WORLDVIEW

A Multidisciplinary Report

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Religious Education Council
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FOREWORD

Worldview is currently a topic of great interest in Religious Education (RE). This multidisciplinary literature review was commissioned by the RE Council of England and Wales (REC) working in partnership with TRS-UK. in order to provide clarity as to the historical and contemporary use of the term in a number of academic disciplines. It forms one element of a larger project that will provide a range of resources to support the use of the idea in school RE.

The REC and TRS-UK are very grateful to the three academics who compiled this independent literature review. It was a challenging project in its own right, but then undertaken just as the coronavirus pandemic took the world into lockdown. This document is a tribute to their professionalism and resilience. The literature review represents the authors' findings and academic conclusions having undertaken an extensive search. It is offered as a resource to support further thinking on this important topic.

The document is open access and free to download from the RE Council website (www.religiouseducationcouncil.org). We provide it in the hope that it will be of great use to academics, RE teachers and other RE professionals as we all seek to provide our pupils and students with high quality RE.

Professor Trevor Cooling
Chair, Religious Education Council of England and Wales

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAR　　　　American Academy of Religion

CoRE　　　　Commission for Religious Education

ERA　　　　Education Reform Act

NATRE　　　National Association of Teachers of Religious Education

QCA　　　　Qualifications and Curriculum Authority

RE　　　　Religious Education

REC　　　　The Religious Education Council of England and Wales

R&W　　　　Religion and Worldviews

SORW　　　Study of religion(s) and worldview(s)

TRS-UK　　Theology and Religious Studies UK

WP36　　　School Councils Working Paper 36

WRP　　　　World Religions Paradigm

CONTENTS

1.
INTRODUCTION

In 2018, after a two-year enquiry, the Commission for Religious Education (CoRE) published its final report, *Religion and Worldviews: The way forward.* The report argues that Religious Education (RE), as well as the structures and systems that support the subject, have not kept pace with recent educational changes, such as academisation and a move towards a school-led system, or with societal and demographic changes. The CoRE report therefore suggests a new vision for the subject in order to reflect children's lived experience of religious and non-religious perspectives.

This new vision for RE proposes three learning aims: 'understanding the human quest for meaning, being prepared for life in a diverse world and having space to reflect on one's own worldview' (CoRE, 2018: 73). Similarly, the report of the Commission on Religion and Belief in British Public Life, *Living with Difference: Community, Diversity and the Common Good,* also recommends that the teaching of religion and belief in schools should reflect a variety of religious and non-religious "worldviews" (The Woolf Institute, 2015). To reflect the new vision, one of the recommendations made in the CoRE report is to rename the subject *Religion and Worldviews (R&W)*[1].

The proposal to teach "worldviews" has led to robust discussions in the RE domain and beyond (Everington, 2019; Jackson, 2014; van der Kooij et al., 2013). The CoRE report defines "worldview" as:

> [A] person's way of understanding, experiencing and responding to the world. It can be described as a philosophy of life or an approach to life. This includes how a person understands the nature of reality and their own place in the world. A person's worldview is likely to influence and be influenced by their beliefs, values, behaviours, experiences, identities and commitments (CoRE, 2018: 4).

The Commission on RE also acknowledges that "worldviews" can be more or less formalised, and that there may be a difference between the "worldview" held by an institution and the "worldview" internalised by an individual.

In response to this report, in February 2020 the Religious Education Council for England and Wales (which established the Commission on RE) commissioned an independent team of researchers to undertake a literature review on work engaging with the concept of "worldview". The purpose was to summarise scholarly usages of the term "worldview" across different disciplines, and to present these findings in a short document. The aim of this literature review would be to offer scholars, policy-makers, and teachers the opportunity to understand how "worldview" has been constructed in academic disciplines that have traditionally informed RE. An open call for applicants was circulated, calling for researchers with an interest in RE.

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1   Note: Renaming the subject R&W is one of eleven recommendations made in the CoRE report (2018).

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Céline Benoit, Tim Hutchings and Rachael Shillitoe submitted their proposal as a review team and were selected by the RE Council after an application and interview process. They were chosen due to their expertise and experience in the study of religion and non-religion in education and contemporary society, as well as the range of disciplinary backgrounds they covered.

The review team were tasked with writing their report across March and April 2020, with the aim of disseminating this to an academic advisory group consisting of thirteen leading academics. The group held a series of five consultation events in June 2020, and invited the authors of this report to attend on one occasion in order to provide feedback on the present document. The review team was also supported by Rudi Eliott Lockhart from the RE Council, and received helpful guidance and feedback from a steering group consisting of Professors Trevor Cooling, Denise Cush, and Stephen Pattison. Throughout March and April 2020, drafts were regularly submitted to the steering group who provided literature suggestions and identified areas for improvement. Ultimately, it was the responsibility of the review team to gather relevant sources, synthesise and summarise the literature, and decide upon on the content, areas of focus and overall structure of the review. The report produced remains independent and was solely written by the review team members.

The scope of the literature review was focused on exploring the concept of "worldview" across a variety of academic disciplines and, where possible, exploring alternative concepts related to "worldview", while keeping to the word limit and timescales set out by the RE Council[2]. This report does not provide an exhaustive discussion of "worldview", but rather a concise, yet detailed, overview of how the concept

has been understood in the core disciplines most relevant for RE and most applicable to the discussions and debates that will ensue. The purpose of this report is not to ascertain what should be considered a "worldview" or how RE should be taught. Accordingly, it is recommended that readers, whether that be academics, teachers or policy-makers, contribute to this discussion by highlighting any further areas of work or literature that would prove fruitful to enhancing conversations about the future of RE and the place and role of "worldview" within those conversations.

The concept of "worldview" has been used extensively in many disciplines of academic research, from the 18th century to the present day. In this report, we focus on Philosophy, Anthropology, Sociology, Religious Studies, Christian Theology and Biblical Studies, and Religious Education. These disciplines have been selected as having the greatest engagement with the concept of "worldview" and the greatest relevance to contemporary RE. Other disciplines, such as Linguistics, Psychology or Politics, also employ the term "worldview", but could not be addressed thoroughly within the scope of this brief report. Some introductory comments on the use of "worldview" in these disciplines are nonetheless included in section 3.6, in order to invite readers to consider engaging with other usages of the term.

The review team also invite readers to enhance and enrich the discussion of "worldview" in RE by drawing attention to parallel and complementary concepts and critical discussions of "worldview" thinking that have developed outside the Western academic and Christian theological traditions. The review team stress the fact that the lack of representation of non-Western scholars within the literature cited in this report is a key limitation. This reflects wider issues, as policies

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2   The team were offered the work on 18/02/2020. The brief given to the authors required the report to be approximately 10,000 words to submitted by 01/05/2020. Excluding front page, contents, abbreviations, acknowledgements and bibliography and including footnotes, this report is 14,084 words.

and/or pedagogies in RE in England and Wales have been dominated by Western-centric voices.

While this report focuses on "worldview", as this is the term used in the CoRE report (2018) and in the RE domain at large (van der Kooij et al., 2013), it is useful to note that there are other terms that are being used and proposed in debates around RE. Such terms include (non-religious) convictions (Council of Europe, 2008; Jackson, 2014); beliefs (Equality Act, 2010); belief system (Ofsted, 2010: 44); beliefs and values; ethics; forms of life and outlook (Gearon, 2017: 363); outlook on life (Skolverket, 2018: 218); stances for living (Birmingham City Council, 1975); life stance; ways of life; philosophy of life (van der Kooij et al., 2013; Watson, 2008). When these terms have been used as synonyms to "worldview" in academic literature, these have been included in the present report. It must be noted, however, that these are rarely used interchangeably with "worldview", and that some scholars who use alternative terminology argue against the use of the word "worldview". Other related concepts, that are not necessarily proposed as alternatives but may also be of interest to readers, include fiduciary framework (Polyani, 1962); habitus (Bourdieu, 1977); plausibility structure (Berger, 1992); ideology (Fairclough 2012); social imaginary (Taylor, 2004); and existential culture (Lee, 2015). Some of these are discussed in more detail in section 3.

One of the fundamental principles of the concept of "worldview", across disciplines, is that more than one view of the world is possible. Students of "worldviews" learn to appreciate that inhabitants of historically and culturally distant traditions understand, interpret, experience and respond to the world in ways different from their own. The word "worldview" is therefore frequently pluralised. For the purpose of this report, we will use "worldview" in the singular when considering the concept itself, and in the plural ("worldviews") when referring to the different views held by different people and groups. This singular vs plural debate parallels a similar discussion over whether 'religion' should be used in the singular or in the plural[3]. While we acknowledge the constructedness of the term "worldview" and its contested nature, from now on, we will use the term without any quotation marks for stylistic reasons.

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3 In 2019, the Welsh Government announced that it was considering renaming RE 'Religions and Worldviews' – therefore pluralising 'religion' and not following the CoRE report's recommendation of using 'religion' in the singular (CoRE, 2018). Although responses to the proposal were mostly supportive, many warned against pluralising 'religion', as it implies discrete entities to be studied in silos, rather than a conceptual category with which to engage critically (NATRE, 2019. REC, 2019; TRS-UK, 2019).

2.
RELIGION, RELIGIONS AND THE WORLD RELIGIONS PARADIGM

Before turning to discuss the concept of worldview, we must briefly acknowledge the challenge already posed for RE by the concept of "religion", which can itself be problematic. The concept of "religion" is notoriously difficult to define, and is 'grounded in ethnocentric assumptions that reflect the long hegemony of Christian theology' (Hanegraaf, 2015: 102). To be classified as a religion by Western societies, a tradition has needed to share a number of aspects with Christianity, including scriptures, a churchlike organisational structure with a priesthood, a belief in a single divine power, and a doctrinal system (Smith, 1964; Dubuisson, 2003). As Dubuisson states, '[t]he West not only conceived of the idea of religion, it has constrained other cultures to speak of their own religions by inventing them for them' (2003: 93).

This ethnocentric, Christianity-centred approach is the foundation of the World Religions Paradigm (WRP), which has been influential in the teaching of RE (Cush, 2020). Wilfred Cantwell Smith (1964) was the first contemporary critic of this model, arguing that the WRP ignores the complexities and the diversity within traditions, as well as the permeability of their boundaries. By focusing on lists of beliefs, the WRP ignores how religion is actually lived, as a fluid, ever-changing phenomenon. The WRP still shapes and determines how Western people think about religion(s) today, and still largely informs RE pedagogies.

The WRP also contributes to a hierarchical ordering of religions, based on Protestant Christianity (Masuzawa, 2005). For example, certain traditions are labelled as "cults", "primal", "primitive", or "pagan", and are not recognised as legitimate forms of religion (Cotter and Robertson, 2016). As a result, movements such as New Age, new religious movements (NRMs), or Scientology often therefore do not figure in RE syllabuses. As J.Z. Smith has argued, the WRP is therefore both a reflection and an instrument of Western power and politics:

> [A] world religion is simply a religion like ours, and that is, above all, a tradition that has achieved sufficient power and numbers to enter our history to form it, interact with it, or thwart it. We recognise both the unity within and the diversity among the world religions because they correspond to important geopolitical entries with which we must deal. All 'primitives', by way of contrast, may be lumped together, as may the 'minor religions', because they do not confront our history in any direct fashion. From the point of view of power, they are invisible (J.Z. Smith, 1998: 280).

Despite these criticisms, we must acknowledge that "religion" does exist 'out

there', outside the classroom (Schilbrack, 2010: 1112). Many people across the world have assimilated the WRP, which remains a major system of classification. Avoiding it, or the concept of "religion" itself, is not the answer because this would fail to recognise how real people actually construct their world.

The purpose of this brief section has not been to reject the word "religion", but to preface our discussion of worldview by reminding the reader that the concept of "religion" is at least equally contested and problematic. Scholars, policy-makers and teachers must bear this in mind when discussing worldview in RE, in order to critically reflect on questions pertaining to epistemology. Codifying worldview along the same normative discourses as "religion" risks anchoring worldview in similar colonial, Western, Christianised constructions (see section 4).

3.
THE CONCEPT OF WORLDVIEW ACROSS DISCIPLINES

3.1 PHILOSOPHY

The concept of "worldview" or *Weltanschauung* appears first in one passage of Kant's *Critique of Judgement* in 1790 (2000, 1.2.26), and flourished particularly in German-language philosophy in the following centuries. For Hegel (1975 [1835], 1.517), a worldview is the shared perception of a nation at a particular point in time, and is revealed particularly by the artist: 'ways of viewing the world are woven into art and revealed by it' (Naugle, 2002: 72). For Nietzsche (2008 [1885]), the death of God and any transcendent truth or reality revealed that all human societies were engaged in building their own artificial worldviews, constantly changing to try to make sense of the chaos of history and nature.

The connection forged by Hegel between philosophy and art was shared by Dilthey (2019 [1911]), who used the term *Weltanschauung* in a particularly influential way to contribute to 19th and 20th-century German debates about the nature and task of philosophy in response to the rise of modern scientific methods and disciplines. For Dilthey, philosophy stood alone as an attempt to understand the world as a whole, in contrast to the new sciences, each of which analysed just one part of the world in one particular way. Dilthey argued that each philosopher tries to achieve a conceptual expression of something that precedes all attempts to think about it: their own 'comprehensive view of the world, of its meaning and purpose' (Staiti, 2013: 797). This goal is shared by philosophy, art and religion, three different attempts to express a *Weltanschauung*. The distinctive task of the philosopher is to identify and categorise different types of worldview, recognising that their own worldview is not truth itself.

According to Dilthey, 'theoretically-oriented man' chooses to focus on reason alone, pursuing science at the expense of a more holistic understanding of the world, and cannot be a philosopher (Staiti, 2013: 797). For Dilthey, philosophy is possible only for 'man as a whole' (*ibid.*: 797), a person who is willing to be their whole self, aware of living their life at a particular moment in history, paying attention to their emotions and desires. Dilthey's ideas were hugely influential, but were opposed by a rival school of German philosophy led by Heinrich Rickert (*ibid.*: 800), who argued that scientific philosophy (*Wissenschaft*) could achieve greater insight into the nature of the world value despite its incompleteness.

Dilthey's emphasis on understanding (rather than scientific explanation) as the key task of the humanities was central to the field of hermeneutics, the study of interpretation. Philosophical hermeneutics developed further in the 20th century into a study of human

existence and the self, informed by the work of Heidegger, Gadamer and Ricoeur. A key principle of hermeneutics is the "hermeneutic circle" (Schleiermacher 1977 [1805]): the whole (of a text, a person or a worldview) can be understood only through analysis of its parts, but each part can be understood only through what we know of the whole. Gadamer (1992 [1960]) developed a dynamic understanding of interpretation as a dialogue between the reader and the text, which is playful, transformative and open to new discoveries, and this approach has become highly influential in RE (Aldridge, 2011; Lewin, 2017; Aldridge, 2018). These circular and dialogical approaches may be helpful to understanding the relationship between (and the study of) "personal" and "institutional" worldviews, the two categories identified in the CoRE report *Religion and Worldviews* (CoRE, 2018).

Worldview and related concepts also proved valuable to existential philosophers. Kierkegaard emphasised the importance of achieving the "life-view", the individual's self-understanding and reflection on his or her own existence, which stood in contrast to the abstract reasoning of philosophy and the dehumanising ideas of mass society. Summarising Kierkegaard, McCarthy argues that 'each man must answer for himself about the meaning of life, and thus he cannot take his cue from the spirit of the age which will all too readily answer on his behalf' (McCarthy, 1978: 136).

Heidegger argued that philosophy should investigate life or being itself (the science of phenomenology), in opposition to the philosophy of the worldview. For Heidegger, a worldview includes 'a view of life', an interpretation of human purpose and of history (Heidegger 1982 [1927]: 5). A worldview is not just theoretical knowledge but promises 'wisdom of the world' (*ibid.*: 4), a set of firm convictions giving practical guidance for how life is to be lived and interpreted. Heidegger argued that a worldview is always reductionist

and limiting, describing it in an early lecture as only 'an objectification and immobilizing of life at a certain point in the life of a culture' (Kisiel, 1993: 17).

Heidegger used the term "world-picture" to refer to the idea that the entirety of the world, including its history and purpose, can be understood by human minds as a coherent system. He argued that there could have been no ancient or medieval world-picture, because 'the fact that the world becomes picture at all is what distinguishes the essence of the modern age' (Heidegger, 1977 [1938]: 130). This transformation of the world into a single comprehensible picture was driven by modern science and technology, in order to reduce the whole natural world into a set of resources for humans to exploit (Heidegger, 1977 [1954]). This scientific, modern worldview is dangerously inadequate, and fails to grasp reality as we really experience it. Instead, Heidegger argued the modern world-picture falsely presents itself as the only truth, as uniquely certain, disguising its presuppositions and suppressing alternative understandings of reality as "primitive" and "superstitious".

The debate between worldview-based and scientific understandings of philosophy continued into the 20th century. Wittgenstein (1969) argued against scientism that our knowledge relies on a *Weltbild* (or world-picture), which is built of 'all the things we take for granted' (Christensen, 2011: 141), including basic ethical convictions. These propositions operate like mythology, held to be utterly certain even if they are not subject to empirical testing. The *Weltbild*, which can never be rationally justified in any non-circular way, is the background against which we can judge the truth and falsity of ordinary statements (Coliva, 2017: 50).

Polanyi's "fiduciary framework" also shares similar concerns to the concept of worldview, and has been influential for scholars of theology and religion. For Polanyi, all knowledge, even scientific knowledge, rests ultimately on beliefs

that cannot be proven empirically:

> We must now recognise belief once more as the source of all knowledge. Tacit assent and intellectual passions, the sharing of an idiom and or a cultural heritage, affiliation to a like-minded community: such are the impulses that shape our vision of the nature of things on which we rely for our mastery of things. No intelligence, however critical or original, can operate outside such a fiduciary framework (Polanyi, 1962: 266).

For theologians and philosophers of religion, this approach proved enticing. Dulles observed that 'If this thesis is true, theology, as the work of faith seeking understanding, is not an anomaly among the cognitive disciplines. Religious ideas are acquired, developed, tested, and reformed by methods at least analogous to those pursued in the natural and social sciences' (Dulles, 1984: 537).

Instead of accepting the notion (fundamental to the scientific worldview) that science advances through steady progress towards perfect knowledge, Kuhn analysed scientific thinking as a coherent system of meaning, which resists change even in the face of contradictory evidence until it is forced to undergo dramatic and sudden change – a 'paradigm shift' (Kuhn, 1996: 2000). A paradigm shift is 'a "revolution" that adjusts beliefs so as to incorporate the new evidence in a way that allows the overall set of adjusted beliefs to come back into coherence as a whole' (Rousseau and Billingham, 2018: 12). Kuhn's paradigms are more limited in scope than worldviews, but his argument is relevant to understanding how individuals find and maintain coherence in religious and non-religious worldviews, where scholars have also found that the emergence of new evidence can lead either to change or to resistance.

The concept of worldview or *Weltanschauung*

uses the metaphor of sight, in keeping with the eye-centric Western tradition of epistemology. Philosophers from non-Western and postcolonial traditions have challenged the implications of this choice of metaphor, which situates the knower/viewer at a distance from the world, monitoring it with an objective gaze. Argentinian philosopher Mignolo (2012: xi) proposes replacing worldview with "world-sense" or "cosmo-sense", to better capture the multiple ways in which we sense the world instead of merely viewing it. Carribean philosopher Glissant extended and challenged the metaphor of knowledge-by-sight to propose a 'right to opacity for everyone' (1997: 194), in resistance to the Western project of understanding all people and ideas (*ibid.*: 190). For Glissant, the world can only be understood poetically, in three different ways: the whole-world, which is both the world itself and our vision of it (*ibid.*: 91); the echo-world, the connections and feedback between things which help to illuminate the world (*ibid.*: 93); and the chaos-world, obscure, unpredictable and infinite (*ibid.*: 94).

This brief outline presents some key questions for RE teachers and researchers interested in worldviews. For example, how can the worldview of a culture be recognised, understood and shared with others? How can pupils inhabiting one worldview interpret a text written in another? How does our own worldview shape and give foundation to what we taken as certain knowledge?

3.2 ANTHROPOLOGY

With anthropology exploring the nexus of society, culture, families, kinship and belonging, it is a relevant discipline to consider when examining the concept of worldview. Religion has always been a central and important focus in anthropology with anthropologists' key questions circulating around issues of diversity, symbols, meaning, morality, power and coherence to name but a few. One of the

greatest challenges for anthropology is the difficulty in both relativizing and scrutinising social phenomena; being able to focus on the smallest of details but then also creating or working with more general categories to allow for comparison across groups and societies (Lambek, 2008). There is a tension in anthropology in regards to both the casual and analytical usage of the term worldview, and as a concept, it is debated within anthropology. Beine (2010) in his research on The American Anthropological Association's use of the concept, found that although there was a calling for the abandonment of the term, worldview as a concept persists in anthropology and found that there is both a casual and analytic usage of the term that permeates anthropological literature. In terms of the more analytic and detailed usage of the concept of worldview in anthropology, the works of Redfield (1952), Geertz (1957) and Kearney (1975; 1984) provide key texts in the definition of worldview and how it has been used within the discipline.

Redfield defines worldview as the 'outlook upon the universe that is characteristic of a people' (1952: 30). Redfield's usage of the concept provides a way of describing a particular way of life and allows for that comparison. This might focus on customs, traditions or the values of a community and their idea of the good life. Worldview, for Redfield, differs from other rubrics such as ethos and values with worldview being 'the picture the members of a society have of the properties and characters upon their stage of action' (*ibid.*: 30). Unlike national character which is about the way your world would look to others on the outside, worldview describes 'the way the world looks to [those] people [within the society] looking out' and the way individuals in a given society see themselves in relation to everything else (Redfield, 1952: 30). When defining worldview, Redfield (*ibid.*) claims certain universals, namely that all worldviews contain spatial and temporal dimensions, that all people are aware of self, that people can distinguish between different aspects of their own self and that people can separate themselves from other human beings based on these different aspects of the self. Redfield explains:

> [I]n every world view human beings, at least, are seen as grouped in classes or categories, and some of the properties of these categories are universal… While, of course, the particular arrangement of categories, as to kindred, neighbours, nationals, or racial or religious groups, differs very greatly, the existence of some such categories and some of the qualities of attitude and sentiment which place every self in relation to whatever categories exist in his society are among the elements which every world view has in common with every other (*ibid.*: 30-31).

In relation to God(s), Redfield (*ibid.*) contends that something that is common in 'some sense' in all worldviews, is the separation of man, God and nature but notes that the degree to which these separations and classifications occur varies across societies. Redfield observes that it is in 'understanding and defining the ways in which these distinctions are made that we shall come to some ordered comprehension of the range of variety of world views and of the types of world view' (*ibid.*: 31).

Geertz (1957) used the concept worldview and differentiated it from other related terms such as ethos and morality. Geertz considered worldview to denote the cognitive and existential elements of life and in contrast, ethos being the more moral and evaluative dimensions of a society. Ethos, for Geertz, means 'the approved style of life' while worldview is 'the assumed structure of reality' (*ibid.*: 424). Although creating a dichotomy here, Geertz explains that these two elements need and support each other, noting that worldview and ethos cannot exist without the other. Geertz argues that:

[T]he ethos is made intellectually reasonable by being shown to represent a way of life implied by the actual state of affairs which the world-view describes, and the world-view is made emotionally acceptable by being presented as an image of an actual state of affairs of which such a way of life is an authentic expression (*ibid.*: 422).

Ethos is, therefore, the values an individual or group holds and the worldview is the way things are, the natural order of things. In terms of separating worldview and ethos, Geertz argues that there is a tendency within scholarship to merge the two and claims that doing so is 'empirically coercive' and philosophically unjustified (*ibid.*: 422).

Geertz's somewhat dichotomous and cognitive approach to worldview has drawn criticism due to the way this understanding of belief neglects the lived and embodied experiences. Asad criticises this and views Geertz's treatment of belief as a 'modern, privatised Christian one because and to the extent that it emphasised the priority of belief as a state of mind rather than constituting activity in the world' (Asad,1993: 47). Whereas Bell's (1992) criticism of Geertz focuses on his distinction between ethos and worldview, with beliefs being subsumed within worldview and ritual within ethos and ritual activity being the arena where worldview and ethos are fused together (Hutt, 2009). Bell's criticism of Geertz is as much a methodological one as it is a theoretical one, but highlights the tensions within anthropology in terms of how to manage the relationship between worldview and other related concepts.

Kearney (1975) strongly advocates for the use of worldviews but acknowledges the prevailing inconsistent and varied usage of the concept. Kearney describes how worldview is not an established field of study itself within anthropology or with its own recognised schools, but literature about worldview still permeates the discipline (Kearney, 1975: 247). Kearney defines worldview as 'culturally organized macro thought: those dynamically inter-related basic assumptions of a people that determine much of their behaviour and decision making, as well as organizing much of their body of symbolic creations' world' (1984: 1). Worldviews in Kearney's approach present the 'basic assumptions and images that provide a more or less coherent, though not necessarily accurate, way of thinking about the world' (*ibid.*: 41). Worldviews are therefore culturally dependent and implicitly interwoven within an individual's everyday life and thinking. The actions and thoughts of individuals are based on, in part, their worldview. In this way, linking back to Redfield, worldviews define the self, it helps individuals to distinguish and define who they are and their relationship to the human and non-human world. Drawing on Kearney's thinking, Cobern argues that worldview 'shapes one's views of the universe one's conception of time and space. It influences one's norms and values' (2000: 8-9).

Anthropology, therefore, raises a number of questions as to how we are to use and understand worldview. The literature shows that worldview is often used as a way to describe particular ways of life, views, traditions and outlooks but that there is often confusion or tension between this and other related concepts such as ethos and values. As highlighted by Geertz and as we shall also observe in the next section, there is also a conflict between the cognitive and intellectual approaches to worldview and those that focus on the lived and embodied realities.

3.3 SOCIOLOGY

In sociology, again as with anthropology, the concept worldview has a varied and often casual usage. Wallerstein (1974) used the related term "world system" to refer to 'a social unit that includes a complete range of specialised activities in a division of labour' (Fulcher and Scott, 2011: 836). This concept

is more concerned with globalisation and the sociology of development; however, it did not focus greatly on religion. World system as with other theoretical approaches in the sociology of development often missed the importance of the role of religion and scholars such as Robertson (2001) critiqued sociological thinking on globalisation that did not attend to religion in this way. Mannheim's (1952) conceptualisation of worldview came from reflections on methodology within sociology and how worldviews can be observed and studied by sociologists objectively (Naugle, 2002). For Mannheim, worldview is 'social totality' and the 'primary substance of thought'.

Berger and Luckmann's (1966) focus on the lived experience, and their social constructionist approach diminishes the importance of worldview due to the heavy theoretical and cognitive orientation of the concept. For Berger and Luckmann, the focus on intellectual history should not be the central focus of the sociology of knowledge. Berger and Luckmann do not dispute that such pursuits should add to the sociology of knowledge, but it would be misguided and ill-chosen for 'theoretical thought, 'ideas', *Weltanschauung'* to become the main focus as they 'are not that important in society', and that they are only part of the sum of what passes for knowledge' (Berger and Luckmann, 1966: 26). Everyone in society participates in the social construction of knowledge and reality, rather theorising is only the focus of a small few and, for this reason, it should not become the dominant focus within the sociology of knowledge.

> Only a few are concerned with the theoretical interpretation of the world, but everybody lives in a world of some sort. Not only is the focus on theoretical thought unduly restrictive for the sociology of knowledge, it is also unsatisfactory because even this part of socially available 'knowledge' cannot be fully understood if it is not placed in the framework of a more general analysis of 'knowledge (*ibid.*: 26-27).

Wuthnow (1976) uses the concept worldview synonymously with belief system. In this work, Wuthnow uses worldview to mean the 'sum total of an individual's beliefs about the world' (Aidala, 1984: 44). In Aidala's review of Wuthnow's contribution, she distinguishes between the existential and normative elements of culture and in doing so, utilises the concept of worldview to refer to the 'conceptions and images' relating to the 'empirical reality', whether this be on a cultural or individual level (1984: 46). According to Roberts and Yamane, worldview is the 'intellectual framework within which one explains the meaning of life' (2015: 94). Drawing on Wuthnow (1981) and differentiating between worldview and myths, Roberts and Yamane (2015) state that myths are stories or beliefs, which, when taken together, act to reinforce and reproduce worldviews.

> Worldview is a more abstract concept than myth; it refers to one's mode of *perceiving* the world and to one's general overview of life. In this sense, a worldview is more than taken for granted and less questioned. Many individuals may not be fully conscious of the alternative types of worldviews, and many never question the fact that their perception is influenced by intellectual constructs (*ibid.*: 94).

Linking to Geertz's conceptualisation of worldview, the authors also discuss how a religious worldview is closely related to group ethos. Geertz distinguished between worldview and ethos and explained that 'A people's ethos is the tone, character, and quality of their life, its moral and aesthetic style and mood; it is the underlying attitude toward themselves and their world' (Geertz, 1957: 421). Ethos is therefore the attitudes about life and worldview denotes a more intellectual or cognitive process. In this

sense, the worldview is 'confirmed and made to seem objective by ethos' (Roberts and Yamane, 2015: 95).

Weber also explored worldviews in his work. For Weber (1968), worldviews often suggest a coherent set of values which relate to each other and offer answers to the 'big questions' in society (Kalberg, 2004: 140). Weber also speaks to the variety of worldviews and their historical and cultural differences but noting that simply having a set of values does not in and of itself attain the status of worldview. This is because, for Weber, only having a set of values 'lacks the comprehensiveness to address ultimate questions, and in doing so, to provide direction, organisation and unity to the lives of its adherents' (*ibid.*: 141). This is not to suggest that worldviews, therefore, requires some sort of transcendent or other-worldly quality. Worldviews, for Weber, can be this worldly and be located in the mundane rhythms of everyday life. As Kalberg (2004) explains:

> Intellectual, social and political movements, as well as religions, may offer broad ranging sets of values and an "ordered meaningfulness" …their "correctness" or "superiority" can never be definitively proven; rather, the legitimacy of this meaningful totality is acquired alone on the basis of *belief* in it by adherents (*ibid.*: 141).

Sheikh (2019) discusses the concept of worldview in global studies and social sciences and highlights two trends within the conceptual work of worldview. The first takes worldview within a cognitive framework and is 'primarily interested in how people develop shared worldviews as cognitive structures, which they apply you make sense of and come to terms with the world (Cobern, 1996; Johnson, Hill and Cohen, 2011; Kearney, 1984). The second Sheikh (2019) identifies is an approach that is 'interested in the socio-political consequences of developing and sharing assumptions about

social reality and is often taken on by social constructivists (Johnson et al., 2011; Koltko-Rivera, 2004; Redfield, 1952). This second trend would read more closely with Berger, Luckmann's and Taylor's readings of worldview. Both these trends highlight the emerging dichotomy or tension in the approach to worldview in terms of either cognitive or social constructivist approaches. Sheikh argues that rather than these representing different understandings of worldview, these varying approaches actual reveal differences in 'how worldviews are applied with respect to varying scientific aims' (2019: 160). In terms of the cognitive approach, worldview analysis is focused on the differences in behaviour and attitudes and comes from a natural science perspective. From this perspective, worldviews are 'relevant as a *human ability* to create order, meaning, and value in a chaotic world' (*ibid.*: 160). Social constructivists, on the other hand, approach worldview as 'narratives to explain a person's place in the world, identify adversaries, and link the person to a purpose-worldly or transcendent' (*ibid.*: 160).

Taylor (2004) speaks of the "Social Imaginary" as a way to conceptualise or to think about modernity. Taylor defines the social imaginary as the '*common* understanding that makes possible *common* practices and a widely shared sense of legitimacy' (italics our emphasis) (*ibid.*: 23). Alongside writers such as Appadurai (1997), Taylor also argues for modernity to be understood in terms of the way societies produce multiple modernities rather than one singular modernity. Taylor (2004) speaks of the 'great disembedding' of Western societies and the influence of secularisation, industrialisation and globalisation which impacted the socio-economic, political and religious landscapes of different societies to produce this multitude of modernities. In conversation with Anderson's (1983) "Imagined Communities", Taylor describes how modern societies focus on the individual experience and encounters as oppose to social theories.

Taylor's approach reflects on the deeply embedded nature of such social imaginaries which intersects with Bourdieu's (1977) thinking on habitus. In relation to worldview, although a different concept, Taylor's work on social imaginaries demonstrates the need for conceptual tools to be reworked in light of the plural and diverse nature of societies and the importance of focusing on the sociality of our everyday lives and how shared and common practices shape and inform our social lives.

The use of worldview in sociology raises a number of questions including how we use worldview in relation to other concepts such as ethos, values, morality and national identity. Sociological approaches also focus on the social construction of worldviews and the potential tension that can arise between this and the more cognitive approaches. This then raises questions of how we account for and properly attend to individual agency when we think of worldview.

3.4 RELIGIOUS STUDIES

In Religious Studies, the concept of worldview has been used to break down boundaries around what is and is not appropriate to study. This not only relates to the inclusion of non-religious worldviews, but more broadly the study of religion itself and what should be included in the discipline. Smart accepted the actual word "worldview" grudgingly, describing it as 'the briefest, least bad' English translation of *Weltanschauung,* and acknowledging that the word did not capture the 'mix of theory and value, of belief and feel, of faith and rite' (1981: 214), which is essential to religions and ideologies. Despite this reluctance, Smart argued that Religious Studies should be reimagined as part of a broader field of Worldview Studies and that the philosophy of religion should become the philosophy of worldviews. Religions and secular ideologies that 'guide men regarding the meaning of life' (1981: 213) should all be analysed as examples

of 'existential worldviews'.

Smart's famous textbook *The World's Religions* (1989, 1998) put his approach to 'worldview analysis' into action, offering 'a history of the ideas and practices which have moved human beings' (1998: 10). The ideas considered included both religions and 'secular ideologies or worldviews such as scientific humanism, Marxism, Existentialism, nationalism, and so on' (1998: 22). Smart argued that this broader view would be able to make better sense of the diversity of the world than a narrow focus on religion alone because the division between what is religious and what is secular is 'a modern Western one' that 'does not represent the way in which other cultures categorize human values' (*ibid.*: 10). Smart proposed that religion could be analysed according to a list of dimensions, originally six but later expanded to seven (practical and ritual; experiential and emotional; narrative or mythic; doctrinal and philosophical; ethical and legal; social and institutional; and material (*ibid.*: 13-21)), and then demonstrated that each of these dimensions could be identified to some extent in secular worldviews as well (*ibid.*: 26). In a presidential address to the American Academy of Religion near the end of his life, Smart argued that worldview analysis would be of benefit not just to academics but to the wider world as well, by defining 'the outlines of a global worldview and (hopefully) of tolerance' (2001: 548) and helping 'the pursuit of mutual dialogues'. This optimistic vision is the opposite of the dialogue-closing uses of worldview language discussed below in the section on Theology (3.5).

More recently, Droogers (2014) and Taves (Taves and Asprem 2018; Taves 2020) have revived Smart's argument that a new focus on worldview studies might help scholars to escape from the challenge of defining religion, but have tried to base this on an explicit definition of worldview rather than Smart's list of dimensions. Droogers argues that religion is 'a sub-category of the term worldview', standing

alongside secular views as part of 'a larger field in which people struggle for and with meaning' (Droogers, 2014: 2) and that scholars should examine both formalized worldviews and 'worldview dynamics', the processes through which worldviews are created and developed (*ibid.*: 24).

Droogers and Taves both understand worldviews as comprising responses to certain 'big questions'. Following Vidal (2008), Taves identifies six questions in particular: reality (ontology: what is real?); origins (cosmology: where did we come from, and where are we going?); knowledge (epistemology: how do we know that?); situation (anthropology: who are we, and what is our nature?); goal (axiology: what is good?); and path (praxeology: what should we do to achieve the good?) (Taves, 2018b; 2020: 138). Taves argues that the answers to these questions can be more or less explicit. At the most personal level, every creature has a 'way of life', which embodies at least an implicit attitude to the six questions. A worldview can be 'enacted' as a 'way of life', 'articulated' in language, or, at the most formal level, 'recounted' as part of a mythology that might be written down in a sacred text (Taves, 2018b). Every living organism has a 'way of life', at least implicitly, even though humans are the only creatures to rationally reflect on the big questions in order to construct an explicit worldview (Taves and Asprem, 2018: 301).

One feature that marks out more recent work on worldview in Religious Studies is its close engagement with 'non-religious studies' or 'secular studies' (Bullivant, 2020), i.e. the empirically grounded study of individuals and populations identified, by themselves or others, as non-religious or secular. Worldview is offered as a way of describing the "religious-like" (Lee, 2015) aspects of non-religious life (e.g. Taves, 2018a). Other concepts, generally synonymous with worldview, have arisen in this work: Ecklund (2010) explores 'atheist spirituality', Baker and Smith (2015) propose "cosmic meaning systems", and Lee (2015; 2019) works

with the ideas of "existentiality" and "existential culture" as well as worldview. Lee's work also explores the characteristics and diversity of non-religious worldviews. Lee (2018) argues that there are 'different kinds of humanism, different kinds of materialism, different kinds of agnosticism', and that they are varied and nuanced, shaped also by the diverse global contexts and communities in which they are found. Importantly, non-religious worldviews are rarely institutionalised, with Lee pointing out that although non-religious worldviews are typically grounded in and shared through common cultures, they do not have the same kind of cultural histories or bodies of writing and literature associated with religious cultures. The muddled and often inconsistent usage of non-religious categories (non-religious, anti-religious, irreligious) can lead to a flattening of 'distinctions between religious and non-religious categories as 'positive' and 'negative' respectively' (Lee, 2014: 467).

Lee challenges this asymmetry and proposes that the aim for scholars of non-religion should be to develop a concept which is comparable to gender, race or class in that it is a concept that is inclusive of all positions. In search of such concepts, Lee (2015; 2019) explores "existentiality" as 'conceptualisations of existence' and existential cultures (Lee, 2015: 159-160), which 'incarnate ideas about the origins of life and human consciousness and about how both are transformed or expire after death'. Lee's empirical work shows that 'people come to existential cultures, religious or otherwise, for non-intellectual reasons' and that they may participate in certain rituals or events due to availability, or through sharing the tastes and preferences of family or friends (*ibid.*: 160). In doing so 'individuals 'might only belong to existential communities out of habit or out of need' but even though they may not join such communities due to intellectual reasoning, it is still important to demarcate such communities according to their existential ideas (*ibid.*: 160).

Although such work uses worldview and

similar categories to transcend theoretical distinctions between religion and non-religion, "Non-religious Studies" also recognise the prominence of non-religious identifications in societies, and it has become common to distinguish between 'religious worldview' and 'non-religious worldview'. Some scholars challenge or complicate distinctions between religion and non-religion – and, by implication, religious worldview and non-religious worldview. By making a clear distinction between religious and non-religious worldview, Nynäs (2018: 63) argues that the risk is to fail to understand 'how people combine spiritual and religious positions with secular values into authentic and meaningful subjective positions, and how these provide both public and private agencies'. Similarly, Nynäs (*ibid.*) also points to the limitations of other concepts such as post secularity and the false dichotomy this can reproduce of the interrelation between religion and secularity in contemporary society. Arguing for a dialogical approach to religion, Nynäs suggests that scholars should use a concept that reveals the fluid and 'unfolding' nature of religion in social life (*ibid*: 67). Drawing on Droogers, Nynäs suggests that 'worldview studies' might alleviate some of the issues within the discipline and challenge taken-for-granted categories in the study of religion (*ibid.*: 67). Day (2011) demonstrates that people may choose specific religious identifications and may identify with selected religious worldviews / religions to complement social and emotional experiences of belonging. For example, she gives examples of participants who identify as Christians for kinship reasons but who do not necessarily believe in God, or whose lives are not informed by Christianity. Examples also included non-religious participants using religious institutions on particular occasions (such as weddings or funerals, for example). To add a further layer of complexity, Cotter (2011) argues that different identities may be enacted in different contexts.

The debates found within religious studies concerning the concept of worldview raises questions about the binary constructions of religion and non-religion. Research with children in primary schools shows that children themselves disrupt and challenge these adult-generated constructions, finding ways to create their own meaning from encounters with religion and non-religion in their everyday lives (Strhan and Shillitoe, 2019; Shillitoe and Strhan 2020). An approach to worldview that takes account of the dialectical relationship between religion and non-religion and the everyday lived reality of this may help to foster an approach to the study of religion and non-religion which is not limited by such conceptual boundaries. Lee's (2015) relational approach to non-religion might prove a fruitful way to overcome this and avoid reproducing conceptual boundaries between the two.

3.5 CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY AND BIBLICAL STUDIES

This section will briefly consider four areas in which concepts related to worldview are regularly used: biblical studies, systematic theology, practical theology, and the Calvinist tradition of worldview thinking descended from Kuyper (1898). The word worldview itself is not widely used or theorized in Christian theology or biblical studies, but these four examples demonstrate that ideas with at least some similarity to worldview have been highly influential. We encourage readers and future contributors to the discussion of worldview and the RE curriculum to consider how similar ideas have been proposed and challenged in other religious traditions, communities and contexts.

In biblical studies, the word worldview is rare, but scholars use the methods of hermeneutics (introduced above in 3.1) to engage with similar concerns. Some biblical scholars have tried to reconstruct what texts meant for their original audiences, emphasising the difference between modern-day and ancient perspectives (Wellhausen, 2014 [1883]; Sanders, 1993;

Albertz, 1994). Others analyse how texts have been interpreted, used and rewritten by readers in different times and places (Gillingham, 2008), including the crucial differences between Jewish and Christian perspectives (Levenson, 1993; Frederiksen and Reinhartz, 2002). Biblical scholars have also reflected on how the worldviews of scholars themselves, including gender (Schussler-Fiorenza, 1984), ethnicity (Junior, 2015) and colonial and postcolonial histories (Sugirtharajah, 2006) can shape, restrict or inform their reading of the Bible. Christian theologians have engaged with the philosophical hermeneutics tradition discussed above in order to develop their own distinctively Christian forms of biblical hermeneutics (Thistleton, 2009; Vanhoozer, 2008). The method of "scriptural reasoning" (Ford 2006; Ochs 2019) invites members of different faith traditions to read one another's sacred texts together, looking for new insights in the interfaith encounter between different worldviews and hermeneutical approaches.

The word worldview is rarely used in systematic and constructive theology, and some theologians have rejected it altogether. Hauerwas (2010: 10) declares that 'Christianity is no "world view," not a form of primitive metaphysics, that can be assessed in comparison to alternative "world views".' Instead, he understands Christianity as demanding a 'transformation of the self', proposing that 'Christians are people who remain convinced that the truthfulness of their beliefs must be demonstrated in their lives'.

This critique assumes that a worldview is just a set of propositions about the world, but a broader understanding of worldview can resonate much more closely with the concerns of Christian theologians. Tillich (1957) defines faith as "ultimate concern", arguing that every person has something which is of the highest possible value to them, for which they would be prepared to sacrifice anything else. This might be something found within a religious belief system, like a God/god/gods, but the object of ultimate concern could also be non-religious: the family, nation, social status, money and so on. Faith, as ultimate concern, is connected to the whole of human personality, linking intellect, emotion and will. The chosen object of faith acts as the central focus that unites an individual's personal worldview, bringing together all their conscious and unconscious assumptions and commitments. Tillich's existential theology explored how any person could have the courage to choose an object of ultimate concern, knowing that life will eventually end in death.

Participation in a religious community is just one of the sources of the practices, values and beliefs that shape a personal worldview and guide the choice of an ultimate concern. This insight has been explored extensively in much contemporary theology, particularly in the discipline of practical theology. Pattison defines the practical theologian as 'a critical inhabitant of an action-guiding worldview (Christianity)' (2007: 20), one who – like Hauerwas – recognises Christianity as more than an intellectual belief system. The practical theologian therefore analyses elements of that tradition in dialogue with other perspectives on human nature, values and experience. Some practical theologians (e.g. Le Cornu, quoted in Bennett at al., 2018: 138) have used the concept of worldviews to explore how individuals come to recognise contradictions between formal religious teaching and real-life experience, forcing them to choose between different action-guiding perspectives. This kind of research demands the use of social-scientific methods of empirical study, including interviews, participant observation and ethnography, to gather reliable data on people's everyday experiences, values, commitments and actions. Examples include Astley's Ordinary Theology (2002) and Ward's (2012) more recent call for ethnographic ecclesiology – developing theology by studying Christians and their churches from the ground up, instead of from the top down.

Theologians have also considered concepts that resonate with what the CoRE report refers to as an 'institutional worldview'. Hauerwas proposed that Christian social ethics must be based on a clear sense of the Christian narrative about the history and future of the church and the world. 'The church', he claimed, must be 'a people who have been formed by a story that provides them with the skills for negotiating the dangers of this existence' (Hauerwas, 2001: 113), and 'the primary test of the truthfulness' of Christian ethics is 'the ability to provide an adequate account of our existence' (*ibid.*: 112). Despite Hauerwas's dismissal of the word worldview, there is a clear parallel here to the broader understanding of institutional worldview proposed by the CoRE report.

Any religion, including Christianity, is diverse and changes over time (a key principle of the American Academy of Religion's recent statement on religious literacy, AAR 2019). However, the idea that Christianity has a single authentic worldview, shared by all true believers, has been extremely influential, as Weir has demonstrated in his research on Dutch, German and American Protestantism (Weir, 2017). The language of "worldviews" has been a powerful weapon in cultural (Zimmerman, 2002), political (Silk, 2015) and even military conflicts (Weir, 2018), because it can be used to stereotype opponents as representatives of a single alien mind, the ultimate "other". By describing a conflict as a battle between two "worldviews", political and religious leaders can persuade their followers that their opponents are motivated not just by a disagreement or a grievance but by an entirely different perception of reality. If so, then there can be no common ground, compromise or dialogue with them (Weir, 2017).

Dutch politician Kuyper used this approach in 1898 to call for Protestants to unite in opposition to secular forces that, he claimed, shared an alien and hostile worldview. 'Two life systems are wrestling with one another, in mortal combat', he argued: Christianity and modernism (Kuyper, 2009: 11). In self-defence, Kuyper claimed, Christians must develop their own distinctive 'Christian worldview', which would shape every aspect of culture and tolerate no debate or dialogue with secularist or modernist ideologies. This call for a Christian worldview influenced Protestant thinkers throughout the 20th century, particularly in the United States, and remains popular today (see for example Dockery and Wax, 2019; Gospel Project, 2013). This approach assumes that many, or even most, people in the world who call themselves Christian do not accept the proposed "Christian worldview". Christians must therefore be re-educated before the project of Christian cultural renewal can be victorious over its secular enemies.

The understanding of worldview operating in these debates has sometimes been limited to the intellectual dimension of beliefs, ideas and doctrines. For example, when the evangelical survey organisation Barna tried to calculate what percentage of American Christians hold a "biblical worldview", they did so by asking survey respondents to agree or disagree with a list of statements (and reported that only 17% met their criteria). This method, Barna explained, was designed 'to gauge how much the tenets of other key worldviews – including new spirituality, secularism, postmodernism and Marxism – have influenced Christians' beliefs about the way the world is and how it ought to be' (Barna, 2017). This reduces worldviews to sets of propositions.

This cognitive, ideas-focused approach has been attacked by Christian philosopher JKA Smith (2009), who argues that Christians are shaped not just by ideas but by their desires, practices, stories and rituals (which can be found inside the church, or in wider culture). 'Instead of focusing on what Christians *think*, distilling Christian faith into an intellectual summary formula (a "worldview")', Smith calls for theologians to focus 'on what Christians *do*, articulating the shape of a Christian "social imaginary" as it is embedded in the practices

of Christian worship' (Smith, 2009: 1). This embodied understanding of how human beings are formed presents a valuable challenge for RE teachers to consider: how can worldviews be taught without reducing them to sets of ideas?

3.6 WORLDVIEW IN OTHER DISCIPLINES

Given the limited length of this report, the review team have chosen to focus in detail on a limited range of academic disciplines that have traditionally informed contemporary RE. However, alternative interpretations of worldview can be found in other disciplines, such as Politics, Psychology and Linguistics. The very brief comments below are designed to encourage the readers' interest in what these other fields may have to offer to the worldview debate, and to explore how these can contribute to discussions about the use of worldview in RE / R&W.

The relevance of worldview to Politics has already been hinted at in the previous section (3.5). By categorising a population according to a set of worldviews with defined characteristics, political researchers try to predict behaviour and explain conflict (for an example aimed at a general audience, see De Witt 2016). Political leaders have used the same technique to motivate their followers (Weir 2018).

In Psychology, the term worldview has become the object of renewed attention in order to understand human behaviour and the human experience. Psychology researchers make a distinction between "worldviews", "beliefs", and "values" (Koltko-Rivera, 2004). Rather than distinguishing between institutional and personal worldview(s), the concept is divided into three types of beliefs: i) descriptive/existential (i.e. what is true and what is false), ii) evaluative (i.e. what is good and what is bad), and iii) prescriptive/proscriptive (i.e. values) (*ibid.*). This demonstrates that worldview can be codified along different norms, rather than the institutional/personal dichotomy used in the CoRE report (2018).

In Linguistics, a distinction is made between the "language"/linguistic and "nonlanguage"/nonlinguistic (Hill and Mannheim, 1992). The purpose is to acknowledge the fact that culture cannot always be represented in terms appropriate to language, and that culture is shaped in 'everyday practices below the threshold of awareness' (*ibid.*: 381). Fairclough (2012), in an attempt to uncover ideological and power structures, proposes to study the relationships between language, society, power, identity, ideology, politics and culture. Rather than solely focus on language, he includes the study of discourse, which he defines as "semiosis" (e.g. encompassing the verbal and non-verbal such as visual, gestural, etc.). Academic debates in Linguistics can inform conversations as to whether worldview should be used to refer to consciously articulated approaches to life, or should also include un-reflected cultural habitus.

4.
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

4.1 WORLDVIEW IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: BACKGROUND

The concept of worldview in RE has been used in various ways by different authors. The account below gives a brief historical overview of its use in the discipline, and shows how there has been a shift in how worldview (or world view) has been interpreted over the years. While worldview has often been used to equate to non-religious worldviews (in opposition to religion(s)), the term is now more commonly used to include religious *and* non-religious worldviews (e.g. CoRE, 2018).

In 1971, the publication of the School Councils Working Paper 36 (WP36) and its impact on RE in England and Wales, was described as 'a "game-changing" moment' (Cush citing Cooling, 2020). It recommended the study of non-religious worldviews and supported a 'sympathetic study' of 'alternatives to religious faith such as secular Humanism, Marxism and Maoism' (WP36: 66, cited in Cush, 2020). The document uses the actual term 'world view' (two words) only once, in the context of discussing Smart's 'dimensions of religion' (see section 3.4). The phrase 'general standpoint and world view of a religion' is used to refer to the doctrinal, mythological and ethical dimensions of a religion (the theory) as opposed to the ritual, experiential and social dimensions (the lived practice).

In 1970, the Bath Agreed Syllabus for RE proposed to include non-religious worldviews (i.e. Humanism and Communism). Shortly after, the 1975 Birmingham Agreed Syllabus for RE included the study of non-religious 'stances for living' (i.e. Humanism and Marxism) alongside "world religions" (Birmingham City Council, 1975; Cush, 2016). These inclusions, however, were controversial and led to syllabus amendments (Cush, 2016; Freathy and Parker, 2013). Although the syllabuses were amended, they raised the question of the place and role of non-religious worldviews in RE. In this context, worldview was used to refer to non-religious worldviews.

These proposals, together with the publication of the WP36, led to a public division within the RE community. Some welcomed a more "inclusive" approach to RE. Others feared this would lead to the secularisation of RE, and viewed the proposals as a symbolic 'attack upon the Christian heritage, identity and morality of Britain' (Freathy and Parker, 2013: 250). "Stance(s) for living" and "worldview(s)" were excluded from the 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA), which remains the latest legal framework for RE. The 1988 ERA stipulates that all agreed syllabuses for RE must 'reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain' (ERA, 1988).

In 1994, educationalists and faith groups produced two model syllabuses for RE (one structured around six "world religions", and one around key questions and ideas pertaining to Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism) (SCAA, 1994a; 1994b). Although the Model Syllabuses followed the

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1988 ERA in only including "world religions", the term worldview was used by the members of the Third Perspective critique of the model syllabuses (Baumfield et al., 1994; 2014). Members of the Third Perspective used worldview to include religious and Humanist/non-religious perspectives, as well as children's perspectives (i.e. personal worldviews, rather than solely institutional ones).

A distinction between personal and institutional worldviews is also made in the Errickers' 'Children and Worldviews' project, which started in 1993. The project focused on the 'small narratives' of children and their own developing worldviews, rather than on the 'grand narratives' of institutional belief systems (Erricker and Erricker, 2000: 194). As the Errickers analysed children's narratives, they described the process as dynamic, 'with no end point envisaged where the "worldview" is a finished product, and with no sense of "development" except change' (*ibid.*: 199).

"World view" was again mentioned in the 2004 national non-statutory framework for RE (QCA, 2004). In a similar manner to the WP36, the concept was broken down into two words (i.e. world view), and covered both religious and non-religious convictions in phrases such as 'other world views' (WP36: 7) (i.e. other than religious ones) or 'a secular world view' (*ibid.*: 25)[4]. In contrast, 'worldview' (one word) was adopted in the 2013 Curriculum Framework for RE, but instead was used to refer to organised non-religious institutions only:

> The phrase 'religions and worldviews' is used in this document to refer to Christianity, other principal religions represented in Britain, smaller religious communities and non-religious worldviews such as Humanism (REC, 2013: 11).

More recently, the phrase was adapted by the Commission on Religious Education (2018), who recommended renaming RE 'Religion and Worldviews' (R&W). However, rather than using worldview to designate (organised) non-religious institutions only, the Commission uses it to include both religion and non-religion, together with both institutional and personal worldviews, which 'had been neglected in previous paradigms' (Tharani, 2020: 20). The report distinguishes between 'institutional worldview' and 'personal worldview':

> We use […] 'institutional worldview' to describe organised worldviews shared among particular groups and sometimes embedded in institutions. These include […] religions as well as non-religious worldviews such as Humanism, Secularism or Atheism. We use […] 'personal worldview' for an individual's own way of understanding and living in the world, which may or may not draw from one, or many, institutional worldviews (CoRE, 2018: 4).

The CoRE report defines worldview as:

> A person's way of understanding, experiencing and responding to the world. It can be described as a philosophy of life or an approach to life. This includes how a person understands the nature of reality and their own place in the world. A person's worldview is likely to influence and be influenced by their beliefs, values, behaviours, experiences, identities and commitments (*ibid.*: 4).

This definition is informed by the German philosophical concept of *Weltanschauung* (see section 3.1).

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4 While they did not use the term worldview, the Council of Europe also recommended the inclusion of religions and non-religious convictions in schools (CoE, 2008).

Today, the usage of (non-religious) worldview(s) remains contested. Some reject the conceptual framework, arguing that the aim of RE should be 'provid[ing] an understanding of the nature and character of religion', and therefore object to including non-religious worldviews (Barnes, 2015: 82). Others worry about secularism further permeating the educational field (Barnes, 2015; Felderhof, 2015), and argue that non-religious worldviews in RE, rather than being studied 'in their own rights' (Felderhof, 2015: 125), should only be mentioned in relation to religion, as 'atheistic critiques' (*ibid.*: 125) and to 'clarify what constitutes the "religious"' (Ipgrave, 2015).

While the CoRE report has moved away from the debate over the inclusion of the non-religious and reframes worldview as all-encompassing, these criticisms demonstrate that worldview remains a contested concept, and its meaning interpreted differently.

4.2 WORLDVIEW AS A SECULAR ALTERNATIVE TO RELIGION

Worldview in RE is constructed in relation to religion and non-religion[5], and the concept is usually preceded by the adjectives "religious", "non-religious" or "secular" (Barnes, 2015; Everington, 2019; Felderhof, 2015; Freathy and John, 2019, van der Kooij et al, 2017). Until recently, many scholars, policy-makers, and practitioners have used 'the concept of worldview to reconcile RE with a secular and religiously pluralistic societal environment' (Riegel and Delling, 2019: 412). Worldview in Western discourse on RE has tended to be constructed as a secular alternative to religion, with non-religious worldviews taken as additional categories to study alongside "world religions" (van der Kooij et al., 2013). As a result,

worldview has often been viewed as the secular equivalent to religion.

Codifying worldview along the same normative discourses as religion[6] risks the (mis) representation of religious and non-religious worldview(s), the reproduction of Western discourses, a narrow focus on institutional non-religious worldviews, and the neglect of personal ones. This is illustrated by current debates pertaining to which worldviews should or should not be taught in RE (Barnes, 2015; Bråten and Everington, 2019; Chater, 2020b; Felderhof, 2015). However, adding 'a series of non-religious "isms" to a series of religious ones' is not aligned with the objectives set out in the CoRE report (2018), which aims to 'move away from the World Religions Paradigm, and not towards a "Global Worldviews Paradigm"' (Cush, 2020).

Drawing a binary opposition between religious and non-religious worldviews risks reifying worldviews, especially in handling the complexities within and between traditions (see section 3.4). It also implies a clear separation between the religious and the secular in which one 'cannot be both or anything in between' (Holloway, 2016). Many have argued that the distinction between the religious and non-religious is a fake dichotomy, and call for a more inclusive system of representation:

> Arguably the notion of 'religion' is a Western construct (Asad 1993), and the religious/non-religious binary, as well as the fencing off of 'religion' from 'non-religious worldviews', are of an artificial nature. It would be fair to question whether indigenous traditions/cultures/worldviews would fall into either or both of these categories (Freathy and John, 2019: 31).

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5 While this division may be viewed as evident in the RE community, it is worth noting that the concept can be approached differently. As mentioned in section 3.6, worldview can instead be constructed in relation to language and "nonlanguage" for example.
6 See section 2.

Furthermore, by constructing worldview as either religious or non-religious, there is the added danger of 'polarising' worldview, and 'setting up an opposition between religious and scientific perspectives or between theistic and atheistic positions' (Everington, 2019: 20).

4.3 WORLDVIEW AS ALL-ENCOMPASSING

Rather than presenting worldview as a secular alternative to religion, more recent work views religion as a subcategory of worldview. In this case, worldview is constructed as encompassing all religions, as well as a 'more personal and broader (i.e. secular) interpretation of views on life than "religion"' (van der Kooij et al., 2017: 172). The CoRE report, which states that '[e]veryone has a worldview' (2018: 26), also interprets worldview as all-encompassing. This interpretation is supported by a number of scholars and practitioners, who embrace the new vision laid out in the CoRE report – some of whom go beyond it in a more radical way (Chater, 2020a).

For instance, Chater queries why the Commissioners did not choose to call the subject 'Worldviews' or 'Worldviews Education', instead of R&W, and compares their decision to include "religion" in the title to 'illogical' titles such as 'Jazz and Music' (2020b: 125). Heilbronn (in press) also argues that "religion" becomes redundant, and proposes to make a distinction between Worldviews Education and RE – which could be maintained in schools with a religious character. Renaming the subject can be a political issue. Despite its inclusive, all-encompassing nature, worldview can be associated with both a secular and secularist position (Bråten and Everington, 2019). The CoRE report indicates that the word religion is kept "both to provide continuity and to signify that young people need to understand the conceptual category of 'religion'" (CoRE, 2018: 7)[7].

In response to some religious organisations' fears of seeing the scope of RE continuously expanding to the detriment of depth of knowledge, Chater (2020b: 122) recommends a 'shift away from a worldview-by-worldview study', to a study of how worldviews operate in the world. Similarly, the CoRE report states that:

> [T]here needs to be a greater understanding, at a conceptual level, of how worldviews operate, the accounts they provide of the nature of reality, and how they influence behaviour, institutions and forms of expression. It is this powerful, conceptual knowledge that all pupils need to have (2018: 6).

Fears about the possible dilution of the subject seem anchored in the World Religions Paradigm[8], and reflect a tendency to reify religions/worldviews. Cush and Robinson warn against the dangers of creating 'a series of separate monolithic "isms"' (in press: 56). The pluralisation of worldview in the title R&W, however, may lead to implicit interpretations whereby worldview is fragmented into a series of discrete entities that can be studied in silos, making it difficult to avoid reductionism and reification. Alternatively, Teece (2017) proposes renaming RE 'Worldview Studies', preferring to not pluralise the term[9]. However, although worldview is pluralised in R&W, the Commission on RE does not recommend adopting a reductionist approach to worldview, and stresses

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7 It is interesting to note that in Norway, the subject was renamed 'Christianity, Religions, Worldviews and Ethics' (Bråten and Everington, 2019). In this model, worldviews equate to non-religion (as in 4.2.). Andreassen (2014) argues that although worldviews get equal treatment, the syllabus still constructs Christianity as culture and national heritage, therefore 'othering' non-Christian worldviews in Norwegian society.

8 See section 2 for a discussion of the World Religions Paradigm.

9 See section 1 for a discussion of the pluralisation of worldview/religion.

that worldviews are 'complex, diverse and plural' (2018: 4).

To classify as a worldview, van der Kooij et al. state that 'four elements are conceptually necessary: existential questions, moral values, influence in people's acting and thinking, and providing meaning in life' (2013: 210). They also distinguish six types of existential questions: 1) Ontological questions, which refer to the nature of existence and the nature of human beings; 2) Cosmological questions, which are concerned with the origin of the universe and the place of human beings in it; 3) Theological questions, which refer to the existence of a deity; 4) Teleological questions, which involve the meaning of the universe and human beings; 5) Eschatological questions, which concern the end of life; and 6) Ethical questions, which refer to the broad themes of good and bad, and right and wrong (Van der Kooij et al., 2017).

If adopting van der Kooij et al.'s model, worldviews that answer existential questions should be included in the RE curriculum, whereas worldviews that answer 'other views on life, the world, and humanity' (such as political parties) should be ignored (van der Kooij et al., 2017: 174). In this model, most of the non-religious worldviews suggested by Barnes (2015) or Felderhof (2015) would not be considered for inclusion in RE syllabuses[10]. These debates about which religious or non-religious worldviews should be included or not highlight a tendency to focus on institutional worldviews, as these types of categorisations fit organised institutional worldviews more comfortably than personal ones (Chater, 2020b: 117).

According to Selçuk and Valk, a worldview framework that is anchored in existential questions is more inclusive, and 'opens up possibilities for dialogue and discussion. It increases understanding of self and others' (2012: 453). In their work, they propose a scheme of work for Islam based on five themes: 1) Personal, Social, Cultural; 2) Ultimate and Existential Questions; 3) Religious/Cultural Dimensions; 4) Ontological/Epistemological; and 5) Universal/Particular Beliefs, Values and Principles (*ibid.*).

Moving away from thematic pedagogies that have traditionally informed RE is also recommended by the Wintersgill project (2017). Rather than adopting 'cross-religion themes' such as 'worship, pilgrimage and sacred texts' (*ibid.*: 10), the Winstergill project identifies the principle of six 'Big Ideas' in order to prioritise content. These ideas are: 1) Continuity, Change and Diversity, which is concerned with the fluidity of religious and non-religious worldviews; 2) Words and Beyond, which refer to language, emotions and non-verbal communication; 3) A Good Life, which addresses moral behaviour; 4) Making Sense of Life's Experiences, which emphasises the importance of the experiential, whether ordinary or profound, and including ceremony and the sense of identity and belonging; 5) Influence, Community, Culture and Power, which deals with how worldviews interact with societies and cultures, and issues of power and authority; and 6) The Big Picture, which is concerned with "big questions", including with the nature of reality, the universe, human nature and destiny, and sources of knowledge. While the Wintersgill project focuses on RE and

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10 Although explicit references to non-religious worldviews are rarely made, Humanism is the most common example of non-religious worldview across the literature and in RE classrooms (Everington, 2019; REC, 2013; Barnes, 2015; Felderhof, 2015).While Humanists UK (formerly the British Humanist Association) supports a view whereby Humanism is constructed as the exemplar non-religious worldview (BHA, 2017), other examples of non-religious worldviews have been proposed and include 'atheism, agnosticism, secularism, rationalism, existentialism, utilitarianism and 'spiritual beliefs' (Everington, 2019: 17). Felderhof (2015) also includes Marxism, Environmentalism and Darwinism. Barnes (2015: 80) mentions 'atheistic Existentialism, scientific materialism; Marxism-Stalinist, Maoist or Marxist revisionary; National Socialism; atheism-nihilism, Freudian psychoanalytic atheism or Nietzschean 'will to power' atheism.'

provides 'generalised summaries of what [they] want students to understand by the end of their RE in school' (*ibid.*: 10), it remains useful as it focuses on 'issues related to religions and non-religious worldviews in the complex world which students inhabit today and will for the rest of their lives' (*ibid.*: 9). The report thus provides an example of how content can be selected when teaching worldview(s)[11].

Although supportive of the Wintersgill project, Freathy and John warn against the danger of 'establishing "Big Ideas" that apply universally across religions and worldviews without exception […], [as] it is difficult to avoid potential charges of reductionism or oversimplification to the point of essentialism' (2019: 31). Constructing worldview along anthropological lines (see section 3.2), they argue that worldview(s) is/are unfixed, unbounded and heterogeneous, and that it is important not to give pupils the notion of fixed '-isms'. Building on the six Big Ideas for RE, they propose adding 'four Big Ideas *about* the study of religion(s) and worldview(s)' (SORW) (*ibid.*: 33, emphasis in original). These are: 1) Encountering religion(s) and worldview(s): Contested definitions and contexts, in order to realise that terms like worldview are contested; 2) Encountering Oneself: Reflexivity, Reflectivity and Positionality, which includes reflecting on our own worldviews and how this affects our study; 3) Encountering Methodologies and Methods: Discernment and Diversity, to familiarise oneself with the different disciplines and methods used to study worldviews and how this affects our perceptions of worldviews; and 4) Encountering the 'Real World': Relevance and Transferability, which seeks to prepare children

and young people to engage in contemporary public and private affairs (*ibid.*: 34-36).

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11 In the Wintersgill report, worldview is viewed as all-encompassing (i.e. as applying to the religious and the non-religious). It is useful to note that although the report uses the phrase religious and non-religious world-views, it remains critical of it because it is 'lengthy and occasionally clumsy, interrupting the flow of the text, which is particularly apparent when reading the text aloud' (2017: 4). The report also acknowledges that the phrase implies a dichotomy between the religious and the non-religious, whereas 'the debate identified in the Big Ideas about the nature of religion not infrequently makes the boundaries between "religious" and "non-re-ligious" fuzzy' (*ibid.*: 4).

In order to learn about SORW, Freathy and John recommend adopting a pedagogical approach that reflects 'a preference for critical, dialogical and methodologically/ hermeneutically-oriented RE', such as the 'RE-searchers approach' (*ibid.*: 38) – an inquiry-based approach to the curriculum, whereby pupils become 'nascent members of the communities of academic inquiry' (*ibid.:* 36). The inclusion of philosophical hermeneutics[12] in RE is not new, and has been at the heart of pedagogical discussions, and precedes the publication of the CoRE report. Scholars such as Aldridge (2011; 2018), Bowie (2016), Panjwani and Revell (Biesta et al., in press) make a case for the role of interpretation, and of hermeneutics in RE. Hannam and Biesta, however, criticise the way in which 'world views'[13] are conceptualised in the CoRE report (2019: 61). According to them, world views in the report are 'restricted to the kinds of things that are believed or practiced [sic.] and therefore capable of being studied objectively in some way' (*ibid.*: 60). They accuse the CoRE report of implicit 'hermeneuticism', as it gives a prominent place to 'understanding', and neglects the existential dimensions of education. Instead, they suggest a non-hermeneutical alternative, whereby 'educational questions would be considered first and foremost, and questions about what it means to live with a religious or non-religious orientation considered in existential terms and not only as beliefs or practices or objectified world views' (*ibid.:* 60).

4.4 INSTITUTIONAL VS. PERSONAL WORLDVIEW

To acknowledge the diversity and complexities of worldview, the CoRE report (2018) makes a distinction between "institutional/organised" and "personal/ individual" worldview(s). By foregrounding personal worldviews, there is scope to acknowledge the eclectic and idiosyncratic nature of worldview (van der Kooij et al.*,* 2013; 2017). Personal worldviews consist of norms, values and ideals; they are fluid and 'may change based on the given situation' (Riegel and Delling, 2019: 404). They may or may not be informed by organised (institutional) worldview(s):

> These views can be, but are not necessarily, based on or inspired by (religious) organized views on life. If persons call themselves Christian, their personal worldview will be more or less based on the organized worldview of Christianity (van der Kooij et al.*,* 2017: 173-174).

Institutional worldview is 'a more or less coherent and established system with certain (written and unwritten) sources, traditions, values, rituals, ideals, or dogmas. An organized worldview has a group of believers who adhere to this view of life' (van der Kooij et al., 2013: 212). Such a definition shares many aspects with the concept of religion (see section 2). It risks codifying worldview along the same normative discourses as religion, which are entrenched in similar colonial, Western, Christianised constructions, and which misrepresent non-Abrahamic worldviews (Kueh, 2020)[14]. As not all worldviews have organisations, Chater (2020b: 120) proposes to use the adjective 'systematic' instead of institutional.

The interplay between institutional/ organised and personal/individual worldviews is a complex one (Miller, in press). The CoRE report recommends engaging with the interplay between these two levels, and with the diversity within worldviews. Yet, in her research,

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12 See sections 3.1 and 3.5 for a discussion of hermeneutics.
13 Note that the concept has once again been split into two words.
14 See also section 2.

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Everington shows that only a small number of RE teachers appear to be able to distinguish 'between organised and personal non-religious worldviews' (2019: 17). This may be explained by the fact that the personal/institutional dichotomy can be difficult to understand and put in practice, especially as non-religious worldviews are unlikely to be organised in a similar manner as "world religions" (Bullivant, 2008).

The personal/institutional dichotomy may also lead to an over-focus on institutional worldviews. While the CoRE report foregrounds personal worldviews in order to be 'fully inclusive of a wider range of worldviews, in highlighting religions/worldviews as really lived' (Cush, 2020), Riegel and Delling, in their research in German denominational education, flag up a tendency 'to predominantly address religion at the level of organised worldview' (2019: 412).

Furthermore, as the CoRE report proposes a clear individual/institutional divide, it risks ignoring the many levels on which the concept can work in between, and around the two realms. In Jackson's (2009a, 1997; 2004) interpretive framework, there is a third category between the personal and the institutional: the community, or membership group. Current models based on the institutional/organised and personal/individual dichotomy ignore this level. Kuusisto et al. also highlight a tendency to 'neglect the global, societal, cultural and communal aspects' (2019: 398). This raises questions about a twofold or even a threefold construction of worldview, as it may be too limited and limiting. For example, academic debates in Psychology show that worldview does not have to be framed along institutional or personal lines (see section 3.6).

Additionally, constructing the world and identities in contrast to one another, or along binary opposites reflects a Western intellectual tradition (Loseke, 2007). By organising worldview as either institutional or personal, and by foregrounding personal/individual worldviews, it privileges the importance of the individual, which is 'in keeping with modern, Western sensibilities' (*ibid.*, 2007: 676). Such a view may therefore reflect a liberal framing.

Finally, Miller (in press: 122) also points out another 'false dichotomy, particularly in the western world, between body and mind and between mind and heart'. With a tendency to focus on the cognitive, worldview has tended to be presented as consciously thought out, while lived and embodied experiences have been neglected. Debates in Linguistics, among other disciplines, show that such a dichotomy can be limiting (see section 3.6).

This chapter has highlighted that although worldview can be interpreted differently within the RE community, there seems to be a shift towards a construction of worldview as all-encompassing rather than equating to non-religious worldviews. It however raises a series of questions that urgently need addressing, such as the dichotomy between institutional/organised and personal/individual levels, and about the constructedness of worldview as a Western liberal post-Enlightenment term. Further questions are raised in the concluding section, and we invite readers to engage with those, as well as others that have emerged from reading this report.

5.
CONCLUSIONS

In this report, we have engaged with six of the disciplines that have traditionally informed RE debates and pedagogies. Our purpose has not been to define worldview or to determine what should be taught in RE classes, but to help inform discussions by sharing something of the rich intellectual history of the often-contested concept of worldview in academic scholarship.

Emerging from this report are key questions that need addressing by researchers, policy-makers and RE teachers. These relate to how worldview is interpreted and how it is operationalised in the classroom. For instance:

- Is worldview used as inclusive of religion and non-religion, or is it used as an alternative term to religion and to refer to non-religion only? If the former, should RE indeed be renamed Religion and Worldviews?
- Should a clear distinction between religious and non-religious worldviews be made? How can we account for the dialectic relationship between the two?
- To what extent is the concept of religion informing the concept of worldview? Which discourses are reproduced in the process?
- To what extent is worldview a Western and Christian construct?
- Are worldviews constructed as static, fixed, unitary entities that can be studied in silos, or as fluid, changing processes?
- Should worldview in R&W be pluralised or not?
- Is worldview used to refer to institutional/organised/systematic '-isms', or is it used to refer to the personal/individual? Or both?
- Should worldview be split in two or three levels? Should entirely different terms be used on each level to avoid confusion?

- Is worldview used to refer to the cognitive/belief/truth claim side of things, or to the existential/experiential/emotional? Or both?
- Is worldview used to refer to consciously thought out and articulated approaches to life? Or does it include un-reflected elements?

A shared understanding of what worldview means in RE and how that understanding can be effectively taught to students is crucial if the RE community is to move forward, as it will allow them to decide how best to implement the recommendations set out in the CoRE report (2018). The review team invite readers to engage with the questions above in order to advance meaningful discussions about the place and role of worldview in RE/R&W.

The review team also invite readers to seek out scholars who have not been included in this report, because their work may offer valuable insights that have not yet influenced policies and/or pedagogies in RE in England and Wales today. This includes the work of minority-faith scholars, indigenous scholars, and scholars based outside Western contexts. Alternative approaches to worldview and complementary concepts can only enhance this discussion, especially those reflecting less Western-centric perspectives.

Finally, the review team also encourage scholars, policy-makers, and teachers to engage with children and young people as they work towards a new vision for RE. Too often, curriculum change happens without seeking to actively include children's and young people's perspectives. Yet, research shows that their voices should be included to appropriately bring about change in education (Smith, 2005; Shillitoe and Strhan 2019; Shillitoe in press).

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