"The Aims and Presuppositions of Religious Education in Catholic and Secular Traditions: a comparison, with reference to spiritual development and religious education"

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by

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CONTENTS

Introduction........................................................................i

I. The Methodological Presuppositions of Education in Catholic and Secular Traditions........................................1

II. The Methodological Presuppositions of Religious Education in Catholic and Secular Traditions.............................94

III. Some Spiritual Dimensions of Religious Education in Catholic and Secular Traditions........................................216

IV. Conclusions....................................................................305

Bibliography........................................................................309
INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to analyse (1) the aims, objectives and assumptions of religious education in present-day Catholic and secular traditions, (2) to examine comparatively the similarities and dissimilarities of approach to religious education by each tradition and (3) to explore some of the issues relating to spiritual development as they arise in religious education in Catholic and secular traditions. It is the underlying thesis of this study that it is in comparing the approaches of each tradition to understanding religious education that it becomes possible to reach a fuller knowledge of what the concerns of religious education are, both in themselves, and also in the approaches and assumptions of the two traditions which are here examined.
This research centres around the generic philosophical and educational epistemologies of each tradition. In particular, three areas of study are considered;

1. The philosophical and epistemological background for the Catholic and secular traditions' concepts of knowledge.

2. The implications of these respective philosophical and epistemological approaches for religious education in each tradition.

3. The deeper understanding of the processes of religious education provided through a comparative analysis of the two traditions' approaches to spiritual development as it relates to religious education.

To this structure a fourth element is then added. This is the comparative analysis which determines by way of a concluding reflection those similarities and dissimilarities between Catholic and secular tradition that provide an insight into the aims, objectives and assumptions of religious education in each tradition.

The subject-matter for this study comprises Catholic theology (especially with reference to revelation and epistemological theory) and secular religious education (in the context of educational epistemology). The methodology used in this study is both analytic and comparative. It is analytic in the sense that it investigates the inherent assumptions which Catholic theology and secular education necessarily use in their respective accounts of reality. It is comparative in the sense that it subsequently compares the approach of each tradition to religious education in the light of those assumptions and philosophies. The ultimate methodology of this study is that of reflection. Thus, it is considered to be the case
that by reflecting upon the data that has been collected and analysed in this thesis that the aims of this study are upheld. In practical terms this study is limited to present-day approaches to religious education in each tradition.

Research into some parts of this area of study has been undertaken already by Catholic, non-Catholic and secular educationalists, working from both generic and differentiated perspectives. Among the modern Catholics scholars of note who have contributed in varying ways to the subject-matter of this study are James Arthur, Hugh Duffy, Thomas Groome, Edward Hulmes, V Alan McClelland, Gabriel Moran and David Warner. Reference should also be made to a scholar of a much earlier generation; Cardinal Newman. His contribution to the subject-matter of this study remains significant. It has also been researched by a number of secular and non-Catholic scholars, notably James Fowler, Michael Grimmitt, John Hammond, David Hay, John Hull, Lawrence Kohlberg and Derek Webster. In addition Dudley Plunkett, although a Catholic scholar, has contributed to 'secular' religious education research in the field of values in education.

This thesis owes a debt to much of the work of scholars such as these, as will be made implicit in the subsequent chapters of this study. That debt is here formally acknowledged.

The structure of this thesis, which comprises this introduction and the three chapters which follow, is intended to present an argument based on three distinct levels of approach. The first level
is a methodological one. Thus, at the first level, the first two chapters of this thesis are concerned with the philosophical, theological and epistemological presuppositions of each tradition in the light of education theory in general, and religious education theory in particular. The second level is a philosophical and reflective one. Accordingly, the third chapter of this thesis compares some of those areas which refer to the relationship of a deeper sense of spirituality and development to the concerns of religious education in both traditions than was possible in the first two chapters. The third level is a reflective and critical one. Thus, the last chapter of this thesis presents some critical and reasoned reflections on the research undertaken in the previous two levels.

The two methodological chapters of this thesis provide an important guide to the initial (and detailed) presuppositions which inform Catholic and secular education theory, and which, in turn, have an equally profound effect on each tradition's concept of religious education. Chapter One, therefore, examines the philosophical methodology which underpins the approaches of present-day Catholic and secular traditions to religious education. As such it is concerned with the educational presuppositions which exist in the approach of each tradition to this area. The first section of this chapter is divided into two parts. Part one looks at the concept of revelation in the Church today. It explores the relationship of Scripture to tradition, and examines the implication
of the Sacred Constitution Dei Verbum on the Church's understanding of revelation. From this analysis, the first chapter moves on to consider how Catholic theology understands the dignity of the human person in the light of revelation. The first half of this chapter ends with an examination of the wholism of Catholic education theory in the light of revelation and the dignity of the human person. A three-fold structure is thus established for Catholic education; revelation, leading to the call to human dignity, finding its educational noesis in the wholism of Catholic educational theory.

This is contrasted, in Part Two of the chapter, with an exploration of secular theories of education. Two specific areas are considered, which may be said to have a concern with secular education. First, rational concepts which owe their origins to the time of the Enlightenment are discussed. These include consideration of what might be described typically as the traditional philosophical concepts of idealism and realism. Second, various cultural and political concepts are examined. These include the sociological models of Mannheim and Durkheim, Marxist theory, postmodernism and its discontents. A comparative discussion follows.

Chapter Two considers the place of religious education in Catholic and secular traditions. In particular, the methodological presuppositions in those traditions which inform the theories of religious education as an educational process are studied. This chapter, therefore, first identifies and analyses the theological and educational presuppositions which underlie Catholic religious
education theory. In doing this, the Conciliar and Post-conciliar documents of the Church are subjected to scrutiny. Having established a structural base for religious education, (which arises from the threefold structure for Catholic education, discussed in Chapter One), this chapter reflects upon some secular approaches to religious education. It considers and compares the work of a number of significant religious education theorists, notably the work of the University of Birmingham's Centre for Religious Education Development and Research, but also the work of experiential theorists such as John Hay and David Hammond. It also explores the implications for secular religious education of some areas of postmodern theology and theory, epitomized by the position of the 'Sea of Faith' school of theologians. A comparison of Catholic and secular presuppositions follows.

In the first two chapters of this thesis, the educational and philosophical presuppositions which lay behind Catholic and secular religious education were analysed. In the second chapter in particular, reference was made to the spiritual dimensions of religious education which exist in both traditions. Chapter Three identifies and reflects upon some of the contexts in which the spiritual dimensions operate. It also analyses the place of spirituality within religious education, from Catholic and secular perspectives.

The first part of the chapter explores some aspects of Catholic theological and educational thought which centre around the issues
of spirituality and catechesis. After defining spirituality and catechesis, the concepts are placed in an educational context. An analysis is made of the interrelationship of these concepts to religious education, and bridges between these concepts and Catholic religious education are explored.

The second part of this chapter considers what it might mean to speak of the spiritual in the context of secular religious education. Secular definitions of the spiritual are explored, and these themes are then placed in an educational context. Here recourse is made to the models of secular religious education explored in Chapter Two. The themes of spiritual development are analysed as they arise in the work of Grimmitt, the experientialists and the non-realists. The chapter concludes with a comparison and contrast of the positions of the two traditions.

The thesis concludes with a reflection on the similarities and dissimilarities of the assumptions of Catholic and secular traditions as they are identified as a result of this study. Parallels of approach are shown to exist between the traditions. However, fundamental differences are also shown to exist.
CHAPTER I

The Methodological Presuppositions of Education in Catholic and Secular Traditions

This chapter considers the philosophical methodologies which underpin the approaches of present-day Catholic and secular traditions to education. Its purpose will be twofold. First, this chapter will analyse and discuss the respective rationale and argument which each tradition gives for undertaking education. Second, this chapter will critically compare the philosophical approaches of two traditions, highlighting both agreements and disagreements between each tradition.¹

Particular attention will be paid to the conceptual noesis which both Catholicism and secular education attribute to education. This will be explored in two ways. First a generic overview of the assumptions on which each tradition bases its education theories will be explored and discussed. Second these conceptual assumptions will be examined, compared and commented upon.
Accordingly, this chapter begins by exploring the Catholic concept of education in its theological sense, in three of its categories; first in that of the concept of revelation being the basis of the Church's self-understanding, then in that of the Church's understanding of humanity, and finally reaching a review of the Church's wholist theology of education in the light of these two concepts. This will involve an examination and discussion of the interplay of these concepts, with particular attention given to the Church's perception of the relationship between reason and revelation.

This chapter will turn next to an analysis of secular education theory. Two general theoretical models will be examined; first, those approaches which form a rational model for education, second, those approaches which fall under the concept of cultural and political theories of education.

The chapter will conclude by making a comparison between Catholic and secular theoretical models of education within the setting of their respective generic educational contexts. The relationship of this chapter to the thesis will also be noted.
i. Catholic Education.

1. Revelation as the basis of the Church's self-understanding.

Christ, the Second Vatican Council reminds us, is the light of humanity, which shines out from the Church for all the world to see (Lumen Gentium, art. 1). It is from this opening premise of the Council's Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, that the Catholic Church's understanding of the world of culture, science and religious expression is derived, and to which the Church’s interpretation of that understanding tends (cf. Gravissimum Educationis, art. 3; Gaudium et Spes, arts. 19, 57-59 passim). As such, education (and with it religious education) is to be found within the same sphere as those other areas of human knowledge, namely, within a Christological framework.

The Church's perception of this Christological genesis of knowledge and pedagogical enquiry, presented within the context of the conciliar documents, makes initial reference, therefore, to revelation as the source of divine knowledge. 'God, who creates and conserves all things by his Word, provides men with constant evidence of himself in created realities' (Dei Verbum, art. 3). The Dogmatic Constitution supports this claim with a reference to Romans 1: 19-20; knowledge and understanding of the divine can be recognized in the realities of creation. Thus, the human desire and
capacity for knowledge - humanity's faculty for education - is to be given expression from the moment of creation.

The processes of learning, (the ability to make sense of the world and of the individual's interaction with the world), when seen Christologically in the context of creation, leads properly to the Catholic concept of revelation. Since the Church teaches that God created humanity in the image of himself, and since, in addition, the Church teaches that God made himself known definitively to humanity (Dei Verbum, art. 2; cf. CCC. art. 27), it would be correct to say that an analysis of Catholic principles in education must begin with an examination of the Church's understanding of revelation.

The opening words of the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation provide a key to understanding the Catholic theology of revelation as espoused by the Second Vatican Council: 'Hearing the Word of God with reverence and proclaiming it with faith...' (Dei Verbum, art. 1). They stress that God has communicated to humanity in a real and meaningful way. The phrase 'the Word of God' refers first to the event of revelation proper: the action of the immanent Trinity, in which God unveils himself in self-disclosure to creation. But it also refers to the way of revelation: a thing to be announced and proclaimed throughout the Church. On the part of the human Church it is an event both of hearing and proclaiming.

At the outset three further points may be made. First, the Council is careful to stress that the Word of God is met, in the
human milieu, by a state of receptivity appropriate to the message; that of reverence. Similarly, it is with an appropriate state of action that the Church responds to God’s self-communication; faith.

Second, it is significant here that the Council speaks of revelation as being an event, to which the human response finds its mechanics mirroring precisely the same actions and processes as those of the Magisterium of the Church. The action in each case consists of a self-same hearing and responding (or in the case of the Magisterium, proclaiming) of the Word of God. Revelation thereby becomes linked to the missionary life of the Church (cf. Latourelle, 1966, p. 456).

Third, it should be noted that the Constitution’s reference to Romans 1: 19-20 must be seen in the context of two forms of revelation which are said to exist; revelation by grace, and revelation by nature. This distinction is made clear by Duffy in his thesis Liberal Education and Catholic Theology. Duffy describes revelation by grace as being 'contained in the Scriptures and in the Church’s tradition.' Revelation in its second form - by nature - 'is the knowledge we have of the Creator through the works of creation' (Duffy, 1989, p. 36).

The use of this type of religious language raises questions as to the extent to which expressions which touch on human actions and events, relate to the theological values which underpin them. In attempting to address this, some comment must be made about the traditions of the Magisterium regarding revelation.
The First Vatican Council determined that the principal truths of faith and morals fell within the remit of its declaration of infallibility. These truths of faith and morals were further declared to be revealed for the whole Church, in the sense of being revealed to the apostles by Christ. These teachings were made available, says the Council, to the apostles. Once the last surviving apostle died, the period of revelation closed permanently. From then on it was the duty and purpose of the Church to continue to proclaim the truths which had been handed down to it, and to explain those truths in ever new ways, and in ever differing contexts (Chirico, 1983, p. 166).

It will be clear from this that it was not the intention of the First Vatican Council to enter with any sophistication into debates about the manifold philosophical issues which such simplistic and anthropomorphic language raise. The Council spoke of revelation as being a verbal event, a kerygmatic presentation of a message. As such, the Council regarded such matters as being an issue of truth, not of debate (Chirico, 1983, ibid.).

Nevertheless, when comparison is made with the statements on revelation found in the documents of the Second Vatican Council, a clear Christological focus becomes apparent. Revelation finds its principal source in the event of the risen Christ (cf. DS 3006; Dei Verbum, arts. 1, 2). It is in the risen Christ that a link may be said to exist between the God who is revealed, and the worldly sphere in which that revelation takes place. God is revealed to
human beings to the extent that revelation happens in the world. But revelation happens in the world only because of the prior action of the God who wills his self-disclosure to come about. The reality of God's communication to humanity is expressed within the context of the created world. In this sense, God's action in revelation may be said to be mediated to human beings through the event of the risen Christ. This event is, in itself, the mediated point of contact between God and humanity (Dei Verbum arts. 3, 6; cf. Balthasar, 1990, pp. 212-213). This must be seen within the overall context of the economy of redemption; God reveals himself to humanity through the risen Christ in order that the reconciliation of the human to the divine in the resurrection may lead to humanity's ultimate redemption. To the extent that revelation is God's call to humanity to return to God, the resurrection takes on the significance of being the central event of revelation (CCC. art. 51).

Having established a Christological link between the God who reveals, and the creatures to whom revelation is made, we must now address the question of how it is possible for humanity to know God in his revelation. The traditional teaching of the Church suggests that the answer to this question lies in the ontological event of the creation: human beings desire God because they are in possession of an ineluctable yearning for God, which has come about not because of human endeavour, but because humanity is created both by and for God. The search for God comes from the desire for God, which finds its origin in the God who created this desire in men in the first
place. Since the Fall, God has been calling humanity continually back into relationship with God (CCC. art. 27).2

This yearning to know God, it is suggested, is found in the religious expression of countless generations. Prayer rituals, sacrificial actions and beliefs about deities are common across cultures to the extent that traditional Catholic teaching has suggested that this shows that humanity is really homo religiosus (CCC. art. 28). Receptivity to God’s revelation is part of human nature.3

Having established the traditions regarding human receptivity, the focus now shifts to the question of how the receptive homo religiosus comes to know God. According to the Catechism, God can be known from the created medium, principally via two processes; the world and the human person. In general terms, the former process relates to five particular ways in which God may be known from creation: movement, becoming, contingency, order and beauty (CCC. art. 31).4 The latter concerns the human capacity for receptivity to God, which has been mentioned above. Humanity is possessed of a critical openness to truth and beauty. Sometimes that openness may become restricted through an overt identification by humanity with the materialism of the created world. Nevertheless, it is as autonomous beings, and with right and informed consciences, that God may be discerned by humanity. This is accomplished through the medium of that which God - as God - has created. In particular, it is precisely because human beings are created beings, made in the
image of God that they retain a capacity to discover signs and symbolic epiphanies of the soul within them (CCC. art. 33).

A word of caution must be expressed here. The Church does not permit, nor could it allow an identification to be made between the God who creates on the one hand, and the world and humanity who have been created on the other hand. To do this in the name of natural theology would be both heretical to the Christian tradition, and also philosophically inadequate. God would be reduced to a relativised category of being. If God's prevenience is to be preserved, this cannot be allowed to happen. Humanity and the world are said, therefore, to participate in, but not to identify with God's being, which alone remains the absolute transcendent, thereby preserving God's sovereignty (CCC. art. 34).5

Mention must now be made of the way in which Scripture and Tradition are said to contain revelation, and, in general terms, of the rôle of faith in relation to revelation.

Scripture is always seen in Catholic tradition as God's word. Indeed this identification is so strong that it is included as one of the five particular ways in which Christ becomes truly present in liturgical celebrations.6 As God's word, it is held to be free from error, and perpetually valid for all times (cf. DS 1501; 3292, Dei Verbum art. 11). As a result, Scripture should always be seen as being the primary source for Catholic theology, and treated accordingly with reverence and faith.7 This concept of Scripture being a primary source of God's word, and thus free from error
implies, therefore a connection between Scripture and revelation. Scripture is said to contain revelation, but not to be the sum total of revelation (*Dei Verbum* art. 7). A clear distinction is drawn between revelation encountered in the pre-apostolic age, and that of the post-apostolic age. Even if considered uncritically, it is immediately apparent from this that Scripture *per se* does not find an ontological identification with the origin of the event of revelation. Scripture therefore must remain a part of the post-apostolic age, and so act as a bearer of the message of revelation, albeit the most important testimony to revelation that there is. The written record always differs from the lived reality of the revelation event (O'Collins, 1981, p. 202).

Tradition, on the other hand, whilst quite clearly originating in the post-apostolic era, cannot make equal claims to the pre-eminence which the Church gives to Scripture (Kung, 1964, 106). Tradition, according to the Council of Trent means the handing on of the Gospel to new generations (*DS* 1501). Tradition cannot claim its origin in inspiration, which is what the Catholic Church has always asserted about Scripture. Its relationship to Scripture and revelation must always be seen in the context in which the Council of Trent understood these concepts; namely a relationship held in the sole sway of the divine. As a source of revelation, all things human must first be discounted, both in the apostolic and post-apostolic ages (*DS* 1501, cf. Kung, 1964, p. 108), before it can be said that what is left is the revelation of God contained in Tradition. However,
this is not to say that Tradition takes on a status which puts it into a co-primate relationship with Scripture. For Tradition takes as its reference point Scripture, which in itself acts as the referee and guarantor of Tradition. Since the Church has always held that Scripture alone is inspired by the work of the Spirit, and thus contains the unmediated word of God, Tradition, being Tradition, which is deposited in the credal, papal, conciliar and episcopal documents and acts of the Church, is mediated, through these human actions of representation, and so can be said to contain the revealed word of God mediately (Küng, 1964, pp. 110-111).

It will be apparent from what has been said above that revelation is seen to come \textit{ab extra}; God takes the initiative in engaging with humanity (\textit{Dei Verbum} art. 2). This engagement takes on the perspective of an inter-personal encounter, in which revelation seems to be imposed upon creation as a whole. It is as a result of this encounter that faith becomes the suitable response for humanity (\textit{Dei Verbum} art. 5). This concept of faith demands not only the exercise of the human will in order for it to be freely expressed, but it also requires a willingness on the part of men to abandon themselves completely to God in an 'obedience of faith' (\textit{Dei Verbum} art. 5). Such demands are very great, and do not precisely correlate to human faculties, but, as numerous conciliar documents attest, relate to the inner, spiritual dimension of each individual.

It is in this context that grace is encountered. For faith, being a reality which comes about in the encounter between God and
creation, is enriched by the grace of God, through the actions of the Spirit on the inner human dimension. In this way, revelation is more clearly understood, and in this way faith is illuminated and developed (Wojtyla, 1979, pp. 19-21).

Mention of faith and of the encounter between God and creation leads to the notion of mystery. For if creation has encountered God in the act of revelation, and if that encounter is both concrete (in the sense that the full complementarity of creation takes part in this encounter), and also spiritual (in the sense that the inner spiritual soul of each individual is touched and enriched by this event), whilst, still in this event of revelation, God, being God, remains transcendently beyond humanity's perception, then the only suitable way of speaking of this paradox is to talk of mystery. Mystery implies that that which is happening, takes place beyond our true perceptions. Mystery indicates the limits of what we are able to say about God, and about ourselves in relation to God and to each other. Mystery hints at matters which touch on reality, but which are greater than reality. As such, our language about this mystery cannot remain propositional, but must embrace some element of symbolism and analogy.9

Recognition of this mystery impinging upon our language, although not new to Catholic theology,10 led to a certain amount of new reasoning about how to think and speak about revelation more appropriately. The influence of Paul Tillich is notably present in the work of modern Catholic theologians today. In particular his
conceptual principle that human causality can be interpreted symbolically has found serious proponents among Catholic theologians today.\textsuperscript{11}

Avery Dulles in his major study \textit{Models of Revelation} has identified a number of theologians, who, following similar lines have sought to re-express the concept of revelation including Baum, Mackey, Moran, de Chardin and Rahner. For them revelation can best be described as a breaking through of humanity to a higher level of consciousness, as humanity is drawn ever more deeply into the divine creativity (Dulles, 1992, pp. 98-109. For a detailed bibliography for these theologians see the notes accompanying chapter seven of Dulles' work, pp. 301-304). The new consciousness which is finally achieved Dulles calls faith (Dulles, 1992, p. 109).

The content of revelation consists in the divine, which is to be found in everything, whether Christologically present in Christ as the incarnation of all reality, or on a more universalist model in which natural theology, (or indeed religious anthropology such as Moran's 'primordial receptiveness'), leads to an ever more unfocussed object to the content of revelation (Dulles, 1992, p. 104).\textsuperscript{12}

Dulles has tried to present a new approach to this concept of revelation, in the light of the attempt of the theologians mentioned above to describe the relationship of the encounter between God and humanity. As such Dulles clearly uses metaphorical language. In using this language as such an endeavour would require it, Dulles is
led to propose his notion of symbolic mediation, as the key to speaking about revelation in a Catholic sense. Here Christ is proposed as the metaphor, and revelation takes on the character of a mediated symbol of Christ's relationship with creation and with God (Dulles, 1992, pp. 131-173, especially pp. 156-160). Although clearly attractive in its attempt at preserving the limits we can put on meaning, it does seem indistinguishable from certain of the 'new awareness' concepts described above, particularly those of Teilhard de Chardin and Karl Rahner (cf. Dulles, 1992, pp. 99-103). Finally, whereas traditional Catholic theology worked propositionally from its perceived derived authority, the more recent Catholic theology of revelation outlined very briefly above can be criticised precisely on the very grounds of authority.

It is in the light of the current arguments about the nature of revelation in the world, and, corresponding to that issue, the nature of the world in the light of revelation, that we can speak here of a second category by which the Church comes to an educational theory which can be called Catholic, namely the Church's understanding of the world.
2. The Church's understanding of the world.

For the purposes of this study, close reference will now be made to some ways in which the Church claims to have an understanding of humanity and the world. We have already commented above on the relationship that the Church sees existing between the revelation of God and the created realities which form the human setting. A link, then, is already established in Catholic theology, between God and humanity. Having examined the first side of this relationship, we now turn to the second, anthropological side.

This section will examine how the Church understands the dignity of the human person, and how that understanding is fully defined with reference to the paschal mystery. Initially, the Church's teleological concerns will be addressed. Accordingly, attention will be paid to the Church's concept of human dignity, and to the rational grounds which the Church finds for this concept.

Second, this section will subsequently explore the Church's theological regard for the actions of humanity. Accordingly the relationship of humanity to the paschal mystery will be explored. This will involve a brief analysis of how the concept of salvation impinges upon our understanding of human dignity.

The Church has consistently taught that humanity possesses of itself a dignity which finds its origin and its summation in the creative and communicative realities of God. Thus the Church states that it is in the creation of humanity in the image and likeness of
God that we find dignitas rooted to the core of humanity. Humanity possess dignity only because God has made humanity to be like Himself (CCC. art. 1700). At the centre of human dignity is to be found the imago Dei.

The concept of the imago Dei begins with the Church’s teachings on the relationship of God to the created realities of existence. Thus it can be noted in a great number of major Church documents and Councils that a consistently high significance is placed in the concept of the creation of the whole world (that is, the sum totality of created reality, both material and spiritual) in a single act freely undertaken by God. This act is ontically temporal in its origin, and is generated from and of nothing in terms of its formation.13

Although finding its origin in the Scriptural tradition of Genesis 1:27,14 the concept developed in reaction to the consistently serious threat posed to Catholic orthodoxy by a number of quasi-gnostic heresies, most notably those of the Origenists, of Manichaeism and of pantheism. Of particular concern to the Church in confronting these attitudes was the fear on the part of the Church that human nature and the human soul would be separated irrevocably through the dichotomous dualism which these heresies seemed to share, albeit generically. If we were to survey briefly the history of Church councils we can see a consistent attempt by them all to retain and preserve a deep and integral unity at the heart of the human person; human nature and the human soul were one.
Thus we can see, for example at the Provincial Council of Constantinople (543) a condemnation of the Origenist view\(^\text{15}\) that souls had an existence which was separate from the body. This view held further that human souls had first existed as independent heavenly spirits, who, growing bored of God's love (\textit{apopsugeisas}) thus became souls (\textit{psuchai}). As a punishment, God sent them to earth into human bodies (\textit{DS 403}). In condemning this view, the Church based its anathema on three particular problems. First this view separated the body-soul unity on which the Church's definition of the human person depended. Second, the Council considered that the Origenists' semantic connection between \textit{apopsugeisas} and \textit{psuchai} was false. Third, and most seriously, the Origenists' view implies that the creation of the world was not a contingent act, but a necessary one, which, of its necessity, limited God's freedom to act (\textit{DS 410}).

Similarly, the Council of Braga (561), condemning the Priscillianists, (originally a Spanish sect who held strongly Manichaean principles) further defined what it was that human dignity comprised; human souls were independent of God (\textit{DS 455}), but were to be found in the unity of body and soul which makes up a human person, which, being created by God is intrinsically a good thing (\textit{passim DS 456, 457, 461, 462, 463}, if taken cumulatively). In essence, the Council sought to reject a dualism of nature and matter, and the accompanying contempt such a view had of the human body. We begin here to see more clearly the Church's understanding of human dignity; it is rooted in the goodness of God's physical
creation, which cannot be condemned because, coming from God, it is good.

It is in stressing this same concept that Innocent III, fighting against a form of French Manichaeism (which became known after 1180 as the Albigensian heresy), presented his *Profession of Faith Prescribed to the Waldensians of 1208.*16 The key article touching on the question of human dignity is undeniably the prescription required of all who return from this heresy to the Church which states categorically that God, who created all things, visible and invisible, remains the single unifying factor of the created realities. Once again, it is in the denial of dualism in all its aspects, and in the affirmation of God as the soul author of everything, including humanity, that the basis of human dignity may be understood (*DS 790*). Seven years later the fourth Lateran Council reaffirmed Innocent III's *Profession*, and added some trinitarian and ecclesiological points: thus, God, as the one Trinity, is presented as the unique principle of creation (*DS 800*); the Incarnation is the work of the whole Trinity (*DS 801*); finally, (and for the first time) the Church's character as a sacrificial and eucharistic community is affirmed (*DS 802*).

The issue of the unity of the human person, and the anti-dualism of Church doctrine continued to be challenged, forcing the Church again and again to define the dignity of being a human in terms of these concepts. Accordingly we find in 1311-1312 the Council of Vienna condemning the teachings of the followers of the Franciscan
John Olieu, which tended to separate the realities of history and human nature from the human 'spirit', effectively making the human person subject to dualist separation. In condemning this teaching we find that the Council stresses that the spiritual soul was the principle of organic life, and that the human person cannot exist unless it is in this unity of soul and body (DS 902). This unity is stressed again in 1442 at the Council of Florence, being linked here to the goodness of God's creation - a creation which involves all things in participation in the goodness of God - (DS 1333, 1336).

Similarly, concern over asserting the fundamental unity of the intellectual (and hence spiritual) with the organic is reinforced at the fifth Council of the Lateran of 1513. In its Bull Apostolici Regiminis the Council sought to condemn the views of the Paduan philosopher Pietro Pomponazzi (1464-1525). He suggested that since humans could apprehend universal ideas, this general ability indicated that the spiritual soul, being traditionally related to the intellect, was not an independent nor individual entity: it was ubiquitous to human nature. At death, therefore, individual identity is lost, with the human person dissolving into the universal spirit. Any organic features of human nature cease to exist at death, being bound up with matter. The Council's condemnation of this view rested on two premises; (1) human nature is both individual and immortal, and (2) human nature is fundamentally one, comprising the unity of the intellectual with the organic (DS 1440).
Thus far we have seen that the Church’s teaching on the dignity of the human person resides with the concepts of the integral goodness of all creation, and in the profound unity of the soul with matter. We have seen further that this teaching was derived for the most part from the *anathemata* declared against various forms of Manichaean heresy. However, by the nineteenth century the wind of social revolution brought with it some new challenges to the Church’s teaching on the human person. Whereas the previous danger had come from a view which had sought to separate the physical world from God, the new dangers of pantheism sought to bring the divine into absolute identification with the physical realities. What the human person was and what God was became indistinguishable through such thought. Thus in 1864, pantheism became one of the targets of Pius IX’s *Syllabus of Condemned Errors*. Pius IX was able to develop the Church’s teaching on the dignity of the human person by asserting that not only did an all-wise, omniprovident divine being (*numen*) exist, distinct from all creation, but also that this being did not ‘become’ Himself in human form, since this would both deny the full humanity of Christ, and also imply that God was subject to the categories of change (*DS* 2901). At the same time, however, Pius IX sought to ensure that this did not lead to the equally prevalent heresy of Deism; just because God should not be identified with creation does not mean that God does not care about humanity, nor does not act in the created order (*DS* 2902).
We come here close to the heart of the Church's understanding of the dignity of the human person; being made in the image and likeness of God does not mean an absolute identification between the human person and God. Nor yet does it indicate that there is no connection with God, for being created (i.e. creaturely), the human person, albeit an independent existence, owes its origins to the creative will of God. Since that created will is intrinsically good, it necessarily follows that creation is also good.

This can be seen most clearly in the Constitution Dei Filius of the First Vatican Council (1870). Basing itself closely on the work of the Fourth Lateran Council (cf. DS 800), the Council, among other matters, looked closely at creation and the role of God in creation. Thus, the Council stated quite clearly that it was in order to demonstrate God's perfection through the benefits given to creation that both at once, and out of nothing, God created spiritual and corporeal creatures. Of particular concern to us is that the Council categorically declared that the human creature shares in both the spiritual and the corporeal life (DS 3002).

In terms of God's actions on and in creation, the Council goes on to state that God protects and governs all which he has made (DS 3003). Since that act was freely undertaken by God, no necessity was involved (DS 3025). Similarly, it is precisely because the action of creation was contingent, that humanity could not be said to emanate from God's substance. A contingent act of creation requires an independent entity to be the subject of creation (cf. DS 3024).
Ultimately, the Council concluded, humanity and creation as a whole, were created for the glory of God (DS 3025).17

The Swiss theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar makes the point that it is this glory of God, which is, in essence, the conformity of humanity to God (Balthasar, 1982, p.455). The creation begins the whole narrative of salvation history. The revelation of God, which was discussed in the previous section, finds its physical expression in the physical sphere of humanity (ibid., p.441f.). But this physical expression of revelation remains necessarily hidden, since, although the human person finds his or her dignity in the fact that he or she was created in the image and likeness of God, there remains an inviolable and unreachable chasm between God and the creature. Human knowledge can only extend so far. Our analysis of human dignity, which will lead us eventually into an assessment of the presumptions of Catholic education theory, presents us for now with a conundrum. In a real and absolute sense humanity is part of the created realities; part, indeed, of nature as a whole. But given this, it is equally true to say that nature, in relation to humanity, transcends human understanding and existence. Balthasar calls this 'the law of "nature", which surpasses and contains all forms of social and individual human activity...the law of reality, of the Being of the world as such' (Balthasar, ibid., p.446). For this reason, Balthasar suggests, the concept of mystery must be employed; and in employing this concept, Balthasar proposes faith as a partner in science, to objective knowledge (Balthasar, ibid.).18
Christologically, Balthasar goes further still. Not only is revelation given by God in creation, albeit in mystery, but, moreover, this revelation continues to play a part in the questions of human identity and dignity despite, (or, indeed, because of), humanity's fallen nature; 'it is, unconditionally, the interior and organic fulfilment of God's original plan, even if its ultimate form in this world is the Cross and the glorifying light of the Holy Spirit that falls on the Cross' (Balthasar, *ibid.*, p.453). It is in this redeeming action of the Cross on humanity that we can see in its definitive form the true meaning of human dignity; in the Incarnation, not only is the divine disclosed to humanity but also humanity itself is similarly disclosed (Balthasar, *ibid.*, pp.458f.). In the Cross, not only is Christ's glory revealed as Redeemer, but human nature is also revealed as being glorified through this action (Balthasar, *ibid.*, pp.460f.). It is in this sense that we can say that human dignity is defined as humanity, sharing in God's glory as the image and likeness of God, revealed in and redeemed by Christ.

This chapter will go on to explore how this definition of human dignity can help to clarify an understanding of Catholic education theory. In doing so, it will be readily seen that the concept both of revelation and human dignity form part of a threefold structure which underpins Catholic educational noesis, and which, as will be seen in the subsequent chapters to this thesis, informs the assumptions which underlie Catholic religious education.
3. Catholic Education.

In the sections discussed above, two major themes of revelation and the meaning of the human dignity of the person were explored in the light of the Church's teachings. These two areas form part of a threefold noesis of a theology of Catholic education, as the following section will seek to show. This present section, then, will be concerned specifically with the concept of 'Catholic education'. It will analyse the concept of Catholic education as a generic term, and will pay attention to the teachings of the Second Vatican Council, and in particular to the key education document of the Council, *Gravissimum Educationis*.19

Analysis of Catholic education begins, then, with an investigation into the meaning of education, as understood from the perspective of the Catholic Church's own perception of the term. The Catholic concept of education may be recognized in two senses. The first sense is of education perceived in a generic form, broadly conceived. Thus, education may be spoken of taking place in the context of the influence of society on the individual, in all its forms. When such influences begin to shape the human individual, we might justifiably call this a learning event. Thus, in its non-specific sense, education may be said to be that process whereby the influences which a person encounters bring about a change or development in his or her values, ideologies, proficiencies, competencies, beliefs and behaviour. Accordingly, in its generic
state, such a process will usually remain unplanned and unforeseen. Similarly, because of its non-specific nature, this process of education could be said to be found in any human encounter with reality, and to extend into any form of social or physical interaction with the world.

The Church in part accepts the validity of this form of education as a means of personal and social development. Thus, Pope John Paul II was able to affirm that 'all human activity takes place within a culture and interacts with culture'. The Pope goes on to state that it is in the exercise of 'creativity, intelligence and knowledge of the world and of people' that true cultural development occurs. The Church, however, transcends culture and ideology in the sense that it teaches the truth about the created order and redemption to humanity. Thereby it gives to humanity the Church's unique contribution to the educational process (John Paul II, 1991, p. 37).

In its second form, education may be understood as a specific task-driven activity. Limited in scope, this form of educational process confines itself to the deliberate, sentient, purposeful and intended actions of individuals and institutions upon others, in order that those individuals being acted upon might be influenced in one or other particular manner. Such intentional influencing of individuals will usually be planned with a desired outcome in mind. On account of the limited nature of this process, planned outcomes may well be small scale in comparison to the unplanned, generic
process mentioned above, but taken cumulatively and over an extended period of time, the learning outcomes may become substantial in scope and detailed in content.

The Church accepts this more specific form of education, involving good pedagogic techniques, as an acceptable means of human education, and, most significantly, as a means of assisting individuals to develop more deeply as human persons (Cf. Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1982, p. 9-14, especially arts. 21-22). In particular, in this planned pedagogy the Church identifies not merely the value of the communication of a corpus of knowledge, but also the fostering of a sense of community among individuals, most especially within the context of an institution (Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1982, p. 14).

In recognising the authenticity of cultural and social development, in both its generic and specific forms, the Church makes a statement about its own role in society, and also, as a result, presents its understanding of this generic process of education. Society does have a role to play in the educational and social development of the human person. But transcending that process lies another form of education, with access to the ultimate truths about human nature. Since the Church's mission is to communicate these truths to the whole world (cf. Mt 28: 16-20), this higher form of education takes on an universal significance: Catholic education.
In his significant book *Towards a Civilisation of Love*, Cardinal Hume, speaking of Catholic education states that 'we have a coherent philosophy and a vision of education that we believe to be of universal significance...God is the heart of religious education and the purpose of all education' (Hume, 1988, pp. 105-106). Hume goes on to explain that in putting God at the centre of the Catholic educational thought his intention is not to limit our understanding of education. All education, he contends, must have within it a continuously richer Christian awareness of the Trinity and of the Judaeo-Christian understanding of creation: 'a vivid and all-embracing awareness of creation as a single and continuing expression of God's overwhelming goodness and love must, of necessity, affect all knowledge and all values' (Hume, 1988, p. 106).

In this sense, Hume stands in the same theological line as J. H. Newman. Newman spoke about the integral unity of knowledge, which the mind or intellect could begin to perceive as a whole: '[the intellect] makes every thing in some sort lead to every thing else...giving them one definite meaning' (Newman, 1976, pp. 122-123). In his approach, Newman seeks to link liberal education to Catholic theology. For while a liberal education was for Newman principally a means of 'the cultivation of the intellect as such', this cultivation or enlargement of the mind should be carefully distinguished from the mere acquisition of knowledge (Newman, 1956, p. 100). The characterising feature of liberal education for Newman
is its wholistic quality, which enables the individual to see the educational and experiential reality 'as a whole' (Newman, *ibid.*, p. 114).

In saying this, Newman is careful to focus into the heart of his concept of liberal education; liberal education remains independent of any influence beyond itself, and refuses to be confused or compromised by some other form of systematisation. It is truly wholistic when it presents itself to us as a contemplation of all reality (cf. Newman, *ibid.*, p. 88).

Now since all knowledge for Newman is essentially whole, this raises the question of how we come to differentiate the sciences (in the broadest sense of that term) from each other. To answer this, Newman presents the circle of knowledge. If the object of all knowledge is truth, then truth must be defined as facts and their relations. These facts and their relations may be reduced and fragmented into the sciences; forms of knowledge. When the intellect engages with these sciences, it categorises them into different compartments. In effect, Newman argues, what is happening is that the intellect creates a record of this or that part of the whole of knowledge (Newman, *ibid.*, p. 37; cf. Duffy, 1989, pp. 25-26).

To this presentation Newman brings Catholic theology. For Newman, theology has to be included within the process whereby the mind categorises the wholistic subject matter of knowledge. For theology deals with creation and the Creator. To avoid it would bring down the whole edifice of the circle of knowledge (Duffy, *ibid.*, p. 26;
Newman, 1976, p. 38). Indeed, as Ian Ker has commented, Newman based his concept of an intellectual catholicity out of his argument for the study of theology, albeit that this should be seen in the context of the unlimited scope of the circle of knowledge (Ker, 1990, p. 23. See also passim Ker, 1988, p. 392). To remove theology from knowledge would cast the circle into 'a far worse confusion' than even the removal of human interaction with the 'circle of universal science' (Newman, 1976, p. 63).

Indeed, it is precisely for this reason that Newman speaks of the relationship of religious knowledge to the circle of knowledge, not in terms of religious knowledge's categorisation within the circle, but as a 'condition of general knowledge' (Newman, 1956, p. 54). Duffy establishes that Newman is able to link liberal education with religious knowledge by the former's ability to bring to the latter a reasoned and eirenic approach to the subject-matter of theology. But Duffy goes on to make the significant point that 'secular sciences and Catholic theology are derived from the same source; namely, the Creator' (Duffy, 1989, p. 27). The revelation of the creative God, then, provides for Newman the datum for all knowledge. The wholism of knowledge stems precisely from this one event.

Cardinal Hume, speaking of the relationship of love to knowledge develops Newman's wholistic theory of education by pointing out that the distinguishing expression of our humanity is to know and to love. But that capacity is brought about only through the intellect and will, which, conforming to the image and likeness of God, allows
us to share in God's life. Knowing the world takes on this religious dimension: when we come to engage our love and our knowledge with the world, we are engaging ultimately in a contemplation of God's creation, and in particular, of creation's relationship to God (Hume, 1988, pp. 103, 106).

But in practical terms, this educational engagement with creation involves some issue of human rights. If human dignity is to be upheld, then, as V. Alan McClelland remarks in his comments on the Second Vatican Council's key education document Gravissimum Educationis, all humans have the inalienable right to education, a right which is irrespective of race, age, sex or societal conditions. Similarly, given the revealed nature of Christianity, it follows that there exists an inalienable right to a Christian education. Thirdly, given the pre-eminence of the relationship of parents to their children, there exist the rights of parents to be involved first and foremost in the nurture, upbringing and education of their children (McClelland, 1992, pp. 9-10). The Church also has a place in this process, most notably in its action and rôle as the custodian of the deposit of faith concerning revelation, and in its proclamation of the universal salvation revealed in the life of Christ (Gravissimum Educationis arts. 2, 3).

At the centre of the wholism of Catholic education, then, lies the Christological focus of the datum of revelation, interpreted by the Catholic community through a process of contemplation of creation and redemption, and fully realised through the gift of
faith. As Edward Hulmes comments, 'Catholic education is about discovering Christ, or it is nothing' (Hulmes, 1995, p. 5).22

The question of the relationship of education with the gift of faith is addressed in the Conciliar declaration _Gravissimum Educationis_. In particular the issue of catechesis is raised as a natural implication of sharing in a contemplation of creation.23 Thus catechetical instruction is described as a process which 'illumines and strengthens the faith' in a way which 'stimulates a constant and fervent participation in the liturgical mystery' (_Gravissimum Educationis_, art. 2). McClelland notes that, as a result, this catechesis clearly indicates that Catholic schools (as the foremost Catholic educational institutions) have a dual rôle of engaging in the development of intellectual skills among pupils, and in the nurturing of faith in those pupils (McClelland, 1992, p. 10; cf. _Gravissimum Educationis_, art. 5). Similarly, _Gravissimum Educationis_ develops a second and equally important principle for Catholic education, namely that it retains a particularly communitarian function. Thus the Conciliar declaration states that it is 'the special function of the Catholic school to develop in the school community an atmosphere animated by a spirit of liberty and charity, based on the Gospel' (_Gravissimum Educationis_, art. 8). McClelland sees here the essential integral wholeness of Catholic education being made manifest. Catholic education finds its ultimate context in the community of saints to which the whole body of the Church is called: 'we use the term "communion of saints" to embrace
this theological concept, this idea of organic connection with the whole human family of God's creation in Christo' (McClelland, 1992, p. 10).

A summary may now be drawn up of Catholic education as a whole, linked noetically to the two previous sections of this chapter. For Catholic education is the manifestation of the human intellectual response to a divine initiative (cf. Hulmes, 1995, p. 6). It finds its origin linked to the event of revelation. It is shown its subject-matter in the life, death and resurrection of Christ. It is made real for us within the intrinsic goodness of creation, and in contemplation of the unity of the soul and body which is to be found in the dignity of the human person. Catholic education completes the process whereby the human response - natural theology - returns to God the love which God first revealed. Seen in this context, Catholic education takes on a particular significance in the life of the Church. Its deep coherence must surely remain one of the Church's greatest treasures.
Thus far, this thesis has attempted to explain in general terms the structure which informs both the theology and the theory of Catholic education. At the core of this structure is the revelation of God in creation and in the redemption from which the whole argument of Catholic educational thought develops. Humanity, whose dignity it is to be made in the image and likeness of God are able to respond to this event of revelation through the intellectual faculties, and by the nurturing of the gift of faith. In this regard, Cardinal Newman's significant contribution to Catholic educational thought has been discussed. Finally, the wholistic and communitarian principles of Catholic education have been demonstrated.

The second part of this chapter will analyse ways in which secular theories of education have been presented. Like Catholic education theory, secular education theory attempts to make sense of reality. Numerous approaches to this problem have been undertaken in the past, but it would be both inappropriate and indeed impossible, given the scope of this study adequately to analyse all these contributions. Accordingly, what follows is an attempt to isolate and discuss some of the more significant themes which have a direct bearing on modern secular education theory.

But even with this aim in mind, many difficulties are to be encountered, unless the terms of reference are more particularly defined. For whereas the first part of this chapter concentrated on an analysis of Catholic education, and was able to identify this
term within the context of the teaching office and conciliar pronouncements of the Church,\textsuperscript{24} it becomes much more difficult to define what is meant by \textit{secular} education.

Correspondingly, it will be assumed throughout that secular education is to be understood within the context of a world view that (1) refuses to permit the actions of a deity or theological system to inform the structures of reality as perceived by secular practitioners, and (2) claims to draw largely upon post-Enlightenment and postmodernist thinking to make or deconstruct its claims about reality. However, even in this context, secular education theory should not be considered in an univocal sense. Many streams of thought flow into secular educational theory, and it would be unwise to regard secular education theory as a monolith.

The second part of this chapter will reflect on two areas which may be said to touch secular education. First rational concepts which owe their origins to the time of the Enlightenment will be discussed. Second cultural and political concepts will be examined.
ii. Secular Education.

a. Rational concepts in secular education: two traditional approaches to the philosophy of education.

The great intellectual watershed of European thought, the Enlightenment, which can with justification be called the birth of modern philosophical discourse is characterised both by negative and positive aspects. In its negative sense, the Enlightenment demonstrated the beginnings of hostility to ecclesial thought in general, and to religious conceptual language in particular. In its positive sense, the Enlightenment brought about the rise and development of scientific theory (cf. Russell, 1991, p. 479).

The roots of the Enlightenment, and the subsequent rise of rational processes of thought are at once complicated and confused. As a conceptual process, the Enlightenment is extremely difficult to date, (a problem common to most eras of thinking). Nevertheless, its principal flowering can be placed generally in the eighteenth century, although its origins are to be found much earlier with thinkers such as Francis Bacon (1561-1650) and Rene Descartes (1596-1650). The Enlightenment was to find its great conclusion in the work of Immanuel Kant (1724-1804). As a period of epistemic philosophy, it represented a pinnacle of human self-confidence, but one which Colin Gunton among others believes to have brought about an alienation of humans from true intelligent thought (Gunton, 1985,
pp. 3f., 153). Its impact upon subsequent Western educational theories was profound.

Naturally enough, the Enlightenment itself had its intellectual forebears. As a rationalist tradition of thought, the Enlightenment found much of its antecedents in the often lively debate between classical idealism and realism first given concrete form in the work of Plato with respect for the former, and Aristotle for the latter.

According to Plato, it was Heraclitus who first suggested seriously that the world was in constant flux or change. Once humans became aware of this decay as a reality in their lives, they began to doubt whether the sense experience of the world could be relied upon any longer to provide certainty about the world.

Two sorts of worlds existed. Principally, and above all else stood the noumenal world of 'Ideas' or 'Forms' in which no part of knowledge could be changed or altered, and in which all truth resided. Our world stood in relation to this world. In our world phenomena occurred which showed reality to us as a continually changing, never certain set of events, which operated as shadows and adumbrations of the fixed world of 'Ideas'.

Whilst Platonist Idealism distinguished between knowledge of everyday things which changed and were temporal, and knowledge of permanent 'Ideas' or 'Forms' which inhabited a separate and unattainable eternal world and only therefore accorded the title of 'Truth', the Rationalist thinkers of the Enlightenment created an even wider dichotomy between rationality and perception (Gunton,
1985, pp. 11-12; cf. Grimmitt, 1987, pp. 18-19). The world of sense experience, which was claimed to be both psychologically and materially unpredictable, was not to be trusted. Only that which was verifiable, and thus part of the rational (and ultimately propositional) knowledge-world was capable of being apprehe (Grimmitt, 1987, *ibid.*, p. 19).

Within this same model of knowledge, the Empiricists such as Locke and Hume, noting what they saw as an inevitable difficulty for the Rationalist account of knowledge, sought to re-introduce a functional use for sense-experience in the processes of knowledge. Whilst reason remained still the final arbiter in the process of the verification of given factual information, that information was derived as such, through the experiential encounter of the subject with the objective world (Grimmitt, 1987, *ibid.*).

Inherent within the three positions outlined above is the notion of value. In Platonic tradition, it is clear that the world of human knowledge fell largely into a category of valuelessness. The human world was perceived as a shadow or representation of the world of 'Ideas' or 'Forms', (i.e. the eternal, 'True' world). In the Rationalist approach no value can be accorded to the findings of sense-experience, which cannot be trusted. It is better to take rational verification as a true indicator of reality. But the extreme response epitomised in the materialism of the Post-Enlightenment Empiricists led to a further value related difficulty. If it really was the case that the physical and material world was
all there was, then this allowed human freedom to become reduced to a nihilistic objectivism, in which the whole purpose and aim of knowing and coming to knowledge within an educational context was lost (Harris, 1979, pp. 3-4).\textsuperscript{25} Such an end for education was in direct contrast to the aims of those supporters of idealism who saw pedagogy in terms of human development over and above objective materialism.

The American educationalist Edward J. Power has suggested a schemata for the philosophical principles of these forms of idealism, and, seeing in them some traditional forms of educational philosophy, has placed them into an educational context. Dividing his philosophical analysis into four constituent parts, Power begins by asking of idealism what it says of the person. He finds that at the centre of idealist philosophy is the belief that the human person is rational, with both a capability for independent thought and the individual use of the will. This use of the mind and will indicates that there exists 'something' to be apprehended.

It is for this reason that Power's second philosophical category touches on the nature of reality. Power maintains that idealist philosophy has to retain a belief in the world as intrinsically spiritual, or at least that the spiritual is all that can be apprehended. Power identifies two kinds of idealism at work here; absolute idealism and critical idealism. In the case of absolute realism, only the spiritual exists: '[o]bjects of sensations are ideas. First, they are ideas in finite (human) minds. These ideas
are not created by finite minds but are imprinted on or presented to them by a perpetual divine activity...On a lower level, they exist when human minds perceive them as ideas' (Power, 1982, p. 76). As a rejection of materialist interpretations of reality, critical idealism rejects the strictly evidential approach of the empirical rationalism of Locke and Hume, in favour of sensory perception. Yet in so doing this, critical idealism allows for the existence of a real world. Critical idealists, as Power notes, uphold belief in 'the conviction that knowledge of something is possible' (Power, *ibid.*, p. 77). But critical idealism is unwilling to accept that sense perception of the world provides us with an account of truth. According to critical idealists, all sensory perception is mediated through the experience of each individual, who makes sense of the data out for that experience. Reality as it truly is can never therefore be understood. Reality is 'real' to us ultimately only in a spiritual sense. Knowledge of the world as it really is remains, therefore, beyond us.\textsuperscript{26} As such, the nature of knowledge is largely intuitive or recollective. Interpretation of the world takes the form of belief in reality. Indeed, some idealists would argue that even if we were to underpin our belief in something over nothing by recourse to descriptive narrative, we would be no nearer to possessing absolute truth. Access to the world as *ding-an-sich* is permanently blocked. Knowledge becomes a possibility only to the extent that opinion and belief becomes the ruling methodological tool for making sense of reality. At its highest expression, the
idealist possession of knowledge is possible to a very few intellectually gifted individuals who are able to step beyond mere sensory perception to reach the spiritual reality of ideas or forms (cf. Power, *ibid*, pp. 77-78).27

The act of knowing and acting in the world leads to the question of ethics and morality; in a world in which we can never truly comprehend reality as it is, why should we follow one moral principle over another? According to Kant, it was precisely because the noumena and phenomena remained separate, and that, as a result only the world of appearances could be known, that the phenomena could be apprehended. The categories of space, time and understanding are not examples of things as they are - the noumena - but establish possibilities of experience. Kant takes recourse in the categorical imperative; practical reason is forced to legislate orthopraxis for itself, based upon the ideology of belief. Limits are established beyond which reason should not journey (cf. Kant, 1933, *passim*).28

The educational context in which Power sets idealism is that of the cultivation of the mind (Power, 1982, pp. 80-81). This is determined in part by the evident concern of idealism to promote the importance of the mind over material reality. If it is true to say that the capacity to think and to understand is a condition of experience, then concern with a deepening cultivation of the mind which engages in experience, is essentially the only suitable educative demand. But similarly, just as the social cultivation of
tradition is communicated in the idealist model through 'attitudes and ideals, in ways of acting [and] in customs and conventions...', so too do idealist concepts of education touch on questions of individualism and human uniqueness (Power, 1982, p. 81). Socialisation, the coming to terms with and participation in the social and cultural heritage of each group of peoples, necessarily involves the individual in the processes of maturation. The capacities and talents of each person must be allowed to develop in relation to the growth of socialisation and societal development. But since idealism regards the world as appearance only, the education of the individual is not aimed at developing skills or even objective knowledge. If idealist education theory has any particular aim for the individual, its principal purpose must be a moral one. Thus Power suggests that idealist education theory is most concerned with the development of character and personality (Power, 1982, ibid.). The individual, in interaction with others comes to experience the transcendence of the world of appearance, and in so doing, interiorises meaning. A two way procedure has commenced. On the one hand the participation in social action lends itself to furthering the good of society. But, equally importantly, it is in the experience of this participation with society that the individual begins to recognise their singular role within the realm of participatory experience. As a result they 'become' good citizens (Power, 1982, ibid.).
From this arises the idealist concept of the student and teacher. Idealism recognises the significance of individual human uniqueness, because socialisation and interior growth both retain a personal aspect. Personal growth requires individual nurture, and therefore the need for there being a rôle to play for both student and teacher ensues. Strict idealist philosophy of education demands that materialist interpretations of the subject of education are denied. The school and the student are not engaged in the physical development of matter, but concentration takes place, instead, on the human mind. This is implied, naturally enough in the affirmation by idealist philosophy of both human personality and the spiritual over the material. But, in addition, if we are to reject the determinism of a materialistic universe, we are left with human autonomy as the essential human experience of the world of sensory participation. Humans experience a whole range of social and interiorised conflicts, which require one choice of action to be taken over another. In a non-determined universe, the possibilities of those choices are entirely free from moral restriction, since the pre-eminence of the spiritual over the sense world of the physical implies freedom from material restrictions. In other words, idealist thought cannot allow moral value, nor an objective moral ontology, based on materialist interpretations of the world. To do so would deny the idealists' chief tenet that the world of sense experience is precisely that; appearance of reality, not reality itself. Questions of morality must reside instead, then, in the conceptual
thought processes of individuals. A moral decision is required to be taken, therefore, by the human person in each and every event which is experienced as a legitimate moment of decision. Moral order would, presumably, be determined through a question of weighing up what was the best action, both for society and for the individual. Such a decision would be learned through the sense experiences of each individual life. In practice this would result in doing good and avoiding evil, and would imply that good and evil could be identified by idealists in terms of what was best both for societal development and individual maturation and interior growth. The role of the student in this context is to recognise and utilise his self autonomy, in order that he could subsequently develop his own personality and talents (Power, 1982, p. 89).

Idealist educational philosophy, it was stated above, is concerned with both the intellectual and spiritual. It is, therefore, recollective and experiential. Given this, it might be suggested that there could be no meaningful role accorded to the teacher. If the main methodology of idealist education is the movement towards self-realisation and self-recognition, then the external teacher, who is by virtue of human nature a different individual, is unable to share in the self-same experiences as the student. However, in general, idealist thought gives genuine significance and value to the role of the teacher. Thus, as Power suggests, the idealist teacher begins not with the notion of altering the nature of the student, but with a recognition of that
nature (Power, 1982, p. 84). To do otherwise would be to move the focus of educational thought from the aims of societal and interior maturation, to the mechanistic process of skills learning, and a corresponding concentration on the results of the acts and events undertaken by the student. This would be far removed from the idealist concept of the individual recognition of the transcendent, spiritual and intellectual realms.

In order to avoid this, and to preserve idealist philosophical integrity, idealism requires the teacher to attempt to co-operate with human nature. Education becomes *educare*, the leading out of the student that which is already within, the creation of a suitable and educational environment for the student, and the use of careful guidance and, indeed, the withdrawal of the teacher from the learning process, where that is held to be appropriate. Indeed, idealism would suggest that the teacher should recognise that as students increase in maturity, they develop their personalities more and more independently. Ultimately the role of the teacher becomes one where the teacher acts in co-operation with nature, and one where he or she engages in partnership with the processes of human development. In so doing, they act as facilitators of that development. Finding itself placed in an intellectualist and spiritual context, idealist education theory denies the role both of the physical and the physiological in education. The rational processes of ideas, mental development and the psychology of the mind take precedence over the acquisition of facts and knowledge. At
its heart lies a belief in an absolute respect for the dignity of each individual. The teacher and the student do not engage in copying or representing social life within the school, but instead share together in the preparation of students for engagement with society as good citizens, ruled by the processes of thought (Power, 1982, pp. 84, 86).

In contrast to the idealism discussed above, realism, the second stream of rationalist thought, presents a very different picture both of reality and of education. Standing in antithesis to the dualist, spiritual and material-dualist interpretations of idealism, realism operates from a unified concept of the person. At its core, the mind and body are one.

Philosophical realism may be consistently traced back to the work of Aristotle. In particular, Aristotle's understanding of the relationship between the soul and the body provides a clear indication of his realist concerns. Thus, Aristotle states with some precision that nothing existed in the mind before it existed in the senses.33 The soul, which Aristotle sees as being both the principle of life, and the power of rational and deliberate thought, is considered by him to be no more essential to human beings than the body itself. The soul and body co-exist as a unified concept in Aristotelian thought (cf. Aristotle, De Anima, pars 402a), but is no more an essential element in the make-up of a human being, than is the body. For Aristotle, both are equally united in the unitive concept of human person.
As the principle of rational and deliberate thought, the soul, in unity with the body, brings about in humans the desire to know. Knowledge of the world is achieved through the encounter with reality. Aristotle's model of epistemology does not allow us to create our own realities. Such noesis occurs precisely because it is the world - created as a reality independent of our own existence - which permits us to come into an experiential connection with it. Our knowledge of it arises both from our empirical data gathering, and also from our organisation of that data into an ordered and rational scheme. As a guard against falling into error in its interpretation of reality, humans work within a system of logics. Error remains possible, of course, but the human capacity and desire for truth assists in minimising that possibility (cf. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, pars. 980ai).

In time, Aristotelian philosophy came under the influence first of Christianity, and then of Islam. Religious presuppositions began to play a rôle in shaping from Aristotle's original realism a mystical, and largely theocentric understanding of reality, especially of the natural sciences. The subsequent growth in Greek and Western philosophical thought, and its concomitant popularisation, especially by such schools of thought as Epicureanism and that of the Cynics and Stoics, led to a diminution in influence for Aristotelian philosophy. Put simply, the fact that such Greek ideas which were heavily dependent (sometimes mistakenly so) on Aristotelianism, and given also that they were becoming
inimical to Christian and Islamic theology, meant, in consequence that Aristotelian thought itself began to wane in influence amongst the Christian and Muslim worlds. Thus Aristotelian realism was to remain, until its great renaissance in the work of Thomas Aquinas (see Coplestone, 1965, pp. 423-434).

From this point onwards, realism was to engage in a constant debate with idealism. This encounter was to last up to the beginnings of the Western age of discovery. As the militarily more advanced West began to discover and ultimately to destroy the indigenous peoples of what became known as the New World, the economic strength of the West began to demand for itself more accurate scientific knowledge of both navigation and geography. These were needed especially for the sake of increased expansion and trade. The philosophical abstractions of idealism began to look increasingly irrelevant to a world grown hard by imperial and monetary ambition. Realism began to increase in influence in the West, as a direct result of these changes. Thus, even amongst such idealist luminaries as Descartes and Kant, we begin to see some inclusion in their thought, of the physical world as a reality which exists independently of the observer.34 The realist debate about the person, knowledge and education stems from such a background.

In generic terms, the realist philosophical understanding of the person, is defined by the capability for mental action, and, in particular, by the capacity for logical thought. In terms of the question arising as to whether human autonomy is present in such
actions, it should be noted that there exists here an ambiguity. It could be argued that humans engage in such mental processes and actions as a result of their free choice in deciding what to think about, and when to think it.

However, it will become immediately apparent to the casual observer that mental processes are often brought about in the individual quite independently of that individual wishing them to happen. A person may well choose to think upon one certain matter. Yet, an event, sense experience or other indicator may intervene in that thought process, to bring about a quite different thought process and outcome.

Similarly, it could be argued that when a person engages in a mathematical or other logical process, that activity may well be said to result in the human thinking under the conditions of determinism. One cannot, for example wish for a simple mathematical process such as the addition of two whole numbers to produce a numeric value which would be against the laws of logic. Philosophical realism cannot allow the human to think in a way which was logically impossible. Accordingly, when realism speaks of humans thinking and acting, those thoughts and activities are both freely undertaken, and determined by circumstance and logical necessity. The human person, then, is both autonomous and determined.

Corresponding to this understanding of the person, realism in its generic form relates reality in its structural aspect, to the idea of the person. Indeed, as Power notes, so many attempts have been
made by realists to describe reality, that a general approximation of reality will only touch the surface of an adequate definition (Power, 1982, p. 94). However, Power is able to contend that at the heart of all philosophical attempts by realists to describe reality, lies the question of what is knowledge, and how does knowledge interact with reality (Power, *ibid.*).

Power identifies three particular ways in which realists might speak of reality. First he suggests the concept of monist materialism. This consists in the view that only that which is 'real' is a part of nature. Such a model, which incorporates the belief that all that is in the natural world is strictly material, suggests the existence of an evolutionary process at work. In this account of reality, the great versatility of existing matter is perceived of as being evidence of the great changes in variation of the physical world, rather than new outcomes of mechanistic actions; differences of degree, not of kind (Power, *ibid.*).

Second, Power proposes a dualist-materialist account of reality. Here reality is to be found both in the material world, as well as the spiritual. Indeed, the wholeness of reality is itself comprised of both. Thus the brain, although material, displays activity which is not only organic, (that is, material), but also spiritual, (that is, beyond the explanation of materialist interpretations of reality).³⁶

Power identifies a third realist account of reality which he calls pluralism. On this model, the differences to be found in
reality are perceived of as stemming from the difference in substance of each entity. Each exists in reality, but each is unique in terms of its substance. Because these forms of the same reality differ from each other in their nature, they become unclassifiable. As a result, some philosophers are prepared to abandon any attempt to define the nature of reality, choosing instead to concentrate on the logical and social constructions which make up our understanding of what we encounter (Power, *ibid.*; see also Berger, 1967, pp. 30-31).

Such diverse explanations, of which monist, dualist and pluralist interpretations are all possible ways for realists to approach the question of the nature of reality, raise serious questions about how the principles of realism may be reflected in ethical behaviour. If, as realists continue to assert, reality can be known objectively, and if our knowing reality does not alter it, then we can be reasonably secure in claiming that we may have a dependable knowledge of reality.

Ethically, the individual would be able to claim that morality and the demands of ethical behaviour were interlinked with the principles of natural law and tested convention. As it has been stated above, realism allows the rôle of logical thought to shape the ways in which we determine the veracity of our interpretations of what we experience. Certainty the reality of what is interpreted, lends itself to ethics. If we can know that the worlds of nature and social convention follow clear and predictable patterns, which are
replicated because the world remains both really and perpetually as it actually is, then ethical demands should be met on these grounds.\textsuperscript{37}

Given the insistence of realism on the dependable knowledge which we may have of the world of reality about us, it is possible to sketch a realist educational theory, which arises from these concerns. Indeed, it is precisely realism's specific commitment to epistemology that allows such a theory to be developed.

As its educational principle, realism allies itself with the need to prepare individuals for life. It finds its contextual rationale for this principle in its belief that reality is not dependent upon human thought, but exists separately to our cognition of it. Because of its inherently independent nature, it can be known through experience and encounter. In order for humans to exist and to live at as effectively as possible, it is important for humans to understand and respond to the reality in which they find themselves. In educational terms, this means that humans need to be prepared for life in general, through an epistemic engagement with this reality.\textsuperscript{38}

To this end, social contexts do play a rôle in shaping the education and preparation of individuals. The expectations and needs for the life-preparations of individuals are defined by the societal contexts in which those individuals are placed, and into which they will grow. The relative complexities of differing social classes and groups will also impinge upon this model. Simpler social structures
will tend to give rise to less complex educational processes. More elaborate social structures will give rise to an increasingly involved institutionalised system of life-preparation.

Within this context it is appropriate to speak of the roles which are proper both to the student and to the teacher. This arises from the strictly empirical process with which realism engages with the individual. The individual is understood primarily through what they do. Given the insistence by realism of the material reality of the world, and in opposition to idealist thought, human behaviour becomes observable, quantifiable and ultimately predictable. This is so, most particularly since, on realism's own terms, human behaviour is a partial demonstration, of the material objectivity of the material world (Power, 1982, p. 102). The student belongs to this observable universe.

As an observable entity, students are held by realists to be capable of thought. This may arise from the determinist processes which underpin the realist model of the world, or indeed from attempts at social autonomy within the material framework. The method of coming to know is secondary to the realist belief that there exists a dependable field of knowledge which the student is capable of apprehending through the tools and skills at his or her disposal.

Since students are capable of objectively coming to know the universe, it becomes essential that they receive the correct preparation and education to be able to act and live in such an
environment. This may, of course, be achieved in many differing ways. For example, some students may wish to engage in scientific positivism; by learning about the mechanics of the material universe, knowledge is gained, which may subsequently be acted upon. Some students, however, may learn to live in an objective universe, through a study of social relations and contexts. The underlying principle remains the same: the student interacts with an objective and dependable body of knowledge. Such activities imply that the student is not a passive learner, but an active one. It is human nature for the mind to actively search out new knowledge, and remains a responsibility for the student to undertake (Power, *ibid.*, p. 103).

The rôle of the teacher in realist philosophies of education is an awesome one, given the crucially significant objectivity of knowledge. Knowledge is dependable. It is trustworthy. It gives truth about the universe, and it provides a means of growth for the individual. A teacher of such objectivity must, therefore, have a thorough grasp of this knowledge. To fail to do so would render the educative praxis vacuous. Imperative to this is the teacher’s capacity to impart the information gained. The teacher must be able to teach, both accurately and technically. As such, their principle rôle is that of being an instructor.

What is to be instructed? Put quite simply, anything which provides an essential contribution to living according to the demands of the physical and social context of the individual (Power,
ibid., p. 104). Such demands, however, cannot be met by idealist claims which suggest that a formal schooling system could be removed from the learning system. On their model of education, students and teachers engage in a joint voyage of psychological discovery, the world of sense perception being largely distrusted. Realism cannot permit such a reliance on sense perception. The student cannot create his or her own knowledge. Teachers cannot allow students to do this. Knowledge remains 'the other' against which the student and teacher are placed, and to which the student and teacher relate. Knowledge must, therefore be apprehended first, before it is passed on to the student by the teacher.

Realism, then, presents education as a material process in which individuals engage with an objective universe, and try to understand it from the context of its ontology. Students and teachers engage in a singular process of the transmission of information from teacher to student. Despite many differing social and economic contexts, this process remains the same. As such it stands in direct opposition to idealist thought.

Other attempts have been made to provide satisfactory models for education, and these models have been used by the secular tradition in an attempt to create a coherent philosophical explanation for education. Some of these models will now be examined.
b. Socio-cultural and political concepts in secular education.

In the section above, two traditional, opposing forms of educational philosophy were examined. Despite their contradictory approaches to the question of how the human being apprehends knowledge, both idealism and realism share a similar concern with rational thought, and how to live a rational life. Both seek to give a framework of meaning to human life, and both use rational processes to come to - albeit differing - statements of belief about reality, and about the relationship of human beings to knowledge.\(^{39}\)

This section will explore another philosophical approach to education, that of socio-cultural theory, which, thanks both to the development of theories of deconstruction and the resurgence of hermeneutic enquiry, has come to dominate much of Western postmodernist thought. Its significance for educational enquiry is its seemingly non-rational base. Indeed, to talk of there being a 'base' to socio-cultural theory may be a contradictory assertion, given the uncertainties such theory accords to fundamental statements concerning knowledge.

At the outset it should be stated clearly that there abounds a great plethora of concerns and approaches, which labour under the *portmanteau* term 'cultural theory'. Thus, marxist, feminist, psychoanalytic and social theory all fall under cultural theory's generic scope. Cultural theories of education are similarly manifold and diverse in nature. Given the limits of this research project, it
would be both unrealistic and unreasonable to analyse all these themes satisfactorily. Therefore, this chapter will examine one particular area of cultural theory, as it touches on educational philosophy, namely that of the social context and (de-)construction of meaning, and apply it to its educational setting.

In his book *Ideology and Utopia*, the great sociologist Karl Mannheim (1893-1947) describes a principle tenet of the sociology of education in the following 'perspectivistic' terms:

'[the concept "human knowledge"] signifies the manner in which one views an object, what one perceives in it, and how one construes it in his own thinking. Perspective, therefore, is something more than a merely formal determination of thinking. It refers also to qualitative elements in the structure of thought, elements which must necessarily be overlooked by a purely formal logic. It is precisely these factors which are responsible for the fact that two persons, even if they apply the same formal-logical rules, e.g., the law of contradiction or the formula of the syllogism, in an identical manner, may judge the same object very differently' (Mannheim, 1936, p. 244).

In this sense, Mannheim's initial sociological approach to education may be described as relativist. We give meaning to our lives relative to our own unique social and cultural perspectives. Elsewhere Mannheim speaks of knowledge (he uses the term 'substantial rationality') as 'intelligent conduct based upon one's own insight into the connections between events' (Mannheim, 1940, p. 53, also cited, critically, in Dearden, *et al*, 1972, pp. 194-195).

In both cases, Mannheim is careful to stress that the individual operates alone, when it comes to ascribing meaning to experience. In both cases it is one's own personal insights which dictate meaning, (and thus value, presumably), to one's experiential and
epistemological life. Meaning takes on a relative status for human beings, and, for that reason, cannot be accorded universal commonality between individuals. What I take and give in terms of meaning for my experiences must remain cut off and unattainable to access for others.

This is not to say that any number of individuals may share an approximate, or indeed seemingly identical meaning for a given experience. On one level, there may exist some common reaction between individuals. Thus, for example, from any five people chosen at random, three of whom may exhibit some degree of arachnophobia, it could be shown that if those three were placed in a room with a spider, they might all demonstrate a reaction of fear. It might be argued from this, that all three individuals shared a common sense of meaning, (i.e. arachnophobia), when comparison is made of their common fears. However, this is to misunderstand Mannheim's sociological theory. Mannheim's theory allows for common experiences, but does not allow for common interpretations of those experiences. This is because, according to Mannheim, our reactions, and our sense of meaning is derived from our own unique and individual insights gained through our own life-time. Since we can only live our own life's experiences and relationships, and not those of others, the mechanism whereby we gain insights remain unique. According to Mannheim, it is because there are no such things as common insights, that ultimately, there can be no common meaning.
This sociological theory of education contains in it some clear difficulties for educational theorists and practitioners. Essentially, if Mannheim is granted his relativist perspective on knowledge, truth becomes relative for each individual, since the individual determines truth, solely on the basis of individual insight gained through individual experience. This raises very serious questions about the processes and purposes of education. If questions of empirical truth become obscured through the relationships and lives of individuals, to the extent that the individual's experience of society alone provides meaning, then education becomes a relativised and relativising activity. Education would no longer be a thing that is 'taught', nor indeed 'experienced' as an objective process. Instead, education would cease to have a function per se, and would thereby be reduced into a set of opportunities through which individuals live in a voyage of socially mediated self-discovery. Why this process should be called 'education', as opposed to a more vague term such as 'living one's life', is open to question. Indeed, the assumption that such an educational model might be correct, raises the fundamental question of whether there can be such a thing as an education process, which of itself, and on its own terms, might change human beings.

Mannheim's own terminology is equally open to criticism. As M. Black has noted, (Dearden, et al, 1972, pp. 194-195), what does Mannheim mean when he speaks of 'one's own insight' being used to determine the veracity of experience? It is certainly questionable
to what extent this phrase makes it clear that rules of social behaviour are identifiable. Indeed, Mannheim's relativist model raises doubts as to whether any such rules can exist. Secondly, Mannheim's description of human conduct being 'intelligent' raises similar questions of meaning. If knowledge is relative to individual experience, to what extent is it possible to speak of 'intelligent conduct', as opposed to, for example, unintelligent conduct? Mannheim's terminology is not helpful here, perhaps deliberately so.

Difficulties such as these stem, paradoxically, from the legacy to sociological theory of Emile Durkheim (1858-1917). At the heart of Durkheim's sociological thought is the contention that society, which is made up according to him of individuals, is, nevertheless, distinct from the individuals who make it up. There exists for Durkheim a 'social' dimension to reality, just as much as an 'individual' dimension. As such, society and the individual possess a qualitatively different identity from each other (Durkheim, 1964, passim).

Durkheim's contention is that it is an impossible task adequately to anticipate or understand the variety of individual expression which occurs in the universe of events. Accordingly, Durkheim chooses to concentrate the focus of his study upon linguistic, cultural, moral and legal systems, and in particular, the inherent social dimension of each, which he believes to stand distinct from the individual who partakes within that system. Education is not exempt from this form of analysis, since, for Durkheim, education
has to do with socialisation. If education has something to do with development, then to a very great extent, development is itself a social activity (Dearden, et al, 1972, p. 113).

Before examining Durkheim's sociological theory of education in a little more detail, it is important to understand what it is that Durkheim means when he speaks of 'the social'.

As with many terms used in sociological discourse, the key concept is multifarious in meaning, operating at several levels of complexity. On one level, Durkheim uses the term simply to denote anything which is general, or collective. Thus, it might be argued that throughout human history, certain beliefs, concepts and values have been maintained continually across different societies, down the ages. Indeed, it could be said that, even though the individual has died, the values which existed in their social environment have survived beyond that individual's lives. The social exists distinct from the individual (Blackledge and Hunt, 1985, p. 8).

As an example of this, Durkheim suggests the concept of religious belief; the basis for mythological interpretations of reality, which Durkheim finds in a great variety of forms amongst religions, 'but which is the universal and objective cause of these sensations sui generis out of which religious experience is made, is society' (cf. Durkheim, 1961, pp. 52-56). In essence, then, Durkheim's first use of the concept of the social relates to this commonality of values and beliefs, which are ultimately derived from the society in which individuals are found.
It will be clear from what has been said above, that Durkheim's initial concept of the social has already introduced some questions of complexity. For Durkheim is not prepared to complete his sociological theory with the notion that society is only the common core of values which are manifest amongst all individuals from the earliest times to the present. For one thing, some values do change. As new values enter into social circulation, the common core in turn begins to change. What was once common now becomes less general, more specific. Moreover, as these changes occur, some individuals may begin to decide that they no longer wish to enter into the common core of shared values. If Durkheim's theory of the social is to be maintained, it must mean more than the simple common heritage of all peoples.

To this end, Durkheim introduces his theory of constraint. Individuals, he claims, are limited by the pressures of social existence. This might be most particularly experienced in the area of morality. Thus, an individual, who wished to act against the commonly held system of beliefs and values of society, (that is, a set of values which that individual had no hand in making), might choose not to follow his or her own desired course of actions, but choose to conform instead to the values of society against which his or her wishes were opposed. This conforming by an individual to a pre-determined, yet opposing set of values, may have at its root any number of causes. These may include hope of reward, fear of punishment, or a desire to please. But there may, indeed be an
imperative desire in the individual who conforms, to do so because they feel it is something that ought to be done. Conforming to predetermined rules may, therefore, have both an external (societal) cause, and an internal (personal) cause. When such an event occurs, it draws the individual into society; it is 'socialisation'.

It has been shown above how Durkheim perceives the social on two levels. First, society is distinct from the individual. Second, society can help to change and develop individuals, especially in the area of behaviour and morality. To these two levels, Durkheim adds a third. Society, as Durkheim stated in the quotation above, which touched on religious belief, is a reality which exists *sui generis*. It has, in other words, an ontological identity. It exists as a *Thou* to the *I* of the individual. It changes individuals, so that it could be argued that individuals relate to it. Just as the laws of nature and physics operate in such a way as to constrain humans to what is naturally and physically possible, so too does society constrain humans to actions and relationships of the possible. Indeed, 'the social' takes on for Durkheim a character which is almost metaphysical. Thus we could replace the term 'God' with that of 'society', and very little else might change; just as God is held by some to exist over and above humanity, so for Durkheim, society exists over and above humanity. Just as conformity to the will of God lead to the life of grace, so for Durkheim, conformity to society leads to fulness of life. Durkheim's virtual
divinisation of society is thus complete (cf. Blackledge and Hunt, 1985, *ibid.*).

Durkheim's theory of education stems from these concepts. But one should be wary of suggesting that for Durkheim, education is solely to be equated with socialisation. It has to do with socialisation, but is not completely identical with it. This assertion is supported in part, by Durkheim's claim that those generic areas traditionally associated with education; knowledge and values, skills and methods, are not found within the individual, but are acquired by the individual, through the processes of socialisation, from the common core inherited by society (cf. Durkheim, 1956, pp. 71f.).

At once the objection might be raised that this is to imply that education must therefore involve introducing the individual to all forms of societal behaviour and experience, both those commonly held to be moral, and those commonly held to be immoral. To leave education at this juncture, would be tantamount to approving the educational value of encountering those very areas of morality which society as a whole would seek to condemn. Accordingly, Durkheim is obliged here to introduce the issue of value. Rather than confront the individual with the whole gamut of moral and immoral actions which occur in the social world, the educator is required to educate the individual in ways which are considered of value in any given society. In order for this to happen, Durkheim suggests, two particular principles take place. First, the content of any education will be found to conform with the values, beliefs and
attitudes of a given society. Education acts, therefore, as a
catalyst for societal homogeneity. Second, education will be found
to conform to the demands of the setting in which it is found. This
implies that different forms of education are suitable for the
different needs and situations in which that education takes place

Durkheim's sociological theory, and his application of it to
education has been criticised on a number of counts. P. A. White has
noted that it is unclear whether Durkheim intended that what he
stated about education should be applied to any particular form of
society, or to the generic concept of society as a whole (Dearden,
1972, p. 116). To the extent that a specific society might be one in
which some values, beliefs and attitudes were generally shared,
whilst there also existed a plurality of values, and beliefs which
were different to others is not, ultimately, to say very much about
the society in which those phenomena occur.

Similarly, Durkheim's educational theories provide little
information regarding the nature and role of the autonomous
individual. White comments on the suggestion of some scholars that
Durkheim shifted his position later, to favour more significance
being placed on the role of autonomy in the education process.
However, he suggests that it would be inappropriate to attempt to
trace such a line of thought in Durkheim, since Durkheim himself
Lastly, it is by no means clear that what Durkheim took to be the aim of education, namely the transmission of values, cultural norms and intellectual abilities, is indeed the aim as such. Certainly there appear to be few commonly held ideals either amongst educationalists or indeed amongst educators which are deemed essential for the education process. Indeed, in applying moral values to the educational process, which, albeit implicitly, is precisely what Durkheim introduces into the debate with his two educational principles, he assumes that there exist clearly identifiable common values and normative moral desires within society. However, if this assumption is applied to society as we find it today, it becomes very difficult to identify any deeply held common values, beyond the vague and the general. In contrast to Durkheim's stated belief in a common core of values, it is often individual self-interest which appears to dominate attitudes and beliefs.

A second significant sociological approach to education is that of Karl Marx (1818-1883) and of Marxism. At the heart of Marxist social theory is the view that there is no such thing as a given epistemological fact, but only social relations which create social consciousness. Knowledge is constructed, operating in individuals as a mode of response to social conditions around them (cf. Kalve, 1994, p. 9). Classically defined by Marx, social consciousness is formed by the social and economic existence of each individual: 'It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but
their social existence that determines their consciousness' (Marx, 1970, p. 21). Similarly, in the preface to the second German edition of the first volume of Marx's monumental analysis of economics, *Capital*, he compares his approach to consciousness with the idealism of Hegel. He writes

'\[Hegel's concept of\] the process of thinking, which, under the name of "the Idea," he even transforms into an independent subject, is the demiurgos of the real world, and the real world is only the external, phenomenal form of "the Idea." With me, on the contrary, the ideal is nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind, and translated into forms of thought' (Marx, 1977, p. 29).

This stress on the material reality which informs consciousness, which Marx provides as the basis of his theory of dialectical materialism, leads Marx, ultimately, to the conclusion that society itself is nothing less than material reality. In opposition to idealism, Marx understood materialism within the context of the material and economic conditions of social life. In this sense, materialists hold that there exists independent of our perceptions a world, which is reflected in some way in our perceptions. Here materialism would appear to be in agreement with the form of realism outlined in the section above. But in addition to possessing some basic realist assumptions, such as a belief in a material world which is sustained through material causes, and a belief in the objective reality of matter which is open to apprehension through material processes of thought, Marxist materialism goes further still. Marx suggests that realism as it stands is too mechanistic to explain social relations adequately;
'The materialist [i.e. realist] doctrine that men are products of circumstances and upbringing, and that, therefore, changed men are products of other circumstances and changed upbringing, forgets that it is men who change circumstances and that the educator must himself be educated' (Marx and Engels, 1976, pp. 618-619).

Put simply, Marx is here suggesting that if our understanding of society bases itself solely on the results of circumstance, that would imply that accident and circumstance were the dominant causal effects in society; chaos would result. However, it is a fundamental tenet of Marxist theory that chaos does not control society. People are able to change circumstance, and indeed, there exist certain laws of development, which arise from the material interconnections and interdependence of reality, which prevent any degeneration into chaos.

In the light of what has been said above, Marx decided that the key to understanding the control of circumstance by humans is to be found in the underlying actions which keep people alive in society. For Marx, that base structure is economic activity and production. On top of this structure are found the institutions of society; politics, education, religion, the family, values and beliefs (Blackledge and Hunt, 1985, p. 113).

However, as with Durkheim, so with Marx there exists an ambiguity concerning the distinction between society as a determined subject on the one hand, and the autonomy and will of the individual on the other. Thus, on the one hand it could be argued that it is the economic base which determines the nature and direction of the institutional forms of society. Similarly, as Marx himself
suggested, if the economic base itself changes, then this will 'lead sooner or later to the transformation of the whole immense superstructure' (Marx, 1970, p. 21).

However, as Barry Hunt has noted, Marx's determinist account of social institutions can be challenged by the view taken by his lifelong collaborator, Engels (1820-1895). Engels suggests that rather than limiting the movement of development from the economic base to the superstructure of society, one should instead work from the perception that there exists a steady interaction between the economic and the social, in such a way that each conditions, and is conditioned, by the other. Thus, a dialectical relationship is established between the economic base and the social superstructure, with a complementary dependence being established. Hunt comments that most Marxists who support this view would add that the economic base retains some pre-eminence in this relationship, being, according to Engels, the stronger and most decisive of the two (Blackledge and Hunt, 1985, p. 115; cf. Marx and Engels, 1979, p. 525ff.). The debate about this, as with much of Marxism is not concluded, nor is it likely to be so.

Given the great many interpretations of Marxism that abound today, it is difficult to provide a precise account of Marxist education theory in the light of Marxist sociology. What follows will be a brief and approximate account of some possible Marxist expositions of education theory. This will by no means exclude other explanations.
The tensions between determinist and voluntarist models of Marxism extend into the questions about the concepts of education theory. Thus, if the determinist approach to Marxism is applied to education, the Marxist practitioner would understand education to belong, in the capitalist mode of existence, to the means of direct production, or, more accurately, direct reproduction. 'Education's raison d'être is to perpetuate or "reproduce" the capitalist system' (Blackledge and Hunt, 1985, p. 135). In other words, education within the processes of capitalism is seen by determinist Marxists as being a social institution, which does not change society, but sustains the existing social and economic order in which it occurs (Blackledge and Hunt, 1985, ibid.).

Because of the dialectical nature of the historical materialism of determinist Marxism, in which the needs of the capitalist class are pitted against the opposition of the working class, education is, therefore, seen as a way of maintaining the capitalist system. As such, education reproduces the pre-existing class structure of society. This is achieved in two ways. First it creates a justification for the existing class structure by encouraging an attitude in society that lauds economic success as direct product of a 'good education, be that through the development of skills or intellectual abilities. Second, it perpetuates capitalist structures by providing a content which creates the necessary skills and abilities needed to maintain the capitalist system (Blackledge and
Hunt, 1985, p. 137). In these circumstances, education is held to be functional.

Such strict theories of direct reproduction are tempered somewhat by the voluntarist Marxism of those who wish to give some role to the notion of relative autonomy within society. Thus, to present education in the bleakest of functionalist terms is to ignore the creative and cultural freedom in which pupils find themselves. Citing Michael Apple, Barry Hunt suggests that voluntarist Marxists would seek to stress the mediating milieu of a classroom or school culture through which any demands from a hidden curriculum are filtered (Blackledge and Hunt, 1985, p. 179, citing Apple, 1982, p. 14). Indeed, it is precisely in the clash of these cultures with the demands and expectations of the capitalist class that the dialectic movement is to be found. Similarly, to let the determinism of history dominate the direction of the lives of individuals is to ignore that humans make history. The desires of the human will play as much a role in shaping culture and attitudes as does the economic and social structure. It is in this sense that education can involve some element of human autonomy; in adapting the curriculum through its cultural filtration in the school setting, pupils express their own dialectic, whilst at the same time encountering the demands of the theory of reproduction mentioned above. Such reproduction occurs indirectly, and should be placed within the context of cultural resistance (Blackledge and Hunt, 1985, p. 195).
Criticisms may be levelled, however, against these theoretical models. Barry Hunt suggests that two particular difficulties arise with the main tenet of historical materialism. The first opposes economic determinism. The example of the economic chaos of the Soviet Union in the years immediately following the Russian Revolution of 1917, (and, indeed, the eventual demise of that State barely seventy years after the event), demonstrated on the part of the revolutionaries an idealism in which the true economic sacrifices and events never mirrored the determinist desires of 'scientific socialism'. The theoretical model of relative autonomy fares no better. This model seems to indicate that the economic base is not the only determining factor in the social construction of reality, but that the political, cultural, religious, moral and intellectual elements also play a significant role in this matter. Accordingly, it could be argued that this theoretical model is no theory at all, but mere, banal commonplace (Blackledge and Hunt, 1985, pp. 198ff.; cf. Carew Hunt, 1963, pp. 67-80).

In addition, Hunt notes that the same kinds of criticism may be made against the implications of Marxist theory for education. The relatively decentralised education system in the United Kingdom reduces the validity of Marxist claims that there is a correspondence between educational structures and capitalist economic demands. In addition, but generically, attitudes to work do not seem to have been greatly influenced by education. Similarly, the cultural attitudes of pupils have not been found to provide
opposition to the existing social and economic order. Lastly, Marxist theory over-simplifies the relationship of the state to capitalist structures. Hunt notes that today there exists a plurality of differing groups, each in positions of power in society, operating within a complex societal web (Blackledge and Hunt, pp. 226ff.).

The dissolution of what was known as the Eastern bloc, followed by the decline of Marxist influence amongst the intellectual communities, marked the collapse of the Marxist ideal. The certainties of modernity seem now to be regarded as an intellectual conceit. Indeed, this sense among thinkers, of the end of the twentieth century as being a *fin de siecle* has led some to question the very reality of historicism (cf. Fukuyama, 1989, pp. 3-17). This questioning has led, in turn to new ways of attempting to understand reality. One significant approach to this issue is that of postmodernism and deconstruction.

Postmodernism and deconstruction are notoriously difficult to define, not least because of their increasingly fashionable status as *portmanteau* terms, which are often misunderstood, and therefore mis-used. Like the other conceptual models examined in this section, postmodernist deconstruction relies upon a particular understanding of society and identity for its base structure. In an article which is generally critical in tone of postmodernism, Hugo Meynell provides a very useful attempt at explaining its method of approach.
Meynell contends that both Postmodernism and deconstruction are 'destructive of norms for coming to know what is really true and do what is really good' (Meynell, 1995, p. 128). This, he contends, is because they rest upon the assumption that 'the notion that there is an independently existing cosmos which makes [our] beliefs and statements about it true or false, is fundamentally mistaken' (Meynell, 1995, p. 126). This assumption is grounded in the belief that any scientific attempt at explaining a world as it is, comes to grief on its failure to reflect on the fact that 'human societies each constitute their own cosmos' (Meynell, 1995, ibid.). Not only is the attempt to move objectively outside our own thoughts and language in order to understand reality as it is, an irrelevant desire, but it is also an impossible task. We could never be sure that the hierarchy of reality which we believe to be objectively real is actually real. 'To say that some beliefs or statements are "true" and others "false" is simply to confer social approval on the former, and to stigmatize the latter as socially unacceptable' (Meynell, 1995, ibid.).

As such, postmodernism is claimed by its proponents to be a language of deconstruction, aimed at undermining the claimed authority of the language being deconstructed. But postmodernism is not intended to be a purely destructive, negative force. For example, although it has been criticised by some for its implied suppression - or indeed repression - of values, (particularly because of its refusal to provide an alternative vocabulary in
substitution for this loss), postmodernism's defenders would argue that it does not suppress vocabulary, so much as interpret it 'as directing us to nothing beyond or outside its own discourse' (Soper, 1991, p. 121).

Postmodernism, then, has profound implications for the way rational discourse is to be approached. Its deconstructive mode of approach results in a constant questioning and self-questioning of authority and received tradition. And in doing this, it establishes and disestablishes at the same time: it questions itself, and is therefore intended to be self-contradictory. As deconstruction, it attempts to reply to the 'logocentrism' of the text, (that view which invests the ontology of truth within the spoken word, tradition or logos). Postmodern culture states, and at the same time questions that which it has stated. In a memorable phrase Linda Hutcheon suggests postmodernist statements are 'rather like saying something while at the same time putting inverted commas around what is said' (Hutcheon, 1989, pp. 1-2; also cited in Meynell, 1995, p. 127).

This in turn has profound repercussions for education theory. If there are no certainties to be apprehended, and if social discourse does not possess any norms and standards by which human development can be understood, nor indeed guaranteed, then knowledge becomes a continuing and changing multiplicity of 'truths', in which any claims to a priori assumptions about reality are to be discounted, because of their uncertainty. As such, a postmodern education theory
would leave a dangerous legacy. Its particular distrust of relative values, leaves the educator in the unenviable position of being forced by the postmodern condition to choose between pre-determined values and goods, (which for the postmodernist are logocentric by virtue of their pre-determined authority, and therefore unverifiable), or to choose 'a pragmatic acceptance of the loss of values' (Soper, 1991, pp. 122-123), and accept what must ultimately be an amoral, and ultimately incommunicable philosophy.

The choice is a stark one. In an attempt to reply to the accusations of postmodernism, some educationalists have tried to provide a basis whereby education theory may operate with more confidence than postmodernism will allow. Thus Paul Hirst proposes four models for education, the last of which he believes may give grounds for such optimism.

Hirst takes education to be 'the process by which each of us becomes the particular person he does, with his own distinctive way of life'. Thus it is 'concerned with becoming a distinctive human being' (Felderhof, 1985, pp. 5, 6). Hirst proposes further that the 'cognitive elements' we come to possess throughout our lives, act in a determining fashion upon our educational growth (Felderhof, 1985, p. 5). Education, Hirst continues, may be both deliberate and unintentional. Indeed, even within the course of planned education, unplanned outcomes may occur (Felderhof, 1985, p. 6). For the purposes of his article, Hirst makes clear that he is concerned more
with the former than the latter. In so doing, he identifies four particular notions of education.

Each model, Hirst claims, rests upon its own specific theory for the basis of knowledge and belief (Felderhof, 1985, p. 6). The first model Hirst proposes might be termed the traditional concept of education. This view proposes that there exists an objective and specific body of skills, concepts and values, within a particular tradition (Felderhof, 1985, pp. 6f.). Knowledge and belief establishes its value because of its 'proven worth...across a long period of time'. That which is thereby held to be true or good becomes the content for instruction (Felderhof, 1985, pp. 7).

This discourse, based on the self-validity of belief, has its strengths in its sense of timeless certainty. Its failings, however, are all too clear. First it contains no self-critical mechanism; plural world-views cannot be tolerated if they conflict with the presupposed traditions of this model. In this case, no rational judgements can be made of such plural views. The education transmitted on this model's terms would be monolithic and singular. Its appeal to the ghetto remains intense (Felderhof, 1985, ibid.).

Second, (and under criticism from the deconstructionists, who would deny the legitimacy of an appeal to tradition), this view fails to establish both the objective reality of the world, and the objective validity of its own presupposed tradition. This model depends on belief for its structural base. Belief, for postmodernism, is
ultimately uncertainty. Therefore this educational concept fails the critique of postmodern culture.

Hirst's second model comes close to the Durkheimian concept of education discussed previously in this section. Hirst presents a notion of education in which knowledge achieves its legitimation through an acknowledged, voluntary social agreement. This is achieved through the convergence of opinion on the meaning of the evidence under consideration. It is by this social agreement that the monolithic basis of Hirst's first educational model is avoided, and whereby the legitimate expression of plural views may be open to consideration (Felderhof, 1985, p. 9).

This concept of a convergence of opinion does have appear to have a certain soundness to it. In one very real sense, it manages to allow some postmodern concern to inhabit it: the question of the existence of an objective form of knowledge does not arise. Knowledge is based upon social agreement. This agreement is concerned with belief, and is not intended to be a statement of certitude about the objective existence of any such body of knowledge. But, as Hirst notes, its failings lie in its treatment of what he calls traditionally non-rational concepts; religion, morality, culture. Because no basic convergence of opinion can be reached with respect to these areas, this model must fail, ultimately, in its universal coherence (Felderhof, 1985, ibid.).

Hirst's third model is very closely related to the first. This model 'attempts...to legitimise autonomous beliefs by insisting that
the accepted traditional belief system itself recognises the existence of autonomous knowledge' (Felderhof, 1985, p. 10). Often wholistic in concept, such a theory relies on claims that all attempts at the pursuit of knowledge rest upon beliefs that the universe was created. In addition, any such theory must possesses a primary focus from which all exploration of autonomous knowledge extends, and to which all explanations of autonomous knowledge must refer and agree (Felderhof, 1985, ibid.).

In the sense that this model requires a presupposed belief in the foundational model of the tradition as its basic element in generating empirical knowledge, it is no different from the first of Hirst's models (Felderhof, 1985, ibid.). It would reject any knowledge claims which conflict with the presupposed tradition, since consistency with those presuppositions becomes a prior requirement for the model's self validation. As a result, the same criticisms which were levelled at the first model may be levelled at this one.

Hirst finally presents a third model which he believes to be the solution to the difficulties described in his previous three models. This concept is comprised of four component parts. First, there can be no exceptions to the belief that 'all areas of beliefs, values, attitudes and so on are seen as areas in which rational critical appraisal' can be made (Felderhof, 1985, p. 12). Second, there are some beliefs which, whilst it may not be possible to assess them rationally, nevertheless may still be held to be more, or less
defensible. Third, there exist some beliefs, (Hirst gives here the example of moral and religious beliefs), which are not only contested, but which, in themselves, contest claims about 'what counts as "rational criticism"' (Felderhof, 1985, *ibid.*). Fourth, no society starts in a vacuum. Each society exists by virtue of its critique of its own existence; it grows through rational self-criticism. It is this ratio-critical element which is central for Hirst. Thus, 'a rational society needs a body of generally agreed principles[...]. How much diversity is acceptable in a society is itself a disputable matter which must be decided by a rational procedure' (Felderhof, 1985, *ibid.*).

As a result, Hirst suggests, this model provides a real strength in that it is not affected by any presupposed tradition upon which a society might base itself. Its aim is not to maintain that system, but to develop the rational life of each person. It is not negative in its aim, but seeks positively to enable individuals to show 'commitment in belief and practice in every area'; a commitment which is determined through rational judgement, or critical review (Felderhof, 1985, p. 13).

To this, however, postmodernism would reply with a question mark. Given the deconstructive nature of this cultural form, the postmodern critic would contend that to claim that there is such a thing as a rational pursuit is to express a certitude in method which is deeply logocentric. The deconstructionist might assert that this logocentrism relies at its base upon a belief in a systematic
tradition – rational discourse – which is itself open to
deconstruction. The hermeneutical critic might in turn also wish to
criticise Hirst on precisely the same grounds: how can one be self-
critical, without applying the self-same critique to the method of
criticism. This circular dilemma continues to haunt postmodern and
critical thought. Education theory is as much affected by it as any
other epistemology.48
iii. Discussion and Conclusions.

This chapter has considered some of the ways in which the methodological presuppositions of the philosophy of education have influenced thought in Catholic and secular traditions. What has been presented above is not intended to show the whole range of such conceptual thinking, rather, it seeks to show a range of some of the major philosophical positions which are found in each tradition.

What follows is a brief consideration of the comparisons between the methodological presuppositions of the two traditions, in the light of the presentations made in this chapter. This thesis will return again to compare details between the traditions later, and in more depth. What follows should, therefore be considered as preliminary.

Three particular areas of comparison present themselves. First, issues concerning the datum for knowledge, second, issues related to the concept of the individual, and third, issues relating to the processes of education.

a. The datum for knowledge.

This chapter has presented one particular, (though not exclusive), model of Catholic education, but one which, this thesis contends, exists at least in part in all Catholic educational thought. A threefold structure was developed in this model;
revelation at the origin of the model, human dignity at the point of reception, and wholism of knowledge at the moment of response.

The internalised logic of this structure is contained within its own assumed tradition, namely that point of contact which established the datum of revelation. It is in the datum of this central focus of the self-communication of God, that the noetic presuppositions of Catholic education are to be found.

This is to be contrasted with the datum for knowledge in secular tradition. As it was described above, traditional idealism and realism place their epistemic logic in a confidence in humanity's rational capacities. Indeed, the very logic of each philosophical approach rests upon the belief that rational argument makes each model coherent. The rational processes become the presupposed datum for knowledge. However, within the secular tradition, a second form of philosophical approach was explored, that of the socio-cultural and political models. At the heart of these ideological concepts was found to exist a belief in the significance of society as an arbiter of theory. For many of the overtly sociological approaches, the presupposition that it was possible to reach societal agreement, formed, to a large degree, the methodological base. This was contrasted, however, by postmodernism. This claimed for itself the irony of 'convention', or anti-convention as its base structure.

Both Catholic and secular traditions, then, use presupposed means to establish their identities and subsequent structures. To that end, it is legitimate to describe this as a convergence of
methodology. However, it is also clear that the content of the presupposed methodologies are, indeed at times wildly opposed to each other, and, indeed, often antithetical.

b. The concept of the individual.

In Catholic theology, as in its educational concepts, the human individual is accorded a very important rôle. The divine self-communication is not merely an aspect of the economic Trinity, but is also an aspect of the immanent Trinity: God communicates not simply in himself, but to another. That other is held to be created by God. Given the goodness of God, the creation of God is also held to be good. Thus we may summarise the Catholic understanding of the individual subject of revelation as the person who is grounded in the creative goodness of God. God becomes the constant point of reference.

Secular tradition contrasts with this theology by asserting the identity of the individual in two ways. The traditional approaches of idealism and realism present the individual as a rational being; one capable of using logic coherently, with respect to the former, and capable of deductive logic with respect to the latter. Thus in idealist thought, the person is endowed with rational abilities. In realist thought, the person is capable of thought, action and judgement. The assumption which underlines each is that rational discourse is possible.
In its analysis of the human person, the socio-cultural approach returns for its point of reference to the concept of society. Thus, the person is endowed with social consciousness, with economic conditions and relationships, with questions of autonomy and the plurality of the person. Although each social approach differs in its understanding of the person to the others, all share a basic assumption that the individual relates not merely to himself or herself, but to a greater whole; society. This may be seen, again, in postmodernism's ironic (de)affirmation of social tradition, which it sees existing as a form of metaphysical fascism, to be confirmed, and in its confirmation, to be denied.

In summary, both Catholic and secular traditions affirm the need to identify the individual. Both use presupposed structures to inform their debate on this issue. But, as with the content of the datum for knowledge, so too with the approaches to the concept of the person: Catholic and secular traditions cannot agree with each other on this point. Indeed, within secular tradition itself, a great deal of ambiguity and difference exists between the various approaches.

c. The processes of education.

This chapter has shown that Catholic education theory is wholist in nature. It proceeds from a pre-determined structural methodology. This methodology encompasses both the datum for knowledge, namely revelation, and the point of reference for the intrinsic goodness of
creation, namely God. As such, all educational processes in which humans engage, originate from this presupposed structure. Knowledge is unitive and coherent because all forms of knowledge share this genesis in God's self-communication to creation.

Secular tradition considers the issues of educational process in the light of its own presuppositions. Thus the traditional rational approach of idealism and realism indicates that education is able to occur by virtue of the rational or active capacities and capabilities of the individual. Idealism develops its theory of education from its conceptual presupposition that the individual has a rational ability. That ability allows judgement about knowledge to proceed on the level of informed and coherent opinion and moral imperative. Realism works from a similar presupposition of the rational capacities of the person. Knowledge is dependable, capable of being known by those who are rational. The reality of the world is asserted. Socio-cultural tradition, in contrast, returns once more to the centrality of society. It is in society that education takes place. Society is the arbiter and limit of the educational enterprise. As a key educational concept, social agreement and convergence determine the educational process. But, as it has been shown above, the deconstructive culture of postmodernism has cast a question over the certainties of social reality. Once again it affirms, and by affirmation, denies the validity of an appeal to social construct for an educational theory. In its place, postmodernism leaves an ironic question mark.
From this, it will be seen, again, that whereas both Catholic and secular traditions share the need to presuppose conditions for their models of education to occur, the content of those presupposed conditions differs to some extent. Both Catholic and secular traditions affirm the need for the existence of some form of society in which education is expected to occur. Both traditions believe that it is possible for education to occur. (These possibilities are, of course denied by postmodern criticism).  

But it is equally clear that the disagreement in content of the presuppositions of each tradition is marked. One bases itself upon a theistic interpretation of reality. The other denies the legitimacy of that reality, either as an actual presupposition, or as a required presupposition.

This thesis will go on to examine the assumptions inherent in Catholic and secular traditions, within one specific field of education, that of religious education. In the light of the discussions in the present chapter, this will concentrate particularly on the stated aims for religious education, and on the educational epistemologies which inform those aims.
NOTES

1 Throughout this thesis the term 'tradition' will be employed to denote Catholic and secular positions. Clearly argument exists both amongst Catholics and secularists as to what each respective group does and should intend in its understanding of both education theory and religious education. Some of these arguments will be explored in detail throughout this study.

2 On the surface, this narrative account would seem to ignore some of the more accepted results of historical and scientific enquiry into the origins of the human species. Just as it would be dangerous to read into this theological exploration the 'assured' truths of history and science (both in the rational and pejorative senses), so too would it be dangerous to ignore here the power of symbolism. See below.

3 The issue of the human rejection of God, and of the apparent non-existence of a yearning for God amongst atheists is accounted for in the Catechism by the notion of revolt against God. Indeed it could be asserted that it is in the dialectic of a God-created desire for God on the part of humanity and the equally God-created autonomy of the will in humanity that an unavoidable tension exists (cf. CCC. art. 29). Chirico makes the point that even in rejecting God, the human remains the highest possible medium for God's self-communication, on account of the created ontology of human yearning which God brought about initially in creation itself (cf. Chirico, 1983, p.167).

4 These terms correspond closely to Aquinas' Five Ways. The fifth term pulchra is found in Aquinas, although his fifth Way relates to the concept of there being a guidedness of nature to which all creation tends. Cf. Summa Theologiae, Ia pars, 2, 3.

5 This in turn raises the question of the need for revelation for humanity. If humanity possess a receptivity to know God, and that receptivity allows for the rational human knowledge to achieve some knowledge of God, to the extent that such knowledge might be held with certainty, then it might also be suggested that revelation loses its communicative significance in that process. Why should an exterior revelation take place, if the capacity to know God is already within human nature? Does this not make revelation irrelevant? This is denied in various ways by the Church Councils, most notably by the First Vatican Council which asserts that there are certain 'good things of God' which lie beyond the sphere of human knowledge, and which God alone can communicate in revelation (DS 3005).
6 The other four ways in which Christ is said to be present in a particularly special way are; in the Church as it celebrates liturgical celebrations, in the Church assembly, in the acts of the ordained minister of the sacraments and lastly in the sacraments themselves, most particularly the Eucharist (John Paul II, 1989, pp. 12-13).

7 On the relationship of Scripture to Tradition within the context of the primacy of revelation See Kung, 1964, pp. 105-106.

8 For a classical Catholic definition of biblical inspiration see DS 1501, 3006; cf. 3288, 3292. See also O'Grady, 1969, pp. 217-222.

9 For this reason O'Grady speaks of revelation being 'not simply a body of doctrine', but a reflection of a living faith brought about by a living individual, namely, Christ (O'Grady, 1969, p. 214, n. 1).

10 See for example references in Mondin, 1963.


12 For a purely secular presentation of this model of revelation see Grimmitt, 1987; cf. Kalve, 1994, pp. 61-68.

13 See, for illustration DS 30, DS 125, DS 3021, DS 3024. Often these teachings take the form of anathemata, (condemnations of propositions contrary to Catholic doctrine). The doctrinal position of the Church is often inferred, therefore, as the opposite of a statement which is being denied.

14 Cf. also CCC. arts. 355ff.

15 Not of Origen himself, however, but of some monks in Jerusalem who had been influenced by his teachings.

16 Waldensians and Lombards in France came to be heavily influenced by Albigensian thought. In subscribing to dualist beliefs concerning Scriptural tradition, they believed with the Albigensians that the Old Testament had come under the influence of a demiurge or evil spirit, holding also that New Testament tradition denied Jesus Christ's human body. They also rejected the notion that the sacraments could be used as a means of sanctification (cf., passim, Kung, 1968, pp.250f).

17 As a fascinating further comment on the whole issue of creation, set in the context of modern paleontology and the theories of evolution, attention should be paid to the Pius XII's encyclical Humani Generis (1950), where the Pontiff permits the study of the
evolution of human evolution, insofar as it follows the demands of Catholic belief pertaining to the immediate creation of souls by God (DS 3896).

18 In a not entirely dissimilar sense Paul Tillich speaks of the transcendence of existence as being crucial to an understanding of human existence, but also as a means of overcoming the fear of non-being. But whereas Balthasar speaks of mystery being integral to understanding human nature, Tillich talks of 'accepting acceptance' of non-being (Tillich, 1977, pp. 152ff.).

19 It should be noted that this analysis will be concerned with the concept of education. The concept of Catholic religious education will be examined in Chapter Two below.

20 One might here see a connection between the Church’s acceptance of societal influence as an valid educational process and the discussion in the previous section of the Church's demand that creation be regarded as a morally good reality: if the created realities are intrinsically good because they come from God, then the educational process whereby society is capable of influencing the person should, in itself, be seen as part of the created realities, and therefore good. This of course is not to deny that some social influences in themselves might not be morally good. The distinction here is between the capacity to influence, and the content of that influence.

21 It was in the context of his writings about the Catholic university that Newman discussed his theory of education.

22 Italics in original.

23 Catechesis is discussed in more detail in the second chapter to this thesis.

24 This is obviously not an exclusive definition of the term 'Catholic', which contains within it many more meanings and shades of spirituality. The definition used here is merely intended to show what 'Catholic' means for the purposes of this particular study.

25 The section on Plato and the post-Enlightenment thinkers presented above is drawn from the present author's previous work, Kalve, 1994, pp. 4-6. Due acknowledgement of this is hereby made.

26 This, of course is epitomised in the Kantian position of noumena and phenomena. The noumena are the external sources of knowledge, which remain unknowable. The phenomena are the mediated experiences by which we infer reality. See, for example Kant, 1933, p. 20f.

27 Kohlberg, amongst others, criticises these Kantian categories of knowledge as being dishonest to developmental psychology. He argues
that experience does not fit a pre-given mould, but is an on-going event which develops out of the interaction between human beings and their environment (Kohlberg, 1968, p. 1023). However, Kohlberg's own position has been criticised, in turn, by R. S. Peters, for not taking personal habit into account within his psychological model (Scheffler, 1966, pp. 245-262).

28 Because his idealism allows room for uncertainty, Kant's concept of reality provides a particular significance to questions which are valid in an educational context, such as how we come to know things, and the extent to which we can know things. We might believe we know the world of appearances, but if all we know is simply appearance as opposed to concrete reality as it is, then there remains the possibility for faith in metaphysics to operate in ways beyond the realm of reason. Similarly, if the implications of Kant's view of reality are correct, then the scientific account of there being a determinism in the world must be considered as an explanation of appearances, not facts in themselves. On this basis alone human autonomy is permissible as a possible alternative.

29 This definition might be compared with the interpretations of the anthropologist Yehudi Cohen, who suggests that socialisation consists of 'activities that are devoted to the inculcation and elicitation of basic motivational and cognitive patterns through ongoing and spontaneous interaction with parents, siblings, kinsmen, and other members of the community'. This socialisation, according to Cohen, occurs within all cultures, as a constant, relational activity (Wax, et al, 1971, p. 22).

30 This is not to say, of course, that modern idealists deny that skills are unimportant, merely that curriculum content should always defer both to idealist philosophical and educational principles. See Power, 1982, p. 88.

31 This is an argument suggested also by R. W. Hepburn in Dearden, Hirst and Peters, 1972, pp. 484-500. Hepburn, one should note, analyses the relationship of aesthetics to education.

32 But note the comments of T. F. Daveney on moral education and also on the dangers of too easily dismissing skills training from intellectual education theory. See Langford and O'Connor, 1973, pp. 79-95.

33 Thomas Groome notes that Aristotle is here stands in direct opposition to Plato who saw the educative process as a way of bringing out of ourselves what was already within. Aristotle stands instead in the tradition of sense experience. See Groome, 1980, p. 6.

34 In the case of Descartes, it is particularly important to recognise that he assumes in his definition of reality that our
self-awareness, and our awareness of the world about us is determined not through a construction of an imaginary reality, but through our re-construction of reality as it is, evidentially and experientially mediated to us through our self-interpretation of the world. In his letter of March or April of 1648, writing probably to the Marquis of Newcastle, Descartes suggests that such a reality exists, our understanding of it being 'our soul's capacity for receiving from God an intuitive kind of knowledge' (Anscombe and Geach, 1970, p. 301).

35 This simile holds good even if it is granted that mathematics is a interpretational construction. What is at issue here is whether it is feasible or not to claim that the logically impossible can exist.

36 Such an understanding of reality leaves it open to attack from idealists, naturally enough, who may wish to argue that claims for the existence of a reality which is beyond our material comprehension, are nothing more than idealist metaphysics. As Power notes, this has been countered by the suggestions of some realists, that the 'spiritual' results of the organic actions of the brain, are, in fact, highly refined parts of the evolutionary process, and hence ultimately of material origin (Power, 1982, p. 94).

37 This is to assume, of course, that natural law, of its character, lays down moral precepts which ought to be followed. Violations of the natural law would, on this view, render the individual open to the situational difficulties and disasters which would ensue. This view could, however, be countered by those realists who wish to stress social convention over natural law. They might argue that moral action retains its obligatory character because conventional wisdom and human experience have shown to us those moral actions which bring about good, and those which do not. Strictly speaking, such a view would be utilitarian, centering upon the usefulness of each and every individual moral action (cf. Power, ibid. pp. 100-101).

38 See also the comments of John Dewey on education as an exercise in management for life, in Kilpatrick, 1933, p. 71.

39 To this end Paul Hirst speaks of education as 'the development of the rational life for each of us, personally and socially' (Hirst, 1995). He goes on to suggest that the rational life 'requires that in every area of thought and practice we pursue truth and justifiable action with no questions ruled out' [emphases in original]. Rational processes are, naturally, open to fundamental questioning, both philosophically and in praxis. This point is acknowledged by Hirst.

40 We should, of course, be careful to distinguish between the terms 'community' and 'society'. In its secular sense community can have two distinct, commonly held meanings. First, community can refer to
a spatial concept, which is often geographic or demographic in focus, indicating some cultural, economic or political area that operates as a self-contained unit. Second, community can refer to a conventional sense of face-to-face contacts between individuals, on a personal basis. Clear roles are identified for individuals, and through this process, normative behaviour comes to be regulated, thereby providing order and security for those groups. To this definition, society might be contrasted. Society might be understood as a process of impersonal contact made throughout the modern, industrialised world. People co-exist independently of each other, and enter into relationships with each other, purely on the basis of self-interest. In this way society acts as an epitome of utilitarianism. However, we should be wary of placing too much stress either on such a division of meaning between these terms, or, indeed, on the definitions that have been given above. There are many kinds of society, as, indeed, there are many kinds of community. Amongst the many normative uses of the concept of society, perhaps the most significant is its employment in opposition to notions of 'the individual'. This is certainly a use which was applied to the term by Durkheim.

41 This would, of course, beg the question as to whether there was such a thing as 'morality' in a sociological setting.

42 Blackledge and also notes the comments of Durkheim's biographer, Steven Lukes, that Durkheim's use of the concept of social constraint is too wide to be of real value in understanding how individuals come to internalise the values of society. Individuals, Lukes suggests convincingly that when individuals internalise moral rules from society, rather than being constrained by them, they show a commitment to them. Commitment, as Blackledge notes, is a positive term, whilst constraint has decidedly negative connotations about it (Blackledge and Hunt, 1985, p. 9, cf. Lukes, 1973).

43 Cf. Lefebvre, 1972, pp. 69-74 for a detailed account of Marx's understanding of 'ideology'.

44 Hunt describes this as the 'theory of "relative autonomy"' (Blackledge and Hunt, 1985, p. 114).

45 How true this is to Marx's original intentions, is, however, open to question.

46 But note the comments of Bertram, 1990, pp. 126f.

47 Meynell distinguishes deconstruction from postmodernism in that the former is to do with certain approaches to literature, whilst the latter is to do with an 'associated attitude to culture and to the world as a whole' (Meynell, 1995, p. 128).
48 Even the anti-postmodern critic might inquire what it is that Hirst means when he speaks of the 'rational' processes. Hirst himself seems aware of this problem of definition. In a private communication to the author he writes 'I have in recent years changed my view of how the rational life comes to be lived. I used to think it was primarily through the pursuits of theoretical reason in the fundamental disciplines of thought[...]. I now think practical reason fundamental in which rational practices develop not from theoretical insights directly, but in practical experience itself...' (Hirst, 1995, emphases in original).

49 It might be argued that Catholicism comes closest to those secular philosophical approaches related to realism. Now whilst the Thomist tradition has often been presented as realist, some secular realists would wish to deny its place amongst them, claiming that no metaphysical system (that is, a system with metaphysical presuppositions) could legitimately call itself realist.
CHAPTER II

The Methodological Presuppositions of Religious Education in Catholic and Secular Traditions

The central focus of this chapter is to do with the methodological presuppositions which inform the theories of religious education, as an educational process, in Catholic and secular traditions.

Religious education as an educational concept raises issues of philosophical complexity and controversy amongst both Catholic and secular thinkers. Among Catholics, the recent development of new programmes of study approved by the Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales and the subsequent disquiet about those programmes expressed by some parents, priests and educationalists, mirrors the controversies surrounding the development of 'experiential' approaches to religious education among secular educationalists (cf. for example Burn and Malone, 1992; White, 1994; Hammond, et al, 1990; Thatcher, 1991).
It may be admitted as an adjunct to the general thesis of this study that this divergent controversy has developed because of increasingly confused notions, among the members and educational practitioners of the Catholic and secular traditions, of what the actual aims and objectives of religious education are, when placed within the context of education theory. Both traditions are at present in a debate with themselves about what they are trying to achieve in religious education, and about what religious education can contribute, both to the education of children, and also to the respective traditions themselves.

In comparing Catholic and secular methodological approaches to religious education within the context of the general educational theories of each tradition, this chapter will attempt to provide evidence of the philosophical complexities which bedevil each traditions' understanding and use of religious education. In the following discussion and concluding remarks, this chapter will seek not only to present these ambiguities in a critical light, but also to indicate some surprising parallels and dissimilarities of approach between each tradition.

This chapter, therefore, will first identify and analyse the theological and educational presuppositions which underline Catholic religious education theory, concentrating most particularly upon the Conciliar and Post-conciliar documents of the Church. Having established a structural base for religious education, (which arises from the threefold structure for Catholic education, discussed in
the Chapter One), this chapter will reflect on some secular approaches to religious education. It will consider and compare the work of a number of significant religious education theorists, notably the work of theorists in the University of Birmingham's Centre for Religious Education Development and Research, but also the work of experiential theorists such as John Hay and David Hammond. A third area of exploration in secular religious education theory will be an analysis of the implications for secular religious education in the light of some areas of postmodern theology and theory, epitomised by the position of the 'Sea of Faith' school of theologians.

A comparison of Catholic and secular presuppositions which underpin religious education in each respective tradition under examination will be attempted. Conclusions will be drawn from this comparison, and contrasts analysed.
'Religious Education in our schools should have pride of place in the curriculum. It must be evident in all our schools that it is the foundation subject and has a natural priority for our work' (Catholic Diocese of Northampton, 1994, p. 10). With these resounding words, the Catholic Diocese of Northampton states its commitment to see religious education placed at the forefront of Catholic education in its diocese.

It is, perhaps unsurprising that a Catholic diocese would wish to place such importance in the religious dimension of education. The diocese, as the local church within the context of the universal Church, seeks quite naturally to uphold the faith of the universal Church in its local setting. This can be seen, for instance, in the words of Bishop Daniel Mullins, 'the bishops of England and Wales have always seen Catholic schools as central to the work and mission of the Church' (Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 1994, p. 7). It is in this context that Catholic religious education must be placed. This is also the context from which any enquiry into the specific methodological assumptions of Catholic religious education must begin.

A number of specific issues arising from the words of Bishop Mullins, quoted above, invite comment. First, the Bishop makes clear that the school is a proper place for Catholic education. The function of this place of education is linked intrinsically to the
mission of the Church as a whole. This is recognised as such, in a recent and significant document produced by the Congregation for Catholic Education. The Congregation states that, reflected in the mission given it by Jesus Christ, the Church develops continually new pastoral instruments to assist 'in proclaiming the Gospel and promoting total human formation. The Catholic school is one of these pastoral instruments...' (Vatican Congregation for Catholic Education, 1988, pp. 20-21). As an instrumental form of pastoral witness to the Church's mission, the Catholic school is said to assist the Church to evangelise, educate and provide formation of both 'a healthy and morally sound life-style among its members' (Vatican Congregation for Catholic Education, *ibid.*, p. 22). As such, the witness of the Catholic school - those distinctive features which make it Catholic - are realised within its own 'particular vision of education'. This witness is one 'which is concerned not only with the teaching and learning of subjects, but also with forming its members in faith' (Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 1994, p. 7). The place in which one finds education occurring as a whole, within a Catholic context is, then, a place of formation. This is the place in which not only is the world of knowledge encountered and taught, but also where a truly theological process is undertaken; the human faith response to God's self-communication.

But Bishop Mullins' comments lead also to a secondary, yet significant point about the relationship of mission and Catholic
schools, namely that Christian formation, as part of the mission of the Church, is not limited to the educational processes of schools. Catholic schools are said to be central to the Church's mission and work, but not necessary and sufficient for that work to be achieved. This is highlighted by a recent document of the National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers, which stresses the need 'for a collaborative partnership between the home, the parish and the school' (National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers, 1994, p. 7). V. Alan McClelland suggests the same, when he reflects on the sense children make of social and community interactions which they discover and engage in as they mature. Thus, McClelland proposes that a child's sense of community begins at home, is encountered in the Church community and is further developed through schooling. The work of faith formation can be said to occur in the same way, with the same interdependence being relied upon in both cases (cf. McClelland and Varma, 1989, pp. 25-29).

A school which undertakes this kind of pastoral and theological work determines, as a result, its structure and ethos. In a recent study of the effect of a Catholic school's ethos on post-16 student academic achievement, Andrew Morris found some evidence to suggest that students who transferred from an environment in which a Catholic school ethos predominated, to one where a secular ethos predominated, suffered detrimentally in their subsequent academic performance. Morris identified a number of areas in which the school ethos of a Catholic school might be said to be distinctive. These
included the idea that in entering a Catholic school one entered into a faith-illumined environment which based itself upon God’s revelation, and in which any teaching activities were compatible with the actions and teaching of Christ (Morris, 1995, p. 68). In this study, Morris included some comments by students about how they perceived their school environments to be distinctively Catholic. One clear observation made by a number of those he quoted was the notion that the Catholic school was essentially a community in which the values of the Gospel were clearly communicated (Morris, 1995, pp. 68ff.). As a community, the Catholic school functions in a way which precludes the concept of competition as a priority. Rather than enforcing the self-seeking, self-valourising strictures of competition, criticised, for example, by McClelland, the sense of community to be found in Catholic education finds its centre permeated 'by the Gospel spirit of freedom and love' (McClelland and Varma, 1989, p. 27; cf. Gravissimum Educationis, art. 8). This necessarily has implications for all the curriculum. Just as the ethos of the Catholic school refers itself constantly to the Gospel, so too the school curriculum must reflect the Church’s belief in Christ, and God’s revelation of Christ as the datum for all knowledge, as the ground and framework for any educational process in a Catholic school (cf. National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers, 1994, p. 7).

Any exploration of Catholic religious education must be placed within this context. If the immediate aim of religious education is
'to promote knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith', then clearly its perspective must be both confessional and Christological (cf. National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers, 1994, ibid.). For this reason the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales have given some clear and unambiguous directions indicating which particular Church doctrines are to be considered as essential for the teaching of religious education. Basing itself upon the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, the directions seek to enable children and adults to grow in commitment to Christ and the Church in such a way that the message of the Gospel becomes 'ever more challenging and central to the lives of all our young people' (Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, 1994, p. 8).

In asserting both a local and a universal dimension to Catholic religious education, it seems clear that the Bishops' Conference wishes to stress the relevance of the local setting in the delivery of religious education, in ways which reflect those particular cultural concerns which inform the educative processes in a given place. But in asserting the universal nature of doctrine and belief, the Bishops' Conference also wishes to stress that faith and commitment are to be found in a community of shared values and ideas: we believe as one Church, not as individuals (cf *CCC* arts. 26, 185). It is the formation and education of young children into a deeper commitment to the community of the Church, which is seen as a clear aim of religious education at the outset.
Four particular themes related to the processes and aims of religious education have been identified. These are; revelation, community, the way of life and celebration. They correspond to the four Constitutions of the Second Vatican Council. Thus, the theme of revelation corresponds to *Dei Verbum*; community corresponds with *Lumen Gentium*; the way of life corresponds with *Gaudium et Spes*; finally, celebration corresponds with *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. This chapter will consider each of the themes in turn, in the light of these four Constitutions. This chapter will also analyse how these relate to Catholic religious education.
1. Revelation and religious education.

The previous chapter has established that the concept of revelation has had a profound effect on a satisfactory understanding of Catholic principles of education. The datum of revelation at once provides both a clear locus for theological exploration, and at the same time gives itself to human understanding as the primary source of all knowledge. As such, revelation is correctly identified in the context of this chapter with the starting point of the exploration of religious education within Catholic tradition. If the first aim of religious education in Catholic schools is to learn 'about religion according to the Catholic faith', and to reflect 'on the ultimate questions of life' (National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers, 1994, p. 10), and, in addition, if the structural importance of revelation to education theory has been correctly understood, then it becomes clear that the two concepts of revelation and religious education are interlinked in a profound and fruitful way.

(a) The Dogmatic Constitution *Dei Verbum.*

The Dogmatic Constitution *Dei Verbum*, which remains one of the most significant documents of the Second Vatican Council, provides a insightful indication of one way in which religious education might usefully be understood. This document was introduced in the first chapter of this thesis, in the theological discussion on revelation.
What follows here is a short summary of some of the key issues in the Dogmatic Constitution. The primary aims of religious education will be analysed in the light of these issues. From this the first structures of Catholic religious education will then begin to become clearer.

The first chapter of this thesis discussed the importance of the opening sentence of the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation: 'Hearing the Word of God with reverence, and proclaiming it with faith...' (Dei Verbum, art. 1): at once revelation is linked to faith and salvation. Why does the Church want to affirm this link? The article goes on to explain that the Council wishes 'the whole world to hear the summons to salvation, so that through hearing it may believe, through belief it may hope, through hope it may come to love' (Dei Verbum, Ibid.).

The Constitution proceeds to give a structural outline for the process of revelation. Thus, God reveals himself because he wishes us to share in the divine life; to experience koinonia. This revelation is in the form of evidence of himself in creation, and in words and deeds. The Constitution proceeds to present and descent of generations to whom revelation was made present; to the primordial couple, to Abraham and the Patriarchal tradition, to Moses and the Prophets, in the definitive revelation of Christ on earth, who, in being revealed, reveals the Father, (cf. Mk 1: 9-11; Mt 3: 13-17; Lk 3: 21-22; Jn 1: 29-34). The Passion, death and resurrection of Christ lead the way to the coming of the Spirit upon the Church, and
point to a final consummation of the great dynamic of revelation in the glorious return of Christ at the end of time (*Dei Verbum* art. 3).

The transmission of revelation is the concern of the second chapter of the Dogmatic Constitution. As Richard McBrien has noted (McBrien, 1980, Vol. 1, p. 219), the Council is keen to place revelation within the context of salvation. Thus the Constitution states that God had revealed himself 'for the salvation of all peoples', and in such a way as to preserve in its entirety the full content of that revelation, to be transmitted intact down through all generations (*Dei Verbum* art. 7). Three particular periods may be identified for this transmission: the Pre-Apostolic, the Apostolic and the Post-Apostolic ages. The Pre-Apostolic age is seen by the Council to be that time from the original moment of divine self-disclosure to the definitive event of Christ's life, words and work. The Gospel is proclaimed in these actions and activities, whether that be the Gospel faith lived and proclaimed by the Patriarchs and Prophets, or indeed most fully proclaimed in the words and life of Christ. This age ends, and the Apostolic age begins, when the Apostles are charged by Christ with the task of proclaiming the Gospel at the Ascension and at Pentecost. From this point onwards, revelation is transmitted through this second stage of contact with the original event of the message. With the death of the last Apostle, the Apostolic age draws to a close; the Gospels are then committed to writing. The Post-Apostolic age now commences. The
Bishops and their successors, to whom the apostolic mantle has passed, maintain, uphold and develop a better understanding of the tradition which has been committed to them. Two clear sources for the transmission of revelation are now identified; Scripture and Tradition (Dei Verbum art. 7). It is this issue of interpretation which the third chapter of the Dogmatic Constitution addresses.

Retaining its faith-centred approach to the salvific realities of revelation as presented in Scripture and Tradition, and retaining as well the structure whereby revelation is made known, the Council states that all that which is 'contained and presented in the text of sacred Scripture, have been written down under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit' (Dei Verbum, art. 11). It has already been commented upon in the previous chapter that the Council is careful not to equate revelation with Scripture. Scripture contains and presents revelation, but it does so on its own terms: God may give us God-in-Christ, but not our language with which to interpret God in Christ. That is left to us to determine.
The following article of the Dogmatic Constitution presents what might be termed the 'educational rationale' behind our interpretation of revelation. Since it is in Scripture that God speaks to humanity in a human manner, it is, therefore incumbent upon the faithful listener to interpret Scripture in such a way as to ascertain precisely what it is that God wishes to say. This quest might be phrased in the following, interrogative way: what meaning was intended by the Scripture writers, who, it is asserted by faith, were inspired in the meaning they gave to their work? It is equally asserted in faith that in some way God’s meaning is represented through the Scripture writer’s meaning. The educational desire 'to know' is placed, therefore, within this faith context. Practical approaches to understanding this meaning are identified. Literary forms as they appear in Scripture are to be respected, for 'truth is differently presented and expressed in the various types of historical writing' (Dei Verbum, art. 12). Accordingly the use of contemporary literary criticism is required. But, crucially, it is equally incumbent upon the exegete, (and, by extension, upon the educator), to work from a position that takes into account the 'content and unity of the whole of Scripture', in the light of Tradition and faith. Finally, all that is said in interpreting Scripture is subject, ultimately, to the judgement and authority of the Church (Dei Verbum, ibid.).

The Dogmatic Constitution goes on in its subsequent articles to examine the ways that the Old and New Testaments are to be correctly
understood as purveyors of the meaning of revelation. The Old Testament, therefore, is placed firmly within the context of salvation history. The communication of the divine is said to point inevitably to the Christological focus of revelation attested to in the New Testament. Thus, the Old Testament is said to prefigure the New Testament (*Dei Verbum*, arts. 14-16). The New Testament too is affirmed as salvific in content, inspired in origins, and touching on historicity in origin and purpose (*Dei Verbum*, arts. 17-20). The Dogmatic Constitution ends with an analysis of the liturgical and theological relationship that exists between Scripture and Tradition in the life of the Church. Thus, the Church’s veneration of the divine in Scripture is explored. Scripture and Tradition are seen as being rules of faith, because of their inspired nature. The Church’s preaching today, therefore should be ‘nourished and ruled by sacred Scripture’ (*Dei Verbum*, art. 21). There exists, moreover a universal right of access to the Scriptures. Accordingly, ‘suitable and correct’ translations of Scripture from the original languages are demanded to this end. Such translating activity is to be more welcomed still, if undertaken ecumenically with other the Christian churches (*Dei Verbum*, art. 22). To achieve a more profound understanding of the meanings invested in Scripture, theologians are charged by the Church with the duty of undertaking patristic and exegetical study, ‘under the watchful eye of the Magisterium’. In studying texts, ‘appropriate techniques’ of textual criticism are to be encouraged (*Dei Verbum*, art. 23). All study nourishes holiness,
if undertaken in the light of faith. Indeed, it is this very demand for study, guided by faith, which, the Constitution concludes, will bring about an increase in veneration of the Word of God, and will lead ultimately to a renewed spiritual life in the Church (*Dei Verbum*, arts. 24-26).

(b) Reflections on the presuppositions of Catholic religious education in the light of the Dogmatic Constitution *Dei Verbum*.

The Dogmatic Constitution throws some light upon the presuppositions which underpin Catholic religious education. Revelation is treated as an objective action; an event. This event not only explains, or justifies the contingencies and accidents of history, but also it gives meaning and grounds for optimism to enable us to begin to explain our origins in the first place. Not only does it assume that reality is objective, or 'real', but also it assumes that reality is created, finding its ontological genesis in the event of revelation. Revelation, then, is a tangible concept, held to be understandable within the reality of an equally tangible universe. There is, in other words, a point of contact between our own human physicality, and the inexpressible, otherness of the divine. This comes about in a purely kenotic manner; it is in the very kenosis of condescension, that the divine enters into the human world of perception, and so becomes known. It is in this act of God becoming known in revelation, that religious education becomes possible.
Of its nature, religious education can be said, therefore, to concern itself, initially at least, with the symbolism of language, and especially, the language of narrative theology. Just as God becomes recognisably active in human history as the Word, so, in turn the Word becomes word, spoken and proclaimed throughout the Church and the world. To begin the activity of religious education, then, is to tell a story.

That story is to do with 'the human quest for meaning'. Within the unfolding scope of the Dogmatic Constitution, it is clear that, as an initial means of access into the story of salvation history, the first aim of religious education is 'to explore the importance of story' in this search for meaning (National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers, 1994, p. 14).

This exploration leads in turn to the issue of understanding: without understanding the meaning of that which has been explored, nothing of human significance will have been achieved. Since, for the Christian tradition, Scripture has such a central focus for understanding the human-divine story of meaning, it is to Scripture that religious education must turn, if it is to attempt to make sense of the meaning vested in revelation. Accordingly, it is 'the role of Christian Scriptures as expressions of the ways in which humankind strives to understand God' which provides religious education with its understanding of the event of God in human history (National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers, 1994, ibid.). It is the belief, similarly, that human history is the
subject for the objective reality of God, (and the telos in which that reality is presented within a Scriptural context), that allows a correlated reflexion of understanding to occur. Human nature, and the intrinsic goodness of the human person is revealed through an analysis of the relationship of God with the world. This is attested and recognized in Scripture.

This is understood, further, in the acknowledgement of the human nature of the expression of God's reality within the Scriptural text. If witness is given to the divine inspiration of Scripture, and through this witness, understanding of the divine becomes possible, then it is equally the case that those witnesses to the human expression of that inspiration, allow those who study the texts to begin to understand the human desires and faith of the Scriptural authors. If the faith of the writers of Scripture, and the faith of those who today witness to the reality of God are correlative, then it becomes possible, at least in part, to come today to a fuller understanding of Scripture, on account of that shared witness. By extension, this reflexion impinges upon how one might understand the faith of the whole community of believers. This is particularly the case if the opening article of the Dogmatic Constitution is taken seriously. Not only does revelation entail receiving, it also requires a response; a personal, faith-filled reflexion on God's invitation. This reflexion becomes an intrinsic part of the presupposed aims of Catholic religious education. It means that, at the outset, religious education cannot remain an
objective, dispassionate exercise. It must involve the individual in his own self-communication and participation in community life. In this way, the individual fulfils the injunction of the Dogmatic Constitution to study the Scriptures, and to reflect upon them (Dei Verbum, arts. 25-26).

This reflexion upon revelation as contained and presented in Scriptural witness extends beyond the writings of Christianity as such, and requires of religious education an exploration into the sacred writings of other faith communities. Thus, it is implied, (indeed the Catechism clearly states) that there exists in all humanity a great commonality of purpose, at times frustrated, at times hidden, but always present, comprising a continuous yearning for the divine. This search for God is to be found among the different faith communities, even among those faiths who do not share a Trinitarian faith. These too are said to adumbrate Christ’s revelatory reality in their own, partial, incomplete ways. As such they are to be respected for their integrity and sense of religious purpose. It is, therefore, expected of Catholic religious education, that an exploration of this search for God be undertaken among the sacred writings of those faith communities (cf. CCC., arts. 841-845).

In the ways described above, Catholic religious education is found to be intimately linked to the outline of the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation. God’s sovereignty as the author of reality is first acknowledged. The unfolding story of salvation
is explored. The faith of the Church is examined by a reflexion upon the faith of the Scriptural witness. The wholeness and integrity of the human search is recognized and valued in the faith of all the religions, but is pointed, Christologically, to the Trinity from whom the story of salvation finds its source.
2. Community and religious education.

The section above outlined the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, and related the presuppositions of Catholic religious education to that document. There exists, however, a direct connection between the event of revelation and the community who experiences this event.

The locus of revelation is reality, or, to put it more correctly, reality is called into being through the action of revelation. Yet, as the previous section has shown, the ability to understand revelation necessarily requires an interpretation of that event. It is in this sense that theology, (in this context, the way of expressing human understanding of the divine), becomes, in Stewart Sutherland's memorable phrase, 'the articulation of the possible' (Sutherland, 1984, p. 73). That articulation becomes possible because of the mediate function of Scripture and Tradition, since these are particular ways in which revelation is presented to us. The presentation of revelation is, therefore, of its nature placed firmly within the context of the Church. Accordingly, theology becomes an ecclesial activity, precisely because it bases itself upon the witness of Scripture and Tradition.

Finally, it should be added that any ecclesial activity finds its origins in the Christ-event, and most particularly, in the significance of the Passion and death of Christ, as the pivotal moment of the history of salvation. This, Lumen Gentium makes very
clear. Similarly, Michael Schmaus comments that 'there is no genuine christology without ecclesiology, since Christ is ordained to humanity, to gather it round himself as the ground and centre of its salvation. There is no ecclesiology without christology, since Christ is the source of the Church’s life and its Lord' (Schmaus, 1972, p. 13).

This section will consider this in the light of the great Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, and most particularly in the deeply significant first chapter to this document. The presuppositions of Catholic religious education will then be examined in relation to this.

(a) The Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium*.

The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, is a deeply significant document for the Catholic Church's self-understanding, for a number of reasons. First, it completed what was left unfinished at the First Vatican Council, by moving beyond that Council's juridical interpretation of the Church, and presenting, as a development of that overtly institutional model, the concept of the Church as mystery. Accordingly, after a number of schemata had been discussed at the Council, and after the title of an initial first chapter to the proposed Constitution had been rejected, (a chapter entitled, significantly, 'The Nature of the Church Militant'), a new schema was adopted by the Council, the title of whose first chapter was 'The Mystery of the Church'
Read in the context of salvation, this concept of mystery takes on a profound significance.

The Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium* contains such a vast amount of material, it would be impossible in the confines of this study to give an adequate presentation of all of its nuances and themes. Accordingly, much of the following exposition and discussion will concern the first chapter of that Constitution. Less detail will necessarily be paid to the remainder.

The first chapter of the Dogmatic Constitution is one of its most important. It is manifestly programmatic, and provides the structural foundations for the development of the whole document. As has been mentioned above, the title of this chapter is significant. The Church is mystery. How this is to be understood, is indicated through the use of images and metaphors, which recur throughout the whole Constitution. What becomes clear is that the intention behind this concept, and the use of imagery points to the fact that the Church's nature cannot be as readily understood as might a mathematical formula. There exists in the nature of the Church a transcendent otherness which defies definition. The reality is greater than our understanding of it, and so must remain - and be understood - as mystery.

This mystery takes on, from its outset a Christological focus and perspective. Thus, when the opening words of the Constitution speak of 'the light of humanity', they refer not to the Church, but to Christ (*Lumen Gentium*, art. 1). The light of humanity is not the
light of the Church, which, in this sense has no light at all, but is, as the light of the Gospels must always remain, the light of Christ. Christ illumines the Church, and Christ illuminates the world from the Church. The Church might be visible to the world, but that visibility comes solely from Christ's light 'which shines out visibly from the Church' (Lumen Gentium, ibid.). In this sense, the Church's existence is owed directly to the event of revelation, Christ, who communicates to humanity from the Church.

At once it becomes clear that the Church is linked in some way to the salvific plan of God for humanity. The Church becomes intimately involved in the salvific actions of Christ on one level because of its identification as a visible instrument for Christ's saving light. This instrumental function of the Church is made more explicitly salvific still, when it is expressed within a sacramental context; the Church 'is in the nature of sacrament - a sign and instrument, that is, of communion with God and of unity among all men' (Lumen Gentium, ibid.). The Church becomes a sign which both signifies and effects a salvific grace.

The first chapter moves next to consider the ecclesial concept of the 'People of God' (Lumen Gentium, art. 2). The Church is described both as being predestined to exist by virtue of its instrumental function in the plan of salvation, yet also as something which is awaiting fulfilment, guided by the Spirit, to reach a definitive completion at the fulness of time. The Church, then, is on pilgrimage (Lumen Gentium, ibid.). This pilgrimage is placed within
the plan of salvation, sited covenantally in the narrative theology of the human-divine relationship, but seen as a journey with a final goal; a return to communion with the Father (Lumen Gentium, ibid.). This theme is returned to in later parts of the Constitution.

The first chapter of the Constitution goes on to discuss the sometimes ambiguous relationship of the Church with the Kingdom of God. Thus, in article 5 of the Constitution, the Church's mission is said to be found in the preaching of the Gospel by Jesus, ('the coming of the kingdom of God'), with the Church being required here to proclaim and establish the kingdom of God on earth, and so function as an instrument, distinct from that kingdom (Lumen Gentium, art. 5). At the same time, however, article 3 speaks of the Church being intimately connected in its origins, with that kingdom. Christ's inauguration of the kingdom of heaven on earth may be seen almost as parallel to the inauguration of the Church, which is itself described as 'the kingdom of Christ already present in mystery' (Lumen Gentium, art. 3). Quite clearly something of a theological balancing act is being attempted here.9

The Trinitarian aspect of this chapter begins to come sharply into focus when article 4 of the Constitution is seen in the light of the previous two articles. In the words of McBrien, 'the Church is the visible embodiment of the triune God' (McBrien, 1980, Vol. 2, p. 671). The Church is called by the Father (Lumen Gentium, art. 2), to union in and with the Son (Lumen Gentium, art. 3), and, as article 4 makes clear this is achieved through the power of the
Spirit (*Lumen Gentium*, art. 4). The work of salvation, which is described in a Trinitarian context at the start of article 4, is mirrored in an equally trinitarian context for the existence of the Church at the end of that article (*Lumen Gentium*, ibid.).

The Constitution goes on to describe the foundation of the Church. This is seen as a two-fold process. First, the Church finds its inauguration in the words and actions of Jesus on earth. But this inauguration finds its completion only at Pentecost, when the Spirit, received from the Risen Christ, empowers the Church to be, fully in the world (*Lumen Gentium*, art. 5). As Jesus was compelled to preach the kingdom, and to do good works, so now 'the Church, too, is called to proclaim, embody and serve the coming Kingdom of God' (McBrien, 1980, Vol. 2, p. 671), as the body of Christ (*Lumen Gentium*, art. 8).10

The subsequent chapters develop the important issues which have been the subject of the observations made above. Chapter two of the Constitution explores the image of the People of God, and the significance of this theme being placed before the following chapter on the hierarchical structure of the Church has been noted by McBrien. 'The Church is presented in *Lumen Gentium* as the whole People of God (chapter II), which happens to have a certain hierarchical structure to help the people of God fulfill [*sic*] its mission in history (chapter III)' (McBrien, 1980, Vol. 2, p. 672). The debate which led to these themes being placed in this way, McBrien calls 'crucial' (McBrien, *ibid.*, p. 671).
Yet, as McBrien notes, the third chapter of *Lumen Gentium* does not find its significance in its place in the Constitution alone. It remains important in its own right, presenting clearly for the first time the truly collegial nature of the college of the Apostles, found in the communion of Bishops (McBrien, *ibid.*, p. 672). In this sense, the Constitution finally completes what was left unfinished at the First Vatican Council, which, in 1870, defined papal infallibility. Authority belongs not only to the successor of Peter, but to the whole episcopal order, which the Council declares to have 'supreme and full authority over the universal Church'. This, the Council asserts, can only come about when the Pope is in agreement with the College of Bishops (*Lumen Gentium*, art. 22). Collegiality exists most especially in an ecumenical Council, but exists also in the relationship of unity found between local bishops, and so individual churches, and also with the Pope (cf *Lumen Gentium*, *ibid.*). The Church is both local, and universal (McBrien, 1980, Vol. 2, p. 672).

At the same time, there exists a universality of function shared by all the People of God, whether clerical, religious or lay. The charge of Christ to preach the Gospel throughout the world applies to all regardless of state (*Lumen Gentium*, art. 30). This universal charge means that the lay are as much functional and active members of the Church, as are those in orders; all have been commissioned to the task of mission by Christ (*Lumen Gentium*, art. 33). Accordingly, all are called to holiness, precisely because Christ calls the
Church to be holy (Lumen Gentium, arts. 39f.). But the call to holiness reminds the Church that it has not yet achieved perfect holiness. This end remains the goal of pilgrimage for the Church (Lumen Gentium, art. 48). Yet, in its final, moving chapter, the Constitution reminds the Church that Mary, who has been assumed into heaven, and who has reached that goal to which the whole Church strives, serves as a model and sign of hope for an accomplishment yet to be achieved. She remains 'the image and beginning of the Church' and 'a sign of certain hope and comfort to the pilgrim People of God' (Lumen Gentium, art. 68).

(b) Reflections on the presuppositions of Catholic religious education in the light of the Dogmatic Constitution Lumen Gentium.

The Dogmatic Constitution presents a number of legitimate areas for consideration as fields relevant to religious education. A proper consideration of the central issues of the Dogmatic Constitution leads to the issue of community, touched on both above, and in the previous chapter. By reflecting upon the vocation of each human being, whether that call be implicit or explicit, to become a Church, it is both possible and justifiable to reflect as well upon 'the human experience of belonging to community' in all its manifestations and forms (National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers, 1994, p. 15.). This provides grounds for the first presupposed aim of Catholic religious education in this context, namely that humanity are not individuals on self-centered quests for
personal and individual fulfilment, but are beings, in each and every case, graced with the dignity of the human person.\footnote{11} As such, they possess the capacity to share with each other a recognition of this dignity. Accordingly, it is through a reflection of this principal dignity, that the human individual is able to identify themselves within the context of a given community. They begin to make sense of the world of relationships in which they find themselves. In doing this they are able to become aware (that is, they develop a capacity to recognise), that 'belonging' is a profoundly human action. Recognition of this fact enables a sense of community and society to develop, and provides also for a reflexive identification to develop in the individual, whereby those positions and philosophies which deny the legitimacy of the community or of society may be rejected, on account of their claims which stand against human dignity. At its core, then, Catholic religious education, responding to the call of the Dogmatic Constitution \textit{Lumen Gentium} that humankind be a community, provides the grounds of faith whereby human dignity - that which is found in human society and community - may be recognised, reflected upon, shared, and lived.

But, as the \textit{Lumen Gentium} makes clear, the call to humanity to be a community comes from God, in revelation. It is according to revelation, that humanity is not called simply to be a community, but to be the community; the Church. In this way, so it is held, humanity fulfils the demands laid upon it by God. In this way, the plan of salvation is brought to its summit. Within religious
education, then, this reflexive consideration of community must lead, therefore, to this ecclesiological event. A deeper contemplation into the experience of belonging to a community, understood in the light of revelation, allows a more intimate consideration of what it means to belong to the Church. Thus, not only does Catholic religious education assist the individual to place themselves in a community, and help them to reflect upon that realisation, but it also enables the individual 'to reflect on the belief that, as people created in the image of a Triune God, Christians are called to be that community which is the Church' (National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers, 1994, *ibid.*).

Catholic religious education necessarily must provide a sound basis upon which knowledge of the structures which form the Church may be given to the pupil. Naturally, some of this knowledge may be found already within the Catholic child. This may have come about through the social contexts in which the child may have encountered the ethos of Catholicism, whether at home, or in a parish setting. Nevertheless, it must not be assumed, of course, that every child has been brought up in such a social setting.\(^1\) Similarly, it should not be assumed that children are necessarily able to use the metaphorical language which informs discussion on the ontology and structure of the Church, and religious concepts, in any particularly sophisticated manner.\(^1\)\(^3\)

Hence, Catholic religious education correctly presupposes that pupils should be assisted in reaching both 'a knowledge and [an]
understanding of people and roles in the Church' (National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers, 1994, *ibid.*). This assistance is an educational aim, and cannot be assumed to exist in the mind of the child without assistance from the religious educator. This naturally raises the hermeneutical question of what understanding is being developed in the child. Does the educator operate objectively, or does he bring his own subjective experiences into the encounter? Two elements may be addressed in this context. First, it is clear that each person brings into the encounter with another their life experiences, values and culture. These cannot, nor should they be ignored. To this extent, the teacher is engaging in a form of indoctrination; using and developing what he has already reflected upon. But at the same time, within a Catholic context, religious education must take its claims to community existence seriously. What is taught is also part of the *sensus fidelium* of the People of God, and is to be valued, as such, for what it is held to be; the mature reflections of the community of believers upon the truths of revelation. Seen in this light, Catholic religious education takes on a developmental role in which it assists in the continued assertion of the Church's identity among its members. Moreover, Catholic religious education demands that this assertion should include the understanding that 'to be Church is to witness to the Good News of Jesus Christ' (National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers, 1994, *ibid.*). Catholic religious education not only calls for an intellectual assertion of belief, but the lived
reality; to engage in religious education in such a way as to develop in pupils an understanding of what it is to be a Church, requires a way of life on the part of the Catholic community as a whole, and upon the religious educator in particular, which is open to examination, and which can be seen to reflect the reality of those beliefs.

Finally, *Lumen Gentium* points out that the human yearning for God, which is to be found among many faiths, is a part of the desire of all human beings to share in the divine life (cf. *CCC*. arts. 839-848). Accordingly, and in the light of the demands of the Church that humanity recognises its communitarian existence, Catholic religious education should enable pupils to examine in depth 'the relationship between the Catholic Church and other denominations and faiths' (National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers, 1994, *ibid.*). Naturally enough, this requires tact and honesty on the part of teachers. Traditions (including the Catholic tradition) must be treated honestly and fairly. Where disagreements exist between traditions, these cannot be ignored. Nor too, however, should the positive and moving theology of revelation be ignored. It supports most effectively the claims of Catholic theology that humanity is one community which shares equally in the dignity of the human person. In exploring the complex interrelationships between Christian denominations, and between the Catholic Church and other faiths, this unity of being can be effectively highlighted, and the theology underlying it effectively maintained.
Having both considered revelation and the structure of the Church in the light of the respective Dogmatic Constitutions of the Second Vatican Council, and also having reflected upon these themes in order to identify some of the major assumptions of Catholic religious education which arise from them, this section now considers the great Pastoral Constitution of the Council on the Church in the modern world; *Gaudium et Spes*.

It is possible to see in *Gaudium et Spes* a development beyond *Lumen Gentium*. Whereas *Lumen Gentium* analysed the mystery of the Church, *Gaudium et Spes* moves on to look at the relationship that exists between the Church and the world. It is, accordingly, concerned above all with questions of lifestyle, morality, values and attitudes, placing them all within a social picture, yet also within a soteriological context.

This is mirrored, naturally enough, in the aims and assumptions of Catholic religious education, as they arise as a consequence of what was discussed above. Revelation is understood as the catalyst that leads to the question of self identity as demonstrated in the Church. But self identity cannot remain isolated within a community. It must relate, and be a part of the greater whole. It must seek an encounter with the other and recognise in that encounter that the other shares in a common unity with the Church. It must, in the words of the Constitution read 'the signs of the time' and interpret
them 'in the light of the Gospel' (Gaudium et Spes, art. 4). The Church is not something that 'exists alongside the world but within the world' (McBrien, 1980, Vol. 2, p. 674). Religious education must take these concerns seriously, if its wholist educational basis is to be recognised correctly.

This section will consider these issues in the light of some of the key themes in the Pastoral Constitution Gaudium et Spes. The presuppositions of Catholic religious education will then be examined in relation to these.

(a) The Pastoral Constitution Gaudium et Spes.

Gaudium et Spes is an unusual document for a number of reasons. First is its unique title; a Pastoral Constitution. This ascription, suggested to the Council by the then Cardinal Wojtyla (cf. McBrien, 1980, Vol. 2, p. 673), later to become Pope John Paul II, gives this Constitution its initial setting; the Church is not dominant in the world, but is a servant of the world (Gaudium et Spes, art. 3).

As ever, the opening of the Constitution presents much of its programme. At once the sense of community is stressed, only this time, instead of simply speaking of the community of the Church as did Lumen Gentium, Gaudium et Spes re-establishes a bond of unity between all human beings, whether Christian or not: 'The joy and hope, the grief and anguish of the men of our time...are the joy and hope, the grief and anguish of the followers of Christ as well' (Gaudium et Spes, art. 1). It goes on to state that its message is
addressed, accordingly, to all humanity, 'the whole human family seen in the context of everything which envelopes it' (*Gaudium et Spes*, art. 2).

Yet in saying this, the Constitution does not want to denigrate or deny the validity of the distinctive message which the Church has to give. There exists, on the part of the Church a religious motivation, but one which is put at the service of the whole world: '[there can be] no more eloquent expression of [the Church's] solidarity and respectful affection for the whole human family, to which it belongs, than to enter into dialogue with it [that is, with the world] about all these different problems' (*Gaudium et Spes*, art. 3).

Accordingly, and in response to this expression of solidarity on the part of the Church for humanity, the Church is required to read the signs of the times, to analyse the social and cultural forms of transformation which modern society has engendered, transformations which can so often lead both to hope and despair (*Gaudium et Spes*, art. 4). It demands of the Church 'a new endeavour of analysis and synthesis' (*Gaudium et Spes*, art. 5).

A great feature of these changes in society, especially within industrial society, is the fact that they bring about a desire in humanity for freedom. This freedom has some clear benefit for humanity if properly used and understood. All too often, however, social changes have led to detrimental changes in moral and religious understanding. God, who was once rarely rejected has
become the rejected one, displaced by a deified form of scientific certainty (Gaudium et Spes, arts. 6, 7). These transformations have also led to a number of imbalances, on the personal, the family and the social levels. Thus, on the personal level, the practical, modern and postmodern outlook stands in opposition to the wholist, synthetic outlook; the demands for practicality oppose the demands of moral conscience; the desire for specialisation contends against an integrated and complete perception of reality. On the family level, demographic pressures compete against economic and social premises; one generation is opposed by its succeeding generation; old social and gender relations are contrasted against new social and gender relations. Lastly, on the social level, the affluent oppose the underdeveloped; international organisations for peace are opposed by nationalism; humanity, the author of distrust and hatred, is opposed by humanity the victim. (Gaudium et Spes, art. 8).

These are seen by the Constitution as ways in which human society has become imbalanced. By implication, the Church contends that they can be rectified, that they do not need to stand in opposition, but that they can be put back in balance with each other. The dilemma for humanity is, however, to achieve this return to balance, to re-establish a recognition of the collective and individual worth of each human being, in the light of humanity's capacity for self-destruction (Gaudium et Spes, art. 9).

At the core of these difficulties, says the Constitution, lies a question of meaning; for what purpose is life? Does life have an
ultimate meaning? To this quest, the Church brings its legitimate voice, and thereby engages in the debate: Christ is the meaning. In Christ, humanity achieves its ultimate perfection. In Christ, humanity finds its completion: 'And that is why the Council, relying on the inspiration of Christ, the image of the invisible God...proposes to speak to all men in order to unfold the mystery that is man and cooperate in tackling the main problems facing the world today' (Gaudium et Spes, art. 10).

As the Constitution develops these themes, it works towards establishing more clearly the Church’s soteriological function as a servant, both in and of the world. There, Church claims, there exists a dignity, given by God, which is to be found in the human person. That dignity, which is built up in the community of all humanity requires us to recognise that, as a result, human actions and activities necessarily take on the most profound significance. They are undertaken, after all, by those who share in the image of God. Through sin, through a seeking after freedom from God, as opposed to freedom in God, that dignity has become sullied, and those who undertake human actions are in need of redemption. At the same time, it is precisely these activities which form the basis of the Church’s dialogue with the world, for the Church is always to be found in the world. But the Church, which must always be understood under its soteriological category of mystery, has not yet fully achieved that salvific function. Its completion will only come about at the end of time. As an earthly institution, the Church is made up
of human beings, who share the same dignity, and bear the same
marred image of God, as those who are found outside the Church.
Provided and nourished by God, however, the Church is at once a
heavenly community, and also a human institution. It journeys
towards the same human goal as does all humanity, yet it is also
enriched spiritually through a constant renewal in Christ.
Recognition of this duality, of the fact that 'the earthly and the
heavenly city penetrate one another is a fact open only to the eyes
of faith' (Gaudium et Spes, art. 40). Yet, at the same time, this
visible union of two functions is both visible and effective. The
Church is given as a means of bringing God's message of salvation
into the world. At the same time the Church seeks that salvation for
itself and for all humanity. But, as mystery, the Church is itself a
means of salvific grace. It is, in essence, a sacrament; that which
both signifies grace, and makes effective what it signifies.

The Church remains, and must remain impartial. It cannot be
allied to one political system, or ideological outlook. The Church
is called instead to a religious function, namely that of passing on
the good news of Christ (Gaudium et Spes, art. 42). Yet this is not
to deny the fact that a prime expectation on the part of human
beings is that they do not neglect their temporal duties. To do so
is to put into danger the very salvation which human beings seek
(Gaudium et Spes, art. 43). Human activity is, after all, linked
inextricably to the dignity of the human person, made in the image
of God. Denial of social responsibility is a denial of God. But the
Church, as the Constitution makes clear, is deeply concerned that the temporal and the religious should be seen as being complimentary to each other. A failure to see it in this way presents a very serious difficulty for the Church, and indeed is understood to be one of the most dangerous threats to a properly religious understanding of the world (Gaudium et Spes, ibid.). This complimentarity is caught up in the very aim of the Church: 'that the kingdom of God may come and the salvation of the human race may be accomplished' (Gaudium et Spes, art. 45).

It is in the light of this effort by the Church on behalf of all humanity, which, the Constitution suggests, is the reason, and indeed, the justification for dialogue with humanity, that the Church believes it has a valid voice in the world. This, the Constitution sees as the proper expression of the missionary function of the Church (Gaudium et Spes, art. 92).

(b) Reflections on the presuppositions of Catholic religious education in the light of the Pastoral Constitution Gaudium et Spes.

The Pastoral Constitution presents some very significant implications for religious education. For the first time, the clear indication is given that, within its educational context, the life of and values of a Christian are things which not only can be taught in a factual, content based manner, but which, being taught, can be experienced, appropriated and given formation within the individual. Secondly, these values derive necessarily from the Church's concept
of community. Educationally, it is from within the community of the Church and of humanity, that the teaching about values and questions of meaning must come.

This necessarily raises the question: from where, from a Catholic perspective, does a sense of values arise, both in religious education, and in the individual? One suggestion is to be found in a recent document on Catholic education prepared by the Congregation for Catholic Education. The Congregation seeks to provide some educational goals for the Catholic school. As it does so, it suggests that a useful frame of reference with which a Catholic school's identity can be correlated is one in which 'the Gospel values which are its inspiration, must be explicitly mentioned' (Vatican Congregation for Catholic Education, 1988, art. 100). For Catholic religious education, the sense of values which must underpin the life of all humanity is found first and foremost in the values of the Gospel. Those Gospel values derive from the life and person of Christ. Since all humanity is called to share in these values, it follows that humanity is called into communion with Christ who brings these values into the human sphere of activity. But it also follows, given Christ's injunction to the Church to baptize all nations, that the particular community of Christ, the Church, is called to bring the world into communion with Christ and with itself. Communion, therefore, becomes mission (cf. John Paul II, 1988b, art. 32).
Educationally, this issue raises a more basic enquiry into the issue of self-experience as a pedagogically sound guide for any exploration of values. If, as has been suggested, a core purpose for religious education as it touches on values and morality is the exploration of those values 'which underpin beliefs and actions in the human family' (National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers, 1994, p. 16), then it must be established that (a) it is possible to identify core human values, and (b) that those values lend themselves to exploration. For Catholic religious education, as for any systematic educational process, the first question must be presupposed, if the second question is to follow. Thus, not only do the values espoused in the Gospel require an assent of faith if they are to be recognised as values, but also, so too do any set of social norms. Faith in values and morality requires us to have faith in the commonality of the human family: to accept common values, one must also believe in a common basis to those values.15

But the Church seeks also to affirm a reality which addresses the commonality of the human condition, with a distinctive voice. For this reason, (though clearly not for this reason alone, given the Church's concept of revelation), the Church proclaims its belief in the Christological dimension to life. Religious education, insofar as it has a role in broadcasting the voice of the Church educationally, functions in such a way that it assists children 'to understand the following of Christ as a call to holiness/wholeness of life' (National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers, 1994,
As the Church proclaims its belief in its central giver-of-values, Jesus Christ, so Catholic religious education parallels that action through its own attempt at proclaiming Christ, by teaching an understanding of the nature of Christ's call to humanity. This, in turn, invites reflection upon the very nature of mission and discipleship. Not only is holiness, wholeness of life in God, to be taught as a valid educational concept, but also it is to be taught as a valid focus for personal reflection and development. This is to do no less than to proclaim 'the living God who is close to us, who calls us to profound communion with himself...It is the proclamation that Jesus has a unique relationship with every person, which enables us to see in every human face the face of Christ' (John Paul II, 1995, p. 145). It is both religious education's Christological praxis, and its rationale.

Finally, it will be clear from what has been said both earlier in this chapter, and also previously in this section, that the Pastoral Constitution is concerned with all human traditions, including especially the faith commitments of religious traditions other than Christianity. Religious education must also accord a special regard for those tradition. Thus, pupils might be expected 'to explore the values and way of life of other world faiths', and so to come to respect those traditions for what they are (National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers, 1994, ibid.).

Of course, it might be argued, perhaps justifiably, that respect does not amount to very much. In one sense this is correct. Respect,
understood in a formalistic sense, might give rise to a deliberate coldness of attitude on the part of the student. The tradition being studied might be an interesting, and indeed, a significant one, amongst the myriad of world-views and religious beliefs. But despite this, the student might remain so detached from the living tradition which he or she studies, that the fact that this tradition might indeed be a living, vibrant expression of the human search for meaning, has been lost by the student. If this is what is meant by 'respect', then it does not stand for what the Pastoral Constitution, or religious education understands by the term.

Respect, as a concept in Catholic religious education, understood correctly in the light of the Pastoral Constitution, means something far more significant and active. Not only does it involve an absolute recognition in esteem of the individual dignity of each and every person, including the self, but also it includes as a necessary condition for this absolute recognition to take place, the further identification of the religious commitment found in traditions other than Christianity, with the human desire to respond to God's initial call to salvation. Respect involves a recognition of the vocation of all individuals, (both those of students and those being studied), according to their conscience, to respond to the revelation of God, as it is understood within the categories, concepts, language and cultural expression of those individuals and traditions. Bound up with this recognition is the belief that God has spoken most completely in Christ. For the Catholic student,
then, right judgement must therefore be understood to have a place within the educational concept of respect. That judgement, however, first and foremost must be inclusive, before it can begin to function at the level at which such respect is engendered. But that decision on the part of the student must be made ultimately from a position of faith, which, for the Christian, arises as a gift from God. As with all theological expressions, respect, correctly understood, owes its meaning and relevance to revelation.
4. The Church's celebration and religious education.

As it has been shown in the preceding sections, the Church's perception of reality, of itself and of the world, begins with its presupposed premise of revelation, which is communicated by, and mediated from Christ, who is present in the Church, and who is proclaimed to the world by a Church which recognises that it is itself in the world, and, therefore, insofar as it is a human institution, also of the world.

But it should also be recognised that the Church understands itself to be intimately connected to what it perceives to be the divine origins of reality. Thus Christ is proclaimed the head of the Church (cf. Colossians 1: 12-20). He is second Adam, who makes right what first went wrong with the human Adam.\(^\text{18}\) He ends the banishment of man from the Garden, when, as the Gardener, he - the Risen Christ - announces the completion of God's plan of salvation by revealing himself to Mary Magdalene (cf. John 20: 11-18). As the Ascended Christ, he prepares the way for all humanity to return to God. But he remains present in the Church, expressing that reality especially, in graces mediated sacramentally by the Church, in its life of celebration and festival.

This celebrating and festive life of the Church is considered and presented in the context of the Second Vatican Council in the Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, promulgated on 4 December 1963. This section will analyse how celebration and festival is to be
understood in the light of this Constitution, most especially through a consideration of elements in its first chapter. The implications of this for religious education will then be discussed. In particular, issues will be considered which deal with the relationship of celebration with human development, and with the symbolic nature of the Church's sacramental life in relation to the inner growth and spirituality of individuals in a learning environment.

(a) The Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium*.

To understand the Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, it is necessary to be aware of the presupposed conditions under which that Constitution is intended to be seen. As Richard McBrien notes, the Constitution develops from the premise that the liturgy must be understood as being the most significant means by which the mystery of the Church can be shown to the faithful and others, in the lives of believers (McBrien, 1980, Vol. 2, p. 676; cf. *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, art. 2). For this reason, the Constitution sees in the Christian life, in its institutions and its call, the possibility of renewal and reform in the light of changes brought about through the beneficial development of human knowledge. This renewal and these reforms are to be understood as ways of up-building the ecclesial body of Christ, to which all humanity is called to be a part. In particular, this involves a reform of the liturgy (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, art. 1). 19
The importance of the liturgy derives from its soteriological function: 'for it is the liturgy through which, especially in the divine sacrifice of the Eucharist, "the work of our redemption is accomplished"' (Sacrosanctum Concilium, art. 2). In these liturgical actions, the Church becomes a sign of the graces mediated through them. The Church, which possesses, so the Constitution asserts, visible and invisible realities, tends to direct itself and those who are members of it from the human elements of its structure towards the divine. In building up the human body of Christ, the liturgy underlines the principle that, through the sign of the Church in the world - a sign of grace made effective through its event - the Church is a sacrament to the world. In its sacramental existence, God and Christ are made present in the world (cf. Sacrosanctum Concilium, ibid.).

How does the Church celebrate, in the light of this soteriological presupposition? Principally, this is achieved through the Church's celebration, in word and rite, of the re-enactment of the Paschal Mystery (that is, the passion, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ). Finding its origin in the saving actions of Christ, and communicated through the Spirit filled actions of the apostles, this 'work of salvation' is continued, according to the Constitution, through the sacrificial and sacramental activities of the Church. Most especially this is to be recognised in the Church's sacramental life of Baptism and Eucharist: 'by Baptism men are grafted into the paschal mystery of Christ; they die with him, are
buried with him, and rise with him...In like manner as often as they eat the Supper of the Lord they proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes' (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, art. 6).\(^{20}\)

Given that the activities of the Church are to be seen as sacramental actions which effect and mediate salvation to the world, it follows that they are in some way related to the saving actions of Christ in human history. Given the universal vastness of God's plan of salvation,\(^{21}\) the Constitution makes clear that the Church takes up and re-enacts that which was accomplished by Christ in the Paschal Mystery (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, arts. 5, 7).\(^{22}\) The Church, continues the Constitution, has been commissioned to continue this perpetual celebration of the Paschal Mystery, through its empowerment in the Spirit (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, art. 6, *passim*), and in its close relationship with Christ in effecting and mediating salvation to the world. 'Christ, indeed, always associates the Church with himself in this great work.' Accordingly, 'the liturgy, then, is rightly seen as an exercise of the priestly office of Jesus Christ' (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, art. 7). As a result, every liturgical action becomes an action of Christ, the Head, and his Body, the Church (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, *ibid*.).

Since Christ is the Head of the Church, and the one who, in the language of Hebrews has 'passed through the heavens',\(^{23}\) and given also that the Church understands itself as a people on pilgrimage to this same destiny of glory, then it follows that the salvific actions of Christ, who is made present in the sacraments of the
Church, provides a foretaste of the future destiny of all humanity (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, art. 8.). The earthly liturgy becomes a paradigm of the heavenly liturgy. Indeed, the liturgy enacted by the Church is provided here with a clear theological context, in which the hidden realities of the divine are made present for humanity in the world of visible realities. The divine subordinates the human, and so provides an image of the in-breaking of God into the creaturely realm, much as do images of revelation and the Incarnation.

A very important point must be made, however, with regard to the activities of the Church. The liturgy does not exhaust all that the Church can accomplish. The Church is able to continue to preach faith and penance, to prepare the faithful for the sacraments, to proclaim the Gospel; to be, in other words, the human partner to a divine imperative (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, art. 9). Yet, at the same time, the liturgy remains 'the summit towards which the activity of the Church is directed; it is also the fount from which all her power flows' (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, art. 10). The Church's mission is overtly proselytic. It seeks to draw all humanity, not simply to itself, but to Christ who shines forth from the Church (cf. *Lumen Gentium*, art. 1). Grace is mediated from that perspective. God's actions are made tangible, and the accompanying grace flows from this divine originator. Given the significance of pilgrimage of the people of God to their destiny of heavenly fulfilment, as an expression of the Church's self-understanding, the
liturgical work of salvation acts as a means of directing the
people of God to that ultimate goal (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, art
10).

The Church, then, as the people of God, must encourage all its
members to become effectively involved in full participation in the
liturgy, and most especially the Eucharist (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*,
arts. 26, 28, 29, 31, 47-55). To achieve this most effectively, it
is necessary for there to be an accessible language of signs and
symbols, readily understood by the faithful, in order that the
sacramental actions of the Church might be properly understood.
Indeed, it might correctly be asserted that the liturgy is of itself
a world of signs and symbols (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, art. 21). Any
renewal or reform of the liturgy must reflect this fact. As Richard
McBrien has commented, 'If the sign is to cause the grace it
signifies (as the Council of Trent declared), then the sign must be
understandable' (McBrien, 1980, Vol. 2, p. 676). To this extent, the
Constitution allows for 'legitimate variations and adaptations' of
ritual, provided that those changes do not touch on the faith or
good of the community as a whole.26

(b) Reflections on the presuppositions of Catholic religious
education in the light of the Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium*.

One particular thread seems to flow as a constant throughout the
Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, as with all four of the
Constitutions discussed in this chapter. That thread is community.
In each case it is the community of believers, who, by virtue of their calling by God to be leaven in the world, are seen as the intrinsic example of unity and communion to which all humanity in turn are called to aspire. The wholism of Catholic theology, seen as the basis of Catholic education in the first chapter of this thesis, is reflected in this Constitution as the community united in prayer and celebration. In a New Testament image, it might be apposite to suggest that Sacrosanctum Concilium envisages the community of believers, the Church, to be a tupos for the disciples and Mary, awaiting their fulfilment by the Holy Spirit, in prayerful, yet celebratory expectation. If liturgical celebration is to mean anything, it must involve the community of the Church, faithfully awaiting their Master.

At the same time, however, it should be recognised that Catholic religious education, in using this wholistic theology, should never ignore the fact that the community is made up of individuals, who share in the experience of being part of this celebrating and expectant community, but who also experience their own individual moments of celebration and joy, both within and without the liturgical setting in which the community of believers is to be found. Educationally, then, Catholic religious education must recognise that individuals find meaning and value in many events in their lives, which are personal, and indeed intrinsic to that individual's social and religious development. These experiences may include self-interpretations of the numinous or the transcendent,
but will just as readily involve questions of sexual and emotional experience, aesthetic or artistic appreciation, as well as awe and wonder. Many of these events and experiences will have been celebrated by individuals, families, or indeed wider communities, and need to be explored as a significant example of the celebratory nature of human development. Thus, Catholic religious education should initially help pupils 'to explore the meaning of celebration which marks the growth and development of every human being' (National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers, 1994, p. 17).

At the same time as recognising the significance of human experience in the realm of the social, emotional and physical world, pupils, along with all individuals, might undergo spiritual experiences which give deeper meaning and value to their lives. Catholic theology, and especially the theology of Sacrosanctum Concilium, suggests that these experiences are to be found in their highest and purest form in the graces given in the sacramental life of the Church, and in particular, in the Eucharistic celebration (Vatican Congregation for Catholic Education, 1988, pp. 58f., cf. Sacrosanctum Concilium, art. 2).

This spiritual growth is recognised by the Constitution Sacrosanctum Concilium, as essential to furthering human growth and maturation, and is to be seen as an equally significant part of Catholic religious education. Thus, teaching on the sacramental journey which each individual undertakes, becomes a way that pupils
'become aware that being a member of the Church is something
dynamic, responding to every person's need to continue growing all
through life' (Vatican Congregation for Catholic Education, 1988,
pp. 59). This educational process must necessarily involve teaching
about signs and symbols, if it is to make sense to the child. The
sacraments are symbolic signifiers, which represent, as well as
effect the grace of divine realities (National Board of Religious
Inspectors and Advisers, 1994, p. 17). Understanding of this
principle can only come about if those symbols and signs are
recognised for what they are.

The stress on the ecclesial nature in which these signs and
symbols are employed, and the concomitant way in which an
understanding of these signs and symbols is intended to bring about
in the pupil an appreciation and desire for active membership of the
Church, indicates here the catechetical nature of religious
education. By reflecting upon the nature of sacraments, and by
experiencing the grace mediated by them, Catholic religious
education becomes the instrumental facilitator by which pupils might
reflect upon those experiences and so come to a mature decision on
whether they should respond positively or not to a deeper
relationship with that Church which has mediated those graces to
them. Religious education acts, therefore, as a missiological and
catechetical branch of the Church, and moves religious education
from being simply an academic subject, to one with a mission of
spiritual development.29
This in turn leads to the question of prayer and the identification of the aims of religious education with the prayer of the Church. If religious education asks pupils to reflect upon the nature of sacraments and their actions, it will equally expect pupils to make a considered response to prayer. Pupils are thus asked 'to reflect on the place of prayer in the life of the Catholic community and of individual Christians' (National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers, 1994, p. 17). This requires pupils to be critically open to the variety and possibilities of prayer in both the Christian and non-Christian traditions (cf. CCC. 1049; 2559f., passim). As with the issue of understanding the sacramental nature of the Church's celebration, in gaining knowledge of Catholic and non-Catholic prayer systems and processes, pupils will face questions touching on their personal involvement in that sacramental life, and in those prayers. Reflection on the place of prayer in Catholic and non-Catholic traditions can only lead to a deeper development both of 'a knowledge and understanding of prayer in other faiths', and in Catholic spiritual traditions (National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers, 1994, p. 17). Given the wholism of Catholic theology and educational theory, this universalising of prayer tradition and experience is one further reflection upon this wholism, of which Catholic religious education is but a part.

In the light of the Constitution Sacrosanctum Concilium, then, Catholic religious education invites the pupil to engage with the
prayer tradition of the Church. He is encouraged to recognise within his own experiences moments of celebration, which are reflected in the life of the Church. He is asked to reflect upon the mystery of the sacramental life of the Church, to experience that which the Church mediates, and to recognise that human dignity, united in a common desire and yearning for God, is to be found in the non-Catholic traditions as well as Catholic ones. Throughout this whole process, the unity of Catholic theology is asserted, mirrored in the ecclesial nature of the religious education which is undertaken, to achieve this aim.
The first part of this chapter has analysed Catholic religious education in the light of the four Constitutions of the Second Vatican Council. In each case, the significant parts of the Constitution were first examined, before a reflection on the implications for religious education in the light of these Constitutions was attempted. By using this particular method (that is, of exposition followed by reflection), the implication should not be drawn that this provides the sole, nor indeed, the most complete way of approaching the question of what constitutes the methodological aims and presuppositions of Catholic religious education. The author of this thesis does contend, however, that in using this particular mode of approach, significant parallels can be found between Catholic theology, as expounded in the conciliar and documents, and one particular interpretation of Catholic religious education which arises as a reflection of that theology.

The subsequent section will analyse some specific themes relating to the aims and presuppositions of secular religious education. Three particular strands will be explored; phenomenological approaches, experiential approaches, and postmodern possibilities for religious education.

A final section will compare the Catholic and secular presuppositions identified in the previous two sections.
ii. Secular Religious Education.

The aims and presuppositions of secular religious education are very varied, and take many particular forms and structures. By way of an introduction to this question, a brief - and by no means complete - survey of opinions will serve to show just how diverse some of these aims might be. The views of the educationalists which follow should not be taken as exhaustive or absolute descriptions of what religious education should aim to be. They are merely illustrative of the problems the scholar faces in attempting to assess these vast issues.

Raymond Holley, for example, has suggested four specific aims for religious education, which he terms, the general aim, the stage aim, the scheme aim, and the lesson aim. Each feeds down to the next aim, in the form of a base and accompanying inverted pyramidal structure, which he demonstrates diagrammatically in his book Religious Education and Religious Understanding (Holley, 1978, p. 17). General aims touch on the 'formal, general statement covering all religiously educational activities indulged in throughout the child's career in school...more a statement of policy than a detailed directive' (Holley, 1978, p. 10). Stage aims relate to the various stages or levels of thinking in which children engage. As children develop, the aims for religious education should reflect these changes (Holley, 1978, *ibid.*). Holley's third type of aims are scheme aims. These relate to particular aims of schemes or units of
work within a programme of study. They are designed to provide a coherent direction in which each particular unit might proceed, and give a unified structure to the overall scheme of study (Holley, 1978, p. 11). Holley's final aim for religious education he terms the lesson aim. This last aim is very specific to the individual task, and is limited to the scope of the individual lesson and its learning objective (Holley, 1978, *ibid.*).

These four elements, Holley argues, might be applied to all forms of religious education (Holley, 1978, p. 9). Indeed, as they stand, they could easily be applied to every curriculum subject. Holley therefore attempts to justify these aims in relation to religious education in particular, by referring to the dimensional, educational and social criteria which, according to Holley, are necessary for providing a basis for a sufficient aim for religious education to be formulated (Holley, 1978, pp. 18-21).^{30}

Dimensional criteria relate to those dimensions of religion which allow reflection and meaning to take place: what it might mean when we speak of religion, for instance (Holley, 1978, p. 18). For Holley, this must include reference to the existence of a spiritual life. Religious education, he suggests, should always aim to 'give practicable direction to the provocation of spiritual insights' (Holley, 1978, p. 19).^{31}

Of educational criteria, Holley stipulates the importance of creating a sufficient 'depth and breadth of religious understanding', as an aim for religious education. This, then,
involves what he understands to be the specifically educational scope of religious education: the development of understanding, knowledge, attitudes and sensibilities for religion. This, Holley adds, is not to suggest that the pupil should actually come to the lesson with a requirement to have a religious faith. Nor, however, does it preclude this possibility (Holley, 1978, *ibid.*).

Finally, Holley advocates a social criteria in which the aims of religious education might be socially contextualised. This relates to Holley's view that secular religious education belongs to a democratic system of education, and must be recognised as such. Accordingly, secular religious education must reflect in its aims, the desires and opinions of the informed majority. In addition, religious education must aim to be moral. Religious education might be used to convert pupils, or to influence them into religious belief. This should be avoided in the aims of religious education. To fail to guard against this would allow religious education to become an immoral and anti-educational process. The right of the pupil to choose on this issue freely, and thereby to preserve his integral autonomy, (an autonomy which, without further justification, Holley asserts to be a philosophical commonplace), must be retained in any aim for religious education (Holley, 1978, pp. 19f.).

Another educationalist, Edwin Cox, identifies four possible areas in which religious education might have an educational role, which he suggests might be possible positions from which the aims of
religious education might arise, in the light of the 1988 Education Reform Act. Religious education might attempt to promote religious belief, to teach morality, to promote a social conscience and to provide for an experience of the transcendent (Cox and Cairns, 1989, pp. 76ff.).

Thus, supporters of a catechetical approach to secular religious education might argue that the aims of religious education should be solely to bring about religious belief in the pupil, to promote religion as a means of underpinning the culture and fabric of British society, much along the lines advocated by the CATS Trust (Hart, 1991, passim).

Cox identifies a second possible aim for religious education which arises from the Act; that of teaching morality. Here, religious education is not so much concerned with the transmission of religious knowledge, let alone belief, but, rather, with the inculcation in children of a morality, which, in the context of understanding and reflection, will teach children to be good (Cox and Cairns, 1989, pp. 77f.).

Cox's third possible aim for religious education, that of promoting the social consensus, is a contentious one. As Cox points out (Cox and Cairns, 1989, p. 79), the 1944 Education Act certainly envisaged that religious education should aim at uniting a society which had been on the verge of losing its sense of values and direction. Placed within the context of the Second World War, which, at the time of the Act, was at a particularly significant point for
the Allies, this desire for social unity seems all the more stronger. The fact that religion is identified as the unifying strand for this cohesion is particularly interesting. Cox suggests that this view of religion might still prevail in some educationalist's eyes, as a valid aim for religious education, and one which, it is implied by Cox, is still considered possible in the approach taken by the 1988 Education Reform Act (Cox and Cairns, 1989, *ibid.*).

The last of Cox's suggestions of possible aims for religious education is one which provides a setting for transcendental experience to occur. There exists good evidence, suggests Cox, that many people have had spiritual experiences. If this is the case, he continues, then some planning for this eventuality must be made in the educational curriculum. This would not imply, as Cox correctly points out, that the educational context of the spiritual is limited to religious education alone, nor that any one particular religion should be studied as a principle example of a vehicle for the transcendent. Other curriculum areas could have equally strong claims to assist pupils to experience the transcendent. Religious education would, therefore, be one curriculum subject among many, engaged in this particular form of education. The debate, as Cox concludes, has only just begun (Cox and Cairns, 1989, pp. 80-83).

Alan Brown presents yet another series of aims for religious education. Brown recognises that it will be impossible to propose a consensus view of the principle aim of religious education. Within
the context of study of religious education and pupils with learning difficulties, Brown proposes his own particular aim for the process: 'to help the pupil to understand religion' (Brown, 1987, p. 12). In doing so, Brown asserts that religious education can claim its place within the curriculum solely on the grounds that it is an educational process, and not a proselytic subject, protected by law from the educational demands placed on the other curriculum subjects by teachers, parents, pupils and educationalists (Brown, 1987, ibid.). This, Brown goes on to suggest, is reinforced by the suggestion that most religious education teachers today believe that pupils construct their own form of social reality. This would include the construction of their own sets of values and beliefs. In Brown's view, then, religious education 'is concerned with helping pupils to understand religion, to make them aware of its basic beliefs and to see how these beliefs have been, and are being expressed...' (Brown, 1987, p. 13). In saying this, Brown argues that religious education must be understood to function in a separate realm from nurture. "Nurture", he comments, 'has outlived its usefulness' (Brown, 1987, p. 14).

Similarly, John Rankin suggests that religious education's chief aim should be concerned with helping pupils understand religions. His key term in this process is that such an understanding must be 'sympathetic' to those religions found both within society, and within the individual pupils. These religions might have had an influence in forming the lives of those individuals, and indeed,
affecting the worldwide community (Erricker et al, 1993, p. 2). This aim, Rankin suggests, follows from his contention that religious education should perceive itself in the same way as it perceives any other curriculum subject: 'it must be a part of a teacher's function to help equip students to meet the circumstances of living in society...' (Erricker et al, 1993, ibid.). Religious education contributes to this by aiming to teach world religions sympathetically, without passing on the prejudices with which we all grow as individuals.

It will be clear from this short and by no means complete survey of some of the aims, which a number of educationalists have found possible for religious education to appropriate, that no consensus exists between theorists' and teachers' views about what it is that religious education should be concerned. Three particular approaches have, or are gaining importance in religious education, however. They might loosely be termed the phenomenological, the experiential and the postmodern schools of religious education theory. This chapter will now go on to examine some of the chief proponents of these schools of thought.

One of the major educational theorists working in the field of religious education today is Dr Michael Grimmitt. Currently Director of the Centre for Religious Education Development and Research at the University of Birmingham, much of his work has centered around the construction of a theory of education which seeks to balance a phenomenological methodology with an applied use of the memories, concepts and values of those engaging in religious education (Grimmitt, 1987, pp. 249-256; cf Grimmitt, 1991, p. 77).

Grimmitt posits two kinds of knowledge, skills and attitudes present in religious education, and informed by differing and yet not completely divergent concerns, resulting in somewhat contradictory outcomes in the learning process.

On the one hand Grimmitt speaks of knowledge, skills and attitudes which are necessary to understand the social significance of religion in present-day society, and on the other hand he speaks of the knowledge, skills and attitudes which are promoted through the study of religion and which give rise to a development of the pupils' own sense of questioning, introspection and sense of self-identity. The former Grimmitt calls 'abilities in pure religion' and the latter he calls 'abilities in applied religion' (Grimmitt, 1991, ibid.).
Grimmitt suggests that it is not only possible, but also educationally desirable to establish links between the phenomenological and interactive methodologies. They provide opportunities for developing a whole range of 'competencies' in the pupil, and provide a common ground between the usually dialectically polarised worlds of the adolescent and the religious believer (Grimmitt, 1991, *ibid.*).

To understand Grimmitt more fully, we will now look at the concept of phenomenology, and analyse how Grimmitt uses this notion in the context of religious education. As will be seen readily below, the concept will play a crucial role in determining for Grimmitt the nature and articulation of social constructs, and of religious and spiritual consciousness.

**Phenomenology.**

In the study of religions the methodological practice known as phenomenology has attracted great attention from many significant scholars, including Joachim Wach (Wach, 1922, *passim*), E O James (James, 1950, *passim*), Friedrich Heiler (Heiler, 1961/1979, *passim*), W L Brennemann (Brennemann, 1982, *passim*), and Peter McKenzie (McKenzie, 1988, *passim*). As a working definition, phenomenology of religion may be described as a methodological principle which utilizes data from the history, theology, social and political contexts and psychology of religion, as well as from direct observation of the field of study. As such, some scholars have
asserted that the proper field for phenomenology of religion covers all phenomena that are claimed to be religious (Bleeker, 1971, p. 16).

Phenomenology can therefore be said to concern itself above all with the identification and description of religious behaviour and beliefs. Attempts at demonstrating or debating the existence of the reality of the religious focus of any of these phenomena must be discounted as being both pointless and irrelevant. The sole concern of phenomenology remains the personal narratives, experiences and actions of devotees.

An important point needs to be raised here about the relationship of phenomenology to tradition, and of the relationship of tradition to the actual actions and beliefs of devotees. In its descriptive function, phenomenology is required to address historical concerns of a religion as well as its narrative ones. Thus when the phenomenologist is engaged in the study of a religious phenomenon account must be paid both to its history and also to its subsequent development. But fieldworkers have often noted that the beliefs and practices of devotees often differ in emphasis, and sometimes in substance, from the historical tradition of the religion. They have argued that the phenomenological method enables a coherent whole to be made of the religious tradition by recognising both the historical (official) practices and beliefs, as well as the unofficial folk-religious expressions and experiences of devotees (see, for example, Bowman, 1992, pp. 6-8, 13f.).
It is in part as a response to meeting the challenge of producing a coherent theory of phenomenology that some scholars today prefer to advocate an open-ended phenomenology over and above the descriptive (and rather restricted) phenomenology described above. Thus John Shepherd, for example, points out quite correctly, that whereas the phenomenology evolved by Ninian Smart in the late sixties has been used erroneously by some as a closed descriptive system, the fact has been overlooked by them that it constitutes not a closed system for the study of religion, but simply presents the necessary conditions for the study of religion to take place. Smart’s phenomenology is not, and was never intended to be a prescriptive approach which denies a combination of both empathy and critical reflection on the part of the interpreter (Shepherd, 1994, pp. 11-16).

Hand in hand with the re-evaluation of phenomenology, is the relationship of phenomenology to anthropology. As early as 1971 the American scholar John Saliba suggested that not only were history of religions and phenomenology intimately linked, with phenomenology providing the tool whereby penetration "into the significance of any religious fact" is achieved, but that anthropology, in providing a means of placing the field of study into an analysis of societal life in general, enables an interest in the folk-religious elements of a religious tradition to be studied alongside the official tradition (Saliba, 1971, pp. 46ff.). This last point is one which Saliba notes had been largely ignored by religious historians, and,
by implication, also by phenomenologists (Saliba, 1971, *ibid.*). Marion Bowman's recent confirmation of the significance of folk-religion to phenomenologists serves to show Saliba's prescience on this point (Bowman, 1992, pp. 20-21).

How, then, does Michael Grimmitt understand phenomenology, and what is its significance to his theory of religious education?

*Micahel Grimmitt and Phenomenology.*

Grimmitt acknowledges that a phenomenological approach to religion, whilst undeniably useful as an instrumental tool with which to study religious traditions, beliefs and practices, retains in its system some inherent difficulties. Phenomenology in the field of religious education (as a process which describes and comments upon the expressions and experiences of religious faith) is a valid method for educational achievement, but needs to be treated circumspectly (Grimmitt, 1987, p. 46).

For whilst phenomenology is often said to be an objective value-free attempt to dispassionately relate concepts and beliefs in concrete terms,37 Grimmitt notes there are two large objections to the implications of this process being fully realised (Grimmitt, 1987, p. 40f.).

First is the objection often given by faith communities themselves. Phenomenology implies that - as objects of study - the religions may be treated with equality, whilst recognising that each tradition possesses distinct and unique features. Phenomenology is a
process which results in what Grimmitt calls an inevitable 'relativisation of religious values and beliefs' (Grimmitt, 1987, p. 40; see also Grimmitt, 1991, p. 78). But members of the religions themselves often raise the objection, especially if they belong to a revelatory faith, that their religious tradition is not only unique, but is also the only true religious faith. For such critics, the study of religion means a further exploration into the Truth. To religious adherents such as these, the ideals of phenomenology remain alien and invalid (Grimmitt, 1991, p. 79).

The second pertinent criticism of phenomenology noted by Grimmitt, questions the basis of that methodology's claim to be impartial and neutral-valued in its study of religious phenomena (Grimmitt, 1987, pp. 41f.). This criticism states that just as religious traditions are made up of their own ideologies and presuppositions, so too the phenomenological method is burdened by a secular outlook which operates in just as absolute a way as do the truth-claims of the religious traditions themselves. Indeed it could be said that phenomenology, because of its secular burden, is as much an ideology as a method. If this is so, then any effective study of a religious tradition becomes influenced by that ideological concern.36

Grimmitt recognises that these different criticisms are important, but believes that phenomenology still has a place in education as a methodological instrument placed within the context of the setting in which those being educated find themselves. He
believes, nevertheless, that as a necessary and sufficient structural base for religious education, phenomenology has failed (Grimmitt, 1987, pp. 209f.).

Firstly it is insufficient as a pure method of teaching religious education because it becomes an unrealistic exercise if conducted with pupils without due regard to their own experiences, needs and sense of value. Any study of religious culture or belief must take into account the *sitz im leben* of those who study it. If this is ignored, and the study of religion fails to make a point of contact, and thus falls short of meeting the needs and catching the interest of pupils, then no educational achievement will result at the end of the process. But, as Grimmitt points out, to provide for the needs and desires of learners through an interaction with the study of a religious tradition is to go against the very principles on which phenomenology is built (Grimmitt, 1987, pp. 209f).

Similarly, phenomenology attempts to discourage the introduction of the values and judgements of the practitioner as a means of understanding religious belief (Saliba, 1971, p. 51). Laudable as this may be, Grimmitt notes that successful child-centered learning requires that 'children's immediate existential situations and experiences provide a basis for all aspects of learning' (Grimmitt, 1987, p. 209). To ensure this happens it is necessary that the child's own values and judgements are employed in dialogue with the traditions which are to be explored. Those values will need to be used both to understand and to evaluate those traditions. If a child
cannot be taught to be constructively critical and open, Grimmitt argues, then that child has not developed educationally,\textsuperscript{39} nor in terms of their human existence (Grimmitt, 1987, pp. 210-211).

In other words, Grimmitt suggests that a balance has to be achieved, whereby it is both recognised and accepted by religious adherents and phenomenologists alike that neither group can claim to have an ideological monopoly on the way pupils within a learning context begin both to experience and to respond to the religious beliefs, rituals and practices of believers. The way pupils come to learn about and 'understand' those beliefs will be qualitatively different from the way believers will 'understand' them (Grimmitt, 1987, p. 46). The context for pupil learning will be decidedly secular. That is a given, which delineates and limits the educational use of religious traditions in schools. It also raises the question of how the religions which are studied do indeed relate to the educational context in which they are found.

A disjuncture exists, therefore between the experiences of children who are being educated in a secular and systematic process, and the experiences of the religious adherents of the tradition being studied. One point of contention lies in the concept of understanding. A child who is learning phenomenologically may come to an understanding of the significance of a certain action or belief on the part of a devotee to the religious tradition, but at no point does that phenomenological method of itself allow the child to understand the religious experience of the devotee from within
the religious tradition. To do so would mean phenomenology would have to cross the barrier of value-judgements and ontological truth - something which phenomenology by definition cannot allow. The child must remain an outsider to the religious tradition.

Grimmott next draws a distinction between what phenomenology achieves, that is, 'learning about religion', and what religious education achieves, that is, 'learning from religion' (Jackson, 1982, P. 143). What does Grimmott mean by the latter term?

First, Grimmott suggests that by learning from religion, individuals are able to gain insights into their own life-story, their situation, values and beliefs. They are able to evaluate, prioritize and make significant the commitments and ideologies within which they exist and interact. This inevitably involves a judgement and appraisal of what they have been studying (Jackson, 1982, p. 143).

Second, Grimmott notes that secular religious education is of its nature humanist, even if some of its practitioners (both teachers and learners) may not be humanists themselves. As a result, the governing principles behind any educational activity that is undertaken by these groups will necessarily be ones which lead first and foremost to some of the achievable goals of secular education. Religion relates to this educational process in an instrumental way. This clearly differs from the theologian's principal task of witnessing to the 'Truth' by an enquiring, self-critical awareness of the presence of the Divine, and a reflection in faith of that
presence for themselves and for their community (Grimmitt, 1987, pp. 257-261).

Social constructs and 'human givens'.

It will be clear from the above that much disagreement will be found between the secular educationalist and the theologian. Each begins with assumptions which are at variance with each other's starting point, and each seems to travel along a different road.

Yet there still remain points of contact between the theologian and the secular educationalist. Both groups make use of experiential models in their approach to religion (for example, the interactive involvement of pupils with materials demonstrated in the 'Religion in the Service of the Child Project' in the University of Birmingham (Grimmitt, 1991, p. 79; Grimmitt, Grove et al, 1991, passim) or the experience of the Divine in the life of the believer). Both groups also make use of contextually determined norms. For the secular educationalist, these norms will be mediated through the social constructs in which individuals live, such as the family and local, plural and world-wide communities, and will determine to a large degree the kinds of learning outcomes one would anticipate as a result (Grimmitt, 1987, p. 256). For the theologian, however, these norms will be mediated through a revelation of the Divine, and through the faith community to which the theologian belongs (Dulles, 1992, pp. 19-35).

Grimmitt works from the notion that there are certain social constructs which are unchanging, but which provide norms through
which his concept of reality is worked out. Grimmitt calls these constructs 'human givens', and goes on to describe them as 'universal or necessary truths of an anthropological kind contingent upon the human condition being as it happens to be, or...facts about human life which are constant, irrespective of culture and ideology' (Grimmitt, 1987, p. 69, his emphasis). Included in this human given is the holding of beliefs through acts of faith.

Grimmitt recognises that many sociologists and social anthropologists would criticise the inclusion of the capacity to hold beliefs in faith as a human given, choosing instead to uphold the rigorous principle that no perception of reality can be value-free, since all forms of society have ideological and environmental factors playing upon them, thereby reducing the human autonomy of choice.

In response Grimmitt suggests that this is radically to fail to appreciate the dualism inherent in the meanings applied to the word 'human' (Grimmitt, 1987, p. 74). For just as one is born human (that is, as part of a species), so also one can become human through the emotional and spiritual growth one encounters in one's life.

Grimmitt goes on to stress that he is not saying here that it is a necessary human given that all human beings should be capable of 'holding religious beliefs by an act of religious faith', but a faith commitment that could be either religious or humanistic. Its basis would be found in the human freedom which enables us to make conscious choices leading to evaluations and subsequent commitments
for or against the chosen reality. For Grimmitt, the 'religious faith response' is influenced through the 'cultural form' which religion takes (Grimmitt, 1987, pp. 90-91, 92).  

Grimmitt's constructs are derived from secularist ideologies and principles. His refusal to engage with the specific truth claims of a religious tradition on the level of epistemological enquiry, and his insistence that his approach to religious traditions should be informed solely in instrumental terms, suggests that, despite his criticisms of phenomenology, Grimmitt remains firmly wedded to that methodology. Religious traditions are not to be treated as bearers of truth, but as systems of thought which reflect what Grimmitt believes to be the human capacity to believe: 'whatever intrinsic worth may be claimed for religion by religious adherents, religious educators are concerned with religion's instrumental worth' (Grimmitt, 1987, p. 259).

But in conjunction with the ideological values which Grimmitt sees in the culture and theology of religious belief, he finds also an educational context for religion. To approach religion as an instrumental system, helps the inquirer to begin to understand the human condition (Grimmitt, 1987, p. 260). The study of religion provides grounds for understanding the human capacity to be religious. If, as Grimmitt suggests, the theology and belief of each tradition is not to be regarded by the educationalist as a noetic source of truth, but is to be seen, rather, as a further example of that tradition's capacity to demonstrate the human 'given' of
belief, then that theology itself can contribute to this phenomenology, yet cannot be used as the sole rationale for education. This is because in his model the principal setting for this development of understanding remains the educational learning process. This process relates to the human capacity to interpret and rationalise the human condition; a capacity which is as much a 'given' as the others 'givens' Grimmitt mentions (Grimmitt, 1987, p. 260).

Grimmitt uses his constructs, therefore, as a means of engaging in the educational process above all other activities. His rationale remains humanistic in outlook and secular in aim. His statement that 'all religions provide a view of the human and a vision of the goal to which human beings should aspire' is used to assert an educational legitimation for his humanist rationale for religious education (Grimmitt, 1987, p. 261).

A critical reflection of Grimmitt's theories.

Grimmitt acknowledges that his own ideological standpoint is influenced by the cultural and educational milieu in which he finds himself. Given the secularist base from which his approach develops, he limits his conceptual theory to the narrative structures of description, and to the auto-psychological response of those who undergo the learning process. Phenomenological methodology, albeit adapted by Grimmitt, is applied to religion, but is used in the context of human development: we live through our experiences, which
inform our personal development. Similarly, the religious development of adherents of those religions is also influenced by these human experiences. Educationally, these experiences, which Grimmitt refers to as 'further examples of human "givens"' can provide a way of meeting both the needs of pupils in understanding their own experiences of meaning and value, whilst retaining the essential integrity of the religious tradition in its own experience of being studied and 'understood' in the process of religious education (Grimmitt, 1987, p. 231).

Grimmitt claims that the secular category of the 'human given' is capable of transcending the norms of a person's capacity to perceive reality, and is thereby able to change that person by means of self-adjustment, by enabling the person to think rationally about morality and then act upon it,42 and by allowing the person to go beyond 'self' to a higher and more humanised concept of being.

However, Grimmitt has failed to show adequately why a 'human given' should act in the way he claims it does. Nor has he shown why that action should be a worthwhile pursuit in itself. Now whilst it might be shown that some acquisition of knowledge by the learner might be achievable through a careful use of the categories which he advocates, Grimmitt fails to demonstrate the logic of his further claim, that the acquisition of knowledge is beneficial or morally good. In other words, Grimmitt fails to tell us why in secular terms his conceptual system of coming to know is indeed worth pursuing
over any other; why are his set of conceptual norms either 'good' in themselves, or good within a universe of possible goods?

In effect, this means that whereas Grimmitt works from the assumption that 'human givens' are non-metaphysical, the value invested in those 'givens', and an absence of a real justification for those values, do indeed imply a metaphysical context for them (Grimmitt, 1987, pp.74-77). Without an objective explanation of them, and a moral justification for them, however, the ontological basis for these 'givens' remains unclear and open to speculation.

It is the contention of this paper that Michael Grimmitt's work rests upon the mistaken conviction that 'human givens' are not of the same order as metaphysical statements. The present author believes that Grimmitt's systematic presentation of an instrumental form of religious education may be disputed, however, because it might be shown that metaphysics does indeed lie at the heart of his theoretical structure. This is a serious challenge to Grimmitt's conceptual work, and is one which secular religious education as a whole needs to address.
2. The Experiential School: David Hay, John Hammond and the developmental experientialists.

The experiential approach to religious education is closely related to the kind of phenomenology suggested by the theories of Michael Grimmett, discussed above (cf. Hammond, Hay et al, 1990, pp. 6-7, passim). In 1990, one of the leading exponents of the school of experientialism, Dr David Hay, reflecting on society’s attitudes towards religious awareness wrote,

'Once people are convinced there are sound theoretical reasons to dismiss it as illusory, religion tends to be pushed out of consciousness or, if it does manifest itself, it has to be interpreted away as an aberration.

Thus a majority of children, when they arrive in school for the first time, will already have assimilated many of the concepts that underpin this dismissal' (Hay, 1990, p. 96).

This, according to Hay, is the reason why it is essential, if religious education is to be a meaningful exercise, for it to seek to retrieve the 'inner space' of individual religious awareness. This, Hay continues, is something 'children in our culture need to be taught' (Hay, 1990, pp. 96, 106). To this extent, Hay is setting out the religious education agenda for the 1990's. Moreover, this agenda does not apply merely to experiential religious education alone, but also, given the increasing popularity of the experiential approach among religious education practitioners, to the larger constituency of religious education research and practice, as a
whole. Religious awareness - the inner space which is to be found in each individual, if looked for deeply enough - becomes a crucial, and sometimes self-assumed presupposition for experientialists. It is a key concept for them, which they are required to establish both as evidently 'real' within the human sphere of life, and also as a valid methodological presupposition for educational practice. For from this concept flows the entire superstructure of experiential religious education theory. Put conversely, if inner space or religious awareness, as defined by the experientialists is a demonstrably false concept, then the entire edifice of experiential religious education falls. How that concept is defended by experientialists, and how their theoretical superstructure builds up from its presupposed reality, is the subject of this section of the chapter.

The background: the initial work of the Religious Experience Research Unit, and its bearing on experiential approaches to religious education.

One of the major difficulties for phenomenologists, psychologists and sociologists alike is the question of how to define 'religious experience'. Even before it becomes possible to examine whether religious experiences actually exist, it becomes necessary for the educationalist to define the terms which will be used in studying them. Hay has indicated the significance of the work of Alister
Hardy and Edward Robinson, in suggesting answers to these questions (Hay, 1990, pp. 29-39).

Hardy, erstwhile Professor of Zoology at the University of Hull, and subsequently holder of the Linacre Chair of Zoology at the University of Oxford, became particularly interested in studying what he termed a 'spiritual reality', which was, to his mind, a 'harmony of experience'. This reality, he believed, was a valid element in human nature itself. In a lecture delivered in 1948, after Hardy had been elected to his Oxford Chair, he suggested that there existed a dichotomy between the materialism of scientific theory, valourised to the point of deification, and the inherent desire in human beings for a meaning or synthesis to life which included the notion of the spiritual: an intangible sense of awareness of the unity of the individual and the world (cited in Hay, 1990, p. 21).

Later, after retiring from Oxford, Hardy developed his ideas more fully in his Gifford Lectures of 1966. Human beings, he suggested, possessed an inherently religious nature. Acceptance of the reality of this experience was being denied, however, because of the prevailing scientific secularism of the world in which human beings grew up. At the heart of the issue, for Hardy, lay the question of religious awareness. If, Hardy reasoned, he was correct in ascribing religious experience as a reality in human life, then it must be possible to observe that experience universally among human beings. Accordingly, Hardy began to devise a 'natural religious history' of
human beings (Hay, 1990, pp. 22ff.). In effect, Hardy was setting out his ground plan to map out the human experience of the sacred. What did Hardy mean by this term?

Hardy had become interested particularly, in the work of a number of anthropologists. The ways in which he understood the term 'sacred' hinged on the ways he understood the work of these social scientists. Of specific importance to him was the work of Emile Durkheim. In 1912 Durkheim had published a significant sociological study of religion called *The Elementary Forms of Religious Experience*. In it Durkheim looked especially at the concept of totemism; tribal religious structures which employed the use of symbolic sacred objects to unite the clan or group. Durkheim's general thesis was that the origins of all religions arose from some form of totemism. Religion was to be understood ultimately, as a projection of social experience. That experience was itself totemic.

But Durkheim adds that this is not to say that religious experiences are simply psycho-social manifestations of materialist phenomena. They retain, according to Durkheim a fundamental otherness about them, which make them unique. Individuals do not find pseudo scientific answers to the meaning and function of the world in which they find themselves, through a religious experience. Rather, they are directed through these experiences to act in a certain way, to live in a particular manner, to be a specific person. Religious experience, for Durkheim, is not simply a response
to a material cause, rather, it is more than the phenomena encountered (cf. Hay, 1990, p. 24; Durkheim, 1961, *passim*).45

According to Hay, Hardy used Durkheim's approach to define what he understood by the 'sacred'. Thus, for Hardy, the 'sacred' did not necessarily denote 'God', but was understood instead to point to 'a reality beyond the self...', something which was 'as biologically real as, for example, the experience of being in love' (Hay, 1990, p. 26). To further his research on this concept, in 1969 Hardy set up the Religious Experience Research Unit (now known as the Alister Hardy Research Centre), to explore and classify the varieties of religious experience.

The Unit collected together large amounts of data on religious experience, and Hardy's interest in both adolescent and childhood accounts of such experience has led Hay to suggest that the information which was gathered indicated that children were just as capable of having religious experiences as more mature people. This leads Hay to suggest that those theorists who define religious experience within the confines of the social construction of reality, (such as, for example, Berger and Luckmann), fail to recognise the significance of Hardy's evidence. There may be serious grounds for doubt, therefore, over the validity of their theories. Social construction theorists, Hay suggests, would argue that the prevalence of religious experiences among more mature subjects indicates that a cultural and linguistic learning exercise has gone on: the subjects 'learn' or appropriate the 'right' social language
and conventions, in order then to interpret certain experiences that they might have, as being religious ones. If, as Hardy's evidence seems to contra-indicate, very young children are capable of having religious experiences before they have appropriated to themselves the relevant cultural and social conventions that allow a religious interpretation of the phenomena to be made by them, then the theory of the social construction of religious experience would seem to be in jeopardy (Hay, 1990, p. 32).

This possibility led, in turn to the work of the educationalist Edward Robinson. For Hay, as for all the experientialists, Robinson's efforts were of great significance. His achievement lay in the fact that he began to question the received wisdom of psychologists such as Piaget and Goldman, that religious intuition, understanding and experience occurred in young adults from about the age of twelve or thirteen, and that before that time, children possessed neither sufficient maturity nor the necessary stages of intellectual development to have 'religious experiences' (Hay, 1990, p. 33). To this extent, Robinson follows Hardy in seeing in children an innate ability to have religious experiences.46

These experiences Robinson sought to classify as "self-authenticating" (Hay, 1990, ibid.). By this, Robinson meant a number of things. First the experience was unique to the individual, to the extent that it made a profound and original impact upon the child. Second, they bring to the child a self-awareness; a recognition of both who one is, and what unity exists
between oneself and the world (Hay, 1990, ibid.). At its heart, Hay contends, lies the issue of encounter: in some way, often beyond the ability of language to describe this event, the individual encounters an experience which is so real to them, and with which they enter into such a profound relationship, that they are able to validate both the experience and themselves. For Robinson, then, religious experience is a reality (Hay, 1990, p. 34).

It is from this background, that experiential religious education draws its initial structural base. For, as Hay has noted, if both Hardy and Robinson were correct in interpreting the data which they had collected, as indicating the existence of a self-validating or self-authenticating series of religious experiences in children, then this has profound and serious implications for the nature of religious education. 'The investigations made by Edward Robinson...suggest that religious education has seriously fallen short in the task of helping pupils to apprehend this very basic experiential dimension of religion' (Hay, 1990, p. 39). How experiential religious education approaches the challenge, follows below.

An experiential theory of religious education.

In the influential handbook New Methods in RE Teaching: an experiential approach, the aims of experiential religious education are presented unambiguously as a two-fold task. The first task is to recognize the validity of the religious experiences of individuals,
such as, for example, those reported in the data discussed above. The second task points out that action is required to achieve this recognition;

'Religious education must perform two tasks if it is to face the question of the religious believer's intention squarely. First, it must honestly present religion for what it claims to be - the response of human beings to what they experience as sacred. Secondly, religious educators must help pupils to open their personal awareness to these aspects of ordinary human experience which religious people take particularly seriously' (Hammond, Hay et al, 1990, p. 11).

Both propositions in this statement of aims derive from the implications which arise for religious education from both the early and the more recent work of the Alister Hardy Research Centre, discussed above.

Thus, in 1978 and 1985, two survey polls indicated that roughly one third of the sample population had stated that they had encountered a religious experience in their lives. In 1987, a follow-up poll indicated that as many as one half of the British population had at one time or another had a religious experience, which they had interpreted as such (evidence cited in Hay, 1990, p. 79; see also Hay, 1987, passim, for a fuller interpretation of the survey data).

The first task of experiential religious education, then, is to present religion as honestly as it can, for what it purports to be - a human response to experiences which are interpreted as being sacred. Evidence from the survey data seems to indicate the presence of a prevalent number of common themes through which individuals
express their interpretation of this 'sacred' experience (Hammond, Hay, *et al.*, 1990, p. 202). In a descending order of frequency amongst positive replies in the survey data, these include a sense of:

- a patterning of events
- an awareness of the presence of God
- an awareness of receiving help in answer to prayer
- an awareness of a guiding presence (not usually called 'God')
- an awareness of the presence of the dead
- an awareness of a sacred presence in nature
- an awareness of an evil presence
- an awareness that all things are one (Hammond, Hay, *et al.*, *ibid.*).

Similarly, there seems to exist specific common areas of religious experience among those who are specifically religious: ritual, in which moments of sacred history are relived so that they take on a renewed sacred significance; sacred literatures, where interpretations of sacred time are made which speak as a direct experience of the divine to the individual; reality itself, which becomes for the individual a direct experience of the sacred, and, prayer and meditation, in which the individual believes himself to be entering more deeply into the sacred reality (Hammond, Hay, *et al.*, 1990, p. 12).

It is argued by the experientialists that all these experiences need to be recognized by religious education, if it is to engage meaningfully with the issue of religious experience: 'To concentrate on externals such as discussions of doctrine, moral stances, pilgrimage, rituals and so on, is to ignore the most central issue
in religion - its spirituality' (Hammond, Hay, et al, 1990, p. 13). Elsewhere, Hay and Hammond write that experiential religious education 'is about using, and so valuing and exploring, one's own experience as a way of knowing better other's experiences of religion' (Hay and Hammond, 1992, p. 145). To do this, they argue, requires the teacher and student to engage with the 'inner'. Using a Tillichian metaphor, they comment: 'Inner is about depth. It is to be contrasted with surface knowledge, the facile and the superficial' (Hay and Hammond, 1992, ibid.).

To understand this concept, it is necessary first to understand why a purely objective appraisal of reality will not do for experientialists, when they define religious education in the light of their beliefs about religious experience. This dissatisfaction stems most substantially from a mistrust, on the part of experientialists, of the ways in which modern science has created the cultural secularism with which most people now understand or explain reality. The problem with this outlook is that so often it seems to forget that it uses metaphysical language to express it own interpretation of reality. The world is not merely interpreted as if it is constructed from atomic and sub-atomic particles, but also, the assumption seems to be made by science that these ways of explaining reality - metaphors for an objective reality beyond complete comprehension - are no longer to be understood merely as metaphors, but as part of the material reality itself (cf. Hammond, Hay et al, 1990, p. 13). Similarly, experientialists note that
consciousness too seems to be understood by secular-science as if it also resulted from this material interpretation of reality. This attitude to the material basis to reality, however, is not simply treated by scientists as theory, but, suggest the experientialists, is used by them as a presupposed assumption to explain all of reality in its every phenomena (Hammond, Hay et al, 1990, *ibid.*).

This presupposition, experientialists argue, has affected society's perception of reality. So much concentration is paid to the outward objective world, that the inner, subjective world of experience is subordinated, or even ignored, in its own right. If the survey data discussed above is correct, this would suggest that a whole area of human reality, a lost inner core, is becoming alienated from society's understanding of it (Hammond, Hay *et al*, 1990, *ibid.*). This process of alienation clearly has implications for religious education.

To this extent, and insofar as experiential religious education understands itself as something which seeks to retrieve this lost inner dimension in students, the religious educator is asked to act as a 'deindoctrinator', working to change the material-metaphorical approach of secular science (Hammond, Hay *et al*, 1990, p. 15). Given that the findings of the poll surveys, as well as the work of the Alister Hardy Research Centre, indicate that a large number of the population may have had, from puberty onwards, and possibly earlier, what they interpret to be religious experiences, it is very likely that a significant number of young adolescents will also have had
these kinds of experiences. Because of the prevailing secular bias of society's materialist understanding of reality, these experiences will tend to be discounted by those children, or interpreted materially. However, experientialists assert that such a view is in itself doctrinaire. In reply to it, experiential religious education seeks, therefore, to present a wider vision of reality: 'What it does is to demonstrate that there is more than one perspective on reality' (Hammond, Hay et al, 1990, p. 15).

Two particular aims for experiential religious education may therefore be identified. First, religious education seeks to enable pupils to become aware of their own inner experiences, to respect and value them for what those experiences are, and so to learn and respect the experiences of others. Second, (and crucially, in the light of the experientialists' critique of the breakdown of metaphor in scientific discourse), religious education must enable the role of metaphor to be understood correctly, in its application to the interpretation which people give to the experiences they have had. This enables religious education to remain firmly non-confessional; the child does not enter into religious practice, but becomes aware both of the power of experience in peoples' lives, and of the significance of metaphorical language which is used to explain these experiences (Hammond, Hay et al, 1990, p. 17).\textsuperscript{47}
A critical reflection of experientialist theories.

A number of major questions arise, however, with regard to how far the experiential approach might be justified in the name of religious education. At issue is the question of inwardness. In a major article which presents a critique of the experiential methodology, Adrian Thatcher argues that experientialist religious education suffers from seriously defective philosophical assumptions and presuppositions about inwardness, which render the methodology unsafe as a means of doing religious education (Thatcher, 1991, pp. 22-27). If experiential religious education asserts the tautology that all human experience is experienced by humans, then, Thatcher argues, the methodology requires an inner world to exist, where some series of internal events act as a parallel to a series of events in the outside, objective world. This latter suggestion, says Thatcher, smacks of a philosophical dualism which has been dispensed with since the time of Wittgenstein, and, latterly, Derrida (Thatcher, 1991, pp. 22-23).

Thatcher's critique is based, therefore, upon the key philosophical issue of the way in which experiential religious education understands experience and inwardness. In essence, Thatcher finds the experientialist approach to this problem to be grounded in the uncritical epistemology of the Enlightenment (Thatcher, 1991, p. 22).

Thus, Thatcher argues, experiential theory presupposes, in the same way as Descartes, that there must exist an inner world or
dimension to which the reality of the outer world is communicated. For Descartes, the existence of this inner world becomes a necessity in order for humans to make sense of an external world. When the first doubts arose regarding the certainty of our knowledge of the external world as it actually is, Descartes began to question in a fundamental way the relationship that was said to exist between a sentient being and the world in which that being comes to attain knowledge (Anscombe and Geach, 1970, p. 265). Descartes suggested, accordingly, that there must exist an inner, private world where knowledge of the outer external world takes place. The immaterial, inner world thus becomes the subject for knowledge of the object, which, for Descartes, was the external world. The inner world becomes the place where knowledge of the outer world - as it actually is - takes place (Anscombe and Geach, 1970, pp. 109ff.; cf. Thatcher, 1991, p. 22).

However, this Cartesian dualism, which Thatcher finds prevalent in the approach to knowledge of the world by experientialist theorists, (Thatcher, 1991, *ibid.*), is an area in which postmodernism has undoubtedly been of great value as a debunker of old, and in this case falsifiable views. Not only do we need to deconstruct our world, but also, we need to deconstruct ourselves. No absolute knowledge of the world as it is, is made available to us. Indeed, some have argued that there is no 'self' available to apprehend the world in the first place (e.g. Solomon, 1988, *passim*, cited also in Thatcher, 1991, p. 27).
A particular criticism of the experientialists' key concept of inner awareness, relates to the question of how we come to understand meaning. Thatcher offers the example of Wittgenstein's theory of language games to show where experiential theory might fall down. Wittgenstein would argue that it is impossible for me to express my sensations publicly, until, or unless there existed a shared common language and concomitant shared conceptual understanding of that language, to which each individual had equal access. Any description of a sensation must, therefore depend upon social training and gamesmanship. The result of this, then, would be to suggest that meaning is publicly learned, not communicated through sense-experience (Wittgenstein, 1986, §§ 243, 290-291; cf. Thatcher, 1991, p. 23). Given that one of the first aims of experientialist religious education is to suggest that the meaning of religious functions and attitudes of believers can be understood by pupils through a heightening of those pupils' self-awareness of the 'inner', that is, the suggested statement that religious education should 'open their personal awareness to those aspects of ordinary human experience which religious people take especially seriously' (Hammond, Hay et al, 1990, p. 11), then this clearly stands in opposition to Wittgenstein's theory of language games – and with most late twentieth century philosophical enquiry. If Wittgenstein is right, then experiential religious education has aims which are impossible to achieve.
In a reply to Thatcher's critique, Hay and Hammond argue that experiential religious education does not operate with the dualist assumptions of which Thatcher accuses them. Rather, they assert, they are concerned the significance of depth for religious education: 'The key to the process is taking seriously one's own experience' (Hay and Hammond, 1992, p. 145). Talk about depth, they continue, is not talk about a hidden inner world which is in some way independent of reality. It is instead a metaphor for a deeper attentiveness and mindfulness. It is through the intellectual journey, moving in greater depths, they suggest that it becomes possible to understand the meanings of expressions and experiences other than one's own. These experiences, they argue, must include religious ones (Hay and Hammond, 1992, p. 146).

The question remains, however, as to how one can reach an understanding of the meanings of experiences which happen to a variety of individuals, without reducing that understanding to mere subjectivity. Any possibility of achieving a shared, common understanding of meaning would be immediately lost to a subjective interpretation. If, as Hay and Hammond assert, religious education seeks 'to demonstrate that there are many possible ways of interpreting the reality in which we find ourselves' (Hay and Hammond, 1992, p. 146), then it becomes theoretically impossible to know whether what one asserts to be the religious meaning of another individual, is, in fact the case. Truth and falsity must necessarily become subjective in the experiential method. To what extent value can therefore be ascribed to it, is a moot point.

At first sight, it might seem paradoxical and, indeed, incongruous to include the work of a theological school within a section devoted to secular, postmodern religious education. It is the case, however, that the 'Sea of Faith' group of theologians represents in terms of traditional theism a decidedly secular and atheistic position, which arises directly as a result of their postmodern reflections. Accordingly, their place is firmly to be found on the secular side of the debate. In addition, although the work of the 'Sea of Faith' theologians has generally been strictly theological, some recent studies, debates and conferences organised by them have begun to be concerned with areas other than theology. This section will outline the postmodern secular theology of the 'Sea of Faith' movement, and will give some indications of the possibilities such a theology presents for secular religious education.

The growth of the 'Sea of Faith' movement.

In 1984 the then Dean of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, Dr Don Cupitt was invited by the British Broadcasting Corporation to write and present a documentary series on the changes in Christian belief which had occurred during the past one hundred years. Choosing for his motif a line from a poem from the nineteenth-century poet
Matthew Arnold, Cupitt called his series of programmes *The Sea of Faith*. The documentary was to prove to be a high water-mark for religious broadcasting, and catapulted Cupitt into the public arena of religious debate. However, Cupitt's views were already familiar to those who had read his seminal work *Taking Leave of God* (Cupitt, 1980). The series and accompanying book (Cupitt, 1985a) both extended the scope of his earlier study, and simplified its language to suit a wider audience.

At the end of 1984 a group of this audience, led by Ronald Pearse and members of the Anglican Diocese of Leicester met with Cupitt in Cambridge, to suggesting the setting up, first, of a conference, and then, of a movement or network of like-minded individuals, which could act as a forum for theological debate and reflection (Hart, 1994, pp. 24-25). The first conference took place in 1988. Subsequent conferences, newsletters and publications followed. A network was quickly set up, and by the end of 1995, a number of theologians were beginning to write under a 'Sea of Faith' label (see, for example, Shaw, 1987; Dawes, 1992; Freeman, 1993; MacDonald Smith, 1993; Hart, 1993; Geering, 1994; Hart, 1995).

*The theology of the 'Sea of Faith' movement.*

The theology of the 'Sea of Faith' movement arises out of the postmodern complexities of late twentieth-century intellectual and spiritual enquiry. At its centre lies the question of the status of reality in the context of the social, sexual, political, moral and
spiritual relationships of individuals as they try to make sense of themselves and the world in which they live. In the section above, it will have been seen how Wittgenstein's linguistic theories were employed by critics of the experiential methodology, to show how it becomes impossible to speak of a meaning for reality outside of the linguistic conventions which are commonly shared by individuals in order that sense may be made of reality. The theology of the 'Sea of Faith' movement also uses Wittgenstein's theory, to construct a philosophical approach to this question, which is called by them 'non-realism' (Hart, 1993, pp. 1-27).

David Hart argues that the ideological failures of the post-War (and, post-Cold War) orders has led to an accelerated feeling of disillusionment with the claims of those who assert their authority or capability to guide or save humanity from disaster and despair. The world of calm assurance which might have existed in the past has long since gone: 'No one group has the right to believe itself absolutely correct in its beliefs or to be the only community in existence with a God-given identity' (Hart, 1993, p. 6).

This loss of belief extends itself into language too. If the cultural relativity which Hart advocates is accepted, then this has profound effects on the ways in which we interpret value and meaning through language. The philosopher D Z Phillips, whom Don Cupitt refers to approvingly, has developed Wittgenstein's concept of the language game, by arguing that religious expressions are themselves self-contained units which operate under their own presuppositions.
Religious language is autonomous; questions of veracity or truthfulness are strictly limited to its internal and limited meaning. Cupitt asserts that

'We can show how it works, but there is no sense in the idea that one might be able to step outside the limits of religious language and check its accuracy by comparing the religious representation of God with the original' (Cupitt, 1982, p. 18; cf. also, Cupitt, 1985b, p. 172f.).

There is, in other words, no 'original' with which to be compared. No meaning lies outside the religious language which is used by the various religious traditions. There is no ontic reality beyond human expression. Outsidelessness becomes, therefore, a key concept in non-realist theology and philosophy.52

What, then of the religious language game? How does this non-realist view of religious language affect talk about God?

*Non-realism and religious language.*

In his study of the human quest for religious meaning, the New Zealand theologian Lloyd Geering describes religion as 'the creation of meaning' (cf. Geering, 1994, pp. 101-118). This anthropologically charged image underlines much of the non-realist philosophy of religion. 'We live', Geering continues, 'in a time of cultural and religious change' (Geering, 1994, p. 100). Accordingly, it is no longer possible to assume one single definition for religion, and thereby say what it should be. To do any other would be the height of arrogance; there would always remain the risk of alienating one
individual or groups's self-perception of their religious life, through misrepresenting what they believed their religion to be (Geering, 1994, ibid.).

To support his argument, Geering gives the example of Wilfred Cantwell Smith's theory of religion. For Smith, religion is less to do with reference to specific doctrines or beliefs, which can be made up into identifiable lists, and more to do with the fact that people can be passionately committed to ideals and causes.53

To this notion, Geering suggests, Smith brings the question of the beliefs and attitudes of individuals. These, accrue to human commitments as a form of "cumulative tradition" (Geering, 1994, p. 102f.). Geering comments that here Smith is close to suggesting that beliefs and attitudes are nothing else than culture. Indeed, as Geering notes, religion and culture are indeed inseparable concepts, which may, however, be distinguished from each other. Following Tillich, Geering argues that religion should be understood as the inexhaustible creative element within any culture. It should be understood as providing the ultimacy of culture, without which, culture would have no depth: "Thus culture manifests in visible or concrete forms the products of the religious quest, namely, the quest for meaning" (Geering, 1994, p. 103).54

The implication in all this is, of course, that as the demands of culture changes, so too does religion change. The traditional image of an unchanging, objective theism, containing revealed and certain truths is equally subject to these changes.
Don Cupitt has indicated what this might mean for traditional religious realism, and in particular, with one aspect of religious realism, namely what Cupitt calls 'supernaturalism'. This, Cupitt suggests

'was a combination of the ancient religious distinction between flesh and spirit with Plato's distinction between the world of sense experience, the world around us, and the higher, unchanging world of ideas' (Cupitt, 1992, p. 12).

For Cupitt then, realism implies a fixed, real, objective world 'out there'; an objective order against which human life and action may be judged (Cupitt, 1992, ibid.). This, Cupitt suggests, broke down largely not as a result of the rise of scientism (as opposed to the views of experientialists such as David Hay, discussed in the section above), but instead, because of the rapid growth from the beginning of the nineteenth century of an awareness of change in society and nature. From 1800, Cupitt asserts, individuals found themselves becoming profoundly more aware than before of dialectical ways of thinking, of the gradual development and alteration of social relationships, of shifts in culture and perceptions of the world (Cupitt, 1992, p. 13). Religion also, then, becomes part of this changing scenery.55

If language, as understood by the non-realist 'Sea of Faith' theologians, is correct, then the idea of 'an objective, ready-ordered cosmos out there and independent of our minds, has come to an end' (Cupitt, 1985b, p. 177). Language, human self-perception and the apprehension of the world all become relativized.
Our world exists only as our world, not as some reality independent of our perception of it.

Similarly, talk of God, creation and an interaction between an objective God and an objective world must also collapse. God can no longer be understood as an independent focus for reality. Instead, God becomes interiorized, or subjectivized into the self; 'Just as the only world there can be for us now is our world, so the only god there can be for us now is our god' (Cupitt, 1985b, p. 181). Religious meaning itself thereby becomes relativized, and human.

It will be seen from this analysis of non-realist, secular theology that language and meaning lies at the heart of the process. Wittgenstein figures prominently in that linguistic model, but, as Cupitt himself has noted, non-realism's greatest debt is to Kant (Cupitt, 1985b, pp. 209-210). For Kant, no direct knowledge of God is possible. We are forced, therefore, to posit an 'Ideal of Reason' in its place. God becomes the ethical content to that ideal, a pole star, a guide, but not a reality independent of our knowing it. 'God, then, is a unifying symbol of the goals of our intellectual and moral life' (Cupitt, 1985b, p. 210). Lloyd Geering goes further, equating God with a symbol for Gaia-earth:

"If we choose to speak of God, we shall be using this term to focus on all that we supremely value and on the goals which make human existence meaningful and worthwhile...

This God is in the physical earth of which we are a tiny part. Even more, this God is to be found in all living creatures. Most of all, however, this God is rising to self-awareness in
the (as yet) confused collective consciousness of the global human community. This is tomorrow's God...' (Geering, 1994, pp. 235, 236).

The non-realism of the 'Sea of Faith' theology, and secular religious education.

Given the secular, humanist basis for non-realism, and given also the strictly cultural and anthropological foundation for religious language and its concepts, any particular aims for non-realistic religious education must follow those same postmodern concerns. The non-realistic contention that there is no objective reality of which it is possible to have certain knowledge, has a profound significance for the aims of religious education.

In order that those implications might be explored in the light of secular non-realistic theology, this study will turn now to a consideration of the question of meaning and value for religious education in the light of this form of postmodernism. From a non-realistic perspective, then, is religious education a good thing? Can it achieve anything worthwhile?

These may seem at first to be curious and odd questions to be asking. They highlight, however, a profoundly serious issue which arises as a result of non-realism. Indeed, this problem haunts nearly all postmodern thought (cf. Soper, 1991, pp. 122-124). In religious education, the question of value takes on a new significance. If religious education can said to have an aim, (which this thesis presumes to be the case), then it must imply that a
certain amount of value or purpose exists in the actions of doing religious education. Non-realism, however, is unable to assert that religious education can have an objective value other than that found in an interiorised, subjective sense. The aims of religious education are not good in themselves, because there can no longer be any objective sense of 'good' or 'bad'. All is subjective.

The aims of religious education, as they arise from this perspective, are equally subjective. They are aims only insofar as they become our aims. Religious education itself is an actual process only insofar as it becomes our process. In non-realist terms, it cannot exist or function in any way other than as a subjective, interiorised action. I do not learn about something other than myself. I interiorise. I learn about myself. I learn about the cultural means of expression in which we all engage: 'the postmodern reality is a collection of petites histoires of the tribal deities that tell us little of the deities themselves, [but] rather more of the cultures that formed them' (Hart, 1995, p. 1). To this extent, postmodern, non-realist religious education is concerned with 'story', whose patterns and meanings are to be understood as ways of approaching the forms of human construction; creations by human beings in ritual and myth, of the meanings for their actions, in which we ourselves are the 'fictions' (cf. Cupitt, 1991, p. ix).

The meanings of those stories are not to be found outside the 'text', but are vested in the 'texts' themselves. Whilst it remains
impossible, in the light of the postmodern critique, to isolate a
deeper objective reality behind the story, 'we can at least gather
together stories from different traditions which highlight the
common features in the human adventure and endeavour' (Hart, 1995,
p. 2). Features share a commonality, solely in an anthropocentric
perspective. The human story has a commonality because it is a story
about our human commonality, not because there are identified,
objective realities beyond us, in which we share (Hart, 1995,
ibid.).

The aim of postmodern, non-realist religious education, then, is
to understand the religious traditions as one element of this human
story. To use another metaphor, religious education looks into a
mirror of reflected images of humanly constructed meanings. Those
traditions reveal, claims Hart, (quoting Peter Berger) '"signals of
transcendence"' (Hart, 1995, p. 4); moments in the religious
language game where humans have created sacred meanings for their
actions and interactions. This sacral character is not to be
understood, however, in an objective sense. It is not an external
reality to the humans who create meaning. Rather, it is part of the
human sense of the holy; that ultimacy which, according to non-
realists, provides the depth and passion in each human culture.

What, then, would the aims of a non-realist religious education
actually achieve? Moving from the acceptance of the existence of a
fixed reality, to belief in a world of human construction,
non-realism would include religious education as a part of that
world. To the extent that non-realism claims to point towards human creativity and cultural expression as the only power which constructs its own sense of values and ethics, non-realist religious education attempts to enable students to understand the significance of this human creativity, for the human spirit. As David Hart comments: 'the freedom to be spiritually creative...could be argued to be the highest and most pertinent form of creativity that human beings can produce' (Hart, 1995, p. 153).

Non-realism implies that religious education should act as a humanising process. It should enable the cultural accretions of traditions to be appreciated for what, to the non-realist mind, they are; human constructions, examples of the holy, human spirit. In the context of non-realism, then, the aims of religious education point to the introversion of perspectives. Meaning becomes subjective. As an educational process, religious education must remove objectivity, discard the real, and relativise all moral judgements and actions. To non-realists, this becomes the ultimate freedom.

A critical reflection of non-realism.

On the face of it, non-realism appears to present some very attractive features for secular religious education. A postmodern world view would certainly seem to make the fraught difficulties of inter-church and inter-faith dialogue less contentious. If, as the non-realists assert, there is no objective reality, then there can
be no truth-claims by traditions on behalf of themselves. No one would have access to an absolute answer.

However, it is precisely in the fact that postmodernism is itself declared by its exponents to be the answer to the - admittedly considerable - difficulties of traditional objectivism and realism, that a paradox lies. As Victoria La'porte rightly observes in her review of David Hart's study of non-realism and the world faiths, 'post modernism can itself be an intolerant creed, especially towards realist ideologies - with its own dogmas and saviours' (La'porte, 1995, p. 43).

Paradox is clearly apparent in postmodernist certainty. How can a philosophical system which denies the legitimacy of tradition, not itself be condemned as a harbinger of a new tradition of certainty: the certainty of uncertainty itself? This is the lasting legacy of postmodernism, whose ironic simultaneous statement-yet-denial leads inevitably to an insoluble paradox.

This insolubility is also present, when postmodernism is applied to religious education. If, as the non-realists seem to imply, religious education is part of the human quest for meaning, but that the meaning which is searched for is, in fact, nothing other than pure subjectivity, then what is actually undertaken and accomplished in religious education, or, for that matter, in any form of educational practice, to warrant calling it education? Non-realism denies the legitimacy of any recourse to objective sources upon which knowledge might depend. Religious education becomes a purely
interior practice, in which the human spirit of creative power is contemplated. But the postmodern paradox here lies supremely in the assertion by non-realists, of the ultimacy of the commonality of the human creative will.

Yet, on what grounds can it be claimed to be a will or commonality, to which reference might be made? If, as some non-realists might wish to assert, commonality is, in fact, the shared experience of being human, then this too needs to be deconstructed. Human nature itself cannot lie beyond the postmodern gaze.

Finally, what use would a postmodern programme of religious education be to inter-religious discussions? Even if Cupitt is granted his deconstructive mission, it would be difficult to see how that mission might contribute to any inter-religious dialogue, as opposed to disputation, particularly with those traditions which claim a revealed nature. It might then be questionable to assert that non-realist religious education would do anything to contribute to religious understanding and appreciation. Given the almost revolutionary character of non-realism, it would seem, rather, that what the 'Sea of Faith' school of theologians is suggesting, is a radical departure from the established approaches of self-understanding of the religious traditions themselves. To enter into dialogue with these traditions from the perspective of this theological radicalism, would seem to be an impossible task. Instead, one ideology would necessarily be left to confront another.
In conclusion, it must be said from the perspective of the author of this thesis, that postmodernism provides some serious challenges to traditional objective theism. This stems as a result of the deconstruction of reality, which postmodernism undertakes. However, as a method of religious education, its appeal must remain limited and partisan. After all, postmodernism itself is an ideology, and as such is burdened with its own prejudices and presuppositions.
iii. Discussion and Conclusions.

This chapter has considered some of the ways in which Catholic and secular forms of religious education might express their aims and presuppositions.

The model employed in this thesis to outline the aims of Catholic religious education, was derived from an analysis of the implications for Catholic religious education of the four main Conciliar Constitutions of the Second Vatican Council. This is not to suggest that this approach, designed to identify the aims of Catholic religious education, is the only way in which this might be achieved. Other methods of arriving at answers to this particular problem might be equally valid. It is the contention of this thesis, however, that the particular methodology employed in this study to identify those aims is a proper one, and that the particular aims of Catholic religious education have been correctly identified.

Much the same can be said about the three particular approaches to secular religious education, analysed in the second half of this chapter. It will be the case, certainly, that other secular methodologies of religious education might have been explored, to a profitable end. What the second part to the chapter has done, therefore, is to present just a few of the possible ways in which secular religious education might function. Despite the admittedly diverse character of the selection of approaches to secular religious education made in that part of the chapter, it remains the
contention of this thesis, however, that what is presented there does represent fairly the broad spectrum of secular thought about religious education. Thus, the author suggests that each of the models studied says something of value about the aims of religious education, and says it on behalf of a wide constituency of secular opinion and theory. What follows is a brief comparison between the approaches of both Catholic and secular tradition, in their efforts to outline the aims of religious education. Three areas present themselves. First the engagement of religious education with religious tradition, second, the aims of religious education, and third the structural presuppositions of religious education.

a. The engagement with religious traditions.

Catholic religious education begins with, and functions from its self-perception of the events of revelation. In particular, the approach of the cyclical theology described in the Chapter One, with which Catholic religious education is imbibed, is itself revelatory. The educational theory that begins from the belief that God calls fallen man to return to life in God, stems from this revelatory point of commencement. From this starting point, the engagement with religious traditions proceeds from the belief that God vests goodness in them through revelation (that is, revelation to the whole world), insofar as those religious traditions enable human beings to strive for God in the ways which are open to them.
However, an underlying tension must always exist in Catholic religious education as it engages with religious traditions. This tension is derived from the faith and understanding Catholic religious understanding has, both about itself and its relationship to the Church, and also in its relationship to the world of faiths.

As a result, Catholic religious education is seen to operate on two levels when it engages with the religious traditions:

(1) Catholic religious education operates as an educational process which claims access to a religious tradition which it holds to be as equally vested in the desire to seek after truth, as are the religious traditions other than Christianity (and other than Catholicism in particular). There exists, in other words, a common, shared dignity, which is recognised in Catholic religious education to exist in all faiths;

(2) Catholic religious education exists as a process which claims access to a religious tradition that itself claims possession of a higher level of fulfilment in that search for God. This claim is held to be higher than that of any other tradition, namely the guardianship of maintenance of the deposit of faith, and the message of revelation. This constitutes Catholicism's claim to uniqueness, authority and catholicity.

This might be compared with the approach of the traditions of secular religious education to the engagement with religious traditions. Secular religious education operates with its own presuppositions and prejudices. Religious education does not, on the
whole, treat the religious traditions as equal partners in a quest for a deeper understanding of truth. This might be contrasted with Catholic religious education which clearly does go some way to recognise this possibility. In all of the models of secular religious education discussed in this chapter, the religious education process is treated as a system which generally perceives itself to be distinct from the traditions it studies, both in its aims, and in its epistemic neutrality. There is no general perception that secular religious education could, or should share in the claims of the traditions which it studies.

Accordingly, it can be added that secular religious education generally functions as a process which obtains data from the religious traditions, but which does not see in its function the duty or ability to contribute to those traditions in their quest for truth. This may be asserted, despite the claims of all three secular traditions under study in this chapter, to contribute to a dialogue between the religions and secular opinion. Phenomenology works from a clear principle of observation, not participation. Experientialism assumes that the subject, (the pupil), is the focus of religious education, not the religious tradition itself, which is regarded as an ancillary to the process. Non-realism denies the claim of any tradition to have authority.

As such, a tension underlies the approaches of secular religious education in its engagement with the religious traditions. This in part mirrors the tensions found in Catholic religious education.
Both Catholic and secular religious education claim a sense of absolute identity. With that identity, each goes forward to engage the religious tradition. Each claims to be distinct from the tradition which is studied. Yet Catholicism recognises itself to be part of the religious milieu in which it finds itself. Secular religious education makes no such distinction, or, in the case of non-realism, denies there is an objective milieu in the first place.

b. The aims of religious education.

To this extent, then, it is possible to isolate what the general purpose of Catholic and secular religious education might be. It is the contention of this thesis that the general aims of Catholic religious education fall into four particular areas. These areas correspond to the four Constitutions of the Second Vatican Council. First, in the light of revelation, Catholic religious education aims to reflect upon the fact, and event of revelation. Second, as a response to the ecclesial nature of Catholicism, Catholic religious education aims to reflect on the fact and event of being the Church. Third, in recognition of the existence and action of the Church in the world, Catholic religious education seeks to explore ways of making that existence and action more meaningful, both to the Church, and to the world. Fourth, in celebration of God's event of revelation, Catholic religious education seeks to call those who undergo the process to live the life of grace, in all that this implies, both negatively and positively.
In a similar way, this thesis contends that the aims of the secular traditions of religious education under review may be summarised in three particular ways. Phenomenological religious education seeks to allow pupils to empathize, to develop themselves personally by developing an understanding of religious tradition, and to reflect on the nature of humanity through a recognition of human 'givens'. Experiential religious education aims to enable us to understand ourselves better, by reflecting on the commonality of experience, and especially religious experience. Non-realism asks us to recognize the human commonality of the search for meaning. It seeks also to limit knowledge to the linguistic concepts that are employed, and to remove what is sees as the burden of objectivity from epistemic enquiry.

c. The structural presuppositions of religious education.

From this reflection of the aims of Catholic and secular religious tradition, and from the overall analysis of data in this chapter it will be seen that both traditions operate from preconceived structural presuppositions.

Catholic religious education assumes the reality of revelation. It functions primarily with regard to its ecclesial claims; it is part of the function of the Church, first and foremost in its mission to the Church and to the world. From this base, Catholic religious education engages with the religious traditions, and uses pedagogical methods to achieve its aims.
Secular religious education also operates with presupposed assumptions. Phenomenology assumes the existence of human 'givens', the capacity to be religious, and the possibility of there being an objective phenomenology. Experientialism presupposes the validity of human experience. It asserts the commonality of the human capacity to have religious experiences, and asserts that these abilities enable individuals to understand themselves better. Non-realism presupposes that objectivity has failed, and that it is impossible to think coherently in realist terms. It also presumes that the only way for religious traditions to engage with postmodern secularity is to embrace an anti-objective non-realist stance.

In conclusion it can be said that Catholic and secular religious education are similar in the sense that they share the need to hold presupposed theoretical positions, in order to enable their aims to be achieved. However, because those aims differ so widely, it is difficult to identify areas where any real basis for agreement might lie in a comparison of those aims themselves.
The Law of the Church, and the Civil Law of the state both have a relevance when discussing Catholic religious education. Thus, according to Canon Law, religious education is to be placed firmly within the principles of Catholic doctrine. Oversight of this is left, ultimately, to the 'competent ecclesiastical authority'. This, in effect, means the Bishop of the diocese (CCL., Cann. 803.$2 and $3). Civil law requires that all Catholic schools, either voluntary or state aided, should conform to education legislation. Thus, religious education must be provided for all registered pupils, the syllabus content for religious education must accord with the Trust Deed relating to the school and controlled by the governors, and religious education must be inspected under the provisions of Section 13 of the Education (Schools) Act of 1992. For a summary of this legislation see National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers, 1994, p. 9.

This is evinced, for example by the Second National Conference of the Catholic Education Service, held at Newman College, Birmingham on 9-11 April 1995. The Conference theme was 'The Church's Mission in Education'.

See also Hastings, 1991, p. 173. McClelland sees a weakness in internal Catholic school policy in its attempts to overcome the stress which secular society and education often places upon the need to conform to an individualistic and materialist goal in education. He regards two documents issued by the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education in the last decade as attempts to redress the balance. Thus he identifies the 1982 document Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith as reflections on the need to emphasize the personal and Christian dedication of the teacher. The second document, The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School, (1988), McClelland sees as stressing the particularly communitarian nature of Catholic religious education. Taken together both documents stand in clear opposition to the demands of secular materialism.


A detailed analysis of the relationship between Scripture and Tradition is presented in the previous chapter of this thesis.

I am grateful to Colin Gunton for suggesting this phrase to me, which I here paraphrase somewhat. It is precisely this separation of revelation from tradition which enables Catholic theology to avoid
the dangers of literal fundamentalism, and which allows interpretation its proper and significant function in assisting our understanding of things (Gunton, 1994).

7 It should be noted, however, that Sutherland does not share in theism's concept of God as an objective supernatural reality. Accordingly, whilst Sutherland's phraseology has been borrowed, his theological understanding of that phrase has not here been assumed. For a detailed examination of what Sutherland means by the term, see Sutherland, 1984, pp. 76-86).

8 See also John Paul II, 1988b, pp. 18-20. The Pope here explicitly links the journeying of the People of God with communion, which he understands to mean 'the union with God brought about by Jesus Christ, in the Holy Spirit' (John Paul II, 1988b, pp. 18). It is because of the combination of an instrumental function and effectual action of the Church, (effectual, that is, in terms of salvific grace), and a concept of the Church as the People of God on a journey (that is, a communion of saints at once on pilgrimage to God and also intimately linked to God through Christ), that the Church is properly understood as a sacrament of unity (John Paul II, 1988b, pp. 19).

9 Schmaus presents a useful summary of the key issues in this debate. He places the origin of the Church definitively at Pentecost, indicating here a supporting pneumatological structure for the Church, which arises as a culmination of Jesus' life, death and resurrection (Schmaus, 1972, pp. 13-42). This pneumatological aspect is supported also by Congar, who points out that an overtly Christological, incarnational model of the Church fails to guard against an institutionalisation of the Church, which would deny the value of the prophetic inspirational life of the Church which is to be found in its ecclesial reality. The Spirit, understood to act in union with Christ, provides for a more coherent unity of structure (Congar, 1983, pp. 5-12).

10 See also Lumen Gentium, art. 8.; cf. Schmaus, 1972, pp. 63-64 Schmaus here considers the meaning of this term for the Council. He fails to note, however, that there is a danger of confusing the divine and human natures of the one person of Christ, with the human nature of the Christian individual, in the analogy he comments upon, in article 8 of the Constitution. This is the reason why, when comparing the Church to both that which is endowed with the spiritual graces of the divine Christ in an already achieved completion, and also a pilgrim Church labouring on earth, yet to reach its home, the Council brackets its incarnational analogy with the words 'in a somewhat similar way' (Lumen Gentium, art. 8).

11 For a brief presentation of the Catholic authorities who support this view, see Chapter One, above.
12 See, for example, Jackson and Nesbitt, 1992, pp. 19-28. Even in a study of avowedly Christian children, (Jackson and Nesbitt define this to mean 'children who regularly attend worship or youth activities related to a church', p. 19), differences in the religious experiences of these children are very varied, albeit with a number of existing experientially overlapping similarities.

13 Cf., for example, Erricker and Erricker, 1994, pp. 174-184; McGrady, 1994a, pp. 148-163; McGrady, 1994b, pp. 56-62. Erricker and Erricker comment upon the need to develop a methodology for religious education, which takes into account the ability of children to use their abilities of imagination and self-expression. McGrady, writing in an Irish context, develops the view, backed up by empirical research, that children find it difficult to use metaphorical language fluently in a religious context. Educationalists, he suggests, should seek ways which facilitate a linguistic approach to the teaching of religious metaphor.


15 This form of fideism avoids, of course, any particular epistemic theory which attempts to establish common human values through logical or deductive means. What is at issue here is not whether any values can be proven to exist, but rather whether values and humanity can be shown to share in a commonality with each other. This thesis contends that one possible way in which values and humanity may be said to share in a commonality might be through a presupposed belief in that commonality.


17 This concept of respect may be extended into a way of life which is to be identified within the whole school ethos. Thus, whilst pupils might be encouraged to develop lifestyles which will contribute to a school environment, and enhance its mission statement, it should be recognised that this does not finish in the religious education lesson. To the extent that religious education is not merely classwork or academic study, the relationship of personal development with an identifiable Catholic ethos remains vital for transforming the way of life of the individual child into one of 'wisdom; understanding; knowledge; right judgement; courage; reverence; and awe and wonder' (National Board of Religious Inspectors and Advisers, 1994, ibid.).

18 Cf. the second reading from the Office of Readings of the Divine Office for Holy Saturday.

19 As Dalmais correctly points out, liturgy should not be understood first and foremost as discourse (logos), but as an operation or action (ergon). This should not, of course preclude the theological
fact that liturgy does contain within itself data, upon which the theologian can reflect (Martimort, 1987, pp. 229-231).

Exegetically, this liturgical structure may be seen, for instance in the description of blood and water pouring from the side of Jesus on the Cross. The key sacraments of the Church may here be identified; blood with the Eucharist, water with Baptism. Indeed, the Church itself can be said to originate symbolically from this pericope, especially since the two sacraments mentioned above are the key sacraments of the Christian life (cf. Jn 19: 34).

E.g. 1 Tim 2: 4.

On the concept of the Paschal Mystery, see Martimort, 1987, pp. 262-266.

Heb 4: 14.

In an Apostolic Letter celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Constitution Sacrosanctum Concilium, Pope John Paul II presents five particular ways in which Christ can be said to be present in the Paschal Mystery. These are (i) within each and every liturgical celebration; (ii) in the assembly of the Church at prayer; (iii) in the acts and person of the celebrating ordained minister ('in persona Christi'); (iv) in the word of Christ, proclaimed; (v) in the sacraments, most especially in the Eucharist, both in its celebration and in its species as consecrated bread and wine. See John Paul II, 1988a, pp. 12-13.

A link between revelation, Incarnation and the Paschal Mystery is made, forcefully by Hans Urs von Balthasar, 1990, pp. 12-14.

This latter point is also noted by McBrien, in McBrien, 1980, Vol. 2, p. 676.

See, for example Acts 1: 12-14.

In some comments to teachers, educators and theologians at the Maryvale Institute of Religious Education, on 9 January 1993, Francis Clark spoke of the danger, in his mind, of minimising the unique significance and efficacy of the Eucharistic sacrifice by first inviting the pupil to consider moments of celebratory and sacrificial significance in their own lives, before making comparison of these with the Catholic theology of Eucharistic sacrifice. This process, which he termed 'physiology', reduced the divine realities of the Eucharistic sacrifice into categories open to phenomenological enquiry. This, Clark argued, would blunt the pupils' understanding of the prevenient nature of the divine action brought about in the Eucharist, and so had to be avoided. This thesis would disagree with Clark's view on this matter, arguing instead that it is an essential educational activity to begin with a
pupil's self-understanding and self-experience, before introducing new ideas and theological concepts to the child. Human development and understanding does not occur in a vacuum, but through a continual upbuilding of the individual, through experience and reflection.

29 From this interpretation, profound questions arise as to the relationship of lapsed, non-Catholics and those of other faiths to the Catholic religious education process. If religious education is catechetical, does this not alienate those who, through conscience or circumstance, cannot belong to the Catholic faith, yet who find value and inspiration in Catholic education? In reply, it must be asserted openly and honestly, yet with friendship and charity, that Catholic religious education is precisely that; catholic. As a branch of the Church, (and indeed a form of theological reflection), it calls all humanity into union with Christ. That union is to be found - albeit imperfectly - in the Christian churches in general, but most completely, in the Catholic communion. This is not to denigrate those religious traditions other than Christianity, in which great good, and the truth of God is to be found. It is a question, nevertheless, of the honest faith response of the Catholic Church to its calling that Catholic religious education must owe its origin and rationale. See also the Declaration Nostra Aetate, art. 2.

30 Holley fails to demonstrate, however, why these criteria should have any more significance than any other that might be posited in their place.

31 This would be supported by, among others, Robert Coles, who in his remarkable study of the spiritual life of children, movingly describes many instances which indicate to him the depth of religious beliefs held by children. See especially Coles, 1992, pp. 129-147.

32 Interestingly, Holley does not suggest the converse: that it might be equally immoral of religious education to take away a particular religious belief from a child, without replacing it with another.

33 This is an important contextual point, which should be remembered when considering Cox’s four particular aims. Cox is concerned to show what the 1988 Education Reform Act might imply for the aims of religious education.

34 An earlier, and shorter version of this section on Michael Grimmitt’s theory of religious education first appeared in Kalve, 1994, pp. 61-68. Due acknowledgement is hereby made to that fact.

35 On the fraught question of what is a religion, I assume the theoretical model proposed in Stone, 1991, pp.337-351. Stone
suggests that religion may be defined as a system of practices and rituals rationalised by belief.

Saliba speaks of phenomenology’s concern with the objective and subjective elements of a person’s experiences.


Although it should be noted that Grimmitt prefers to speak of one ideology being ‘criticised from the standpoint of another’ (Grimmitt, 1987, p.41).

I.e. the development of such skills as self-knowledge, critical openness and the capacity for personal decision-making. See Grimmitt’s article, ‘World religions and personal development’, in R Jackson, (1982), pp.142-143. Of course such a list would not be exhaustive.

For Grimmitt, the ‘cultural form’ of religion comprises the symbolic language and actions which form a systematic structure whereby the meanings of a transcendent objectivity placed outside human categories are communicated to the human. In a loose sense this could also be termed Grimmitt’s concept of revelation.

In speaking of the enquirer beginning ‘to understand the human condition’, Grimmitt is of course using the term quite correctly as an experiential expression. Thus through education we come to terms with what we are and what we experience. Education, then, provides the means whereby we enter more intimately into an engagement with our humanity.

But see Smith, 1986, p.80.

Grimmitt attempts to demonstrate here the factual basis for ‘human givens’.

By this I do not suggest that notions such as human freedom are unverifiable on their own terms. What I am arguing here is that it is wrong of Grimmitt to suggest, as he does, that when such concepts are applied in support of the idea of ‘human givens’, that those ‘human givens’ can therefore be understood as non-metaphysical terms. Social constructs do not provide cast-iron defences against metaphysical thought.

This idea of there being ‘more’ than just the objective world is mirrored in William James’ seminal study of religious experience. In a curiously Kantian conclusion, James asserts that our apprehension of an objective world is but a part of a fuller process, a unity, of the objective reality which is ‘incalculably more extensive’ than the subjective interpretation of it (James, 1985, p. 476). Religious
experience for James becomes a union with this reality which is more than the interpretation. For James, as a Christian, that reality he finally calls 'God' (James, 1985, pp. 486f., 491).

46 It should be noted that reports of childhood religious experiences are given usually by adults who remember their experiences over often a lengthy period of time.

47 For a examination of the issues surrounding metaphor and experiential awareness, see Erricker and Erricker, 1994, pp. 174-184.

48 This in itself may well be a contradiction in terms for postmodernism!

49 For an example of this from a feminist perspective, especially in relation to Derrida's key term difference, see Soper, 1990, pp. 11-17.

50 This point is recognised by Hay and Hammond (Hay and Hammond, 1992, p. 146).

51 Thus, for example, at the 8th Annual Conference of the Sea of Faith Network, held at Leicester University on 27-29 July 1995, three stranded activities were available to participants; a political strand, a creative strand and a theological strand.

52 For a critical analysis of 'outsidelessness' from a theistic stance, see Brinkman, 1994, pp. 53-58.

53 To the extent that Geering describes this as 'the capacity of people to be religious' (Geering, 1994, p. 102), his understanding of Smith's view of human nature is virtually indistinguishable from Michael Grimmitt's theory of human givens.

54 Here links may be seen between the approach of experientialists to questions of significance and value, and the non-realist position. See also Tillich, 1984, p. 101f; cf. Tillich, 1957, pp. 5-11.

55 For examples of this changing scenery, see Cupitt, 1985b, pp. 154ff. Cupitt concludes, 'If religion has a history, then it is a human one' (Cupitt, 1985b, p. 159).

56 For a detailed account of how, in Cupitt's view, objective theism has been forced to decline, see Cupitt, 1980, pp. 15-33.

57 This, for example, Anthony Freeman gives as a title for one of his chapters in God In Us. See Freeman, 1993, especially pp. 48-51.
CHAPTER III

The Spiritual Dimensions of Religious Education in Catholic and Secular Traditions

The first two chapters of this thesis analysed the educational and philosophical presuppositions which lie behind Catholic and secular religious education. In those chapters, (particularly in the second), reference was made to the spiritual dimensions of religious education which exist in both Catholic and secular contexts. The present chapter seeks to identify some of those contexts in which those dimensions operate, and to analyse the place of spirituality within religious education, from Catholic and secular perspectives.

To do this, the first part of this chapter will explore some of the aspects of Catholic theological and educational thought which centre around the issues of spirituality and catechesis. After attempting to define spirituality and catechesis, these concepts will be placed within an educational context. An analysis will be made of the interrelationship of these concepts to religious
education, and bridges between these concepts and Catholic religious education will be explored.

The second part of this chapter will consider what it might mean to speak about the spiritual within the context of secular religious education. First, secular definitions of the spiritual will be explored. Then, in parallel with the first part of this chapter, these themes will be placed within an educational context, this time applying them to the secular context established in the first two chapters of the thesis.

The chapter will conclude with a comparison and contrast of the two positions explored. Similarities between the assumptions and presuppositions of the two traditions will be examined, and differences highlighted.

The chapter will end with some final conclusions drawn from the discussions and exploration outlined above.
i. Catholic Religious Education and the Spiritual.

1. Defining 'the spiritual' in Catholic theology and thought.

Spirituality is both a lived experience and an area suitable for academic study. It is a lived experience in that it is found in the beliefs and life experiences of the individual (Hume, 1988, p. 97). It is to be experienced in the light of faith, but it is also an experience which is practical, being seen by many interpreters as a way of living out that faith in concrete terms.¹

Spirituality implies a life lived in and filled with the Spirit. It becomes a study of experience, and is grounded in the experiential realities of the life of each individual. It is not to be understood simply as an exercising of the intellect, but as a Christologically focussed engaging of the entire self; 'it is the lived experience and praxis of my life as uniquely called by Christ' (Kaam, 1975, p. 293).

Neither, however, is spirituality simply a life lived, or an experience experienced. Spirituality does engage the intellect, especially through faith. As Pope John Paul II has put it when speaking about faith and human freedom, 'the essential usefulness of faith consists in the fact that, through faith, man achieves the good of his rational nature' (John Paul II, 1994, p. 192, original italics removed). Catholic spirituality, indeed, spirituality extended to include all experiences of faith combines just this
element of belief and intellectual enquiry. A Christological activity, its dependency upon Christ as the source and focus for those experiences, makes it above all a reflective action.

Van Kaam has noted that this action is one part of a two-fold stream which flows from a reflection on sacred scripture, the other stream being that of systematic theology (Kaam, *ibid.*, p. 8). Accordingly, any attempt to define the meaning of spirituality will have to include in its survey the significance of scripture to its enquiry. It is to the scriptural witness to spirituality that this chapter now turns.²

(i) Scriptural origins.

The earliest Christian references to spirituality as the experience of life lived out in the Spirit are to be found in the Pauline letters (Komonchak, 1990, p. 972). This form of experience should be seen as one which has been touched by the reality of the divine. John Ziesler notes that the Pauline use of the term 'spirit' should ordinarily be understood to refer to the Holy Spirit: '[it] was the divine especially in its communication with and action upon the human' (Ziesler, 1983, p. 95). J. D. G. Dunn comments also that central to the themes of Pauline theology is the notion of the experience of divine grace, expressed most definitely in Paul's use of terms such as 'in Christ' and 'in the Lord'. This language, and the language of the Spirit bound up with it, is according to Dunn
part of Paul's experiential concept of a divine power which 'transforms a man from the inside out' (Dunn, 1975, pp. 200ff.).

Paul speaks of those who are in Christ as being set free from the law of sin through the law of the Spirit, which is life in Christ (Romans 8: 1-2). Accordingly for Paul, the Spirit has a functional role to play in the events of human salvation. Christ, who brings about salvation, brings about the possibility of new life, a life lived 'according to the Spirit' (Romans 8: 4; NJBC. 82: 63). So, for Paul, life itself becomes filled with the Spirit of power (1 Cor. 2:4), who dwells in us (Romans 8: 9). Faith in God's action of raising Jesus in a transformed and gloriously new way of being, incorporates us into Christ, who pours out the Spirit upon us. This enables us to recognise God in faith, and call Him Abba (Romans 8: 9-17).

Within this context it becomes legitimate to speak of the religious experience to which Paul attests in his writings. He does not testify simply to the resurrection as an event which occurs beyond his own life-experience, but affirms that life is now lived not merely through Christ but in Christ (Gal. 2: 20). Spirituality exists for Paul inasmuch as the new life of the risen Christ fills his (i.e. Paul's) very being. As Joann Wolski comments of later Pauline spirituality, 'his mature experience was one of ever deeper participation in the paschal mystery, of loving trust even unto death...' (Komonchak, 1990, p. 973).
When the Gospels are considered, it becomes clear that it is the concerns of the different communities for whom and by whom the Gospels were written that guide and influence the spirituality of each of them. Mark’s Gospel, which probably originated from Rome, has as its central theme the kingdom of God. From the outset, two elements play a continuous role in this theme as it develops: Mark’s Christological concerns (who is Jesus), and the communities concerns about discipleship (what is the appropriate response to Jesus). It is through this that the Marcan narrative employs the multi-faceted structures of Messiahship, the Suffering Servant motif, Son of God, the Lord, et cetera. Structurally, the Passion narrative seems to have a climactic function, showing that Jesus is only properly understood in the light of his suffering, death and resurrection.

Indications about the Christological and discipleship spirituality of the Marcan community for whom the Gospel was written are found throughout the text. Jesus is understood not only as the one who inaugurates the kingdom of God, (a kingdom which for now remains hidden in part), but is also the Lord who calls the people to repentance and faith (Mk 1: 1-15). Through a process of being portrayed as healer, teacher, crucified and risen one, the Gospel shows a dynamic movement towards a final understanding and experience of who Jesus is, and of what our response to him should be. This development seems initially to be hidden from our perception: the so called 'messianic secret' in which Jesus is presented as actively seeking to hide the claims to messiahship made

The response to Jesus, that of discipleship follows a positive line of progress in the first half of the Gospel, but becomes increasingly negative and bleak in the second half. Thus, in the first half of the Gospel, the disciples are held up to be the ones to imitate (Mk 1: 16-20; 2: 13-14; 3: 13-19; 6: 6b-13). But the exemplary behaviour of the disciples rapidly vanishes as Jerusalem and the Passion approach. Increasingly a negative light is thrown on them. Ultimately they run away, abandoning Jesus to his fate (Mk 6: 52; 8: 14-21; 8: 32-33; 9: 32-37; 10: 35-45; 14: 17-21, 26-31, 43-52, 54, 66-72). The focus shifts. Marcan spirituality moves its attention from the example of those in the Gospel who so dramatically failed to follow Jesus, to Jesus himself, who now becomes the only one who deserves imitation. To be a true disciple in the light of Mark's Gospel is to be an imitator of Christ, who faithful to God, followed along the path of love to his own death and ultimate triumph. This spirituality only becomes clear in the light of that resurrection.

The spirituality of Matthew's Gospel seems almost certainly grounded in a Jewish-Christian perspective. Two strands seem to inhabit Matthean theology; the portrayal in the Gospel of Jesus as the Christ, and the notion of the closeness of the kingdom of God as Jesus preaches it. Both of these themes seem to be set out most
clearly at the beginning and end of the Gospel. At the start of the Gospel, Jesus is seen as the royal Son of God, as Immanuel, God-with-us, as the Christ (Mt. 1: 18-25). At the end, all authority and power over the kingdom of God, over heaven and earth, and over all time is given to Jesus. Having proclaimed the kingdom to Israel, the community must now go out and preach to the gentiles in that same power (Mt. 28: 18-20).

The kingdom of God becomes an object of hope (Mt. 6: 10) and proclamation (Mt. 3: 2; 4: 17). Its proclaimer, the Christ, makes its nearness felt in such a way that it becomes an eschatological symbol of God's promise of salvation (e.g. Jesus appearing to equate the future destruction of Jerusalem with the end of the world, and his accompanying parables in Mt. 24: 1-51).

Matthew's Gospel attempts to establish Jesus's relationship with Judaism in the light of this sense of impending finality of the old order and the establishment of the kingdom. Thus, Jesus is shown not merely to be one who affirms the Mosaic Torah, but who brings it to complete fulfilment (Mt. 5: 17). A yearning seems to exist for the renewal of the bonds of Israel's laws and traditions, and it is to the end of achieving this, and of establishing the new covenant of the people with God that the ecclesial community is instituted. This relationship exists, according to Matthew's Gospel through Jesus Christ (1: 23; 28: 18-20).

Matthean spirituality, then, is to live according to Jesus's teaching in this new covenant. It is in experiencing this
cooperation with God that we enter into a new covenant, a new Church.

When Luke's Gospel is considered, it is seen that the Lucan text appears to rely upon Mark's Gospel. The Greek of the prologue is masterly (Lk 1: 1-4), and the there exist also indications of the author's familiarity with Septuagintal Greek in the following passage. Other internal evidence suggest sources were used which derived from Q, as well as a source original to the Gospel, normally designated L. But it is also evident that Luke refashions and redacts material to suit his own theology. From this we can understand something of Luke's spirituality and his understanding of religious experience throughout the Gospel (NJBC. 43: 4).6

Two particular strands of Luke's theology might here be highlighted. First is that of his sitz im leben. Given the focus of Luke-Acts, it seems right to suggest that Luke is addressing a well-to-do Gentile audience who are facing the prospect of living in an increasingly hostile environment. Questions of theodicy seem to arise quite naturally as a result of this throughout the Lucan texts: if God has not kept his promise to his chosen Jewish elect, allowing Jerusalem instead to be destroyed, then why should Gentile Christians believe in this same God's promise of faithfulness to themselves? Luke's reply to this is to provide his audience with the overtly kerygmatic structure and story of Luke-Acts. Through Jesus God was faithful to his people Israel. But this 'Israel' is no longer the Jewish nation alone, but includes the Gentiles, the
unclean and the outcast. Israel is thus reconstituted, as a
continuity of the new with the old (NJBC. 43: 5). Its universal
character is typified by the utterance of the non-Jewish Centurian
at the Crucifixion (Lk 23: 47), by the events surrounding the
conversion of Cornelius (Acts 10), and the general direction of
Luke-Acts which reaches its conclusion in Paul's open-ended mission
to Rome - by implication indicating the whole world - (Acts 28:
30-31).

In this context, the spirituality of the community in Luke-Acts
is the experience of a missionary Church learning to expand in a
world of all peoples. In this experience the community learns to
widen its horizons in its sharing and caring. It finds itself called
to spread the Good News wider than before, just as Jesus was
impelled by the Spirit to proclaim the freedom of God's power to a
larger generation than his own Jewish people.

Turning to the question of the spirituality found in the Gospel
of John, it will be seen that the Gospel differs from the synoptic
gospels both in form and style. Rather than use apothegms and short
parables to present the message of Jesus, Jesus is portrayed through
the use of long and highly symbolic discourses. At the same time,
Jesus is shown to engage in a much wider mission, both in Galilee
and Judea, focussing in particular upon the latter. This might be
seen as a contrast to the predominant preoccupations of the
synoptics with a ministry of Jesus set largely in Galilee.7
The theology, and hence the spirituality of the Gospel concentrates on the hour of Jesus' glorification (NJBC. 61: 14). Jesus' mission, that of bringing about grace and truth into Creation, finds its genesis from the Father (Jn 1: 11-12; 18: 37). In order to fully achieve this goal, which for John is finally accomplished in the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus, the Gospel narrative moves through various cycles of acceptance and of rejection (NJBC. 61: 14). A pattern is established for the Gospel: a positive beginning (Jn 1-4) gives way to a progressive and cumulative rejection of Jesus. Conflicts arise over his identity. These remain unresolved and by being ambiguous, they can be seen as a necessary component of faith seeking understanding in John's theology. Resolution of the conflict is only possible when Jesus has completed his mission and has returned to the Father (Jn 5-12). The mood darkens again, but with the impending departure of Jesus from life looming larger, the promise is made to the disciples of a future joy which will be given to them. Jesus will be seen to dwell in them when the Paraclete is given as a guide (Jn 13-17). Finally Jesus' glorification is achieved in the crucifixion and resurrection. In this context the episode with Thomas leads to a statement by the narrator that the Gospel itself is intended to lead the hearer to faith in Jesus (Jn 18ff.; 20: 30-31).

The spirituality of John's Gospel stems directly from this pattern. In the Gospel narrative John describes how the community itself experienced both union and alienation. This arose primarily
because of the experience of who Jesus was: his intrinsic unity with God. An understanding of this fundamental concept of unity might be extended to the whole community, so that each person is able to experience unity with each other in Christ. Similarly, the question of the identity of Jesus, which brought about rejection of him by the Jewish community might be extended to the Christian community's own experience of alienation and rejection by the world. The Gospel presents a challenge to the community to respond to this alienation. Finally, just as Jesus was sent by God, so the community is sent by Jesus into the world to give light to the world, and to bring the world to glory in God. The spirituality of the Gospel of John might thus be summarised as follows: to experience the Christian life is to experience the same relationship as Jesus had with the Father. It is to be Christ in the world, and so to do the Father's will (Komonchak, 1990, pp. 973f.).

The general forms of spirituality in the New Testament described above are to be found also within Catholic theology, and must be seen to be as much a part of Catholic theological thought on spirituality as they are for New Testament thought in this area. The next sections of this enquiry into the meaning of spirituality will look at the theological reasoning of twentieth century Catholic spirituality in the light of the scriptural witness.
There was a certain ambivalence present within the character of Catholic theology in the twentieth century which is reflected also in the spiritual writings which developed during that time. On the one hand, there was a scholastic tradition which seemed to derive both from the 'rediscovery' of Thomism at the beginning of the century, and also sought its roots in the questions of authority which dominated ecclesial history in the nineteenth century. However, this form of tradition could find its origins much further back than the 1800's. Its most significant proponents could justifiably claim an inheritance from the seventeenth century, and a concomitant growth in ascetical theology pointed back even further to the desert Fathers themselves. In contrast to this, however, there existed also a more liturgical and Christocentric spirituality which was guided by the reforms of the Second Vatican Council, but which also claimed an ancient antecedence through its claim to have returned to its sources in the studies in biblical and liturgical history which came to dominate conciliar thinking. This section will consider a representative sample of spiritual thought from each of these traditions, highlighting the differences as well as the similarities found between each of them and showing how both can claim to share in the spirituality of the scriptural traditions discussed above. The spirituality of twentieth century scholasticism will be represented by Tanquerey and Garrigou-Lagrange, that of pre-conciliar reform and renewal by Marmion and de Foucauld.
a. Adolphe Tanquerey.

Tanquerey was a member of the Sulpician order, one which found its spirituality in that of the French school of seventeenth century spirituality. In the light of this, it might seem surprising to find that Tanquerey's understanding of spirituality resembles to a remarkable degree the kind that came to be developed by the Second Vatican Council. Thus Tanquerey's spirituality is found to be grounded in scripture and doctrine, and to find as its beginning the question of human existence. Its primary theological focus is Trinitarian, and it depends heavily upon the concept of the mystical body of Christ and the Church: Christ is seen to be central, in whom we find our union through union with the Church. Finally, Tanquerey's spirituality involves the call of the whole Church, ordained and laity together, to the life of Christian perfection (cf. Tanquerey, 1930, passim).10


Garrigou-Lagrange was a doyen Dominican professor of dogmatic theology at the Angelicum in Rome, and was theological mentor of Pope John Paul II. His theology of spirituality depends even more than does Tanquerey's upon the concept of the individual. The spiritual life involves intimate conversations with God. This is achieved through a threefold process in which the individual passes through a purgative, illuminative and unitive stage to reach the perfection of Christian existence in God. The first stage, the
purgative, is one in which sins are effaced by punishment. The senses are purged, passions quieted and desires softened. The second stage, the illuminative, is pneumatological. The individual receives illumination by the gifts of the Holy Spirit, so that contemplation of the mystery of God is made easier for him. The third stage is the unitive one. Here the individual enters into a state of perfect mystical union with God, in which the passions are burned away, and in which the individual practices the moral and theological virtues to the highest degree possible.

Exemplified by his concept of detachment, Garrigou-Lagrange's theology is as much concerned with the individual's struggle to free himself from the lower appetites that drag him down and impede his efforts from achieving the fullest union with God, as is the spirituality of Tanquerey. It is the concept of union with God as the one thing necessary for salvation that drives Garrigou-Lagrange to espouse a spirituality bereft of sensuality and worldliness. All are called equally to holiness. That holiness is the holiness of the desert, ascetical and demanding in its requirements in the extreme (see Garrigou-Lagrange, 1947, 1948, passim).

c. Abbot Columba Marmion.

Abbot Marmion's theology of spirituality differs from that of the previous two theologians described in this section because of its greatly positive anthropocentrism and liturgical bias. Whilst both Tanquerey, Garrigou-Lagrange and Marmion all assert the fundamental
importance of the redemptive work of God in Jesus Christ, Tanquerey and Garrigou-Lagrange speak of God acting virtually in an exclusively juridical sense. God declares the sinner just. There is no real transformation or renewal of that individual. God remains a somewhat distant judge: the individual has no particular function to fulfil in his spirituality other than to be justified by God's declaration.

Marmion's theology of spirituality functions within a rather differently presupposed structure. God is no longer the distant judge who imposes His law, rather he becomes understood correctly only when He is seen to be the source of love. This love is made most particularly manifest in the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ. The truly divine, out of love for humankind becomes truly human. But Marmion does not leave his theology standing at the incarnation. He develops the theme of loving sacrifice more fully by presenting the Eucharist as the source from which, and in which the true depth of Christ's action in the soul becomes properly effective. In so doing he prefigures the use by the Second Vatican Council of the theme of the liturgy in general (and the Eucharist in particular) as the source and summit of the Christian life, to be found in the Sacred Constitution Sacrosanctum Concilium (Sacrosanctum Concilium, art. 10). The Eucharistic theme is continued through extension: 'to give oneself to Jesus Christ is to give oneself to others for love of Him, or rather to give oneself to Him in the person of our neighbour' (Marmion, 1934, pp. 164-165).
This stems directly from Marmion's understanding of the Eucharist. Since it is in the Eucharist that we have become one body in Christ, so we are compelled to love one another, regardless of the cost. The political and social implications of this theology are clear. To be a human being is to be in communion with each other.

d. Charles de Foucauld.

Charles de Foucauld was the founder of the Little Brothers of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. In a similar way to Adolphe Tanquerey, Charles de Foucauld followed in the traditions of French spirituality. His own spirituality differed from that of the Benedictine Abbot Marmion, and as a result, one commentator has noted that his approach, particularly his focus on Jesus was thus 'less liturgically and less socially oriented than Marmion's' (McBrien, 1980, Vol. 2, pp. 1073).

Poverty and simplicity became the guiding principles of his theology. To be fully realized, to be a Christian, to follow Jesus demands that the individual should follow the way of poverty and humility. To work this out in reality, Charles de Foucauld set up a religious community. Its own principles involved communal sharing, a lack of personal possessions, the giving of gifts, food and help freely to all who asked, and an attempt to live the life of the gospel in evangelical simplicity (see Foucauld, 1964, passim).
(iii) Theological enquiries into spirituality: Vatican II.

Before considering the specific theology of spirituality of the Second Vatican Council, this section will discuss briefly the work of two significant theologians whose contributions might be seen to prefigure what eventually developed at the Council. Those theologians are the Jesuit Teilhard de Chardin and the Cistercian Thomas Merton. This section will then go on to consider spirituality as it evolved out of the Second Vatican Council.


Teilhard de Chardin’s major contribution to the debate about spirituality was his attempt to re-assess spirituality in the light of humanity’s concrete existence here and now. His work as a palaeontologist enabled him to seek ways of linking together the scientific wonder and awe he felt about the world with the sense of mystery he felt to be imbued in the world about him. God was not to be experienced in the way of purgation, nor through a striving after mystical union. Instead, God was to be found fundamentally through a turning towards the things of the earth, through a sense of awe and wonder at the reality of existence in the world, and through delight in the life of all that exists. All existence becomes a partaking in the divine. Indeed, Teilhard de Chardin speaks specifically of a *milieu divin*, in which all existence has its being and shares in the dynamism of God (see particularly Teilhard de Chardin, 1980, pp. 112-149).
b. Thomas Merton.

The emphasis found in the spirituality of Teilhard de Chardin of seeing the world as a holy place is very noticeable in the writings of the Cistercian monk Thomas Merton. Merton's own spiritual journey is an interesting one. After an early life that was notably non-religious, Merton converted to Catholicism and was eventually drawn to the contemplative order that was to become his home for the rest of his life. The early part of this journey was recorded by Merton in a remarkable autobiography, which received praise in both the secular and religious worlds. In it, it is significant to note that Merton writes of a world from which flight seems the only option available for him. The world is a wicked place, demanding purgation (Merton, 1981, pp. 419-423). But by the time of his death, Merton had shifted his views considerably. In one of his last books Merton relates how, when on a shopping errand for the monks in downtown Louisville, Kentucky, he was suddenly and inexplicably overcome with the notion that he loved all he saw, that human beings cannot be alien, one to another, that the concept of holiness being something other than the shared reality of being human was a dream. Holiness for Merton becomes real in the very demands, social, political and human, which make up the basic needs of humanity. The life of perfection becomes, then faithfulness to the call of God, in every situation of human life: to be a saint is to share with God in the work of creating our own identities (Merton, 1964, passim; Merton, 1961, pp, 29ff.).
c. The Second Vatican Council.

The principal contribution of the Second Vatican Council to the Church's understanding of spirituality was to determine unequivocally that spirituality was not just for priests and religious, but for all people. Thus the opening statement of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, Sacrosanctum Concilium states with absolute clarity that the Council sought 'to impart an ever-increasing vigor to the Christian life of the faithful...[and] to strengthen whatever can help to call all mankind into the Church's fold' (Sacrosanctum Concilium, art. 1, [sic]). In a similar vein the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Lumen Gentium, speaks pointedly of the call to holiness by which 'all Christians in any state or walk of life are called to the fullness of Christian life and to the perfection of love...' (Lumen Gentium, art. 40). Spirituality has here taken on a universal character. Not only does the Catholic Church conceive of spirituality as applying to its own members, but, significantly it sees spirituality applying also to all Christians of whatever denomination throughout the world.11

This intensive concentration of spirituality in the world has with it far reaching consequences. We are already called to holiness because the Holy Spirit is already indwelling within each of us. To be a Christian, then, is to live in such a way that we correspond with who we are already called to be.12 In what way is this correspondence made manifest? Typically, conformity of the individual to the calling of holiness is established through the
presence of the 'fruits of the Spirit': mercy, kindness, humility, meekness and patience (Col. 3: 12; Gal. 5: 22; Rom. 6: 22; see also Lumen Gentium, art. 40).

Yet this concept of holiness, and the spirituality from which it derives is understood by the Council to be much farther reaching than one which simply touches upon the individual:

'It is therefore quite clear that all Christians in any state or walk of life are called to the fullness of Christian life and to the perfection of love, and by this holiness a more human manner of life is fostered also in earthly society' (Lumen Gentium, art. 40).

The Council here teaches the first of the two main themes of Conciliar spirituality: that the call to holiness is made on an individual basis to every person, but that the call to holiness and perfection applies also to the very notion of what it means to be a human, and to what it means to speak of a humane society. By striving to live the life of perfection, human society finds a basis for living in unity by this way of love.

In addition, the subsequent article of the Constitution makes clear the second great theme of the Council on spirituality: that the same holiness, the call to which is open to all, is achievable whatever the state of life of the individual. Thus the Constitution states unambiguously

'Accordingly, all Christians, in the conditions, duties and circumstances of their life and through all these, will sanctify themselves more and more if they receive all things with faith from the hand of the heavenly Father and cooperate with the divine will, thus showing forth in that temporal service the love with which God has loved the world' (Lumen Gentium, art. 41).
This concern with spirituality as it is found in the world is similarly continued and developed in the Council's understanding of what it is to be a missionary Church in the world. The Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity, *Ad Gentes*, declares that 'The Church on earth is by its very nature missionary since, according to the plan of the Father, it has its origin in the mission of the Father and the Holy Spirit' (*Ad Gentes*, art. 2). In addition, the Decree argues that by virtue of the universal call to holiness, every Christian participates in the Church's mission. In a similar vein the significant Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes* recognizes that the world is no longer a place which is inimical to the Church, but one from which the Church can learn much too. Thus the Pastoral Constitution speaks of the areas in which the Church receives benefit from the world. These areas include the experiences gained from the past, the progress of science and the rich variety of cultures and traditions which have developed in human society (*Gaudium et Spes*, art. 44). The Church does not stand in opposition to the world, then, but is an active and historically significant part of the world, reading the 'signs of the times', and noticing the presence of God in the middle of historical events, as well as in the lives of individuals.¹³

Catholic spirituality can be seen to have many themes and many, often diverging paths along which the theologians who have attempted to explore spirituality have travelled. Three key components exist to form a generic structure for Catholic spirituality: God, the
individual and the world. The great development of twentieth century spirituality, and especially the understanding of spirituality as it was developed by the Second Vatican Council, was the move away from a separate, interiorized spiritual world which rarely touched the lives of the majority of lay Catholics, to a spirituality in which the individual is called to holiness personally, but which draws benefit through its interaction in the world, through its mission and its receptivity, and by its attempt to understand the world authentically as part of the whole which is spiritual existence.

The next section of this chapter will explore the ways in which spirituality has a place within the context of Catholic religious education. Particular attention will be paid to the function of catechesis with spirituality, and of the relationship of catechesis with religious education.
2. The place of spirituality in Catholic religious education.

Spirituality clearly has a significant place in any discussion about Catholic theology and the Christian life. In addition, an equally significant a place exists for spirituality within Catholic religious education. In particular the concept of catechesis here plays a part. Distinct from, yet related to Catholic religious education, catechesis will be shown to be a means – although not an exclusive means – of enabling spirituality and religious experience to become elements of religious education. To do this, consideration will be made of the function of catechesis as a way of relating faith to spirituality. A definition of catechesis will be outlined, and the relationship that catechesis has with spirituality will be described and explored. Then the convergence of catechesis and spirituality to religious education, and the divergence of these elements will be examined.

(i) Catechesis and spirituality.

Kevin Nichols gives a salutory warning to those who attempt in one all-encompassing term to define catechesis too readily: 'These attempts will fail not because of the difficulty of the material but because the endeavour itself is mistaken' (Astley and Day, 1992, p. 54). It is for this reason that Nichols prefers not to speak of catechesis by using a single readily usable definition, but chooses instead to deal with the 'logical and definitive criteria' (Astley
and Day, 1992, *ibid.*) found in exploring the transforming rôle of catechesis. This Nichols calls the 'logical geography of catechesis' (Astley and Day, 1992, *ibid*.).

Nichols has here in his sights the American religious educationist Thomas Groome. Both Nichols and Groome understand catechesis as originating in the primacy of the Christian community. But in Nichols's view Groome has seriously misunderstood the function of catechesis. Of paramount concern to Nichols is that when Groome speaks of catechesis he defines it in such a way as to remove it necessarily from its intellectual and educational context. As Groome himself notes, once catechesis's commonality with education is removed, 'from what discipline does one draw to empower the activity?' (Astley and Day, 1992, p. 55, citing Groome, 1980, p. 27). Nichols asks pertinently: what is it that Groome is intending to indicate when he speaks of the need for catechesis to seek the means to empower itself? Not, Nichols suggests, to create a notion of *kudos* for the good of catechesis which might arise from a sense of belonging to a recognized discipline (Astley and Day, 1992, *ibid*.). Instead, Nichols suspects, Groome is expressing 'the desire to belong to a discipline whose coinage has universal currency' (Astley and Day, 1992, *ibid*.). Perhaps this might be called the desire for respectability.

But, for Nichols at least, catechesis is not subject to any particular discipline. It does not need to seek the respectability of the shelter of a recognized discipline. It is, by implication at
least, an unique activity in its own right. Nichols admits that it is closely connected to both education and socialization, but that it exists separately from either of these processes. Nichols's own criteria for education and socialization are not without difficulties. Education requires that something worthwhile should be transmitted, that cognitive perspectives should be developed in the activity, and that the procedures used should be morally acceptable in that they allow for the principle of respect for persons. Socialization involves the conforming of the individual to the norms of the culture and society in which they grow up. It does not require the cognitive perspectives which education requires, nor the freely chosen intention to be a part of the culture in which one grows and develops. Crucially, and as opposed to his criteria for education, socialization demands that the culture of the society should remain definitive, regardless of whether or not the individuals who live within that culture are collectively engaged in the shared common life of that culture (Astley and Day, 1992, pp. 59-60).

On their own terms alone, these criteria are contentious. If education is a qualitative process, as Nichols seems to imply, then this begs the question of who it is who decides what is 'worthwhile' or not for the criteria to be fulfilled. Similarly, Nichols seems to imply further that all education must produce cognitive results: presumably he means by this intellectual development. Where does this place certain aspects of physical education and music, for
example? This thesis' own definition of education involves a more holistic understanding of the criteria involved. Not all development is cognitive, but development does play a crucial function in education.

More serious, and more worrying, perhaps, is Nichols's understanding of socialization. At the heart of Nichols's comments is the unambiguously central purpose of culture in any understanding of socialization. The problem lies not so much in the requirement that culture should be considered, but in the exclusive understanding Nichols has of the action of culture. Nichols seems to be implying that to socialize properly is to live in the sway of the one dominant culture of the society in which one lives. This may not have been Nichols's intention, but the claim Nichols makes for the paramount centrality of the culture of society even if the individuals in it are not all collectively engaged in the shared life of the group, implies a down-grading of the many cultures which exist today in a pluralist society in respect of the one dominant culture in society at the time (Astley and Day, 1992, p. 61).

For Nichols education and socialization form one particular stream which point the way to defining a criteria for catechesis. He suggests that catechesis resembles education in that neither are what he terms 'task-specific' (Astley and Day, 1992, p. 62): each form of activity functions in a general way. Similarly, socialization and catechesis seem to follow parallel patterns. Each seems to occur within the context of the cultural world in which the
individual lives. Those cultural influences seem to play a part in determining the development of that individual. Here Nichols correctly raises the question of whether it is true to speak of catechesis as being cognitive in its approach to the individual, or whether the faith-principle which any discussion of religious beliefs and developments must necessarily involve arises as a result of individual participation and through experience alone. For Nichols, a correct understanding of catechesis arises out of a correct understanding of the formation of faith.

To enable this to happen, Nichols requires that a second stream of approach to catechesis should come into play. This involves the relationship of catechesis to Church traditions and the particularly significant aspects of Church life, of the community of faith, of the pastoral ministry of the Church and of evangelization (Astley and Day, 1992, p. 61). Catechesis involves the interplay of the educational and social factors described above, but it also involves the ecclesial structures which have a concern with faith.

Nichols's view is supported here by the witness of the documents of the Second Vatican Council. The Dogmatic Constitution *Dei Verbum* places catechesis firmly within the ministry of the word, along with all forms of Christian instruction. In doing so, the Constitution reflects the Greek origins of the term catechesis: *katechein*, to resound, to echo. Luke-Acts uses the term to indicate an instruction in the way of the Lord (Lk 1: 4; Acts 18: 25; 21: 24). Paul uses it
to indicate oral instruction - a handing on of all that has been received in and through Christ (Gal 6: 6; 1 Cor 14: 19; Rom 2: 18).

The notion that faith, which for Nichols holds a central position in any understanding of catechesis, is intimately connected with instruction is given additional support in the Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church, Christus Dominus. 'Bishops should be especially concerned about catechetical instruction. Its function is to develop in men a living, explicit and active faith, enlightened by doctrine' (Christus Dominus, art. 14). The Decree goes on to assert that catechetical instruction should be based on 'holy scripture, tradition, liturgy, and on the teaching authority and life of the Church' (Christus Dominus, ibid.). It is because of the relationship of faith and doctrine to catechesis that its position is here so intimately connected to the traditions and teaching office of the Church, and to the guardians of that teaching office, the Bishops. Nevertheless, while the Bishops may have pastoral oversight of catechesis, the actual process of the instruction and development of faith is given to those who are suitably qualified (presumably both by experience, life-style and education), to adapt and review with respect to the relative ages, abilities and other circumstances of those who receive it.

Given the ecclesial scope of catechesis, it becomes apparent that, just as faith is intended to be a life-long experience, so too is catechesis intended to be a life-long process of conversion and renewal. Thus the General Catechetical Directory Ad Norman Decreti
speaks of a Christian community of mature faith, living constantly in the light of the promptings of the Holy Spirit a life of just such conversion and renewal. 'Catechesis exercises the function ...of preparing people to be receptive to the action of the Holy Spirit and to be more thoroughly converted' (Ad Norman Decreti, art. 22). That preparation involves what Nichols has above described as socialization: using insights on culture to read the 'signs of the times'. In this case, however, the General Catechetical Directory recognizes that the context in which the socialization of faith with culture should occur is within a missionary setting: the mission of the Church necessarily involves the proclamation and fostering of faith in contemporary human society (Ad Norman Decreti, arts. 1-5, 26). As Pope John Paul II has stated in his Apostolic Exhortation Catechesi Tradendae, catechesis is best understood as a missionary activity. Indeed, the desire of Christ that the Church should seek to make disciples of all the nations, places catechesis firmly within a missionary model: 'The Church has always considered catechesis one of her primary tasks, for, before Christ ascended to his Father after his Resurrection, he gave the Apostles a final command - to make disciples of all nations and to teach them to observe all that he had commanded' (Catechesi Tradendae, art. 1).

However, catechesis is not to be confused with the initial proclamation of the Gospel which brings about the initial conversion of the individual. Instead, the Pope identifies two objectives for catechesis: first to mature the initial faith of the individual and
second to educate the individual more deeply in the message and person of Christ (\textit{Catechesi Tradendae}, art. 19). Catechesis is rooted in faith, and is to do with faith. It does not consist of a body of dry truths but is to do with communicating the living God. Its primary object is the mystery of Christ himself (\textit{Catechesi Tradendae}, arts. 5, 7). As such, catechesis is linked directly with the forms of Catholic spirituality which have been described in the section above.

That link between spirituality and catechesis is seen very clearly in the application of the three principles of Catholic spirituality (God, the individual and the world), described earlier in this chapter to the model of catechesis explored above. Just as the developments in twentieth century spirituality have meant that the spiritual heritage of the Catholic Church could be experienced in a manner that was more community focussed than hitherto was the case, so catechesis, as the process of development among the members of the Church of a 'living, explicit and active faith' (\textit{Christus Dominus}, art. 14), enables the whole community to engage in a journey of renewal and growth. Just as the present understanding of spirituality has succeeded in establishing for the Church a dialogue with the world, so too catechesis today is required to be engaged in a form of instruction and teaching which reads the 'signs of the times' in an attempt to communicate in a world which has progressed far along the path of secularization. There is an interaction, therefore, between catechesis and the theology of spirituality which
is profound and warrants comparison. It should be recognized, however, that comparison does not imply equality.

There exists a difference between spirituality and catechesis in the sitz im leben of each respective approach. Spirituality is understood to be an experience of the living God's call to holiness for each of us, fashioned in and through the world, calling us to be the Church in and to that world. Spirituality is both of the initial and the continuing experiential reality of God for each of us. It is an on-going process, but one which arises at the outset of our experience of God. Catechesis, on the other hand, presupposes an initial, developed faith amongst those who receive it. As such, and mindful of the etymological root of the term, catechesis should not be confused with the initial proclamation of the Gospel, but should be seen as an 'echoing' of the Gospel. As instruction, rather than kerygma, catechesis may be usefully employed in support of evangelization, but should not be seen as taking the place of evangelization. In addition, catechesis cannot properly be understood as the Christian experience of God, (as opposed to what spirituality clearly is), but as a systematic process whereby the understanding and faith in God which is already present might be further renewed and developed. Thus, while clear comparisons exist between spirituality and catechesis, clear contrasts also exist.

Spirituality and catechesis are thus related one to the other, yet distinct from each other. Both concepts touch upon key issues of understanding and growth. One is broadly experiential and
existential, the other instructional and supportive. How do these concepts, at once united yet different relate to Catholic religious education? The following section explores precisely this question.

(ii) Spirituality, catechesis and religious education.

At the end of the second chapter of this thesis Catholic religious education was described as a process which functioned from its self-perception of the events of revelation. A cyclical theology was said to operate within religious education, which determined its presuppositions and defined its aims. God calls fallen man to return to life in God: a call which finds its origins in revelation. Given that the discussion above of the dimensions of Catholic spirituality have highlighted the increasing emphasis this century on the experiential reality of God in the world of human existence, then spirituality and catechesis are intimately connected to Catholic religious education by virtue of their own dependence upon just such a cyclical theology of revelation. This is not to say, of course, that the spiritual dimensions of Catholic education are to be found exclusively in Catholic religious education. To suggest such a limitation would be to put a limit on the universal quality of our experience of God. A Catholic Education Service discussion paper states:

'Within the distinctive character of Catholic education, spiritual and moral development are intimately connected with, though not identical to, religious education, catechesis, collective worship, private prayer and liturgies. However, they are also promoted through all subjects of the curriculum.
and throughout the general life and work of the school' (Catholic Education Service, 1995, p. 5).

Clearly, then, spirituality is perceived to have a wider educational application than might otherwise be the case were a theology of spirituality (and a theology of catechesis) to concentrate purely on religious educational perspectives. Having acknowledged this, however, it is also obvious that religious education, spirituality and catechesis do share some similar aims and aspirations which give warrant for comparison to be made. A certain three-fold equivalence (that is, not an equality of substance but rather a generalized symmetry of form) might be made for spirituality and catechesis on the one hand and religious education on the other, drawing upon the conclusions reached at the end of the second chapter. This three-fold equivalence consists in (1) the engagement of Catholic religious education with the whole of religious tradition in equivalence to spirituality's universal call to holiness and the life-long commitment of catechesis to the growth of the individual in the light of the 'signs of the times'; (2) the generic aims of Catholic religious education in equivalence to the way of Catholic spirituality and the goals and aspirations of catechesis; (3) the structural presuppositions of Catholic religious education in equivalence to the structural presuppositions of both a Catholic theology of spirituality and catechesis.

The first equivalence relates therefore to the scope of Catholic religious education, theology of spirituality and catechesis. Catholic religious education, it has been seen, engages in dialogue
with the religious traditions of the world because it proceeds from the belief that these traditions are themselves vested in the intrinsic goodness of God. Revelation is, after all, given to the whole world. Insofar as religious traditions aim to help humanity strive towards God, they are themselves good in that they share, along with the tradition from which Catholic religious education derives its impetus, a common dignity. However, as was also noted in Chapter Two, there exists a basic tension here: for Catholic religious education also claims access to a higher level of fulfilment in the search for God, found in the guardianship and maintenance of the deposit of faith. This places Catholic religious education in a position where it regards itself as universally relevant to all traditions, while at the same time sharing in a common dignity with those traditions.

This finds an equivalence in the emphasis in Catholic spirituality on the universal call to holiness. The experience of God has a continuing and absolute relevance to humanity. We are all called: the message of salvation is universal. Similar tensions to those which are found in Catholic religious education exist, however, with any theology of Catholic spirituality's appeal to the world. Just as Catholic religious education recognizes the presence of God in the world's religious traditions, but stresses still the unique and universal character of Catholic belief, so too Catholic theologies of spirituality, while recognizing the capacity in all human beings to experience God (and to do this in and through the
world), point ultimately to the heritage of Catholic tradition and its dependence upon the initial revelation of God and the unfolding of the divine plan of salvation for the fulfilment of God's will towards humanity. The theology of spirituality recognizes the call to holiness to be universal, but unique.

Catechesis too has a universal application. Taking as its task the command of Jesus at the end of Matthew's Gospel to 'make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you' (Mt 28: 19-20a), catechesis must be seen as a part of the on-going and continual missionary activity of the Church. However, mindful of the distinction between kerygma and catechesis, it should be remembered that catechesis remains a secondary activity to proclamation and evangelization. Catechesis has been shown in this chapter to be concerned with the growth and maturation of faith of those who are members of the Christian community. To this extent, the demands of catechesis are to be applied universally to the Church: growth is for all its members, at whatever stage they may be. Once again, however, an underlying tension, (which, in effect, is its identity), is to be found in the relationship catechesis has with the wider world. While the catechist is expected to read the 'signs of the times' the message is not of the world but to the world. Catechesis seeks to prepare people to hear afresh the Word of God, and to be stirred by the promptings of the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, although the
techniques of pedagogy and social psychology which have evolved in twentieth century educational practice play a part in determining the manner of engaging in catechesis, yet should it constantly be borne in mind that catechesis, like the theology of spirituality and Catholic religious education, has as its origins and point of focus the message of salvation in God's revelation to humanity.

The second point of equivalence is that of the aims, ways and aspirations of Catholic religious education, spirituality and catechesis. The second chapter of this thesis contended that the aims of Catholic religious education can best be seen in their correspondence to the four major Constitutions of the Second Vatican Council. Thus, in the light of revelation, Catholic religious education seeks to reflect on that event of revelation. It aims also to reflect on the ecclesial nature of faith. In addition, Catholic religious education also tries to explore ways in which to make sense of the Church's existence in the world. Finally, in union with the whole Church, and in celebration of the events of revelation, Catholic religious education seeks to guide those who experience it in the life of grace and holiness.

Catholic spirituality finds an equivalence with these aims. In seeking to communicate the experience of God as a universal call to holiness, it recognizes the immediacy of revelation as the origin of that experience. This experience is ecclesial, but as the examination of the theology of Thomas Merton showed above, that experience is mediated through the experience of living in the
world. It cannot be separated from our experience of reality, since reality is a part of the experience of God. Finally, the nature of spirituality is such that to live the spiritual life is to live the life of grace. The aim of spirituality is the call to holiness, an aim which it shares in part with Catholic religious education.

Catechesis also shares in some of the aims and aspirations of Catholic religious education and spirituality. Thus, catechesis aims to guide the individual in his reflections on the events of revelation. The significance of the function of catechesis as an ecclesial activity has been highlighted: it is one of the ministries of the Word, and its exercise is to be given special attention by the Bishops of the Church who are called upon to oversee the exercising of this ministry in their dioceses. Catechesis takes place in the world, and as part of the Church's on-going dialogue with the world, the process of catechesis is required to engage fruitfully in this continuing discourse. Finally, in its assistance to the faithful in their individual and collective pilgrimage journeys, catechesis aims to be part of the celebration of the call to holiness and grace made to the world. Its function, strictly speaking, is to the Church. However, in pointing towards an eschatological realization of human hopes, it can function in a wider context, calling all humanity to witness to the events of revelation.

The third equivalence between religious education, spirituality and catechesis is that of presupposition. From all that has been
said above, it is clear that Catholic religious education assumes a reality to the events of revelation that is at once both profound and moving. Modern pedagogical techniques, obtained from the fact that religious education takes place in the world from which it draws its educational methods, are used as part of the function of the Church: to engage in proclamation and mission to the world in service to God, to call humanity back to God, to be the Church.

Catholic spirituality shares fully in these presuppositions. The experience of God is confirmation of the reality of God. As with Catholic religious education, Catholic spirituality recognizes the reality also of the world in that experience. Humanity functions in the world, relating, falling, rising again. The human experience of God takes place first and foremost in this setting. The experience of God's reality is to this extent mediated through the world, but, being identified within a specifically Catholic perspective, the Church is seen to play a fundamental part in incorporating that experience within an ecclesial position.

Finally, catechesis also shares presuppositions with Catholic religious education and spirituality. The reality of revelation is presumed at the outset of any catechesis. Catechesis builds upon the initial acceptance by the individual of the Gospel. It assumes equally that Christ has been experienced by that individual as a reality in his life. Faith is assisted to mature. The activity is, therefore, rightly described as being one which is faith-filled. It is also presumed to be an ecclesial activity: Christ's command for
the Church to make disciples is taken to heart. Catechesis lives out that reality, and in so doing shares in the life of the Church.

From these three areas of equivalence it will be seen that Catholic religious education shares much with the theology of spirituality and with catechesis. Differences do exist. Religious education remains first and foremost an educational activity. Whilst it is the case that it shares areas of concern with the elements discussed above, it would be wrong to draw too many strict parallels between them. Spirituality as the experience of God may correctly arise during the experience of religious education, but it does not constitute the whole of religious education, as an analysis of the first part of Chapter Two would readily show. Equally, catechesis may occur during the experience of religious education, drawing on the individual's initial faith-stance and thus enabling the individual to grow in faith, but it would not be correct to claim that religious education consisted entirely of catechesis. Catechesis is principally an action or event of faith. Catholic religious education clearly involves the faith of the individual in its process, but remains principally an activity of education.

If a clear parallel can be identified to exist between Catholic religious education, spirituality and catechesis, it is that of development. Religious education draws the individual into a real engagement with the events of revelation, of being the Church, and of being the Church in the world and of celebration of the call to holiness. It guides and assists in intellectual growth. It seeks to
enable the individual to belong, both to the Church and to the world. It seeks to make the cyclical theology of a return of the fallen child to the grace of God a reality. As such, it tries to allow the individual to develop through a process of religious education.

Spirituality too is involved with development. The call to holiness, the call to return to a life of grace, to journey on, back to God, this too is a form of development. The individual is encouraged to take to heart, to find a significance in and an ultimacy through his experience of the reality of God. Spirituality is the definition of an authentic life inasmuch as the individual who experiences the reality of God lives filled with the Spirit of God and seeks to conform ever more fully to the image of God which the life of grace allows.

Catechesis also clearly is concerned with development. Indeed, with its open-ended relevance to all people no matter at what stage they may be in their journey of faith, it points to the fact that catechesis is to be seen as the way of faith development in an ecclesial setting. The sense of 'journey', which has functioned as a motif to accompany the progress of faith can be seen here to complement the notion of development, both as a means of imagery of pilgrimage, but also, more pertinently, as a reality for the individual. Faith consists of a journey back to God, a journey which is itself given impetus by the successive faith-development and maturation which takes place assisted by catechesis.
The first part of this chapter has considered some of the dimensions of spirituality and catechesis as they impinge upon Catholic religious education. Some scriptural and theological aspects of spirituality were explored, and the role of catechesis examined. Parallels and differences were highlighted between these two dimensions and Catholic religious education. Catholic religious education does not consist wholly of spirituality, nor is it completely a catechetical act. It does however contain elements which share an equivalence with and a similarity to these other areas.

The following section will consider some of the dimensions of secular spirituality. The relationship of those dimensions to religious education will also be explored.

A final section will compare and contrast the Catholic and secular forms of spirituality discussed in this chapter as they impinge upon religious education.
1. Defining 'the spiritual' in secular thought.

The many dimensions of the spiritual play a key part in secular educational thought and also in relation to secular religious education. Although section 1 of the Education Reform Act of 1988 specified that schools should promote the spiritual development of all pupils, no clear definition was given of what was meant by the term. Some scholars have chosen to make a clear distinction between the 'spirit' and 'spirituality', seeing the former as a defining quality of what it is to be distinctively human, whilst seeing the latter as a religious concept which is defined by the values and belief systems of faith, and which has to do with the individual's self-understanding in terms of his origins, identity, purpose and destiny. The term 'the spiritual' is seen by these scholars to be a bridge between these two concepts, and is applied to those commonly shared aspects of human life which do not deal with the physical or the material dimensions of experience. At the same time, those who would give those experiences a religious interpretation would be permitted to do so; thus the term remains ambiguous (Erricker, et al, 1993, p. 33).

Moreover, within secular contexts the terms 'spirit', 'spirituality' and 'the spiritual' have come to be applied to such a wide range of social, psychological and aesthetic areas that an attempt at formulating a single characteristic definition for each
term - and, indeed, an attempt to find distinctions between these terms - is inevitably doomed to failure. Partly this stems from the inability of secular and increasingly postmodern critiques of reality to determine whether structural realities underlie our assumptions about human self-awareness, judgment and experience.18 Experience of events which, even when understood in rational, scientific terms, leaves the individual who has experienced them with a deeper insight into himself, (even, indeed, when that self-understanding arises from a delusional psychosis), nevertheless remains 'valid' for that individual because it is subjectively 'real' to him. It identifies for him, and in him, his own uniqueness. It makes the claim that this human being is an individual: a person who is one amongst billions. Thus the shared commonality of certain experiences - grief and joy, for example - does not imply that humanity is a single amorphous entity. Each human being experiences grief and joy as an individual first, and as part of the human family second. In secular terms, 'spirit', 'spirituality' and 'the spiritual' are subjective expressions if they are to mean anything.

At one level, this implies a finality to the search in understanding the secular spirit, spirituality and the spiritual. If these phrases represent subjective understandings of human experience to the highest degree possible, then any meaningful exploration into these terms is at once limited and empty. On this basis, I can speak only of myself, and only of the subjective as it
relates to me. In so doing, that speech will not be understood properly by another because that other is not me. The other, after all, will have his own subjectivity and his own understanding of his own experiences within which to find meaning. My own subjectivity remains mine and not that of another.

It might be objected that it is possible to speak of some common heritage which is shared between us all. Thus, the argument might run, grief and joy are universal experiences which we do all share and can talk about meaningfully to others, and which do form part of this world of 'the spirit', 'spirituality' and 'the spiritual'. However, whilst it might certainly be admitted that grief and joy arise universally among all people as experiences to a variety of events throughout the course of life, it should also be borne in mind that the specific meanings attributed by individuals to those experiences remain subjective. In this sense, therefore, experience remains relative to the individual: the understanding of each individual's particular experiences by another must remain approximate at best, just as much as the particular experience remains fundamentally the experience of the individual. These ambiguities should be kept in mind in all that follows.

All these difficulties of definition and meaning have not prevented the assumption being made by government educational inspectors that the approximation discussed above can be assessed, albeit in part. In a short but significant discussion paper by the Office for Standards in Education in 1994 the spiritual and moral
dimensions of education are discussed within the context of the theme of development:

'This publication is unashamedly about values[...]but also about personal development in its fullest sense. That fullest sense is, in the wording of the 1992 Schools Act, one which encompasses the "spiritual, moral, social and cultural" development of all pupils. And one of the central tasks of the new system of inspection is to ensure schools' capacity to encourage that development' (OFSTED, 1994, p. 1).

The discussion paper states clearly and unambiguously that education is not merely to do with the gaining of knowledge and essential skills, but also to do with personal development 'in its fullest sense' (OFSTED, 1994, ibid.). That fullest sense, the discussion paper goes on to state, includes the areas of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development which affect all pupils in a school (OFSTED, 1994, ibid.).

This raises implications for the relationship between the process of education and the society who pays for it. Society makes an investment in education, and, OFSTED suggests, quite rightly should expect that the goals set by society for education should be achieved. (This naturally begs the question of whether the goals society expects of education are indeed achievable). At the same time, however, OFSTED states that schools should not be expected to take responsibility for any failures on the part of society, or of individuals within that society, to uphold some kind of moral and spiritual cohesion within society (OFSTED, 1994, ibid.).

The 1992 Education (Schools) Act set up the statutory framework for inspections under a new independent system. One of its four
legal requirements for the inspections process, referred to by the OFSTED discussion paper was that schools were to be inspected to see how well they promoted the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils (OFSTED, 1994, p. 5). Clearly this indicates that the legislators - not necessarily the best judges in these matters - believed that the spiritual element of education, as well as the others listed, could be identified and assessed. However, as the discussion paper notes, real problems arise from this assumption (OFSTED, 1994, *ibid.*). Schools and inspectors alike needed to determine what was meant by the key terms of 'development' and 'the spiritual, the moral, the social and the cultural'. Because this portion of the chapter is primarily concerned with 'the spiritual' in secular educational and social thought, the first and last of these terms will be considered as they arise in the OFSTED discussion paper and more generally.

The concept of development is central to the 1992 Act, and thus just as central to the tasks of school inspectors. In outline, OFSTED speaks of development being influenced by three factors: its close relationship to growth and maturation; that it cannot occur without some kind of stimulus or 'nourishment'; that parents, schools, peers and media all make contributions to this 'nourishment' (OFSTED, 1994, p. 6). However, any assessment of this basic structure is complex and varied in its difficulty.

Educational development itself is more complicated to determine as a process. This, the OFSTED discussion paper notes is 'because it
is concerned both with how schools develop pupils and with how pupils develop' (OFSTED, 1994, ibid.). Inspection of educational development is held to be necessarily a two-fold process firstly of the assessment of educational provision including the ways in which the school has both provided and promoted a favourable environment for development, and secondly of an assessment of pupils' learning, experience, behaviour, attitudes and values which are determined through the provision that has been made, and which give direct evidence of how and why those pupils are able to develop in the ways they do (OFSTED, 1994, pp. 7, 6). The discussion paper notes that inspectors 'can assess the stages of development which are taking place (process) and what pupils achieve as a result of passing through these stages (outcome)' (OFSTED, 1994, p. 6). The discussion paper notes that pupils themselves may well have something to contribute towards this process of development.

In addition, the discussion paper refuses to allow the assumption to be made that 'development' can progress along the same linear pattern in all of the aspects which the paper addresses (i.e. the spiritual, the moral, the social and the cultural). 'Social development' might follow a pattern which is readily observed and measured, but 'spiritual development' is not so easily assessed. The paper notes that this is so for 'any definition of this particularly difficult concept' (OFSTED, 1994, ibid.).

Having given a caveat to describing development in specific terms, the discussion paper quotes, without giving a reference the
definition of spiritual development offered by the 1993 revised edition of the inspectors’ manual Framework for Inspection. It is worth reproducing that definition in full, since it is used by OFSTED to guide its own understanding of the term in the discussion paper, and is relevant to our understanding of the ‘official’ secular understanding of the term:

Spiritual development relates to that aspect of inner life through which pupils acquire insights into their personal existence which are of enduring worth. It is characterised by reflection, the attribution of meaning to experience, valuing a non-material dimension to life and intimations of an enduring reality. ‘Spiritual’ is not synonymous with ‘religious’; all areas of the curriculum may contribute to pupils’ spiritual development (OFSTED, 1994, p. 8).22

In its subsequent commentary, the discussion paper suggests that spirituality is not a synonym for religious education. There are, however, close connections: ‘spiritual development may be both an aim for religious education and an outcome of it’ (OFSTED, 1994, ibid.). There are, suggest the authors, links between spiritual development and religious education in the sense that just as religious education is to be seen as seeking to increase the awareness in pupils of ‘ultimate questions’ to do with life and existence, so too is this a function of the process leading to spiritual development in individuals. Religious education promotes spiritual development, but does not encompass it. That remains ‘a responsibility of the whole school and of the whole curriculum’ (OFSTED, 1994, ibid.).23

Specifically, the OFSTED authors believe that spirituality has to do with personal beliefs and values, ‘especially on questions about
In particular, questions about the nature and purpose of life seem to be central to their understanding of spiritual development. As a consequence, these issues go to the heart of what it means to be human, and touch upon the very basis of personal and social life and behaviour (OFSTED, 1994, ibid.). In the light of this, the discussion paper holds that the aim of spiritual development is 'to help individuals to make sense of those [ultimate] questions, and about what it does to help form pupils' response to life and to various forms of experience, or even to questions about the universe' (OFSTED, 1994, ibid.). However, the distinction of these aims from the aims which the discussion paper suggests properly belong to religious education (namely seeking to increase in pupils an awareness and 'scrutiny' of questions of ultimacy) is here frankly unclear (OFSTED, 1994, ibid.).

The discussion paper notes also that spiritual development will mean different things to different religious and non-religious individuals working in the same context. Thus those with religious convictions may find it impossible to make a division between the 'secular' parts of life and the 'spiritual' parts. Life is seen as a complete wholist unity in which the secular is taken up into the sacred. Non-religious individuals, the OFSTED authors note may find it virtually impossible to assent to the idea of 'the spiritual', seeing the world solely in reductionist or materialist terms (OFSTED, 1994, ibid.). This problem, the discussion paper pleads,
needs to be bridged for progress to be made: 'It is vital to press towards a common currency of shared understandings' (OFSTED, 1994, *ibid.*). However, how this might come about, and indeed, whether, within a secular society, such an endeavour might be achievable, is not addressed.

In summary, then, the OFSTED discussion paper seems to suggest a general and wide definition for spiritual development. The spiritual quest, the authors suggest is something that virtually all people are able to identify with. We all seek answers — whether consciously or unconsciously — to the question 'who am I?', 'to where am I travelling?' (OFSTED, 1994, *ibid.*). This quest, the OFSTED authors add, requires intellectual curiosity. It demands in us the ability to seek after meaning, but it presumes that meaning can be reached and understood. The task of education becomes one in which pupils are lead 'in the direction of open-ended enquiry...[in which pupils are invited]...to take an increasing responsibility for themselves and their work' (OFSTED, 1994, *ibid.*). Unfortunately, however, and despite the grandeur of this vision, the OFSTED authors fail to address a central paradox that bedevils this open, generally secular approach to spiritual development. For if the desire of the inspectors is to see greater autonomy and individuality in the thought processes of individual pupils, it remains the case that this independent, almost postmodern individuality finds its foundation in the assumptions and ideologies of the teachers, the State and society, who bring to the process of spiritual development
their own agendas of influence and formation. Individuality, the key essential ingredient to mature spiritual development in the eyes of the OFSTED authors is thus dependent upon and externally agreed common authority, whose very basis is open to critical question and debate.

This question of authority is touched upon only tangentially by the OFSTED authors, who show a concern more for the assessment of the results of spiritual development, rather than the actual processes and ideologies that bring it about. Thus, whilst it is acknowledged that any inspection of spiritual development places the inspector in the position of a virtual inquisitor, and that the underlying principle of an inner life is hard to identify, yet assessment of spiritual development can still take place, through an analysis of the ways in which schools provide for spiritual development, through the values and attitudes of the school, through the contributions made by the curriculum, through religious education (presumably still part of the same curriculum, but separately identified by the OFSTED authors), collective worship and other assemblies, and through extra-curricular activities (OFSTED, 1994, p. 9). How does this provision reveal itself in the pupils who are to be assessed? The discussion paper suggests that assessments which touch on pupils' knowledge of the central attitudes of religions and philosophies, understanding the ways others have interpreted the world through story, myth and historical and scientific endeavour, personal beliefs and the values which arise
from them, behavioural attitudes and personal responses to questions about the meaning of life (OFSTED, 1994, pp. 9-10). Paradoxically, the discussion paper is keen to preface these suggestions with the stricture that it is not the function of inspectors to assess the 'spiritual health' of the individual pupil (OFSTED, 1994, p. 9).

However, if the personal beliefs, behavioural attitudes and personal values of the individual are to be assessed, it becomes very hard to determine the value and validity of a judgement about the demonstration of a spiritual, 'inner' development of a pupil, which claims to be unbiased and non-judgemental with respect to those beliefs, and one which assumes a certain ideology or another in order to compare it against the spiritual development of the individual pupil, and thus reach a judgement about that pupil's spiritual development. Any judgement implies a set of ground-rules; a standard against which that which is judged has to be compared. That implies an authority which determines the rules: an ideology. This is not discussed by the OFSTED authors, and remains a serious weakness to their approach in understanding the term spiritual development.

The position of the OFSTED discussion paper, looking towards a common definition for spiritual development which, although open both to religious and secular considerations leans more to the latter than the former, is noted by Michael Newby (Best, 1996, p. 95). In a paper entitled 'Towards a secular concept of spiritual maturity' Newby aims to clarify what spiritual development might
mean for a secular life lived in a non-religious environment (Best, 1996, p. 93ff.). Newby presupposes a number of additional contexts for his analysis. Thus he assumes that spirituality should be identified with the development of personal identity, and is to be distinguished from moral development because, in opposition to moral development, spiritual development focuses upon the psyche of the developing self. This psyche may not always retain its integrity when conforming to moral norms, and should thus be regarded as an element of the individual which is separate to moral development. This leads to Newby's other major assumption about spiritual development, namely that spiritual growth can be a meaningful concept to employ about an individual even outside the 'tightly-defined religious and ideological traditions' (Best, 1996, p. 93). This, however, raises the question of whether Newby is not here applying his own ideology to spiritual development? Newby's assumptions remain open to empirical scrutiny, and his assertion that the psyche is readily identifiable is puzzling, given that he has not established what the term might mean, nor how its 'existence' is an ontological statement. These concepts appear to derive from Newby's own ideological assumptions about reality, and thus form a paradox to his thought, given that ideology is claimed by Newby to belong to the same 'tightly-defined' set of beliefs from which spirituality is to be set free (Best, 1996, ibid.).

Newby defines the 'non-religious context of secular life today' as a postmodern culture which owes a debt to the pluralist post-
traditions of late modernity. It is a culture, Newby asserts, in which spirituality focuses increasingly upon 'the preservation of individual, national and international identity, rather than religious development' (Best, 1996, pp. 93, 94). It is this sense of personal, communal and global identity which informs Newby's understanding of spiritual development. Spiritual development is to be defined 'as primarily the development of psychic self-identity' (Best, 1996, ibid.). This 'requires the composition of a continuous, coherent and creative life-narrative' (Best, 1996, ibid.).

Newby acknowledges that his approach to spiritual development works from an ideological standpoint - although he does not apply this term to himself. Thus he notes that his account of spiritual development stems from 'the values shared by liberal educators committed to an education which seeks to enable the transformation of life-quality through the development of personal autonomy' (Best, 1996, p. 95). Here legitimate questions might be raised concerning the basis by which we might determine our personal autonomy in this particular context. If, as Newby later suggests, human autonomy is defined from within the culture of the age, (a culture which has become, moreover, 'no longer traditional'), then human autonomy must become a necessarily amorphous and indefinable concept (cf. Best, 1996, ibid.). Furthermore, Newby is unclear about what he means when he refers to 'tradition': how is this term to be understood? Could it not be argued that any commonly agreed cultural norm becomes the 'tradition' of the society at that time; thus, could it not follow
that the present postmodern culture is now the 'tradition'? Newby is unclear about these issues.

Given Newby's insistence on making spirituality and personal development dependent upon cultural constraints and contexts, (namely, that the ultimate desires, aspirations and inspirations are constantly determined and re-determined by cultural structures within which the individual moves and lives), Newby sees a link between culture, spirituality and the society in which these events occur (cf. Best, 1996, *ibid.*).

Newby presupposes that the central feature of society today is that it is liberal and maintains an openness of enquiry: 'Integral to this is the valuing of critical and imaginative thought which is not restricted by refusal to question accepted authorities' (Best, 1996, *ibid.*). However, even here Newby's assertion is unable to support itself sufficiently well. What, for example, would happen to a critical analysis of society which belonged in its mode of thought to the 'old' tradition of metaphysics, and which would thus arise in critical confrontation to the 'new' orthodoxy of liberal openness? On Newby's own presupposed grounds for engagement, the 'new' orthodoxy of liberal openness would not accept the validity of metaphysical critiques *a priori* of those critiques being posed. This would presumably be the case because the 'old' tradition of metaphysics would belong to part of the 'accepted authorities' which Newby alleges is open to question in the first place. This paradox is reinforced by Newby's subsequent comments 'That this [openness]
rules out certain religious and ideological attitudes should be clear at the outset. For reasons of tact and discretion, it is unwise to specify offending sub-traditions, as well as politically and socially harmful’ (Best, 1996, *ibid.*).25

It has already been noted that Newby is aware of the OFSTED position on spirituality discussed earlier in this chapter. He considers OFSTED to have a more open attitude towards spirituality than did its predecessors, an attitude which Newby appears to welcome in curious terms:

The recent emphasis in government consultation papers upon open and critical enquiry attests to the insufficiency of religious spirituality, at least as it is commonly understood. OFSTED itself comes very close to this perception in its emphasis both upon "what is supremely personal and unique to each individual" and also upon the importance of "pressing towards a common currency of shared understandings"...Spirituality is, therefore, not simply an individual matter, but one for society to address.’ (Best, 1996, *ibid.*).

Newby is here a little disingenuous in his interpretation of the OFSTED position. The relationship between secular and religious spirituality is treated with more subtlety by OFSTED than Newby is prepared to allow. Thus, his claim that OFSTED emphasizes that religious spirituality is an insufficient form of human expression, is not an accurate assessment of the true position. Certainly OFSTED treats secular spirituality with the same status as religious spirituality. To claim, as Newby does, that OFSTED holds a particular bias against religious spirituality in favour of secular spirituality is a one-sided interpretation of the facts, at the very least.26
In summary, Newby's concept of secular spirituality has the notion of a liberal democratic and humane society at its base. This provides the boundary for a coherent spiritual identity to be formed. However, even as Newby notes in passing, his assertions remain open to criticism largely because their very basis is incapable of formulation in an incontestable form (Best, 1996, p. 96). The difficulty of presenting an argument following Newby's own terms arises because any structured proof which might be offered in its support would require a clearer evidential basis that Newby is able to provide. Argument becomes assertion, and assent an act of faith rather than a rationally conceived structure. At the heart of the difficulty lies the problem that must bedevil all secular thought: the question of authority. What, for example, does Newby mean when he refers to 'democratic and humane principles' (Best, 1996, *ibid.*)? On whose authority does it depend to determine whether society is acting according to these principles? This is a particularly pressing issue for Newby to address, since as it stands, only those views and beliefs which do not represent a danger to the democratic and humane principles of liberal secular society are permitted to be respected and allowed in Newby's system.27 The impression is left that rather than describing spirituality, (something Newby claims he is doing: Best, 1996, p.106), Newby seems instead to be replacing the notion of a purely secular personal development with the label of 'spiritual development', without touching on the notion of ultimacy which seems to be at the core of
most interpretations of spirituality. Newby's notion of 'spiritual
development' is greatly politicized, but seems also to be limited by
that very approach.

The next section of this chapter will explore some ways in which
spirituality has a place within the context of secular religious
education. Particular attention will be paid to the relationship
between secular spirituality and the three models of secular
religious education explored in Chapter Two.
2. The place of spirituality in secular religious education.

The brief analysis of some of the many possible secular interpretations of spirituality shows that its very broadness of definition permits its application to many contexts. The following section will reflect on the ways in which concepts of spirituality have been applied by the three main secular traditions of religious education considered in Chapter Two. Thus, the phenomenological approach of Michael Grimmitt to religious education will be reconsidered as it refers principally to his concept of development. Next, the experientialist school of religious education will be analysed with respect to its concept of 'the inner'. Finally, the non-realism of the 'Sea of Faith' school of secular theology will be reconsidered in the light of its own distinctive notion of the 'holy (human) spirit'.

(i) Michael Grimmitt and spirituality.

Chapter Two considered the work of Michael Grimmitt. His attempt to establish a proper function for phenomenology within the context of religious education was explored, and his efforts to establish a balance between phenomenological methodology with the applied use of the memories, concepts and values of those who engage in religious education.

Thus, Grimmitt was seen to employ a specific theory of religious education, in which two kinds of knowledge are involved. These, it
was seen, Grimmitt calls 'abilities in pure religion', and 'abilities in applied religion' (Grimmitt, 1991). Grimmitt is seen to examine ways in which phenomenology - as a dispassionate discipline of study - may still have value as a means of exploring religion within an educational context, through its re-defining as a functional tool which must take into account both the *sitz im leben* of those who engage in religious education, as well as taking into account the beliefs and values both of the child and the religious tradition which is being studied. Grimmitt applies to this the concept of 'human givens': the capacity in human beings not simply of being born human, but of becoming human through the emotional and spiritual growth which makes us who we are. It is this issue which provides an indication of some of the spiritual dimensions in Grimmitt's theory of religious education.

The key relationship between secular spirituality and Grimmitt's theory of religious education rests upon the way in which each can be seen to be concerned with development. Grimmitt recognizes that 'moral, religious and spiritual consciousness is a component of human consciousness which has the capacity to become all-embracing in terms of human meaning-making' (Grimmitt, 1987, p. 167). These components are contextualized within his frame of 'human givens': they alert us and raise in us what Grimmitt refers to as 'value-imperatives', which are found within the 'givens' (Grimmitt, 1987, p. 368).
This quite explicit 'humanizing' of spirituality is made clearer by Grimmitt elsewhere. 'All human meaning emerges in human contexts' (Grimmitt, 1991, p. 85). Whilst this might be a truism, it reveals also a concern with the identification of the source of human spirituality as Grimmitt perceives it. We establish our individual hermeneutics, through the beliefs and values we hold about the world in which we live. In an explanation of this process, Grimmitt identifies a four-old definition for this process, involving the enhancement of our awareness of our core-values, an encouragement to evaluate our experiences by interpreting our experiences sub specie aeternitatis, the ability to hold beliefs and values as an act of faith, and a recognition of the influence holding these beliefs and values may have on us in the future (Grimmitt, 1987, p. 168). Faith-responses, which Grimmitt appears to equate with a self-transcendent point of reference by which we are able to interpret the totality of our experiences, play a significant part in this definition. We do not exist in a vacuum: our experiences of the world about us bring about in us varying levels of interpretative response. The educational process itself, Grimmitt remarks, is a process 'directed towards bringing about change or development in some form' (Grimmitt, 1991, p. 80). For Grimmitt, that development forms part of the structure of human consciousness: a core human value.

Grimmitt makes clear that in speaking of spiritual development, he does not mean religious development. Instead, he understands
spiritual development to be the human ability to be aware of the possibility of transcending themselves in such a way that 'the limitations of human finite identity are challenged by the exercise of the creative imagination' (Grimmitt, 1987, p. 125). Its link to religion remain strictly defined: it may arise as a result of a reflection upon an individual's religious consciousness, but it does not become dependent upon. For Grimmitt, the influence of religion upon spiritual development is a contingent factor, not a necessary one (Grimmitt, 1987, ibid.).

What spiritual development might mean specifically within Grimmitt's theory of religious education, is outlined further. Spiritual development involves the heightening of what Grimmitt calls 'the hierarchy of humans needs excelling the material' (Grimmitt, 1987, ibid.). Love, forgiveness, powerlessness and dispossession, the yearning for completion, for wholeness and integration all form part of the matrix of human spiritual self-awareness (Grimmitt, 1987, ibid.).

Within the context of Grimmitt's theory of religious education, his concept of human spirituality retains a coherence within that theory. Specifically, if Grimmitt's contention that every religious tradition and phenomenon which is encountered in an educational context, is empowered in such a way as to present to the learner - whatever that individual's personal religious beliefs - an educational gift, the instrumental worth of which is dependent upon the manner in which the learner interacts with it, then those core
values which lead the individual to reflect upon the non-material aspects of life, (that is, those senses of spiritual development mentioned above), begin to function as part of this process.29

In concrete terms, Grimmitt has proposed a four-fold strategy to deliver religious education following his theoretical structures. Although designed specifically for use with young children, it does demonstrate in a wider context Grimmitt's more general concerns. It highlights those areas of his thought which reflect his understanding of spiritual development, but is set within his theory of religious education.

Within Grimmitt's interactive model, the learner receives and engages with the religious phenomenon which is presented to him. This may have the effect of bringing about a confirmation in the learner of any faith which he might possess. However, it may not have this effect. Since it arises from the relationship of religion to spirituality, it remains a contingent factor, not a necessary one, in the life of the learner. However, it would be wrong to assume from this that Grimmitt does not intend benefit to be derived by those whose faith is not confirmed by the encounter. The educational benefits of self-understanding and self-transcendence from material concerns to the spiritual ones mentioned above fall into this category (Grimmitt, 1991, p. 83).

Subsequent to the encounter and engagement, the second stage of the process is termed by Grimmitt the 'Discovery Stage' (Grimmitt, 1991, p. 84). This stage marks the bridge between the world of the
ordinary and the material - the world of the classroom - with the world of the religious phenomenon which has been encountered. In a sense, this stage sets the interpretative scene within which the learners will begin their interaction with the religious phenomenon. Grimmitt comments that the key concern here is given 'not to what the believing religious community thinks or feels about this material, but to the way the children themselves interact with it' (Grimmitt, 1991, ibid.).

Grimmitt's third stage of the process of religious education, in which spiritual development has a part, is what he calls the Contextualization Stage (Grimmitt, 1991, ibid.). This stage involves the distancing of the religious phenomenon from the learner. Although it might at first sight appear paradoxical to create boundaries which inhibit closer contact with a phenomenon which the learner is actively seeking to understand, Grimmitt's strategy involves a particular concern with placing the religious phenomenon within its own context. Almost invariably this context is one which remains beyond that of the learner. Here Grimmitt's secular agenda asserts itself. The learner is not undertaking religious education in order to become part of the same context as the religious phenomenon, but engages in religious education to reach a self-understanding both of the phenomenon and of himself, through this process.

The final stage of Grimmitt's religious education strategy he calls the Reflective Stage. Here a dialogue takes place between the
learner and the religious phenomenon. This can only occur now because the religious material has been contextualized, the limits having been delineated and the boundaries drawn between the learner and the religious phenomenon. Again, what Grimmitt finds to be specifically educational in this process is the possibility this action presents for the learner to gain, through a religious insight into the phenomena, the ability to become self-aware, and to evaluate himself through a reflective encounter with the contextualized religious phenomena (Grimmitt, 1991, *ibid.*).

Grimmitt's theory operates within an avowedly secular context, and his understanding of the contribution of spiritual development must be seen in the same light. Thus, he warns us to reject outright the ideas of those who think that spiritual development and the self-transcendent capacity of humans to seek the non-material in an otherwise material world, is somehow magically parachuted down upon the learner from some metaphysical beyond. The human context within which interpretation and meaning are defined, 'the beauty and holiness of religious material', remains a controlled activity within a predetermined human setting (Grimmitt, 1991, pp. 84-85). Its strengths are marked. Grimmitt’s insights into spiritual development are fascinating in the sense that, like almost all secular notions of spirituality, the actions which bring it about speak more about the individuals who develop, than the events which bring about that development. It is a determinedly secular approach to an abstract, yet seemingly living process. Its problems are,
however, significant too. Grimmitt is careful to attempt to seek a balance between a phenomenological methodology and the applied use of the memories, concepts and values of those who engage in religious education. However, the balance is one which favours the assumption that the possibility cannot exist of an autonomy within a religious tradition which might draw the learner into a contextualized relationship with itself, whilst retaining its own dynamic self-existence. The scales are, therefore, imbalanced before the process of religious education begins to take place. The balance which is achieved is on secular terms throughout. The possibility that the truth-claims of any religious tradition which is encountered in the process might have an intrinsic ontological existence or validity, remains firmly outside the theory, and is not a concern of Grimmitt's.

(ii) The Experiential School and spirituality.

In the previous chapter consideration was made of the religious education theories of the experiential school of John Hammond, David Hay and others.\(^3\) Mention was made of Hay and Hammond's assertion that the experiential method had to do with taking seriously one's own experience. Two aims were identified for the method: first, that religious education seeks to enable pupils to become aware of their own inner experiences, and to recognize, learn and respect the experiences of others, and second, that religious education must be undertaken in such a way as to allow the function of the
metaphorical language employed by those who speak about their own experiences to be understood correctly.

These aims were shown to have arisen in order that the experientialist methodology should enable religious education to bring the learner to an awareness of the power of experience within the lives of others, whilst keeping the learner outside the 'walls' of confessionalism. This has been noticed also, albeit critically, by Kevin Mott-Thornton, who suggests that the experiential approach functions so as to promote spiritual development without introducing a substantive set of religious or moral values into the exercise (Best, 1996, p. 84).

The experientialist approach to religious education has significant impact upon the way in which spiritual development is to be understood in experiential thought. Hay and Hammond comment at the end of their response to the critique of Adrian Thatcher that

'Religious education is about observing differences and similarities in religious systems and noting recurring themes. Experiential religious education emphasizes the relation of these to our own feelings and thoughts. In this, the subject gains its depth' (Hay and Hammond, 1992, p. 149).

It is this issue of 'feeling' that provides an indication of the relationship of spiritual development with the experiential religious education. Methodologically within the classroom, the experiential approach seeks to introduce directed activities which involve the use of fantasy, story, imagination and personal reconstruction of external stimuli through guided meditation and centering exercises. These methods are intended to allow the
learner to reflect upon the experiences that he has encountered, but to recognize that those experiences are his own, belonging to no other person (cf. Hammond, Hay et al, 1990, p. 28).

This principle arises as a natural consequence of the experiential methodology as a whole. Stemming from the increasing influence of British phenomenology in the 1970's, which was perceived to have had a relevance as an educational method in religious education, the experiential approach seeks to create a more fair balance between description and subjectivity than had previously been the case. However, this is not to suggest that the experientialist method attempts to supersede that of the phenomenologists. Largely, the difference occurs in the common understanding of many that phenomenology stood for a simple concentration upon the externals of phenomena, regardless of whatever prejudices the observer might have. That this was never the real intention of phenomenology is recognized by the experientialists (Hammond, Hay et al, 1990, p. 6). It is probably more accurate to say that the experientialist school develops the findings of the phenomenological method, without rejecting the assumptions phenomenology uses when undertaking its tasks.

This development involves for experientialists a recognition and analysis of what it means to speak of subjectivity. The learning process, in which an event is encountered and reflected upon, cannot be undertaken superficially. It must involve depth and significance to the individual who encounters it, for it to awaken meaning in
that individual. The process, therefore, requires the individual who undertakes it to reflect upon the ways in which the encounter give meaning to himself: the reflection is not of the external event which has been encountered but of the individual in whom resonances of depth and personal meaning now begin to reverberate. In their significant article which replied to charges of dualism made against them, Hay and Hammond make this concept clear:

'Experiential religious education is about using, and so valuing and exploring, one's own experience as a way of knowing better others' experience of religion. This is the significance of all the "inner" talk: "inner space", "going inside", "inner eye" and so on...Inner talk is a metaphor for attentiveness, mindfulness' (Hay and Hammond, 1992, p. 145).

The concept of the 'inner' is thus significant. When the pupil enters into the world of another, he does not enter, so the experientialists suggest, as an automaton, incapable of responding without any sense of personal reaction and emotion. The involves the pupil as an individual in ways which may be painful, even humbling. Recognition that my own view is not the only possible view of the universe is not a truism, but an act of faith in myself: I recognize that the way I see the world is not the only valid view. But in so doing, I am able to reflect upon and respond to the ways I have understood my existence. This takes place in the light of my experience of events and phenomena which originally lay outside my own perspectives, but which have now, in my encounter with them, entered into my world (cf. Hammond, Hay et al, 1990, p. 6). It is in this sense that the experientialist views the concept of spiritual development.
A number of questions can be raised, however, against the experientialist approach, particularly over whether or not spiritual development can actually take place using the methodology that has been proposed. Thus, it is acknowledged by experientialists that the principle concern of the method is to induce reflection in the pupil that is both self-referring and non-specific. However, this in itself depends upon the ability both of teacher and pupil to reach an understanding of the experience in terms of self-evident axioms which retain a neutrality of assumption and prejudice, with the exception of the values and attitudes already inherent within the pupil or teacher. Spiritual development becomes reduced to an individualism which acts both as the source and the reflection of the source, within the encounter. This, however, means that the notion of 'development' is less clear than might be expected: rather than undertaking a non-specific process with a defined and identifiable learning and developmental outcome, the experiential method appears to depend instead on a peculiarly defined and specific set of assumptions, namely, those of the individual pupils which are brought into the encounter. If it should be the norm, as the experientialist methodology clearly intends, that no 'religious' confessionalism should occur in the experience of a pupil with a religious phenomenon, within an educational context, then the spiritual growth or development of the pupil remains decidedly static. Reflection is not development. One might learn 'more' about
oneself, but one does not thereby 'acquire' the external experience. As Mott-Thornton comments:

'the de facto spiritual forces which reign in the lives of pupils as they enter the classroom would continue to do so as they leave it. In that case the school would be wasting valuable time and energy on spiritual development in the first place' (Best, 1996, p. 86).

Thus, the implications for spiritual development in the methodology of the experientialists are ambiguous. The strengths of the method are clear. The re-introduction of reflective analysis into religious education, and the recognition that the study of religious phenomena must involve more than a descriptive and rather dry pedagogy can only be welcomed by religious education practitioners. Similarly, the efforts by the experientialists to take the views, beliefs and experiences of pupils seriously is also to be welcomed, since it enables pupils to have an active part in the learning process. However, questions remain as to whether that process is particularly meaningful. The only real experiences that seem to be involved in the process are the same ones that entered the classroom before the event was encountered. The pupil leaves, unaltered by the external reality of the encounter, but altered only by a self-reflection brought about in the pupil by the encounter with the religious phenomenon.
(iii) The Non-Realist 'Sea of Faith' School and spirituality.

The previous chapter identified the religious education aims of the postmodern non-realist tradition of the 'Sea of Faith' theologians. They are intensely subjective: religious education is a process only insofar as it becomes my process. In non-realist terms my very existence is dependent upon my own interiorized subjective actions. The learning process is not one in which an external reality becomes appropriated to myself: instead, I interiorize, I learn about myself, I tell myself my own 'story'. The meanings of these stories are not found outside the 'text', but are vested within the 'text'. Religious traditions, rather than expressing underlying realities about themselves, reflect instead one or other element of the human 'story' in which we all share. Non-realist religious education looks into a mirror, which reflects images of humanly constructed meanings. In parts of the language game which make up this 'story', humans have been able to construct sacred meanings for their actions. These sacral aspects should not be understood, however, to have an objective reality. Instead, they mirror those moments of ultimacy which provide depth and passion in each human culture.

Clearly the concept of a non-realist spirituality will be closely connected to this notion of 'story'. Equally clearly, any notion of 'story' must involve human consciousness. Given the auto-reflexive nature of the non-realist aims for religious education summarized above, that idea of human consciousness must be specifically human
self-consciousness. If we interiorize, if the 'text' is our 'story', then all we can know and believe to be true must be part of our subjectivity, not that of another. Understanding the self must be crucial to understanding non-realist concepts of spiritual development.

In one of his most imaginative and arrestingly refreshing works, the 'Sea of Faith' theologian par excellence Don Cupitt attempts to outline the philosophical motifs which have underpinned his whole approach to life, and, more recently, his facing up to death. In a deceptively simple conversational style, yet with an engaging subtlety, Cupitt takes up the theme of self-consciousness:

'As an exercise, lie in bed tonight in the darkness and silence. Reduce all external stimuli to the minimum, but remain alert and attentive until you can hear first the beating of your own heart and then in time the slow surgings of the rest of your physiology. That's life. Now wait and listen out for the E-vent, the forthcoming of Becoming. You are acutely conscious, with open eyes, but you are not at all self-conscious. You are indeed undistracted by thoughts of the self or by awareness of any boundary between the self and the not-self' (Cupitt, 1995, p. 13)

Cupitt goes on to make the point, consistent with his earlier approaches to knowledge discussed in Chapter Two of this thesis, that our knowledge of our 'Becoming' referred to above, is determined through our language. We are, he suggests, 'languagey' beings: 'You are such a languagey being that in you the very forthcoming of Becoming is already formed and facilitated by language' (Cupitt, 1995, ibid.).
But Cupitt has already warned the reader that 'there is a certain amount of word-play in the text, and a few deliberate giveaways for you to spot' (Cupitt, 1995, p. 4). Thus, just as I might lie in the darkness, listening to the beating of my heart, trying to observe the E-venting, the coming forth of Becoming, what I notice instead, Cupitt argues, is a flux, or change which is illuminated through language: both language that is semantic and thus form-fulfilling, and language that is semantic, and thus continuity-giving. For Cupitt, words are life-giving. They 'create'. They are the shape of events and E-vents (Cupitt, 1995, p. 14).

For this reason, any concept of spiritual development which might arise from non-realist religious education involves first and foremost the religious language game, in which distinctions between the Conscious and Unconscious are like distinctions between text and subtext: 'it is a distinction that can be made within the language and body-language that appears and moves on your surface' (Cupitt, 1995, ibid.).

A similar argument is posed by Lloyd Geering (Geering, 1994, p. 45ff.). The world, he suggests, first exists in our heads. However, we do not usually consider its reality in this way, because we tend to make an appeal to sensory data to support our normal contention that we should identify the world absolutely with reality. However, we need to take a step back from this, and recognize with what Geering describes as 'quite a high degree of sophistication', that we need to draw a distinction between the way
we see reality, and reality as it 'is' in itself (Geering, 1994, p. 45).

The collection of sensory data, then, requires the subtlety of interpretation for us to begin to construct a world of consciousness. The tool of that interpretation is language. Thus, whilst it is to be acknowledged that we each view the world from our own individual perspective, and that no two individuals can have the same particular experience, we are yet able to construct worlds of shared commonality, because we are able to use a common language, but a language which remains always self-referring in terms of the individual who uses it (see especially, Geering, 1994, pp. 46-48).

Cupitt goes further still. The Kantian concept of reality, upon which Geering, initially at least, seems to depend, lays open the possibility of realism to assert itself into the theory. If reality is distinct from our interpretation of it, then that reality must still exist 'beyond' our perception of it. This, as Cupitt warns, is the way of bad philosophy (Cupitt, 1995, p. 15).36

Rather than retain a 'ghost in the machine', Cupitt demands that we should rid ourselves of the notion that there is such a 'thing' as mind, consciousness or unconsciousness (Cupitt, 1995, ibid.). The old distinction between inner and outer, act like prisons. They trap the individual in a lonely state of self-delusion, in which everyone lives in their own isolated world of reality, never sharing a commonality of understanding. Cupitt's imagery here is startlingly effective. The individual becomes 'locked up in solitary
confinement. That's foul. So let's forget it: unmake the prison' (Cupitt, 1995, *ibid.*).

Where does this leave the notion of spiritual experience and development? If consciousness is not an internal reality, then in what sense can the non-realist speak of spiritual development?

First and foremost, non-realist subjective consciousness should no longer be considered to be distinct and interior. Instead, it becomes part of the public commonality of the outside. Cupitt takes the example of objects on his desk before him as he writes. A pen, keys, the wood of the desk - and his consciousness of these things - are not situated in some privatized interior, but out there. Cupitt sees them there. But it is by spreading out a sense of consciousness and a valuation of these things over them as they are, out-there, that a life-world is constituted. By sharing in the same language we are all capable of sharing that same consciousness. In a beguiling aside Cupitt comments that

'I'm telling you only things you already know: that's what I mean by a democratic metaphysics of ordinariness. I'm not trying to sell you anything; I'm only trying to show you that you are fine as you are. No news is good news, so my evangel is that there is no news' (Cupitt, 1995, p. 16).

Consciousness, then, is the illumination, the lighting up of the flux of things. When part of the E-venting strand becomes language-formed, it becomes intelligible. In doing so, it becomes conscious and articulated. Once such an association begins, language takes over. New resonances attach themselves, linguistic allusions form and accrete. Sign-formation creates ripples in the flux, trains
of thought, light. 'That’s consciousness', suggests Cupitt, 'and I call it phosphorescence, a lighting-up of the flux' (Cupitt, 1995, p. 17). Rather than speak of consciousness as a spiritual essence that is added on to the physical biology of a human being, then, it should be understood as a moment of articulacy: the ability to bear witness, to speak with meaning, and so to create the world.

Our development is thus dependent upon our articulacy. Set within the theoretical concepts of non-realist religious education, the process is not one in which an independent event is experienced and reflected upon, but one in which the very experience of living is illuminated, articulated and ultimately created by our language. In this sense, non-realism goes much further than either of the two previous models discussed above. For here something happens. We become conscious. We create meaning. We shine.

However, some pertinent questions arise over the validity of the assumptions upon which non-realist notions of consciousness and spirituality depend. The assumption is made that non-realism can be applied universally to all individuals. Of course this is not necessarily the case, since individuals may wish to assert a set of belief values which are based upon ideals which are constituted by a realist view of metaphysics. The application of non-realism in such a context would act to alienate those who retained a sense of realism in their day to day lives. More significant perhaps is that non-realism would, on its own admission, define truth-claims as matters of belief: the flux of things is interpreted according to
the enlightenment of my language, in other words, to how I believe. However, the notion of belief must have its own origins too. Since non-realism demands that any talk of a world 'out there' which retains a reality independent of our interpretation of it must be rejected, it becomes unclear where the notion of 'belief' might find its justification. Non-realism retains within it seeds of deconstruction. Cupitt's 'last philosophy' may not yet live up to its name.
iii. Discussion and Conclusion.

A great diversity of elements have come together in this chapter to enable an appreciation to be made of the profound complexities of spiritual development within the context of Catholic and secular religious education. This section will compare and contrast briefly some of the themes which have presented themselves. It will seek both to bring together those themes which are shared by Catholic and secular traditions and to draw out the differences between them. A final conclusion to this chapter will then be reached.

Despite their divergent natures, both Catholic and secular traditions share a common set of attitudes and presumptions. In their efforts to understand the nature of spiritual development, both traditions seek after the meaning and significance of human spirituality, attempting to set the venture beyond what is purely biological or mechanical. There is, on the part of Catholic tradition on the one hand, and the distinct secular approaches of Grimmitt, the experientialists and the non-realisits on the other, a genuine concern for depth and honesty in the attempt.

Catholic tradition shows itself to be profoundly concerned with the scope of this effort. In particular, Catholic tradition recognizes the value of the universal character of its nature. Within the context of religious education, spirituality and catechesis, that universality is expressed (1) educationally, in the constant desire to seek after that which is higher, to a reality
beyond our individual understanding, but part of the wholeness of existence, epitomized in revelation; (2) spiritually, in the encounter with God, in which the call to holiness is made universally and without exception; (3) catechetically, in the universal call to the Church to continue a universal missionary activity within the world.

Secular tradition, represented here by Grimmitt, the experientialists and the non-realists also share universal concerns which function for each of these representatives in the same absolute manner as they do for Catholic tradition. Thus, both Grimmitt's approach to religious education and spiritual development and that of the experientialists have a universal effect: all of us are capable of responding, the theories suggest, to the instrumentalism of the methodology, (Grimmitt), or to attempts to reach self-reflection (experientialism). In each case, the process enables more to be learned about the individual who undertakes it, than about the event experienced. This does, however enable all individuals to participate in the activity: all views are valid, none to be denied. In a not dissimilar way, the non-realist approach depends upon the commonality of our understanding for its success. We are able to share, to be conscious of each other's concerns, because we are capable of sharing an agreed hierarchy of language. Language becomes the universal factor.

Clear differences exist between Catholic and secular traditions, however. Principally, these relate to the underlying assumptions
that are prevalent in each tradition. Catholic tradition functions with specifically metaphysical constraints. The basis of these constraints rests in the realist structures which underpin the Catholic Church's understanding of God, humanity and the world. Not only is revelation understood to be an event - indeed, the event - of human history, but also it is understood to be self-referring. It ruptures the web of time, but stands beyond time itself. It points, unremittingly, back to itself. It announces that reality is even greater than the world can imagine. This is because, as the first chapter shows, revelation cannot be contextualized into a pre-determined set of human constructs. Reality itself is caught up in the God of revelation.

As a form of self-reference, the experience of God becomes the reality of God. Catholic spirituality is thus shown to be a recognition of the reality of God in the world. Catholic catechesis demonstrates that this experience becomes part of the journey back to God: by becoming Church we fulfil, at least in part, the call to oneness in God, to wholeness, to redemption, to life. This all flows from the initial premise of Catholic tradition that God is a reality distinct from our own reality, yet closer to us than we can possibly comprehend.

Secular tradition, on the other hand, cannot share these presumptions. For both Grimmitt and the experientialists, the place of spiritual development within religious education is determined in a specific context. The process of religious education and spiritual
development is controlled by its human setting. For Grimmitt, any questions concerning the validity of the truth-claims of a religious tradition are placed beyond the scope of the phenomenological and instrumental theory which Grimmitt has constructed. Thus, whilst not necessarily denying that a religious tradition might have valid truth-claims to make, his educational process retains a disinterest in those claims. The mechanism is not permitted within the theory to do otherwise. In this action, Grimmitt's secular assumptions are made clear. For the experientialists, similar restrictions operate. The experiential method is concerned directly with the reflective structural development of the pupil, but that development is determined solely on the pupil's own terms. The pupil enters and leaves the encounter untouched by any external reality which might exist on the part of the religious tradition. The alteration in the pupil that might come about through the encounter is directly considered by the experientialists to be auto-reflexive. The secular assumptions are equally clear: any external truth-claims by the religious tradition are secondary insofar as religious education and spiritual development is concerned solely with self-reflection on the part of the pupil. Here both clearly differ from the assumptions of Catholic tradition.

The non-realist concept of spiritual development within religious education highlights most clearly the differences between its assumptions and those of Catholic tradition. Whereas Catholic tradition asserts the reality of God, non-realism asserts that there
is no external reality beyond the reality that our language constructs for us. Despite this, non-realism cannot be said to be a propositional philosophy, because the language used does not refer to anything real, rather, 'reality' is constructed by the language that is used. Here Catholic theology differs. Although it can be argued that words are employed in Catholic theology in an imperfect sense, (thus it could be claimed that theology is an exercise in reconstruction, rather than reflection), the language remains propositional in the sense that it constantly refers back to a reality distinct from that of those who express the language. For Cupitt, however, this is anathema: language cannot refer to another reality. It creates. It does not reflect. It is the illuminator, not the mirror. To this extent, Catholic tradition and non-realism can never agree.

In conclusion, the concepts of Catholic and secular spirituality to be found within the context of religious education share similarities, but differ in their underlying presuppositions. Catholic tradition asserts its faith in the reality of God, and in the validity of our experience of that reality. Secular tradition either relegates questions about the validity of the truth-claims of religious traditions to a place beyond the scope of its theories of religious education and spiritual development, or it denies their reality in total.
NOTES

1 See, for example, the article by Catherine Mowry LaCugna and Michael K. Downey, 'Trinitarian spirituality', in Downey, 1993, pp. 968-82.

2 Although it would be more correct to speak of the spirituality of the Hebrew Bible and its influence on the spirituality of the New Testament, such an undertaking would go far beyond the particular concerns of the present thesis. It should be said, however, that both for Pauline and Gospel communities all understanding of religious experience, including that learnt from their heritage in the Hebrew Bible is to be known in the light of those communities' experiences of the risen Christ. For that reason - but not that reason alone - this portion of the chapter will consider certain aspects of spirituality as it is made manifest in the New Testament.

3 On the influence of the Old Testament on Paul's theology of the Spirit, and on Paul's somewhat ambiguous use of his spirit terminology, see NJBC. 82: 61 and its accompanying literature.

4 This probability arises because of the witness of Papias, but also because of the presence of a number of Latin 'loanwords', (e.g. measures and currency), Roman legal concepts, (e.g. the notion of a wife divorcing her husband, which could not happen under Jewish law [Mk 10: 12]), and the atmosphere of impending persecution with which chapter thirteen of the Gospel is imbued.

5 The present form of Matthew's Gospel is probably a mature synthesis of material, combining Mark and an early collection of sayings of Jesus (called Logion-Quelle or Q), shared with the Gospel of Luke. A number of puzzles remain as to origins and subsequent development of the Gospel into its final form. It may well have been written within the context of a Jewish community. See NJBC. 42: 2-3, 26).

6 Since the Gospel presupposes the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, but seems not to indicate an awareness of the persecutions which Christians suffered during the latter part of Diocletian's reign (AD 81-76), nor the re-organisation or Judaism by the Pharasaic party at Jamnia in AD 85-90, which also resulted in increased hostility towards the Church, a date for the Gospel might be given tentatively of AD 80-85, possibly originating from Syrian Antioch (NJBC. 43: 2-3).

7 Dating and describing the sources for John's Gospel present the biblical scholar with some complexities. John has clearly drawn upon
some traditions which are shared by the synoptics. Thus, for example, both the synoptics and John share stories about healings, they both mention the multiplication of loaves and speak of the rescue of the disciples from a storm. (See also *NJBC.* 61: 3 for more details of major concurrences between the synoptics and John). References to authentic Palestinian detail which has not been found in the synoptics, along with an emphasis on the role of John the Baptist seem to indicate that the Gospel - or at least the Johannine community for whom the Gospel was written - found its origins in the diverse Palestinian sects of Judaism (*NJBC.* 61: 10), perhaps in those of Asia Minor, and written possibly in the late 90’s AD (*NJBC.* 61: 18).

8 This section of the chapter will consider Catholic spirituality as it is to be understood in general terms in the twentieth century, concentrating largely on the periods before and during the Second Vatican Council.

9 It is relevant to ask at this point whether it is strictly correct to speak of the scholastic approach being in conflict with a liturgically based spiritual tradition. Both approaches contain elements of each others concerns and claims.

10 McBrien criticizes Tanquerey's spirituality for having taken a different route to present day Catholic thought because of what McBrien sees as Tanquerey’s dependency upon a scholastic methodology. For Tanquerey, the human person is conceived of as being a one which has lost something originally intended for it by God. Human existence becomes a process of struggle between the higher and lower faculties of human beings, and does not depend upon individual development. See McBrien, 1980, Vol. 2, pp. 1070f.

11 See, for scriptural support Mt 5: 48.

12 Here we are justified to ask whether there exists a moral compulsion for our existence beyond the purely ontological concept of personhood. Our calling which pre-exists our understanding of that calling defines our humanity. Not only do we conform to who we are, we also conform to who we should be. See the particularly interesting discussion on ontology and personhood by John Zizioulas in Schwobel and Gunton, (1991), pp. 33-46.

13 To that end Joann Wolski suggests that 'Christian spirituality...becomes more authentically biblical, discerning God’s presence in the midst of the events of history as well as in the movements of one's inner spirit' (Komonchak, et al, 1990, p. 980).

14 See, for example, the preliminary discussions on the role of spirituality within the context of celebration in religious education, in Chapter Two, above.
See in addition Mayr, 1988, pp. 34-36.

See the second part of Chapter One of this thesis.

Thus the *Catechism* quotes, virtually without additional commentary, from *Catechesi Tradendae* article 5, citing the clear and unambiguous Christocentric heart of catechesis as it is there envisaged: "At the heart of catechesis we find, in essence, a Person, the Person of Jesus of Nazareth, the only Son from the Father...who suffered and died for us and who now, after rising, is living with us forever."[...]* Catechesis aims at putting "people...in communion...with Jesus Christ[...]") (CCC art 427).

Evidenced, for example, by discussions held at the Centre for the Study of Contemporary Issues in Education Seminar held on 3 March 1997 at the University of Hull, where questions concerning the idea of moral authority in society pointed towards an inability to identify the basis for any such authority, in secular terms. By extension, this would imply also that the structural assumptions we might have about the reality of events which give meaning to our lives may well be just as indeterminate. Personal meaning, to express a tautology, is subjective, after all. If moral authority cannot be satisfactorily identified, it too becomes a subjective experience.

Original emphases removed.

Original emphases removed.

Original emphasis removed.

This can be compared with the comments of the National Curriculum Council who suggest that 'The term [spirituality] needs to be seen as applying to something fundamental in the human condition...[having to do]...with the search for meaning and purpose in life and for values by which to live' (National Curriculum Council, 1993, p. 2).

This similarity yet distinction of roles between religious education and spiritual development only holds good, of course, if it can be both shown that, on the one hand, the aims of religious education have to do with this seeking after ultimacy, and that spiritual development arises out of a process that shares this quest, and on the other hand that spiritual development contains an identifiable 'other' or 'more' which extends beyond this quest, or is at least shared across the whole curriculum and in the life of the school.

This stress on religion might seem to be somewhat paradoxical, in the light of what was commented upon just before!
Why tact and discretion should play a part in mitigating against any offence caused by the exclusion of metaphysical orthodox traditions from consideration by society, is curious. On Newby's own terms, metaphysical thought is automatically ruled out, and is, as a result, presumably an anathema to society. His assertion that those sub-traditions [Newby's definition of this is unclear] which subscribe to the kind of religious and ideological attitudes which Newby condemns, should still receive our tactful and discrete respect, whilst the larger traditions from which these arise — master traditions which exhibit an authority that 'inhibit[s] change by repressing unrestrained enquiry' — should be condemned, seems largely illogical, given that those sub-traditions worthy of tactful and discrete treatment draw their very existence, according to Newby, from the larger traditions which are condemned. See Best, 1996, p. 95.

For this reason also, the arguments put forward by Thomas Carey do not stand up to close scrutiny. His criticism of OFSTED rests upon the view, shared by Newby, that OFSTED favours the secular when speaking of spirituality because its description of spirituality 'has no obvious religious content in the sense that no specific reference is made to "God" or "the Absolute"' (Carey, 1996, p. 31). However, OFSTED is clearly more nuanced in its approach than Carey suggests. 'Religious' is not a synonym for 'spirituality', OFSTED indicates. The implication remains, however, that a 'religious' experience could also be considered a 'spiritual' one. It should be noted that Carey's criticisms of OFSTED relate directly to its presentation of spirituality in the Handbook, not in the discussion paper discussed earlier in this chapter. See, Carey, 1996, ibid.; also OFSTED, 1994a, pp. 86ff.

Newby does suggest that it is 'for the government to decide when this is, in fact, the case' (Best, 1996, ibid.). This naturally raises the question of who determines whether the government acts contrary to the principles of humane, democratic liberalism. Society, which might be said to act with period checks and balances upon government is a diverse structure containing people who may hold opposing views, including those who might not support democratic and humane principles. When such individuals come to the fore in a legitimate way, such as those who brought about the onset of Nazi Germany, the principles which underline the authority of the government appear be horribly contradicted by the results. Newby seems to be exercising a circular argument.

See pp. 64ff. of this thesis.

See Grimmitt's comments about his work with colleagues at CREDAR, in Grimmitt, 1991, p. 82.

Interestingly, Grimmitt adds that he here sees links between his own approach and the spirituality of Ignatius of Loyola. Ignatian
contemplation, which Grimmitt defines as the engagement of the whole person through the active use of the imagination as it touches upon issues such as commitment and feeling, is a view which Grimmitt suggests underlies his own understanding of spiritual development. See Grimmitt, 1991, p. 87f.

31 Mention should here be made of the work of Stone, 1992, and Mackley, 1993.

32 See, for example, Hammond, Hay et al., 1990, pp. 31-176, where various descriptions of the kinds of lesson plans envisaged by the experiential method are outlined, explored and reviewed. Cf. Mackley, 1993, passim.

33 Grimmitt's phenomenological approach sought to achieve the same kind of balance, albeit using a different method to that of the experientialists, to develop the phenomenology of the seventies.

34 Italics in original.

35 Presumably Geering means by this that we first create our world in our mind. Perhaps he chooses the word 'heads' to avoid the charge that he is perceiving self-consciousness in dualist terms: if a 'place' for consciousness is identified too specifically by Geering, he could be charged - with some justification - with the non-realist sin of Cartesian dualism.

36 That is, a warning against those who might adopt a realist position. Cupitt is not criticizing Geering, since Geering himself argues to a non-realist position through his concept of symbolic meaning, which he introduces later into the argument (Geering, 1994, p. 119ff.).

37 Cupitt has increasingly moved towards a 'philosophy of light' in recent years. One of his lightest and most optimistic books so far has been given the significant title Solar Ethics. See Cupitt, 1995a.

38 Italics in original.
CONCLUSION

This thesis has shown that a number of similar concerns exist between Catholic and secular traditions in their approaches to religious education. Chapter One demonstrated that Catholic and secular traditions share a need to propose sets of pre-existing conditions to be first put in place, before their respective models of education might function. They both affirm the relevance of the existence of society in order that education might happen. With the exception of postmodern criticism, both traditions accept implicitly that the educational venture is a credible and possible exercise.

Chapter Two developed these similarities further, by demonstrating that within the particular concerns of religious education, both traditions again assume that certain structural preconditions must exist for their individual models of religious education to function. It was shown that Catholic religious
education assumes the reality of revelation. It was shown further that Catholic religious education must function in a recognizably ecclesial structure: Catholic religious education is first and foremost a function of the missionary life of the Church, in which pedagogical methods are employed to engage with the religious traditions of the world, but which also includes the effort to seek after a deeper understanding of Catholic faith itself.

It was also shown in Chapter Two that secular religious education also operates with presupposed assumptions. The phenomenology and instrumentalism of Grimmitt's approach is shown to assume the existence of human 'givens'. The experiential methodology is demonstrated to assert that human self-experience and self-validation are the only possible experiences that can be meaningfully encountered in the religious education process. Non-realism is shown to presuppose that realism has failed, and that objectivity is impossible.

Chapter Three demonstrated that both Catholic and secular traditions are able to share common ideals about the validity of placing spiritual development within religious education. Both traditions assume this possibility, and both seek ways to demonstrate this. This chapter was able to indicate through demonstrating this concern that spiritual development has a particularly important place within religious education. The possibility of development which each model believes to be feasible
indicates that religious education is considered to be a significantly valuable locus for this to occur.

However, clear differences exist too, between Catholic and secular traditions. Catholic theology presupposes that reality is to be based upon a theistic concept of nature and supernature. This is not shared by secular traditions, which, as Chapter One has shown, deny the legitimacy of that reality as a means of understanding human existence. Similarly, in Chapter Two, differences between traditions exist. Catholic religious education uses a set of assumptions to structure its model of religious education. In doing this it does share a certain commonality with the secular traditions of religious education, which diversely operate their models of religious education using preconceived assumptions. However, those assumption themselves are so divergent, with the theistic stance of Catholic theology standing in opposition to the secular assumptions of Grimmitt, the experientialists and the non-realists, that agreement between the traditions is seen to be so far apart, to be virtually meaningless. This difference is continued in Chapter Three. Because of its presuppositions about nature, Catholic tradition is required to assert its faith in the objective reality of God. In doing this, it is shown also to be making a statement about the reality of the human experience of God, which places it into the position of a subject of study by secular tradition, rather than a partner on the secular quest for a fuller and more meaningful religious education and spiritual development. Secular tradition
relegates questions about the validity of the truth-claims of religious traditions to a place outside the scope of their theories of religious education and spiritual development, or, in the case of non-realism, denies that reality altogether.

In final conclusion, then, it must be said that Catholic and secular traditions do share the need to operate with assumptions. What this thesis has done, however, is to demonstrate that those assumptions rule each other out: they cannot both be right. The differences outweigh the similarities. Catholic and secular traditions are ultimately divergent in their approach to religious education and to the place of spiritual development within that process.
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