

The Shaping of the Modern Mind

Unit 1 - The Cosmos We Lost

Medieval people saw the universe and their place in it in a way that now seems quaint. But it was coherent and rational in the light of all available knowledge.

Unit 2 - Rebirth And Reform

The 15th and 16th centuries see the Renaissance, Reformation and Counter-Reformation. Each leads to further, unforeseen problems. People feel radical change is in the air but no one sees what is coming.

Unit 3 - A New Heaven And A New Earth

In the 17th Century a new approach to nature that we now call "science" proves to be immensely successful. Its implications extend further with each generation.

Unit 4 - The Enlightenment

In the late 17th and 18th Centuries there is a new confidence in human reason, called the Enlightenment. It leads to ideals of progress and freedom, with revolutionary achievements in many fields. Many of the issues are under intense discussion again today.

Unit 5 - The Impact Of Science

In the 19th century the impact of science continues to grow, particularly when the theory of evolution challenges older views. The universe presented by science grows vaster and stranger. Intense debates about what it all means still continue.

Unit 6 - Facing The Big Questions

Though specific issues get settled, underlying ones recur. Why should this be so? How far can we hope for reasoned solutions?

Unit 7 - Domination And Doubts

Western nations expand to colonise or dominate the rest of the earth but within our lifetime the balance is changing again. As we adjust to living in a global village, the meeting with other cultures and religions leads to new issues.

Unit 8 - Where Are We Now?

Current knowledge emphasises how our beliefs are influenced by our upbringing in a particular culture. How does this bear on the tension between science and religion? Where does it leave us today?