerned specifically with accountability to the Muslim community - is far from unproblematic. At the end of Chapter Two I drew attention to some of the complications which were highlighted by the Honeyford affair. Implicit in the developing concept of **moral and legal accountability** on the part of the LEA is the idea that teachers are merely employees of the LEA, paid to put the policies into practice. The moral and legal accountability of the LEA to the electorate thus involves a strong emphasis on the **contractual accountability** of heads and other teachers to the LEA. Not surprisingly, a number of teachers, including Honeyford, resented this erosion of their professional autonomy; **professional accountability** in their view involves the freedom to make judgements on educational matters according to appropriate educational criteria and the responsibility to offer an account of these in accordance with professional codes of practice when required to do so by interested parties. When the Drummond Parents' Action Committee (DPAC) attempted to **call Honeyford to account**, however, their main objection was that he was not being sensitive to their cultures or responsive to their special needs. **Responsive accountability** implies an obligation to **take account of** the wishes of interested parties beyond the letter of the law or the teacher's contract; but the term gives no clue as to who the interested parties are or whose claim

must take priority in the event that the interests of the parents, the children, the local community or the general public are not compatible. To talk in an unqualified way of the accountability of teachers to their employers and parents may therefore be misleading since it does not distinguish between different forms of accountability and it does not acknowledge the difficulty of being accountable to different interested parties at the same time.

Two needs emerge from this brief review of accountability in relation to minority communities such as the Muslims in the U.K. The first is a clarification of the concept itself. A considerable amount of research has been carried out in the field of accountability in recent years, (e.g. Becher *et al.*, 1979; Sockett *et al.*, 1980; Elliott *et al.*, 1981a, 1981b; Kogan, 1986), but this research has sometimes been based on conflicting conceptual frameworks. The second is to consider whether any of the models of accountability point to ways of making decisions about the education of Muslims that are acceptable to all the parties involved, including the Muslims themselves. These two issues will occupy the remainder of the present chapter.

Dictionaries (e.g. the Concise Oxford) usually define 'accountability' either in terms of an agent's obligation to 'give an account' of his actions or as 'responsibility'. Neither definition is adequate without qualification. To define accountability in terms of delivering an account is inadequate since it is clear that a headmaster who harangues his assembled school with political propaganda for half an hour every morning will not have fulfilled the requirements of accountability so long as he is happy to describe or explain his actions to anyone who requires him to do so. Educational accountability also involves taking into account the requirements of the law, the values of the broader society, the guidelines of the local authority, the professional code of conduct, the rights of the parents, the interests of the children and so on. In addition, accountability implies that the educators' account of their actions should (implicitly if not explicitly) be judged to be satisfactory by those who have a legitimate stake in the educational

process. Accountability thus inevitably raises questions about who should have a stake in the educational process, and is never far removed from questions about the control of education. As Bridges points out,

> *an explanation of educational accountability couched simply in terms of a school's concern to communicate what it is doing to an outside audience fails to tell us enough about educational accountability as a political concept located among discussions about the control of education.*
>
> (1981, p 224)

The equation of accountability with responsibility involves different problems, not least that it provides too easy a justification for the claim that the teacher should be accountable in the main 'to his or her own informed conception of the role of a general educator' (Bailey, 1983, p 11). Bailey argues that

> *the more I am morally responsible or accountable for my own actions, the less it is reasonable to expect me to be responsible or accountable to anyone else in the sense of simply obeying them; though it might indeed be reasonable to expect me to give an account of, explain or justify my actions, if only to show publicly that I am acting in a morally responsible way.*
>
> (ibid., p 14)

The trouble with this argument is that 'responsibility' is a much broader concept than 'accountability', and one cannot therefore make distinctions that relate to the former and apply them uncritically to the latter. The primary force of the sentence, 'Titty is responsible for her own actions' is that the origin of her actions can be traced back to Titty herself. This implies (a) that she is capable of rational conduct and (b) that she is free to choose between courses of action. It may also, but need not, imply that she is liable to be called on to answer for her actions. Accountability, however, means

responsibility only in this latter, narrower sense of answerability. But to be answerable implies an audience (whether explicitly referred to or merely understood) in a way which acting in a morally responsible manner does not, and thus it is not possible to discuss educational accountability without asking to whom the educator is to be accountable. It may be possible under certain conditions to justify a professional model of accountability which lays stress on the teacher's autonomy, as I shall argue later, but a justification that is based on too broad an understanding of the concept will not do.

An adequate account of educational accountability must therefore steer a middle path between control and autonomy. The autonomy of educators will be tempered by the fact that they are accountable to those they serve, and that those they serve have legitimate expectations and requirements which should be satisfied. On the other hand, the control of education can never be so tight that educators are reduced to the status of conveyor belts carrying precious nuggets from the mines of knowledge to the rows of empty minds waiting to be filled. From what has been said so far, it appears that there are six conditions which any case of educational accountability must satisfy:

(1) The person who is accountable is the holder of a defined role.

(2) The role-holder' s accountability relates to actions carried out in connection with the requirements of the role.

(3) The role-holder's accountability is to one or more specific audiences - those who have delegated the responsibilities of his role to him, and/or those who are on the receiving end of his actions.

(4) The audience has certain legitimate expectations which the role-holder should take into account, and has grounds for insisting that those expectations be satisfied.

(5) The role-holder should be willing to accept that some account of how the expectations are being satisfied should be prepared if the audience requires it, or at least that evidence should be made available to the audience so that some assessment of how the expectations are being satisfied can be made.

(6) Sanctions or other forms of appropriate action (including professional advice, remedial help, further feedback) are available if the account or assessment indicate that the legitimate expectations are not being satisfied.

Two main types of question emerge from these six conditions. The first concerns who defines the responsibilities of the specific role - the role-holder himself relying on his own professional expertise, or the audience; and if it is the latter, does this refer to those who foot the bill, or those who receive the service? The second concerns the level of control implicit in the notion of accountability to a specific audience. Should the role-holder merely be responsive to the expectations and requirements of those he serves, or is he answerable to them? The way in which educational accountability is understood in practice depends on the answers given to these two questions. Let us look at the two questions in more detail.

Accountability is usually invoked when there are three parties to an agreement rather than just two, i.e. when the role-holder is engaged to provide a service but is paid by someone other than the person who receives the service. In other words, **a** is paid by **b** to provide a service for **c**, and **a** is accountable to both **b** and **c** for providing that service. Thus a bus driver is accountable both to the bus company which hires him and to the passengers he serves, though on some occasions he might allow his own claims

to expertise to override the requirements of the other two parties ('I've been driving buses fifteen years, and I know what I'm doing'). Accountability procedures are less likely to be invoked in a situation where **b** pays for a service which she herself receives from **a**, since the direct control she can exert (e.g. by refusing to pay for the service) normally obviates the need for a more time-consuming and less clear-cut calling to account. In education, there is some uncertainty about who **b** actually is (the local government, the national government, the tax payer or the rate payer), about who **c** actually is (the child, the parent, the local community or society as a whole) and about the legitimacy of the claims of other groups (employers, unions, universities and so on) to have a say in the process.The situation is further complicated by the fact that parents may well pay for education as taxpayers as well as being on the receiving end as consumers. Nevertheless, the crude distinction between **a** (the educator), **b** (those who employ him) and **c** (those for whom he carries out a service) still has some validity. The question of which of these should have the greatest say in determining the responsibilities of educators lies at the heart of the debate about accountability.

The second question requires a distinction between on the one hand the answerability of educators, their responsibility to demonstrate that they are satisfying the expectations of the audience and that, for example, pupils are in fact learning what they are supposed to learn (which I shall call 'contractual accountability'), and on the other the process of taking into account the requirements of all interested parties when making educational decisions (which I shall call 'responsive accountability'). The former category is exemplified in the question whether we are getting value for money from our educational service, the latter in the question which figured highly in Callaghan's 'Great Debate' launched in 1976, whether education should be more accountable to industry. Contractual accountability is primarily concerned with educational outcomes and results, whereas responsive accountability, while not ignoring these, puts more emphasis on educational processes and decision-making. Contractual accountability is directed more towards control (though, as we shall see,

self-accounting procedures are an attempt to fulfil the requirements of contractual accountability while playing down the element of control); responsive accountability is directed more towards involvement and interaction between the decision-makers and those whom the decisions affect. In contractual accountability, the requirement for educators to give an account of their actions means no more than that they should give a description of them; in responsive accountability, on the other hand, giving an account of one's actions involves explaining and justifying them.

An analysis which combines the distinction between contractual and responsive accountability with the dominance of one of the three main parties to the accountability process - the employer (i.e. the LEA, the governing body or other employer), the autonomous professional and the consumer - produces six possible models of educational accountability. These are:

1. The Central Control Model (contractual, employer dominant).

2. The Self-Accounting Model (contractual, professional dominant).

3. The Consumerist Model (contractual, consumer dominant).

4. The Chain of Responsibility Model (responsive, employer dominant).

5. The Professional Model (responsive, professional dominant).

6. The Partnership Model (responsive, consumer dominant).

These models are, of course, ideal types, but it is hoped that, in spite of the inevitable oversimplification, a brief examination of each will help to shed light on the notion of accountability to the Muslim community in the U.K.

* * * *

The Central Control Model lays stress on teachers' status as employees with a contract of employment (at least in some sense), who are under the obligation to demonstrate that they are in fact doing what they are paid to do (cf Gibson, 1980). Even after payment by results was abandoned, the accountability of educators was for many years judged primarily in terms of their students' success in public examinations. The requirement of the 1980 Education Act that schools should publish a detailed analysis of their examination results for the benefit of prospective parents, and the requirement of the 1988 Education Act that pupils should be tested at the ages of 7, 11, 14 and 16, both reflect this view of accountability. One of the purposes of the new national curriculum is to

> *enable schools to be more accountable for the education they offer to their pupils, individually and collectively.*
>
> (DES, 1987, p 4)

A similar approach has been much in vogue in the U.S.A. since the 1960s: educators are accountable to the general public (who pay for the education through taxes) for the achievement of pre-specified objectives by the children they teach, and this achievement is assessed on the basis of the test scores gained by the children. Test results thus loom large in the accountability process, and the question of whether the tax payer is getting value for money from the educational system can be answered in terms of what results are achieved from what outlay of resources. The main objections to this approach to accountability have been set out by Sockett (1980, p 17-19). A much less crude approach to central control, which takes account of the fact that the success of a school can never more than partially be judged by test or examination results, is seen in the external monitoring of schools carried out by representatives of the teachers' employers (HMI at the national level and LEA advisers or inspectors at the local level).

The Self Accounting Model involves schools and teachers monitoring their own activities in an attempt to satisfy the requirements of contractual accountability while holding on to as much professional autonomy as possible and avoiding increased bureaucratic control of education. The Cambridge Accountability Project (Elliott et al., 1981a, 1981b) was mainly concerned with investigating schools that were committed to the Self-Accounting Model. Both Scrimshaw (1980) and Becher et al. (1981, p 75ff) offer a number of arguments in favour of a school offering an account of its activities rather than being called to account by an external body. Sockett (1982, p 544), on the other hand, questions whether self-accounting is a credible alternative to the bureaucratic centralism of the first model, since 'accountability without redress is empty'.

The Consumerist Model introduces the mechanisms of the free market in place of central or professional control as the primary means of enforcing educational accountability (cf Kogan, 1986, p 51ff). The model is based on the belief that if schools or LEAs no longer have a guaranteed clientele, this will create an incentive to compete which will in turn push up educational standards. The model is exemplified in proposals for a voucher system such as that advocated by Coons and Sugarman (1978) and more recently by Seldon (1986), whereby parents' influence on the character of the school would be strengthened by their freedom to spend their vouchers at the school of their choice. Honeyford, too, argues that under such a system

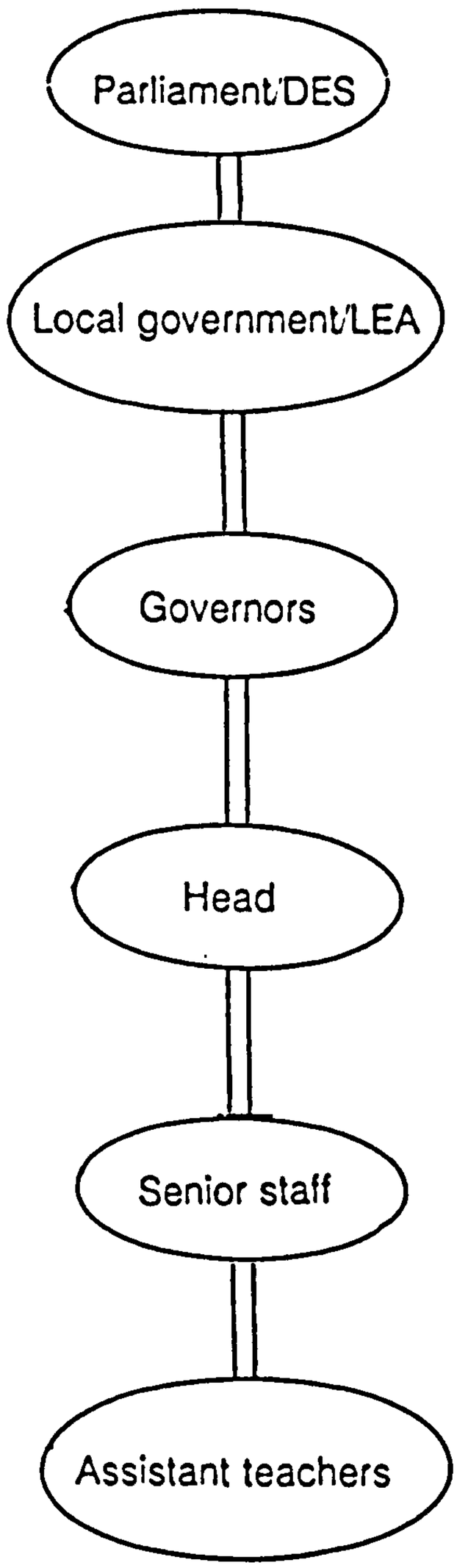
> *parents would become much more involved in the accountability of schools, since they possess 'the power of exit' and control the purse strings.*
>
> (1986)

Of course, individual parents who are dissatisfied with the educational provision at one school have always had the right to transfer their children to another. The William Tyndale affair, for example, started with a considerable number of parents transfering

their children to other schools before the ILEA began to investigate what was going on at the school (Gretton and Jackson, 1976; Ellis et al., 1976; Scrimshaw and Horton, 1981). But the Consumerist Model goes beyond this in that it involves a radical redistribution of power and authority in educational matters. The model clearly lies behind the provisions of the 1988 Education Act which allow the governing bodies of schools to opt out of local authority control and allow parents greater freedom to send their children to the school of their choice.

The Chain of Responsibility Model is a form of responsive accountability based on an acknowledgement of the complexity of the relationship between employer, practitioner and client in the field of education, and an acknowledgement that different types of educational decisions may reasonably be considered the domain of different groups. The model has three main features. The first is that an initial distinction is made between those who make educational decisions and those whose wishes, interests, requirements or opinions are merely taken into account by the decision-makers. The second is that the various groups of decision-makers, who consist of different categories of elected representatives and their employees, are ranked in a chain which extends from parliament and the DES, to local councils and LEAs, to school governors, to headteachers, to senior staff and finally to assistant teachers. In some respects the relationship between the links in the chain is hierarchical, in that each link can control, to a greater or less extent, the practice of subsequent links, and the autonomy of any given link is subject to the constraints which may be placed upon its freedom of action by the preceding links. However, to describe the relationship as hierarchical or as one of control is to oversimplify it. For the elected representatives are unlikely to act without at least seeking the professional advice of their employees, and those at the teaching end of the chain have a variety of means open to them for diminishing the effectiveness of policies initiated without their approval. These include tacitly ignoring the policy, going through the motions of compliance, campaigning against the policy through their unions, working to rule and so on. The third characteristic feature of the model is that

FIGURE ONE: THE CHAIN OF RESPONSIBILITY MODEL



THE CHAIN	responsive to . . .	THE INTEREST GROUPS
Parliament/DES	. . .	General public, CBI, TUC, universities, national pressure groups.
Local government/LEA	. . .	Rate payers, local electorate, employees, local industry
Governors	. . .	Parents and local community
Head	. . .	Parents, higher education, colleagues
Senior staff	. . .	Parents, pupils, colleagues, unions, other educational institutions
Assistant teachers	. . .	Parents, pupils, colleagues, unions, other educational institutions

each link in the chain has a special responsibility to particular interest groups, as set out in Figure One. Each link demonstrates its responsiveness to its interest groups in two ways: sounding out opinion and engaging in dialogue on the particular educational decisions for which it has responsibility, and delivering an account of the decisions it has made. One disadvantage of the Chain of Responsibility Model is that it might lead to a growth of bureaucracy and to power struggles between different links in the chain. Another disadvantage is the implicit hierarchy of interests which results from the more or less explicit hierarchy of educational decision-making and control. Thus the interests of the parent qua parent rank lower than the interests of the parent qua rate payer, and both rank lower than the interests of national industry. An interest group may appeal to a higher link in the chain if it believes the response to its wishes and demands has been unsatisfactory, but has no guarantee of a sympathetic hearing. Sir Keith Joseph, for example, was very responsive to a small number of complaints about Peace Studies in schools (Joseph, 1984), but refused to get involved in the Honeyford affair; and Kenneth Baker, who intervened in the McGoldrick affair, held back from involvement in the dispute at Headfield Middle School in Dewsbury (Caudrey, 1987).

The Professional Model avoids the problem of a hierarchy of interests by leaving educational decisions (except on matters on which they are contractually accountable) to the judgment of the professional educators - or of the school, though I tend to agree with Sockett (1980, p 13) that school accountability is reducible to the accountability of the head and other teachers. On this model, which is set out in more detail by Bailey (1980, 1983), professional educators seek to retain control over educational decisions which affect themselves, and see themselves as the arbiter when they are faced with conflicting demands from different interested parties. Their professional status requires them to take account of all the expectations, wishes and criticisms emanating from those with a legitimate interest in the education they are providing, but as they are ultimately responsible for educational practice, so they claim the right to make final judgments and to define the boundaries of their own accountability. This right is based on their

professional training and expertise, on the standards they have implicitly committed themselves to when entering the profession, and on the professional autonomy that teachers have traditionally been allowed in this country. How far the claim of teachers to be professionally autonomous is justifiable in our contemporary pluralist society will be considered in the final section of the present chapter.

The Partnership Model combines two main principles. The first is that the responsibility for educational decisions should not lie with one dominant group, but with a partnership of all those directly affected by a particular decision or with a legitimate interest in it. The second is that all the parties to the partnership are not merely consulted before the decisions are taken, but have a share in the actual decision-making, either directly or through their representatives (the distinction between representation and direct participation, which Pateman (1970) makes much of, is not central to the argument here). There are likely to be three stages in decision-making on this model: (a) the pooling of ideas and the critical discussion of options; (b) 'the negotiation through argument and compromise of whatever can satisfy most people as being the most rational, or, failing that, the most reasonable solution' (Bridges, 1978, p 118); and (c) the acceptance of the obligation to abide by and help carry through the decisions which have been reached in this democratic manner. This model therefore provides a quite different approach to accountability from the Chain of Responsibility and Professional Models. Each member of the partnership is accountable to the other members in the sense of being under an obligation to take their views and interests into account, but is not accountable to any outside interest group (unless of course he has been elected as a representative of a broader group, in which case he will be answerable to them for the way in which he represents their interests).

A major obstacle facing the Partnership Model is the difficulty of gathering all the parties with a legitimate interest into a single manageable committee which can actually make decisions. Usually in practice only some of the main interested parties are brought

together on a decision-making body. The Schools Council was one such attempt, but was perhaps too dominated by teachers (Plaskow, 1985). Prior to the 1986 Education (No 2) Act, governing bodies were often dominated by political nominees. The theory behind the encouragement of greater extra-professional participation in educational planning and decision-making is set out in the Taylor Report, to which the roots of the 1986 Act can be traced:

> *The Secretaries of State have pointed out that curricula must meet, and be responsive to, the needs of society...If ordinary people do not, as some teachers suggest, understand what schools are trying to do, it is in part because they have traditionally not taken an active part in determining the educational policy of the schools.*
>
> (DES, 1977)

Elliott (1980, p 82), however, has argued against the participation of non-professional bodies in final decisions about educational policy, and in any case it has been suggested (Bridges, 1982b, p 14) that many parents do not see PTA committees and parent governors as a genuine vehicle for the expression of their concerns.

It may be helpful at this stage to look back at Bradford's educational provision for its Muslim community and ethnic minorities generally in light of the distinctions which have so far been made.

The Accommodationist Phase of Bradford's policy towards its minority communities described in Chapter Two provides an archetypal example of the Chain of Responsibility Model. A number of features of the policy make this clear. First, the council and LEA were attempting to respond to the perceived needs and wishes of the particular interest groups to which they were responsible. The comment of the former chairman of the Educational Services Committee has already been referred to:

> *One in six of our children come from Asian families...It is the simple duty of the Council to try to satisfy their needs.*
>
> (quoted in The Times Educational Supplement, 25 May 1984)

Secondly, though they took care to engage in dialogue with the minority communities, the Council and LEA emphasised their own right to interpret and evaluate the requirements of those communities. Thirdly, the Council and LEA drew attention to the fact that they were acting within the guidelines defined by the government or the DES; usually, they claimed to be 'clarifying' or 'interpreting' or 'acting within the spirit of' the 1944 Education Act. Fourthly, the Council and LEA expected subsequent links in the chain of responsibility to take account of their guidelines and definitions of good practice and to act in accordance with them.

Honeyford's stance, on the other hand, provides an equally clear example of the Professional Model. Where LEA guidelines were specific, he took these to form part of his contractual obligations and carried them out to the letter. But where LEA guidelines were expressed in general terms as recommendations for good practice, he considered these as advice which he as an autonomous professional could weigh alongside other considerations before making decisions about educational practice within his own school. The high value which Honeyford put on professional autonomy is made clear in his guide for probationary teachers (1982a, p 158) as well as in the reports he was required to prepare for the crucial meeting of the Schools (Education) Sub-Committee on 22 March 1985 when a vote of no confidence in him was passed.

The view of accountability which emerges from the protests against Honeyford, however, is much less straightforward. The protest may be divided into three stages. The first stage involved the two logical courses of action open to parents according to the analysis of responsive accountability which has been offered: organising a protest

group (the DPAC) to co-ordinate action against Honeyford and to put pressure on the LEA to respond to their demands (in keeping with the Chain of Responsibility Model); and urging the school's parent governor to press the claims of the DPAC on the governing body as a whole (in keeping with the Partnership Model). In the event, the existing parent governor could not handle the demands and resigned, and the election of the DPAC chairperson as the new parent governor by a large majority put her in a strong position to urge both governors and LEA to call Honeyford to account. The LEA's response to this first stage of the protest appeared to miss the point, however; the DPAC were objecting to Honeyford's failure to be responsive to their wishes and needs, but the LEA sent in a team of inspectors to Honeyford's school to check that its educational provision was in line with LEA policies. In other words, complaints about a lack of responsive accountability were being met in terms of the contractual accountability of the Central Control Model.

In the second stage of the protest, the DPAC began to call the LEA to account. They claimed to be supporting LEA policies on race relations, and called on the LEA to take what was in their eyes the necessary step of dismissing a head who was contravening these policies. The Council's response this time was to require Honeyford to prepare six reviews of aspects of his school's provision - a requirement which was closely in line with the Self-Accounting Model, except that there was still a strong element of central control in the advisers' evaluation of these reports. The main complaints against Honeyford in the second report by the advisers were that he had not changed his attitude in any way and that he was not sufficiently responsive to the requirements of the particular interest groups that according to the Chain of Responsibility Model were primarily his responsibility - the parents and the local community. As a result of this report he was suspended.

The final stage of the protest, after Honeyford had been reinstated, had much more in common with the Consumerist Model. This stage was marked by direct action

aimed at making his school unworkable and thus his departure inevitable. The justification for this action was based on the claim that the parents had the right, as the representatives and trustees of the children at the school, to call a head directly to account themselves. This of course raises the question whether the wishes and judgments of parents should be paramount in the education of their children, a question which has been much debated in recent years (cf Coons and Sugarman, 1978; O'Neill and Ruddick, 1979; Bridges, 1984; Hobson, 1984; McLaughlin, 1984, 1985), and which is central to the present thesis (see Chapter Five). The mode of Honeyford's actual departure, however, was such that he could claim it was an autonomous decision on his part, in line with the Professional Model; although he was willing and able to carry on as head, he weighed the effect the dispute was having on his wife's health, the morale of the staff and the education of the pupils and decided that the best course of action was to accept early retirement.

The fact that all six models were thus operating in the Honeyford affair highlights the difficulties in any discussion of accountability to the Muslim community. Clearly, we are concerned primarily with responsive accountability rather than contractual accountability, but there are a number of crucial questions that must now be considered. How should educational decisions be reached? How much account should be taken of the wishes of interested parties? Is it in fact possible to take account of conflicting wishes, and if not, whose interests are to take priority? Are there basic criteria according to which educational problems should be resolved irrespective of the wishes of interested parties? If there are, are teachers in the best position to understand these criteria and should they therefore have the final responsibility for decisions relating to educational policy and practice? The final section of the present chapter briefly examines the kinds of answers provided to these questions by the three models of responsive acountability and considers the arguments relating to each model with particular

reference to the needs and aspirations of the Muslim community.

* * * *

Let us start with the Professional Model. Accountability according to this view involves professional responsibility, plus a willingness to offer an account of one's actions when this is required of one (for example, by a school's governors). It stresses a relationship of trust between the various parties involved in the educational enterprise, rather than one of compulsion, and stresses the professional judgment of the individual teacher rather than the following of externally imposed rules and guidelines. Bailey argues that it is based on the principle of teacher autonomy:

> *An autonomous teacher does not ignore the wishes and interests of others - parents, pupils, governments and employers - but such a teacher does reserve the right to consider such wishes and interests in the light of appropriate criteria. The wants and wishes cannot simply be taken as given starting points. An autonomous teacher does not necessarily refuse to submit to the judgment of others, but again such a teacher would need to satisfy himself concerning the criteria of judgment and the procedures by which he is asked to accept the judgments of others. In particular he might consider it proper to be subject in some matters to the judgment of his professional associates.*
>
> (1980, p 99)

Bailey offers three main justifications for linking accountability to professional autonomy. First, he argues that accountability necessarily involves autonomy and that accounts of moral and professional action only make sense where the agent is considered to be autonomous (although he points out that autonomy is always a matter of degree: cf 1980, p 104; 1983, pp 11, 15). If the agent is merely responsible to his

superiors in the sense of working strictly to their orders, then it is they, not he, who should provide the explanation and justification of his actions. The second argument is a refinement of the assumption held in some quarters that teachers' professional knowledge and expertise justifies them in holding themselves aloof from non-expert interference and criticism, or at least that if their actions are questioned by parents, for example, the appropriate response is for teachers to attempt to 'educate' the parents (cf Nias, 1981, p 202) by patiently explaining what they are seeking to do and why. Bailey (1983, p 13-14) argues that teachers' professional expertise consists not in the possession of specialised packages of information and skills but in the capacity to apply broadly generalisable knowledge, skills and attitudes to whatever situations they find themselves in. The capacity to make autonomous decisions is thus a major part of teachers' expertise, and to instil that capacity in their pupils is one of their major goals; but it is because their decisions are autonomous ones that they have a duty to explain them or give an account of them to all interested parties. The third argument is that teachers in fact have to be accountable within considerably diverse contexts, and that the best way to help teachers to fulfil their role satisfactorily in these differing school conditions and arrangements is to encourage them to develop the capacity to reflect critically on the possible ways of applying general educational principles to specific situations and to act on the basis of this rational reflection. Only if teachers are professionally autonomous will there be a system of decision-making flexible enough to take into account the needs of individual children and the requirements of specific contexts: a centrally imposed system could not be sufficiently adaptable.

The first of these arguments is broadly acceptable, so long as it is acknowledged that accountability involves at least a minimal degree of autonomy and a minimal sense of responding to, or being constrained by the legitimate claims of, interested parties. Indeed, it is this very tension between autonomous action and legitimate constraint that is picked out by the term 'accountability'.

Bailey's second argument, which defines teachers' professional expertise in terms of the ability to make autonomous decisions about what and how to teach children, is more problematic. Clearly teachers cannot exercise their professional autonomy in total isolation and independence from their professional colleagues. But as soon as Bailey concedes that professional autonomy includes 'the right to participate in the formation of policy to be collectively implemented' (1980, p 107), we are forced to ask why this right to participate is restricted to professional educators. If the parents (or politicians, employers, trade unionists, social workers or other interested parties) share the fundamental knowledge and commitment to autonomy which in Bailey's view form the basis of teachers' professional expertise, on what grounds are they to be excluded from participation in decisions affecting the future generation? Even if parents do not share this knowledge and commitment, to exclude them from the decision-making process has every appearance of oppression and a lack of respect for the rights and opinions of others.

If the second argument relates primarily to questions of practical detail requiring immediate resolution, then few would dispute that these are best dealt with by the person on the spot; and much educational decision-making belongs to this category. But Bailey appears to argue that more fundamental decisions, such as educational aims and priorities, should also be the exclusive domain of the professionally autonomous teacher. This does not mean that the wishes and requirements of interested parties would be ignored, but simply that they would be put through the filter of the teacher's own rationality, expertise and professional judgment. On Bailey's view, the teacher, who has an informed and rational conception of what education is and where it should be leading, fights for education as he sees it and tries to stop it being domesticated to other ends. The resulting decisions and actions would thus inevitably be dependent on the teacher's perception and understanding of the situation. It is clear that if a system of autonomous decision-making by professional teachers is to be found acceptable, there has to be a high level of trust in the teacher's perception and understanding of the

situation and an agreement over the basic criteria according to which the autonomous decisions should be made. Our contemporary multi-cultural context underlines the difficulties in achieving either of these conditions. Teachers' perceptions, preconceptions and tacit cultural assumptions are no longer universally shared (if they ever were), and teachers themselves are in any case notoriously divided on many issues, including the aims of education. It is doubtful if there is a sufficient agreement over 'values which are basic to our shared form of life' (Bonnett, 1979, p 166) to provide a framework of basic educational criteria. This point is fundamental to the argument of the present thesis, and will be discussed in much more detail in subsequent chapters.

Teachers can count on public and parental support most readily when they are perceived to be doing their best to achieve educational goals which are shared by all interested parties. Such trust is clearly much more readily achieved in a mono-cultural than in a multi-cultural context. Nias comes to more or less the same conclusion in an intuitive article of considerable insight (1981, p 211ff), where she argues that trust, at least in an educational context, involves (a) predictability of personal and institutional behaviour and (b) agreement over ends. Where these two conditions prevail, parents and the general public appear happy to leave educational decision-making to the autonomous professional, confident

> *both that the school was doing what they would broadly wish it to do and that it could apparently be trusted to get on with the job.*
>
> (Bridges, 1982b, p 14)

In the absence of such predictability and agreement, however, the claim of teachers to professional autonomy is likely to be seen as a barrier to, rather than as a way of facilitating, accountability. A common educational system in a pluralist context is bound to produce conflict over the aims of the education provided, and thus over educational

practice, and there will be increasing dissatisfaction with the policy of leaving the decisions to the teachers.

To sum up, it seems almost impossible to have (a) the professional autonomy of teachers, (b) the common school, and (c) a pluralist society at the same time: any two of these conditions precludes the third. (a) and (b) may perhaps be compatible only in a homogeneous, mono-cultural society where there is a broadly shared framework of educational assumptions; they are thus likely to be able to continue in those parts of the U.K. which have so far been untouched by cultural and ethnical diversity. (a) and (c) can exist together only when two conditions prevail: first, that 'virtually everyone in the school knows what (its educational) assumptions are before joining it and has some fair measure of sympathy with them' (Scrimshaw, 1980, p 52 f); and secondly, that parents have some measure of free choice between schools so that they can in fact find a school with whose goals they are in sympathy. Athough parental choice has become a slogan of Conservative educational policy in recent years, it seems very doubtful that Muslims in the U.K. as yet have the freedom to choose a school for their children which is in harmony with their own educational beliefs and values. Whether this forms an argument for the establishment of Muslim voluntary-aided schools will be considered later in the thesis. If (b) and (c) are to be combined, however, Nias (1981) suggests that the professional autonomy of teachers will have to be tempered with what she calls 'formal procedures' of accountability, by which she appears to mean forms of organisation which structuralise relationships, responsibilities and roles within the school and which make explicit the criteria according to which decisions are made. This is because in a pluralist society, groups such as the Muslims are likely not to share all the tacit assumptions or stated educational goals of the common school, and therefore parental rights may be invoked which are ignored when there is a consensus of values, and teachers' actions are likely to come under much closer scrutiny. 'Formal procedures' may well involve increased central control, but may also open up greater participation in decision-making by all the parties involved. The Chain of

Responsibility Model is an approach to accountability which takes account of the need for 'formal procedures' and which perhaps has more potential for coping with the fundamentally conflicting educational values, goals and assumptions held by different groups in our society than does the Professional Model. Indeed, in so far as he acknowledges the need for 'a structural framework for policy-forming discussion', Bailey (1980, p 107) concedes the existence of constraints on teachers' professional autonomy.

Two main arguments can be marshalled in support of the Chain of Responsibility Model of Accountability. The first is that it is a workable and bureaucratically efficient model which succeeds in balancing the rival claims of a number of different parties with an interest in educational decision-making. Of all the models under discussion, it comes the nearest to current practice in the U.K. It seeks to maximise efficiency by opting for central planning where this would avoid overlapping or duplication in educational decision-making (the National Curriculum is an example of this), but a balance is sought between public, national interests and the interests of the individual. There are clear-cut channels for parents and other interested parties to make their influence felt. It even allows for a certain amount of jockeying for position among the various groups. The case study of Bradford outlined in the previous chapter shows an LEA taking the initiative in planning special educational provision for its Muslim pupils. On the other hand, the state also has some trump cards; it has the financial clout, for example, to impose some decisions (such as the introduction of TVEI) which have been reached with the minimum of consultation. However, teachers can sometimes command a virtual veto over some state policies by refusing to co-operate in their implementation; at the time of writing this seems to be the likely outcome in many schools of the requirement of the 1988 Education Act for a mainly Christian daily act of worship. The Chain of Responsibility Model thus allows both for centralising tendencies and for the inevitable opposition to them.

The second main argument in support of the Chain of Responsibility Model is that there is greater legitimation for the decisions being made since they are made not by autonomous professsionals but by democratically elected representatives (MPs, local councillors, some governors) or by their employees who are directly answerable to them. Bridges (1979, p 161 f) and White (1980, p 27 f) take this point further and argue that decisions about what to teach in school are dependent on conceptions of the good life and the good society, and that teachers cannot claim any special expertise which would justify leaving such decisions in their hands. The Chain of Responsibility Model seems to be capable of taking into account a wider variety of conceptions of the good life and is more amenable to the principles of distributive justice and to the values of our contemporary pluralist society than the Professional Model.

Some of the disadvantages of the Chain of Responsibility Model have already been mentioned earlier in the present chapter: its tendency to encourage bureaucracy and to increase power struggles between groups and the implicit hierarchy of interests which it entails. The argument that greater legitimation is given to the educational decisions according to this model because some of those making the decisions have been elected democratically depends on one's understanding of representation. On one view, representatives are elected to carry out the wishes of the electorate; but in practice there is rarely, if ever, any clear electoral mandate on educational matters from the electorate as a whole. As Becher *et al.* (1981, p 151) point out,

> *It is seldom given to education ministers to be able to quote the backing of electoral authority for what they do, because education rarely - perhaps more rarely than other areas of government - gives rise to any clear mandate for reform.*

On another view, representatives are elected, not to carry out the specific wishes of the electorate, but because they broadly share the same framework of values and can

therefore be trusted on the whole to make decisions that are in the best interests of those they represent. But the particular form that parliamentary democracy takes in this country currently ensures that no-one is elected to parliament who shares the framework of values of the country's one-and-a-half million Muslims. This does not mean that their interests are not represented in the sense of being taken into account in the decision-making process at the national level; but it does mean that the terms of reference by which those interests are expressed and judged are defined by people who do not share their framework of values and who may indeed hold incompatible beliefs and assumptions. The problem is that the agreement of the majority is all that is needed to make the Chain of Responsibility Model workable, but in pluralist context, simple majoritarianism is likely to leave some minority groups dissatisfied and anxious to opt out of the current system. All this is clearly in need of much more detailed examination; the question of the rights of minority groups will be picked up in Chapter Six, and the possibility of the construction of a framework of values which would be acceptable both to the Muslims and the non-Muslim majority in the U.K. will be discussed in Part Three. But one solution to the problem of the apparent oppression of minority groups would appear to be to encourage greater participation in actual decision-making by all the parties affected by the decisions, as allowed for in the Partnership Model.

The arguments in support of the Partnership Model fall into two main sections: those relating to the rights of individuals to protect their own interests, and those relating to the intrinsic value of collective decision-making. The first set of arguments sees the primary aim of the partnership as giving an interested party, either individually or in alliance with others, the opportunity to protect or defend his own interests, values, wishes and points of view against competing claims which are put forward by others. Mill (1972c, p 186 f) justifies democracy in such terms:

> *The rights and interests of every or any person are only secure from being disregarded when the person interested is himself able, and habitually*

> *disposed, to stand up for them ... Human beings are only secure from evil at the hands of others in proportion as they have the power of being, and are, self-protecting.*

Free and fair discussion between the partners would give each the chance to put forward his case and would set in motion negotiations about the best way to accommodate the different interests. The final decision would ideally represent some kind of balance of individual interests, settled amicably if possible by mutual consent after free and open discussion, but settled by a vote if disagreements remain too strong to do otherwise. This argument is clearly based on the fundamental liberal values of justice, equality and rationality. The second set of arguments have been developed recently by Bridges (1979), White (1987) and Haydon (1987), who emphasise the value of the democratic process *per se*, according to which all interested parties have a share in the actual decision-making. Drawing heavily on Mill (1972c), Bridges argues that co-operation in a common cause is a value in itself (1980, p 67) and that participatory democracy enhances the quality of life (1979, p 164) both for the community as a whole and for the individual participants (1978, pp 118-121).

There are a number of practical difficulties with this Partnership Model, however: how to decide whose interests in educational decision-making are legitimate; how to balance the partnership between numerically uneven parties such as parents, teachers, the general public, LEAs and industry; how to justify the extensive demands participation makes on the time, effort and commitment of those involved; how to avoid conflict and divisiveness as groups realise that their chances of gaining concessions increase with the intensity of feeling with which they express their views; and how to ensure that the decisions reached through democratic participation are actually good ones. There is a danger that democratic participation may become more of a power struggle between rival factions than an impartial way of resolving disagreements in a spirit of co-operation. Dunlop (1979, p 48) juxtaposes a different type of co-operation

in which identity with the community is achieved through the sharing of customs, traditions, values and tacit assumptions, and sees this identity with the community as taking the sting out of any disagreements that might arise and enabling a common mind to emerge. Within a homogeneous, mono-cultural society, such a spirit of co-operation is quite compatible with the autonomy associated with the Professional Model. In a multi-cultural society, however, it is only likely to be achieved within separate cultural groups, or else under a system whereby parents are genuinely free to choose schools which share their own fundamental values and beliefs. How far this provides a justification for the establishment of separate Muslim voluntary-aided schools will be considered later in the thesis.

Bonnett (1979, p 166) reminds us that there is a danger in what I have called the Partnership Model of losing sight of the fact that there are objective criteria that provide 'a firm and limiting framework' within which democratic decisions can be made. He points out that 'consistency with the values upon which the idea of democracy rests would seem to demand set limits upon the content' of decisions reached by participatory democracy. If Parliament were to push through a law requiring boys to have two years more compulsory schooling than girls, this would be unjust whatever democratic procedures were involved in passing the legislation. It would be unjust because it did not meet certain criteria of justice, and these criteria of justice are a matter of rational appraisal rather than democratic decision (cf Gutmann, 1980, p 176). A corollary of this (and here I am extending Bonnett's argument) is that a dissenting minority need not consider itself bound by a democratic decision unless that decision satisfies such objective criteria as the demands of justice; otherwise, as Bridges (1980, p 69) concedes, corporate decision-making would be oppressive of individual freedom and smack of totalitarianism. This highlights the need, before democratic decision-making can even start, to endeavour to establish the criteria according to which those decisions can be made, criteria which are consistent with our fundamental shared beliefs and values. Bonnett goes on to suggest that establishing such criteria might resolve most of

the fundamental problems about educational provision, 'such that matters remaining to be resolved are predominantly technical and therefore more appropriately the domain of relevant experts'. If this is so it will be necessary, before any decisions can be made about educational provision for the Muslim community, to establish the criteria (such as the rights of parents and the rights of minority communities) by which those decisions will be made, and to set out the fundamental framework of values (such as freedom, equality and justice) according to which those criteria are established.

All this, however, presupposes the acceptance of a liberal framework of values. Indeed, liberal values are the only thing which the three models of responsive accountability examined in the present chapter have in common. The Professional Model lays particular stress on autonomy, the Chain of Responsibility Model on distributive justice and the Partnership Model on democratic participation. The Swann Committee too has produced a basically liberal report (DES, 1985), basing its recommendations on what it sees as rationally justifiable axioms for a democratic pluralist society. But the values which underlie the educational recommendations of the Swann Report are far from generally accepted by the Muslim community (cf Ashraf, 1986a; Khan-Cheema *et al.*, 1986). The question therefore arises whether liberal values can actually provide a framework within which the question of educational provision for the Muslim community can be resolved to the satisfaction of the Muslims themselves. Part Two thus examines liberal values and the criteria by which liberalism would seek to resolve the problem of educating Muslim children. Chapter Four sketches a framework of liberal values and their educational implications, and Chapters Five and Six explore the rights of Muslim parents and the Muslim community respectively from a liberal perspective.

The arguments of the present chapter have suggested that all forms of responsive accountability work best in situations where such accountability is least likely to be called for, i.e. situations of trust where there is a broad agreement over fundamental

values. Part Three pushes the discussion one stage further back by comparing the fundamental values of liberalism with those of Islam, to see whether there is in fact a sufficient basis of shared values (or if not, whether one **could** be agreed) to enable both world views to work together within a common educational system.

PART TWO

THE RIGHTS OF MUSLIMS : A LIBERAL PERSPECTIVE

CHAPTER FOUR

THE LIBERAL FRAMEWORK OF VALUES

Towards the end of Chapter Three it was argued that the concept of responsive accountability takes for granted a liberal framework of values. The aim of the present chapter is to examine this framework briefly. The chapter has the limited intention of providing a basis for the consideration of the rights of Muslims as parents in Chapter Five and as a minority community in Chapter Six. The aim of Part Two as a whole is to explore whether liberal principles and values can provide a means to resolve the problem of educational provision for Muslims which is acceptable to Muslims themselves. The present chapter also provides a basis for the comparison of liberal and Islamic values in Part Three.

Although it is of course acknowledged that many different versions of liberalism exist, it is not relevant to the purposes of the present thesis to discuss the arguments between these different versions in any detail. On the contrary, my main focus of attention will be the inter-relationships of liberal values, particularly different types of rights. The understanding of liberalism which I shall adopt will be as broad as possible, though it will be necessary to establish the boundaries of liberalism, by contrasting it with non-liberal world views such as totalitarianism. The chapter is written in the belief that liberalism provides the theoretical framework of values that comes closest to the actual political, economic and educational circumstances that prevail in our particular society, and that liberal values are to be found in a wide range of political perspectives from conservatism (in spite of attempts by Scruton, 1984, pp 192 ff, Dworkin, 1978, pp 136 ff, and others to drive a wedge between liberalism and conservatism) to certain forms of socialism (cf Freeden, 1978, pp 25 ff; Siedentop, 1979, p 153). Where it is necessary to concentrate on one typical form of liberalism in

the course of the chapter, I shall focus on the particular strand which can be traced from Kant to contemporary philosophers like Rawls, Dworkin, Hart, Williams, Ackerman, Gutmann and Gaus, and in the area of education to liberal philosophers such as Hirst and Peters (*pace* Enslin, 1985), because this seems to me to be the most influential strand in contemporary liberal thought.

Liberalism is generally considered to have its origin in conflict, but this conflict is variously depicted. Gaus (1983, p 2 f) depicts it as being between individuality and sociability, while others have seen it as a conflict between liberty and equality (Gutmann, 1980, p 8 f), or self-fulfilment and social justice. Ackerman (1980, p 3) fixes the point of origin for liberal values in the conflict between one individual's control over resources and another individual's challenge to that claim. I shall argue in this chapter that there are three fundamental liberal values. The first is respect for the freedom of the individual, and the second is the equal right of all other individuals to similar freedom (cf Hart, 1984, p 77 f). There is a tension that exists between these two values (cf Norman, 1982; Ackerman, 1980, pp 374 ff). In fact, some liberals have argued strongly that the first value is the more fundamental (Hayek, 1980; Berlin, 1969) and others have made out an equal strong case for the second (Dworkin, 1978). However, I want to argue that it is precisely the tension between the first two values which gives rise to the need for the third fundamental liberal value, that of consistent rationality. By this I mean the willingness to articulate logically consistent rational justifications for decisions and actions. It is with these three fundamental liberal values and their inter-relationships that I shall be mainly concerned in the present chapter.

Though they may be understood in a variety of ways (see below), there seems to be fairly widespread agreement among liberals that these **are** the most fundamental values, and that liberal ethical theory is based on them. Thus the principle of respect for persons is grounded on the second and third values, and the principle of personal autonomy on the first and third. The interaction between all three values provides the

basis for the just resolution of conflict. It is when we proceed beyond the three fundamental values that the different versions of liberalism part company. The first parting of the ways comes between those who believe that 'good' is of prior importance and therefore justify actions and decisions in terms of their consequences, and those who believe that 'right' is of prior importance and therefore justify actions and decisions in terms of a set of moral duties. The dominant view in the former category is utilitarianism, which maintains that the justice of institutions may be measured by their capacity to promote the greatest happiness of the greatest number; classical exponents of utilitarianism include Bentham (1948) and Mill (1972a), and it has found a modern upholder in J.C.C. Smart (Smart and Williams, 1973). The latter category has produced a range of different views, depending on how the moral duties are conceived. An initial distinction may be made between intuitionism (which involves the attempt to fit a set of unrelated low-level maxims of conduct together into a consistent whole, and thus may be considered the nearest philosophically respectable approximation to 'common sense'; cf Raphael, 1981, p 44 f; Benditt, 1982, pp 81 ff) and distributive justice (which involves the claim that the plurality of moral duties must be conceived hierarchically). Libertarians such as Hayek, Friedman and Nozick would give priority to the following maxims of distributive justice:

To each according to his merit;

To each according to his work.

Egalitarians such as Rawls, Dworkin and Gutmann, on the other hand, prefer to see distributive justice in terms of:

To each according to his need;

To each according to his worth.

(cf Vlastos, 1984, p 44)

These maxims can be seen, for example, in Rawls' principles of justice:

> ***First Principle.*** *Each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive total system of equal basic liberties compatible with a similar system of liberty for all.*
>
> ***Second Principle.*** *Social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they are both: (a) to the greatest benefit of the least advantaged, consistent with the just savings principle, and (b) attached to offices and positions open to all under the conditions of fair equality of opportunity.*
>
> (1972, p 302)

To pursue the differences between these conceptions of liberalism, however, would take me beyond the very limited brief of the present chapter, and I want now to return to a consideration of the three fundamental liberal values.

The framework of values can be classified initially by considering what is **excluded** by the three fundamental values. The first value, that of respect for the freedom of the individual, clearly excludes a totalitarian emphasis on communal unity to the extent that it endangers individuality. Thus liberalism is broadly incompatible with Marxism (cf Gaus, 1983, p 6). The second value, that of the equal right of all other individuals to similar freedom, excludes the hierarchical ranking of individuals according to which some have a greater claim to freedom than others. Thus liberalism rejects slavery, for example, or Nazi claims to superiority over Jews (cf Ackerman, 1980, p 6). The third value, that of consistent rationality, excludes arbitrariness, inconsistency and the failure to take account of relevant factors (cf Taylor, 1982). It rules out the uncritical acceptance of dogma, whether based on authority or revelation, and equally it refuses to drift into the sort of relativism which insists that cultures for

example, can only be understood from within and on their own terms (cf Hollis and Lukes, 1982).

There is considerable scope, however, for different understandings of the three fundamental liberal values. The freedom of the individual, for example, may involve freedom to satisfy one's desires (as in Benthamite utilitarianism: cf Bentham, 1948) or to realise one's rationally determined interests (as in Kant, 1948), or simply to be oneself by being free from constraint. It may, but need not, involve the construction of a life-plan (cf Rawls, 1972, p 407 ff, Gaus, 1983, p 32 ff). The equal right of all other individuals to similar freedom may be understood in a fairly minimal way by some libertarians, but is usually expanded (especially by modern liberals) into some form of group membership or collectivism, which may be seen in such diverse institutions as the nation state, the trade union or the common school; Gaus (1983) in particular talks of a 'new liberalism' in terms of social life and human potential to co-operate. Finally, consistent rationality may, on a utilitarian view, involve no more than the rational appraisal of utility (i.e. what will promote happiness and reduce happiness), which is taken to provide the basis for the just resolution of conflict. A Kantian view of consistent rationality, on the other hand, is much richer, as it not only provides the basis for the just resolution of conflict, but also is an end in itself (the 'search for truth') and enriches our understanding of the first two liberal values: thus the freedom of the individual is understood in terms of rational autonomy and the will (which itself may provide the basis for certain supererogatory virtues such as generosity and humility), and the equal right of all other individuals to similar freedom provides the basis for an ethical system which includes respect for persons, promise keeping, refraining from deceit, tolerance, openness, fairness and freedom from envy. Even those who argue that liberalism is grounded in agnosticism about moral issues (e.g. P White, 1983) are committed to the principle of consistent rationality, in that they insist on remaining sceptical only because no good reasons have as yet been provided to justify a change of view.

Typically, no one conception of the good life is favoured in liberalism, and a vast range of life-styles, commitments, occupational roles and life-plans are possible within the liberal framework (cf Popper, 1966). Certain forms of human behaviour, however, are ruled out in principle by reference to the three fundamental liberal values; these include prejudice, intolerance, injustice and repression. Other forms of human behaviour are necessary in principle on a liberal view in certain contexts (such as equality of opportunity), though ways of putting them into practice or even conceptualising them may still be hotly debated. In contexts where certain forms of behaviour are considered essential to a liberal perspective, a liberal theory can be developed. The liberal framework of values has produced in particular a political theory, an economic theory and a theory of education.

Liberal political theory supports democracy as the most rational safeguard against tyranny, and clarifies the role of the state and the law (Benn and Peters, 1959; Duncan, 1983). The state is not an end in itself but 'exists to regulate the competition among individuals for their private ends' (Strike, 1982b, p 5). It provides the means of protecting the public interest and ensuring social justice (Miller, 1976). The law exists to maintain order in society, by protecting persons and property (Jenkins, 1980) and to prevent harm (Mill, 1972b; Hart, 1963). Some major debates within liberal political theory include the extent to which democracy should entail representation, which may satisfy the protection of interests, or participation, which may contribute also to human development (cf Pateman, 1970, 1979; Lucas, 1976); the balancing of state power with civil liberties (cf Dworkin, 1977, p 206 ff; Strike, 1982a); and the conflict between the right-wing emphasis on stability, non-interference, free enterprise, initiative and merit, and the left-wing emphasis on egalitarianism and the combatting of social injustice.

Liberal theory accepts the holding of private property as legitimate and supports the notion of the free market economy in which free markets provide the goods and

services which consumers choose to buy, though the state may intervene to regulate the economy if necessary, to ensure free and fair competition and to prevent harm to others. Liberalism does not, however, require a particular stance with regard to any of the following debates: the debate between those like Hayek who continue to support the old liberal principle of *laissez-faire* and more modern liberals who emphasise the need for tighter government control, for example, in monetary policy or welfare distribution; the debate between the supporters of capitalist free enterprise like Friedman (1962) and those who wish to see a significant redistribution of wealth and income, for example, by providing a minimum wage; and the debate between those who emphasise the need for free enterprise and efficiency, and those who argue for an increase in industrial democracy.

A liberal theory of education rules out certain processes such as indoctrination and brainwashing, and rules in the development of the rational self (Hirst, 1974, p 30 ff; Strike, 1982b, p 12) and social competences and the provision of the breadth of knowledge and understanding and the dispositional qualities needed to facilitate the development of personal autonomy (Dearden, 1972; White, 1982). It leaves open to debate the question how far the interests of children should be protected by their parents or the state and how far they can be viewed as rationally autonomous individuals before they achieve adult status (i.e. free to develop their own idea of the good, and free from the constraints of authority). Within limits, it also leaves open the debate between the common school and differentiated schooling.

There can be no liberal theory of religion because no elements of religion are **required** by the three fundamental liberal values. On the contrary, what is required of the liberal state is a degree of **neutrality** on religious matters, together with a respect for individual freedom of conscience. Fishkin (1984, p 154) points out that

> *The state could not enshrine the religious convictions of any particular groups by public commitments and avoid the charge that it was biasing the marketplace of ideas by giving certain metaphysical and religious claims, certain ultimate convictions, the stamp of state authority and legitimacy.*

Religion is seen as a private and voluntary matter for the individual, and it is here that a gulf opens up most clearly between the liberal and the Islamic framework of values, for on an Islamic perspective religion provides a complete way of life which encompasses public domains like politics and education as well as the private domain of personal faith. The question whether Islamic beliefs can be held in a way which does not conflict with fundamental liberal values occupies much of the remainder of the thesis.

Two crucial questions now arise in connection with the freedom of individuals to pursue their own religious interests:

(a) To what extent does this freedom include the right to bring up one's children in one's own religion? This question, which involves liberal concepts of the child and the family as well as the liberal values already mentioned, forms the topic of Chapter Five.

(b) To what extent does a minority religious community have the right to preserve, maintain and transmit its beliefs to the next generation? This question involves liberal concepts of pluralism and minority rights as well as the values already mentioned, and forms the topic of Chapter Six.

Both questions touch on the concept of rights, and it is with a brief sketch of the liberal concept of rights that the present chapter concludes. Rights have been analysed by content, by status, by origin, by context, and by the grounds on which they are justified. They are usually prefixed by some sort of defining adjective: moral, political,

legal, social, natural, human, constitutional, civil, individual, religious, women's, and so on. For the purposes of the present discussion, however, I shall distinguish only two types of rights, which I shall call moral rights and social rights. By moral rights I mean those rights without which the three fundamental liberal values cannot be achieved. Examples of these are the right to life itself, the right not to be enslaved, the right not to be brainwashed. These come closest to the status of absolute rights, though there has always been a debate among liberals as to whether there really are any absolute rights (Gewirth, 1984), for it is not difficult to imagine situations where one set of *prima facie* rights may be in direct conflict with another (McCloskey, 1985, p 133 ff). By social rights I mean those rights which are established by rational debate as the most appropriate means of ensuring the just resolution of conflict and general human well-being. These rights are open to negotiation even among liberals, and may have to be fought for, even though they involve claims based on liberal ethics and the liberal theories of politics, economics and education. They are often defined by law; examples include the right to education, the right to low cost housing, the right to free medical care or to a minimum income. Often these rights are to do with the definition of roles and relationships and the distribution of power (for example, women's rights, parents' rights). Sometimes the rights are little more than a rhetorical expression of desires and needs, or a preference for particular social goals, such as students' rights and animal rights (cf Jenkins, 1980, p 241f). A right is only a claim or a demand unless it is built into the social structure and there is an apparatus for implementing it. As Jenkins points out, rights are not usually invoked except to redress injustice *(ibid.*, p 243). On a liberal view, rational deliberation and/or negotiation is always needed to resolve a situation of conflicting rights.

On this analysis, the right of an individual Muslim to practise his religion is a moral right based on the fundamental liberal value of respect for the freedom of the individual. It has a near-absolute status. The right of Muslims to bring up their children in the faith of Islam, however, is a social right which is much more open to debate.

Liberals may have doubts about the rights of Muslim parents in this case because they see them as potentially in conflict with the rights of the children to be liberated from the constraints of their cultural environment and to grow up into personally autonomous adults. I shall examine this argument much more closely in Chapter Five, together with the Muslim rejoinder that the liberal view fails to take adequate account of the cohesiveness of the family unit and the emotional bonds which will normally provide a stable, secure context within which the children can thrive.

A liberal understanding of rights tends to be in terms of the individual or of society as a whole. It appears to be part of the logic of liberalism to reduce the rights of minorities to individual rights. In Chapter Six I shall examine the right of the Muslim community to use education to preserve its distinctive beliefs and values and transmit these to the next generation. Once again, on a liberal view, this is a social right which has to be weighed against other considerations. From a Muslim perspective, the question is whether too high a price in terms of acceptance of fundamental liberal values is being demanded in return for the conceding of the rights of Muslims to transmit their faith. In Dworkin's famous image of the trump card (1984, p 153 ff), he argues that an individual has a right when there is a reason for assigning some resource, liberty or opportunity to him even though normally decisive considerations of the general interest would militate against that assignment. Fishkin (1983, p 188f), however, reminds us through the story of the monkey's paw that a trump card may sometimes be used to fulfil certain wishes but at too high a price to a general state of well-being. The underlying question with which I am concerned in the remainder of Part Two is whether, if Muslims accept the right to educate their children in accordance with their own beliefs **on liberal terms**, they will find themselves committed to a framework of values which is fundamentally at odds with their own deeply held beliefs.

The present chapter has inevitably been somewhat schematic, but it will have served its purpose if it makes clear as precisely as possible what is meant by

'liberalism' whenever the term is used in the course of the thesis and if it provides an adequate foundation for the discussion of Muslim rights in the next two chapters.

CHAPTER FIVE

A LIBERAL VIEW OF MUSLIM PARENTS' RIGHTS

In Chapter Four I presented a sketch of liberal values and located a liberal approach to education, religion and rights within that sketch. In the present chapter I will narrow the focus of attention to a liberal view of the rights of Muslim parents to bring up their children in their own religion. This will involve an examination of parents' rights and childrens' rights. I shall argue that on a liberal view parents can claim certain paternalistic rights in connection with their children, but that these rights are constrained by considerations of (i) the public interest and (ii) the need to promote the personal autonomy of children. The effect of these constraints is that although parents may be justified in bringing up young children in an environment of religious belief, they are not justified in taking steps to ensure that their children cross the threshold to adulthood as unquestioning religious believers.

In the course of the chapter I shall criticise this liberal view on three main grounds. The first is that it has no clear concept of childhood or of the distinction between childhood and adulthood. This creates difficulties when it comes to justifying the common liberal demand for equal respect between children and adults. Liberals tend to depict adulthood in terms of freedom, autonomy and rationality and childhood in terms of the absence of these, yet refuse to define the transition between childhood and adulthood in terms of some minimum attainment of freedom, autonomy and rationality. The refusal follows inevitably from the fact that such a definition would sit rather uneasily with the second fundamental liberal value - the equal right of all individuals to the same freedoms - because some children would attain the minimum level before others; but in any case autonomy is notoriously difficult to quantify.

The second main criticism of the liberal view is that since liberalism is grounded in the conflict between individuals, it tends to see the family in terms of the conflicting rights and interests of parents and children (cf Ackerman, 1980, p 151-4). This is an inadequate conceptualisation of family relationships however, since the family may produce bonds of loyalty and inspire altruistic feelings which (even though liberals may acknowledge them), do not fit easily into an account of liberal values.

Finally, on a liberal view the family is often seen as a means to an end, for example, as a training ground where children develop communal feelings and social attitudes which they later extend to their broader social milieu (Gaus, 1983, p 96-8). The preferred end on a liberal view is the development of personal autonomy, and the autonomy of the family is suppressed where necessary for the sake of this end. I shall argue later in the thesis that the development of personal autonomy is only one of a variety of goals that parents may legitimately have for their children, and that a strong emphasis on the development of personal autonomy can in fact be counter-productive. If the child's present freedom is constrained in order to make future choice more real, and the parent's present freedom is constrained in order to protect the interests of the child, this would appear to put some strain on the first fundamental liberal value of respect for the freedom of the individual.

I shall now turn directly to the question whether Muslim parents have the right on a liberal view to bring up their children in their own religion. To produce a negative answer to this question, it would have to be established that at least one of the following statements can be justified on a liberal view:

either

(a) that parents have no right in principle to make any **fundamental** decisions about the education or upbringing of their own children;

or

(b) that it would conflict with the public interest for different children to be brought up as unreflective religious believers, and that in this respect considerations of public interest are paramount;

or

(c) that such an upbringing or education would infringe the best interests of the children, and that such an infringement is unjustifiable.

An examination of these three propositions provides the framework for the present chapter.

* * * *

Let us consider the first proposition, that parents have no right in principle to make any **fundamental** decisions about the education or upbringing of their own children. P White (1983) argues that

> *there are no, so to speak, self-standing parental rights. That is, there are no rights possessed by parents qua parents which permit them to direct their children's lives along certain tracks.*
>
> (p 159 f)

She goes on to concede that parents do have two types of rights. (The first is to enable them to carry out their parental responsibilities - though it is not clear precisely what would be licensed by such a right - and the second, held in common with all citizens of a democratic society, allows them to try to interest others, including children, in their own interests). But her claim offends widely held 'commonsense' assumptions about parental rights. Parents have traditionally been considered to have the right to develop

particular talents in their children, to buy superior education, to withdraw their children from RE lessons, to send them to a religious school, and so on. White's view shows liberal educational theory at its furthest from current educational practice, although she does represent her proposals as a basis for practice. In spite of the fact that the view seems counter-intuitive, however, in the sense that it denies parents a freedom that they have traditionally held, it can be seen as a practical way of resolving a problem that liberal philosophers (such as Fishkin, 1983) have been becoming increasingly aware of, that the autonomy of the family sits uneasily with other liberal values, such as the equality of life chances and the principle of personal autonomy. Fishkin sees what he calls a 'trilemma of equal opportunity' in these conflicting values, which can only be resolved by 'systematic intrusions into the family' (1983, p 6).

But what precisely is meant by the autonomy of the family? First, parents (and others) have their own interests which can sometimes only be achieved through the co-operation of other members of their family. There is therefore a need to balance the rights of children against the rights of their parents, and there is no need to assume that the rights of the children will always be paramount. A family consensus may be sought. Secondly, since parents are most affected by what happens to their children, they are surely entitled to the biggest say in crucial decisions affecting their future. The good of the parent is tied up with what happens to the child.

It must not be assumed that family ties necessarily conflict with children's interests. On the contrary, they may help children to learn communal feelings and social attitudes (cf Gaus, 1983, p 93-6). Thus Fishkin (*ibid* p 35-6, 42) claims that the autonomy of the family requires that so long as no-one is severely harmed, intimate consensual relations within a given family governing the development of its children should be immune from external coercive interference (cf Geach, 1983, p 4, 15-16). In this statement, however, both the concept of 'severe harm' and the concept of 'consensual relations' are problematic. Children are vulnerable to oppression, open to

manipulation and exploitation and generally in need of protection. And consensus within the family may suggest no more than that children have been indoctrinated or their affections manipulated and their desires shaped by their parents (cf McLaughlin, 1984; Lukes, 1974). Thus a particular form of upbringing cannot be justified simply by the retrospective approval of the child, but must be justified on more objective grounds, such as whether it satisfies the conditions of equal opportunity and aims at the personal autonomy of the child.

This leads to the question of paternalism and parents' rights. Whatever disagreement there may be about the nature of childhood and the status of the child (see below), it is clear that children are physically, psychologically and morally immature, and that they lack the rational capacity to exercise the responsibilities of citizenship. This is taken to justify paternalism (the right to interfere in the life of another person for his or her own good), although the **extent** to which paternalism should be applied towards children is a matter of much debate (cf Harris, 1982b). Strike (1982a) argues that the present freedom of the child may be infringed to prevent her from harming herself, to develop her rational capacities, to expand her future opportunities, to maximise her future happiness and to prevent her from making immature, uninformed decisions.

The main question is whether the parents or the state should be the primary paternalistic agent in respect of children (cf Henley, 1979, p 255). The teacher may also have some paternalistic authority, though her relations with children are likely to show more of the authority of the expert over the novice (Strike, 1982a, p 134 ff); it has frequently been argued that the teacher is an expert in means rather than an arbiter of ends, though this view may be too simplistic (cf Sockett, 1975, 53 ff). It is clear, however, that the state's general control over the child in the last century has been extended at the expense of the family (Peters, 1959, p 41-44). For example, the requirement that all children go to school may be justified at least partially on

paternalistic grounds (cf Raphael, 1983, p 14) though it is also of great utility to adults (Harris, 1982b, p 45). This requirement has been extended in the last century from a few years' instruction in basic skills to institutionalisation for a substantial part of children's lives (Strike, 1982b, p 89). This extension of state control has been viewed with concern in some quarters (cf Geach and Szwed, 1983, p 1-2), though Hamm (1982, p 75 ff) argues that society at large (i.e. the democratic state) is more competent than an individual parent to fulfil the paternalistic duty of providing an education. Gutmann (1980) suggests that the best paternalistic agency will be the one that can best satisfy the interests of the child and thus leaves open the possibility that it may not be the parent. Friedman (1962, p 85) claims that there are two grounds for governmental involvement in education: when the consequences of education affect the public interest (which will be discussed below), and involvement for paternalistic reasons. But the state cannot take over all the responsibilities of parenthood from parents without becoming a kind of Big Brother; children can only learn what it is to be a person and develop an understanding of private values (cf Strike, 1982b, p 87 ff) from other individuals, not from the state. Thus although the state has a legitimate claim to paternalistic intervention in the public development of the child (i.e. as a future citizen) it must acknowledge that that involves only one element in the upbringing of the child; it therefore delegates (if that is not too strong a word) responsibility for the development of personhood and private values to those who have the strongest sense of duty and commitment to the child, who know the child and its needs most intimately and who are tied most closely to it by bonds of affection. Thus the weight of the argument about who should be the primary paternalistic agent seems to favour the parent (or someone acting *in loco parentis*).

This relationship between child, parent and state can perhaps be expressed most clearly in terms of a hypothetical social contract made between the parents and the state at the birth of a child. The biological parents are appointed trustees of the child; the trusteeship demands that they make decisions in the best interests of the child and that

those decisions are not against the public interest; in return, they are allowed to determine the course of their family life without undue interference from the state, except in so far as such interference may be required to prepare the children for citizenship. The state remains the final arbiter when the terms of the trusteeship are abused by natural parents, and thus has the right to find substitute parents or to take over the trusteeship itself if the natural parents are clearly either not acting in the interests of the child, as in the case of child abuse, or acting in conflict with the public interest, for example, by allowing the child to commit crimes. The need for such interference may be much less, however, when there is an extended family (as typically occurs in the Middle East) than in the Western nuclear family. State involvement in the upbringing of children otherwise is limited to situations where the state has an interest in what happens, such as the increase of industrial performance, the development of social competencies, and the preparation of children for democratic citizenship. On this view, the state can only insist, for example, that all children learn a modern language in school if it can be demonstrated that this is in the public interest; otherwise the decision is the parents', and they must decide whether it is in the interests of their own particular child to learn a modern language. In the same way, parents are free to send their children to the school of their choice unless it can be shown that it is against either their children's interests or the public interest for them to do so. Thus parents are not barred in principle from making fundamental decisions about the education or upbringing of their own children, unless those decisions conflict with either their children's own interests or the public interest.

This same conclusion can be reached by a shorter route suggested by McLaughlin (1984). If it is accepted that there is more than one path to the goals of a liberal education (as Ackerman, 1980, argues), then so long as parents agree to confine their decisions to a liberal framework of values and to avoid decisions that conflict with their children's interests or the public interest, there can be no grounds for denying parents the right to make fundamental decisions about the upbringing of their children.

Whether or not it could be enforced in practice, such a denial could only be justified if parents did not keep their part of the bargain. To deny them the right in advance would amount to unjustifiable state constraint or interference in the legitimate freedom of the individual.

Therefore the statement that parents have no rights **in principle** to make fundamental decisions about the education or upbringing of their children cannot be justified. We must now turn to questions of public interest and the interests of the child.

* * * *

In this section I want to consider whether it would necessarily conflict with the public interest for children to be brought up in the religion of their parents. There are three conditions under which an action may be considered to conflict with the public interest in a democracy:

(i) if it promotes purely sectional interest at the expense of the society as a whole;

(ii) if it fails to weigh all relevant interests fairly and impartially and with due respect to the fundamental liberal values of justice, equality and freedom;

(iii) if it fails to take account of the interests of people generally as members of the public. By 'interests' I mean what is beneficial to them (cf P White, 1973, p 220) and what increases their opportunities to get what they want (cf Barry, 1967, p 115).

The general public has a twofold interest in education, the first positive and the other negative. The positive dimension involves the development in children of

competencies which will help to create a stable and democratic society. Friedman (1962, p 86) says that such a society is 'impossible without a minimum degree of literacy and knowledge on the part of most citizens and without widespread acceptance of some common set of values'. Since all citizens share the same laws, the same political rights, and the same economic system, it is important that they should be able to 'interact harmoniously and communicate intelligibly' and 'function properly in a just society' (Strike, 1982a, p 159). It is in the public interest that individuals should become good citizens or become economically productive, and where there is such a public interest, education becomes a 'legitimate object of public concern' (*ibid*). This is the justification for compulsory education, public financing of schooling and for public regulation of private education. The negative dimension involves the protection of the public interest from harm. For example, if parents sought to bring up their children in a way that was seen to 'fuel intolerance and undermine social co-operation' (Coons and Sugarman, 1978, p 91), the state has a right to overrule the parents to prevent the public interest from being harmed.

If religious upbringing necessarily either prevented children's preparation for citizenship or damaged the public interest (by fuelling intolerance, for example), then the state would be justified in principle in forbidding it. It is easy to think of hypothetical examples of religious upbringing where such an eventuality might occur. All I am concerned to establish now is that it does not **necessarily** occur in all cases of religious upbringing. If being a liberal citizen is not incompatible with holding religious belief (as liberals commonly point out), then training a child for liberal citizenship (liberal education) cannot be incompatible in principle with bringing that child up in a given religion; all we can say is that it **may** be incompatible in practice if the religious upbringing conflicts with the public interest or with the child's interests. I shall argue later that the religious upbringing of some children may actually be **in** the public interest. So what justification do the many contemporary liberal educationalists who oppose the religious upbringing of children offer for their views? The justification

appears to be based on the protection of the public interest from potential rather than actual danger. However, interfering with the liberty of individuals to protect the public interest from potential danger is generally considered totalitarian. There may be a few borderline cases where such legislation is justifiable (e.g. seat belts and crash helmets) but only in cases where private interests (avoiding unnecessary risks to life and limb) and public interests (avoiding unnecessary medical expense) clearly coincide, and where the public benefit (saving of public funds) is not potential but real and quantifiable. These conditions do not hold in the attempt to deny parents the right to bring up their children in their own religious beliefs.

There is no way of claiming that education should or can be provided entirely on the basis of the public interest. Although schools are publicly financed and administered, they invariably provide instruction in excess of what is required by the public interest; Strike suggests that in providing this additional education schools are acting on behalf of the parents (in their role as paternalist agents), not the state:

> *It is inappropriate for the state to use the fact that it supports or administers schools that serve the public interest in order to extend its authority over the private components of education.*
>
> (1982a, p 160-1)

The argument is that education involves the transmission of both public and private values (religion belonging to the latter category); if the state tries to promote private values, this would have to be done from a neutral standpoint as far as the good of pupils was concerned; but 'public schools cannot be effective in allowing individuals to develop their own view of the good while remaining neutral concerning the good' (Strike, 1982b, p 13). I shall discuss the distinction between private and public values later in the chapter (and more fully in Chapter Nine), but it is clearly a hopeless task to search for a common framework of private values within society at large. However, in

view of the justification of parental paternalism given above, it is enough that the private values promoted within any given school should be ones approved by the individual parents or trustees concerned. The implications of this argument will be explored in more detail later in the thesis; it has already been developed further than needed to establish the point at issue here, that if it is accepted that education involves the transmission of both public and private values, then it cannot be argued that a religious upbringing necessarily conflicts with the public interest.

Finally, if the public interest requires that all relevant interests should be weighed fairly and impartially and that sectional interests should not be promoted at the expense of society as a whole (Benn and Peters, 1959, p 271-3), then it may be in the public interest for the children of religious believers to be brought up in their parents' faith. The alternative - that all children irrespective of parents' beliefs should be given a religiously neutral, secular education - might give an unfair advantage to those whose parents have brought them up in a secular humanist tradition and might discriminate unjustly against the children of believers whose emotional and social stability might be put under greater strain as they find themselves pulled in two directions at once. It would be hard to justify such discrimination in terms of the public interest; whether it could be justified in terms of the interests of the child must now be explored.

* * * *

Before we can ask whether bringing children up in the religion of their parents would infringe the best interests of those children, we must consider in what sense the children have interests. There is no clear liberal perspective on this as there is no clear liberal perspective on childhood, though Kleinig (1982, p 197 ff) attempts some clarification of the problems. There are a number of debates within liberalism relating to children and their rights and interests. The first concerns the extent to which children can be considered free. P White (1983, p 139-41) insists on talking of the autonomy

(not potential autonomy) of the child, while J S Mill excludes children along with barbarians, slaves and the delirious from his principles of liberty (1972b, ch 1), saying that they cannot be the best judges of their own interests. The second debate is between those who hold that each individual child has his own unique nature and requires freedom to find or create the life that best suits his nature, and those who hold that all children are born the same but achieve individuality by the differential organisation of this common endowment; on the latter view, children's individuality is initially constructed for them and later developed by themselves (cf Gaus, 1983, p 33 f). The third debate is the one between paternalism and children's rights. Assumptions about the justifiability of parental paternalism are questioned by child liberationists such as Holt (1975), who have argued that children should have the right to decide for themselves matters which affect them most directly. Partly as a result of the influence of the liberationists the dividing line between childhood and adulthood is gradually being eroded (cf Harris, 1982b; Postman, 1983). The recent emphasis on children's rights (Wald 1979; Houlgate, 1980; Wringe, 1981) has led to family relationships being increasingly discussed in terms of the conflicting rights and interests of parents and children (Ackerman, 1980, pp 151-4). This is because, as pointed out in Chapter Four, rights are not usually invoked except to redress injustice, and the injustice suffered by children is usually at the hands of those who make decisions on their behalf (i.e. the parents). Since children have no power to support their own rights, the state intervenes on their behalf when it sees fit. State paternalism is typically seen in the child-saving movement (Freeman, 1983, p 29-35; Goldstein *et al*, 1973, 1979, 1986), with its emphasis on the protection of children from inadequate care. However, the debate comes a full circle with Goodman's claim (1971) that talk of children's 'rights' obscures their more fundamental needs for love and security. The unhappy situation of children, he says,

> *is not something to cope with polemically or to understand in terms of 'freedom', 'democracy', 'rights' and 'power', like bringing lawyers into a*

family quarrel. It has to be solved by wise traditions in organic communities with considerable stability, with equity instead of law and compassion more than either.

A middle-of-the-road liberal view considers children to be persons, objects of respect, and ends in themselves, but sees them as autonomous, rational, moral agents only in the sense of belonging to the class of beings who share those characteristics: their capacity in this respect is 'unactualised potential' (Strike, 1982a, p 126). However, they are not 'adults in miniature' (Goldstein *et al*, 1973, p 13), and their growth to autonomous, rational moral agency is not in a straight line. Their immaturity may show itself in an inability to judge the consequences of their acts, to apply appropriate standards when judging action or to apply self-control - and also in irrational appraisals of situations and in changing psychological states, including distorted emotional responses, inability to postpone gratification and changing developmental needs. It is the fact that they are objects of respect and that they are potential autonomous rational moral agents that justifies us in talking of the interests of the child. It is the fact that children are immature and only potentially rational and autonomous that makes them dependent on adults for the early years of their life. It is this combination of interests and dependence that provides the justification for paternalism.

The interests of children are, of course, not necessarily paramount in decision-making which affects them. In matters in which the public interest is involved (for example, the financing of education), the interests of an individual child must be weighed against those of other children and other interested parties such as the state and the broader society. Within the family, the child's interests are weighed against those of other members of the family. But in those situations where the parent is acting paternalistically (i.e. as trustee of the child's interests), she is bound to seek the best interests of the child. There may be some situations in which a parent finds herself

wearing three hats simultaneously in a context of family decision-making: representative of her own interests, trustee of the interests of her child, and objective arbiter of these perhaps conflicting interests. On a liberal view, this is a major problem, resolvable only by the appointment of an eagle-eyed state as referee ready to blow the whistle on the slightest suspicion of a foul. The problem may recede, however, if we acknowledge the existence of values which are supernumerary to the liberal framework described in Chapter Four; for in a wider moral context of love, care and concern (cf Kleinig, 1982, p 207), parents may, for example, make sacrifices for their children and seek a better future for them than they had themselves. I shall argue later in the thesis that a liberalism which failed to take account of such possibilities would provide an impoverished view of society.

If we concede, however, that children have rights as potentially autonomous agents, and that parents, at least when they are wearing their trustee hat, are bound to take into account the interests of the child, there is still a difficulty in establishing where, exactly, the interests of the child lie. Coons and Sugarman (1978, ch 3) have shown that there is no general consensus about the best interests of the child. Bridges (1984, p 56-7) extends their argument by suggesting that the liberal attempt to establish criteria by which the pursuit of autonomy, and thus the neutral presentation of alternative conceptions of the good life to children, can be objectively justified, may be seen as just one more challengeable version of what is good for children. If liberals claim that those who oppose their views are simply wrong, their opponents (religious fundamentalists or Marxists, for example) will claim the same about the liberal view and will present alternative justifications for their own. Bridges (*ibid*, p 57) concludes,

> *We are faced then with a conflict of world view which cannot be resolved except within a framework of premises which constitute one such world view and therefore cannot (unless perhaps by a convenient coincidence of opinions) resolve conflicts between such views.*

In Part Three and particularly in Chapter Nine, I shall explore whether there is any way of avoiding such strident defence of entrenched positions, whether there are values which Muslims and liberals actually share, and whether there is any possibility of real dialogue about education between those who hold a liberal perspective and those who hold an Islamic. But the present chapter and the next are concerned with exploring whether the educational demands of religious fundamentalists such as the Muslims can be met to their own satisfaction within a liberal world view.

Many liberals would wish to argue with Coons and Sugarman's claim about the indeterminacy of children's interests, and would wish to claim that at least one thing, the development of personal and moral autonomy, is in the general interest of all children (Crittenden, 1978; McLaughlin, 1984). Of course, it is not sufficient to argue that children are potentially autonomous and that we have a duty to help them to achieve their potential, for they may be potentially racist or murderous; the decision to help them to achieve the particular potential of personal and moral autonomy requires a prior judgement about the value of this potential. This prior judgement may be based on the claim that children have a right to certain 'primary goods', among which would be an education designed to give them a knowledge of competing conceptions of the good life and to develop their capacity to choose freely and rationally between them (cf Bridges, 1984, p 56; Gutmann, 1980). According to Rawls, paternalistic decisions, as far as these are justified,

> *are to be guided by the individual's own settled preferences and interests in so far as they are not irrational, or failing a knowledge of these (as in the case of children), by the theory of primary goods. As we know less and less about a person, we act for him as we would act for ourselves from the standpoint of the original position.*
>
> (1972, pp 209, 248-50)

A primary good is something rational people want whatever else they want - rights and liberties, opportunities and powers, income and wealth and self-respect (*ibid*, pp 62, 92). This list of primary goods may thus be taken to provide the general criteria 'according to which we can judge the interest of persons under paternalism' (Strike, 1982b, p 135). This list also provides for many liberals the general criteria according to which a common curriculum can be built. Rights, liberties and self-respect all point in the direction of personal and moral autonomy: if one is to help children to be free to do something, they must be helped to develop the power and the means to do it. White (1973) and others have argued that people can make an informed choice between alternative activities and ways of life only if they have been introduced to the range of possibilities. A child can become a responsible citizen in a democratic society only by means of a basic general education of sufficient breadth and openness. Similarly, certain fundamental skills and knowledge are necessary if individuals are to prosper economically in our society (cf Crittenden, 1982, p 7).

Liberalism can thus produce a framework of both public and personal values which can elucidate the interests of the child and thereby provide a basis for educational decision-making. The public values involve preparation for citizenship in a democratic society; the child is to come to understand, and develop a commitment to, those values in the broader society which can justifiably be claimed as universally appropriate. The personal values involve the development of personal and moral autonomy, based on rationality combined with the child's right to freedom and self-respect: the child needs to become aware of the diversity of beliefs and lifestyles that exist in the world and to develop the capacity to make rational, informed choices between alternatives.

The main question now is whether this is an adequate characterisation of education, whether all that is important in the educational process can be characterised within this framework of public and personal values. I shall argue that at least on an Islamic perspective, the framework is incomplete, and that education involves a third set

of values which I shall call community values. These values are not (completely) open to rational analysis, but are linked to the 'private' values mentioned earlier in the chapter. They tend to be shared by groups of individuals such as families or the adherents of a particular religion. They are learnt - more often perhaps picked up rather than directly taught - by the younger members of the group from the older. This category of values includes most religions and some moral beliefs. I shall discuss the concept of community values much more fully in Chapter Nine, but for now two examples will help to clarify what I mean by the term.

First, P White (1983, p 142) argues that parents should have the duty of the primary education of the child because 'as a matter of fact most people seem to like having children and bringing them up' and

> *they enjoy family life and a great source of their sense of leading a worthwhile life comes from bringing up their children, teaching them all kinds of things, playing with them and so on.*

These seem hopelessly inadequate grounds for leaving the primary education of children to their parents; one would not leave children to the mercy of a child-molester or pervert simply because he enjoyed having children or playing with them. An adequate characterisation would have to include reference to the fact that parents generally have a greater commitment to the well-being of their own children than anyone else. Yet such a commitment (which I would call a community value) is inexplicable in terms of the liberal framework of values set out in Chapter Four. To put it another way, the random assignation of newborn babies to families at birth (cf Fishkin, 1983, p 57) would equalise life chances and be quite justifiable from the point of view of Rawls' original position. Our revulsion at the idea, whether it is natural or socially constructed, can only be explained in terms of community values. A second example can be seen in a situation in which one only has time to rescue from a blazing

house either one's aged mother or a medical professor at the height of his career. Utilitarianism would insist on rescuing the latter, egalitarianism would insist that both had an equal right to be saved and therefore favour random choice. Only community values would provide grounds in terms of ties of affection and loyalty that might justify what would otherwise merely be an instinctive reaction, to rescue one's aged mother.

Liberalism of course cannot totally ignore the fact that community values form part of the interest of the child, nor does it seek to. The question is simply how much weight should be given to community values in education, compared to public and personal values. I shall distinguish three answers to this, the first two being compatible with liberalism, the third not.

First, community values may be conceived merely as a means to achieving the liberal ends of public and personal values. This appears to be Pat White's position, but would also take in arguments about children needing a stable base to avoid disorientation, and about involvement in a tradition providing the best grounding from which autonomy might develop (cf McLaughlin, 1984).

Secondly, community values may indeed be considered values in their own right, without which the life of individuals would be impoverished. Nevertheless, they are secondary to the public and pesonal values which liberalism proclaims, such as autonomy, and cannot be promoted in schools at the expense of the latter. This appears to be McLaughlin's position: parents may 'introduce their children to a substantive set of practices, beliefs and values' so long as they do not lose sight of the goal of their children's eventual autonomy (1984, p 78-9).

Thirdly, community values may be considered of prior importance, so that other values can only be understood within the parameters that they legitimise. Religious values are paradigmatic here: a religion typically provides a comprehensive viewpoint

from which perspective on other areas of life is gained (Strike, 1982b, p 88). The autonomy of the subject or discipline can no longer be guaranteed on this third approach if there is a clash with fundamental religious values. The meaning of personal and moral autonomy may also have to be reassessed to ensure that it does not provide a means for undermining fundamental community values (cf Halstead, 1986, ch 4). This third approach would not necessitate any rejection of public values, however: indeed religious believers may become model citizens, both in the sense of participation and in the sense of being law-abiding. From a religious point of view, there may be as much value in creating an ethos in which community values might be picked up as in the direct transmission of these values. Any such structured approach to the transmission of community values would be in contrast to contemporary state schools where such community values as are learned tend to be picked up from peers in age whose culture, according to Strike (1982b), is characterised by ignorance, lack of insight, shallowness of experience and rejection of adult sources of insight and experience; contemporary state schools thus 'seem ideal institutions for a society that wishes to commit cultural suicide' (p89). A much fuller examination of community values and of their relationship to rationality and education will be provided in Chapter Nine.

However, it is hoped that enough has been said in this present chapter for an answer to be given to the question whether bringing children up in the religion of their parents would infringe the best interests of those children. On a liberal view, a religious upbringing along the lines of the first and second approaches outlined above would be acceptable, whereas one along the lines of the third would not. The centrality of autonomy to the liberal view denies the right of 'any power holder to inculcate an uncritical acceptance of any conception of the good life' (Ackerman, 1980, p 163). In so far as Islam is a fundamentalist religion which values the acceptance of a particular conception of the good more highly than autonomy or critical openness, we can say that on a liberal view Muslim parents do not have the right to bring up their children in their own religion.

Part Three will examine whether this is in fact an accurate characterisation of the Muslim position, and if it is, what the consequences are for dialogue between Muslims and liberals and for the education of Muslim children in a predominantly non-Muslim society. Finally, in Chapter Ten, I shall consider whether, even if Muslims do not have the moral **right**, on a liberal view, to seek to bring up their children as unreflective believers, they may nevertheless be **allowed** to do it, since the coercion needed to prevent a religious upbringing may be even more offensive to fundamental liberal principles. But first I want to look at the question whether on a liberal view the Muslim community has a right to seek to preserve, maintain and transmit its beliefs and values intact in a non-Muslim society. This forms the topic of Chapter Six.

CHAPTER SIX

A LIBERAL VIEW OF MUSLIM COMMUNITY RIGHTS

The last chapter was concerned with a liberal view of the rights of Muslims as parents to bring up their children in their own religion. The present chapter is concerned with a liberal view of the rights of Muslims as members of a distinct religious group to educate the children born into that group in a way that is in keeping with, and helps to preserve, its own distinctive beliefs and values. Both parents and religious communities are 'social groups', but there is a significant difference between them. Perhaps this difference can be best illustrated by reference to a series of questions (for several of which I am indebted to Lustgarten, 1983, p 98-100):

-Should local authorities provide facilities for single-sex swimming in public swimming pools and baths in response to Muslim requests?

-Should employees be allowed time off from work to perform the daily prayers or to attend mosque on Friday mornings in accordance with the requirements of the Muslim faith?

-Should the physical mutilation of infants (such as the Muslim practice of circumcision) be permitted for religious reasons?

-Should separate slaughter-houses be provided for Muslims so that *halal* meat may be produced locally for the Muslim community?

-Should the minarets on the new mosques now being built in British cities be allowed to broadcast the call to prayer five times daily in accordance with Muslim tradition?

-Should Muslim personal law be applicable to Muslims in the U.K.?

-Should Muslims be granted a voice in Parliament by allowing them representation in proportion to the size of the Muslim community in the U.K.?

-Should the Muslim community be allowed to set up its own voluntary-aided schools in the U.K. along the lines of those already run by the Roman Catholic, Anglican and Jewish communities?

These questions have much in common. They all involve the question of the freedom of Muslims to act in accordance with their religious convictions and the established way of life of their community, and they all involve the question of the relationship between minority groups and the broader society, and what assistance the Muslim community can expect from the broader society as it strives to preserve its own beliefs and values and perpetuate its own existence. But the first four questions (Group A) can be distinguished from the last four (Group B). Justice requires that if the rights under demand in the first four questions are to be conceded at all, they should be conceded to Muslims as a group (and to anyone else with a similar interest in the right). But once the right has been conceded, the choice whether to exercise the right or not lies with the individual (though, of course, in practice the individual may be under pressure from the group to conform). The right claim in the former case can therefore be justified from the point of view of the state on the grounds of the fair treatment of individuals and the freedom of individuals to reject certain current social practices on conscientious grounds and to choose instead to act in accordance with their own beliefs. The rights under demand in the last four questions, on the other hand, cannot be justified in

individualistic terms, because they cannot coherently be exercised by individuals, since they affect the whole group willy-nilly. If permission is granted, for example, for the call to prayer to be made from a minaret, it will be heard in all the streets in the locality, whether or not each individual resident wishes to hear it.

This is exactly the distinction between the right of Muslim parents to bring up their children in their own religion and the right of the Muslim community to preserve its beliefs and values by transmitting these to the next generation through a system of education. In the former case Muslim parents are seeking the right to make an individual choice to bring their children up in the faith (or to delegate this task to approved teachers); the fact that this is expressed in terms of individual freedom of choice makes this a goal that liberals could be expected to have much sympathy with. The main hesitation that liberals would have in allowing this right, as was seen in Chapter Five, is that other human beings are involved in the decision as well as the parents - and the rights of those other persons (the children) must be protected as well. In the latter case, however, the Muslims are making a rights claim which can only be taken advantage of as a group. Liberals would have less sympathy with such a claim because of fears that the group might be oppressive of individual freedom. They would also be worried about the possible fragmentation of society and would wish to ensure that the group was not setting itself up as a rival to the state.

Both liberalism and contemporary democratic practice are invariably more sympathetic to group rights of the former category than to those of the latter. It is no coincidence that the first four in the sample list of rights claimed by Muslims are coming to be allowed in some parts of the U.K. while the last four are consistently rejected. Of course, the right to circumcise males has historically been recognised much longer than the others - probably mainly because of non-liberal considerations such as long-standing biblical prejudice, the wide extent of the practice, arguments based on hygiene and the impossibility of enforcing legislation outlawing the practice. Otherwise, of the

four Group A-type rights, it is perhaps the one that liberals would accept most reluctantly (and female circumcision even more so), as it appears to be an assault on the privacy of the individual. A liberal case in support of male circumcision would presumably be developed in terms of personal identity. The other Group A rights may perhaps be conceded by liberals on the basis of the second-best principle (cf Ackerman, 1980; Crittenden, 1982, p 45 ff); if Muslims are not prepared to participate fully in the life of the broader society, it may be better to grant them certain rights which will encourage partial participation than to see them withdraw into complete isolationism. The Group B rights, on the other hand, have more fundamental difficulties inherent in them from a liberal point of view, especially the application of Muslim personal law. Their rejection is not unexpected, for contemporary social legislation reflects an ideology of liberal individualism, and tends to be sympathetic towards any rights claims that can be understood in terms of individuals and wary of any which belong only to groups. For an explanation of this bias towards the individual, we need to look again at the framework of liberal values.

Crittenden points out that

> *In classical liberal theory there was no commitment to intermediate groups as essential constituents of a corporate society. The fundamental units are individuals and the state. The former make up an aggregate whose collective will is expressed by the state.*
>
> (1982, p 13)

This explains the liberal tendency to talk of 'community' (i.e. the aggregate whose collective will is expressed by the state) rather than 'communities' (i.e. the intermediate groups). In so far as they are acknowledged, the intermediate groups are seen as formed in accordance with the will of individual participants. Their purpose is seen wholly in instrumental terms: to protect and advance the interests of individuals (for

example, trade unions). On this account, individuals co-operate only for the sake of pursuing their private goals, and as Rawls points out, 'each person assesses social arrangements solely as a means to his private aims' (1972, p 521).

Contemporary liberalism, on the other hand, has come to place more value on groups and has moved away from the idea that 'individuality and sociability are 'opposites' in tension' (Gaus, 1983, p 108). This has come about for a variety of reasons. First, groups have been recognised as an important contributor to an individual's identity and self-concept (cf Sandel, 1982, p 150; Swann Report, 1985, p 3). Secondly, human beings need social contact, tend to value common institutions and activities, and do in fact have shared final ends (Rawls, 1972, pp 441, 522). Rawls goes further (*ibid*, p 523) and argues that only through co-operation can humanity realise its potential, as individuals participate in the sum of the realised natural assets of the others (a point neatly illustrated by my reference to his work here). Rawls calls this process 'social union' and argues that a well-ordered society will contain countless social unions of many different kinds; he sees the state as 'a social union of social unions' (*ibid*, p 527). Thus we arrive at the idea of pluralism.

The notion of pluralism fits well with contemporary liberalism in the sense that it follows naturally from the acceptance of freedom of thought and expression, freedom of conscience and religion and freedom of peaceful assembly as human rights. Pluralism is seen as a way of preserving freedom from oppression by a powerful central government or by crude majoritarianism. Pluralism involves the encouragement of diversity as good for the health of democracy, indeed, as the very essence of democracy. Such diversity, however, as we shall see, can only be celebrated (on a liberal view) under certain conditions: one obvious example, provided by Marcuse (1965, p 90), is that indiscriminate tolerance may become a license for intolerance by facilitating the existence of groups that deny fundamental liberal values such as freedom, justice and equality. Freedom therefore can be granted to groups, on a liberal

view, only if the groups satisfy certain conditions (cf Jenkins, 1980, pp 241, 263). These conditions include respect for individual freedom (including freedom of action, freedom of conscience, freedom to leave the group); recognition that other groups have the right to enjoy the same freedoms and privileges that it enjoys for itself within the wider society; and respect for the interests of the wider society (which presupposes a commitment to certain social and moral values, such as justice and an acceptance of the rule of law). Any discussion of pluralism therefore involves the interplay between the freedom of the individual, the freedom of the group and the interests of the broader society; but even on a contemporary liberal view, it is the freedom of the group which most frequently has to give way in the face of constraints from the other two.

The aim of the present chapter is to elucidate further the conditions which a group must satisfy on a liberal view, and to consider a Muslim response to these criteria of acceptability. The main question is whether the Muslim community in the U.K. would be prepared to submit to those conditions in exchange for being granted the right to preserve its own beliefs and values by transmitting these to the next generation through public education, or whether these conditions are fundamentally in conflict with the Muslim faith. In this case, the acceptance of the conditions would be incompatible with the preservation intact of the faith.

The present chapter will be divided into four sections: first, an examination of the nature of pluralism, the rights of groups and the role of the state vis-a-vis groups; secondly, the conditions under which, on a liberal view, pluralism is justifiable; thirdly, an examination of the Swann Report's response to the issue of the rights of the Muslim community, as an example of a scheme of educational policy based on a liberal view of pluralism; and finally, a Muslim response to the views expressed in the Swann Report, pointing to fundamental disagreements over values.

* * * *

It is clear that whether by birth, choice or chance all human beings are members of a variety of different groups, and that these groups have shared characteristics which distinguish them from other groups (cf Swann Report, 1985, p 3). Thus a person may be a teenager, a Northerner, a homosexual, a woman, black, a greengrocer, an Oxonian, middle class, an anorexic, a householder, a snooker-player, a Mensan, a Buddhist, married, a vegetarian, a Conservative, a criminal, and may (just conceivably) be all of these at the same time. Only some of these groups, however, are universally considered educationally significant (for example, those based on age), though a case may also be made out for the educational significance of sex, of district, of race, of religion, of intelligence, of criminality, of medical condition, of artistic interests, of (future) occupation or even of social class. Further, only some of these groups gain sufficient cohesiveness from their common characteristic to be considered a **community**; for example, there is no community of householders or of married people. The concept of 'community' is a complex one, as will become clear in the course of the present chapter, but for now I shall consider a community to be a group distinguished by a common location, a common interest or a common physical attribute (cf Chatterjee, 1983). Membership of an ethnic group on these terms involves belonging to a community. An ethnic group can be characterised by shared physical attributes (such as skin colour) and by a shared cultural way of life; in this sense it is possible to talk of a West Indian community. Membership of a world religion also involves belonging to a community; for although the group may be multi-racial and multi-cultural (cf Ashraf, 1986a), it is bound together by a common set of beliefs and values and a common way of life.

These distinctions are important when we come to consider contemporary pluralism in the U.K., for there are many ways in which a society may be pluralist. The Swann Report associates pluralism with multi-racialism (DES, 1985, pp 5,8). Other writers (including Crittenden, 1982) have stressed **cultural** pluralism, that is, the acceptance within a society of differences in the beliefs, values, traditions and

practices to which members of that society have a commitment. **Political** pluralism is about the relations between different communities within a state and the degree of authority exercised over them by the state. **Religious** pluralism occurs when a number of groups with differing religious beliefs exist side by side in a (supposedly) secular state. Nonetheless, these different forms of pluralism 'share important theoretical ground and are closely related in practice' (Crittenden, 1982, p 15). This tendency of different forms of pluralism to overlap is seen in comments by Bullivant (1984, p 71) and Martin (1976) on structural pluralism. Structural pluralism, they argue, may be required to guarantee the continuation of cultural pluralism, but structural pluralism has institutional, socio-political implications. It is thus possible to discuss pluralism in general terms (as the Swann Report does), although it is sometimes necessary to specify exactly what type of pluralism is under discussion.

Various attempts have been made by social and political theorists to justify the placing of greater stress on the group than liberalism allows, but, as we shall see, none of these attempts is directly related to the dominant form of pluralism in British society - the presence alongside the indigenous majority of ethnic minority groups with diverse and sometimes opposed cultural values and ways of life. Nicholls (1974, 1975) has distinguished three types of social and political pluralism which stress the importance of the group. For the sake of simplicity I shall call these the English model, the American model and the colonial model. Each model is concerned to explain the type of unity which exists, or which ought to exist, within given states, and with the relationship between unity and diversity within a state.

The English Model of pluralism is based on the work of a group of English political thinkers in the early years of the present century, particularly J N Figgis, F W Maitland, the early Harold Laski and G D H Cole. Their ideas can be traced back to Aristotle's arguments against Plato's conviction that the state should be a 'totally unified entity' (Barker, 1962, pp 40, 51). Aristotle saw the state as an aggregation of

communities of different kinds. Their ideas can also be seen in the structure of medieval society, where cities, universities, guilds and monasteries enjoyed a high degree of independence from centralised authority. Crittenden points out that most of the ideas of the English pluralists had already been set out some three hundred years earlier by Althusius (1557-1638) in his 'Politics', although his work was not immediately influential. In particular he claimed that 'the existence of many types of association within the society encourages a rich and envigorating diversity' (Crittenden, 1982, p 12). Perhaps the more recent ancestry of the English pluralists should also take in Hegel (cf Singer, 1983).

The English pluralists were primarily opposed to what I earlier called the 'classical liberal theory', i.e. the belief that the only significant entities were the individual and the state. Groups, they maintained, had an existence which did not derive from the state but which equally could not be understood fully in terms of the lives of their individual members. They saw these groups - whether cultural, religious, economic, civic or other - as voluntary associations which the individual could freely join or withdraw from. The assumption was that most people would belong to a number of different groups, with cross-cutting membership; thus people of different races might belong to the same trade unions, and people of differing religious persuasions might share the same leisure interests. The pluralists argued that such groups are part of the healthy existence of a state, and that without them liberty was unlikely to be meaningful. The three basic principles of English pluralism thus are:

(i) that liberty is the most important political value, and that it is best preserved by power being dispersed among many groups in the state;

(ii) that groups should be regarded as persons (i.e. having a separate legal existence);

(iii) that ideas of state sovereignty should be rejected (Nicholls, 1974, p 5).

According to Figgis, the state is best seen as a *communitas communitatum*, a term which had earlier been used by T H Green (Nicholls, 1975, p 77) and which, as we have already seen, was later picked up by Rawls. But Figgis goes further and suggests that 'men are members of the state only through their membership of societies like the church, the trade union or the family' (Nicholls, 1975, p 79). The authority of the state to regulate and control group activities was not denied, but the pluralists insisted that the state had a corresponding duty to protect the freedom of individuals to 'pursue substantive goals through groups' (Nicholls, 1974, p 3), and to respect the **internal** development and functioning of the group (Figgis, 1913, pp 121-4). Finally, they believed that the state was not infallible, and that there might be times when groups are justified in resisting the state (Nicholls, 1974, p 14).

Turning to the American Model of pluralism, we find that the work of Bentley, Truman, Dahl and other theorists appears to be mainly concerned to explain and justify the political system actually in operation in the United States. Political decisions are reached by competing groups attempting to influence the policy of government at different levels in the interests of their own members, for example, by expensive electioneering or by civil rights campaigns (Nicholls, 1974). The state is seen as 'a regulator and adjustor among them; defining the limits of their actions, preventing and settling conflicts' (Dewey, 1920, p 203), though sometimes the state may get 'caught up into active participation' in the struggle between groups (Nicholls, 1974, p 2). Even more than in the English model, the state is considered as made up of a cross-cutting web of politically significant groups. Thus Kornhauser (1960) denies that medieval states were pluralist, because groups such as the monasteries and colleges had little or no cross-cutting membership with other groups. American critics of pluralism (such as Wolff, 1968, and Marcuse, 1968) do not oppose pluralism as an ideal, but deny that in practice the U.S. political system, though depicted as pluralist, actually works in the

best interests of the whole population or protects the rights of all groups impartially. Indeed, Marcuse sees the 'harmonising pluralism' of the United States as a manifestation of a new totalitarianism (*ibid*, p 61).

The Colonial Model of Pluralism is less clear cut. Although Nicholls talks of the 'theorists of the plural society' (1974, p 3), this term is misleading because the social anthropologists and sociologists who make up this group (e.g. J S Furnivall, J H Boeke, M G Smith and L Despres) are more concerned to describe a pluralist situation than justify it. Indeed, when they move beyond description, it seems to be in the direction of suggesting ways in which countries can 'depluralise'. Moreover, they are not concerned with what are thought of as pluralist societies in the contemporary West (industrial societies with disadvantaged ethnic minority groups) but mainly with colonial or post-colonial territories such as Burma or the Dutch East Indies, which contain different racial or ethnic groups.

On this model, group affiliations do not form a cross-cutting network or web, but reinforce one another so that the state is made up of different segments, separated from each other by social, cultural, religious and racial factors. Consequently, the members of the groups live almost all their lives within their own group, meeting members of other groups only 'in the market place'. The whole state is kept together by two factors: by a common economic system, and by force. This type of group affiliation is generally considered most likely to manifest intense and violent conflicts (cf Dahrendorf, 1959).

None of the three models directly captures the nature of the pluralism which (in the words of Lustgarten, 1983, p 98) 'has become the dominant characteristic of twentieth century states: ethnic pluralism within the framework of a united polity'. And none of the three models can provide an answer to what has become one of the most pressing contemporary issues (to use Lustgarten's words again): 'how, within

the overarching political unity, are conflicts engendered by the co-existence of diverse, and at times opposed, cultural values and ways of life to be resolved?' On the other hand, all of the models help to shed light on the difficulties faced as a result of the existence of sizable ethnic minorities in the U.K. (as in other states). Where ethnic identity is paralleled by corresponding patterns of dwelling, occupation, language, religion, dress and recreation, the group is set apart from outsiders as having a distinctive cultural identity and way of life. Crittenden (1982, p 31) presents a fuller picture of this 'insular pluralism'. Such segmentalisation of society along ethnic divisions has much in common with the Colonial Model, except that we do not expect a democratic society to use force to hold the state together, unless in exceptional circumstances, as the use of force in such a context would offend fundamental democratic values. But what options other than force are open to a liberal state? The American Model is unlikely to provide the solution if Wolff's criticism of it is valid; he claims (1968, p 149, 152) that the American system of pluralism favours well established groups which subscribe to uniform cultural patterns. The new ethnic minorities often lack the power, skill and resources to urge their cause against entrenched interests; and if the government attempts to redress the balance by positive discrimination and compensatory programmes, these may be resented by the ethnic majority, and in any case the justification of such actions is open to question. As Van den Berghe (1967) points out, social pluralism in the United States in practice depends on a considerable degree of cultural uniformity - and it is precisely such uniformity which is lacking in the ghettos of the ethnic minorities. Indeed, the most serious problem for the liberal state is that many of the ethnic minorities do not belong to a cross-cutting network of groups which would facilitate interaction with members of other ethnic communities. It is widely held (for example, by Nicholls, 1974, p 49; Dahrendorf, 1959, p 215) that the likelihood of political and social instability and conflict increases when there is a segmented society, and that it diminishes in the cross-cutting pluralism of the English or American Models. But the English Model is also not without its problems for contemporary pluralism: for it is hard to imagine a

contemporary state being prepared to allow minority groups total freedom with regard to their internal development and functioning. The state would inevitably seek to protect itself from the twin dangers of anarchy if the group refused to accept the state's authority, and of the suppression of individual rights within the group (Selznick, 1969, p 38).

Is it possible in the present situation of ethnic pluralism in the U.K. to take on board the advantages of the English Model while avoiding its dangers? Nicholls (1974, p 61) draws attention to the difficulties. In his analysis, originally homogeneous states have virtually disappeared in the aftermath of imperialism and in attempts at modernisation. These states have moved towards one of three possibilities: segmentation (with its risk of instability and conflict); the 'mass society', where group loyalties are minimal and individuals are isolated and impotent (which Nicholls sees as potentially totalitarian); or cross-cutting pluralism. But if there is no tradition of the last of these among the ethnic minority groups, what steps could the state take to achieve this ? One possibility is for the government of a country to adopt a policy of rehomogenisation, aiming at national integration through an extension of state-controlled institutions; these might include new welfare programmes, anti-racist policies, inner city redevelopment and particularly a common education for all - aiming at greater homogeneity and greater interdependence in the next generation. Another, more radical, possibility is to create a society in which everyone participates fully in the decisions. But both these solutions may be perceived by minority groups as constituting a threat to their existence or way of life by undermining their traditional identity (cf Taylor, 1984, p 194). The resulting alienation makes it harder to achieve the 'basic consensus, to bring everyone to the general will' which is necessary for participatory democracy. The participation of everybody in a decision is only possible if there is an adequate basis of common agreement, or an underlying shared goal. Otherwise democratic participation becomes merely a cover for majoritarianism, demanding excessive concessions from groups that lack the power to press their case.

Whether any such ground of agreement exists in the case of the Muslim community in the U.K. forms the subject of Part Three of the present thesis.

The problem cannot be ignored, however, for the evidence suggests that the changes in the social fabric of modern states resulting from the arrival of immigrants and their families from other cultures are permanent and irreversible. A basis for policy has to be found, if decisions are not to be made on purely pragmatic considerations. The framework of liberal values outlined in Chapter Four provides one such basis. The next two sections of the present chapter attempt to outline, first, how liberalism would seek to resolve the problem of maintaining the unity of the state without threatening the existence of ethnic, cultural and religious minorities, and secondly, what specific educational consequences would result from such a liberal approach to pluralism. The chapter concludes with a Muslim appraisal of such an approach.

* * * *

Liberalism does not prescribe one clear-cut approach to pluralism. An approach has to be worked out which takes into consideration the various fundamental liberal values, and it is not surprising that different liberals, giving different weight to the various values, come to a range of different conclusions. Thus we find one liberal taking a comparatively hard line with the ethnic minorities. He somewhat reluctantly supports the toleration of communities whose culture does not support autonomy, so long as they are 'viable communities', but he hopes for their gradual transformation, while at the same time claiming that if the life they offer their young is too impoverished and unrewarding, compulsory assimilation (by force if necessary) may be 'the only humane course' (Raz, 1986, p 423-4). On the other hand, we find another liberal arguing that ethnic minorities should be permitted 'unrestricted freedom to follow their own customs and religious practices, be governed by their personal law and receive education in their language and cultural tradition'. This freedom would be subject to

just two limitations: any practice leading to severe physical abuse would be disallowed, and impracticable institutional accommodations to minority beliefs and values would not be required (Lustgarten, 1983, p 101 f). The former of these views adopts an approach of negative freedom (reluctant non-interference) whereas the latter involves positive freedom, particularly in the sphere of education where the transmission of the cultural values of the minority community would be provided out of public resources.

In this present section I want to explore a liberal view of pluralism which adopts a middle path between these two extremes. In particular I am concerned to establish what criteria must be met on a moderate liberal view, if minorities are to be allowed the freedom to preserve their distinctive beliefs and values by transmitting them through the public system of education to the next generation. The view of pluralism presented here is broadly in line with that presented by Crittenden (1982). I shall use the three fundamental liberal values outlined in Chapter Four as the main framework of analysis.

A commitment to the first fundamental liberal value of respect for the freedom of the individual places certain restrictions on the freedom of the group to control its own internal development and functioning, and in particular rules out an oppressive relationship between the group and its individual members. It is frequently pointed out that the group can potentially be as tyrannous towards the individual as the state can (Selznick, 1969, p 38; Kerr, 1955, p 14), particularly if the state's right to interfere with groups to protect the interests of their members is rejected (as it is by most of the English pluralists). Three conditions are required by the liberal position. First, the individual should be not only formally free to leave the group but actually free to do so, that is, free from economic, social or other pressures which make it impossible for him or her to do so. Secondly, the legitimate exercise of authority within a group should be subject to the ultimate supremacy of the individual conscience. However, as Nicholls (1975, p 97) points out, this need not mean that the individual conscience becomes the ultimate authority in religion, for example, but that the conscience is the faculty for

discriminating between authorities and thus avoiding blind obedience. Thirdly, the individual's actual freedom and range of choice must not be foreclosed by the activities, beliefs, values and lifestyles of the particular group into which he is born. Clearly, in practice, some groups will merely pay lip service to these requirements, while others may completely disavow even the rhetoric. However, it is up to a liberal state to decide whether or not to tolerate groups which infringe the requirements; in some case toleration may be more acceptable than repression.

A more difficult problem arises for the liberal state if the group's way of life or system of belief is cramping the potential of individuals within the group, without their apparently being aware of it. Has the state the right to interfere with the internal activities of the group under such conditions? It is here that the parting of the ways comes for liberals and the English pluralists. The latter believe that it is no more justifiable for the state to interfere with groups than with individuals for their own good; liberals on the other hand give priority to the freedom of the individual over the freedom of the (intermediate) group, and therefore may under certain conditions condone interference in the group in order to protect the individual. If the group's right to exist and remain free of intervention is based on liberty, then this has important consequences for the exercise of authority and power over individual group members (cf Lukes, 1974); if the group fails to respect the freedom and rights of its members, then it is undermining the basis on which its own existence is justified.

A commitment to the second fundamental liberal value, the equal right of all other individuals to similar freedom, together with its consequences for social life in the broader community, establishes several preconditions for pluralism. Each group must recognise the right of other groups and individuals to enjoy the same freedoms and privileges that it enjoys for itself within the wider society. This presupposes a minimum set of common values and standards of behaviour within the wider society: first, a basic social morality without which any form of social life would not be possible

(in particular, a respect for justice and a recognition that other groups have as much right as one's own to avoid physical pain and death among their members); secondly, a commitment to values presupposed by the pluralist ideal (in particular, the toleration of groups with different ideals to one's own and the rejection of violence as a means of persuasion); thirdly, acceptance of a common system of law and government by all groups within the broader society (though the systems need not be the same for all 'broader societies'), and a commitment to seek to change these only through democratic means.

So far so good. But this minimum framework of common values is in no sense a complete scheme of social morality. It is in seeking to move beyond this minimal range of preconditions for pluralism that once again liberals part company with the English pluralists. Liberals seek to enlarge the minimum framework to include a more substantial range of values within the public area of common morality, leaving the rest (e.g. religious beliefs) to the personal sphere of life. The pluralists, on the other hand, would not wish to expand the common framework beyond the minimum set out above, but would recognise an area of substantive moral values which was the rightful domain of the group; this domain would encroach on both the area of public values and the area of personal values on a liberal view. I shall discuss this domain, which I call community values, more fully in Chapter Nine. Pluralists see the purpose of the minimum framework as providing 'an orderly context in which separate groups can live out their own virtually autonomous lives' (Crittenden, 1982); liberals would consider such an attitude as divisive, destroying the essential unity and coherent structure of the state. Ways in which liberals would seek to enlarge the minimum framework of values include, for example, expanding the requirement of tolerance of other groups to one of welcoming and celebrating diversity, and more generally include seeking to promote the common good and the public interest (i.e. the interest of the broader society). Current debate about negotiating a framework of shared values (Haydon, 1987; White, 1981) is an instance of this liberal approach. It is easy to see how the liberal approach lends

support to belief in a common system of education. Pluralists, on the other hand, are wary of anything labelled the 'public interest' or the 'common good'. They see them as a disguise for the imposition of majority values on unwilling minorities. They are dubious about the possibility of creating any set of common values beyond the purely political framework necessary for the maintenance of order (Nicholls, 1974, p 46, 62). In so far as they see any 'common good' worth considering, they see it as structural rather than substantive in nature (Nicholls, 1975, p 9-10).

Crittenden (1982) presents the liberal response to this and a justification for seeking to expand the framework of common values. If a pluralist society is a society, there must be interaction between its constituent groups. Political and economic systems cannot exist in isolation from cultural factors (language is an example), and if the former characterise the society as a whole, then the latter cannot be left totally to the society's constituent groups. It is impossible for a political order to function 'without making at least some assumptions about the ingredients of a worthwhile human life' (p 30). The liberal vision of pluralism involves 'a delicate balance ... between the development of a distinctive common culture and the protection of diverse cultural practices' (p 35). It rejects a policy of assimilating all groups to the culture of the dominant group. However, it 'need only tolerate, and is not required to encourage', a sense of ethnic identity among minority groups (p 35). It requires all groups to participate 'in an evolving core of common culture' (p 35). It anticipates that sections of the population will increasingly 'identify with the common culture and its largely secular moral values rather than with particular cultural sub-groups' and that traditional ethnic, religious or class-based groups will correspondingly decline (p 37). Crittenden is aware of a tension between his depiction of diversity as desirable and the homogenising tendencies of the type of pluralism he supports (p 38), but nonetheless he believes that 'open pluralism' with its high degree of interaction between groups is the only form of pluralism compatible with liberalism (p 36).

A commitment to the third fundamental liberal value, consistent rationality, is required as a means for the just resolution of conflict between groups, as a way of satisfying the requirement for a non-violent means of persuasion, and indeed as a way of facilitating any kind of dialogue between groups. The very intelligibility of the concept of liberal pluralism expounded so far depends on a commitment to rationality. There could be no basis for the search for an expanded framework of common values if there were no public criteria of rationality against which beliefs and values could be assessed. To the liberal, the value of rationality is self-evident; 'it cannot be seriously douted' says Crittenden (1982, p 42), 'that the practice of critical, reflective rationality is preferable to any that relies largely on the unquestioning acceptance of received beliefs and the pronouncements of established authority'.

In the liberal pluralist society, critical rationality provides the common mode of thought and the means for debate about the shape of its common life. What critical rationality requires of members of the pluralist societ is an active willingness to review all beliefs and values in the light of the evidence of experience and to reject or modify them where the evidence becomes strongly weighted against them. What critical rationality does not require, as Crittenden (p 45 ff) is at pains to point out, is for individuals to be constantly calling everything into question, or to refuse to acknowledge the possibility of areas of experience that surpass rational understanding, or to deny the importance of feeling in human experience, or to assume that there must always be a single best answer to complex moral problems. In view of this last point, a liberal pluralist society is bound to 'tolerate any moral system or way of life that is rationally defensible'. Indeed, since persuasion by force is ruled out, it is likely that a liberal pluralist society will tolerate ways of life that are not rationally defensible so long as these are not in conflict with fundamental liberal values such as justice and freedom, because if members of groups committed to such ways of life cannot be persuaded by rational means to give them up, it may be the lesser of two evils merely to tolerate them rather than attempting to remove them by force. On the other hand, groups to whose

way of life critical rationality is central are bound to find liberal pluralism more congenial than groups based on 'commitment to a "sacred" order of authority that dominates every aspect of human life'. To use Crittenden's words once again, 'the price the latter must pay for general toleration in a pluralist society is the acceptance of a public order at odds with its fundamental ideals' (p 50).

A commitment to liberal pluralism thus has profound consequences for education. In particular it rules out the uncritical presentation of any concept of the good or of any understanding of the world and human life. Children of all groups need to be taught to question their assumptions, to grapple with conflicting world views, to engage in rational debate, and to value diversity of tastes, interests and non-fundamental values. In this sense, the needs of children do not vary according to the commitments of their parents, and thus education can become a common enterprise for the children of all groups and communities in a pluralist society. We can now therefore turn to the Swann Report which applies the above principles of liberal pluralism to the educational problems arising as a result of the presence of ethnic and religious minority communities in the U.K., and which develops from these principles a scheme of educational policy which it entitles 'Education for All'.

* * * *

The Swann Report (DES, 1985) had among its terms of reference to 'review in relation to schools the educational needs and attainments of children from ethnic minority groups ... ' (p vii). It starts by attempting to reflect upon the relationship between the ethnic majority community and ethnic minority communities in the context of the kind of society for which in its view the educational system should seek to prepare all youngsters. The view that emerges is very much in line with the concept of liberal pluralism outlined in the previous section of this chapter:

The ethnic community in a truly pluralist society cannot expect to remain untouched and unchanged by the presence of ethnic minority groups - indeed the concept of pluralism implies seeing the very diversity of such a society, in terms for example of the range of religious experience and the variety of languages and language forms, as an enrichment of the experience of all those within it. Similarly, however, the ethnic minority communities cannot in practice preserve all elements of their cultures and lifestyles unchanged and in their entirety - indeed if they were to wish to do so it would in many cases by impossible for them to take on the shared values of the wider pluralist society. In order to retain their identities when faced with the pervasive influences of the lifestyle of the majority community, ethnic minority groups must nevertheless be free within the democratic framework to maintain those elements which they themselves consider to be the most essential to their sense of ethnic identity - whether these take the form of adherence to a particular religious faith or the maintenance of their own language for use within the home and their ethnic community - without fear of prejudice or persecution by other groups. It is important to emphasise here free choice for individuals, so that all may move and develop as they wish within the structure of the pluralist society. We would thus regard a democratic pluralist society as seeking to achieve a balance between, on the one hand, the maintenance and active support of the essential elements of the cultures and lifestyles of all the ethnic groups within it, and, on the other, the acceptance by all groups of a set of shared values distinctive of society as a whole. This then is our view of a genuinely pluralist society, as both socially cohesive and culturally diverse.

(pp 5-6)

This passage appears to suggest that in a pluralist society there should be freedom for the members of minority groups to maintain their distinctive cultures and lifestyles,

since assimilation unjustly seeks to deny the fundamental freedom of individuals to differ in areas 'where no single way can justifiably be presented as universally appropriate' (p 4); but this freedom is subject to two major constraints: first, priority must be given to taking on 'the shared values of the wider pluralist society', for without these there would be the danger that society would fragment along ethnic lines, and this would 'seriously threaten the stability and cohesion of society as a whole' (p 7); and secondly, the group's authority and control over the individual is constrained by the requirement of 'free choice for individuals'. These constraints suggest that in spite of the claim in the last two sentences of the passage, the goal of social cohesion is taken more seriously than that of cultural diversity. Indeed, the tentative vision of society at the end of the Report's first chapter confirms this impression:

> *We are perhaps looking for the 'assimilation' of all groups within a redefined concept of what it means to live in British society today.*
>
> (p 8)

These two constraints on the freedom of the group are very much in evidence in the Report's educational recommendations. Stress is placed on the role of education in laying the foundations of, and helping to shape, a 'genuinely pluralist society' (p 316). Three goals are mentioned for education: first, educating all children to an understanding of the shared values of our society; secondly, helping children to appreciate the diversity of lifestyles and backgrounds which make up our society; and thirdly, meeting the individual educational needs of all pupils (pp 316-7). The first of these aims is based on the first constraint mentioned earlier, the avoidance of social fragmentation. The second aim again seeks to avoid fragmentation by encouraging the celebration of diversity, while at the same time opening the door to genuine individual choice between alternative ways of life. The third aim raises the question of how the 'individual educational needs' of the pupils are to be assessed, and by whom. The Report appears to suggest that the danger which Harris (1982a, p 227) draws attention

to, that any selection is bound to reflect the cultural values of the selector (he writes of '**our** judgements as to the worth of elements of **their** culture'), is to be avoided by assessing such needs according to rational, educational criteria. The third aim therefore inevitably involves the right of all children to decide for themselves their future way of life. There seems to be an unresolved tension in the Swann Report between its claim that education should at least partly be concerned to enable and assist ethnic minorities 'to maintain what they regard as the essential elements of their cultural identities' (p 465-6) and its approval of a statement by Banks to the effect that if schools were to reinforce the values and beliefs that students bring with them from home, such an approach would be too 'culturally encapsulating' (p 322). Presumably it is the need for education to promote the shared values of the broader society and to respect the rights of the individual pupil which leads the report to conclude that

> *the role of education cannot be and cannot be expected to be to reinforce the values, beliefs and cultural identity which each child brings to the school.*
>
> (p 321)

Schools do not have a responsibility for cultural **preservation**, for culture is anyway something fluid and dynamic (p 323).

Exactly the same approach is adopted when the focus of concern is narrowed down to religious education in Chapter Eight of the Report. The starting point is that education should aim to

> *broaden the horizons of all pupils to a greater understanding and appreciation of the diversity of value systems and lifestyles which are now present in our society while also* ***enabling and assisting ethnic minorities to maintain what they regard as the essential elements of their cultural identities*** *(my emphasis). It is clear from*

the evidence we have received that for many ethnic minority communities, especially those from the various faiths within the Asian community, respect and recognition for their religious beliefs is seen as one of the, and, in some cases, the central factor in maintaining their community's strength and cohesiveness.

(p 465-6)

It becomes clear as we read on, however, that the first goal mentioned here is to take priority in religious education as elsewhere: a phenomenological approach to religious education is considered the most suitable way of developing pupils' understanding and appreciating the diversity of beliefs and life-stances which exist. The second goal of education, that of enabling and assisting ethnic communities to maintain what they regard as the essential elements of their cultural identities (p 466), is reduced to a few superficial pastoral concessions, mainly on food, clothing and physical education (p 343) and the retention of single-sex schools. Religious **education** should focus on the nature of religious belief generally, we are told, and on the religious dimension of human experience; the maintenance of specific religious beliefs, even if they are '**the** central factor in maintaining (a particular community's) strength and cohesiveness' (p 466) has nothing to do with **education.** This is **instruction**, and can only be provided by the individual faith communities (p 496-7).

The call for separate voluntary-aided schools for ethnic minority communities is opposed by the Report on similar grounds. Such schools would be pulling in the opposite direction from the Report's underlying principle of 'Education for All'; they might make it more difficult for their pupils to take on the shared values of the pluralist society (including the appreciation of diversity), and they might restrict the freedom of children to decide for themselves their own future way of life.

The Swann Report provides a long and detailed discussion of a great many issues involving ethnic minorities in England and has already become the subject itself of many articles and commentaries (NAME, 1985; CRE, 1985; Islamic Academy, 1985; Khan-Cheema *et al*, 1986). I have here merely isolated one strand of thought running through the Report, a strand that is particularly relevant to the claim of the Muslim community to the right to educate its children in a way that is in keeping with, and helps to preserve, its own distinctive beliefs and values. Rather than developing the ideas in the Report itself in more detail, I shall now turn to a Muslim response to the Report, starting with some detailed criticisms and moving on to what appears to be a serious clash of fundamental values.

* * * *

The Muslim response to the Swann Report (DES, 1985), with which the present chapter concludes, will include a discussion of the way the Report categorises groups and communities, and of the relationship between religion and culture and a sketch of Muslims' fundamental disagreements with the Report over shared values and the aims of education.

First, many Muslims resent being called an 'ethnic community' (Ashraf, 1986a, p v; Khan-Cheema *et al*, 1986, pp i,4; Islamic Academy, 1985, p 3); even if the majority of the Muslims in this country do as a matter of fact have a common racial and cultural background, as the Swann Report points out (1985, p 503, footnote), it is not primarily their common ethnicity but their religion that binds them together into a community. Therefore to talk about 'the moves by certain ethnic minority communities, motivated primarily by religious concerns, to establish their own "separate" schools' (*ibid*, p 498) is misleading. The moves, in the case of the Muslims at least, are by a religious community which happens to be drawn largely (but certainly not exclusively) from a particular ethnic minority. Two main problems arise from implying that

Muslims are an 'ethnic community'. The first is that we are never quite sure whether what is said about ethnic communities is meant to apply to the Muslims or not. When we read of the 'growing concern of many Asian parents ... at their children losing touch with their cultural heritages through the absence of any form of 'support' for their home languages and the risk of their children's ethnic identity being 'submerged' by the influence of English' (*ibid*, p 202), this sounds as if it is meant to refer to Muslims, as they form the largest section of 'Asian parents'. However, such concern, although it may be felt by some individual Muslim parents, is not fundamental to Islamic belief. Ashraf (1986a, p vi) makes this clear as he presents his vision of the future:

> *In two or three generations a group of Muslims will emerge who will be British in their use of English, in some of their customs and conventions, even in their love of English literature, but they will be Muslim ... in positive absolute values.*

This leads to the second main problem with calling the Muslims an 'ethnic community', that the situation is being defined in terms that the Muslims would not themselves use and that consequently their own perspective on the problems being faced by the Muslim community is constantly lost sight of or distorted. For example, the maintenance of minority languages, which may be expected to be of primary concern to an ethnic minority group, is likely to be of very secondary importance to a group whose primary concern is the preservation of religious beliefs and values. 'Ethnic community' implies quite a different set of values from 'religious community'.

Even worse, however, is the constantly recurring use of the phrase 'the Asian community' (*ibid*, pp 202, 466, 500, 501). There is no such community, and the various groups included under this heading are in fact diverse in religious beliefs and values, in cultural matters such as food and dress and in social behaviour and lifestyle; the only factor they have in common is racial origin. The 'Asian community' is thus

identified solely on the basis of racial characteristics, and to identify a community on those grounds is to encourage the very prejudice that the Report is committed to rooting out. There is a frequent failure in the Report to distinguish between Muslim and non-Muslim 'Asians', and this means that what appears to be internal disagreement within the Muslim community often turns out to be disagreement within the so-called 'Asian community'. For example, one does not know if the criticisms of separate Muslim schools made by the President of the National Association of Asian Youth (Swann Report, p 510) are being made by a Muslim or not; one suspects not. Much more seriously, the continued use of the term 'Asian community' implies that Asian Muslims have more in common with other Asians than they do with indigenous Christians. This is not so (for the Qur'an acknowledges the close relationship between Islam, Judaism and Christianity), and to imply otherwise is to create a gulf where one did not exist before. It may indeed turn out to be the most serious mistake in the Swann Report - and I shall return to this topic in Chapter Ten - that instead of emphasising points of agreement and common values between Muslims and those sections of the indigenous population that are religious believers, it chooses to emphasise the racial and ethnic separateness of the Muslim community and then to look for ways of resolving the resulting problems that are hardly compatible with a Muslim world view. Thus we find the Swann Report recommending on the basis of educational arguments and in the name of pluralism that the law requiring a daily act of collective worship in schools should be re-examined with a view to amending or repealing it. But, as I shall show in Chapter Eight, Muslims do not accept the educational arguments, and it is ironical that the arguments advanced by the Swann Report in the name of pluralism have more in common with the views of the National Secular Society (cf letters to The Guardian, 9th July 1986, 22nd July 1986) than they do with either the Muslims (cf Islamic Academy, 1985, p 7) or with large numbers of British citizens of West Indian origin. What Muslims are seeking for their children is a school atmosphere where religious beliefs and values can be respected and nourished; compared to this, all the other preoccupations of the liberal pluralist society which the Swann Report supports, such

as anti-racist strategies and the preservation of minority community languages and cultural traditions, are of very secondary importance in Muslim eyes. Many Muslims would be less resistant to the idea of the common school if they did not see the traditional religious values which have for centuries underpinned education in this country being so rapidly undermined.

It may be argued that I am making too much of the constant references to Muslims in the Swann Report in terms of 'ethnic minorities' and the 'Asian community', and that these terms are only used as a neutral and intentionally vague way of defining certain groups - the vagueness masking what would otherwise become a fierce dispute over religious, cultural, national, racial and ethnic boundaries. My point is that even these vague terms contain a value judgement - the decision not to treat religious categorisations as the most fundamental ones in our society - and that the effect is to relegate religious beliefs and commitment to a low status, at the same level as other cultural differences. Religion is considered as one among several possible forms of cultural identity (Swann Report, 1985, p 466); cultural identity is seen as one of the elements in ethnic identity (p 3); ethnic groups are one of a number of groups of which individuals are normally members (p 3); and all these groups, as we saw in the previous section, are allowed on a liberal pluralist perspective to influence individual development only subject to certain conditions, viz. that individual freedom of choice is respected (p 323) and that priority is given to the 'shared values of the broader pluralist society' (p 5). On a Muslim view, on the other hand 'the stability and cohesion of society as a whole' (p 7) is not a primary value; society itself holds value only in so far as it satisfies certain prior conditions. On the political level, the concept of the Islamic state takes priority over any man-made political institutions or divisions, and on the personal level, religious identity takes priority over nationality or ethnicity or culture or any other framework of categorisation. This will be discussed more fully in Chapter Seven below. Muslim acceptance of the ideal liberal pluralist society which the Swann Report commends and of the particular educational policies which it proposes

depends entirely on the degree of compatibility between those proposals and the Islamic world view. This therefore becomes the topic of Part Three of the present thesis. But first there are some more fundamental problems with the Swann Report from a Muslim point of view which must be sketched out.

From what has been said so far, it is clear that many Muslims would wish to distinguish religion from the other elements of culture, at least as the latter term is conceived in sociological circles (i.e., including all the customs, patterns of behaviour, institutions and lifestyles of a society), which is the sense in which the Swann Report generally uses the term. I have pointed out elsewhere (Halstead, 1986, p 9) that the sociological sense of culture does not imply any essential difference between devotion to one's ferrets, devotion to one's regiment or devotion to one's God and does not therefore provide us with essentially different means for evaluating such diverse devotions. But the distinction between 'culture' and 'religion' is clear from an Islamic point of view. Culture, within which Muslims would include dress, occupation, leisure activities, types of residence and lifestyles, is seen, as in the Swann Report, as something fluid and constantly subject to change, and in this sense the Muslims have been described as a multi-cultural community (Ashraf, 1986a, p v). If this is what is meant by culture, then Muslims would certainly agree that seeking to preserve a culture may be 'self-defeating since all cultures are dynamic and are continually changing and being changed' (Swann Report, 1985, p 323) and that an education which sought merely to reinforce existing cultural values would be 'far too limiting and culturally encapsulating' (p 322). But a religion which is based on revelation must have a fixedness which is quite alien to 'culture'. This is not to deny that a religion needs the capacity to take on board modern scientific discoveries and new moral problems which they sometimes raise; but they must be taken on board in a way which is compatible with the essential truths of the religion. The religion itself is not negotiable. This is why the Muslims will part company with the Swann Report when it insists on treating religion as one of a possible range of cultural options open to the individual child. It is

a misrepresentation of the Muslim position to write of their desire 'to give their children the opportunity to learn **about** (my emphasis) the religious traditions of their own faith communities in a positive and accurate manner' (p 501). This is the language of social anthropology rather than religion, and reduces religion to the status of an optional extra for the individual rather than the basis for the unity, indeed the very existence, of the community of which, by birth and upbringing, Muslim children are becoming a part.

The concept of 'shared values' is central to the Swann Report, but it is not always clear how the concept is to be understood. Certainly it is not to be equated with traditional British values. Sometimes, when the Report discusses 'the common ... values which we all share' (p 7), it seems to refer to an HCF of values, that is, to a set of values which is shared as a matter of empirical fact by all the major cultural groups that make up contemporary British society. Such a view, as I have pointed out elsewhere (Halstead, 1986, pp 7, 17) would be quite acceptable to Muslims and other minority groups in the UK. At other times, however, for example when it discusses the need for the minority groups to '**take on** the shared values of the wider pluralist society' (p 5, my emphasis), the Report appears no longer to have in mind an HCF of values but to be pointing, as White (1987, p 17) suggests, in the direction of what our shared values **should** be, even if they are not in practice shared by all the groups in our society. References to what can 'justifiably be presented as universally appropriate' (p 4) suggest that the Swann Report accepts that there are criteria of rationality which 'shared values' must satisfy if their acceptance as universal principles is to be justified. The view of the task of education which emerges from this is a fundamentally liberal one. First, education should encourage a commitment to the framework of shared values and an understanding of the rational principles on which they are based. Secondly, education should provide children with objective information about, and insight into, a wide range of non-shared cultural values; encourage them to respond sympathetically to, and indeed to value, diversity in this area; and leave them to determine their own individual identities and develop into autonomous individuals.

Many Muslims may be much less happy with this second account of 'shared values', since it is based on liberal assumptions which they do not necessarily share, yet their freedom to opt out of the educational system to which it gives rise would be very limited. Particularly problematic from an Islamic point of view is the notion that there are criteria of rationality by which all values can be judged. While such criteria may be accepted as appropriate for judging **cultural** values on an Islamic view, they are not appropriate for **religious** beliefs and values that are based on divine revelation, for the human intellect cannot set itself above what they believe to be revealed truth (cf Khan-Cheema *et al*, 1986, p 5). Muslims' acceptance of a divine order of authority that affects every area of their lives places significant limits on their ability to accept the liberal understanding of shared values and education. First, although Muslims can clearly value **cultural** diversity, their commitments (as the protests against Salman Rushdie show) may prevent them from **celebrating**, as opposed to tolerating, a diversity which includes groups totally antipathetic to their own beliefs and values. Secondly, there will be limitations on the degree of personal autonomy which children will be encouraged to develop; this will be discussed more fully in Chapter Eight. Thirdly, Muslims will be very wary of proposals to negotiate a framework of commonly accepted values (White, 1987; Haydon, 1987), because there are many values which they consider to be non-negotiable, because they are afraid that alien, secular values will be agreed by the non-Muslim majority and because the process of negotiation itself presupposes certain values which Muslims do not necessarily accept. Above all, Muslims fear a further decline in religiously based values, which White himself (1987, p 22) anticipates will be an outcome of his proposals; the proposal to phase out worship from the maintained school, which has already been mentioned, illustrates this secularising tendency (cf Halstead and Khan-Cheema, 1987).

Put thus baldly, the Muslim reaction to the Swann Report is unlikely to gain a sympathetic response in many quarters. Clearly what is needed before the debate can

proceed is a more detailed analysis of Islamic values and an Islamic approach to education, presented as sympathetically as possible. Only then can a critical response to the Islamic position be developed. Part Three therefore seeks to re-express the terms of the debate about the education of Muslim children from an Islamic perspective.

PART THREE
THE ISLAMIC WORLD VIEW

CHAPTER SEVEN

AN ISLAMIC FRAMEWORK OF VALUES

In Part Two the question was considered whether liberal values could provide a framework within which the problem of educational provision for Muslim children could be resolved to the satisfaction of the Muslims themselves. This involved an examination of a liberal view of the rights of Muslim parents to bring up their children in their own religion, and the rights of the Muslim community to educate its young in a way which is in keeping with, and helps to preserve, its own distinctive beliefs and values. In both cases it was seen that, on a liberal view, these rights exist for Muslims only subject to certain conditions. In the former case, the rights of Muslim parents to bring up their children in their own religion are constrained by considerations of the public interest, and by the need to ensure that the children's personal autonomy is not lost sight of as an ultimate goal. In the latter case, the rights of the Muslim community to preserve, maintain and transmit its own distinctive beliefs and values are constrained by the need to avoid foreclosing the child's ultimate freedom and range of choice by inculcating the uncritical acceptance of a particular conception of the good life. Although in the eyes of liberals these conditions are fully justified on the basis of the framework of values set out in Chapter Four, there is no reason to expect that the conditions will necessarily be acceptable to individuals or groups who do not share that liberal framework of values. This is indeed the case with many Muslims, whose view of the nature and aims of education differs significantly from the liberals', because it starts from different premises.

The aim of the present chapter, therefore, is to provide a brief sketch of Islamic values and the grounds on which they are based and to draw attention to some of the main differences between the Islamic and the liberal framework of values. In a single

short chapter, the approach will inevitably be schematic, but it is hoped that enough will be said to provide an adequate basis for a more detailed account of an Islamic view of education in Chapter Eight and a discussion of the possibility of a reconciliation between the liberal and Islamic views of education in Chapter Nine.

* * * *

Islam is both a civilisation and a religion. In the former sense, Islam is an historical phenomenon, and the term refers to everything that has been said or done by numerous generations of people calling themselves Muslims. In the latter, more fundamental, sense, Islam is the religion of the submission (*islam*) of the human will to the divine, based on the message received in the form of the Qur'an by the Prophet Muhammad, and incorporated in a series of institutions of which Islamic law (*shari'a*) is perhaps the most important. In the present and subsequent chapters, I shall reserve the term 'Islamic' for those institutions that are based directly on the principles of the religion of Islam, and shall use the term 'Muslim' for those institutions infused with the spirit of Islam but also subject to a greater or less extent to other influences. Thus, I wish to call al-Kindi, al-Farabi, Ibn Sina (Avicenna) and Ibn Rushd (Averroes) Muslim philosophers, but al-Ash'ari and al-Ghazali Islamic theologians. Similarly, it will be possible to speak of the Islamic tradition of tolerance while acknowledging that historically some Muslims have shown a high level of intolerance. No civilisation in practice can be completely shaped by a religion to the exclusion of all other influences, though one of the aims of the much publicised Islamic resurgence in recent years has been to bring the civilisation of the Muslim world more into line with Islamic principles, for example, by purging their institutions of remnants from the colonial era. It is the religious principles of Islam, however, that give the Muslim world its strong sense of unity, for however much civilisation and culture may differ from one region to another, these remain constant. Indeed, these principles are taken by Muslims to be unchanging across time as well as space, though it is acknowledged that they may need to be re-

expressed in modern idiom if they are to be comprehensible to the present-day generation (cf Nasr, 1981, p 2).

It is with Islam as a religion that I am concerned in the present chapter, and in particular with the fundamental Islamic values which are shared throughout the Muslim world simply because they are fundamental to the religion of Islam. This is not to deny that there are differences of perspective between different Muslim groups. Just as the fundamental liberal values discussed in Chapter Four provide a framework equally for utilitarianism, libertarianism and egalitarianism, so the Islamic principles discussed in this chapter have manifested themselves in a variety of sects and tendencies. But these differences should not be overemphasised; they do not usually extend to the fundamental values. Insofar as I have to take account of the differences at all in the present chapter, I shall follow the most orthodox and traditional viewpoint. This is in recognition of the worldwide strength and influence of resurgent Islamic fundamentalism, but also because it enables the points I make to be seen in their clearest, most unambiguous form. Thus I shall focus on the Sunni sect, rather than the Shi'ite, and the Ash'arite school of theology rather than the Mu'tazilite. In parallel to my identification of a major strand of liberalism in Chapter Four, running from Kant to Rawls, so I shall draw heavily on a strand of Islamic thought which can be traced from the mediaeval thinker, al-Ghazali, to the contemporary scholar, S.H.Nasr.

The Islamic framework of values discussed here can, like the liberal, produce its own distinctive political theory, ethical theory, economic theory and theory of education. Indeed, much work has been done in recent years on Islamic political theory (cf Brohi, 1982a; Enayat, 1982), Islamic ethics (cf Hourani, 1985; Hovannisian, 1985), Islamic economic theory (cf al-Mahdi, 1982; Choudhury, 1986; Mannan, 1986) and Islamic education (which is discussed in Chapter Eight). Islam provides a more comprehensive world view than liberalism, however, for it also encompasses areas where liberalism has no distinctive perspective, such as the aesthetic (cf L.L.al-Faruqi,

1982) and the spiritual (cf Nasr, 1987a)). Islam is a religion, but far more than that term usually implies in the West; it is a *din*, a whole way of life. As Montgomery Watt points out,

> *it is not a private matter for individuals, touching only the periphery of their lives, but something which is both private and public, something which permeates the whole fabric of society in a way of which men are conscious. It is - all in one - theological dogma, forms of worship, political theory and a detailed code of conduct.*
>
> (1979, p 3)

In Chapter Four it was argued that liberalism has its origin in the tension between two conflicting values - individual freedom and the drive to self-fulfilment on the one hand, and the equality of all individuals on the other - and that it is the application of rationality to this tension that produces the distinctively liberal world view. In contrast, what underpins the Islamic framework of values is a profound sense of unity (*tawhid*), according to which all the elements in the universe and all aspects of life contribute to a harmonious whole. This doctine of unity is not unique to Islam; for example, Rademacher (1961) has written a detailed exposition of it from a Christian perspective. But undoubtedly it occupies a much more central place in Islamic than in Christian beliefs and values. The Islamic principle of unity draws attention initially to the oneness of God, the creator and sustainer of life, whose will and authority are supreme and encompass the whole universe. Secondly, it draws attention to the unity of mankind; human beings are equal in God's eyes, and are bound together in an interdependent community of life and work, and have a common destiny. Thirdly, it emphasises the harmony between humanity and the created natural world, which are complementary in God's scheme of creation. Fourthly, it provides an integrated and comprehensive outlook on life, where familiar Western tensions disappear, as between the spiritual and the material, the religious and the secular, or the law and personal morality. The pursuit

of knowledge, according to this doctrine, ceases to be a fragmentary and compartmentalised activity, for all knowledge ultimately contributes to our knowledge of God. The whole fabric of life is thus governed by a single law: the realisation of the divine will.

On an Islamic view, people are guided to an understanding and experience of this unity through the revelation (*wahy*) by which God has made himself known. This revelation was brought to the Prophet Muhammad in the Qur'an and interpreted by him in his sayings and traditions (*sunna*). Together, the Qur'an and the *sunna* form what Sardar (1979, p 24) calls the 'absolute reference frame' of Islam. They contain essentially the same message as that revealed to earlier prophets including Adam, Abraham, Moses and Jesus, but whereas earlier messages are seen as corrupted, the Qur'an is considered to be the word of God in its final form. An acceptance of revelation in this sense thus lies at the very heart of Islam. The term 'revelation' usually implies one of two antitheses: it suggests either a contrast between 'natural religion' and 'revealed religion', or an opposition of some kind between 'reason' and 'revelation'. The Islamic position with regard to the former of these is clear: God cannot be descibed or symbolised or understood by reference to anything in the natural realm, at least without prior account being taken of revealed truth. The Islamic view of the relation between reason and revelation, however, is more complicated. The Qur'an constantly stresses the importance of reason or the 'intellect' (*'aql*), and in fact describes those who go astray from religion as those who cannot use their intellect (*la ya'qilun*). The intellect here is conceived as the means by which people come to understand the signs (*ayat*) of God, and come to recognise and accept God-given truths. The Islamic theologian al-Ghazali, however, has a much broader concept of the intellect. Like Aquinas, he shows great respect for Aristotelian logic and analytical thinking, which he considers to be neutral with regard to religious truth and therefore capable of being harnessed in support of Islam and appropriate for inclusion in the curriculum of Islamic learning (Watt, 1983, p 78). On the other hand, there is in his view no way that

independent human rationality can take precedence in Islam over revealed religion. As Nasr (1981, p 26) points out, the use of the intellect is considered valid only when that intellect is in a wholesome state (*salim*), and wholesomeness is to be judged in terms of following the divine law (*shari'a*), which is itself based on revelation. Hourani (1985, p 149) asserts that

> *from an early time Muslims who understood the overwhelming power of God as the chief message of the Qur'an could not admit that man could ever work out by his own intellect, without aid from scripture, what was right and what was wrong in the world.*

Al-Ghazali and other Islamic theologians maintain that ethical knowledge is derivable entirely from revelation, and that it is only under the umbrella of revealed religion that reason comes into play, to carry out the functions of interpretation and application and to refute opponents. Critical appraisal thus can never be applied to the foundation of religious commitment. Reason stands independent of revelation only for the very first step in Islamic apologetics (since, of course, revelation cannot authenticate its own authority: cf Flew, 1966, p 19), as al-Ghazali himself makes clear:

> *In sum, prophets are the doctors of heart ailments. The only beneficial function of intellect is to teach us that fact, bearing witness to the veracity and its own incompetence to grasp what can be grasped by the eye of prophecy; it takes us by the hand and delivers us to prophecy as the blind are delivered to guides and confused patients to compassionate doctors. Thus far is the progress and advance of intellect; beyond that it is dismissed, except for understanding what the doctor imparts to it.*
>
> (quoted in Hourani, 1985, p 165f)

On al-Ghazali's view, human beings' awareness of their own weakness and uncertain state, plus their natural inclination to avoid harm and to seek their own good, should lead them to a state where they can recognise the authority of the teaching of Islam. God has given them everything they need to make an intelligent decision: a prophet to warn them, miracles or signs in support of his authority (such as the miracle of the Qur'an), their intellect to help them to understand the warnings and see the significance of the signs, and their natural concern for their own interest. The purpose of both the warnings and the signs is to help people to recognise their 'contingency and dependence upon an omnipotent God' (Leaman, 1985, p 135). If they fail to do so, then the teaching about the Last Judgment reminds them that they are ultimately accountable to God for their beliefs and actions.

* * * *

Once revelation is accepted as the source of truth, no value system can be postulated which ignores it. Revelation is primarily concerned with three things - with God himself, with the mutual relations of God and human beings, and with the principles of human conduct - and from an Islamic point of view each of these has profound consequences for the construction of a framework of values. Rahman (1982, p 14) points out that:

> *Just as in Kantian terms no ideal knowledge is possible without the regulative ideas of reason (like first cause), so in Qur'anic terms no real morality is possible without the regulative ideas of God and the last judgment.*

The dependence of all human beings on the divine guidance contained in the scriptures as the basis of their moral knowledge is a recurrent theme of the Qur'an. To forestall man's natural tendency to go astray, God provides guidance (*huda*), and the

appropriate response to that guidance is for the Muslim to surrender his own personal moral judgment to the guidance of God and the Prophet (as contained in the Qur'an, the *sunna* and their derivatives). The Qur'an says,

> *It is not for any believer, man or woman, when God and His Messenger have decreed a matter, to have the choice in the affair. Whoever disobeys God and His Messenger has gone astray into manifest error.*
>
> (Sura 33, verse 36, Arberry's translation)

It is clearly implied here and elsewhere in the Qur'an that revelation is to be taken by Muslims as providing an exclusive guide to moral knowledge for human beings. The separation of morality from religion is seen as a modern aberration.

Two questions now arise which were the subject of much debate in the 8th to 12th centuries A.D., when Islamic civilisation met, and learned to respond to, Greek philosophy. The first is whether on an Islamic view ethical knowledge can **sometimes** be arrived at by independent reason or whether it can be drawn **only** from revelation and derived sources. The former view was held by the Mu'tazilites, though they, unlike some Muslim philosophers, saw reason and revelation in ethics as complementary, never in opposition; but most Islamic theologians accepted the latter view, restricting the role of reason to matters of interpretation, the use of analogy, and so on. Clearly they felt that if human beings could judge right and wrong without reference to God, this would somehow undermine God's omnipotence (at least, unless God had willed it so), since they would be in a position to judge God's actions themselves and form an independent verdict on his moral pronouncements. The second question is whether ethical value terms such as 'good' and 'right' have an independent meaning that can be derived rationally, or whether they simply **mean** what God approves or commands or decides is good and right, a position which I shall call ethical voluntarism. Once again, the former view was held by the Mu'tazilites and all Muslim philosophers, the latter by

al-Ash'ari and almost all Sunnite jurists and theologians. Theologians like al-Ash'ari and al-Gazali did not shy away from accepting the more extreme consequences of their doctrine of ethical voluntarism, that if God had commanded theft and murder, then it would be right for man to commit them. Some modern scholars, such as Albert Hourani, however, are more sympathetic to the standpoint of the Muslim philosopher Ibn Rushd, who notes that 'such a position potentially undermines both faith in God and belief in ordinary morality' (Hourani, 1985, p 59).

Undoubtedly the view that values are in essence whatever God commands and that they can only be known ultimately through revelation has been prevalent in Islam for many centuries. But this view does not necessarily provide the best foundation for constructing a framework of Islamic values. The problem is that the debate about the ontological status of values, which was eventually won as far as Islam was concerned by the ethical voluntarists, was conducted in terms drawn not from the Qur'an but from Greek philosophy. In the Qur'an itself, reason and revelation are never set in opposition, for 'reason' *('aql)* is understood in the more limited sense of the use of the intellect rather than in the sense used by later Islamic thinkers of reasoning that proceeds without any help from revelation. Thus, according to the Qur'an, it is reason *('aql)* which enables people to interpret God's signs *(ayat)*, and the Qur'an urges people to make the fullest use of their intellect *('aql)* which is given them by God, to understand his will and to follow his guidance. On a Qur'anic view, the only alternative to following this path is to follow one's untutored passions.

The Islamic framework of values is grounded ultimately not on what God commands, but on what he is. Islamic tradition states that there are ninety-nine names of God, each expressing some quality, such as the Merciful, the Oft-Forgiving, the Trustworthy, the Just, the Righteous (Stade, 1970; Doi, 1981, p 20). According to Ashraf (1987, p 15), the divine names

are the archetypes of all values manifested in contingent circumstances to be realised through action in the human world.

In other words, God's names enshrine in a perfect form certain universal unchanging norms which are capable of being known and realised even in this imperfect world, and these therefore provide the basis for an Islamic value system. As Rahman (1982, p 14) puts it,

God is the transcendent anchoring point of attributes such as life, creativity, power, mercy and justice (including retribution) and of moral values to which a human society must be subject if it is to survive and prosper - a ceaseless struggle for the cause of the good. This constant struggle is the keynote of man's normative existence and constitutes the service ('ibada*) to God with which the Qur'an squarely and inexorably charges him.*

In al-Ghazali's view, the purpose of individual existence from a human point of view is the attainment of happiness, and happiness is to be found overwhelmingly in the next life (cf Hourani, 1985, p 147). There are two means to this end: first, obedience to the rules of conduct set out in revealed scripture (which implies belief in them), and secondly, the cultivation of the virtues of the soul. Al-Ghazali maintains that while external acts of obedience are important, the cultivation of the virtues is valued more highly in God's eyes because the virtues are a reflection of God's own names and attributes. The principal virtues taught in the Qur'an are honesty, trustfulness, justice, perseverance, piety, benevolence, gratitude, tolerance, firmness of purpose, wisdom, courage, kindness, trustworthiness, chastity, generosity, hard work, charity, temperance and forgiveness (Sarwar, 1980, p 191ff). A detailed interpretation and application of these virtues is contained in the *hadith* (sayings of the Prophet Muhammad).

According to the Qur'an, human beings are God's *chef d'oeuvre* (Sura 15, verse 29; Sura 38, verse 72), because they alone are able to understand and take on board, of their own free will, the divine attributes. For this reason, God has given them a position of stewardship in the world and to them falls the responsibility of sustaining themselves and the rest of creation in accordance with the divine attributes. He has equipped them with everything they need for this task, including the capacity to perceive, to reason, to learn, to understand, to remember, to communicate and to act; guidance in the form of revelation; and the predisposition to love the good and to recognise God's commands as universal and unchanging norms. Though prone at times to make mistakes of judgment, to act selfishly or to commit acts of aggression or injustice, human beings are not, on an Islamic view, tainted by original sin (cf Al-Faruqi, 1982, p 154f); on the contrary, the moral struggle that Muslims are charged to sustain against such failings is not blighted by any sense that the task is an impossible one without direct divine intervention. Nor is the Muslim discouraged from enjoying this present life to some legitimate extent. As God's deputy (*khalifa*), he is free to use his God-given faculties to the utmost, whether in the pursuit of knowledge, the harnessing of the created world to his own purposes, the enjoyment of possessions and pleasures in this world, or in individual creativity of any kind. The only restriction is that all of these activities should be carried out in accordance with Islamic principles and laws. Excessive indulgence in material pleasures would be likely to make people unmindful of their creator, and the pursuit of profit in a way which does not respect the right of every creature to draw sustenance from the earth would be likely to diminish people's chances of fulfilling their role as God's deputy. To act in accordance with Islamic principles, and faithfully to carry out the stewardship to which one has been assigned is in fact the true nature of worship (*'ibada*) in Islam.

Worship, the Qur'an tells us, is the sole purpose behind the creation of mankind (Sura 51, verse 56). But worship is not to be conceived narrowly in terms merely of observing the five pillars of Islam: making the declaration of faith (*shahada*), ritual

prayer (*salat*), wealth sharing (*zakah*), fasting (*sawm*), and pilgrimage (*hajj*). As Qutb (1982, p 27) points out, God

> *has made all the natural activities of the body, mind and soul, if devoted and committed to God, forms of true worship.*

Thus tilling the earth, begetting and bringing up children, eating and drinking, searching for knowledge and truth, striving to establish social, political and economic justice, making culture and civilisation, are all forms of worship. Unlike other religions, Islam sees ethical value not as indifferent or opposed to the processes of life on earth, but as their very affirmation and promotion under the divinely appointed moral law (cf I Al-Faruqi, 1982, p 156). Perhaps the greatest act of worship is the continuous struggle to make operational the moral values which constitute the divine will.

In brief, to worship is to accept God's will as supreme. God's will is embedded in the structure of the whole of creation, including man's physical nature, which is evidenced by the necessary constraints or laws of nature which exist in the created world. Man's moral nature, however, is not subject to the same kind of constraint. He is free to obey or disobey the divine commandments which are the embodiment of God's will, to accept or reject its norms and values. To accept God's will as supreme is consciously to submit oneself to the highest reality one is capable of apprehending; as already noted, the primary meaning of Islam is 'submission'. It is to live with a vision of God's constant involvement in the world. It is to bind oneself to live in harmony with God's creative purposes.

It has already been stated that in Islam the divine will is embodied in concrete form in the *shari'a* (revealed law), which governs every aspect of the Muslim's relationship with God and with his fellow-men. It guides him equally in legal matters (such as the conduct of divorce), moral matters (such as the commendation of hospitality) and religious matters (such as the obligation to fast, pray, give alms and perform the pilgrimage to Mecca). The *shari'a* is a systematic codification of laws based

on the Qur'an and the traditions of the Prophet (*sunna*), especially his sayings (*hadith*) though these two sources have been supplemented by the use of analogy (*qiyas*) and consensus (*ijma'*) to take account of contingencies not covered directly by revelation or prophetic tradition. The formulation and interpretation of the *shari'a* has always been the task of the professional Islamic scholars (*'ulama'*), whose authority has been accepted by the community (*umma*) because of their wisdom, religious insight, intellectual expertise and knowledge of the Qur'an and the Prophet. The *shari'a* is the 'core and kernel of Islam' (Schacht, 1974, p 392) and is viewed by Muslims as 'a transcendent reality which is eternal and immutable' (Nasr, 1981, p 24). It is the way by which God's justice and other goals are realised. It provides divine guidance for men's actions, and is the model by which their actions, individually and collectively, are judged. Obedience to the *shari'a* constitutes the basis of true religion in Islam, and guarantees believers their reward on the day of judgment. But 'obedience' (which implies a degree of compulsion or bondage) is only the first stage in a person's response to the law. As Brohi (1982b, p 232f) points out, the Muslim may reach the stage where

> *what at one time compelled obedience on his part is progressively replaced by his love and longing to do the deed in conformity with the law.*

When the individual enters the path of spiritual growth (*tariqa*), however, he does not turn his back on the *shari'a*, but simply develops a new attitude towards it. The *shari'a* literally means the broad highway; it provides the direction in which the whole community of believers (*umma*) should walk, and indeed is what binds them together into a community in the first place.

Religion, as O'Hear (1984, p 4f) reminds us, is never a purely individual affair. The religious community offers its members a sense of belonging, guidance, support, direction and purpose and helps them to see themselves as playing a part in an overall

scheme of affairs. The community can elicit strong feelings of loyalty from its members, and on MacIntyre's (1981) view can help to ground moral values in a coherently structured and socially oriented narrative or quest. This sense of community is rarely found in a stronger form than in Islam. Social integration is considered important at all levels, from the family, the mosque and the local community to the worldwide community of believers (*umma*) who are bound together, irrespective of race, in a genuine sense of brotherhood. In the Islamic community, every member is equal, except in the piety and righteousness of his actions, and no-one has immunity from the operation of the law. Montgomery Watt (1979) comments that

> *the basis of this integration of communal life and the sense of brotherhood is the deeply rooted belief of Muslims that their community or* umma *is a charismatic one, in virtue of its being divinely founded and having a divinely given law - or in more modern terms, in virtue of its being a bearer of values.*

Social morality is central to Islam, and the community plays a vital part in the realisation of the divine will. Within the Islamic community, relations between individuals are highly important, and are based on the principles of mutual protection and support. It is recognised that coercion cannot be used in moral matters, since for action to be moral it must result from the free and deliberate exercise of the subject's faculties of decision; thus all that the Muslim can do for his fellow citizen is to educate, convince and persuade. This consideration, says I Al-Faruqi (1982, p 167)

> *makes of the Islamic state a college on a very grand scale, a college for ethical endeavour and felicity where every person is at once a student and a teacher.*

On an Islamic view, the goal of social existence is exactly the same as the goal of individual existence: the realisation on earth of divinely ordained moral imperatives. This is why, as al-Faruqi (*ibid.*, p 165) points out, 'Islam does not countenance any separation of religion and state'. The state is viewed as 'society's political arm', which is subject to the same moral imperatives as the individual or the group. Between the state and the citizen, as between any social institutions and the individual, there is only a division of labour, a distinction as to function. All are bound by the same goal, just as all are subject to the same divine law. Thus Islam is just as relevant to economic, political, social and international affairs as it is to the individual conscience.

* * * *

It has become clear that there are many points of contact between Islamic and liberal values. Several of the ethical values which are essential to a liberal world view, such as truth-telling and promise-keeping (cf Raphael, 1981, p 44), also feature on any Islamic list of basic virtues and qualities (e.g. Sarwar, 1980, pp 191ff). In the social and political domain, Islam, just as much as liberalism, has stood for freedom of religion and conscience (Brohi, 1982b, p 248), the toleration of minorities (Khadduri, 1984, p 144), racial integration and harmony (Montgomery Watt, 1979, p 233) and equality before the law, irrespective of race, colour or class (Khadduri, 1984, p 237). For Muslims, the reason for the large degree of overlap between the two value systems is that liberal values are derived from religious ones, and all religious values originate ultimately from the same divine source, through revelation. For liberals, the reason for the overlap is simply that the values held in common are rationally justifiable, and that it would be impossible to have a rational system which ignored them.

The more fundamental the values are, however, the wider appears to be the divergence between the two frameworks. For example, when Khomeini (1981) says that 'Islam is committed to truth and justice', it is clear that his conceptualisation of

these two values is widely divergent from any liberal's; 'truth' to him is the truth of the revelation, and 'justice' is conceived along the lines of Shafi'i's stark definition

> *Justice is that one should act in obedience to God.*
>
> (quoted in Hourani, 1985, p 33)

Of course, Khomeini represents one extreme of Islamic thinking, and Khadduri (1984) has shown just how much debate there has been within Islam on the political, theological, philosophical, ethical, legal and social aspects of justice. Nevertheless, Khomeini's call to Islamic scholars to unite against secular, tyrannical, unjust and materialistic Westernised rulers in the name of truth and justice, has been viewed with considerable sympathy both in Iran and beyond.

The divergence between Islamic and liberal values may perhaps be described most clearly by providing an Islamic response to the three fundamental liberal values that were discussed in Chapter Four. It is now therefore proposed to examine rather more closely the Islamic view of individual freedom, equal rights and objective rationality.

The notion of individual freedom has never been a dominant one in Islam, and indeed Muslims have always been strongly aware of the existence of constraints upon human action. In the Qur'an and early Muslim thinkers, the term 'freedom' is primarily used to distinguish between the slave and the free man (Rosenthal, 1960). Within Muslim philosophy, the term refers to the human capacity to create one's own actions and to exercise free choice (*ikhtiyar*) - a concept which appears to be in conflict with the Islamic doctrine that all human actions are created by God. Insofar as people are totally dependent on God's will in every aspect of their lives, there is little room left for individual freedom in human affairs. This latter stance raises its own theological problems, however, for God's justice would be in doubt if he rewarded and punished people for actions for which they were not themselves genuinely responsible. Al-

Ash'ari proposes as a solution to this problem that God creates a person's actions but the person then 'appropriates' (*kasaba*) them; the actions can therefore be called **his**, and he can bear the responsibility for them. Contemporary Islamic scholars generally argue that a person's responsibility for his actions is based on his freedom to choose (Ashraf, 1987, p 5) and that actions can only be considered moral when they result from the individual's free exercise of his capacity to make decisions (I Al-Faruqi, 1982, p 152; cf Qur'an, Sura 2, verse 256). But in liberal eyes, the Islamic concept of free will is a very unsophisticated one, involving little more than the choice to accept or reject the guidance contained in the revealed law. In Islam, there is no place for the liberal vision of the autonomous individual working out for himself his own religious faith and his own moral standpoint, for this would be in conflict with his status as slave (*'abd*) with regard to God. Nasr makes it clear that

> *there is no freedom possible through flight from and rebellion against the Principle which is the ontological source of human existence and which determines ourselves from on high. To rebel against our own ontological Principle in the name of freedom is to become enslaved to an ever greater degree in the world of multiplicity and limitation.*
>
> (1981, p 17)

The Western concept of freedom is thus dismissed by many Muslim scholars as aimlessness and license (Ali, 1984, p 53). True freedom can only be attained by those who live in accordance with the divine law, which imposes limitations on human freedom in one sense, but which makes possible a greater inner freedom, the liberation of the soul from its own tendency to go astray. Islamic mystics (*sufis*) have frequently stressed the importance of freedom in this sense, as the complete detachment of the human soul from everything except God. This emphasis on the spiritual dimension of freedom is perhaps not incompatible with Hourani's call (1985, p 276) for greater social freedom in the Muslim world. In the past, some Muslim rulers may well have

been unduly authoritarian under the guise that their acts were the expression of the divine will.

The second fundamental liberal value, that of the equal right of all to individual freedom, is equally problematic on an Islamic perspective. Equality is certainly a basic concept in Islam, but it derives from God's unwillingness to reckon any human being superior to others except on the grounds of piety (Qur'an, Sura 49, verse 13), not from specific rights which are a part of our humanity. From an Islamic perspective, as Brohi (1982b, p 233f) points out, human beings have no rights in relation to God, and their rights in relation to their fellow men are derived from their primary duty to God. Specific obligations towards God, other human beings and Nature are delineated in the *shari'a*, and human rights result from the fulfiment of these obligations, not vice versa. Since the *shari'a* is the expression of God's will, and all human beings are equal in God's eyes (except in terms of piety), it follows that there should be absolute equality in the eyes of the law, and that no-one should have immunity from the operation of the law for social or political reasons. Such equality in God's eyes, however, does not preclude the possibility that different human beings may have different roles and functions in society in accordance with their divinely ordained nature and potential - hence the distinct lack of sympathy among many Muslims for movements concerned to equalise the role of the sexes in society (Nasr, 1981, p 212f).

Much has already been said in the present chapter about the Islamic view of the third fundamental liberal value, that of consistent rationality (however this is conceived: see Chapter Four). It has been shown that in Islam rationality cannot take precedence over revealed religion as a foundation of other values. This may be what is behind Karl Barth's statement that 'belief cannot argue with unbelief: it can only preach at it', which Flew (1966, p 9) claims not to understand. For if believers were able to enter into rational debate about their beliefs with outsiders, this would make rationality a more fundamental value than anything within the domain of belief itself. As we have seen, al-

Ghazali does in fact concede that rationality is needed to establish the credentials of revelation as the primary source of all other values, though I have suggested elsewhere (Halstead, 1986, p 58) that what establishes the revelation as true in the minds of believers is more likely to be some form of spiritual experience or basic intuition. Within the framework provided by revelation, however, rationality (*'aql*) assumes a very high level of importance in Islam. Repeatedly, the Qur'an addresses itself to the understanding of its audience (e.g. Sura 3, verse 65; Sura 12, verse 2) and in numerous places it urges them to consider, reflect and understand through the use of their reason. Reason is used not only for interpreting the Qur'an and traditions (*sunna*), determining the consensus of the community (*ijma'*) and drawing conclusions by the method of analogy (*qiyas*), but also for independent judgment and striving after the truth (*ijtihad*). *Ijtihad*, however, is not intended to elevate the individual judgment over that of the group, any more than it raises independent reason over revelation; independent thought and creativity are encouraged only among those whose religious knowledge and understanding are well established, and in any case they are to be balanced by consultation and dialogue (*shura*) until consensus can be achieved among the whole community (*umma*). The use of God-given rational faculties in the pursuit of knowledge and truth is indeed viewed as a form of worship in Islam, so long as it is undertaken within the boundaries defined by revelation. On these terms, the antithesis between reason and revelation disappears; what reason discovers cannot be thought of as unrevealed, since it can only be discovered with God's help, while the contents of revelation can only be recognised and understood through reason.

Islamic values are grounded firmly on religion, which provides a comprehensive framework for human life. Their religion gives Muslims a profound sense of purpose and direction, and no aspect of their life is untouched. Islam makes no distinction between 'the good of this world and that of the world hereafter' (Khan, 1981, p 1) or between the sacred and the profane and the man who works to support his family and the scientist who pushes back the frontiers of knowledge may both be considered to be

engaged in acts of worship as important as prayer itself (al-Attas, 1979, p vi; Nasr, 1966, p 98). Indeed all branches of knowledge may be considered Islamic if they are pursued in accordance with Islamic principles. Within Islamic countries, culture is shaped largely by religion, beside which any ethnic differences seem of very minor significance, and religion ties the whole community of believers together with strong bonds of loyalty and helps to increase its stability and continuity (though al-Ghazali warns leaders against supporting religious and moral principles not for their divine nature but for their utility in maintaining union in the family and stability in the community: cf Khadduri, 1984, p 92f). The fact that Islam is a long-established religion means that its values have significant historical roots and its followers have a sense of belonging to something vaster and more permanent than themselves, though Nasr (1981, p 32) acknowledges the need for 'translating truths of Islam into a contemporary language without betraying them'.

All this has a profound relevance to the education of Muslim children, for Muslims not surprisingly want their education to be shaped in the light of their own religious faith and experience. We are now in a position to look more closely at what view of education emerges from the Islamic framework of values which has been considered here, and the Islamic view of education thus forms the topic of Chapter Eight.

It has not been my intention in the present chapter to enter into any kind of debate about the truth or falsehood of the Islamic belief in the existence of God and in the Qur'an as the climax of all divine self-revelation, the fulfilment which partly completes and partly corrects the messages of earlier prophets. My concern has been simply to examine the Islamic position and to compare it to the dominant liberal perspective in this country as a first step to establishing whether any form of educational provision is possible which does not conflict with the deep-seated convictions of Muslims who are commited to the framework of values outlined in this chapter.

CHAPTER EIGHT

AN ISLAMIC VIEW OF EDUCATION

Islam has a long-standing tradition of education, and of respect for education. Evidence for this is seen in the frequent injunctions found in the *Qur'an* and the *hadith* to pursue knowledge (e.g. Qur'an 20:114) and in the stress laid on wisdom and guidance rather than the blind acceptance of tradition (*Qur'an* 2:170; 17:36, 6:148). From the start, education in Islam was religious in nature and its unequivocal goal was to produce true believers. The earliest Muslim schools undoubtedly played an important part in the socialisation of the diverse ethnic groups conquered during the period of Muslim expansion, into the faith of Islam and its way of life. It also seems likely that the discouragement of independent thinking as liable to undermine orthodoxy or obedience to divine injunctions stems from this period. The responsibility for education lay with the *'ulama'* (the 'learned'), and in the early centuries of Islam both the *katatib* (primary schools) and the *madaris* (schools for higher studies) were almost invariably attached to mosques. Even at the highest level, there was little attempt to extend the teaching beyond the *Qur'an* and the *hadith,* Arabic language and literature, and Islamic law, theology and philosophy. During the Middle Ages, education in Muslim countries gradually began to stagnate, partly because of the rigidity with which the subject matter was defined (cf Gibb, 1969, p 98-9) and partly because of a sterile pedagogy which put much emphasis on memorisation, made extensive use of physical punishment and required studies to be carried out in Arabic, a language which an increasing number of Muslims found hard to understand. The stagnation made it easier at the time of Western imperialist expansion for Western systems of education to be introduced into Muslim countries. Gauhar (1982) argues that such education intentionally or otherwise perpetuated Western domination and that the effects of this are still in evidence today. The countries were administered in accordance with Western

laws and values, and there was little chance for anyone who had not been educated in a Western language and in Western culture to gain any position of power in legal, political, commercial or professional institutions. Traditional Muslim education existed side by side, of course, with Western education in Muslim countries, but in the main it served only the poor and those without power. Thus at the beginning of the twentieth century, Muslim countries typically had a powerful, Western-educated elite with a deep seated interest in retaining Western cultural traditions and institutions, and a massive majority whose education, though Muslim, was minimal in comparison, and served to reinforce their lower social and economic status. Muslim education seemed both unwilling and unable to respond to the rapid expansion of knowledge, particularly scientific and technological, that was taking place in the West and it came to be depicted in Western and Western-educated circles as backward and obscurantist. A dictionary of Islam published in 1935 provides a common view of Muslim education at the time:

> *the chief aim and object of education in Islam is to obtain a knowledge of the religion of Muhammad and anything beyond this is considered superfluous, and even dangerous.*
>
> (Hughes, 1935)

In the post-colonial period, no uniform pattern of education has emerged in Muslim countries. Some have retained and extended a Westernised system, others have attempted to bolster the status of a Muslim system so that it can exist side by side with, and as a viable alternative to, the Westernised system, yet others have attempted to Islamicise the system completely, but remain significantly dependent on Western expertise and Western ideas particularly in the areas of science and technology. Muslim immigrants to the West have generally welcomed the social and economic advantages achieved or anticipated through the education provided by their new home countries, yet have sought to supplement this with more specific religious and moral instruction at mosque schools outside normal school hours. Such supplementary schools, however,

are modelled on the traditional *kuttab* and *madrasa* with all their attendant faults (rote-learning, corporal punishment, unqualified teachers and so on); and the extra demands made on pupils' time, together with the lack of co-ordination between the maintained schools and the mosque schools in approach and methods have led to very widespread dissatisfaction with this combined system among Muslim parents.

No system has so far emerged which seems totally satisfactory from a Muslim point of view. A modified Western system of education is likely to leave Muslim children exposed to an underlying set of secular values and assumptions which are alien to the spirit of Islam. Muslim schools of the old style, on the other hand, seem unable to prepare children adequately for the needs of the modern world or to help them to take advantage of modern scientific, technological and economic progress. Yet a combined system such as that currently operating for many Muslim children in the U.K., whereby they attend state schools in the daytime and supplementary schools at evenings and weekends, draws attention to a gulf between religious and non-religious learning which is in direct conflict with the Islamic doctrine of *tawhid* (unity), according to which all aspects of life should be integrated and contribute to a harmonious whole. What is now being sought by an increasing number of Muslim parents, intellectuals and leaders is a single, unified system of education which is based on Islamic principles yet which pays attention to the recent expansion of knowledge, the reality of socio-economic change and the multi-faceted needs of the individual in contemporary society. This aim lay behind the convening of the First World Conference on Muslim Education in Mecca in 1977: to develop a genuinely Islamic system of education appropriate for students in the modern world at all levels (al-Attas, 1979; Husain and Ashraf, 1979). In 1980, a Universal Islamic Declaration was drawn up under the auspices of the Islamic Council of Europe, which had this to say about education:

> *Education is an important corner-stone of the Islamic system. Pursuit of knowledge is obligatory for all Muslims, including knowledge of skills,*

crafts and vocations. Some of the basic principles of Islamic educational policy are:

(a) There shall be universal basic education for all men and women in society, and adequate national resources shall be made available for this purpose.

(b) The purpose of education shall be to produce people who are imbued with Islamic learning and character and are capable of meeting all the economic, social, political, technological, physical, intellectual and aesthetic needs of society.

(c) The two parallel streams of secular and religious education prevailing today in the Muslim World should be fused together so as to provide an Islamic vision for those engaged in education, and to enable them to reconstruct human thought, in all its forms, on the foundations of Islam.

(Azzam, 1982, p 262-3)

Islamic scholars and educationalists are currently working on the Islamisation of education in line with these principles in a number of countries, including Nigeria (cf S A Lemu, 1987; B A Lemu, 1988; Yusuf, 1989), Malaysia (cf Sidin, 1987; Sanusi, 1989), Pakistan (cf Saad, 1987) and Bangladesh (cf Nagi, 1987), as well as in the U.K (Ashraf, 1989a). The term 'Islamisation (or Islamification) of education', although in common usage among Islamic scholars, is somewhat misleading because it implies that the process starts with some concept of **education,** which is then shifted or adapted in some way to make it compatible with Islam. In fact, the reverse procedure is being adopted; the fundamental beliefs and values of Islam provide a framework within which a genuinely Islamic approach to education can be worked out.

In the next section of the present Chapter I shall attempt to sketch an Islamic view of education in line with this process, based on four sources: first, the recent and substantial work carried out in the wake of the First World Conference on Muslim Education by Islamic scholars throughout the world; secondly, the practical experiments in the Islamisation of education carried out in a number of Muslim countries; thirdly, the traditional Muslim education provided over the centuries in the *katatib* and the *madaris;* and finally, and most significantly, the Islamic framework of values set out in the previous chapter. From these sources it is hoped that there will emerge a consistent yet distinctively Islamic perspective on educational aims, teaching methods, the context of schooling and the curriculum. The Chapter will conclude with a brief liberal critique of the Islamic view of education that has been presented, and a Muslim response to that critique.

* * * *

The three Arabic words for 'education' emphasise three different dimensions in the educational process and thus provide a useful starting point for an analysis of the aims of education on an Islamic view. *Tarbiya* comes from the root *raba* (to grow, increase) and it refers to the goal-oriented process of rearing or bringing a child up to a state of completeness or maturity. *Ta'dib* comes from the root *aduba* (to be refined, disciplined, cultured) and refers to the process of learning a sound basis for social behaviour within the community and society at large. It includes coming to understand and accept the most fundamental social principles such as justice (cf al-Attas, 1979, pp 2-4). The third term, *ta'lim*, comes from the root *'alima* (to know, be informed, perceive, discern) and refers to the imparting and receiving of knowledge, usually through training, instruction or other form of teaching. To analyse education in terms of (i) aiding individual development, (ii) increasing understanding of the society of which the individual is part, and its laws and values and (iii) transmitting knowledge, is by no means exclusive to Islamic thinking. What creates a distinctively Islamic view of

education is the application to these three dimensions of the principle that no aspect of a Muslim's life can remain untouched by religion. Thus whereas the liberal educationalist will discuss individual development in terms of the development of personal and moral autonomy, in Islam it will be discussed in terms of the balanced growth of all sides of the individual's personality, including the spiritual and moral, leading to a higher level of religious understanding and commitment in all areas of life. The liberal educationalist will see the most justifiable form of society as an open, pluralist, democratic one, whereas in Islam the best society is one organised in accordance with divine law. The liberal will argue that no one set of religious beliefs can be shown to be objectively true, and that critical openness and free debate provide the most rational means for advancing the pursuit of faith. Islamic educationalists, on the other hand, though they as much as liberals claim to be engaged in the quest for truth in all things (which they see as an act of worship in itself: cf I Al-Faruqi, 1982 p 152), do not accept that there can be any discrepancy between revealed (*mukashifa*) or transmitted (*naqli*) knowledge and intellectual (*'aqli*) or attained (*husuli*) knowledge, and therefore see a place for both equally in any kind of educational provision. On an Islamic view, education cannot ignore

> *the whole content of reality, both material and spiritual, which plays a dominant role in determining the nature and destiny of man and society.*
>
> (Husain and Ashraf, 1979, p ix)

These three dimensions provide the three basic objectives of Islamic education. Khan (1987) summarises them as follows : the 'intellectual, moral and spiritual development of man'; the 'Muslim requirements of a good life in the service of Allah'; and 'to gain knowledge (*'ilm*) for good action'. Let us look at each of these rather more closely.

First, individual development. A fundamental aim of Islamic education is to provide children with positive guidance which will help them to grow into good adults who will lead happy and fruitful lives in this world and aspire to achieve the reward of the faithful in the world to come. What precisely is meant by good adults has been spelled out already in Chapter Seven, where the Islamic concept of the human being is considered. Briefly, the goodness of human beings on an Islamic view lies in their willingness to recognise their position of divine stewardship (*Khalifat-allah*) and accept the obligations which this position entails; to seek to take on the divine attributes such as *hikma* (wisdom) and *'adl* (justice) which have been clarified through divine revelation; to strive for the balanced growth of the integrated personality, made up of the heart, the spirit, the intellect, the feelings and the bodily senses; to develop their potential to become *insan kamil* (the perfect human being); and to allow the whole of their lives to be governed by Islamic principles, so that whatever they do, however mundane, becomes an act of worship. The purpose of education is to guide children towards these goals. People do not achieve their potential automatically, for by nature they are forgetful and open to the influence of injustice and ignorance; it is through education that they develop the wisdom (*hikma*) and faith (*'iman*) which help them to take pleasure in doing good and never to lose sight of their relationship with God. This view of individual development has profound consequences for what is to be taught in schools and how it is to be taught, as will shortly become clear.

Secondly, education, like religion, can never be a purely individual affair; this is because individual development cannot take place without regard for the social environment in which it occurs, but more profoundly because education, in that it serves many individuals, is a means for making society what it is. Education may thus be a vehicle for preserving, extending and transmitting a community's or society's cultural heritage and traditional values, but can also be a tool for social change and innovation. The strong sense of community in Islam, from the local level of the extended family and the mosque to the worldwide community of believers (*umma*), has

already been emphasised in Chapter Seven. What binds the community together is the sense of equality in the eyes of the *shari'a* (divine law) and it is acceptance of the *shari'a* that makes a person a Muslim. In Islam, social existence has exactly the same goal as individual existence: the realisation on earth of divinely ordained moral imperatives. Indeed, the spiritual growth of the individual (*tariqa*) can take place only within the *shari'a*. Both *shari'a* and *tariqa* are metaphors, the former carrying the literal meaning of a broad highway, the latter a narrow path. The Muslim community walk together along the broad highway of the divine law, which sets out God's will for people in both their private and their social life and helps them to live harmonious lives in this world and prepare themselves for the life to come. The social dimension of education in Islam is therefore eventually a matter of coming to understand and learning to follow the divine law, which contains not only universal moral principles (such as equality among people, justice and charity), but also detailed instructions relating to every aspect of human life. The *shari'a* integrates political, social and economic life as well as individual life into a single religious world view. In Islam therefore there is no question of individuals being encouraged through education to work out for themselves their own religious faith, or to subject it to detached rational investigation at a fundamental level; the divine revelation contained in the *shari'a* provides them with the requisite knowledge of truth and falsehood, right and wrong, and the task of individuals is to come to understand this knowledge and exercise their free will to choose which path to follow. The notion of free will in Islam, as we saw in Chapter Seven, is a very unsophisticated one, involving simply the choice to accept or reject the complete package of beliefs, and contracts sharply with the liberal notion of personal autonomy.

The Islamic ideal, according to which there is no separation of religion and state, can of course only be a reality in a Muslim country. Where Muslims are in the minority, as in the U.K., their consciousness of being a community bound together by a shared faith

is coupled in the large majority of cases with an equally strong desire to be truly British, full members of the wider community, enjoying equal rights and sharing similar responsibilities as all other citizens.

(Islamic Academy, 1987)

The social dimension of education for British Muslims would therefore seem necessarily to involve an understanding of the principles and values which lie behind the notion of British citizenship. However, if Muslim children are to learn the values on which British citizenship is based in total isolation from the religious values which underpin their membership of the worldwide Islamic community, then a fragmentation begins to enter into the educational process which is totally alien to the fundamental Islamic principle of *tawhid* (unity). A liberal approach involving a commitment to free critical debate and the presentation of religious values from an open, detached perspective would achieve the necessary integration, but at the cost of displacing religion from its pivotal position in every dimension of life, including education. The only approach to social education which would appear to be compatible with Islamic principles is to put the religious values at the heart of the educational process for Muslim children, but then to build into the process whatever else they need in order to learn to live as full British citizens. As al-Attas (1979, p 32) points out, it is more fundamental in Islam to produce a good man than a good citizen, for the good man will also no doubt be a good citizen, but the good citizen will not necessarily also be a good man. The consequences of such an approach for the curriculum and the context of schooling will be discussed shortly.

The third dimension of education involves the transmission of knowledge, and particularly the selection of what knowledge is to be transmitted. Much work remains to be done on Islamic epistemology, though the Islamic theologian al-Ghazali, the social theorist Ibn Khaldun and the various Muslim philosophers have all made significant contributions. As far as the nature of knowledge goes, one point on which all are

united is that knowledge cannot be divided into two classes, one secular and the other religious. All knowledge comes from God, and serves ultimately to make people aware of God and of their relationship with God. In his *Kitab al-'Ilm,* the ninth-century mystic Al-Muhasibi classifies knowledge into three types:

> *first, knowledge of what is lawful and unlawful, which is knowledge of what concerns this world and is outward knowledge; second, knowledge of what concerns the next world, which is inward knowledge; third, knowledge of God and His laws concerning His creatures in the two worlds, and this is a fathomless sea, and only the most learned of the faithful attain to it.*
>
> (Smith, 1935, p 57)

More normally in Islam, however, knowledge is categorised not according to its scope but according to its derivation. The First World Conference on Muslim Education based its classification of knowledge on the distinction between that which is derived from divine revelation and that which is derived from 'the human intellect and its tools which are in constant interaction with the physical universe on the levels of observation, contemplation, experimentation and application' (al-Attas, 1979, pp vii, 159). Ibn Khaldun (1958) subdivides the latter category into knowledge which is based on sense experience and knowledge which is based on logic and rational thinking. In Islam, the knowledge which is derived from divine revelation is the highest knowledge, not only because it relates most directly to God himself and his attributes, but also because it provides an essential foundation for all other knowledge. As was pointed out in Chapter Seven, people are free to do as they please so long as they remain loyal to the divine injunctions contained in the *Qu'ran* and the *shari'a.* Indeed, any pursuit of knowledge may be viewed as a form of worship in Islam so long as it is undertaken within the boundaries defined by revelation. The educational consequences of this are clear: whatever other knowledge is to be transmitted through

education, the knowledge which is derived from divine revelation is obligatory. Ashraf (1988b, pp 13-17) provides a rather more sophisticated hierarchical ranking of knowledge, involving a five-fold categorisation based on the derivation, nature and value of knowledge:

(i) spiritual knowledge, i.e. knowledge of God and his attributes;

(ii) moral knowledge, based on universal values linked to divine attributes;

(iii) intellectual knowledge, i.e. that acquired through the application of reason and logic;

(iv) knowledge which is derived from and helps to discipline the imagination;

(v) knowledge that grows from and helps to discipline sense-experience.

Since (i) and (ii) are the most important, they have to be 'instilled into a child from the earliest stages' (Ashraf, 1985, p 5), though the **understanding** of spiritual knowledge is likely to be achieved last, after an adequate training of the bodily sense, the imagination and the rational powers:

> *Intellectual discipline will help a child to proceed from the concrete to the abstract, from sense impression to ideation, and from matter-of-fact relationship to symbolisation. It is only when these abilities start growing that a child begins to appreciate the inter-relationship of disciplines and realises what he is emotionally conditioned to believe, that is, the presence of the Will of God in Nature and Man and how the entire creation is* ayatullah, *signs of God, manifestation of divine power, symbols of reality.*
>
> (ibid., pp 5-6)

The imparting of knowledge is not an educational goal in itself in Islam, but merely a means to an end, as al-Ghazali points out (n.d., Vol I, pp 83-9). The pursuit of knowledge is worthwhile only if it stimulates the moral and spiritual consciousness of the student and leads to *'iman* (faith) and *'amal-i salih* (virtuous action), which are constantly emphasised in the Qur'an (e.g. Sura 103, v 3). *'Ilm* (knowledge), *'iman* (faith) and *'amal* (action) go hand in hand, and together they generate *yaqin* (certainty). Certainty may sometimes be obtained through an acceptance of what the *'ulama'* (the learned) teach about the Qur'an and the Prophet. Islam therefore encourages an attitude of respectful humility towards such legitimate authority, and trust in the truth of the knowledge which it hands down. What ties all knowledge together into a unity, however, is the concept of *yaqin* (certainty); the Qur'an says 'And serve your Lord until certainty comes to you'. (Sura 15, v 99). Certainty is the conviction of *al-Haqq* (the truth), one of the names of God himself.

The Islamic conception of knowledge is thus at variance with the Western conception in two key points: first, it includes matters of faith and belief as if they were unproblematic; and secondly, it is not seen as valuable in itself or for, say, liberation, but is valuable only in so far as it serves to inculcate goodness in the individual and in the whole community. The implications for education are that the cultivation of faith is an essential part of education and that there is no justification for setting children free from their spiritual or moral moorings or creating doubt in their minds about revealed knowledge (Ashraf, 1988c, p 1). This does not mean, as Badawi (1979, p 117) points out, that religion should be used

> *to hamper the innovative spirit of man, ... to stifle any new idea or to cripple scientific enquiry.*

He argues that so long as society is religious and so long as science does not impinge on the province of religion, students must be allowed to specialise and students of medicine or engineering or geography cannot be expected to devote as much time to religious issues as students working in Islamic studies. However, religious education needs to be harmonised with all other disciplines, so that the Islamic principle that the pursuit of knowledge, whether religious or scientific, is 'a form of worship by which man is brought into closer contact with Allah' (Jamjoom in al-Attas, 1979, p vi) becomes a reality for Muslim students. Education is thus not to be seen as an end in itself, but as a way of bringing children more into line with God's purposes. Faith in God is axiomatic and is a major factor in determining who is to do the teaching, how and where the teaching is to be carried out and what is to be taught. It is now time to turn to a closer examination of these issues and to consider an Islamic view of the teacher, the context of education and the curriculum.

Traditional Muslim education in the *kuttab* and the *madrasa* provides us with a very different view of the role of the teacher from that currently held in Western society, but one which is much closer to fundamental Islamic principles. Teachers enjoyed very high status in the Muslim community, not least because of the emphasis the *Qur'an* and the *hadith* place on the pursuit of knowledge. But to be considered an *'alim* (a learned man) involved duties as well as privileges. Teaching was considered almost a religious obligation, and teachers were expected to show dedication and commitment in their task of consolidating the faith and spreading knowledge. Teachers had a special responsibility to nurture the young and develop their spiritual and moral awareness, and it was recognised that this was as likely to occur 'through imitation of a teacher and personal contact with him' (Ibn Khaldun, 1967, p 426) as through instruction. For this reason teachers were expected not only to be learned, but also to have a deep personal commitment to the faith and to be a living example of virtue and piety which students could unhesitatingly emulate. The teachers were accountable to the community not only for transmitting knowledge and for developing their students' potential as rational

beings, but also for initiating them into the moral, religious and spiritual values which the community cherished. Recent writers (e.g. Ashraf, 1988c, p 2) have drawn attention to the fact that the teacher's attitudes, characters, habits and beliefs will necessarily influence their students and have argued strongly that Muslim children should be taught by teachers, whatever their academic discipline, who are believers and whose lives are grounded on an unquestioned moral integrity. This provides another point of strong contrast with the liberal view.

As far as pedagogy is concerned, however, modern Islamic education cannot be considered bound by the traditions of Muslim education over the centuries. The use of corporal punishment, for example, which continues to be widespread in the *katatib* and the *madaris,* is grounded in tradition rather than in Islamic principles, and indeed al-Ghazali in his *Ihya' 'Ulum ad-Din* (n.d.) and Ibn Khaldun (1958) both disagree with the harsh treatment of children as psychologically damaging and likely to distort their love of learning and their understanding of human dignity. Similarly, the traditional dependence on rote-learning and memorisation is not intrinsic to Islamic education, as Ibn Khaldun (1958) recognised six hundred years ago when he defined education as 'a special skill whose aim is to establish the faculty of knowledge in those who learn, rather than to force them to memorise the offshoots of knowledge'. Nevertheless, modern Islamic education is likely to find much that is of value in traditional Muslim education, and indeed, as Badawi (1979) has shown, the latter has a number of characteristics which would appear strikingly modern even to Western eyes. There is a natural integration of the curriculum, there is a close personal relationship between the teacher and the taught, elitism is discouraged, undue attention is not paid to examinations, pupil grouping is less rigid and students are comparatively free to pursue their own interests. Above all, traditional Muslim education is not an activity separated from other aspects of society; it is rooted in the community it serves, responding to its needs and aspirations and preserving its values and beliefs.

What is absolutely vital on an Islamic view of education is that the ethos of the school is in harmony with fundamental Islamic principles, so that children are not alienated from the community to which they belong but are encouraged to become aware of their roots in that community and to understand its values. Since education is considered in Islam to be a lifelong process, of which formal education in schools and colleges is only one part, it is important for the integrated development of the personality that formal education should not pull the individual in a totally different direction from the informal education that takes place through such social institutions as the family, the local community, the mosque, the social or youth centre or the place of work (cf Khan, 1981, p 127). Muslim parents do not want schools to encourage a rift between children and parents or to cause conflict in children's minds. Children are immature and vulnerable to manipulation of various kinds, and need the stability and security that comes from being encouraged to conform at school to a coherent set of life principles which are consistent with the belief system of their home and community. If the ethos of the school is to be in harmony with fundamental principles, this means that schools should never put children in a position where they are required to act contrary to their faith. This has consequences for many aspects of school organisation, including uniform, school meals and co-education as well as several areas of the curriculum, which will be discussed shortly. It also means that children should not be encouraged to develop a questioning attitude to their own religion, or be forced into a position where they have to make a choice between a religious and a non-religious way of life, before they have developed the maturity of judgement, wisdom and breadth of knowledge and understanding which would make such a choice meaningful (Ashraf, 1988c, p 2). Finally, it means that schools should not allow children to pick up messages through the hidden curriculum (for example, through peer group pressure or the way the school is organised) that are likely directly or indirectly to undermine their faith. Al-Taftazani (1986, p 73) argues that custom is an important way of establishing principles in people's hearts. If a school has an Islamic ethos, it is constantly

reinforcing the sense of inward attachment to Islam which, as we have seen, is one of the basic objectives of Islamic education.

On the basis of what has been said so far, two principles can be set out according to which an Islamic curriculum must be constructed:

(i) Education must not be separated into two kinds - religious and secular. On the contrary, religion, which affects every aspect of life for the Muslim, must be at the very heart of all education as well as acting as the glue which holds together the entire curriculum into an integrated whole;

(ii) Muslims are free to study exactly what they please, so long as they do it in the spirit of Islam. Equally, although in the past 'learning' in Islam was associated with a balance and breadth of knowledge, Muslims must now be considered free to specialise in any branch of knowledge, subject only to the same proviso of remaining fully committed to the fundamental beliefs and values of Islam.

A number of features emerge from these two basic principles, which must characterise the Islamic curriculum. First, it must contain specific teaching about God and the way he has revealed himself to human beings, and guidance about how to regulate life in accordance with the divine injunctions contained in the *Qur'an* and the *shari'a*. For otherwise, it would be impossible to know whether one's pursuit of other knowledge was in the spirit of Islam or not. Secondly, the autonomy of the subject or discipline at least as understood in liberal thinking, is excluded, for all subjects and all knowledge need the guiding spirit of religion to give them purpose and direction; if religion is ignored, Muslims feel there is a danger that the pursuit of any domain of knowledge might lead to doubt, deception and constant searching and even to the corruption of faith and morals. Thirdly, it is clear that many subjects, perhaps all, cannot be studied as they are in the West. The changes that are required fall into three categories:

(a) Some subjects need specific changes to be made to their typical syllabuses and/or organisation in the West if they are to avoid the contravention of particular Islamic injunctions. For example, the tasting or handling of any pig products must be completely avoided in Home Economics, and the organisation of physical education, games and swimming must be adapted so that Muslim children, especially girls, are not encouraged or required to contravene Islamic rules on modesty and decency.

(b) Some subjects and topics that appear on Western curricula are best avoided altogether as likely to indulge, or encourage the improper use of, the bodily senses rather than disciplining them in the spirit of Islam. These subjects and topics include sex education, dancing, some aspects of art (e.g. nude drawing) and some aspects of music (especially modern popular music).

(c) Some subjects need radical transformation to bring them into line with Islamic values. Religious education is itself a prime example. As I have pointed out elsewhere (Halstead and Kahn-Cheema, 1987, pp 24-30), Muslims are not happy with reducing the teaching of Islam as far as their own children are concerned to one element in a world religious course, and they find the secularisation of religious education virtually incomprehensible. They believe that nurture in the faith is still central to religious education, which they consider to involve teaching about the value of religion generally and the provision of information about different religions as well as specific instruction in the child's own religion. Because they place considerable emphasis on learning by example, they do not accept that RE could ever be taught by an atheist, and they cannot see any justification for forcing children to step outside their own faith in order critically to assess its most fundamental beliefs.

Apart from RE, a considerable amount of work has already been done on ways to bring other subjects into line with Islamic beliefs and values; these include natural science (Naseef and Black, 1987; Mabud, 1988; Qutb, 1979; Nasr, 1982 1987b, 1988; Ashraf, 1986b; Bakr 1984); social science (I al-Faruqi, 1981; Majal, 1988; Sharifi, 1985; Zaman, 1984; Ba-Yunus and Ahmad, 1985; Mutahhari, 1986); history (Qutb, 1979); philosophy (Nasr, 1982); and literature (Ashraf and Medcalf, 1985; Ashraf 1982). Although it is sometimes presented as such (e.g. Shalabi, 1980), the process of radical transformation of the curriculum consists of much more than merely grafting or transplanting into modern Western knowledge an Islamic component; similarly it consists of much more than merely expunging what is directly offensive to Islam, though that may be an important first step. What is required is the reconstruction of the entire discipline in accordance with Islamic principles. One example may be sufficient to illustrate how this process may work out in practice.

Art clearly has a significant place in the Islamic world view, and such typical examples as Kufic calligraphy, mosque architecture and carpet weaving unambiguously reflect in both spirit and form their sources in Islamic revelation. Yet because of the absence of an Islamic philosophy of art, an Islamic theory of aesthetics or an Islamic art criticism, Western criteria tend to be applied not only by Western students of Islamic art but by Muslim students as well. Nasr (1989) argues strongly that art, whether Western or Islamic, must in future be taught to Muslims from an Islamic perspective, and that a satisfactory Islamic philosophy of art must be developed to provide the basis and framework of art education. This will involve an examination of the *Qu'ran* and the *sunna*, together with the works of Islamic theologians, philosophers, scientists and mystics and the codification of Islamic views of beauty, the origin of form, the concept of space, the nature of matter, the relation between unity and multiplicity, permanence and change, the fragility of the world, the sense of rhythm, symbolism and truth as well as the meaning, function, role and spiritual and social significance of art. It is likely to

involve a totally new hierarchical ranking of types of art, (cf L Al-Faruqi, 1982, p 201 ff) with the high position of calligraphy, geometric and arabesque designs, architecture and crafts being reflected in the art curriculum of schools. The goal of art education would be to see Islamic art once again ' with an eye illuminated by the vision of faith in the Islamic revelation' and to encourage the creation of works of art by Muslim artists and artisans 'which continue to praise the Creator and to reflect His beauty ... in accordance with the Islamic conception of Man as God's vice regent (*khalifat-Allah*) on earth' (Nasr, 1989, p 10).

In art, as in all aspects of Islamic education, the aim is clear: to involve religion at a fundamental level in everything that is to be studied, to help children to understand the importance of religion to every aspect of life, to encourage their commitment to a way of life lived in accordance with divine injunctions. We must now turn to a liberal critique of the Islamic view of education that has been expounded in this chapter.

* * * *

From a liberal perspective, the Islamic view of education set out above has deep flaws. First, it assumes the truth of a set of religious beliefs whose truth cannot be established objectively, and puts the transmission of these beliefs, without leaving them in any sense open to critical evaluation, at the heart of the educational experience. On this view, Islamic education is not really education at all, but a form of indoctrination. Secondly, the character of other kinds of knowledge is obscured, because the autonomy of the subject or discipline is not recognised. Thirdly, Islamic education offends the fundamental liberal value of the freedom of the individual, for instead of encouraging children to become personally and morally autonomous and to work out their own life plans for themselves free from external constraint, it unashamedly guides them, willy-nilly, into a pre-determined way of life. On a liberal view, education should liberate children, free them from the constraints of the present and the particular (Bailey, 1984);

it can never be the purpose of education merely to confirm any group in their own culture, as Phenix (1965, p 90 f) points out:

> *The purpose of academic teaching is to increase understanding, not to advocate a particular religious position. The only proper advocacy in the scholarly community is that of truth, and truth may manifestly be served best by remaining open to the possibility of new and better understanding.*

These criticisms clearly strike at the very heart of the concept of Islamic education, and cannot be ignored by Islamic thinkers. In fact, liberal educationalists have not written very much about Islamic education directly, but most of what has been written in recent years in opposition to Christian education and the Church school system is based on principles which are equally relevant to the liberal case against Islamic education. Indeed, when dismissing 'the whole idea of Christian education' as 'a kind of nonsense', Hirst (1974b, p 7, 77) makes it clear that what he says about the Christian religion is likely to apply just as much to other faiths. And when Flew (1972, p 106) describes the educational programme of the Roman Catholic Church as a model case of indoctrination, he would no doubt say the same about any system of schooling, (Islamic or other) which maintained its separate existence solely or primarily to inculcate its own distinctive doctrines in the young.

The notion of indoctrination provides an appropriate starting point for a closer examination of the liberal case against Islamic education. Liberal educationalists would no doubt agree with Barrow (1981, p 150) that schools which have 'the intention of committing children to a set of beliefs ... are guilty of indoctrination', particularly if the aim is to make the beliefs unshakeable ones (White, 1967, p 189; Flew, 1972, p 75) and if they are the beliefs of a restricted number of people where the restriction follows from their inability 'to provide publicly acceptable evidence for their truth' (Gribble, 1969, p 34). Indoctrination, we are told, may even occur unintentionally, if teachers

take for granted certain beliefs in their teaching (White, 1967, p 189) or speak of their beliefs with a particular 'emotional warmth' (Cox, 1983, p 65). Indoctrination is both morally and intellectually objectionable. Morally, because it conflicts with the obligation to bring up children as morally autonomous people (White, 1982, p 166); it implies a lack of respect for persons by denying them 'independence and control over their lives' (Kleinig, 1982, p 65). Intellectually, because it subordinates a commitment to reason to a set of beliefs that cannot be shown objectively to be true, and fails to make plain to children the controversial or questionable status of those beliefs.

Hirst in particular has expanded in the latter point in considerable detail. He distinguishes between a 'primitive' concept of education in which a group merely passes on what it holds to be true or valuable to the next generation (1974b, p 80), and a 'much more sophisticated' view of education which stresses an open, rational, critical approach to all beliefs, designed so that pupils will develop 'commitment to justified beliefs on appropriate grounds'. (1983, p 3). It is acknowledged on this latter view that education must start with some system of beliefs, but the maintenance of that system is not an educational goal. Education aims instead 'at the development of the rational life of every individual' (1985, p 13). In cases where particular beliefs are contested (religious and moral beliefs are particularly relevant here, though Hirst (1985, p 2) argues that it is in the nature of **every** kind of belief to be challengeable) this is best dealt with precisely by presenting challengeable beliefs as challengeable, and by outlining the nature and extent of the challenge in any given area. The critical examination of different and rival belief systems should be encouraged, so that individuals may develop commitment to what they judge to be the most rationally justifiable beliefs and values in their particular circumstances. Education must be 'open-ended in the outcome of particular beliefs which pupils might come to hold' (1983, p 3). Hirst questions whether the 'primitive' concept of education mentioned above is really education at all, since the aim of propagating any faith is 'something quite other than education' (1974b, p 89); but in the more sophisticated sense of open,

rational development, 'there can be no such thing as a Christian education' (1972, p 11), because religious beliefs are a matter of private individual commitment, there is a lack of agreement not only about the status of religious beliefs but even about the criteria by which such beliefs could be judged (1967, p 331), and therefore religious beliefs must not be allowed to 'determine public issues' such as education (1974b, p 3). According to Hirst, religion should be studied as part of education (1973, p 10), and such study should involve genuine empathy and an appropriate form of engagement, but the teaching must be accompanied by a clear indication of the status of the religious claims (1972, p 8), and 'it is necessary to education that no religious position be embraced' (1974b, p 89). Children must be left free to make their own decisions about what attitude to have towards religious beliefs.

The position advanced by Hirst is so very far removed from the Islamic view of education set out in the present chapter, that there is a danger of a total lack of comprehension. Unless some way can be found of making one set of claims intelligible to the other side the disagreement will stay at the level of mere assertion and counter-assertion, with no real communication or dialogue taking place. I have already said that liberals have not so far engaged directly in any serious way with the Islamic view of education, but it is equally true that no serious attempt has been made by Muslim scholars to respond to the charges liberals have made against a religiously oriented education, at least in language which liberals can understand. So the first point that needs to be established is whether dialogue between liberals and Muslims is in fact possible, whether the language they speak has enough in common for some sort of debate to proceed. Can the Muslims, for example, respond to Hirst's charges in a way which accords with Islamic principles yet in language which is familiar, or at least comprehensible, to liberals? As a non-Muslim with a life-long experience of Islam, I have attempted elsewhere (Halstead, 1986) to sketch out a few possible starting points for an Islamic response which meets these conditions. The present chapter will conclude with a brief summary of these.

Possible Islamic rejoinders to the liberal critique of Islamic education fall into three main categories. The first focusses on the concept of indoctrination, and involves the claim that there is a significant difference between enforcing belief and encouraging it. The second relates to the nature of belief and proposes that religious beliefs are essentially different from other types of belief, such as scientific ones, and hence cannot be validated or dismissed by the same criteria. The third picks up the concept of autonomy and argues that there are limits to people's control over their own lives and that individuals can never make decisions in isolation from the community in which they live. Let us look at each of these in turn.

There is an ambiguity in the concept of indoctrination, as indeed there is in the phrase 'inculcating belief' which was used earlier. It can be understood in the strong sense of forcing children into the position where they come to accept the truth of a proposition or set of propositions 'in such a way that nothing will shake the belief' (White, 1967, p 181), or in the weaker sense of the presentation of a definite world view to children as part of a 'coherent primary culture' (Ackerman, 1980, p 141; cf McLaughlin, 1984, p 78), which provides them with a stable moral and religious foundation until they are old enough to make up their own minds about religion. The former is certainly as alien to the spirit of Islam as it is to liberalism. Islam has never supported compulsion in religion (cf Brohi, 1979, p 74) and has always accepted that individuals must make their own free choice when it comes to religious commitment (Ashraf, 1988b, p 2). Hulmes (1979, p 13) argues in any case that a remarkable number of people do in fact escape from the consequences of even the most rigorous indoctrination, and that it is perhaps more difficult to achieve indoctrination in the strong sense than has sometimes been claimed. The weaker sense of indoctrination is more problematic. Liberals commonly claim that religious values and beliefs must be taught in a way that does not prejudice the individual's right to choose between religions or between religious and non-religious world views or even to stand back from the whole debate (cf Kenny, 1983) and that this requires some sort of neutrality in

the presentation of religion in schools. But there are both logical and practical difficulties with any such neutral approach. Clearly, different religious positions cannot each be presented as 'true', as Hardy (1982, p 111) points out, since accepting the truth of one tradition requires that other traditions be dismissed as mere truth claims; but if we present each tradition as a truth claim, then we have abandoned our neutrality and prejudged the question whether any tradition is in fact true. At least, the pupil is likely to pick up the hidden-curriculum message that neutrality is superior to commitment, or even that disbelief is superior to belief (cf Barrow, 1974, p 56). In practice, the neutral approach does not often extend beyond education **about** religion, and reduces the study of religion to history, literature, sociology or general knowledge. While this may go some way to encouraging a sympathetic attitude to different faiths, it can only promote a very limited religious understanding. Even to encourage children to enter imaginatively into the experiences of believers is unsatisfactory, for there is a world of different between acting a king in role play and actually being a king. The understanding which these approaches develop is incomplete because they miss the essential ingredient of **commitment**, which 'is, ultimately, what religion is about' (Hulmes, 1979, p 79). On the Islamic view, children are to be educated in a school whose ethos is consistent with the values and beliefs of their parents and local community, by teachers who serve as examples of reflective commitment to those values (cf Dunlop, 1984, p 110 f). The aim of such education, however, is not to imprison children within a particular culture, and it is rather odd to call the process 'indoctrination', at least if the term is to retain its perjorative sense. For children's minds do not operate in a vacuum until they are mature enough to reflect on the nature of social or moral rules and it seems better to set them to work on what their parents and community believe to be of value than to leave them floundering, open to exploitation by the unscrupulous, or an easy prey to irrational pressures. Further justification for such a process is not hard to find. White (1982, p 93 f) talks of the need for individuals to learn to resolve conflicts for themselves, but the resolution of conflicts presupposes an acceptance of beliefs, for conflicts are real only if the rules in conflict are seen as binding. Logically, therefore,

the acceptance of rules, not just an awareness of them, must precede the capacity to resolve conflict (cf Peters, 1981, p 169). Secondly, it is logically impossible to make a rational choice between moral rules without knowing what a rule is. Children need to be taught the nature of rules (cf Straughan, 1982), and the understanding involved is likely to come through practice and experience of rules. Thirdly, one cannot simply inform children of the options available, train them in rational decision-making and then leave it up to them. They need emotional stability, security and confidence if they are to grow into mature, responsible, reflective, authentic adults, and an education which provides them with a coherent, stable world view based on the beliefs and values they have met through their primary socialisation at home would appear to satisfy these conditions particularly well.

The second Islamic response to the liberal critique involves a rejection of Hirst's claim that **all** beliefs are the result of conceptual schemes that have been devised or constructed to 'capture' human experience, and that all beliefs are therefore essentially challengeable and should be presented as such to children (1983, p 3). Muslims would have no difficulty in accepting this claim with regard to scientific, political and all other beliefs that are the product of human activity, which Ashraf (1988, p 1) calls 'conjectural' knowledge; but an Islamic perspective demands that religious beliefs be considered different from other beliefs in their origin, their object, their nature and their scope. For the Muslim, the religious beliefs of Islam are founded on divine revelation, and to suggest that they should be taught in a way that leaves them open to critical challenge would be to place the human intellect above the divine. The Qur'an is God's final revelation to human beings, and thus religious belief is anchored in the absolute in a way that other beliefs (scientific or political) are not. In a passage already quoted, the Qur'an says

When God and his messenger have decreed a matter, it is not for any believer, man or woman, to have the choice in the affair. Anyone who disobeys God and his messenger has gone astray into manifest error.

(Sura 33, verse 36)

Hirst (1983, p 3) argues that children must be encouraged to engage in 'critical reflection on beliefs in all areas in the interests of rational beliefs'. Islamic beliefs, however, are seen ultimately as a gift of God, in the form of inner illumination. Criteria of rationality, at least if starkly construed, cannot be all-pervasive in a discussion of appropriate grounds for assent to such religious beliefs. If, as is claimed, the beliefs are founded on divine revelation rather than on humanly constructed conceptual schemes, then a reflective investigation of them can only concern itself with the structure of beliefs that has been built upon this foundation of divine revelation, not with the revelation itself. This process might reasonably involve examining the socially constructed system of beliefs for internal coherence by measuring it against the fundamental claims made by the religion, but even this kind of 'measuring' is likely to be more productive if it is based on spiritual insight and wisdom rather than on narrow rationality. Indeed, such a process may not be called critical, rational reflection at all unless rationality is conceived in very broad terms as taking into account the development of the whole human personality: intuition, the conscience, the feelings, the will, the dispositions and the moral, social and spiritual dimensions of personality as well as the narrowly rational.

I argue elsewhere (Halstead, 1986, ch 6) that there are two sides to faith in Islam: the private spiritual response to religion, and the public structure of beliefs. These correspond to two Arabic terms that have already been discussed: *tariqa*, (literally, a narrow path), which refers to the individual's spiritual growth towards certainty and perfection, and *shari'a* (literally, a broad highway), which refers to the divinely ordained way of life for the whole community. The *tariqa* is a private individual matter

based on spiritual experience, and it is difficult to explain in terms that are open to objective rational evaluation and assessment, though the concept is by no means exclusive to Islam. Wittgenstein (1958) suggests that there can be a sudden moment when certainty comes to a person, though the ground will presumably have been already prepared by the process of socialisation. MacIntyre (1959, p 219) says that it is a matter of conversion. Others have seen its origin in the human will, or in a basic intuition about the existence of things. As already mentioned, Muslims see it as a gift from God. *Haqq al-yaqin* (the truth of spiritual certainty) arises from *wahy* (direct revelation from God) which speaks to the human heart, enabling people to perceive God and understand the meaning and purpose of existence. Individual spiritual experience, however, has to be attached in some way to the 'real' world (Sealey, 1985, p 11); otherwise it might be totally unintelligible to an outsider and capable of being dismissed as a complete illusion. In Islam, individual spiritual experience is attached to the 'real' world by involving commitment to a publicly recognisable way of life. When sufficient people share the commitment, the way of life gains currency as a social structure. The Qur'an says,

> *For each of you we have appointed a divine law and a way of life.*
>
> (Sura 5, verse 52)

The *shari'a* (divine law) is the public expression of Islam, and provides the unifying element in the *umma* (community of believers). Naturally, it is possible for an individual to consent to the outer form of Islam and follow the precepts of the *shari'a* without understanding or experiencing spiritual certainty himself, just as it is possible for him to follow the precepts without appreciating their internal coherence and consistency. The structure of Islamic law is in fact a remarkably rational one, but when it is argued back to first principles it is found to depend on a consensus of spiritual certainty which is shared by the community of believers but which is not open to objective critical investigation. Wittgenstein argues that it is impossible to find criteria

by which to judge that the religious views of one community are inferior to those of another; one is simply committed to them or not, and it is impossible to justify (or condemn) such a commitment outside the way of life of which it forms a part. Within its own system, it may be totally coherent and justifiable, but the fundamental principles on which it is based can only be understood by those who accept the system. As Wittgenstein (1958, p 226) says, 'What has to be accepted, the given, is - so one could say - forms of life', and by 'forms of life' he appears to mean what Muslims call *umma*.

Islamic education involves encouraging children to develop commitment to the shared way of life in the hope that they may in due course come to understand the underlying principles of that way of life and find spiritual certainty for themselves. To encourage such commitment to the way of life of the community of believers into which a child is born cannot be viewed on indoctrinatory in the strong sense defined above, but is a normal part of the socialisation process, important for the stability of the community and the security of the child. Islamic education respects individual freedom with regard to the private development of spiritual qualities or emotions but does not extend that freedom to the public face of religion, the commitment to the shared way of life (though that commitment could become increasingly **reflective** as the pupils become older). One of the purposes of Islamic education is thus to enable the Islamic community to pass on the beliefs and values that it shares to the next generation; to fail to do so would have every appearance of the wilful self-destruction of the community. If MacIntyre is right, it may be only through such communities that 'civility and the intellectual moral life can be sustained through the new dark ages which are already upon us' (1981, p 244 f).

The discussion has already begun to move into the third Islamic response to the liberal critique; this involves the claim that there are limits to people's control over their own lives. On a liberal view, individuals should strive to be free agents, able to make

choices and plan their commitment to religious beliefs according to rational principles, not necessarily in isolation from the community to which they belong, but at least in a way which enables them to balance the influences of that community against other considerations which may affect their beliefs. By equipping children with the means to make rational choices and base their beliefs on appropriate evidence, education, on this view, should help children to become independent of the pressures of socialisation, of moral and religious persuasion and of vocational utility. White argues that the only real alternative to this kind of autonomy, which gives one the ability to resolve conflicts for oneself, is 'blind reliance on authority' (1982, p 50 f), but he rejects the latter on the grounds that there are no authorities on how best to live (as distinct from those who claim to be authorities: 1984, p 119).

In its extreme form, the liberal notion of encouraging rational choice and the individual construction of belief is easy to discredit. O'Hear writes disparagingly of 'lonely autonomous agents in an emotionally empty state of rational reflection' (1982, p 127 f) and Pole elequently reminds us of the damage too rigid an emphasis on rationality might inflict on unformed minds:

> *to their potential flowering or promised crops ... this bright insecticide, preterlucid 'rationality', meant only for pests, proves a blight, sterile and fatal.*
>
> (1972, p 174)

It is clearly necessary therefore to distinguish the more extreme form of autonomy from one which is rather less severe. What I shall call strong autonomy insists that all beliefs must be held open to a rigorous criticism based on rationality (cf Dearden, 1968, p 48) and that each person must work out a life plan for himself, similarly work out how to resolve the particular conflicts that inevitably occur in his life and ultimately be

judged by his own moral standards. In what I shall call weak autonomy, the individual needs at least to come to see the point of social or moral rules and to give his consent to them. This is close to what Berger and Luckmann (1967, p 149 ff) call the process of 'internalisation', except that it is here the result of **conscious** reflection, in which the stage is reached where the individual no longer needs to be ordered or reminded what to do. There is no passive, blind or unreflective reliance on authority, and a person's thoughts and actions are his own, understandable only by 'reference to his own activity of mind' (Dearden, 1972, p 453). The difference between strong and weak autonomy is thus a matter of degree. The former emphasises critical investigation and the creation of a value system for oneself; the latter, reflective understanding and an informed commitment to a (perhaps pre-packaged) value system. The former puts a heavy stress on individualism; the latter acknowledges the need for respect for the social context and social tradition in which the individual grows up (cf Dearden, 1984, p 111; Pring, 1984, p 73). The former requires people to find rational justification for every belief they hold. The latter allows people to accept things on authority so long as it is reasonable to do so and only requires that **if** they reason, they should avoid partiality, incoherence, inconsistency and irrelevance; it does not require that **everything** should be subjected to rational scrutiny (cf Barrow, 1975, p 188).

I have argued elsewhere (Halstead, 1986, ch 4) that weak autonomy is broadly in harmony with Islamic education, but that strong autonomy is neither consistent with Islamic principles nor philosophically sound. If each individual has to work out a life plan for himself, then how is he to find any criteria for his choices except on the basis of further criteria he chooses until he finally just plumps for something (cf O'Hear, 1985, p 149)? Autonomous choice ultimately lacks weight if it ignores human community and human history. There are practical problems with strong autonomy as well. It has an element of elitism, in that the critical rationality which it requires is likely to be attained more fully and more quickly by some people than by others. Even White (1982, p 137) concedes that not all children will find in autonomy a realistic life-aim.

While people in higher social brackets are likely to find the possession of autonomy an asset in their work, others may find it a positive hindrance. It can thus be argued that to emphasise strong autonomy in education is simply a new way of bolstering up a hierarchical structure of society and of perpetuating social inequalities. Strong autonomy may also breed a sort of arrogance, which rejects tradition just because it is old or unfashionable (Ward, 1983, p 54). In stressing rationality, it may underestimate the need to feel what it is to be a person among other persons (O'Hear, 1982, p 128). In encouraging people to question their moral beliefs, it may merely make them confused and 'unmeshed with the society as it is' (Barrow, 1975, p 188) with the result that the social stability of the community comes under pressure. Integrity is much more likely to be found, not when each individual tries to become his own authority on morality (as would be required by strong autonomy), but when individuals develop a rational attitude to tradition and authority (through a form of weak autonomy), with due respect for their social roots. So White (1982, p 50) is setting up a false dichotomy when he claims that the only real alternative to autonomy is 'blind reliance on authority'. A middle path, which aims at achieving a **reflective** reliance on authority by emphasising understanding, sound judgement, breadth of knowledge and a respectful appreciation of authority and expertise, is a genuine alternative, and is much more in line with Islamic education. Peters proposes something very similar when he says that all children should be initiated into a conventional morality (i.e. doing what others say is right), but as and when they are able, they move towards a rational moral code in which they develop 'a rational attitude both to tradition and to authority' with the result that 'authority becomes rationalised, not superseded' (1981, p 134).

The Islamic approach is broadly in line with Peters' here, except that it puts less emphasis on the individual and more on the rational consensus (*ijma'*) of the learned (*'ulama'*) or of the community as a whole (*umma*), thus tending to avoid the dangers of extremism or fanaticism. It is important in Islam that the beliefs which the community agrees on, whether moral or religious, come to be seen initially as objective reality by

children. Gradually children will develop (and will be encouraged by schools to develop) an awareness of how their own personhood (their rational, emotional, spiritual, social and moral natures) locks into this objective reality. The aim of this kind of education is simply (if one may be excused the horticultural image) to produce strong roots, which will be able to support a fuller blossoming into understanding and reflective commitment in the course of time. Both direct teaching and the school ethos, on an Islamic view, will encourage students to see beyond the outward manifestations (or 'pictures' to use Wittgenstein's term) until they reach the stage of understanding the deeper spiritual truths behind the outward form of the social and moral rules that they have learned, and make them their own. But at the same time, those who have not reached, or perhaps will never reach, this form of weak autonomy, will not be treated with disdain or left to flounder, but will have a stable base for their own lives. This form of education is thus more egalitarian, more morally coherent and more attentive to the full personality of the child than the starker forms of liberal education that are currently fashionable in some quarters; it is also more conducive to social order. For many Muslims, to encourage such a spirit of reflective commitment in young people is a first priority of education.

* * * *

In the present chapter I have attempted to sketch an Islamic view of education in line with the framework of Islamic values presented in Chapter Seven. This view was presented first in strictly Islamic terms, but then in response to a liberal critique of the Islamic view, it was re-expressed in terms that are more accessible to liberals. In addition to outlining an Islamic view of education, therefore, it is hoped that the present chapter has established that some sort of dialogue is possible between liberals and Muslims, in spite of their very different world views. Chapter Nine now takes the process of dialogue and negotiation further, to see if sufficient common ground can be found on which to construct an agreed common system of education.

CHAPTER NINE

ISLAM AND LIBERALISM : THE SEARCH FOR COMMON GROUND

The purpose of the present chapter is to consider whether Muslims and liberals can find sufficient common ground for a common education system to be developed that is acceptable to both. Such a position can obviously be reached only by a process of dialogue and by a willingness for each side to come to understand the other. Both liberals and Muslims are in fact committed in principle to the process of dialogue, liberals because they see it as a means of persuasion which they consider preferable to coercion and more in harmony with democratic ideals, and Muslims because as a minority in the West they recognise (as a very minimum) that far from being able to insist on a system based on Islamic values for their own children, they are unlikely even to have their views acknowledged in educational planning if they are not willing to enter discussions with non-Muslims.

It has already been shown that Islam and liberalism do in fact have some common ground in their views of education. For example, both are dubious about the educational value of too strong an emphasis on vocational training. Both stress the need for some sort of integrated curriculum, with due attention paid to breadth and balance. Both are anxious to discourage elitism and to promote individual development. But in other areas the gulf remains quite wide, and on closer examination even areas of apparent agreement (such as a commitment to the pursuit of truth and justice) cannot be taken for granted, for it became clear in Chapter Seven that terms such as 'truth' and 'justice' do not necessarily mean the same to Muslims as they do to liberals. The question that is now to be explored is whether any shifting of positions is

possible that will bring Muslims and liberals genuinely closer without involving a blind eye being turned to the very real differences that do exist between the two perspectives.

In Chapter Eight it was shown that perhaps the biggest difference between the liberal and the Islamic perspectives on education is that the latter is based on a set of values that cannot in liberal eyes be justified rationally. In Chapter Five, these were called community values, as distinct from public values (those which can be justifiably be presented as universally appropriate) and individual values (those which belong to the domain of free personal choice and commitment). In the first section of the present chapter it is intended to consider whether the existence of community values as a distinct category could be conceded by liberals, and if so, whether it could be accepted that they have an important part to play in education. In the second section, the possibility is explored that Muslims might come to hold their beliefs in a manner which leaves them more open to critical debate. The implications for educational practice are touched on briefly here, but will be examined more fully in Chapter Ten.

* * * *

Some clarification of the concept of 'community values' is needed to begin with. I am using the term 'values' in the sense of beliefs about what constitutes right, good or desirable actions or situations. In other words, values can provide the basis for moral or other judgements about actions or states of affairs. Some sociologists (e.g. Berger and Luckman, 1967) have been concerned to explore the relationship between values and the way situations are defined, the way that values help us to understand the meaning of social situations, and the origin of values themselves, whether in isolated individuals rebelling against their own society, in individuals interacting in any given social situation or in whole communities or societies which 'produce definitions of the overall reality of human life' (Berger and Berger, 1974, p 368). Weber (1967), for example, has argued that the Protestant ethic produced exactly these values (such as

honesty, hardwork, rational planning and so on) that were conducive to the growth of capitalism. In the particular strand of liberal thought which has been under consideration in the last few chapters, the sociological claim is accepted that all beliefs and values are

> *the result of conceptual schemes that have been devised or constructed to 'capture' human experience,*
>
> (Hirst, 1983, p 2)

but this is used as the basis for the **normative** argument that all beliefs and values should be kept open to rational investigation. Hirst argues, as we saw in the previous chapter, that in all areas people must expect their beliefs and values to be challenged in the light of new circumstances, evidence, experience and the development of alternative forms of belief. Such rational investigation may confirm that there are certain values (e.g. equality) that can 'justifiably be presented as universally appropriate' (Swann Report, 1985, p 4), but in all other cases, the fundamental freedom of individuals to differ over the beliefs and values that they hold must be respected (cf Hirst, 1974b). This has important consequences for education. Liberals do of course recognise that all education takes place in a particular social context whose way of life involves beliefs and values which 'must necessarily be communicated to young children' (Hirst, 1983, p 3); but education is in no way concerned to **reinforce** those beliefs and values. Rather children are to be encouraged to engage in critical reflection on their beliefs and values, so that they may come to understand, for example, what it is about certain values which makes commitment to them 'universally appropriate' and so that in areas of legitimate diversity they may come to assent freely to beliefs and values 'on appropriate grounds' (*ibid*). In a sense, Muslims, too, accept the social construction of their beliefs and values. The *shari'a* (Muslim law), for example, is a rational development of a legal system based on four sources: the *Qur'an*, the *hadith* (sayings of the Prophet), *qiyas* (analogy) and *ijma'* (consensus). The formulation and the

interpretation of the *shari'a* is the task of the '*ulama*' (the learned), whose authority is accepted on account of their religious insight, wisdom, intellectual expertise and knowledge of the *Qur'an* and the Prophet Muhammad. However, although the beliefs and values embodied in the *shari'a* cannot be justified (at least to the satisfaction of liberals) as universally appropriate, Muslims do not accept that 'education cannot operate on the assumption of the justification of those beliefs' (Hirst, 1983, p 4). On the contrary, it is central to the Islamic view of education that these beliefs and values are taken for granted and are presented to Muslim children as appropriate for their acceptance and commitment. To do otherwise would, on an Islamic view, be to promote doubt or scepticism at the expense of faith and commitment, to stress the importance of individual judgement over that of the community and perhaps eventually to undermine the way of life of the whole community. This set of beliefs and values, that liberals wish to see taught in a critically open way which respects individual freedom and which Muslims wish to be taken for granted in the education of their children, is what I mean by the phrase 'community values'.

Community values are precisely those values that are shared by a whole community, but not by those outside the community (though they may of course overlap to a greater or less extent with the values of other communities). I have so far referred exclusively to the Islamic community, which may be understood on the local level as the Muslims of a particular town or district or, more fundamentally, as an international group (*umma*) which transcends barriers of race, language, state, culture or class but is united by a common religious adherence. But it is a feature of any community - and by community I mean a social group which is bound together by at least one significant shared characteristic, such as nationality, region, language, culture or religion - that it has its own distinctive values. Taking his example from the Greeks, Hampshire (1982, p 150-1) argues that

the glory of being Greek emerged in following the social customs, the habits in matters of address and social manners and in conduct generally, which are distinctively Greek; and the glory of being Athenian, or being Spartan, rather than of being just Greek, resided in following the very different and distinctive customs of these two very discriminating cities. If the word 'glory' seems too high flown and seems an exaggeration in this context, one could say instead that the point of thinking of oneself as Greek or as Athenian resided in the thought of the distinctiveness of their way of life; and their way of life consisted not only of social customs and habits of address and habits of conduct more generally, but also of distinctive moral codes and principles, with typical prescriptions derived from them. This implies that no convergence to general agreement is required in a justification of these prescriptions.

Durkheim, too, appears to maintain that membership of any group or community involves, and is to be understood in terms of, a distinctive set of values and a distinctive way of life. He argues (1933) that individuals need to be integrated into a wider moral community if they are to avoid the dangers of *anomie* (loss of norms and values), and that social unity and order are possible only because people share a *conscience collective* (a consciousness of common moral values). The values, beliefs and normal patterns of behaviour that make up this collective consciousness in any given community achieve coherence and unity by being linked to an overarching view of reality, which Durkheim (1915) calls 'religion', though it must be remembered that Durkheim uses the term 'religion' in a much wider sense than common usage, to cover any framework which claims to provide ultimate meanings for human experience and activities (including nationalism, Marxism and so on, as well as specific religions). Religion is thus an expression of basic social or community values, and any accompanying rituals serve to reinforce the unity of the community. Berger and Luckmann (1967) go further and argue that religion plays a crucial legitimating role in

the social construction of reality. By providing ultimate meaning for human experience, religion serves as a 'shield against the terror of anomie' (Berger, 1969). It is hardly surprising therefore that religion and the community values which it legitimates under its overarching framework have traditionally occupied a central place in the education of the young. Durkheim sees the transmission of community values as a major function of education:

> *Education is the influence exercised by adult generations on those that are not yet ready for social life. Its object is to arouse and to develop in the child a certain number of physical, intellectual and moral states which are demanded of him by both the political society as a whole and the special milieu for which he is specifically destined.*
>
> (Durkheim, 1956, p 71)

On this view, education primarily serves the community's interests and constrains the individual to conform to its collective values and norms. Its main function is one of socialisation. Durkheim's analysis seems equally applicable at a time of increasing secularisation, at least in the West, when organised religions have experienced difficulties sustaining their influence on social life; for on Durkheim's definition, society always has religion, but 'religion' may now take the form of national identity, ethnicity or whatever, rather than being grounded in a belief in God, or gods or other supernatural entities. Some sort of overarching framework still exists which provides the values which are transmitted through education. Thus sociological research has uncovered the typically American values of ambition, competitiveness and individual achievement that are reinforced by American education, in contrast with Soviet education which lays stress on the values of discipline, loyalty and co-operation with others for collective achievement (Berger and Berger, 1974, p 74-5). Of course, the transmission of such community values is often tacit rather than overt. Children were (and perhaps still are) encouraged to internalise the values and norms of white middle-

class culture in the U.K., we are told, more through the hidden than the overt curriculum (cf Keddie, 1973). Sir Keith Joseph, on the other hand, when Secretary of State for Education, argued that the shared values which are distinctive of British society and culture should feature openly in education (Kimberley, 1986, p 107-8).

It must be emphasised that in the above discussion I am concerned with values outside the minimum framework which rationality legitimates and the public interest demands. Schools have virtually always provided education which is in excess of what is required by the public interest, as was pointed out in Chapter Five, and Strike (1982b, p 88-9) claims that with the expansion of the influence of schools at the expense of that of the family, the church and the community, schools are under a stronger obligation than ever to promote such supernumerary values. As was shown in Chapter Two, what many Muslims in the U.K. are now seeking is not an education which is in conflict with fundamental values or with the public interest; rather, they are demanding that where community values are passed on to children, it should be their own Islamic community values that are passed on to their own chidren. They are quite happy to respect the right of any other community to do the same (cf Khan-Cheema *et al*, 1986, p 14).

So far, I have tried to make clear what community values are. They differ from individual values, because far from depending on individual choice and self determination, they have a fixedness and a closedness which enables them to be perceived as objective reality by those who have internalised them (Berger and Berger, 1974, pp 80-5). They differ from public values in that, although they are not untouched by criticism or reflection (cf Hampshire, 1978, p 6), they are culturally rather than rationally justified; they are part of what is involved in being a member of a group. In describing community values, I have inevitably touched on some of the arguments that can be raised in support of giving them an important role in education;

but I will set these out more fully in due course. Before going any further, however, I want to sketch out a liberal response to the notion of community values.

From a liberal perspective, there are three major problems with the notion of community values. The first relates to the liberal view of beliefs, which has already been discussed. On this view, all beliefs and values are essentially challengeable and should be held in an open-ended way that recognises that they may need to be revised after critical investigation. Certain values, such as justice, may emerge from such appraisal as universally appropriate, in which case they will provide a boundary within which individuals can develop their own concepts of the good (Rawls, 1982, p 160-61). But as far as all other beliefs and values go, they need to be held in a way which recognises that they may be challenged in the light of new circumstances or evidence (Hirst, 1983, p 2), whether they are 'community' values or not. The presentation of a particular set of beliefs and values to children for their uncritical acceptance and commitment thus runs counter to the most fundamental principles of liberalism. No special status can be given, on a liberal account, to a set of values simply because they are traditional, are shared by a whole community and form the basis of the distinctive identity of individuals in that community.

The second problem from a liberal perspective is precisely that if community values are presented in education as something fixed and requiring uncritical commitment, this robs the individual of his rightful freedom to make decisions for himself and 'reduces him from a free person to a bee tied to a hive' (Dahrendorf, 1968, p 34). It fails to respect the person as an individual and thus buys social cohesion and stability at too high a price to the individual. As was made clear in Chapter Four, a distinctive feature of liberalism is that it does not provide all the answers, but 'leaves the ethical problem for the individual to wrestle with' (Friedman, 1962, p 12). This raises questions about the concept of personhood, which will be discussed shortly.

The third problem is that there can be no justification on a liberal view for presenting one particular set of community values as fixed in a pluralist society. It was shown in Chapter Six that a pluralist society is necessarily characterised by the existence of different beliefs, values and ways of life. Yet if a pluralist society is to be a society, there has also to be a sufficiently broad range of ideals, values and procedures held in common, and the groups that make up the society 'must have regard for the common good in the pursuit of their own objectives' (Crittenden, 1982, p 21). But how is a sufficiently broad framework of **common** values to be achieved? Clearly what have so far been described as **public** values (those which can be justifiably presented as universally appropriate in a pluralist democracy) will provide the basis on which a common framework can be constructed, but they are not sufficiently broad to provide the complete framework. Similarly, as White (1987, p 16-17) points out, a framework consisting of the highest common factor of values actually held in common by all the groups in a pluralist society, will be too **thin** to serve any significant function. Yet the Swann Report (DES, 1985, pp 5-7) argues convincingly that it is impossible for each community to retain its own values untouched by other groups; and the attempt by any one group in society (whether or not it forms the majority) to impose its values on other groups, except where this is justifiable in terms of the public interest, would be seen as contravening the spirit of liberalism. The liberal answer, according to Haydon (1986, 1987), White (1987) and others, lies in negotiation. What is envisaged is that groups will come together, aware of their different value orientations but aware also of the need for a common framework in areas of common life (especially legal, political and economic life) and willing therefore to enter into discussions with a view to reaching agreement on certain matters of values. This approach is justified on the grounds that what an ethical theory needs to be, in order to offer a resolution of problems, is not **true**, but **agreed** (Haydon, 1986, p 98), and that there is value in the process of democratic negotiation *per se* (White, 1987, pp 20-23).

To sum up, in so far as liberals are prepared to concede the importance of community values at all, they are not conceptualised in the same way at all as they are on an Islamic view. To liberals, they consist of a negotiated framework of commonly accepted values, and even if broad agreement is reached over them within society, they are still to be considered challengeable and must be transmitted to children in a critically open manner and in a way which respects the ultimate freedom of individuals to make choices for themselves.

Before we proceed with a response to the liberal critique, one specific Islamic reaction must be noted. It would not be possible in principle for an Islamic group to enter into the sort of negotiation of a framework of common values that Haydon talks of. What matters for Muslims more than that an ethical framework is agreed is that it is true, and it is precisely because the Islamic ethics are considered to be based on divine revelation that they are not open to open-ended negotiation. If Muslims are to enter into dialogue with non-Muslims over values (which is what the present chapter is about), the aim of the engagement on an Islamic view must be to share ideas, to achieve greater mutual understanding, to see if more common ground can be discovered than was realised before, which may justify greater co-operation. The aim cannot be to compromise fundamental beliefs and values in any way in the interests of wider agreement and co-operation with non-Muslims.

We can now move on to a more detailed response to the liberal objections to the notion of community values, and in so doing consider the main arguments in support of giving them a significant place in education. The arguments that follow are not drawn directly from Muslim writers, but it is intended that they should be in harmony with the Islamic principles set out in Chapter Seven.

Problems arise immediately if the idea of negotiating a framework of commonly accepted values implies that the final agreed framework will contain some values drawn from one community, some from another. As Hampshire (1978, p 12) points out,

> *the virtues typical of several different ways of life cannot be freely combined.*

It may be that a way of life can only be understood **as a whole** (cf Toulmin, 1950, p 153) and that its coherence depends on a well-established set of inter-related values which cannot be discussed separately. It is further argued by some Wittgensteinians that any given way of life can only be understood **from the inside**, and that no justification for commitment to a way of life is possible that is developed outside the way of life itself. Wittgenstein himself writes,

> *What has to be accepted, the given, is - so one could say - forms of life.*
>
> (1958, p 226)

Although it is uncertain exactly what Wittgenstein means by the term 'form of life', Phillips (1956, p 27; 1970, p 14), Malcolm (1984, p 72) and others have based arguments on the assumption that religion is a form of life and as such is 'given' or axiomatic so that religious beliefs do not need to be justified and indeed cannot be (see below). Sherry (1977, p 23), on the other hand, argues that specific religions or specific religious practices may come closer to what is meant by 'form of life'. Trigg (1973, p 64) takes the phrase to refer more generally to 'a community of those sharing the same concepts'. But however we understand the phrase, the Wittgensteinian notion of 'forms of life' presents a twofold challenge to liberalism as defined in Chapter Four. First, it implies that the rules which govern the behaviour of any given community can only be understood through the eyes of members of that community. If one fails to accept this, one may simply be imposing 'a set of alien categories on a culture one has

failed to understand' (Lear, 1984, p 146); but if one does get inside the culture of a community, its beliefs and practices may be seen to make sense. Secondly, it implies that when liberal demands for the justification of beliefs have followed through a chain of explanations they may be found to be grounded in a particular recognisable 'form of life'. What emerges from this line of reasoning, as Lear (*ibid.*) points out, is

> *the autonomy of a culture's beliefs and practices. From outside the culture there is no legitimate vantage point from which to criticise them. From inside the culture the beliefs and practices will 'make sense'.*

Berger and Berger (1974, p 386) reach a similar conclusion via the quite different, sociological route which has already been considered, when they write that society is 'constituted by the definitions of reality that prevail in it'. According to Phillips (1967), the society and the definitions of reality cannot be understood independently of each other, and he criticises those philosophers who fail to consider the contexts of religious beliefs, who try to discuss, for example, the question of the existence of God without taking into account the form of life in which belief in God is a central part (Phillips, 1967, p 4, 63; cf Sherry, 1977, p 118). If sets of beliefs and values are as intricately tied to specific communities as is being suggested here, this has two consequences. First, it makes the liberal notion of negotiating a framework of shared values essentially problematic, since this would involve wrenching beliefs and values from their context and thus making them meaningless. Secondly, it casts doubt on the liberal value of free individual choice; for if the community's beliefs and values are to be considered autonomous, the individual can have no rational grounds outside the community's own framework for accepting or rejecting them. Just as it was shown in Chapter Five that the principle of the autonomy of the individual is in constant conflict with the principle of the autonomy of the family (cf Fishkin, 1983), so too it sits uneasily with the principle of the autonomy of the community. Communitarians like MacIntyre, Hauerwas and Sandel consider the latter of prior importance. They argue that our

identity is not independent of our attachments and we are therefore necessarily involved in the purposes and ends which characterise the communities we inhabit. Sandel points out that 'since others made me, and in various ways continue to make me, the person I am' (1982, p 161),

> *I am situated from the start, embedded in a history which locates me among others, and implicates my good in the good of the communities whose stories I share.*
>
> (1984, p 9; cf MacIntyre, 1981, p 205)

On this view, a major purpose of education must be to provide a fairly stable set of guiding values for the child, i.e. those of the community in which the child grows up; Toulmin makes what appears to be an obvious point that the child who is brought up according to a consistent set of moral principles is the one who is most likely to 'get the idea' of ethics (1950, p 169). Durkheim (1956) denies that this sort of education, even though it involves constraining children to a socially determined set of values, is tyrannous. He argues that it is justified because the children themselves are the beneficiaries (cf Gutmann, 1982, p 270). Equally, however, a purpose of education must be to preserve, maintain and transmit community values, for these are where the individual's interests primarily lie, rather than in the supposed liberation from the present and the particular (Bailey, 1984). Wolff (1968, p 145) puts the point more forecefully:

> *It seems, if Durkheim is correct, that the very liberty and individuality which Mill celebrates are deadly threats to the integrity and health of the personality. So far from being superfluous constraints which thwart the free development of the self, social norms protect us from the dangers of anomie; and that invasive intimacy of each with each which Mill felt as*

suffocating is actually our principal protection against the soul-destroying evil of isolation.

Liberalism has often been attacked of late for failing, though its strong emphasis on individual freedom and choice, to take sufficient account of an individual's ties and attachments (Williams, 1981; Sen and Williams, 1982, p 5; O'Hear, 1982, p 127 f; 1985, p 149). Older proponents of liberal education have argued that a group or community 'has no consciousness or life apart from that of the individuals who compose it' (Peters, 1966, p 216) and that the trouble with a group discussing what ought to be done by the group as a whole is that it may ignore 'the stake of any individual in the future' and 'the role of the individual in determining his own destiny' (*ibid*, p 215). But more recently we find some liberal educationalists willing to distance themselves from what they call 'abstract individualism' (Haydon, 1986, p 97-8; 1987, p 27). Haydon, indeed, emphasises the need to view persons not as free-floating individuals but as firmly rooted in the practices and traditions of their cultural inheritance, which he considers to provide 'at least the initial basis of their values' (*ibid*). The reasons for this liberal shift, of course, are not hard to see. Too severe a form of individualism would sit rather uncomfortably with the idea of **negotiating** a framework of commonly accepted values which Haydon expounds, for in practice such negotiation would have to be carried out by **representatives** of specific groups or communities, rather than by every individual member of those communities. The point of negotiated values would be lost if they were not accorded some degree of fixedness but were constantly challenged in a fundamental way by individuals.

In view of the foregoing discussion, there is clearly some uncertainty about the second and third liberal challenges to the notion of community values (the need for individuals to be free to determine their own destiny, and the need for a **negotiated** framework of values in a pluralist society), and some shifting of ground may be possible. The first liberal challenge, however, is harder to undermine. This involves

the claim that since all beliefs are challengeable, they should be presented in an open way to children, and that education should be concerned with 'achieving commitment to justified beliefs on appropriate grounds' (Hirst, 1983, p 3). The biggest problem here is how to find out what constitutes 'appropriate grounds'. For the liberal, such grounds must be based on rationality, however that is to be conceived. But community values, as expounded in this chapter are not necessarily values which can be rationallly defined or justified, at least to the satisfaction of everyone. The domain of morality will serve to illustrate the point. Certainly some moral principles, such as the disposition to treat all men and women alike in some respects, in recognition of their common humanity, are rationally defensible and not contingent upon any type of social order, and such a principle prescribes a fairly specific, settled set of norms for human behaviour. I have called these principles 'public values'. But there are other values such as love and friendship (cf Hampshire, 1982, p 148), altruism (*pace* Nagel, 1970), loyalty (cf Wolff, 1968, pp 51 ff), hope and patience (cf Hauerwas, 1981, p 5), charity (cf MacIntyre, 1981, p 162 f) and ultra-obligations generally (cf Grice, 1967, pp 155 ff), that are held in as high esteem as justice in many contests, and yet do not share either the same rational justification or the same fixedness as far as behaviour is concerned. Rational considerations may set the parameters for behaviour based on the latter type of value: the behaviour should not cause avoidable unhappiness or offend the principle of fairness. But, as Hampshire (1982, p 154) points out,

> *These bare requirements plainly underdetermine the full, complex morality of the family and of sexual relationships and of friendship in any man's actual way of life.*

Community values are based on the specific habits and conventions associated, probably over a long period of time, with one particular way of life and the way of life gains coherence from the harmonious interlocking of its various elements. Hampshire

argues that there is a rational justification for respecting some set of not unreasonable, if ultimately arbitrary, moral claims of a conventional kind,

> *because some moral prescriptions are necessary in the areas of sexuality and family relationships and friendship and social customs and attitudes to death; and that men are reasonably inclined to respect those prescriptions which have in fact survived and which have a history of respect.*
>
> (ibid, p 155)

But even Hampshire concedes the liberal claim that such values must be rationally defensible if challenged and argues that there is no virtue in clinging to such values if there are compelling grounds of a rational kind for rejecting them (for example, because they are unfair).

What is the case with morality applies even more so to the domain of religion. For here there is no set of principles corresponding to justice which can be justifiably presented as universally appropriate. On the contrary, all religious beliefs and values seem to fall into the category of community values whose truth can never be established objectively but whose coherence depends on the specific way of life of which they are a part. In an article entitled The Groundlessness of Belief, Malcolm (1977, p 154-5) criticises the assumption that because religious belief has no rational justification it cannot be considered intellectually respectable. He claims that religion and religious belief are indeed ultimately groundless, and that although of course **within** the religious framework there is criticism, explanation and justification, no similar rational justification can or need be applied to the religious framework itself (*ibid*, p 152). On a communitarian point of view, the fact that the way of life exists, is rooted in history, is internally coherent, provides values which are traditionally respected by the community, and is consistent with fundamental moral principles or public values, provides sufficient grounds for giving it a central place in education. On the one hand, if any of a

community's values are worth preserving, education may be the only way to do that; on the other, if children are to grow up with a sense of what it is to be a person among other persons they need the stability and identity which socialisation into a fixed set of shared beliefs and values is most likely to provide. Contemporary liberalism may be prepared to go a certain way down this path but only on condition that such beliefs and values are passed on to children in a critically open way, in recognition of the fact that no religious beliefs can be shown objectively to be true and that challenge and change must be accepted in principle if compelling reasons for such change can be justified rationally.

We can now return to the dialogue between liberalism and Islam directly. For proponents of the Islamic view of education, the fact that fundamental Islamic values are shared and have been shared over a long period of time by the whole Islamic community provides sufficient grounds for using education to encourage the children of the community to develop commitment to those values. The fact that the values are considered to be based directly or indirectly on divine revelation objectifies them further, and makes the transmission of them to the next generation a sacred duty. On a liberal view, however, there is nothing special about Islamic community values which gives them the right to immunity from criticism; on the contrary, they must, like those of all religions, be subject to searching examination (Trigg, 1973, p 59-60). And if religious claims are 'essentially contestable' (O'Hear, 1982, p 14), there can be no right on the part of any community to prejudge the truth of their own claims on behalf of their children. Many liberals accept that certain moral rules have to be transmitted to children before they understand the justification for them or can evaluate them for themselves (Peters, 1969, p 106; O'Hear, 1982, p 122 ff; J and P White, 1986, p 156); some argue that certain religious values and beliefs may be transmitted in the same way (McLaughlin, 1984, 1985). But such education would be quite unacceptable from a liberal point of view if children were not encouraged sooner or later to recognise

contestable beliefs as contestable or allowed to challenge the culture in which they were brought up and form their own ideals.

It is time to look again at the Islamic position to see if any room can be found for the notion of critical openness, for it appears that unless some accommodation can be made to this fundamental liberal principle, an impasse will have been reached in the dialogue between liberalism and Islam with which the present chapter is concerned.

* * * *

Critical openness involves ensuring that one's fundamental beliefs and commitments are open to public, rational, critical test and acknowledging that they are at least in principle revisable after appropriate investigation. It therefore also entails a willingness to adopt an attitude of serious reflection towards new ideas and new possibilities. In other words, critical openness is simply an extension into other domains of the critical-speculative view of the advancement of scientific knowledge; Popper and others have argued that scientific knowledge develops by means of the critical examination of existing knowledge to discover its weaknesses, and the production of new theories, by a process of imaginative speculation, which are then subject themselves to further critical appraisal. At first blush, it seems that there can be no point of contact between the critical-rationalist attitude and the religous (cf O'Hear, 1984, p 247; Hirst, 1985, p 197 f); the former involves casting doubt on existing knowledge and using human faculties to weed out weaknesses and reconstruct more rationally justiable beliefs, while the latter is concerned with the preservation of sacred and eternal truth. There is a significant number of Christians, however, who wish to argue not merely that religion is compatible with critical openness, but that the inner nature of the Christian religion requires a critically open response (Smart, 1968). Hull goes so far as to argue that 'it is God's wise decree that his creatures should be critically open' (1984, p 216) and that God himself 'has the kind of critical openness appropriate

to a perfect being' (*ibid*, p 218). While this idea perhaps represents only one strand of Christian theology, its educational concomitants have taken a firm root in religious education in the U.K. in the last twenty years. Smart (1966, 1968, 1969) argues that Christian education cannot ignore philosophical problems which are raised by Christian doctrine; that it necessarily overlaps with areas of scientific and historical enquiry (e.g. the story of creation and the death of Jesus); and that it cannot ignore the truth claims of other varieties of religious experience. For these reasons, Christianity cannot be taught as 'a self-enclosed, self-authenticating system of truth' (Hull, 1984, p 95), but should be taught in a critically open, descriptive, comparative way which does not prejudice the final outcome as far as the beliefs that children may come to hold are concerned. Smart sees this approach to religious education as (happily) in line with both his liberal concept of education and his understanding of the nature of society. If education is to encourage children to become personally and morally autonomous, it requires openness, and this is seen as the essential characteristic of the RE teacher, rather than a deep personal faith (1966, p 15). Education is the public activity of the state (in contrast to nurture, which is the domestic activity of the church), and since countries like the U.K. are to all intents and purposes secular in their institutions and pluralist in their cultural and religious beliefs, the open, neutral religious education which Smart claims is required by the logic of religion, is also reinforced by sociological factors. Thus he concludes,

> *The test of one who is teaching reasonably in a society such as ours is openness.*
>
> (Smart, 1968, p 98)

More recently, Hughes (1985, pp 16 ff) has argued that the Church must seek to integrate religious belief with everyday experience. If it fails to do so, it can only survive by insisting on the unquestioning acceptance of authority and by denouncing criticism and proscribing contrary teaching; in the long run, he claims, such attempts to

stifle free discussion will lead to a decline of religion. If, on the other hand, the Church welcomes discussion and the free exchange of ideas, it must

> *expect to be questioned and challenged by its members and it must be prepared to change its own ways of thinking and acting, submitting itself to the light of truth.*
>
> (ibid, p 21)

What I now want to explore in this section of the present chapter is whether there is any possibility in principle that the notion of critical openness and the free exchange of ideas may be incorporated into an Islamic view of education.

Some Western sociologists have argued that there is an historical inevitability about the process of secularisation which is bound sooner or later to affect all institutions, including the teaching of religion. Weber, who sees secularisation as the social product of Protestantism and capitalism (1967), claims that it is characterised by a pluralism of conflicting values and the institutional relegation of religion to purely private choices (1965). Berger (1969), following Weber, distinguishes between objective secularisation (the institutional isolation of religion) and subjective secularisation (the loss of religious credibility at the level of human experience) and sees both at work in the West. But Berger pays little attention to Islam and the question remains whether secularisation is a global process or merely a Western phenomenon (cf Turner, 1974, p 158). Lerner (1964) argues that the process of modernisation in the West has global significance because it provides the pattern for all modernising societies; and according to this theory, modernisation, which involves urbanisation, literacy, media participation and electoral participation and, more generally, the freeing of individuals from the established customs and values of traditional society, is clearly related to secularisation (cf Turner, 1974, p 161). However, any global theory about the inevitability of secularisation will have to take into account the reality of religious

revival in a variety of different contexts, not least the well charted Islamic resurgence, and the common Western assumption that sooner or later Islam would follow the pattern of Christianity and become increasingly secularised may be held with less confidence now than it was ten or twenty years ago (cf Voll, 1982, p 275 f).

Certainly there are Western scholars and orientalists who have been anxious to find evidence of a liberal spirit in Islam. Some have looked backwards to the Mu'tazilites, who have (rather misleadingly) been called the 'liberal theologians of Islam' by Horten (1912), and who have more recently been used (again rather misleadingly) to establish that not all religious thinkers even in Islam 'would insist that the primary aim of religious education was to support religious practice' (O'Hear, 1982, p 13). Others have spoken with approval of attempts, particularly on the Indian sub-continent by people like Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan and Ameer Ali and particularly in the period before 1945, to re-express Islam in terms which are more in keeping with Western liberal values (Smith, 1946; Gibb, 1947; 1969, ch 10; Cragg, 1965). Yet others have argued that there now exists 'a large, mainly silent, body of liberal opinion in Islam' (Watt, 1988, p 143; Hourani, 1985, p 276), though it must be pointed out that Watt is using the term 'liberal' in a very broad sense, to refer to any Muslims who hold that the traditional world view needs to be corrected in some respects. As evidence for an increasing liberal-minded spirit in Islam, he refers to a new willingness to participate in dialogue with Christians (Watt, 1979, p 238 f; 1988, p 120 f) and to the work of two scholars who combine their Islamic faith with an awareness of contemporary thought: Fazlur Rahman and Mohammed Arkoun. Rahman has proposed a new approach to Qur'anic exegesis: first, consideration must be given to the historial situation in which a specific rule was formulated; then the general moral principles underlying the rule must be discovered; and finally these general principles may be used for guidance about present-day problems (1982, p 5 ff). Arkoun (1984; 1986, p 159) comments on the urgency of the need to open up what Muslims have traditionally treated as *impensable* or *impense* to critical analytical thinking; he appears to be suggesting that Qur'anic

assertions should be treated as historical facts to which the methods of historical criticism may properly be applied (cf Watt, 1988, p 2). Indeed, Gibb (1947, p 124 f), Watt (1988, p 86f) and others have argued that the loss of the earlier flexibility in Islamic thought about the fourth Islamic century is seen particularly in its disregard of historical thinking, and that one of the greatest needs of Muslims today is the acceptance of historico-critical methods, even if this entails the abandonment of 'some inessential and secondary points of traditional belief' (Watt, 1988, p 88). Unless Muslims are willing to take on board at least some forms of Western historical and scientific method, Watt fears that they may become totally isolated from the modern world, incapable 'of entering the universe of discourse of Western scholars and thinkers' (1979, p 238). Hurst goes further and argues that it is impossible to pursue modern scientific education without adopting the critical-speculative method; yet once a mind acquires the critical habit, it will not restrict the process of questioning to one particular dimension of knowledge (the scientific), even if ordered to do so by religious leaders (cf Hirst, 1985). He therefore sees it as inevitable that the process of Islamicising the curriculum discussed in Chapter Eight will fail:

> *Either it will produce a curriculum that is moribund, in which case it will produce no-one capable of outstanding research, or it will succeed despite itself in producing people who are genuinely capable of critical-speculative thinking. In which case, they will waste no time in throwing it out and replacing it with a better one.*
>
> (Hurst, 1985, p 199 f)

To what extent all this is merely wishful thinking on the part of some Western liberals is not immediately obvious or easy to establish. Certainly the situation in the Muslim world is much more complicated than is suggested by Watt's distinction between traditionalists and liberals (Watt, 1988, p 2 f) or by Sardar's opposing paradigms of *taqlid* (uncritical faith; blind, unquestioning obedience) and *ijtihad* (effort,

struggle, independent judgement). First, the West has clearly made significant intrusions into the Muslim world, though these have taken a variety of forms. As was mentioned in Chapter Eight, the left-overs of Western imperialism are still very much in evidence, both in institutions such as education and in ideas, attitudes and values such as nationalism (cf Nuseibeh, 1956; Zeine, 1973). Some prominent figures in the Muslim world, such as Ataturk, have been happy to throw in their lot entirely with Western culture; the Egyptian writer Taha Husain, for example, once wrote:

> *Let us adopt Western civilisation in its totality and all its aspects, the good with the bad and the bitter with the sweet.*
>
> (quoted in Badawi, 1978, p 14)

Others (often called modernists) have sought a synthesis of Islamic and Western ideas, and even where Western values are rejected there often remains a dependence on the West for technology; in any case modern communications ensure a continuing access to Western ideas. Secondly, Islamic resurgence is a well-documented reality (Voll, 1982; Watt 1988; Ayoob, 1981), though the term is used in a number of different ways including the Islamisation of the social and legal framework of Muslim countries, political opposition to the West and the strengthening of the traditional conception of the Islamic faith. Thirdly, genuine debates are going on within the Muslim community, for example about the status of women, the charging of interest on loans, the collection of *zakat* (alms), the issue of family planning and the punishment of crime (Rahman, 1982, p 136; Watt, 1988, p 108 ff). Fourthly, it is clear that not all Muslims adhere strictly to all the requirements of the faith, such as praying five times a day. It is impossible to generalise about the reasons behind this state of affairs, however; while some may have serious intellectual doubts about the Islamic tenets of faith (e.g. Fyzee, 1963), others may be resentful of the intolerance and arrogance of certain self-styled Islamic leaders (Sardar 1979, pp 58, 68), while others simply find their faith squeezed into the background by the pressures of modern life and perhaps openly acknowledge that they

are backsliders. Finally, it is clear that a willingness to criticise the passive acceptance of authority, and the closed-minded intolerance of some traditional scholars does not make a Muslim a modernist. Sardar, for example, describes modernism as

> *even more destructive than the narrow, rigid confinement of traditionalism.*
>
> (1979, p 59)

and speaks highly critically of Fazlur Rahman as a neo-orientalist in the mould of Schacht, Gibb and W C Smith (*ibid*, p 73). In all this confusion, one fact remains indisputable, that

> *the thinking of the fundamental Islamic intellectuals and of the great masses of ordinary Muslims is still dominated by the standard traditional Islamic world view and the corresponding self-image of Islam.*
>
> (Watt, 1988, p 1)

I find it impossible, however, to assess the truth of Watt's claim that there is a large, mainly silent, body of liberal opinion in Islam (*ibid*, p 143); it seems to me that perhaps he overstates this.

The other claims made by Western scholars seeking to establish the existence of a liberal spirit in Islam are more open to appraisal, however, and I intend now to look at each in turn. To recapitulate briefly, the claims were, first, that the Mu'tazilites held parallel views to liberals; secondly, that evidence of a new openness can be found in a recent willingness to enter into dialogue with Christians; thirdly, that Muslims such as Fazlur Rahman have proved willing to apply Western critical techniques to Islam; and fourthly, that it is inevitable that once Muslims have accepted the principle of critical-speculative thinking in science, they will start to apply the same techniques to their religious beliefs.

First, the Mu'tazilites. They were the first school of systematic theology in Islam, coming into existence in Iraq about a hundred years after the death of the Prophet Muhammad and continuing to be influential for about three centuries. Certainly they were not free thinkers or rationalists in any modern Western sense, as Nyberg's article on them in the Encyclopaedia of Islam makes clear. But in seeking to face up honestly to some of the problems of religious belief, they did develop some rationalist tendencies expecially in the domain of ethics. Their method was to start from a few broad principles stated or implied in the Qur'an, such as the unity and justice of God, and then to deduce their logical consequences. Thus they applied human, rational ideas about justice to Qur'anic statements about God's justice, and deduced that God would deal out rewards and punishments on the day of judgement in accordance with this intelligible justice. They further deduced that evil doers would be punished only for sins they had the power to avoid, which in turn implies that people had the power to choose their own conduct; but such human freedom is not compatible with divine predestination of human affairs and therefore they argued that God has delegated to human beings the power to decide and even to 'create' their own actions. The Mu'tazilite commitment to rationality can also be seen in their belief that the value of many things can be recognised by the intellect independently of revelation (e.g. the intuition that 'irreligion (*kufr*) is evil') and that other true judgements can be inferred from these primary ones through rational study (Hourani, 1985, pp 69, 126). But they also stressed that revelation was an equally important source of knowledge, and never in disagreement with reason; revelation tells us truths that reason unaided could not have discovered, although

> *reason can recognise and accept them as rational when once they have been revealed - e.g. the value of prayer in building character.*
>
> (ibid, p 18)

Whether or not these are to be viewed as 'liberal' tendencies in any broad sense, I can find no evidence for O'Hear's claim that

> *members of Mu'tazilite tradition argued, like St Thomas Aquinas in Catholicism, that men had a religious duty to use their reason to assess the claims of revelation.*
>
> (1982, p 13)

On the contrary, Mu'tazilites to my knowledge never questioned fundamental Islamic doctrines such as the unity of God and his creation, or considered them challengeable, but merely used their reason to understand and clarify these basic beliefs as best they could. They can hardly therefore be said to have been critically open in any way that approximates to the contemporary liberal sense; it is hard even to judge what importance they placed on reason, for although Westerners are understandably interested in this dimension of their thought, Watt (1948, p 69) points out that reason is not in fact mentioned very much in their writings.

Secondly, the willingness of Muslims in recent years to enter into and even initiate dialogue with Christians (and to a less extent with other religions) is well documented. Muslim-Christian conferences have been held in many places including Libya under Colonel Gadhafi and Iran under Ayatollah Khomeini (Watt, 19779, p 238; 1988, p 120 f), and the Islamic Academy has sponsored seminars with Christians in the U.K. and elsewhere and is currently working with Christian scholars on a number of joint curriculum projects (Ashraf, 1988b). Again, however, this is not really the 'liberalising tendency' that Watt claims it to be (1979, p 239); still less is it a sign of critical openness. Such dialogue is justified in Muslim eyes by the special place accorded to Christianity in the Qur'an (e.g. Sura 5 verse 82, Sura 57 verse 27) and the belief that all religions have the same origin and many shared concepts (Ashraf, 1988c, p 3). There

appears to be a growing feeling that ultimately Christianity and Islam are on the same side in the spiritual battle against secularisation.

Thirdly, we must consider the claim that certain Muslim thinkers such as Fazlur Rahman have been willing to apply Western critical techniques to Islam. It is true, as already mentioned, that Rahman has argued the need to understand the spirit of the Qur'an as a whole before trying to interpret particular passages. A slavish literalism in approaching the Qur'an might lead to the argument that since it is a pillar of Islam to pay *zakat* (alms), some people must remain poor in order for the rich to earn merit in the right of God; but Rahman (1982,p 19) pours scorn on such an argument as totally contrary to the spirit of Islam. Elsewhere, (*ibid*, p 38), Rahman speaks somewhat nebulously of the mind's creativity in reaching out to the unknown (*ijtihad*). However, he is totally opposed to the secularisation of learning (*ibid*, p 133 f), and the main purpose of his book is to show how important, though difficult, the task will be of systematically reconstructing knowledge and education along Islamic lines. *Ijtihad* is a difficult Arabic word to translate; it combines the notion of exertion, effort and diligence with that of independent judgement, and thus seems to have affinities with Hull's sense of 'thinking for yourself', which is related to both autonomy and critical openness. But the opening of the gate of *ijtihad*, which Rahman (*ibid*, p 7 f), Sardar (1979, pp 56 f, 152 ff) and others recommend, neither leaves it up to the individual to work out his own faith nor involves the questioning of the fundamentals of the faith. It is simply a way of tackling the stagnation resulting from the old emphasis of some Islamic traditionalists on blind, unquestioning obedience (El Tom, 1981, p 41), and restoring Islam's more dynamic qualities. In any case, the *ijtihad* being proposed is generally conceived of as an institutional activity (Sardar, 1979, p 156) or an activity of the entire *umma* (community) (Saqib, 1981, p 49).

The case being argued here by Rahman and others clearly falls short of Hirst's strong sense of critical openness, as set out earlier in the present chapter. But perhaps a

weaker form of critical openness can be identified. This may require the believer to adopt a critical, enquiring attitude in which he thinks for himself, accepts responsibility for his own beliefs, rejects authoritarianism, adopts an attitude of appraisal towards his beliefs, but does not actually question their foundation (cf Barrow, 1975, p 188 ff). This weak sense of critical openness seems to be what Hull (1984, p 209-10) has in mind when he suggests that in the case of Islam, critical openness may mean 'the process of drawing contemporary inferences from a received theological structure'. If that is what critical openness means then Muslims can have no real argument with it, except perhaps to view it as more of a community process than an individual one, for it leaves the foundational beliefs and values of Islam (as set out in Chapter Seven) unchallenged and untouched. And these are the beliefs that unite all the members of the Muslim community; as Rahman writes,

> *it is also something of an irony to pit the so-called Muslim fundamentalists against the Muslim modernists, since ... the Muslim modernists say exactly the same thing as the so-called Muslim fundamentalists say: that Muslims must go back to the original and definitive sources of Islam and perform ijtihad on that basis.*
>
> (1982, p 142)

As we saw in Chapter Seven, even the most conservative Muslims recognise the need to 'translate the truths of Islam into a contemporary language' (Nasr, 1981, p 32).

Finally, Hurst's claims that sooner or later Muslims will get caught up in critical-speculative thinking whether they wish it or not must be examined. He writes,

> *if some propositions about the world are potentially erroneous, and if scientific knowledge proceeds by cumulatively uncovering the error and correcting it, why (if there is no contradiction between revelation and*

research) are some propositions in a reserved category, whose truth is unquestionable? If we create an educational system (as we presumably wish to) which successfully transmits the critical-speculative method to at least some of its graduates, they will be bound to ask why there are some propositions (other than tautologies, which are not about the world) which are necessarily true, when all the rest are falsifiable in principle. To reply 'because God uttered them' is not calculated to satisfy a mind imbued with the critical-speculative ethos.

(1985, p 199)

Hurst seems to imply that as soon as Muslims acquire the questioning habit, the whole structure of Islamic authority will crumble and there will be nothing left to support such activities as the Islamisation of the curriculum. There are various problems with this thesis. To start with, it presupposes that all areas of knowledge and belief are sufficiently homogeneous that if it can establish that critical openness and the critical-speculative method are appropriate for one, the scientific, they will be found equally so for all other types, including the religious. Callan (1985) adopts a similar approach in arguing against the parental right to give one's children a religious upbringing; he draws his main examples from the inculcation of **political** beliefs in children and then unapologetically transfers these arguments to religious beliefs. However, it is possible to argue that religious beliefs differ from other forms of belief in their nature, their origin, their justification and their object and that there is therefore no evidence as yet that religious beliefs should, or even can, be subjected to the same kind of critical investigation that we consider appropriate for, say, scientific or political beliefs.

Let us look at these differences between religious belief and other forms of belief in more detail. Kenny (1983, p 2 f) proposes that there are three senses of belief in God. The first is simply that God exists. The second is accepting that something is true on the basis that it has been revealed by God; it is not so much believing in God,

says Kenny, as believing God. The third is trust in God and willingness to commit oneself to him. The first type of belief has a similar form to a scientific belief and appears to be open to rational investigation. The third is a matter of personal choice and may well involve some form of mystic experience. The second, though it takes for granted the truth of the first, does not itself have the form of a verifiable proposition; and this is the sense of religious belief that occurs most commonly in Islam. It consists of 'intellectual assent to doctrines as revealed by God' (Kenny, 1983, p 3). One cannot reach a justifiable belief in God in this sense through the process of open critical reflection. To the Muslim, belief in God is a gift which comes through divine revelation, whether in the form of the Qur'an or in the form of an inner illumination which sweeps away doubt. Criteria of rationality, at least if starkly construed, cannot be all-pervasive in a discussion of appropriate grounds for assent to such religious beliefs. If, as is claimed, the beliefs are founded on divine revelation rather than on humanly constructed conceptual schemes, then a reflective investigation of them can only concern itself with the structure of beliefs that has been built upon this foundation of divine illumination, not with the divine illumination itself. The process might reasonably involve examining the socially constructed system of beliefs for internal coherence by measuring it against the fundamental claims made by the religion, but even this kind of 'measuring' is likely to be more productive if it is based on spiritual insight and wisdom rather than on the narrow rationality of the critical-speculative approach. Indeed such a process may not be called critical, rational investigation at all unless rationality is conceived in very broad terms as taking into account the development of the whole human personality: intuition, the conscience, the feelings, the will, the dispositions and the moral, social and spiritual dimensions of personality as well as the narrowly rational.

When Muslims maintain that their fundamental religious beliefs are based directly on divine revelation, then that is the end of the debate about their justification as far as they are concerned. They are simply God-given. The Qur'an says,

When God and his messenger have decreed a matter, it is not for any believer, man or woman, to have the choice in the affair. Anyone who disobeys God and his messenger has gone astray into manifest error.

(Sura 33, verse 36)

If the non-believer attempts to insist that the believer holds his fundamental beliefs in a way that acknowledges that those beliefs might change, then this is requiring him to accept, while he is still a believer, that the beliefs which God has given him might turn out to be false. This is doing more than asking him to entertain doubts where before he had certainty; it is asking him to be prepared to deny his faith in God himself. In Islam, however, both doubt and unbelief are seen as a sign of a person's confusion and ignorance, or else wilfulness, rather than as an exercise in rationality, independence or critical openness.

To put it another way, a political belief (in Conservatism, for example) might reasonably be held in a critically open manner, because not only is the adherent's understanding of Conservatism likely to change with time, but also Conservatism is itself recognised as a humanly constructed conceptual system which is liable to change and error. In religious belief, on the other hand, though few would deny that the believer's understanding of God might grow and change and develop, the object of that belief, God himself, is not similarly subject to change. The belief is thus anchored in the absolute in a way that political beliefs are not. For the Muslim, God's nature is real, objective and unchanging, and so is the response which he requires from human beings, as indicated in his final revelation to them, the Qur'an. This response involves experiencing the world as the field of God's activity, and therefore fundamental religious beliefs cannot be treated as a self-contained entity that may be dealt with separately from the rest of life and may be retained, modified or rejected in the light of alternative beliefs, new circumstances, experience or reason. For the believer, his faith

is what glues the whole of knowledge together, and if God created the world, it seems perverse to seek to understand any part of it - whether history or art or the physical structure of the world - without reference to the purposes of God. Where Hurst's argument goes wrong on an Islamic view is that he treats religious beliefs as just one more set of propositions about the world, which sooner or later even Muslims will seek to open up to rational, critical appraisal. To Muslims, however, though scientific, political and all other beliefs that are the product of human activity may be changeable and challengeable, fundamental religious beliefs emanate from God, not from man, and are therefore unchanging. Muslims thus can make no sense of the claim that they should be held and taught in a way which leaves them open to critical challenge.

To sum up. Very many Muslims are aware that there have been and still are serious faults in the traditional Muslim system of education: it is often backward-looking, out-of-date, authoritarian, intolerant, constricting and intellectually stagnant (El Tom, 1981, p 41). But this does not necessarily mean that they are prepared to swing to the other extreme and cease to teach Islam to their children altogether or teach it in a way which is 'open-ended in the outcome of particular beliefs which pupils might come to hold' (Hirst, 1983, p 3). On the contrary, what is being sought is a systematic reconstruction of knowledge and education which is truly in harmony with Islam. The idea of holding religious beliefs tentatively and presenting them to children as open to question and potentially revisable or disposable is a kind of nonsense in Islam. From an Islamic viewpoint, therefore, any proposed common system of education that is based on either the secularisation of education (involving the abolition of religious education and worship) or on religious neutrality (in which Islam is presented as on a par with other religious and non-religious world views) cannot be accepted.

* * * *

A serious impasse has now been reached. A coherent common education would have to be based on some sort of systematic and unified set of values. But it has become clear that there is not agreement over a sufficiently substantial set of shared values even between liberalism and Islam. Neither perspective appears willing to accept that the value of an agreed common educational system is sufficient to justify the concessions that are necessary to make it possible. A dilemma now faces liberalism, in so far as it is the dominant underlying philosophy of Western democracies and therefore in a position to impose its views on minorities such as Muslims in the West. Should it concede that the principle of common educational experience for all children is incapable of realisation, and hence allow Muslim parents and others to educate their children, if they choose to, in religious schools? Or should it in fact impose its values (in the name of protecting the best interests of the children) on an unwilling minority and run the risk of being branded totalitarian and intolerant? A way of resolving this dilemma forms the main topic of the next chapter.

PART FOUR

EDUCATION FOR MUSLIM CHILDREN IN THE U.K : POSSIBILITIES

CHAPTER TEN

MUSLIM DENOMINATIONAL SCHOOLS RECONSIDERED

It is clear that significant numbers of Muslims in the U.K. do not share a sufficiently substantial set of values with the majority to enable agreement to be reached over a common educational system. It is equally clear that many Muslims are not satisfied with the concessions currently being granted by some LEAs (see Chapter Two), including the retention of single-sex education, the provision of *halal* meat for school dinners, permission to be absent from school on religious feast days and permission to wear a school uniform and games kit that is in keeping with Islamic notions of decency and modesty. Although such concessions have succeeded in defusing some of the anger felt by Muslim parents when they have seen their children put in a position where they are expected by schools to act in a way that is contrary to their faith, the concessions are still in one sense tokenistic. This is because they are piecemeal concessions which relate to the external manifestations of Islam without paying any attention to the underlying spiritual beliefs and values which give them coherence (see Chapters Seven and Eight). A failure to take account of these underlying, unifying, Islamic beliefs and values makes the concessions appear arbitrary, eccentric, even devoid of meaning; it might also lead to the conclusion that Muslims would be unreasonable not to welcome, for example, the retention of an all-girls school committed to feminism (cf Khan-Cheema, 1984, p 10; McElroy, 1985, p 7) or the establishment in a predominantly Muslim area of a community school with a public bar and mixed bathing. However, it is hard to see how adequate attention may be paid in education to the underlying beliefs and values of Islam except in some form of Muslim denominational schools. Only in such a school would it be possible to provide both direct religious teaching of Islam and an Islamic ethos, where the values, aims, attitudes and procedures (cf Dancy, 1980) are consistent with Islamic principles

and importance is placed on the personal beliefs of the teachers. The Islamic ethos would help to promote consistency between the home and the school, which in turn would help children to feel secure in their religious and cultural roots and to avoid the well-documented tension and conflict of loyalties that Muslim children often experience in state schools (cf Morrish, 1971; Iqbal, 1977; Rahman, 1977).

Muslim denominational schools may take one of three forms: independent, opted-out or voluntary-aided. Current evidence suggests (e.g. HMI, 1984, 1987a, 1987b, 1987c) that Muslim groups in the U.K. often lack the financial resources and educational and administrative expertise to run independent schools to a standard comparable to that of state education. Although some Muslim groups have given serious consideration to the possibility of taking advantage of the right conferred by the 1988 Education Act to opt out of local authority control, subject to the wishes of the majority of parents and governors (cf The Times Educational Supplement, 16th October 1987, p 1), many are aware of the problems that would accompany such action particularly the loss of good-will, co-operation and advice from the LEA (cf Ashraf, 1988a). The preferred solution among Muslims seems to be to request voluntary-aided status, both for independent Muslim schools wishing to join the maintained system (as in the case of the Islamia Primary School in Brent and the Zakariah Girls' High School in Batley) and for existing state schools which have a considerable majority of Muslim pupils (as in the case of the five schools in Bradford which the Muslim Parents' Association sought to take over as voluntary-aided schools; see Appendix One). Such schools are financed mainly by the state and have their standards of general education laid down by the DES, but their governors have the freedom, within certain boundaries, to determine their own admissions policy, to appoint teachers (in which case, attention can be paid to the teachers' personal faith) and to determine the nature of the religious education and worship in the school (which could thus be planned according to Islamic principles). The right of Muslims, like other religious groups, to seek to establish their own voluntary-aided schools is firmly enshrined in the 1944 Education Act (cf Swann

Report, 1985, pp 499, 515). The right is currently exercised by other major religious groups and sects in the U.K., notably Anglicans, Roman Catholics, Methodists and Jews. The call for Muslim voluntary-aided schools, which has been frequently heard in very recent years, may thus be seen as a call for parity of treatment with other minority religious groups in the U.K.

This leads to the liberal dilemma with which Chapter Nine concluded. Should liberals accept in principle that Muslim parents and others should be free to educate their children, if they so choose, in their own denominational schools? This would involve recognising that the principle of a common educational experience for all children is incapable of realisation, and acknowledging the right of non-liberal groups to use education to maintain their own world views. Or should liberals, in so far as they are in a position to do so (for liberalism is the dominant underlying philosophy of Western democracies), seek to insist that all children **do** receive a common educational experience and that this experience is defined in terms of liberal values? This would involve imposing liberal values (in the name of protecting the best interests of the children) on an unwilling minority, who may be excused for judging liberalism to be intolerant and tyrannous. There is no completely clear-cut solution to this dilemma. In a democracy, the assumption is that people can do what they want unless there are good reasons for not allowing them to do so. So the question is whether or not there are good reasons for not allowing Muslims to send their children to denominational schools if they choose to do so. Some liberals suggest there are good reasons, some not. A further question which must be asked is whether, even if there are good reasons for not allowing Muslim, denominational schools, it may nonetheless be wiser and more expedient on practical rather than principled grounds to accept them and to avoid compulsion.

In the first section of the present chapter, two extreme liberal responses to the dilemma will be considered, the first arguing for the freedom of Muslims to educate

their children as they wish, and the second against. I shall then propose a middle path between these two extremes. The remainder of the chapter will be devoted to an examination of the implications of this middle path.

* * * *

The first liberal response to the dilemma, then, involves recognising the freedom of Muslims to educate their children as they wish. This response is grounded on three liberal doctrines. The first is the fundamental value of freedom from tyranny including the tyranny of the majority; such freedom lies at the heart of the liberal ideal of democracy (cf Popper, 1966, p 125). The second is the recognition of the need to respect different values within society (cf Crick, 1977); this is commonly put more strongly, expecially in discussions of multi-cultural education, as the 'celebration of diversity' (cf Saunders, 1982, p 13). Thus the Swann Report claims that

> *the concept of pluralism implies seeing the very diversity of such a society ... as an enrichment of the experience of all those within it.*
>
> (DES, 1985, p 5)

The third factor is the willingness of liberals to defend what they oppose. This is based on the principle that the state has no right to impose a preferred way of life, but should leave its citizens as free as possible to choose their own values and ends, consistent with a similar liberty for others (Sandel, 1984, p 1). Thus liberals distinguish between permitting a practice (pornography, for example) and endorsing it. Permitting a practice in this sense is based on the liberal principles of toleration, freedom of choice and fairness.

It is considerations such as these which lead Lustgarten to argue that

ethnic minorities shall be permitted unrestricted freedom to follow their own customs and religious practices, be governed by their personal law, and receive education in their language and cultural tradition. This is subject to but two limitations. The first is that a practice may rightly be outlawed where it results in severe physical abuse or worse. The second is that institutional accommodation to different patterns of life among minorities is required unless it can be shown to be wholly impracticable.

(1983, p 101)

Clearly, the notion of liberty which underpins this argument is very different from Mill's (1972b). Though it may make use of Mill's principled objection to compulsion and coercion, where he claims that 'all restraint, qua restraint, is an evil' and 'leaving people to themselves is always better, *caeteris paribus*, than controlling them' (*ibid*, p 150-1), it does not accept the high value Mill places on individuality or his dismissal of actions based on inherited custom. Though Lustgarten presents his arguments within a liberal framework, the views he expresses are to be found more frequently among conservatives or those writing within a religious tradition. Thus Hiskett argues that from a conservative point of view, granting Muslims permission to have maintained denominational schools

is faithful to the principle of limited government - that government ought simply to set up an arena in which citizens can work out their own solutions but should not attempt to construct those solutions for them. Under such a free market discipline the education of Muslims in Britain is most likely to find its own level within the law and culture of the land.

(1989, p 39-40)

Writing from a religious perspective, Haldane argues that members of religious communities such as the Muslims are more likely to accept the value of religious

tolerance if they are themselves beneficiaries of it, that is, if, instead of being required to send their children to secular schools, they are given support to maintain their own institutions. He argues that

> *if cultures are to be taken seriously, non-aggressive commitments are to be respected and freedoms are to be acknowledged, then there is no option but to extend the system of voluntary-aided schools to the Muslim community.*
>
> (1988, p 233)

As a liberal, however, Lustgarten is aware of some of the problems with his position. One problem is what kinds of groups are to be permitted the unrestricted freedom to follow their own customs and religious practices that he proposes. Another, more fundamental, problem, arises in consideration of the well-documented case of the Amish: how far should parents' views of the proper way of life govern their children's behaviour until they leave home, and are they entitled under any circumstances to foreclose their children's ability to participate in the wider society or at least to opt out of the group (cf Lustgarten, 1983, p 104-5)? It is the desire to protect the life chances of children from being foreclosed in this way that leads many liberals to reject the position advocated by Lustgarten.

The second liberal response to the dilemma set out at the beginning of the chapter, then, involves a rejection of the freedom of Muslims to educate their children as they wish. White, who advocates this view, argues that the upbringing of children is a special case, where the liberal principle of freedom of action is subject to certain limitations. On the whole, he is happy for the values of ethnic minority communities to be left to 'flourish or wither as the reflective judgements of their members determine' (1987, p 24). He argues that there is no case for any adult members of such communities to be forced to relinquish their group values, however out of step they may be with 'the national consensus', so long as they bring no harm to others. But as

far as children are concerned, the larger community may sometimes have to interfere with minority group values in their upbringing. This is because

> *children must be brought up in such a way as to enable them freely to participate in [the larger community]. This sets limits to how far they can be brought up to believe that the values of their [minority] community are the only ones they should follow.*
>
> (ibid, p 24)

Raz (1986) adds more substance to White's argument. After establishing that autonomy is a constituent element of the good life on a liberal view (p 408) and that harm occurs when autonomy is threatened (p 412 ff), he turns to the problem of how to treat communities such as religious sects whose culture does not support autonomy. In so far as such communities insist on bringing up their children in their own ways, they are, on Raz's view, harming them (p 423); so the question arises whether coercion can justifiably be used to break up such communities, for example, by refusing to allow them permission to run separate schools for their children. Raz suggests that although in theory people may be justified in taking action to assimilate the minority group, in practice such action might cause more harm than tolerating what would on a liberal view be an inferior way of life. However, if the minority community were judged to be condemning its young to 'an impoverished, unrewarding life' and denying them the opportunity 'to thrive outside the community', then

> *assimilationist policies may well be the only humane course, even if implemented by force of law.*
>
> (p 424)

Hirst (1983) adopts a rather different approach in rejecting the freedom of Muslims to educate their children as they wish, as has already been seen in Chapters Eight and Nine. He suggests that an open, pluralist society will

> *be intolerant of individuals, groups and practices, etc., which seek to undermine open, critical debate on any matter.*
>
> (p 5)

His vision of the liberal society is less concerned with 'the mutual toleration of different moralities' (Wollheim, 1959) between which the individual is free to make a rational choice, and more with Mill's notion of refining and developing moral beliefs and values through a continuous process of experimentation and debate (cf Mitchell, 1967, p 89). Hirst further argues that separate schools for the adherents of particular religious faiths are educationally and socially less desirable than pluralist schools. The educational argument against such schools has been considered in detail in Chapters Eight and Nine, and highlights the fundamental disagreement between liberals and Muslims to which the present chapter is seeking a practical solution. In brief, his argument is that such schools would be used to advocate a particular religious position and to confirm a minority in their own culture, whereas education should be concerned to promote justifiable beliefs through an understanding of different possibilities and their implications, and should be open-ended as far as the particular beliefs which pupils might come to hold are concerned. The social argument is that such schools tend to be socially divisive and that the isolation of minority groups is likely to 'prolong injustice and intolerance at the hands of the majority' (1983, p 6).

Wolff (1968, p 74) has drawn attention to some of the problems with this more hard-line liberal approach: non-liberals will only be permitted to bring up their children as they wish so long as they first subscribe to certain liberal principles. With some irony he comments that true believers always find it impossible to imagine that decent

men could honestly disagree with them. Even more seriously, the hard-line liberal approach lays itself open to criticism as tyrannous and intolerant - the very qualities which liberalism is committed to eradicate. Strike reminds us how serious an attack it is on an individual or a group to compel them to violate their own fundamental convictions (1982b, p 94); in fact, he goes further and argues that it is incompatible with the principles of liberalism to seek to impose any beliefs or versions of the good life on any citizen of a liberal democratic state. All beliefs - even such fundamental ones as autonomy and respect for persons - must be arrived at without any compulsion by government; indeed, it is this fact that makes liberalism 'inevitably vulnerable to self-destruction as a coherent moral ideology' (Fishkin, 1984, p 155-6). But to compel all children to undergo a common educational experience based on a particular framework of fundamental liberal beliefs whether or not these are shared by the children or their parents comes perilously close to the kind of imposition of beliefs which is unjustifiable from a liberal perspective.

* * * *

There is, however, a middle path between the two extreme liberal positions which have so far been examined. To recapitulate, the problem is that the Muslims in the U.K. form a largely self-contained community and that there is no way that satisfies criteria of freedom, equality and justice of incorporating them into the educational system of the broader community whose values they do not share. I want to argue that the middle path, which represents a compromise between the two extremes, holds the best chance of providing a satisfactory solution to the problem. This approach involves accepting that Muslims should be free to establish their own denominational schools, but only subject to certain conditions, which will be specified shortly. To reach this position, the liberal 'wets' like Lustgarten will have to concede that the freedom of ethnic minorities to educate their children in their own denominational schools must be dependent on their meeting certain criteria relating to the public interest and the interests

of the children themselves. On the other hand, the liberal 'hard-liners' like White and Hirst may have to concede that, in our present contingent circumstances, denominational schools may be the lesser of two evils. Such an approach is in fact a familiar one to liberals. I referred in Chapter Six to Crittenden's argument (1982) that a liberal pluralist society is likely to tolerate ways of life that are not rationally defensible so long as these are not in conflict with fundamental liberal values such as justice and freedom, because if members of groups committed to such ways of life cannot be persuaded by rational means to give them up, it may be the lesser of two evils merely to tolerate them rather than attempting to remove them by force. Raz (1986, p 423) argues some kind of test of viability may be the most important consideration in determining policy towards such groups. So long as the culture of the group enables its members 'to have an adequate and satisfying life' (however this is defined), and so long as it does not lead them to harm others or to diminish the options open to people outside the group, then the continued existence of the group 'should be tolerated, despite its scant regard for autonomy' (*ibid*, p 423). Strike (1982a, p 56) discusses arguments from Mill (1972b) which seem to suggest that even if liberalism is 100 per cent right and the religious approach to education 100 per cent wrong, there may be utilitarian benefits in tolerating the continued existence of the religious approach, because a true opinion needs to be challenged if its vitality and basis in rationality is to be appreciated.

Certainly there are strong contingent arguments in favour of the establishment of Muslim voluntary-aided schools, as I have pointed out elsewhere (Halstead, 1986). First, in cities like Bradford with a large Muslim population, separate Muslim schools are currently being created by default. This is because when the proportion of Muslim (or other ethnic minority) pupils in a school reaches a certain level, indigenous parents will sometimes stop sending their children there (cf McElroy, 1985) and the schools quickly become

> *de facto 'separate' schools for particular ethnic minority groups in all but name and legal status, since they have a considerable majority of ethnic minority pupils.*
>
> (Swann Report, 1985, p 499)

Thus, far from being a threat to 'the stability and cohesion of society as a whole' (*ibid*, p 7), separate schools are in fact being created by the actions of the white majority, and in such circumstances it seems unfair not to allow the minority group concerned the right to a major say in the running of the school, the curriculum and the appointment of teachers.

Secondly, as members of the dissenting group on the Swann Committee pointed out (*ibid*, p 515), it appears unjust and discriminatory to refuse to allow the establishment of Muslim voluntary-aided schools while Christians and Jews continue to enjoy the right to their own voluntary-aided schools. Haldane (1986, p 163-5) comments on the irony that Muslims are expected to be satisfied when their own requests for such schools are turned down so long as other religious groups are not allowed them either:

> *a society that would respond to [Muslims'] expression of deep attachment to tradition by casting off its own inheritance might not be wholly sincere in its commitment to respect the integrity of Muslim and other essentially religious immigrant cultures.*
>
> (Haldane, 1988, p 232)

Thirdly, to argue, as the Swann Report does (1985, p 509), that it is not desirable for groups of Asian children to be taught exclusively by teachers of the same ethnic group without similarly criticising schools where groups of white children are taught exclusively by teachers of the same ethnic group appears to be discriminatory. And to

suggest that Muslim voluntary-aided schools might not do a good job, when other voluntary-aided schools are often both over-subscribed and academically successful, again gives the impression of prejudice against the Muslim community.

Fourthly, if the Muslim request for voluntary-aided schools is refused on the grounds that the presence of Muslims in multi-cultural schools is needed to help the white majority to shed their racist tendencies (*ibid*, p 510), then this is another, if more subtle, form of exploitation, since the rights of the Muslim minority would be denied for the benefit of the white majority. A strong case can therefore be made that Muslims should have the right to choose for themselves whether such schools should be set up, and if they are, whether to send their own children to them. At least such an approach would enable the debate to be conducted outside the framework of the interests of the white majority and would avoid the dangers of Paternalistic Racism that were discussed in Chapter Two (cf Halstead, 1988, p 151-3).

Fifthly, if any minority refuses to conform to a cultural norm, it is frequently the case that what is presented by the majority as a just and rational compromise does in fact discriminate against the minority. For example, the non-smoker whose eyes water in a smoke-filled staffroom is liable to feel discriminated against if each member of the staff is given the right to choose freely whether or not to smoke; and the bus traveller who is susceptible to draughts suffers at the hands of the fresh-air fiends who, quite reasonably, open only the window nearest to them. There are some situations where the only solution appears to be separate provision. Many Muslims will argue that this is the case with education, for a multi-cultural compromise which involves presenting Islam, communism, humanism and atheism, for example, as if they were all equally valid views of the world is abhorrent to many Muslims (cf Hull, 1984, p 205). It is not the knowledge of different ways of life *per se* that they object to, but the failure to present them from the standpoint of commitment to the truth of one particular world

view, i.e. Islam. Commitment merely to the procedural value of critical openness seems to many Muslims like a recipe for moral and religious chaos.

Sixthly, on a more practical level, it has been argued that there are significant benefits in encouraging private Muslim schools to seek voluntary-aided status, since entry into the state sector may be a way of guaranteeing certain academic standards (cf Straw, 1989, p 9).

Finally, the various international codes of human rights (in particular, the European Convention on Human Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights) appear to lend support, subject to certain conditions, to the establishment of denominational schools. Bailey (1988, p 126-7) sets out three principles which are derived from the international codes of human rights:

1 *Subject to the maintenance of minimum educational standards, religious communities or other groups should be free to establish and maintain, at their own expense, schools in which children are educated in accordance with their own beliefs, and parents should be free to send their children to such schools.*

2 *The state is free to contribute financially to the maintenance of such schools, but is under no obligation to do so.*

3 *The state should ensure that neither its own schools, nor those established by religious communities or other groups, will promote or sustain divisiveness: indeed, it has an obligation to ensure that all schools, and not only its own, will be so established and run as to promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among different groups, including religious ones.*

The middle path which I am proposing takes account of these arguments and accepts that Muslims should be allowed, subject to certain conditions, to establish their own voluntary-aided schools. This would give them the right, within certain boundaries, to determine the form of religious education and worship to be provided in the school, and to seek to establish an Islamic ethos in the school. Priority would no doubt be given to the task of eradicating both direct bias against Islam , as in the traditional reporting of the Crusades in Western textbooks, and un-Islamic attitudes such as the 'development of doubt and scepticism' (Islamic Academy, 1984, p 4). The school governors, the majority of whom would be Muslim, would also have the right to appoint teachers and to determine the admissions policy of the school. With regard to the latter, however, Muslim organisations have already made it clear that in principle they would be happy to admit non-Muslim pupils and to employ Christians or other believers as teachers (cf Muslim Parents' Association, 1983; Halstead, 1988, p 44).

Ashraf (1986a, p viii; 1988d, p 77) makes the important point that it is not realistic to imagine that enough voluntary-aided schools will be quickly established to cater for all the Muslim children in the U.K. There are nearly 20,000 Muslim school-children in Bradford alone. It seems inevitable that for many years to come large numbers of Muslim school-chilren will be educated in state schools and receive religious instruction separately in mosque schools. The Muslim community may therefore be expected to keep up its campaign for single-sex education and for other concessions that prevent Muslim chidren being put into a situation where they are required to act in a way that is contrary to their faith (see Appendix One), as well as for factually correct teaching about Islam in state schools and for LEA support for mosque schools. Nevertheless, Ashraf believes that Muslim voluntary-aided schools will set 'a pattern and an ideal' for the education of Muslim children in the U.K., showing that it is possible for such education to be run according to Islamic principles (1986a, p viii-ix).

The point of having voluntary-aided schools is to leave the Muslim community free to direct the personal development of their own children according to Islamic principles. However, since education is an activity which occurs in and affects the broader society, to say nothing of being financed through local and central government, it is clear that the broader society and the state have a legitimate interest in what goes on and the right to insist on certain conditions being met, whether through legislation or through advice from HMI and LEA inspectors. Most of these conditions are implicit in what has already been written in the present chapter. For example, no less than other maintained schools, voluntary-aided schools have a responsibility to take account of the needs of industry, to promote tolerance and to prepare children for citizenship. No less than other maintained schools, they have a responsibility to ensure that children are educated in such a way that they can enjoy a satisfying economic and social life. Finally, Hirst's point about social divisiveness needs to be considered: the state has a right to expect that voluntary-aided schools should not further the isolation of minority groups or play into the hands of racists. These various points can be brought together under two headings, the first relating to the public interest and the second to the interests of the child.

The public interest (as defined in Chapter Five) requires that a minimum set of common values and standards of behaviour should be accepted as axiomatic in all the schools of a given society or state, including voluntary-aided schools. There are three dimensions to any such minimum set of common values. The first is a basic social morality without which no form of social life would be possible (in particular, a respect for justice and a recognition that other groups have as much right as one's own to avoid physical pain and death among their members). The second is the acceptance of a common system of law and government by all groups within the broader society, and a commitment to seek to change these only through democratic means. Since all citizens share the same laws, the same political rights and the same economic system, it is

important that they should be able to 'communicate intelligibly' and 'function properly in a just society', and it is 'a legitimate object of public concern' that they should become good citizens and become economically productive (Strike, 1982a, p 159). The third is a commitment to at least some of the values presupposed by the pluralist ideal, particularly the toleration of groups with different ideals to one's own and the rejection of violence as a means of persuasion. The state has a legitimate right to protect the public interest from harm and therefore has the right to insist, for example, that they do not educate children in a way that might fuel intolerance or undermine social co-operation. There is much evidence to suggest that the teaching of a basic social morality would present few problems for Muslim denominational schools, and that the preparation of pupils for citizenship would be accepted as an important part of the school's role (cf Halstead, 1986, p 23), but I shall argue shortly that Muslim organisations currently need to give much more thought to practical ways of promoting tolerance towards groups with different values and beliefs from their own.

Although accepting that Muslims should be free to set up their own voluntary-aided schools involves accepting that the Muslim community has the right to direct the personal development of Muslim children, this does not mean that the state washes its hands of any need to protect the interests of the child. On the contrary, the social and economic interests of the child are still very much part of the state's domain. There is a need to ensure, for example, that the quality of education provided in the voluntary-aided school is high enough for its pupils to compete in the job-market on equal terms with pupils from other maintained schools; of course, voluntary-aided schools are open to inspection by HMI and LEA advisers, and are required to follow the National Curriculum. Some of the problems which might arise as a result of this requirement are outlined below. The state also has a duty to ensure that pupils at voluntary-aided schools do not experience injustice and intolerance at the hands of the majority as a result of their institutional separation from the broader society. This points to the need both for a continued emphasis on tolerance and mutual understanding in all schools,

and for a significant interaction with the broader community on the part of pupils at Muslim voluntary-aided schools.

Muslims who have in recent years pressed the case for the establishment of Muslim voluntary-aided schools have, not surprisingly, tended to concentrate on the kind of religious teaching that such schools would offer and the way in which they would seek to cater for the personal interests of their children. In the final section of this chapter I want to indicate some of the other areas of educational provision within the proposed Muslim voluntary-aided schools which are in urgent need of clarification and more detailed investigation. The final section therefore considers where further investigation may profitably build on the work which has been carried out in the present thesis.

* * * *

The first area which needs much greater clarification is the extent to which, leaving aside the specific area of religious education and worship, Muslims would be happy in their own voluntary-aided schools to work within the framework of the National Curriculum. Very little work has been done so far by Muslims on this specific issue, but an examination of the curriculum of existing independent Muslim schools in the U.K. provides some idea of where the problems may lie. The curriculum of the Islamic College, Whitechapel Road, London, for example, does not include any music (apart from Qur'anic chanting), art (apart from calligraphy), design, technology or a European language other than English (Hiskett, 1989, p 12-13) though there is no reason in principle why the last three should not be provided. Other areas which may be problematic for Muslims are dance and sex education, and they may wish to change aspects of the science curriculum to allow for belief in creationism (see Chapter Eight). Each problematic area of the curriculum needs to be examined in detail, and Muslim leaders must be willing to explore the reasons why the subject is included in the

National Curriculum and perhaps reconsider their own attitude to the subject. Western music, for example, is never, to my knowledge, included in the curriculum of any independent Muslim school in the U.K., but it is by no means clear whether this is because of cultural prejudice or because the music is seen to be in conflict with Islamic principles. It is very difficult to imagine the reasons for a principled objection by Muslims to certain kinds of classical music that have been directly inspired by religion and that represent man's search for the infinite. Hiskett (1989, p 35-6) makes some sensible suggestions about how to fit religious teaching and Arabic into the curriculum and how to compromise over sex education, but there is clearly much more to be done in this area as well (cf Ashraf, 1988c).

The second area where much more work must be done by Muslims is the clarification of how other world views would be presented in Muslim schools. It is one thing to accept the **principle** of tolerating groups with beliefs and values different from one's own, but something else to encourage children and young people to **practise** such tolerance. Practical tolerance is made easier if people **understand** the group they are tolerating, and Muslims need to make clear how they would present to their pupils not only the beliefs and values of other faiths, but also the values of non-religious world views. What is needed, for example, is for Muslim children to be given an introduction to liberal values, to what liberals believe about autonomy, about critical openness, about indoctrination, about sexual equality and so on. Certainly such an introduction could be presented from an Islamic point of view, but unless it was not unsympathetic in its approach, it would hardly serve the interests of tolerance and mutual understanding within our society. To my knowledge, Muslims have not begun to address this issue as yet.

There is clearly a danger that if Muslim children attended Muslim voluntary-aided schools, this would further increase the isolation of the Muslim community which was noted in Chapters One and Two. The third area where work needs to be done is thus to

explore ways of reducing the isolation of the Muslim community. Clearly it is not enough that Muslims should **understand** the beliefs and values of the broader society. Some way must be found of engaging in dialogue and co-operation with non-Muslims, so that bridges may be built between communities and divisiveness avoided. Perhaps the only argument that could be developed for allowing voluntary-aided schools for Catholics, Anglicans, Methodists and Jews but not for Muslims is that the Muslims, unlike the others, are not fully integrated into the dominant British culture and are not members of cross-cutting groups that mingle freely in the pub, the dance-hall or the rugby club, for example. As Hiskett (1989, p 11) points out, to grant denominational status to a Jewish school does not involve the state in cutting its pupils off from significant areas of British, indeed Western European, culture, but to grant it to a Muslim school might well seem to do so. It is incumbent on Muslims therefore to spell out the specific steps they would take to avoid their children becoming isolated from contact with the culture and the people of the broader community.

It may be that Muslims will find it easier to interact, co-operate and enter into dialogue with members of the other faith-communities in the U.K. than with other members of the broader community. Watt (1979, p 203) detects certain indications that Islam is abandoning its earlier isolationist attitude with regard to Christianity and suggests that there is a growing feeling that

> *Islam and Christianity are ultimately on the same side in the spiritual struggles that lie before humanity.*

Nasr (1981, p 36) argues that it is time for Muslim scholars to carry out more serious studies of other religions and that

> *the best way to defend Islam in its integral nature today is to defend* religio perennis, *the primordial religion* (al-din al-hanif) *which lies at the heart of*

Islam and also at the centre of all religions which have been sent to man by the grace of heaven.

Yamani (1983, p x) says that apart from a few crucial differences, there is 'a vast expanse of human conduct and behaviour 'in which Christians and Muslims will find they are at one. The time thus seems ripe for serious dialogue to begin between Islam and other religions, especially Christianity (Nasr, 1981, p 35). By dialogue, I mean the mutual exchange of views between groups who have a genuine interest in each other and are prepared to learn from each other. Indeed, such dialogue has already begun in practice. For example, The Centre for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations has been established for a number of years in Birmingham. The Islamic Academy in Cambridge is currently engaged in dialogue with Hindu representatives as well as with Christians, and is seeking to co-operate with the Farmington Institute and with projects at King's College, London to establish a faith-based curriculum which may be acceptable to believers from different faith communities (Ashraf, 1988b, 1988e; 1989b). This is an ambitious project which is only just at its inception at the time of writing.

Another way forward which may help to avoid the damaging isolation of the Muslim community might be the establishment of joint Muslim-Christian voluntary-aided schools. No such project has as yet been proposed, but it would seem to be a possible solution to a problem that occurs not infrequently in some inner-city districts, that a Church of England voluntary school finds itself with a majority of Muslim pupils. The idea of a joint voluntary-aided school is not without precedent; indeed, there are now about half a dozen joint Catholic/Anglican schools, including one which was established in Cambridge in 1988. Nonetheless, it would be foolish to underestimate the difficulties. A systematic approach to the project would involve first, making clear the fundamental values which were agreed between the two (or more) religious groups responsible for establishing the school; secondly, defining the extent of the co-operation

between the two groups; and thirdly, establishing procedures for resolving the disagreements and conflicts that would inevitably occur. With regard to the first of these tasks, Watt (1983) has stressed how many fundamental beliefs and values are in fact shared between Islam and Christianity. Yandell (1984, p vii ff) makes a useful distinction between 'context beliefs' and 'core beliefs'. Context beliefs are presupposed by, and provide the context for, the more specific core beliefs. A context belief, for example, might be that religious knowledge is gained primarily through revelation; a core belief, that the Qur'an was revealed by God to the Prophet Muhammad. The belief that God governs the course of history might be a context belief, whereas a belief in the second coming of the Messiah would be a core belief. It may be possible to produce a shared religious ethos for a joint Muslim-Christian school based on context beliefs, and to allow separate religious instruction within the school for core beliefs. Clearly, however, very much more work is needed on such a project before it could ever become a viable possibility, and it is beyond the scope of the present thesis to explore it more fully here.

What it is hoped the present thesis has achieved, however, is a clarification of the reasons why many Muslims are dissatisfied with the education provided for their children in the U.K., as well as of the values that would underpin a genuinely Islamic education, and the fundamental conflicts between liberal and Islamic views of education. An understanding of the genuine difficulties, both practical and conceptual, that lie in the path of providing an education for Muslim chidren which is acceptable to Muslims themselves is a pre-condition for successful policy-making in this area, whatever way forward is eventually adopted.

APPENDIX ONE

EDUCATIONAL DEMANDS OF MUSLIMS IN BRADFORD AND LOCAL AUTHORITY RESPONSES

(1) The Teaching of Islam in State Schools

Not surprisingly, the first demand to be made by the Muslims in Bradford was for the teaching of Islam in schools, though this demand was not made until the late 1960s, when the Muslim community was already both sizable and well-established. Up to that time, the transmission of the Islamic faith and culture had been considered the responsibility of the family and the mosque school. Saifullah Khan (1975) has emphasised particularly the role of Muslim women in the transmission of religious traditions, and, in earlier research, Goodall (1968) reported that most children from Pakistani families in Bradford attended mosque schools from fifteen to twenty hours a week, to learn Arabic and Urdu and to read the Qur'an.

As Muslim groups became aware of the general right of parents under the 1944 Education Act to arrange denominational religious instruction for their children, either by bringing an outside instructor into the school or by taking their children out of school at the beginning or end of the school day for such lessons, so pressure began to mount for such instruction to be provided for Muslim children in Bradford's secondary schools. The Muslim Association of Bradford and the Muslim Education Trust were the main pressure groups involved at this stage. In 1969, Bradford's Director of Education, F J Adams, was worried by these requests, though he recognised the need in principle to respect the rights of minorities. He saw them as running counter to Bradford's policy of integration, and spoke of the danger of a 'divisive element creeping into the schools'. Initially, permission was given for instruction in Islam only

at Bradford's immigrant education centres, but in 1972 this was extended to any secondary schools in the district. Commenting on this decision by Bradford's Educational Services Committee, Councillor Albert Swindlehurst said, 'Until there was integration and they perhaps had their own denominational schools, the committee should at least attempt to help them'.

Thus Bradford's LAM No. 2/82, which is discussed in Chapter Two, was a clarification and codification of policy which had been instituted ten years earlier. Parents were free to withdraw children from school to receive religious instruction elsewhere, or to arrange for such instruction to be held on school premises. The last hour of school on Fridays was set aside for this purpose. In addition, imams were given permission to enter schools at lunch-time, on the request of parents, to lead Muslim children in prayer.

The demand for the teaching of Islam in state schools had two further repercussions on local authority policy. First, it acted as a catalyst to the development of the city's new agreed syllabus for Religious Education, which sought to give a fair treatment of, and show equal respect for, all the major world faiths. Secondly, the proliferating mosque schools and other supplementary schools, which remained the main centres for instruction in Islam, were financially supported by the Council. In 1983, a grant of £100,000 was temporarily withheld in an attempt to persuade the supplementary schools to improve standards of health and safety.

Two main doubts hang over local authority policy. On the one hand, there is the question how far, if at all, local authority schools can be used to maintain and transmit any religious faith. On the other, it is questionable whether the Council should give financial support to supplementary schools whose method of teaching and discipline and dogmatic approach are fundamentally in conflict with contemporary educational belief and practice in this country. It has also been claimed that lengthy tuition outside

school hours curtails Muslim children's chances of benefitting educationally from normal extra-curricular activities, and perhaps impairs their ability to obtain maximum benefit from their schooling.

(2) The Retention of Single-Sex Schooling

Single-sex schooling, particularly for girls of secondary school age, has been one of the most sustained demands of the Muslims in Bradford (Iqbal, 1975). Islamic law and traditions do not allow the free mixing of the sexes outside the family after the age of puberty, and some Muslim parents have been prepared to keep their daughters away from school altogether, or to send them to Pakistan to complete their education, rather than allow them to attend a co-educational school (cf Selbourne, 1987, p 103). Apart from an unrealistic request in 1973 by the Muslim Association of Bradford for the law to be changed to allow the girls to leave school at the age of twelve, single-sex schooling appears to offer the only solution to this situation. Initially, the main pressure from groups such as the Muslim Parents' Association, the Jamiyat Tablighul-Islam and the World Islamic Mission was for a separate school for Muslim girls to be established with financial assistance from the Council. Eventually in 1983 a fee-paying school was opened in Bradford by the Muslim Association, with places for 100 senior Muslim girls; however, this school has been criticised by Her Majesty's Inspectorate for its inadequate accommodation and resources, its lack of suitably qualified staff, its lack of a balanced curriculum and its low expectations of pupil performance (HMI, 1987a). This school could not in any case accept more than a small percentage of the Muslim girls in the city; by 1983, there were approaching 2,000 of upper school age, and Muslim pressure groups such as the Council for Mosques began to put their efforts into demanding that Bradford Council should reverse its co-educational policy, and at least retain the status of Belle Vue, the only remaining girls' upper school under its control. Ironically, there is a large Catholic girls' upper school in the city, St Joseph's

College, with significant numbers of pupils of Polish, Ukrainian, Italian and West Indian origin, but as it has voluntary-aided status the governors are entitled to fix the school's admissions policy. 85% of the places reserved for Catholics, and priority for the remaining places is given to parents specifically seeking a Christian education for their daughters. Many Muslim girls each year are refused admission on these grounds. The third all-girls upper school in the city is the now independent Bradford Girls' Grammar School, which has a small percentage of Muslim pupils.

In the early 1970s, the Council merged most of its single-sex schools to form co-educational comprehensives, and it was Council policy to refuse permission for Muslim girls to transfer on cultural grounds to girls-only schools. This policy was explained by Bradford's acting Director of Education, B.J.R. Parker, in 1974, when he pointed out that if all Muslim girls in Bradford were free to transfer to Belle Vue Girls' School when it became the city's sole girls-only school, it would very soon become an all-Muslim school. When the policy was changed in 1980, and it was decided to allocate pupils to schools on the basis of parental choice (though pupils within the catchment area were given priority in the case of an over-subscribed school), Parker's prophecy rapidly became true: by 1984 the intake to Belle Vue Girls' School had become more than two-thirds Muslim (McElroy, 1985) and this proportion is still rising. The policy turn-around was completed in 1983 when a Labour motion to merge Belle Vue Girls' and Boys' Upper Schools was narrowly defeated in a Council debate. Since 1983, spokesmen of both main parties have promised to retain the single-sex option (cf Dawe, 1987).

As was pointed out earlier in the chapter, the Council's present policy on single-sex schools implies a value judgement that consistency with their parents' beliefs is more important in the education of Muslim children than the benefits of co-education, that the consequent segregation of Muslim girls into what some call 'ghetto schools' is a worthwhile price to pay for such consistency, and that the rights of parents to make

educational decisions affecting their own children should take priority over all other considerations, even, if necessary, over the rights of the children themselves. Perhaps, however, this is merely another example of a pragmatic policy: at least it tackled the problem of the Muslim girls in the city who were being kept away from school altogether. But even the success of this intention is not guaranteed; in 1984 the headteacher of Belle Vue Girls' School reported that Muslim girls were four times more likely than their indigenous peers to be absent from her school.

(3) The Abandonment of Mono-cultural Education

It would be wrong to claim that before the 1980s there was a demand by any of the minority groups in Bradford for anything called multi-cultural education. However, some of the groups - particularly the Muslims again - did fear that their children were being subjected to moral, cultural and religious indoctrination in schools, although they did not always use those terms. They expressed concern about the effect of 'the permissive British society' on Pakistani girls and about the 'demoralization' of Muslim children. These misgivings about the moral atmosphere of schools tended to focus particularly on sex education, which many Muslims wanted to be discontinued, and on authority and discipline, which they wanted tightening up. No doubt this latter point underlies the desire among some Muslims to retain corporal punishment in mosque schools, which was highlighted in the national press in 1986. There were even greater misgivings about the un-Islamic practices which some Muslim children were being encouraged to engage in - the wearing of skirts, the exposure of girls' bodies in PE, swimming, dancing and showers, and fund-raising activities involving forms of gambling. Some Muslims have also objected to their children having to attend Christian assemblies, prayers and religious education classes and concern has increased in view of the specifically Christian provisions of the 1988 Education Act. The Muslim Parents' Association had been campaigning on these issues since 1974, and in early

1982 launched a vitriolic attack on Bradford Council in the form of a thirty-six page report entitled 'Transformation of Muslim Children' (Patel and Shahid, 1982). This report undoubtedly had a major influence on Bradford's LAM No 2/82, which was issued later the same year. Other concessions sought by Muslims to help their children to retain their religious identity included the provision of *halal* meat in schools, which is discussed below, and making the holy days of Eid ul-Fitr and Eid ul-Adha official holidays for Muslim schoolchildren. More recently, some Muslim groups have objected to the government's inclusion of music, art and drama in the national curriculum, for these activities are in danger of violating the teachings of Islam, and some Muslim parents would wish to withdraw their children from such classes.

The development of multi-cultural education was the response of Bradford Council to these demands. The multi-cultural policies fall into two categories: those which grant multi-cultural concessions to the minority groups, so that schools are never in a position to require pupils to act in a way that is contrary to their (or their parents') religious and cultural beliefs; and those involving the treatment of all religious and cultures with equal respect, so that a positive image of each is presented to all pupils in the city's schools. The first of these objectives was detailed in Bradford's LAM No 2/82, which is discussed in Chapter Two: this document is partly prescriptive (children were to be allowed to cover their bodies as they chose for swimming, PE and showers and to wear traditional dress instead of school uniform) and partly advisory (teachers were to exercise tact and discretion in sensitive areas such as health education and lotteries and raffles). The second objective was reflected in the decision to include the variety of faiths in the city in the new RE syllabus published in 1974 under the title 'A Guide to Religious Education in a Multi-faith Community'; this was revised again in 1983. For once, a pragmatic response to the presence of adherents of a variety of world religions in the city went hand in hand with new theoretical approaches to the teaching of Religious Education that had been developing since the late 1960's. An Inter-faith Education Centre for RE teachers and others, catering for the five main faiths

in the city, was opened in 1986. Other attempts to treat the major world religions with parity of esteem include the granting of permission for Muslim, Hindu and Sikh children to be absent from school on religious festivals such as Eid ul-Fitr and Diwali, and experimental proposals for worship in schools (CBMC, 1986a, 1986b).

The multi-cultural policies were actively disseminated by the LEA advisers and the local T.F. Davies Teachers' Centre, and headteachers were encouraged to organise in-school staff development to ensure that the policies were actually implemented as far as possible. The case of Wyke Manor Upper School provides a well-documented example of the response of one particular school to Bradford's multi-cultural policies and guidelines; after an intensive period of discussion in working parties, faculty meetings and whole staff meetings with outside speakers and LEA advisers, school statements were drawn up on multi-culturalism as well as on anti-racism and prejudice, and the support of parents and governors was actively sought (Duncan, 1985a, 1985b; Lynch, 1986, pp 82, 152).

The Council's policies sought to tread a middle path between trapping minority children within a restricting culture on the one hand and culturally uprooting and disorienting them on the other; at the same time they sought to inculcate in all children a respect for a variety of cultures and an appreciation of multi-cultural education as an enriching experience. However, they have been criticised for attempting to present too many faiths and cultures to children, in too diluted a fashion, and not helping children to discriminate between them; for emphasising community differences and thus underlining their separateness; and for not stressing the need to master the dominant culture if one is to thrive economically and politically in society.

(4) The Cessation of the Policy of Dispersal

The policy of dispersing Muslim and other ethnic minority pupils throughout the city's schools (commonly known as 'bussing') was introduced in 1964 in accordance with DES guidelines. The policy had two aims. The first was to assist the language development and general integration of minority children in the city by ensuring that no schools, even in areas of the city where the ethnic minorities were concentrated, had a majority of such children; the original limit of 10 per cent of immigrants in a school was quickly raised to 25 per cent, and raised again in 1969 to 33 per cent. The second was to ensure that all indigenous children had some contact with the ethnic minorities; as Bradford's assistant education officer, P Bendall, explained in 1972: 'If we can give as many English children as possible the chance of growing up in school with immigrant class-mates, then there is a good chance they will learn to live in harmony with them, and carry on doing so after their schooldays'. Another of the city's education officers, quoted by Troyna and Williams (1986), put it more bluntly: 'dispersal is ... quite simply a system of social engineering' (p 18).

This policy was never popular with parents. Indigenous parents objected strongly if they found their own children refused a place at a local school to make room for ethnic minority children coming from a distance, and minority group parents were inconvenienced when it came to attending parents' evenings and other activities. Minority pupils were deprived of the benefits of a neighbourhood school, and most of the minority group parents hoped that their own children would not be chosen for 'bussing'; about 15 per cent of ethnic minority children actually were chosen.

Political opposition to the policy developed initially from the far right and the far left. The former objected to any degree of encouragement of racial mixing in schools, the latter to the manifest racial discrimination in the way dispersal was carried out; only children from ethnic minorities were being 'bussed' and this was seen as an example of

what Hill and Issacharoff (1971, p 51) called the 'highly unequal interracial accommodation' which was operated in Bradford. The latter objection only made slow headway, however, for two reasons. First, to challenge intentional racial mixing as discriminatory seemed to be in direct conflict with the American experience of 'bussing' (where it was intentional racial segregation which was attacked as discriminatory). Secondly, to call for white children to be 'bussed' into inner-city schools which were already bursting at the seams would appear perverse; 'bussing' was at least in part a reponse to overcrowding and a way of giving ethnic minority children the benefit of smaller classes. In the event, it was a complaint by a member of the National Front to the Race Relations Board which led to an investigation of Bradford's policy of dispersal, though somewhat ironically the complaint was expressed in terms of which most ethnic minority parents would have approved: 'bussing' was wasting their children's time and denying them the benefits of a neighbourhood school (Kirp, 1979, p 96). Professor Hawkins of the University of York was appointed by the Race Relations Board to examine whether Bradford's policy of dispersal could be justified in terms of language needs rather than of race. As a result of his report, a few minor modifications were made to the policy.

Council support for the policy remained strong, however, long after it had been phased out in other parts of the country. Indeed the Labour whip was withdrawn from Councillor Rhodes in 1976 for opposing it. In 1978 Councillor Hussain claimed that the 'tremendous social, cultural and educational benefits' of the dispersal policy far outweighed the difficulties it caused for ethnic minority families. He also warned that abandoning the policy would lead to 'segregation and eventually to ghetto schools' and that a massive school-building programme in the inner city would be required. Both of these prophecies have since come true. Opposition to the policy gradually gained momentum, however, in the late 1970s. Councillors Ajeeb and Hameed called the policy racialist and considered it an affront to the freedom and dignity of ethnic minority parents. A petition rejecting 'bussing', with a thousand signatures from teachers,

parents and others, was presented to the Council in early 1979. The last straw came when the Commission for Racial Equality decided to reactivate its investigation into the legality of 'bussing', and at the end of 1979 the Council decided to phase the policy out.

Undoubtedly economic factors were a major consideration in the retention of 'bussing' in Bradford for so long. Even when the 33 per cent limit on the number of ethnic minority children in a school had been abandoned as impractical in the mid-1970s, 'bussing' continued, because there was simply not enough space in the inner-city schools for the expanding population, while there was plenty in suburban schools. The political decision to permit all children to attend neighbourhood schools, however, meant that by 1984 there were nineteen schools in the city with over 70 per cent of ethnic minority children, and led to a major new building programme of additional first and middle schools in the inner city. The effect of the decision to abandon 'bussing' on the educational achievement of the children concerned, and on race relations generally, is difficult to assess because of the many other complicating factors, but it seems unlikely that cross-cultural understanding in the city has been improved by the growth of 'ghetto schools'.

(5) The Provision of Mother-tongue Teaching

The special language needs of pupils of Asian origin are not difficult to see. From an early age they are likely to communicate with their parents and elders in Punjabi, Urdu, Gujerati, Bengali or Pushtu; with some of their peers and in all of the contacts with the wider community they speak English; and, in the case of Muslim children, they use Arabic for religious purposes. Since the 1960s mosque schools and other supplementary schools have catered for these needs by providing tuition in Arabic and a number of mother-tongues; and, as we have seen, such schools have received financial

support from the Council. However, demands have not been widespread from the minority communities for mother-tongue teaching in Local Authority schools, though there have been some (for example, from the Hindu Society in 1984); parents have tended to give higher priority to an adequate level of attainment in English. It has been left to the Council to do most of the running in working out children's needs in this area.

Over the last twenty years Bradford Council has tended to place rather less emphasis in its language policies on giving special help with English to ethnic minority pupils, and rather more emphasis on the positive use of minority languages in schools and in official publications. In the 1960's, three Immigrant Language Centres (later simply called Language Centres) were set up in Bradford to ensure that all children had a minimum level of proficiency in English before being transferred to Local Authority schools (Verma, 1986, p 52). This was considered an efficient use of resources by the Council, particularly in the days of 'bussing'; otherwise every school would have needed an E2L specialist. Doubts developed, however, as to whether such separate provision was really in the best interests of the children concerned. The Language Centres were finally closed in September 1986, with their pupils being catered for henceforth within existing schools.

Mother-tongue teaching has taken two forms in Bradford. First, minority languages, especially Urdu, have been introduced as options alongside French and German in the modern language departments of an increasing number of middle and upper schools. The mother-tongue teaching survey carried out in Bradford and elsewhere as part of the Linguistic Minorities Project reported a total of 183 ethnic minority language classes in the city's schools (Linguistic Minorities Project, 1983). Secondly, there have been experiments in the use of the mother-tongue of Asian pupils as a medium of instruction alongside English for the first two years of their school career. The first was a project sponsored by the EEC, which ran from 1976 to 1980,

and the second, the Mother Tongue and English Teaching for Young Asian Children Project (MOTET) was funded by the DES from 1979 to 1981 and carried out jointly by the University of Bradford, Bradford College and the Council's Directorate of Education (Rees and Fitzpatrick, 1981). Its findings provided inconclusive evidence as to the value of such teaching, except perhaps as a means of boosting motivation, confidence and cultural identity, but the practice has been continued in Bradford on a small scale. Undoubtedly the biggest obstacle to the further development of both forms of mother-tongue teaching is the shortage of suitably qualified teachers. Both forms of provision have been criticised, however, for their cost and because it is not clear whether they actually are educationally beneficial for the pupils.

(6) Permission for Extended Trips to the Indian Sub-continent

This was not an issue in the minds of Asian parents until the local authority took steps in 1981 to restrict such trips. The restrictions were proposed because of concern that the education of Asian children was being damaged by trips abroad of anything from two months' duration to a year or more, and because, when there was so much pressure on inner-city school places, it was difficult to keep places open for children who had gone abroad indefinitely. The Council's Multi-Cultural Review Body therefore proposed that heads should be allowed to remove pupils from school registers and allocate their places to other children if they were absent for more than six weeks during term-time - an absence considerably longer than the two weeks allowed for in the 1959 Education Act.

At a public meeting held at Drummond Middle School to discuss the proposed rule (a meeting later described by Honeyford, 1984), there were strong objections from Asian parents. They asked the Council to exercise greater flexibility in their approach to the problem, and pointed to the educational and cultural benefits that their children

might receive from such trips. The proposals were quietly dropped, but the issue was re-opened by Honeyford two-and-a-half years later (1983c), when he claimed that there appeared to be one set of rules for Asian children and another for the rest.

(7) The Development of Anti-racist Policies in Education

Anti-racism is, of course, a very broad concept, and if taken to include what is now sometimes called 'cultural racism' (cf Seidel, 1986, p 129; Ashrif and Yaseen, 1987, p 123; Gilroy, 1987, p 61), it encompasses all the demands listed so far. For example, Councillor Hameed's dismissal of the dispersal policy as 'racialist' has already been noted. In the present section, I intend to concentrate on two specific demands associated with the development of anti-racist policies in education: the clamping down on overt racist behaviour involving or affecting schoolchildren, and the elimination of factors contributing to unintentional and institutionalised racism in schools. Overt racist behaviour covers everything from the 'unfriendliness, rudeness or indifference' which the Azad Kashmir Muslim Association said in 1982 was rife in Bradford (Yorkshire Post, 30 April 1982), to the graffiti, name-calling, racial bullying and gang fights in schools which are reported with increasing frequency in the local press (though the Revolutionary Communist party has claimed that a conspiracy of silence exists between the police, the press and the Council to conceal the real extent of racist attacks).

Racist attacks on Muslims increased in 1986 after the Honeyford affair, and again in 1989 in the wake of Muslim protests against Salman Rushdie. In March 1986, leaders of the Asian Youth Movement called for an official investigation into fighting outside Belle Vue Boys' School which led to the arrest of five pupils; the situation was serious enough for pupils at nearby first and middle schools to be sent home early to avoid getting caught up in the clashes. Sporadic activity in schools by the National

Front and other far-right groups has invariably increased tension; trouble flared up at Eccleshill Upper School following distribution of the British Nationalist, and some Asian pupils were reported to be 'too scared to return to school' (Hamilton, 1984). From time to time allegations are made of racism among Bradford teachers, especially since the announcement that a former Bradford head, Stanley Garnett, had joined the British National Party in 1983. Claims of racism among the staff at Wyke Manor Upper School directed against its black headteacher were made by a supply teacher in the News of the World; although the teacher who made the allegations was suspended and the allegations were officially denied, 300 pupils at the school went on strike in 1984 to demand the dismissal of a 'racist' teacher. Marches against racism have become commonplace in Bradford, though education is of course only one of many areas covered by such anti-racist protests.

Although activities like marches inevitably attract more media attention, other protests against less obvious forms of racism, such as the negative patronizing or stereotyped views of some races in school books and the sometimes unintentional racism of 'colour-blindness' (i.e. the denial of significant differences between ethnic groups), continue to be made by some minority groups in Bradford. In 1983 Raminder Singh, the Chairman of Bradford's Community Relations Council, drew attention to the problem of racist school books, and in their publication entitled Reading, Riting, Rithmetic, Race in 1984, the Asian Youth Movement attacked complacency on racial issues among teachers and administrators and called for an anti-racist education centre to be set up in Bradford. Shepherd (1987) highlights the low expectations that teachers had of their Asian pupils at one of Bradford's inner-city middle schools.

The Council has sought to respond to both sets of demands. In an initial policy statement distributed to all its employees in 1981, the Council outlined a new twelve-point plan on race relations. This included commitment to a policy 'to encourage equal opportunities, to reduce racial disadvantage and to root out once and for all racial

discrimination'. The Race Relations Advisory Group was set up the same year to help other Council departments on racial issues, and the Council was already talking in terms of 'the vetting of books, materials and curricula to ensure that stereotyped images or prejudices are avoided' (CBMC Digest, 1981, p 23). In 1983, the local authority attempted to standardise procedures in schools on the challenging and correcting of racist behaviour. A Local Adminsistrative Memorandum (LAM Mo 6/83) entitled Racist Behaviour in Schools was circulated to heads, giving guidelines and rules based on the earlier policy statement, and requiring them to identify and deal firmly and consistently with racist incidents in their schools, and to report them regularly to the local authority. The LAM emphasised the need:

1. to deal with the alleged perpetrators of the racialist behaviour;

2. to aid and support the victim;

3. to lay down firm lines of responsibility for dealing with incidents;

4. to deal with the impact of the incident on the whole community.

Each school was asked to prepare a detailed statement of its own policy against racialist behaviour, based on the general principles set out by the local authority. These general principles included the immediate removal of racialist graffiti or slogans from books or walls; the immediate confiscation of racialist literature, badges or insignia; reporting any activities of extreme political groups inciting racial hatred within the school to the police and the Directorate of Education; informing the parents of pupils responsible for racialist behaviour and involving them in any disciplinary procedures; and informing the victims of such behaviour of the action taken against it.

At the same time as attempting to deal with examples of overt racism, however, the Council has also taken some steps to eradicate its underlying causes and less obvious manifestations. The decision to keep ethnic records, made in 1981, represented a clear rejection of the 'colour-blind' approach favoured by some teachers and an attempt to facilitate the monitoring of discrimination resulting from ethnic diversity. The campaign against institutional racism can be seen in the abolition of separate Language Centres in 1986, the drive since 1983 to appoint more ethnic minority governors, the encouragement of schools and libraries to examine critically the image of minority communities presented in the books they use, and, perhaps most controversially, the Racism Awareness Training courses which all heads and others involved in recruitment were required to attend. Though these courses were discontinued in 1986, their activities were incorporated into the regular training and in-service courses run by the local authority.

Perhaps the most important thing to emerge from the Council's actions so far is the great need for tact and sensitivity in bringing racial issues into consciousness and in attempting to correct misunderstandings and to change ingrained attitudes about race. It may be argued that if an anti-racist policy is perceived as a threat, as Bradford's was by many headteachers (cf Halstead, 1988, p 29-30), it is almost certain to be counter-productive, and the best solution then is to approach the problem from a different angle. This appears to be the thinking behind the abandonment of the Racism Awareness Training courses, but such tact and sensitivity was not always evident in the Council's handling of the Honeyford affair.

(8) The Establishment of Muslim Voluntary-aided Schools

In January 1983 the Muslim Parents' Association submitted a request to Bradford Council for permission to take over two first schools, two middle schools and one

upper school as Muslim voluntary-aided schools. Among the schools concerned were Honeyford's school, Drummond Middle, and Belle Vue Girls' Upper School. The main reasons for the request were to provide a base for the preservation, maintenance and transmission of the Islamic way of life, to enable Muslim children to have a high level of general education while observing the laws of Islam, to protect children from Westernisation, secularisation and un-Islamic practices by providing schools with an Islamic ethos, and to ensure that the children were not taught by teachers who had themselves rejected religion. Admission would not be restricted to Muslim children, however. The request was justified in terms of rights granted under the 1944 Education Act, and was seen as a call for parity of treatment with other minority religious groups in the UK, such as Catholics and Jews, who already have voluntary-aided schools. Several respected figures in the British Muslim community visited Bradford to express support for the request, including Yusuf Islam (the former pop star, Cat Stevens). In Bradford, however, opinion within the Muslim community was divided over the value of such schools. The Council for Mosques voted 13-8 against the proposal, and both the Community Relations Council and the Asian Youth Movement strongly opposed it. The latter warned of the dangers of 'voluntary apartheid' and the possibility of a 'racist backlash', and saw the way ahead as depending not on religious schools at all but on a greater openness within a common educational system to ethnic minority needs and a greater commitment to anti-racist education. It was reported that only forty-eight of the pupils at Belle Vue Girls' School supported the MPA's request. Outside the Muslim community, however, the request was universally opposed. The staff at Belle Vue Girls' School were unanimous in threatening resignation, and one parent-governor at Drummond Middle school collected 7,000 signatures against Muslim voluntary-aided schools. The local newspaper ran several articles opposing the scheme, but none in favour. Bradford's Educational Services Committee voted unanimously in September 1983 to reject the MPA's request. The official reasons provided for the refusal are interesting: no mention is made of the dangers of religious segregation, or indeed of any of the points made by the Asian Youth Movement; it was merely claimed that the

proposal lacked the support of a sufficiently broad section of the Muslims in Bradford, and that there were neither sufficient financial resources nor the necessary educational and administrative experience within the MPA to carry the project through. This avoidance of a principled stand against Muslim voluntary-aided schools, although many councillors clearly felt that such schools would contravene the whole spirit of the Council's multi-cultural policies (which were directed towards meeting the needs of ethnic minority children **within** the framework of a common school curriculum), perhaps illustrates the pragmatic and conciliatory nature of the Council's response to Muslim demands. But the Council's response appears to leave the door open for a reapplication at a later date. Indeed, some Muslim groups have tended to wield the threat of such schools as an instrument of persuasion when they meet opposition to their demands (as in the call for Honeyford's dismissal). For many people, it appears that the call for the establishment of Muslim voluntary-aided schools marks the limit of what can be tolerated in a multi-cultural society, and it is the only serious request from a minority group in Bradford so far to meet with an outright refusal. There is little doubt that this fact influenced the local authority's determination to demonstrate its fairhandedness by pressing ahead with the multi-cultural policies such as the provision of *halal* meat in schools.

The call for such schools raises a number of significant questions about the aims of education, which I have discussed in more detail elsewhere (Halstead, 1986). It forms part of the larger debate which has been carried on intermittently in the last three years in the correspondence columns of The Guardian, The Independent and The Times Education Supplement regarding the dual system of education and the justifiability of separate denominational schools. Interviewed on the BBC programme The Heart of the Matter on 13th September 1987, Honeyford expressed provisional support for the establishment of Muslim voluntary-aided schools. Early in 1988, it was first reported that the Labour Party leadership was dropping its opposition to such schools (Straw, 1989), partly no doubt in response to rumours that some Muslim leaders were

urging schools with a Muslim majority to consider opting out of LEA control, as permitted by the 1988 Education Act. The Labour-dominated Association of Metropolitan Authorities, on the other hand, remains staunchly opposed to Muslim voluntary-aided schools.

(9) The Provision of *Halal* Meat in Schools

Halal meat is meat which has been slaughtered in accordance with Islamic law. The animal must be conscious at the time of slaughter, and the name of Allah is invoked as the animal's throat is slit. Meat killed in any other manner is *haram* (forbidden) to Muslims, and this is generally taken to include meat from animals which have been stunned before slaughter in accordance with the 1933 and 1974 Slaughterhouse Acts. These Acts, do, however, empower local authorities to allow both Jewish and Muslim methods of slaughter, and Bradford has for many years had a *halal* slaughterhouse to serve the needs of Muslim butchers in the city. But prior to 1983 no *halal* meat was served in public institutions such as schools and hospitals where people of different faiths and cultures intermingle. In practice this meant that many non-vegetarian Muslim schoolchildren in Bradford schools, as elsewhere, were eating only vegetarian dishes in order to avoid contravening Islamic law. During the 1970s and early 1980s, demands intensified from Muslims for an acceptable meat dish to be provided for their children in schools.

In September 1983 the local authority began a pilot scheme involving the provision of *halal* meat in ten schools. Within a year this had been extended to nearly sixty schools, and the eventual intention was to serve *halal* meals in all schools with more than ten Muslim diners. The policy met immediate and vociferous opposition, however, from local animal rights campaigners, and this opposition, highlighted by the refusal of one campaigner to pay her rates, received much attention in the local and

national press. Undoubtedly the issue also became a focal point for racial prejudice. The Muslims, worried that the concession they had won might be slipping away from them, began to make their feelings known more forcibly; an estimated 3,000 Muslims joined a pro-*halal* demonstration, and a 7,000-signature petition was handed in a City Hall. In March 1984 the full Council debated whether to continue the provision of *halal* meat in view of the protests against it. In spite of the opposition of some prominent Labour councillors, including the Lord Mayor, Norman Free, continuation of the policy was supported by fifty-nine votes to fifteen. *Halal* meat now seems to be established as one of the most permanent and secure provisions for Muslim children in the city.

(10) The Removal of Honeyford from the Headship of Drummond Middle School

Following the publication of Ray Honeyford's article 'Education and Race - an alternative view' in The Salisbury Review early in 1984, a protracted campaign was launched against him calling for his dismissal from the headship of Drummond Middle School in Bradford, a post he had held since 1980. The affair became an educational *cause celebre* in the U.K. It received extensive media coverage and had political, legal, social and administrative repercussions both locally and nationally (Brown, 1985; Foster-Carter, 1987; Greenhalf, 1985; Halstead, 1988; Jack, 1985; Matthews, 1986; Murphy, 1987; Selbourne, 1987).

This was not the first article Honeyford had written about issues of race, multi-culturalism and the education of ethnic minority children. Indeed, since 1982 he had been arguing in the columns of The Times Educational Supplement and elsewhere that multi-cultural education is misguided and that the main need of ethnic minority children is to master British culture and become full British citizens. The tone of his articles gradually became more strident, however, and they were sometimes far from positive in

their depiction of Muslim and West Indian culture and local authority policy. Not surprisingly, he was criticised by ethnic minority groups and cautioned by the LEA. His article in The Salisbury Review early in 1984 takes his arguments against multi-cultural education further. First, he claims that freedom of speech is becoming 'difficult to maintain', because the feelings of guilt induced by the 'race lobby' and the fear of giving offence are preventing 'decent people' from writing their thoughts honestly. Secondly, he expresses much stronger criticisms of some aspects of minority cultures than he did in earlier articles. The 'vast majority' of West Indian homes are described as lacking in educational ambition; a disproportionate number are 'fatherless'; and the West Indian is described as someone who creates 'an ear-splitting cacophony for most of the night to the detriment of his neighbour's sanity'. He criticises the 'purdah mentality' of some Muslim parents and describes Pakistan, the country of origin for most of Bradford's Muslim families, as 'obstinately backward', plagued by 'corruption at every level', and the 'heroin capital of the world'. Finally, he touches on the educational disadvantage suffered by the white children who now form a minority group in many inner-city schools; they are inevitably not so well initiated into their own language and culture as their parents were, and their plight is likely to become more serious since they lack a spokesman or pressure group to articulate their anxieties. It was this article which triggered off what has since become known as 'the Honeyford affair'. As soon as the article came to the attention of Bradford Council and the wider public (some two months after its initial publication), it drew a barrage of criticism from many quarters, and set in motion the chain of events, including serious disruption at Drummond Middle School, which eventually led to Honeyford's early retirement.

The affair itself, however, was one of enormous complexity, and it raises fundamental questions not only about multi-cultural education and anti-racism, but also about free speech, the accountability of teachers and the control of education. Certainly Honeyford had succeeded in alienating both the LEA and the mainly Muslim local community that his school served, but this does not mean that both parties co-operated

freely in seeking his departure from the school. On the contrary, the Drummond Parents' Action Committee (the first main pressure group campaigning for Honeyford's dismissal) saw itself in conflict with the LEA, which it accused of not implementing its race relations policies, while the LEA warned parents of possible legal action if they kept their children away from school. A significant number of Muslim groups, including the influential Council for Mosques, were active in the campaign against Honeyford, but not all the Muslims in the local community opposed him; in fact, two of the three pro-Honeyford community representatives who were co-opted onto the new governing body of his school in October 1985 were Muslims. The DPAC alienated another potential ally, the NUT, which consistently expressed opposition to Honeyford's views, by accusing Drummond Middle School teachers of unprofessionally threatening to punish children who attended the DPAC's alternative school; the NUT threatened legal action against the DPAC for this allegation.

Honeyford's own union, the NAHT, championed him throughout the affair. The school governors also supported him throughout, though sometimes only by narrow margins and on one crucial occasion only as a result of a tactical error on the part of his opponents: a resolution calling for Honeyford's reinstatement after he had been suspended in April 1985 was passed by seven votes to four after four anti-Honeyford governors had chosen to boycott the meeting. Honeyford was frequently depicted as a racist; however, the NAHT took out a writ on his behalf against Bradford Council for alleged libel by seven racism awareness training officers who described him in a memorandum as a 'known racist' and refused to accept him on one of their courses, and his final early retirement package included a sum of £5,000 in settlement of the alleged libel. It was ironical to find that anti-racist protestors who by October 1985 had become a permanent feature of life at Drummond Middle School were made up of two distinct and physically separate groups - the white left-wingers on the one hand and the Asians on the other - while the children in the playground on the other side of the wall appeared to be completely integrated. Although nationally the debate about Honeyford tended to follow party political lines, with Conservatives like Sir Marcus Fox and

Nicholas Winterton speaking out in support of him in Parliament and Labour MPs such as Max Madden speaking against him, at a local level the decisions, at least at first, were less clearly along party lines. In March 1984, the Conservative chairman of the Educational Services Committee was one of Honeyford's most outspoken critics, while his supporters included the Labour Lord Mayor. All three local political parties in the hung Council changed their position in the course of the affair on giving Honeyford a financial incentive to take early retirement.

On top of these complexities are the tremendous emotions that were aroused on both sides of the debate and the distortions and misleading innuendoes that occurred with increasing frequency in reports of the affair both locally and nationally. On the one hand, demonstrators portrayed Honeyford as a devil on banners inscribed 'Honeyford writes in the blood of the blacks'. On the other hand, he was described in a letter to the local Telegraph and Argus as 'a sacrificial lamb on the altar of race relations' (27th March 1985) and even compared to Christ. The popular press tended to depict the affair as a conflict between a 'decent chap' (News of the World, 31st March 1985), who 'dared to speak his mind' (Daily Mirror, 9th April 1985) and the 'Thought Police who have bludgeoned Mr Honeyford into submission' (Daily Express, 30th March 1985). Honeyford's opponents had their own forms of distortion, however; a leaflet in Urdu purporting to be a translation of Honeyford's Salisbury Review article converted his statement about 'fatherless' West Indian families into a dismissal of Asians as 'illegitimate'. Some commentaries that have been written since the end of the affair have been even more fanciful in their distortions. West (1987), for example, somewhat sarcastically comments that Honeyford lost his job 'apparently for the crime of wanting to teach English children their own language, history and religion'.
On the other side, Gordon and Klug argue that

the superiority of white (middle-class) culture is implicit throughout the

writings of Ray Honeyford.

(1986, p 23)

In fact Honeyford seems to have been much more in touch with many working class people than were the leaders of the campaign against him, who often turned out to be from liberal/radical middle class backgrounds themselves.

I have attempted elsewhere (Halstead, 1988) to pick my way through the bias and distortion in order to establish as fully and as objectively as possible what actually happened in the affair. A brief outline of the main incidents in the affair is perhaps all that is needed here. After the initial wave of protests and demands for Honeyford's dismissal in March to May 1984, the LEA decided to carry out a full inspection of Drummond Middle School. The aim was to check that LEA policies, particularly those relating to multi-cultural education, were in fact being carried out. The advisers reported that LEA policies were generally being carried out at the school, but spoke of the need for Honeyford to 'regain the trust and confidence of a significant proportion of parents'. At a meeting of the Schools (Education) Sub-Committee in October, called to consider the report, a motion of no-confidence in Honeyford was defeated. He was given six months to prepare six reports on aspects of the school's provision, particularly relating to links with parents and the local community. The aim appeared to be to give him a chance to reconsider his attitude to multi-cultural education. Meanwhile, the Drummond Parents Action Committee kept up its pressure on the LEA to dismiss Honeyford, organising 238 parents to request the transfer of their children away from Drummond Middle School, and then organising an alternative school in the Pakistan Community Centre for children to attend when they were kept away from Honeyford's School. When the Schools (Education) Sub-Committee met again in March 1985 to consider Honeyford's reports, a vote of no-confidence in him was passed, and a few days later Honeyford was suspended by the LEA pending a special hearing of the case against him by the school governors.

The affair became a national issue at this stage, with debates in Parliament and with frequent reports in the national press, almost all of which tended to side with Honeyford. The affair came increasingly to be depicted as a free speech issue. Various attempts were made to produce a pay-off deal for Honeyford. In June 1985, after a four-day hearing, the school governors decided that allegations against Honeyford were 'not fully substantiated' and they recommended his reinstatement. The question of whether the governors' decision was legally binding on the LEA was taken to the High Court, and when the Court found in favour of the governors, Honeyford returned to his job at the school in September 1985. His opponents were horrified at the direction events had taken, and launched a new campaign of picketing, strikes and protests. For two weeks, only about a third of the children attended his school. The Council for Mosques called on all Muslim children in Bradford (over 16,000) to boycott school for one day in protest against Honeyford. Local interest focussed strongly on the new governing body that was to be set up for Drummond Middle School in October 1985, and when it emerged that Honeyford had the support of a clear majority of the new governors, his position seemed more secure. The next month, however, the tables were turned when the Appeal Court reversed the earlier decision of the High Court and ruled that the LEA still had the right to dismiss a head even if the governors did not agree. Meanwhile, community relations in the city were deteriorating rapidly as a result of the Honeyford affair and both Honeyford and his opponents became the targets of death threats. Honeyford eventually accepted an early retirement package in December 1985.

The Honeyford affair had serious repercussions on the local political scene and on race relations in Bradford. Although his departure became inevitable, in one sense it was a defeat not only for his supporters but for those occupying the middle ground who believed that behind the stereotypes of Honeyford as martyr or devil lay serious issues which could only be resolved in open, rational debate. It was a defeat because the

debate had been foreclosed. Perhaps the insensitivity and injudiciousness of his own contributions to the debate were partly to blame for this outcome, although he himself had written of the need to 'create a more honest, a more open and a less fearful intellectual climate' (1984) in which issues such as multi-culturalism, anti-racist education, tolerance, cultural continuity and the basis of shared values in our society could be discussed. But the strident tone of his articles was matched by that of the calls for his dismissal, and neither they nor the manner of his eventual departure did anything to bring reasoned discourse to bear on the debate or to facilitate discussion of the issues raised by his articles and by the campaign against him.

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