Christian doctrine in adult religious education: a critical study

Mark David John Savage

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CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE IN ADULT RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: A CRITICAL STUDY.

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This study seeks to discover the proper style and place of Christian doctrine in adult religious education.

The critical assessment of the work of three influential authors: Johannes Hofinger, John H Westerhoff III and James Michael Lee reveals that none is able to offer an adequate model for practice. Hofinger has a limited vision of both theology and education; Westerhoff too limited an understanding of education; and Lee far too narrow an understanding of theology.

Consideration of the nature of Christian doctrine and its relationship to theology and the life of faith indicates that it is the product of a multi-disciplinary encounter between the gospel and the world. It is continually changing and being refined and is best understood and communicated by means of analogy.

Music offers an analogy which sheds light on the Christian story. It also provides an analogy for the process of doing theology itself. It draws attention to the central importance of the encounter between the composer, the composition, the performer and the listener in that moment of performance which is a new act of creation for each participant. This shows that God is not revealed in the un-read word of scripture, but in the present, lived encounter with the word. That encounter may be simple and direct, but it also involves a myriad of factors which together comprise the story and context of the scripture itself and of the person who reads it. It is the responsibility of the religious educator of adults to try to understand both levels of encounter.

The re-making of Christian doctrine for each adult learner is a life-long process which depends upon reflection upon past learning. Its outcome is properly open-ended, but it must be continually assessed to prevent it becoming dangerously unfocussed.

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INTRODUCTION

The Background to the study

The mainstream Christian denominations in Britain are experiencing a considerable growth in demand for lay adult education and training.

The reasons for this are several and detailed examination of them lies beyond the scope of this study. Nevertheless, one or two observations, even of a general and imprecise nature are necessary in order to explain why it now seems appropriate to explore the place of Christian doctrine in adult religious education.

In Britain, as in a number of other countries, a declining number of ordained ministers has forced the churches to reconsider their ministry as a whole. Lay Christians have been encouraged, for reasons of pastoral necessity as much as from any theological conviction, to take a more prominent role in the organised activities of the churches, not least in the leading of worship. Not surprisingly, not only have the churches felt it important to prepare lay people for their new role, but lay people themselves have asked for appropriate education and training.

A correspondingly revised theology of the laity has also developed. The Second Vatican Council was a highly significant catalyst for this, especially through the Decree on the Apostleship of the Laity, but also the Constitution on the Liturgy. In the Church of England, some structural change came in 1969 with the Synodical Government Measure, but more recently, the Advisory Council for the Church's Ministry (ACCM) has stressed that the training of the clergy should be 'of such a kind as to produce interdependent ministry.' [1]

Consideration of the status and ministry of the laity has also drawn attention to Christian ministry performed in and through secular life as well as to 'Sunday ministries'. The need to support people in this and to encourage them to reflect systematically and theologically upon their wider experiences has

been increasingly recognised. As people's experience of life comes into a lively and sustained dynamic with the Bible and Christian Tradition lay discipleship is not only more mature and informed, but better able to face the challenge of an age in which change is ever more rapid.

It has not, however, proved easy to meet this need and to facilitate imaginative and confident lay theological reflection. Ministers have felt it important that they should increase their efforts to 'teach the faith' and lay people have often indicated a desire to learn, but what has been taught has not been either very effective or helpful. Ministerial training, at least in the Church of England, has concentrated traditionally on an academic programme of theology, but this is now recognised to be inadequate. ACCM has admitted that clergy in training have failed to learn to deal theologically with experience, either their own or other people's.[2] Not surprisingly, as they have no other model of 'teaching the faith' than that which they themselves encountered at theological college, when they try to replicate this in a local church amongst lay people, the failure to deal theologically with experience is even more complete. And yet it is precisely the ability to reflect theologically that lay people need. The gulf between academic theology and the experience of ordinary life is made to seem almost unbridgeable.

Clergy who do not possess the imagination and determination to make the necessary connections for themselves either adopt an anti-intellectual distrust of theology or retreat into a stale world of second-hand and increasingly irrelevant debate. Lay people are left with the feeling that the kind of theological training given to the clergy is not for them, even if, for the most part, they do not know why this is so.

It is in response to this situation that this study has been attempted. It seeks to discover the proper style and place of Christian doctrine in adult religious education, which is to say the place of Christian doctrine in that dynamic of reflection which will enable people to deal both theologically and creatively with their own experience and that of others.

What the study seeks to do

The starting point is a consideration of the attempts that three highly influential writers have made to describe the nature, place and function of Christian doctrine in adult religious education. These authors, Johannes Hofinger, John H Westerhoff III and James Michael Lee have been singled out because of their highly distinctive, contrasting and detailed contributions to the subject. It is not the primary purpose of this study to examine all that has been written about the role of Christian doctrine within adult religious education. Rather, it seemed more helpful to explore, in more detail, two or three major thinkers, from whose writings certain key issues have arisen and then to proceed to address some of those issues.

Of these three, only Hofinger (a Jesuit) has written a book directly on this subject and even then, with the primary, but not exclusive, purpose of the education of children. His position is characteristic of an approach which has dominated many British Christians' understanding and practice of adult religious education. He lays considerable stress on the sermon as the main focus of adult religious education and is concerned, above all, that God's Word should be spoken faithfully, trusting that God the Holy Spirit will carry out the rest of the educational task in the lives of those who hear.

John Westerhoff's (an Episcopalian Priest) writings have exercised a considerable influence on the educational thinking and policy of the Church of England over the last few years, especially in the General Synod Report of 1988 Children in the Way.[3] Westerhoff makes much of the gathered learning community of the church and of the links between worship and learning. Although he sometimes addresses particular issues related to certain age groups, his essentially broad-brush approach quite often fails to specify whether he has children, young people or adults in mind; which, of course, also makes his work especially congenial to those concerned with 'all age' learning. Although Westerhoff is keenly aware of the importance of cultural context and the problems that arise if this is overlooked, it is apparent that his claim to have developed

a distinctively Anglican understanding of religious education has contributed greatly to the interest which has surrounded his work in Britain.

James Michael Lee (a Roman Catholic layman) is outspoken, provocative, original and from time to time so persuasive that he cannot be ignored. He has offered a robust critique of most other scholars in his field and has reserved some of his sharpest and strongest words for his views on the character and place of Christian doctrine, and indeed theology in general, within religious teaching (or 'religious instruction' as he prefers to say). He has no time at all for the 'messenger-boy' 'theological imperialism' of Hofinger's humble insistence on the faithful preaching of God's Word, and he is greatly irritated by what he believes to be Westerhoff's inconsistency. His contribution is no less than a 'macro-theory', which has its basis in a social-scientific empiricism. The religious instructional act must be explainable, verifiable and predictable. There is no need, argues Lee, to rely on the Holy Spirit mysteriously and unpredictably 'zapping' the learner.

After each writer's work is described, there follows a discussion of their understanding of the aims of religious education; the relationship between theology and social science; the role of the learner and of the teacher in the religious educational act and the nature and relationship between faith, revelation and Christian doctrine.

From this a number of issues emerge. The first concerns the nature and function of Christian doctrine within the nature and function of theology itself. Lee is particularly forthright in his drawing of a sharp distinction between religion and theology. Is he correct to argue that theology is a speculative science which need not be put into practice? After considering some definitions of doctrine and theology and examining theological methodology, there follows a brief investigation of the views of several leading scholars on the nature and purpose of theology and its relationship to the life of faith. This is largely in response to a similar exercise carried out by Lee.

The exploration of the relationship between theology and education is central to this study, which, if religious education is to succeed, must cohere with and follow on from the primary aims and purpose of the enterprise. It is therefore essential to examine the ways in which the study of or engagement in Christian doctrine might affect the adult learner. Lee doubts whether the conventional, verbal, cognitive study of theology has any great power to effect a noticeable or measurable change in the behaviour of the learner. Others, including both Hofinger and to a lesser extent Westerhoff hold almost contradictory views. Lee, on the other hand insists that it is possible to explain, verify and predict the religious instruction act, but Hofinger and especially Westerhoff maintain that this cannot be the case. They argue that the product of religious education is, quite properly, more open and unpredictable. A study of the nature and feasibility of evaluation and assessment in adult education has therefore been included in order to try and shed some light on this rather confusing divergence of opinions. To what extent are these contrasting views theologically or educationally grounded? To what extent is it generally believed possible to assess the outcome of affective as well as cognitive content in adult education? And what is the relationship between the cognitive and affective domains?

In the chapter on the nature and function of Christian doctrine and theology it is argued that the truths which theology seeks to express and to elucidate are not confined to the particular cognitive systems of human language, spoken or written, and especially not to the ('scientific'?) norms of academic theology. If Christian doctrine has an essential part to play in adult religious education, can this be achieved more effectively with the assistance of the Arts? Lee himself considers that music may provide a helpful locus of relationships between the cognitive and affective dimensions of knowing, a view which seems to gain the enthusiastic approval of numerous other writers and yet is seldom investigated further. Hence, before the chapter on assessment and evaluation, a fairly wide-ranging consideration is included of the way in which music may, or may not (to paraphrase Lee) 'plunge one into a world which is divine'. What part might music play in

enabling people to 'do theology'? What light does music shed on the nature of the truth to which theology points?

Finally, in conclusion, a summary of the preceding chapters leads into some suggestions for further study.

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CHAPTER ONE

JOHANNES HOFINGER

Not many writers on the subject of Christian education have devoted a book explicitly to the teaching of Christian Doctrine. Hofinger's study: *'The Art of Teaching Christian Doctrine'* [1] is not only unusual but seminal. It is singled out by Harold William Burgess [2] as representative of the 'traditional theological approach' of religious education. *'The Art'* was first published in 1957 and revised and enlarged in 1962. It was written in Manila in the Philippines, and drew from material Hofinger had earlier prepared for missionaries in China. It is not Hofinger's only publication, but it remains his most distinctive contribution to the theory and practice of religious education.

The structure and balance of the book reflects Hofinger's primary concern to elucidate the content of Christian Doctrine and only secondarily, to comment on the art of teaching. Part 1: 'Our Task' is concerned with outlining the aims and purpose of 'Catechesis'; the main theme of Catechesis, which is the mystery of Christ; and some of the methods appropriate to that task. Comparatively little time however, is spent discussing method. In this section it is clear that Hofinger is largely concerned with the teaching of children rather than of adults. Indeed, this concern, is shared by both Westerhoff and Lee in their works. Nevertheless, in each case there is much in their writing to indicate that the basic educational or theological assumptions they propound hold true for the education of adults as well as for children. Westerhoff and Lee both make this very clear, indeed Westerhoff's approach is of its very essence 'all-age', but Hofinger too, in his insistence that the message of the mystery of Christ reigns supreme over the way in which that message may be proclaimed, makes it clear that this applies both to the education of children and of adults. The complete sub-ordination of process to content is ill-suited to the education of children and hardly better for adults.

Part 2, 'The Content of our Message' in a highly detailed and systematic exposition of Christian Doctrine, ordered to proclaim "not only some particular doctrines, but above all, the kerygma ... (which is) the mystery of Christ ... one wonderful whole, one

divine cosmos ... a beautiful and forceful unity'.[3] The order therefore emphasises 'the fundamental statement of God's fatherly love' so that we may 'respond by a life of grateful reciprocal love'.[4] Hofinger argues that in order to ensure that effective teaching takes place the outline of each lesson must be made clear 'in a way which will help the students to grasp the principal idea and the connection between the individual parts of the lesson, and not merely to retain some interesting details of it'.[5] Nevertheless, Hofinger is keen to emphasise that it is theological rather than didactic priorities which dictate the ordering of material. What he actually means by this is the arrangement of the Catechism set forth by Pope Pius V at the Council of Trent, which Hofinger considers we 'can rightly claim to resemble the Apostolic method of teaching'.[6] Such a method is also appropriate for today's needs, argues Hofinger, for by it the values of Christianity are unfolded through the retelling of salvation history, followed by an explanation of the duties of Christian discipleship. 'From such value-saturated, apostolic, doctrinal teaching came the glowing zeal of the early church and its astonishingly vital religious energy'.[7]

Part 3 - 'The Heralds of Christ - Their Personality and Formation' centres attention of the person of the catechist. As the sub-title suggests, this is a discourse on the personal qualities required of a catechist. The heart of Hofinger's concern is that the catechist or 'herald' must share close personal contact with Christ: 'as teachers of religion, we are not so much heralds of Christ, as heralds <u>with</u> and <u>in</u> Christ'.[8] Hofinger does, in fact, offer a series of observations on the particular catechetical role of lay teachers, religious, and priests, with recommendations for their respective training needs. But in each case, this is designed to increase their faithfulness and their zeal for the vocation of catechetics. 'The Development of Kerygmatic Spirituality' and an 'Ascetical Concentration' should take precedence over 'an additional course in theology'.[9] Interestingly, Hofinger considers that the 'ordinary scholastic text books of seminaries' cannot be recommended for the training of sisters, so that the course which might best fit them as catechists, as 'non-specialists' would be two-fold. First by concentrating on the

quality of their spiritual life they may become equipped to be better teachers. Secondly they must study some elements of Christian Doctrine (including church history and liturgy but not philosophy and apologetics which Hofinger fears they will only 'learn rather than really assimilate'). This programme is a clear example of the way in which Hofinger's catechetical principles are to be applied. Similarly, the 'catechetical apostolate of the priest' is one characterised by faithfulness and proclamation. Hofinger holds that both preaching and teaching are kerygma, for both are performed in obedience to 'the command of Christ to proclaim God's message of salvation to all men'.

Accordingly, the sermon or homily at Sunday Mass is the priest's prime educational opportunity. Following from this, Hofinger recommends that the priest should next concentrate on 'the guidance and continued formation' of the catechists who teach in his schools and confraternity classes. Not surprisingly, this guidance is first and foremost of a spiritual nature; so that when the priest visits a class of children under instruction he should strive to do more than 'make some witty remark ... and make sure that they are learning the catechism by heart: he should rather leave behind some special fruit of priestly action'. Whenever he is concerned to instruct converts, this must be in 'sound Christian Doctrine', but this must be performed in a specifically priestly way, which, Hofinger argues as far as possible is to be in as Christlike as possible, in that a man, because of his priesthood, has a speical likeness to Christ who is 'at once Priest and Teacher'.[10]

Finally, in an appendix Hofinger summarises the proceedings of the International Study Week on Mission Apologetics held at Eichstatt in Germany during July 1960. The significance of this is that Hofinger here makes a call for a specific text book for adult catechumens which might 'answer their particular problems'.[11] He never wrote such a book, but at the start of section 2 of 'The Art' Hofinger does outline an attempt to show 'how the kerygmatic approach might work out in the concrete form of thirty instructions or lessons, designed for adults'.[12] Not surprisingly, Hofinger recommends that the material for adult learning might equally serve as the raw material for a course of sermons. Also, his brief aims

and notes of method for each lesson might also apply to good sermon practice à la Hofinger. For example:

'THE HOLY SPIRIT

Method: Historical - Explanatory.

The New Testament accounts of the promise of the Spirit and of his coming on Pentecost should first be told, and then the doctrine concerning HIM explained from them. To use several Bible narratives in one lesson is to be usually avoided in the lower grades (1-4) 'The Unity of Intuition' is thereby lost. But this method may be used for a good reason in teaching adults, especially where the Bible narratives have such a close intrinsic connection (the promise and its fulfilment).

Viewpoint: A Religious Knowledge of the Holy Spirit from the effects He produces in the Church and in men's hearts.

Aim: A great appreciation and ardent *desire for this most wonderful 'Gift of God'.* Thanksgiving for the Holy Spirit so abundantly communicated to us.

Hofinger's understanding of doctrine, of religion, of revelation and of faith are discussed below in parallel with those held by Lee and Westerhoff. For now it is enough to note that doctrine for Hofinger can be equated more or less entirely with systematic teaching, which is carried out by 'historical-explanatory' lectures following, as we have seen, the order of the catechism. This, Hofinger argues is the good tidings of the mystery of Christ. In addition, there should be some introductory study of the Bible, the Liturgy and some attention given to Christian living.

However, Hofinger's overall aim is to 'form true Christians who truly live out their Christianity. Religious knowledge in itself is not the real goal of our teaching, it is only a means. The goal of religious instruction is religious living'.[14] By this declaration, Hofinger demonstrates a unity of purpose with Lee and with Westerhoff; but it is very clear that their understanding of this aim and especially their means of achieving it are both strikingly different.

JOHN H WESTERHOFF III

Westerhoff is unusual amongst protestant writers in describing the process of religious education as 'catechesis'. He explains Catechesis as 'the process by which persons are initiated into the Christian community and its faith, revelation, and vocation; the process by which persons throughout their lives are continually converted and nurtured, transformed and formed, by and in its living tradition". [15] The main focus of catechesis in Westerhoff's scheme is the Christian community, itself the locus of 'living tradition'. Hence in his understanding, Catechesis is not 'doctrinal indoctrination' but 'intentional socialisation in a community of Christian faith', and it refers to 'every activity engaged in and by the church which celebrates and illuminates the word or activity of God'. [16] The content of Catechesis includes evangelisation ('encounters with the Gospel through deeds and words which aid conversations or human transformations in the realms of thought, feeling and behaviours'); and also assimilation ('incorporation into the Gospel tradition through deeds and words ... it encourages persons to interpret and apply Christian understanding and ways to individual and social life through reflective action').

Like Hofinger, Westerhoff expresses a deeply rooted concern that the catechist be faithful: 'a catechist needs to be a sacramental person, one who brings God to people, (one whose) identity is hidden in God, a person who meditates day and night on the love and activity of God'. A catechist is 'converted and nurtured within the Christian community' but is not someone who 'has all the answers'. Her/his role is to be a fellow pilgrim who says: 'Where would you like me to go? Would you like me to join you?' And, 'most of all, a catechist is one who knows that no new insight comes unless it comes from a source that transcends both the pilgrim and the guide, namely God'. [18]

Westerhoff displays a particularly Anglican approach, or at least what he argues to be an Anglican approach. [19] For this reason, his work seems to have been enthusiastically read in the Church of England. However, a note of caution needs to be added here, in that Westerhoff himself is well aware of the cultural setting in

which his writing takes place, a cultural setting which is quite different from that found in the British Isles. Nevertheless, the recent General Synod of the Board of Education of the Church of England's Report Children in the Way draws considerably on some of Westerhoff's writings including *'A Pilgrim People'* and *'Will Our Children have Faith?'*. [20]

Although Westerhoff sees catechesis as a deliberate process, indeed a process of enculturation, he holds that the teacher, who functions as a guide, may not function in quite the same way as a secular educator. What Westerhoff requires is a pastoral minister who must possess pastoral gifts in preference to educational gifts. This emphasis is also demonstrated in his consideration of the aims and methods of secular educational sciences. He argues that a 'production' process of education as 'expressed in the philosophy of Locke and Hume' by which in terms of Christian education, teachers 'do something' to those being taught 'to make them into persons of faith' is no longer appropriate; nor is the 'growth' model 'expressed in the philosophy of Kant and Rousseau', in which the teacher helps those being taught to become what 'the teacher' knows they can and therefore should be become'. [21] Both these parts, says Westerhoff operate according to four assumed tasks:

1. The formulation of educational objectives.

2. The selection of learning experience which will best aid the achievements of these objectives.

3. The organisation of learning experiences to achieve these objectives.

4. The evaluation of whether or not these educational objectives were reached.

Westerhoff considers that this 'borrowing' from the symbol systems of the social sciences is 'regretful', because 'it tends to turn mysteries into problems, doubts into errors, the knowable into the yet to be discovered'. It assumes that all human behaviour is caused or has purpose, and, consequently, that the activity of

teaching must be goal orientated. He continues 'there is just sufficient value and truth in this language to warrant its use, but we must never forget that to be in the presence of another is to be faced with mystery, doubt, and the unknowable. To accept curricular language without question can easily lead to ignoring the fullness of the eternal mysteries present and to opting for the sterility of a predictable future'. It is for these reasons that Westerhoff has chosen what he considers as 'the more adequate metaphor' of pilgrimage which is a shared journey in community in which all share both experiences and reflections upon them. [22] It is this metaphor of pilgrimage which has been taken up in 'Children in the Way' and used by the Church of England as the main reason for suggesting that parish education here needs to be as far as possible 'all-age learning'. Westerhoff is quite prepared to give examples of how he sees this pilgrimage working in practice. He is particularly keen to mark events in the church's year and to link this community-story to the church's liturgy: 'the aim of the liturgy is so to celebrate, live, and tell God's story in community that our human stories, our lives, might be shaped to serve God's purposes and thereby give meaning and health'. [23] He has indeed devoted at least half a book to the subject of Learning through Liturgy. [24]

The place and nature of Christian doctrine in Westerhoff's understanding of religious education is somewhat vague. He divides the processes of 'thinking theologically' into fundamental theology, constructive theology and practical theology. Catechesis he argues relates primarily to areas of practical theology and in particular pastoral theology. (Practical theology itself has, he argues, five inter-related dimensions: liturgical, moral, spiritual, pastoral and catechetical.) The catechetical dimension: 'focusses on life in a learning community; that is, formation or the processes by which we are initiated into the church and its tradition, and reflection on experience, which also includes the converting and nurturing processes by which we are aided to live into our baptism by making the church's faith more living, conscious, and active, by deepening our relationship to God, and by realising our vocation, including reflection on experience.' Fundamental theology according to Westerhoff is sometimes known as

dogmatic theology. He sights Rahner's 'Foundations of the Christian Faith' as an example: an 'intellectual description, explication, and justification for the Christian faith'. Constructive theology on the other hand, is equated with systematic theology, for example that by John McQuarrie: a theology which helps 'to make sense of our life in our day in light of the church's tradition'. [25]

Westerhoff's description of 'meaningful catechesis' as a matter of four intersecting components' is also helpful in elucidating his position. These components are:

1. The need to consider the historical-social-cultural reality in which our people live (the need to understand our historical situation, our contemporary society, and the culture of our people ... this critical analysis aids catechesis for mission and ministry).

2. The need to be aware of the human needs of our people (physical, emotional, mental and spiritual needs).

3. The needs our heritage brings to us (or another way to say to it is that we need to know the story and vision of our people, we need to make our communities' story our personal story).

4. The need to be aware of the places the church touches the lives and the quality of that touching in terms of the other three components (the three major settings Westerhoff identified are: a liturgical - communal setting, a retreat-devotional setting, and a moral-social setting). [26]

It is, perhaps, in the third and fourth components that indicators to the place and nature of doctrine in Westerhoff's scheme might be most readily detected. The emphasis on the community's story seems to be paramount, which is told with sensitivity to the natural horizons of both sacred and secular time ('we have agreed that the church year is best understood as related to our human pilgrimage and the Scriptures that inform the seasons of the church year as

expressions of our human experience and journey. The aim of liturgy is to so celebrate, live, and tell God's story in community that our human stories, our lives, might be shaped to serve God's purposes and thereby given meaning and health'). [27]

Westerhoff emphasises the need for doctrine to be experientally real for the learner. Doctrine, he says, is the manifestation of faith 'understood as perception ... beliefs, doctrine, and dogmatic theology are human attempts to express symbolically the cognitive content of faith. Our beliefs are historically influenced and always being reformed and reinterpreted, while faith is constant, prior to, and more basic than beliefs'. [28] Scripture and tradition (at least understood in the narrow sense) is not enough for Westerhoff. He locates revelation very much within the faith-community as an activity of hoping, listening, prayer, relating disclosing and community itself. Without present experience, he holds that 'we are reduced to passivity and memorisation'. (These ideas are discussed further below.)

Westerhoff's catechetical way of doing theology, with its emphasis on community, socialisation, and the church's year, seeks to help people to understand the implications of the Christian faith for their life and their lives 'to critically evaluate every aspect of their individual and corporate understandings and ways, to be equipped and inspired for faithful activity in church and society'. [29] Westerhoff, however, is so preoccupied with the life of the people of God that he does not, perhaps, make the connections between the life of the Christian community and the life of society very clear. It is hard to see, in his scheme, where they impinge upon each other. It seems to lack the quality which Westerhoff ascribes to constructive theology as helping to make sense of our lives in our day in the light of the church's tradition. Such a criticism might also be directed at Hofinger.

Perhaps the best way of illustrating what Westerhoff means by a catechetical way of doing theology is to repeat one of the many examples of practice he describes in his books. The following illustration is within what Westerhoff describes as the liturgical-communal setting:

'During Lent intergenerational groups prepared dramatisations, dances, songs, and the like for each of the tales in the story of salvation, including the story of Creation, the Flood, Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac, Israel's deliverance at the Red Sea, Isaiah's Song of Salvation, the Valley of Dry Bones, the Gathering of God's People, and the birth, passion and death of Jesus. On Holy Saturday, a camp fire was lit on the church lawn and on Easter Eve the congregation gathered to sit as families around the camp fire and to experience the story of Salvation interspaced with psalms, songs and prayers. Then the Paschal Candle was kindled from the fire and the congregation proceeded into the church singing. Passing at the entrance to celebrate baptism and the renewal of their baptism vows, the congregation then continued into the Nave for the announcement of Easter and the celebration of the Eucharist.'

Westerhoff adds: 'both preparation for and participation in this event offered opportunities for catechesis.[30]

Westerhoff emphasises the significance of ritual in learning and the opportunities for learning both in leisure and in the places where people work, but he does not make very clear what form the latter might take. Action, including political action may be a proper consequence of the Christian ethic, but reflection on action is a function of the gathered community.

From all of this it is clear that Westerhoff does not advocate the adherence to an inner logic or system of doctrine such as that favoured by Hofinger. The starting point for Westerhoff varies in accord with the situation and context of the local Christian community. On the other hand the great significance which Westerhoff places on the church's liturgy must inevitably pose some kind of logic and order as his description of the role of catechesis in Christian initiation seems to indicate.[31] Doctrine never seems to emerge as an entity in itself, but as a natural, implicit, component of the whole catechetical event - something which is experienced in a particular context rather than a corpus of information which may be studied in isolation.

JAMES MICHAEL LEE

James Michael Lee's convictions are powerfully uncompromising: 'I was convinced that God was calling me to make history rather than to write it'. His strong sense of a mould-breaking vocation is revealed in his autobiographical essay the title of which boldly declares his intention: *'To Change Fundamentally Theory and Practice'*. [32]

It is this candid and often bitter work which explains most clearly Lee's understanding of the nature and place of Christian Doctrine in religious education; although he expands his ideas more systematically in the course of each of his huge trilogy of text-books, *'The Shape'*, *'The Flow'* and *'The Content of Religious Instruction'*. [33]

Lee describes his upbringing as being 'reactionary Brooklyn Catholicism' which he expected would provide him with total power to explain and master all areas of reality, but the young seminarian was soon to learn a hard lesson which changed his life. He was asked to teach in an ordinary New York school. He had to learn quickly and learn on his feet. It was an ordinary school in that it contained 'hoodlum students' who had 'no personal motivation other than to have fun and avoid work'. His seminarian training had not equipped him to cope with this kind of experience, and as his inherited 'theological world-view' did not seem to be able to help him survive in the classroom he turned away from it, and sought a different theory which might explain his failure to teach effectively and might also equip him to succeed in the future. Building on his studies at Columbia University Teachers' College where he learned, inter alia, that 'education must start with the learner where he is developmentally' and 'the effectiveness of teaching and learning are ascertained by careful empirical research', he endeavoured to erect from this what he was to call a 'macro-theory' on the foundation of empirically verified data. This emerged as the 'Social Science Approach to Religious Instruction', which not only provided him with a more satisfactory means of explaining the teaching-learning act which he

considers central and fundamental to religious instruction; but also spreads far beyond this to being 'truly a whole world view, whole mentality, a whole way of greeting the cosmos and living in it'.

Having rejected his inherited theological world view and embraced his new social science approach, Lee now had to describe the proper place of theology (if any) in his scheme. He does this by contrasting his approach with that of other seminal Christian educators, amongst whom both Hofinger and Westerhoff figure large.

Lee in Response to Hofinger

It is perhaps significant that by far the most frequent reference to Hofinger's work occurs in *'Shape'* - the earliest part of the trilogy (1971). Here Lee uses Hofinger as something of an Aunt Sally. Hofinger's emphasis on the need for religious instruction to be totally faithful to the word of God is rejected as leading to 'conformity rather than transformation', and more particularly is attacked under four headings, each a 'stumbling block'. These are pedagogy, psychology, philosophy, and theology. Lee uses each of these to sketch out the framework of his own theory.

Pedagogy

Earlier, Lee has commended Hofinger's belief that teachers of religion are, above all, charged 'to teach the kerygma which is the total mystery of Christ' (see above); but then he turns on Hofinger and accuses him of seeming to ignore 'the basic fact that in the Christian heritage, product content is not a thing or an abstract set of doctrinal propositions, but instead a person'. Lee goes on to argue that 'efficacious learning can be facilitated, not by telling the individual that such and such is God's word and he must be faithful to it, but instead by so structuring the learning situation whereby the individual is enabled to be faithful to his own experiencing'. [34]

Lee insists that the learner is more important than the teacher, and returns to this theme in the course of *'Flow'*. Here he cites

Hofinger's concept of the teaching of religion as 'the art of transmitting a given doctrinal content to others' and comments disapprovingly that this view is one in which the teacher is 'one who remains unchanged during the pedagogical dynamic'.[35] Yet again, Lee cites Hofinger as the first example of an advocate of the 'proclamation theory', by which, to quote Hofinger, 'the presentation is regarded as by far the most important part of a good (religious) lesson'. Lee holds that this view is 'almost totally teacher-dominated and subject-centred' which, he argues is an extremely limiting and restrictive strategy. It is a strategy unable to explain, predict, or even facilitate the learning of the religious lifestyle, the main purpose of religious instruction.[36] Lee sees the teacher of religion as an enabler, and the act of teaching as an interactive process in which four variables are involved: the teacher, the learner, the subject matter content, and the environment. 'Every pedagogical experience is a dynamic interplay among these four factors in which each of these factors undergo some change'.[37] And again 'to describe a religion teacher or any other kind of teacher is more to describe a function than to describe a person', not that Lee regards the function of teaching as being impersonal, but that his personality is subsumed under the facilitating function.[38]

Lee twice quotes Hofinger's concern that religious education might 'appropriate techniques of teaching which are fully in accord with profane subjects, but meaningless or even harmful in religious formation'.[40] To avoid falling into this trap, Hofinger himself counsels a shift in attention away from particular techniques to basic principles. It is Lee's contention that the basic principles adopted by Hofinger are those provided by theology, and as such, he argues consistently and at great length, are 'simply not competent to determine the intrinsic norms of any non theological reality or to determine how non theological reality works'.[41] It is in response to the 'theological imperialism' espoused by Hofinger and others that Lee defines his own social science approach. The relationship of theology to religion and to the social sciences lies at the very heart and colours so much of Lee's writings. It will be discussed more fully later.

Psychology

It is a short step for Lee to argue that just as Hofinger chooses to ignore much of the insight to be gained from social science as a whole, so with respect to psychology in particular, his work can be shown to be deficient. Put bluntly, Lee declares that 'the fidelity approach (characterised by Hofinger) ignores and indeed flails one of the touchstones of all behavioural science, namely that each person while possessing certain of the same characteristics as other individuals, nevertheless is unique and different from all others. In totally ignoring the basic psychological fact of individual differences the fidelity approach insists that learners who have naturally different bents be taught doctrines in the same way'. Lee then follows this with a theological comment, which although it is not further explained here, clearly arises from his view on psychology: 'revelation is not uniform, but in an extraordinarily exquisite manner takes on the form of the psychological and existential requirements of the developing person'. This does, however, lead us to one of Lee's definitions of religion, important in the understanding of his whole contribution to religious education (or instruction). 'Religion ' he states 'is the living of a relationship with God where the person 'is at', at the person's own unique point of self-actualisation'.[42]

Philosophy

The philosophical stumbling block is, perhaps, the most difficult of the four to understand. Lee does not quote Hofinger (or indeed any other writer) directly here; but his philosophical category is aimed at picking up the concern for fidelity expressed by Hofinger (and quoted earlier by Lee). Fidelity, according to Hofinger, is to be the most characteristic virtue of the teacher; in the sense that it is the teacher's overriding duty to be faithful to the word of God. Lee responds by pondering the nature of truth. He is unhappy with the concept of propositional truth, admitting only grudgingly that in 'a secondary and derived sense - truth is the adequation of the mind with what actually exists in reality'. He

continues 'in a deeper and more human sense, truth is value; specifically truth is person and particulary the person that is Jesus'.[43] Hence, the truth cannot be truthfully known, but it can be loved. 'Is it possible that by his non verbal response to Pilate's position, Jesus was indicating that truth is to be found more in the non verbal than in the verbal, more in the personal than in the abstract?'.[44]

Clearly Lee is treading on ground that is somewhat contentious and in adopting what seems to be a rather vague and even theological(?) definition of truth he appears to be at some odds with his insistence on empiricism elsewhere. It is not easy to follow his logic. He is, however, entirely consistent in his trust of raw experience rather than talk about experience.

Theology

Here we encounter some of the most characteristic themes of Lee's work. As the implications of these are discussed later, at this point it is best perhaps to attempt merely to summarise his attitude to Hofinger's work. Lee's main contention against Hofinger is that 'theologically, the fidelity approach tends to minimise if not indeed strangle the human element in Christianity by making religion a business of adherence to precision of verbal formulae'. The implications of this for religious instruction is that prime importance must be placed on the psychological structure of the learner rather than on the logical structure of human formulations of God's revelation.[45] Lee does acknowledge Hofinger's aim that 'modern religious instruction aims not at mere knowledge but lived religion' but he dismisses it as paying mere lip service to an ideal which is not acted upon.[46]

Hofinger is quoted on numerous occasions as a prime exemplar of the theological approach to religious education which Lee so much deplores. Lee turns round Hofinger's description of catechetical method as 'the handmaid of the message' and describes it as the 'messenger-boy' approach. He leaves us in no doubt that he regards such a stance as being theological imperialism. In the course of an important section, Lee defines the distinction, in his opinion, between religion and theology. Indeed the whole of Chapter 8 of

'Shape' is entitled 'The Place of Theology' . Lee argues that 'religion tends to be an activity of the whole man, while theology represents principally the work of the intellect'. Lee also says that 'Jesus was a religious educator rather than a theologian'. This leads him to express a heartfelt desire: 'It is my conviction that once religious instruction is removed from the shadow of theology, once it is emancipated from its position as handmaid to theology, it will grow and thrive and prove to be a wonderfully effective form of Christian activity'.[47] Clearly this last statement is intended as a corrective (and more!) to Hofinger.

Little new criticism of Hofinger can be found in *'Flow'* , but in *'Content'* Lee explores the difference between Hofinger's Theological Approach and his own Social Science Approach. In relation to language Lee states that 'religious language is basically existential and direct, while theological knowledge is basically logical and inferential'. (see also below)[48] As evidence for this view he cites Hofinger: 'because Hofinger views religious instruction as essentially a theological discipline, he regards the verbal content of the religious educator as primarily informational and cognitive rather than existential. For Hofinger, catechesis is a logical informational step-by step arrangement and development of the points to be proclaimed'. Perhaps because of this, Lee is able later to cite Hofinger as an example of an educator who 'virtually never accords serious extended attention to non-verbal content in religious education'.[49]

From all this, it might appear that Lee has little time for Hofinger; but in *'The Authentic Source'* he describes a meeting (or more exactly a 'Meinungsaustausch' he enjoyed with the 'saintly Hofinger', which took place in May 1981). Lee detected a few signs of a conversion of Hofinger's approach in that Hofinger now regarded 'the conceptualisation of structural content as a major advance over the previous notion of handmaid'. Unfortunately Lee does not really explain what he means by this![50]

Lee in Response to Westerhoff

In some ways Westerhoff is much closer to Lee's position than Hofinger is and accordingly Lee is unable to present such a contrast, in order to make plain his own thoughts. What differences do remain are, however, interesting and worth noting. Lee's principal objection to Westerhoff seems to be a charge of inconsistency: 'Westerhoff engages in conceptual confusion and internal contradiction'.[51] It is also interesting to note that whereas the bulk of Lee's comment on Hofinger is to be found in the earlier part of the trilogy, and little in the course of *'Content'*; Westerhoff is not discussed at all until *'Content'*.[52]

Lee is naturally sympathetic to Westerhoff's advocacy of the need to focus on learner-centred education; of the importance and the potency of ritual, symbol, and of non-verbal content in religious education and especially of his preference for 'a holistic Christian life style to skewed ultracognitivist one'.[53] However, Lee soon loses patience with him. For example, he lambasts Westerhoff, accusing him of the grossest inconsistency in taking socialisation as a major principle for explaining, predicting and verifying religious-instructional endeavour, yet at the same time holding to a theological macro-theory of religious instruction.[54] The evidence for Lee's claim that Westerhoff advocates a theological macro-theory, rather than a social-scientific theory of religious instruction may seem to be largely a matter of semantics; but it is true that Westerhoff's theories are certainly more subjective than those of Lee and he also stresses the unpredictability of catechesis. Lee makes much of this. For example, with reference to Westerhoff's *'Will Our Children Have Faith'* Lee wonders: 'some religious educationalists have made the gratuitous, un-historical, dualistic, and illogical claim that religion consists of so-called externals like institutions or creeds or buildings or outward human conduct, while faith comprises the so-called internals like interior commitment'. Lee however, insists that 'the available empirical research strongly suggests that the person is in all likelihood homo integer, so that virtually all human behaviours (including those classified as faith or religion) have simultaneously an 'inner' and an 'outer'

face'.[55] Hence, Lee is able to describe the phenomenon of faith as "simply a label given to a certain set of behaviours, which enjoy a certain similarity to one another'. Lee himself understands the distinction between inner and outer dimensions of religion as the former being experiences, feelings, beliefs and myths and the latter being rituals, symbols, institutions and credal statements.

Lee's understanding of the relationship between religion, theology and Christian doctrine

We have already seen that Lee considers that his inherited 'theological world view ... did not seem to be directly generating or explaining effective teaching procedures' and even more than this 'was actually hindering me from teaching effectively'.[56]

It was this jolt which gave Lee the impetus to propose his own new definition of the nature and role of religious instruction and to contrast it with the nature and role of theology. As can be seen from Lee's reactions to Hofinger and Westerhoff, this concern is never far from the centre-stage of his thinking. It accounts for a large number of pages in each of his major books, and because it is treated at such length, it is not easy to summarise adequately, even if, at times it rather seems as if Lee is intent on rehearsing old arguments.

Lee devotes whole chapters to this subject in both *'Shape'* and *'Flow'*, and indeed it is the whole point of *'Flow'*. In *'Flow'*, as can be seen from the brief summary of Lee's reaction to Hofinger, Lee takes up a position in which he sees little value in using theological methods to carry out effective religious instruction; but he is also at pains to say that he is not antithetical to theology - *in its proper place.*[57] However, by the time he comes to write *'Content'* Lee seems to have hardened his position somewhat, or at least his argument is even more rigorously made.

In *'Content'*, Lee contends that 'one of the most serious shortcomings of religious instruction both in the United States and

Europe lies in the frequent failure of teachers, curriculum builders, and other kind of religious educators to recognise the essential difference in scope between religious content and theological content'.[58]

Lee offers a definition of religion: 'Religion is that form of lifestyle which expresses and enfleshes the relationship a person enjoys with a transpersonal being as a consequence of the actualised fusion in his self-system of that knowledge, belief, feeling, experience, and practice that are in one way or another connected with that which the individual perceives to be divine. This definition also suggests that religion is ontically different from theology'. On the other hand, Lee argues that theology is not, in itself, a religious act, but it may be a component of religion and it may become a religious act by the intention of the theologian who wishes to offer his work to God.[59] Lee points out that a 'theologizer' may have a 'basic faith commitment' and yet be imperfect in putting this into practice in his daily life, and that there is no evidence to suggest that there is 'a necessary correlation between the quality of a theologian's religious life and the quality of his theorizing'. In short, 'theology is the speculative science investigating the nature and workings of God. Religion, on the other hand, comprises a life-style, a total way of engaging the whole person'. And again 'as a science, theology can be put into books. As a lifestyle, religion cannot be put into books; only the history of religion or description of religious experience can be put into books. Theology is abstract, while religion is concrete. As a general rule, theology is objective whereas religion is both subjective and objective'.[60] What role then can theology play in these schemes? How may Christian doctrine form part of the religious-instructional teaching-learning act? What solution Lee is prepared to offer is to be found in *'Content'* especially in the Chapters entitled 'Product Content', 'Verbal Content' and 'Cognitive Content'.

Product Content says Lee refers to a 'particularised, static, and usually 'tangible' kind of content'. He illustrates this with reference to arithmetic: in two times two equals four, the product content is four. The distinction between product content and

process content is that the product content is something which has been performed in the sense of a completed process (four as the sum of two and two) whereas process content is something which is being performed (the act of adding two and two together).[61]

Theology forms one aspect of product content, but only one aspect according to Lee. Other disciplines must take their place alongside theology. These include psychology and sociology, both of which are used in order to explain and understand and live out religion, which is a human activity, indeed a way of life. Lee spells out his meaning in an important passage: 'Theology as product content has no place in the religion lesson as pure theology, but rather in so far as theology is logically related to and existentially bonded to religion according to religion's manner of existence in the religious instruction act itself'.[62]

Lee admits that when asked many people both in Europe and the United States identify religious instruction with the imparting of theological information; but he insists that religious instruction must be concerned with facilitating desired religious behaviours and not an inducing of cognitive theological outcomes or, better, the latter only as and when they are components of the former. In order to redress the balance, Lee states that it is necessary to 'make theological abstractions properly subordinate to the concrete revelational realities from which they derive'. The power of theology to effect a religious behavioural outcome is pretty well nil in Lee's estimation. It is, he says, after all 'a distinct ontic entity' which is 'impotent in directly generated religious outcomes'.[63] Clearly this is not only a highly contentious claim (which will be discussed below), but it is not entirely clear why Lee employs such a tautologous phrase as 'a distinct ontic entity'. What theology can do, Lee argues, is to 'provide an important cognitive explanation, interpretation, and meaning for religious experience and religious behaviour'. It functions, he says at two levels: in opening up 'for the learner an adequate understanding of theological concepts and truths' and in providing 'a plausible cognitive grounding for religious behaviour'. Accordingly, theology must be judged as to the extent to which it makes religious behaviour or experience more meaningful.[64]

An important statement of Lee's recommended role for theology in the act of religious instruction, is: 'the religion teacher uses theological product content not so much to acquaint the learner with doctrinal facts as to make it possible for him to come to a progessively deeper cognitive consciousness of his present potential religious experience'. Indeed, he adds 'theological content must be of such a character that it is personally significant to the learner'. [65] This also means that theological content should not be incorporated into a lesson on the basis of the logical order inherent in the development of theology as a science, but in accord with the psychological state of the learner, as it is relevant to his religious experience or Christian living. Lee argues that this is in accord with the way in which a person becomes religious, whereas the logical order of theology is at odds with this, and indeed if insisted upon may be harmful to the proper development of the learner's religious experience.

It is perhaps important to note that Lee holds that religious living is 'essentially a personal affair'. Although he accepts that 'community life has had a definite and valuable place in the history of Christianity' he cites Jesus himself as someone who exhibited a lifestyle which was neither primarily individual or primarily communal. There is however, very little in Lee's writings to see how religious instruction is a communal affair other than in the narrow community of the 'religion class'. [66]

Lee encourages his readers to 'facilitate the acquisition of cognitive product content about God' through the use of story and of analogy. Indeed he declares that 'a story is a cognitive invitation to a vicarious experience (which) tends to be one of the most effective kinds of verbal pedagogical devices'. He also advocates the use of experiential methods familiar to many British practitioners, for example the 'trust-fall'. He summarizes his position thus: 'through religious knowledge, the religion teacher can only teach about God, whereas through religious experience he can teach God'. [67]

In his chapter entitled Cognitive Content, Lee devotes a subsection to Christian Doctrine; but he does not add very much to what we have learned already, choosing to emphasise again his belief in the

importance of 'theology-for-religion rather than theology-for-theology' in the context of the religion lesson; and also the primacy of religious experience over theological knowledge. What is new here is his contention, an important one in the context of his writing, that 'Christian Doctrine' is religion, the personal human relationship which an individual has with God as that individual operationalises this relationship in daily living. Christian Doctrine in its fulness and integralness is Christian living.' He adds 'it is not accurate to conceptualise Christian Doctrine as consisting solely of cognitive content. Christian Doctrine encompasses all eight basic kinds of substantive content dealt with in this book'. (These are: product content, process content, cognitive content, affective content, verbal content, non-verbal content, unconscious content, and finally, lifestyle content). He distinguishes Christian Doctrine from theological content in that 'theological content comprises only one aspect of the totality of cognitive content'. He insists that as 'etymologically, Doctrine means that which is taught ... Christian Doctrine is the whole of the Christian message'.[68] Although Lee is undoubtedly correct in etymology, his application of it here seems somewhat perverse.

Lee's contention that theological instruction is primarily concerned with cognitive content whereas religious instruction (as he understands it) involves the whole gamut of contents involved in Christian living (see above) is relatively uncontroversial. What is much more contentious is Lee's firmly stated contention that 'the available research data suggests that any posited, direct, significant causal relationship between cognitive content and religious conduct simply does not exist'. To back up this contention he cites research which appeared to demonstrate that although a group of children may be taught in class the 'proper' moral behaviour, nevertheless their actual behaviour may turn out to be quite different. In other words, religious knowledge does not always facilitate religious living.[69] Again, this is a perfectly fair observation, but it is certainly not evidence to validate these claim that there is no significant causal relationship between cognitive content and religious conduct. Although knowledge may not always, invariably, lead to a particular outcome, it is not permissible to say that knowledge has no bearing

on action. To suggest that clearly runs against Lee's carefully defended notion of the homo integer (see above page).

Lee goes to some lengths to distance himself from any charge of anti-intellectualism, berating, for example, those (who maintain a hyper-affective stance towards Christianity) 'who wallow in sloppy sentimentality' and who 'debase virile religion' into a 'touchy-feely affair' (does Lee have Westerhoff in mind here!?). Lee argues that cognitive content is indispensable but that it must be integrated 'dynamically' with what a person finds out about reality through his affective life or through his overt activity. He makes a plea for the teaching of intuition as well as the teaching of ratiocination, and for facilitation of creative or divergent thinking as well as convergent thinking.[70] Here Lee still insists that cognitive content has no direct causal relationship with any behavioural outcome, but he does concede that it may become a 'yeasting force'.

In his chapter on Verbal Content Lee introduces some further interesting ideas, especially on the relationship between theological and religious language.

He argues that religious language is special. It is in some sense a technical language 'expressing a person's thoughts, feelings, and actions with respect to their encounters with God'. On the other hand theological language expresses merely the cognitive character of theology and treats God as an object. This is in contrast to religious language which treats God as a subject, 'as a person'. Lee explains the distinction between the two as the difference between the recitation or invocation of the Lord's Prayer on the one hand and the 'set of verbal symbols used in the cognitive investigation of the elements of praise and petition in the Lord's Prayer' on the other hand.[71] Lee argues that religious language may make use of theological language, but that theological language draws upon and 'receives its sustenance from' religious language. Or again, religious language is 'experiential' in that it is both subjective and affective whereas theological language is 'scientific' in that it is 'fundamentally objective and cognitive'. Accordingly, Lee argues that metaphor is more suited to religious language than to theological language in that it is too imprecise

to take its place in a scientific enterprise. Hence, because the Bible is full of metaphor, it may be said to be a religious document and not a theological one. It is not theology but the raw material for theology. It is in the nature of religious language to make use of hyperbole slogan, sign, symbol, allegory and myth all of which offer 'great opportunity' for the religious instructor. A further distinction which Lee draws in some detail is between hermeneutics and hermeneutic. The former is, he argues a branch of linguistics, and therefore 'definitely not' a part of theology. Yet again, Lee's insistence that theology is narrowly bound and ontically distinct leads him to some curious, even perverse conclusions.[72]

On the other hand, the task of hermeneutics in Lee's scheme is to discover the meaning of the Biblical text and 'to convey that meaning in such a way that people will understand this meaning'. Hermeneutics includes exegesis which itself makes use of a very wide range of disciplines including history, geography, anthropology, theology, archaeology and 'the like'. Lee is keen to stress the importance of hermeneutics in the religious instruction act, declaring that a hermeneutic prospective is necessary to prevent the Bible from being perceived by the religious educator or learner as a closed book. Hermeneutic on the other hand is defined by Lee in almost exactly the same terms as Westerhoff defines constructive or systematic theology:

> Lee: 'hermeneutic ... constitutes an attempt to bring together object and subject, biblical text and modern human beings in one interacting matrix of interpretation'.
>
> Westerhoff: 'Constructive theology helps to make sense of our life in our day in the light of the church's tradition ... it explores systematically what it means for Christians to say 'I believe ...' in a particular time and place'.[73]

Lee claims that the founder of hermeneutic is Schleiermacher, and other significant figures in its development include both Barth (Lee cites Barth's commentary on Romans), Brunner (Lee identifies Brunner's demythologising with hermeneutic), Ebeling (although in a footnote Lee distances himself from Ebeling's view of the task of

hermeneutic as 'theology helping proclamation') and Pannenberg.[74]

Lee's claims are such that they merit careful examination. This is begun in the following chapter, but the chapter on 'Christian Doctrine, Theology and the Life of Faith' the authors cited by Lee are discussed in more detail in an attempt to discover their own understandings of the nature of theology and its relationship to lived religion - the life of faith.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Hofinger, J. (1962) The Art of Teaching Christian Doctrine: The Good News and Its Proclamation Notre Dame, Indiana
2. Burgess, H.W. (1975) An Invitation to Religious Education Birmingham, Alabama
3. Hofinger, J. (1962) p. 52
4. Ibid p. 53
5. Ibid p. 55
6. Ibid pp. 57-61
7. Ibid p. 63
8. Ibid p. 199
9. Ibid p. 221 ff.
10. Ibid p. 238 ff.
11. Ibid p. 276
12. Ibid p. 93 ff.
13. Ibid pp. 126-7
14. Ibid p. 17
15. Westerhoff, J.H. (III) and Edwards, O.C. Junior (Eds) (1981) Issues in the History of Catechesis Wilton, Connecticut p. 1
16. Westerhoff, J.H. (III) (1982) 'A Catechetical Way of Doing Theology' in Thompson, Norma H. (Ed) Religious Education and Theology Birmingham, Alabama p. 220
17. Ibid p. 220
18. Westerhoff and Edwards (1981) pp. 302-3
19. See, for example: Westerhoff, J.H. (III) (1983) Building God's People in a Materialistic Society New York p. 140 ff.
20. The National Society (Church of England) for Promoting Religious Education (1988) Children in The Way (London) draws particularly upon:-
    a) Westerhoff, J.H. (III) (1976) Will our Children have Faith? New York
    b) Neville, Gwen Kennedy and Westerhoff, J.H. (III) (1978) Learning Through Liturgy New York
21. Westerhoff and Edwards (1981) pp. 298-9
22. Ibid pp. 299-300
23. Westerhoff (1983) p. 67
24. Neville and Westerhoff (1978)
25. Westerhoff (1983) pp. 6-12

26. Westerhoff and Edwards (1981) pp. 305-7
27. Westerhoff (1983) p. 67
28. Westerhoff (1982) p. 225
29. Ibid p. 222
30. Westerhoff and Edwards (1981) pp. 307-8. What Westerhoff describes is, of course, a very ancient practice see, for example, Welsford AE (1951) Life in the Early Church p. 232 ff. London
31. Ibid pp. 311-314
32. Lee, J.M. (1983) 'To Basically Change Fundamental Theory and Practice' in Mayr, Marlene (Ed) Modern Masters of Religious Education Birmingham, Alabama.

    This book, which gives leading figures in the field the opportunity to 'tell their personal histories' also includes essays by Hofinger and Westerhoff. It is interesting to note that both their contributions are not only significantly shorter than Lee's, but also that neither is anything quite so colourful, or perhaps memorable. They are nevertheless, helpful and revealing. Hofinger's essay: 'The Catechical Sputnik' affirms his position already outlined; but whilst he comments: (I am) 'forever sceptical of all trends in religious education which unduly insist on much theoretical knowledge of the educator', he qualifies, or perhaps better explains this by referring to a 'great pastor' whose 'study of theology did not make him a great catechist'. Lee would not be surprised by this admission! Later, Hofinger states his concern for 'correct doctrine in the whole process of religious instruction'. He does not, however, explain the meaning of this concept beyond that already discussed. The last few paragraphs of Hofinger's essay make somewhat sad reading, for he regards the developments 'in the last fifteen years' in religious education as a 'serious setback'. He blames this on a 'formidable wave of secularism and an unreadiness to accept the normative directions of the Church'. Presumably Hofinger remained profoundly unimpressed by Lee's work. Westerhoff on the other hand is disarmingly self-deprecating. His 'Journey into Self Understanding' is a story of a man who is 'fundamentally introvertive, vulnerable, private, painfully shy' and yet 'intuitive-feeling' (rather than

'sensate-thinking') - a 'dreamer, most at home in the world of mystery and imagination'.

33. a) Lee, J.M. (1971) The Shape of Religious Instruction, Mishawaka, Indiana
    b) Lee, J.M. (1973) The Flow of Religious Instruction, Birmingham, Alabama
    c) Lee, J.M. (1985) The Content of Religious Instruction, Birmingham, Alabama
34. Lee (1971) pp. 36-8
35. Lee (1973) p. 221
36. Ibid p. 194
37. Ibid p. 222
38. Ibid pp. 225-9
40. Ibid p. 33 - Lee is here quoting from Hofinger (1962) p. 63
41. Lee, J.M. (1982) 'The Authentic Source of Religious Instruction' in Thompson, Norma H (Ed) Religious Education and Theology, Birmingham, Alabama, p. 179 - Lee illustrates his understanding of 'non-theological reality' thus: 'Theology can no more provide the intrinsic norms for the principles and practices of general instruction and religious instruction than it can provide the intrinsic norms for the principles and practices of sculpting, dentistry, engineering, creative writing, and so on. Theology can no more provide religious instruction with principles and procedures of effective teaching than it can provide engineering with the principles and procedures of building a bridge'.
42. Lee (1971) pp. 38-9
43. Ibid p. 40
44. Lee (1985) p. 459
45. Lee (1971) p. 41
46. Ibid p. 11
47. Ibid pp. 225-253
48. Lee (1985) p. 281
49. Ibid pp. 357-9
50. Lee (1982) p. 156 This maybe Lee's view about Hofinger, I am unaware of Hofinger's views about Lee (as a person). Hofinger's views about the kind of theory advocated by Lee are as strongly attacked as Hofinger's are by Lee (see above, note 32)

51. Lee (1985) p. 704
52. Lee does, however, discuss Westerhoff outside the trilogy. See for example, in Lee J.M. (1982) passim
53. Ibid p. 702
54. Lee (1982) p. 143
55. Ibid p. 102 ff.
56. Lee (1983) p. 278
57. Lee (1973) p. 225
58. Lee (1985) p. 2
59. Ibid pp. 5-6
60. Ibid p. 7
61. Ibid p. 35
62. Ibid p. 41
63. Ibid p. 44
64. Ibid p. 45
65. Ibid pp. 46-7
66. Ibid p. 680 ff. also see Lee (71) pp. 85-6
67. Ibid pp. 55-66
68. Ibid pp. 139-40
69. Ibid pp. 141-4
70. Ibid pp. 148-9 and 183
71. Ibid pp. 280-8
72. Ibid pp. 312-335
73. Ibid pp. 335-9
74. Ibid pp. 340-2

CHAPTER TWO

DISCUSSION AND COMPARISON OF HOFINGER, WESTERHOFF AND LEE

From the preceding chapters it will be immediately apparent that whilst there are some points of agreement in the theories and writings of Hofinger, Westerhoff and Lee, there are also fundamental differences, and not just differences of degree, but of substance.

There have been several attempts to provide a framework for the analysis of different approaches to religious education (or 'Christian education', or 'catechesis', or 'religious instruction', or the 'teaching ministry' or 'Christian nurture' - there is no agreement about what the enterprise should be called). Almost all have been published in the United States, by American scholars, writing in and from an American context. Notable examples include the studies by Lee himself, Piveteau and Dillon, Seymour and Miller, Harris, Chamberlin, Knox, Wyckoff and perhaps most helpful of all, H.W. Burgess. Burgess compares numerous schemes under the headings of aim, content, teacher, student, environment and finally, evaluation. He makes no claim that this system is exhaustive, but it has the twin advantages of simplicity and easy applicability. A further advantage of Burgess' study is that he includes both Hofinger and Lee amongst his subjects. [1]

As the significant points of contact, both of agreement and of dispute between the thoughts of Hofinger, Westerhoff and Lee fall fairly naturally within the scope of Burgess' categories, these have been adapted. The main differences of this chapter are that the category of environment is not addressed directly and that of evaluation is largely subsumed under aim and to a lesser extent, under teacher and learner. Evaluation, however, is given more detailed consideration in a later chapter.

AIM

It is this category, the aim of the religious-instructional act, perhaps the most fundamental, which also seems to offer most hope of agreement between the three theorists examined here.

Hofinger considers that the aim of teaching religion is 'to convey the Christian message', but that this must have a behavioural outcome: 'we not only have to give our students a thorough knowledge of the faith, but we must also form true Christians, who truly live their Christianity. Religious knowledge in itself is not the real goal of our teaching, it is only a means. The goal of religious instruction is religious living' and, 'as perfect a living union with Christ as possible'. [2]

Lee's position doesn't seem to be very far removed from this, indeed Burgess points out that Lee is in agreement with the majority of Christian religious educational thinkers 'who hold that the ultimate aim of religious instruction is that every student should have a life characterised by love and service to both God and man in this present world and attain happiness in the world to come'. But it is the enablement of Christian living which is Lee's primary goal, a goal which may be realised. This is, as Burgess points out, a broader concept than either Christian belief or Christian love, but includes religious belief, religious practice, religious feeling, religious knowledge and religious effects 'in all of these cases it is important to remember Lee's behavioural and relational definition of religion – a 'form of lifestyle which expresses and enfleshes a lived relationship etc. ...' see above). [3] It is of central importance to Lee that behavioural outcomes may indeed must be evaluated. He regards a lack of evaluation as 'ruining the cutting edge of educational innovation'. He argues that evaluation is lacking partly because of what he calls the prevailing 'blow theory' of religious education (the Spirit blows where He wills); [4] partly because of a lack of the necessary skills to carry out the evaluation and partly because he believes that 'there is the implicit or explicit conception that the outcomes of religious instruction cannot really be measured since they are spiritual and hence outside the competence of any evaluation system'. [5] In passing, it is worth considering here, what Lee actually means by 'evaluation'. Again, Lee's use of language is interesting too. It is clear from *'Flow'* that he regards evaluation as the measuring of the achievement of identifiable behaviour patterns: something which must be 'scientific rather than impressionistic'. [6] As will be argued in

a later chapter, this is a restricted understanding of evaluation. Most educationalists would describe this kind of measurement as assessment. Evaluation is usually reserved to describe specifically qualitative assessment of an educational goal. Hence it cannot avoid being somewhat personal and subjective.

Whether or not Lee uses the term evaluation correctly, he insists nonetheless that 'religious instruction must be de-spookified'. He continues: 'religious behaviours are not some sort of vague, amorphous, spooky phenomena but rather an identifiable set of behaviours'. And again 'Can we not observe the difference between a religious man and a sinful man by his cognitive, affective, and lifestyle behaviours? To be sure the whole notion and meaning of sin are wiped out when one insists that it is impossible to identify and assess the quality of an individual's behaviour'. [7]

All this is in considerable contrast to Hofinger's reluctance to pay much attention to evaluation (a characteristic, says Burgess, of the 'Traditional Theological Approach'). [8] It is sufficient, indeed it is essential, for the teacher or 'herald' to be faithful, from which Hofinger argues: 'if we heralds are thus faithful to our message ... then unselfishness and winningness will follow of themselves ... and Christ will be able to work in and through the herald, in Christ's own way. We are not the masters of our message' says Hofinger. [9]

Westerhoff is similarly unhappy about specifying aims too particularly and in assessing their achievement but he is in agreement with Hofinger and Lee in the behavioural or lifestyle aim of religious education. Catechesis is a 'pastoral activity of intentional Christian socialisation', it fosters vocation, which Westerhoff describes as 'to live a truly human life in community', which is a lifelong process. It is also an all-embracing act. It 'has to do with every aspect of personal and social life; it cannot be restricted to the world of work or be divided into material and spiritual, secular and sacred, masculine and feminine, body and soul.' [10] The enormity of Westerhoff's aim makes it difficult, if not impossible to achieve any kind of meaningful evaluation. Although Lee also begins with a wide, boundless aim, he is

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determined to lay this on one side and to concentrate his attention on more proximate ends. Lee's social science approach warmly embraces the four assummed tasks of modern general education which Westerhoff so distrusts. He insists on identifying religion with a number of clearly identifiable variables, but Westerhoff, in his reluctance to concentrate on the individual, rather than the individual in the context of community, refuses to adopt this approach. Lee, as has already been noted, is more than willing to concentrate on the individual qua individual. Westerhoff is far more concerned to talk about the need to recognise mystery, doubt and the unknowable; He does not accept the value of trying to evaluate or assess whether or not certain learning objectives have been reached. For him, the outcome of catechesis is quite properly unpredictable and open-ended, because in it we encounter the unknown and then unknowable.

In short, although Hofinger, Lee and Westerhoff all express the aims of their enterprise in behavioural terms, admittedly often (and especially in the case of Hofinger and Westerhoff) using deliberately vague language, it is only Lee who is prepared to try to specify any of these objectives and to insist that they may be evaluated (even if we may quibble with Lee's understanding of evaluation). Lee's criticism of Westerhoff, that he is guilty of inconsistency, is justified in as far as a social science macro-theory must be discrete according to the terms which Lee prescribes. Lee cannot accept Westerhoff's socialisation model which is supported not by specifically behavioural objectives but by objectives so impressionisticaly sketched and theologically justified that Lee considers Westerhoff's guiding principle to be a theological macro-theory. In as far as this means that Westerhoff may be mistakenly unwilling to be tied down to empiricism as Lee demands, then Lee's criticism is fair and admissible. However, Lee's criticism does depend largely on the acceptance of his definition of religion, which itself makes its own value judgments. It must be said also that Lee's criticism depends too on his own definition of social science, which is not perhaps as value free as he would like us to believe. If Westerhoff's analysis of the significance and role of the community in religious education is correct, then Lee's attack is also less potent, in that the number

of variables Westerhoff allows really does become too great to handle easily. Lee's reductionism, impressively broad-ranging and thorough as it undoubtedly is, may just be short sightedness; but Lee is surely right to push the social-scientific behavioural analysis for the purpose of reasoning his ends . Whether or not it is more effective, using Lee's own evaluative criteria, in meeting the common aim of all three writers is difficult to say. There is clearly a need to research Lee's methods in practice over a period of years and in a number of different contexts. A further problem is that Lee is remarkably coy about describing praxis. He tends to leave the religious instructor to translate his theory into practice.

David Heywood has put forward a pertinent and convincing discussion of the relationship between theology and social-science, in which he argues very persuasively that Lee's understanding of science is limited and defective in that social-science does not function solely as a self contained, value free, empirically testable system of pure knowledge, but rather 'is carried on with a framework of concepts'.[11] Both theology and social-science, involve their own images of humankind, (or perhaps one should say different social sciences and different theologies express a large number of different positions). Lee accordingly makes use of his own concept and images, some of them presented in language which, even according to his own tight definition must be regarded as 'theological', for example, his talk about truth, as outlined above. Moreover, as Heywood points out, social-science is not value free as it requires a continuous interaction between empirical research and conceptual analysis. Lee's own world view provides his conceptual framework. Hence it can be argued that theology and social-science are not so much 'ontically different', as in a dynamic relationship and so Heywood rightly points out that 'the issue of primary importance is whether we have a consistent and workable understanding of a relationship between the two areas'. Lee's consistent approach, although characteristically somewhat perverse, is certainly impressive in that he has no doubt in his own mind as to the relationship between the two areas of study as they affect religious instruction. Westerhoff and Hofinger in their own ways also pursue a valid approach, even if it does seem today that Hofinger's concentration

on the cognitive dimension of religious knowledge renders his approach less useful. Perhaps it is Westerhoff who is most open to the charge of internal inconsistency, but only perhaps because his position is so much harder to define.

TEACHER AND LEARNER

It is particularly interesting that despite such disagreement over how commonly held aims may or may not properly be realised, or at least how attempts to realise these may or may not be assessed or evaluated, all three writers place enormous significance on the person, character and role of the teacher (guide, herald or whatever); and yet explain this significance in very different ways. Lee insists that the teacher is fundamentally a professional specialist who is able to facilitate religious learning. She is a professional teacher who uses the 'facts' about learning and teaching to achieve her ends. It would seem then that Lee is propounding a purely functional view of the teacher who need not be as faithful or saintly as Westerhoff and Hofinger both argue must be the case. Indeed, it has already been noted that Lee, to some extent at least, regards the role of the teacher as pure function and hence that it is possible, in theory, as Burgess points out, for any willing person to become a religion teacher, providing that 'he is able to adequately deploy his personality toward achieving the function which he is teaching.' [12] Lee argues that religious instruction must be learner-centred, rather than teacher-centred, but in order to achieve this, he is moved to write about the role and training of the teacher at very great length particularly in *'Flow'*, where he devotes four chapters specifically to the nature and conduct of teaching and develops this further at many other points throughout the book. He rejects many alternative theories of teaching religion those, for example characterised, by him as the 'personality theory', 'the authenticity theory', 'the witness theory', 'the blow theory', 'the dialogue theory', 'the proclamation theory', and 'the dedication theory'. All of these are summarised succinctly by Burgess. [13] And yet it is also clear that the supreme importance Lee wishes to attach to the lifestyle content of religious instruction makes it difficult in practice for the teacher of religious instruction to be quite as neutral as he

seems to suggest elsewhere. Here, in his chapter on lifestyle content Lee states that 'a lifestyle outcome cannot be directly taught when the substantive content and/or the structural content of the teaching act are ontically different or pedagogically disjointed from the desired lifestyle outcome'. And again 'if Christian lifestyle is to be taught directly, then the substantive content must necessarily consist of Christian living itself'. Lee here provides seven major elements in the successful 'laboratory' for Christian living: 1. Concrete here and now performance; 2. First hand experience; 3. Fostering of a holistic intergration of the major domains of human functioning; 4. It is typified by controlled conditions; 5. It involves experimentation; 6. It includes ongoing performance-based validation of Christian lifestyle activities and behaviours and 7. It inevitably intertwines theory and practice.

Lee argues that lifestyle is 'what a person really is'. For Lee the teaching of religion is about the teaching of a workable religious lifestyle 'that delicious and holistic functional integration of all the individual substantive contents'. He believes that as no one lifestyle is necessarily right for all people it is important that the learner is given the opportunity to try out several patterns of lifestyle behaviour. He argues that this point is 'surely one of the great central theme of the Gospels'.[14]

In the light of what Lee has to say about the teaching-learning of lifestyle content, it would be difficult to imagine that any teacher of religion who took this to heart could work as Lee insists is possible, in a purely functional way. Lee's discussion of lifestyle content clearly in no way invalidates the potency of his comments regarding the inadequacy of the other teaching theories he describes, but a truly holistic view surely lessens the likelihood that the religion teacher could be anyone who was not religious in accord with Lee's definition of that word.

Turning to Westerhoff, it is clear that the effective catechist needs to be exceptionally well integrated into the worshipping Christian community, a person of deep spirituality and pastoral

sensitivity, who will function as a fellow-traveller. In Westerhoff's scheme there is little attention paid to the teaching-learning act. Catechesis is a process in community and a step into unchartered regions. The main difference between the pilgrim student and the pilgrim guide is that the latter has more 'experience in journeying'; but it is also expected of the catechist that he or she will be a 'unique personality willing to make his or her life an experience available to others as a resource for their pilgrimage'.[15]

Hofinger places similarly high expectations on the religion teacher. Quite apart from the immediate function of teaching in the classroom, teachers are to be 'imitators of Christ' in their whole way of life, and not just in Christ's way of teaching (a method, incidentally, which Lee warms to: he cites the way in which the risen Christ on the road to Emmaus gives due attention to the 'multi-dimensionality of substantive content'). The qualities Hofinger expects in a true herald of Christ include '1. A humble and joyful consciousness of our sublime vocation (this is an awareness of being sent by Christ and accompanied by him in the work done in his name - an inspiration (literally) to the catechist). 2. Close personal contact with Christ ('we should be able to say to our heroes what St. Paul could say: 'be imitators of me, as I am of Christ'). 3. Diligent cultivation of the specifically kerygmatic virtues which are fidelity, unselfishness, and winningness, and according to which the catechist is required to study all theology, with a purpose of getting a deeper and fuller understanding of revealed truth as a message we are sent to proclaim; to leave no time or interest left over for ourselves; and to be so Christ-like that if Christ is living in us, we shall win others as our Lord did himself.'[16]

It is this Christ like quality, that is the key in so many different ways to the success of catechesis as Hofinger understands it; so that Christ himself can speak through the catechist as directly as possible to the person being taught; so that indeed, the love of Christ will impel them to faithfulness. Something similar lies at the heart of Westerhoff's vision; but here it is the faithfulness of the entire Christian community which is so

critical. Lee on the other hand, argues that there is no evidence to suggest that personal holiness on the part of the teacher ensures adequate or effective teaching. He admits that role models are powerful, but considers that the 'witness theory' of teaching is not only too vague but that it is oppressive in that it forces the teacher's personal holiness onto the learner and fails to respect the learner's needs. The model which the teacher lives may not be appropriate for the learner.[17] All three authors recognise that there has to be as complete a consistency as possible between the content of what is taught/learnt (in whatever way content is understood) and the process or method of teaching-learning. Lee, of course, insists that the content of religious instruction is the religious instruction itself. It is the religious instruction act which is a pilgrimage.[18]

Lee's disapproval of Hofinger's model of pedagogy has already been noted, but it would also be fair to Hofinger, under Lee's analysis, not merely to categorise him as a prime example of a proclamation theorist (a herald of the good news of salvation), but also to some degree, a dedication theorist (which demands a high level of affective and attitudinal commitment on the part of the religion teacher). Similarly, Lee's 'personality theory', 'authenticity theory', 'witness theory' and 'blow theory' can all be applied in part to Hofinger's position. What cannot be doubted is the importance of the teacher, even if, as Lee and others might argue, the effect of concentrating on the teacher is done solely to make the teaching-learning act more learner-centred.

Lee is the only theorist to offer a precise explanation of how the teacher effects the religious instruction act, although even he does not fully provide convincing examples of life-style content which are as neatly packaged into behavioural goals open to easy assessment, as is possible, perhaps, with other aspects of the content of religious instruction as he defines it. But Lee himself will admit that there are many other factors at work in religious learning than those over which the religious instructor has control; for example, the prime importance of the family experience of the learner. No community-based model a la Westerhoff can do justice to the sheer complexity of modern life in which people find

themselves. Far from it being the case that as Lee argues, categories which are ontically different can exercise no direct cause or relationship upon each other, it remains true only that the nature of this relationship cannot be easily explained, in that it is undoubtedly true that in some situations cognitive content may appear to have no effect upon behaviour, but that in other situations this is not the case. The failure of cognitive content to affect behaviour is no proof that it is essentially incapable of achieving this. This is relevant to the discussion of the role and the character of the teacher, in that it seems to be the case that the person and personality of the teacher strongly influences the teaching-learning act, even if this is not conceived in terms of Lee's witness theory. It is not possible to maintain as complete a control over all the variables of the teaching-learning act as Lee would like. What Lee is able to offer far more satisfactorily than almost any other theorist is a logical interpretation and explanation of some of the most significant variables.

Undoubtedly the teacher has power to influence some of the other variables which constitute the teaching-learning act (the content, the environment etc.) and it is also true that if there is a clear lack of consistency between significant variables (and the teacher may be included amongst these) the effectiveness of the teaching-learning act will be impaired. But it is also clear that even when care is taken to take account of all the variables over which one might claim to be able to control, the outcome of the teaching-learning act in the context of religious instruction must remain open. One only has to follow Lee's example in looking to Jesus' own practice of teaching and to the many different outcomes of that to realise that both Hofinger and Westerhoff are right to be suspicious of predicting too confidently the result of religious instruction. This need not be explained solely by reference to the 'blow theory' so much deplored by Lee, but to the complexity of the factors involved in the educational act, and probably also to the challenging multi-dimensionality of the content of religious instruction, which leaves open a variety of response. After all, Lee himself admits that no one lifestyle is appropriate for all people; indeed he seems to suggest that there is a huge multiplicity of possible lifestyles.[19] Indeed, by this admission

Lee makes his closest approach to Westerhoff's insistence that the outcome of the religious instructional act is properly open-ended and unpredictable.

CONTENT: FAITH AND REVELATION

Westerhoff's understanding of faith is demonstrated by a story of an episode which took place in a class taught by him, in which he encouraged students to equate faith with perception. He states: 'our world is mediated to us by our world view. Faith is a particular way of perceiving life and our lives ... it is not a case of faith versus no faith; it is only a matter of what faith we hold'. From this he argues that 'when a person's faith is deepened or given greater clarity, that person's perceptual field is enhanced and enlivened'. Westerhoff emphasises that faith understood in this way is not a belief system or an intellectual assertion of truth. It may be expressed 'attitudinally as trusting' and 'behaviourally as worshipping' and 'intellectually as believing' ('manifested' as doctrine'). [20]

Having outlined his understanding of faith, Westerhoff turns to revelation (see above) which he argues is made possible by faith, although it is God's revelation of God's self: 'a personal encounter with a living, acting God'. [21]

Faith for Lee, as stated above, can be expressed in most basic terms as 'a label given to a certain set of behaviours'. [22] Westerhoff holds that faith is a 'primal and primitive force that preceeds and indeed constructs knowledge itself'. [23] Faith cannot therefore be taught outside the context of living and especially worshipping within a community of faith. As David Heywood has pointed out, Westerhoff does not deny that faith can be learnt, only that it cannot be taught. This flies in the face of Lee's thesis, not only in terms of his identification of faith with a series of faith 'acts', but also in terms of Lee's writing about 'attitudes' which may also, he argues, be learnt in accord with his religious instruction macro-theory. He quotes with approval Stansfield Sargent and Robert Williamson's statement that 'an attitude defines one's position toward a given aspect of his

perceptual world'. 24 Lee proceeds to describe research which suggests that there are three critical points in the formation of attitudes: early childhood, adolescence and early adulthood. This parallels Westerhoff's stages of the affiliative, searching and integrating stages of pilgrimage. Indeed Lee's understanding of attitudes seems to be very close to Westerhoff's understanding of faith. Revelation for Lee on the other hand is all-pervasive. The only condition of revelation is that it is 'always and everywhere mediated by human beings'. [25]

Whilst both Lee and Westerhoff adopt an essentially social-scientific understanding of faith, be it described as perception or attitude, Hofinger takes a markedly different approach. He does not insist on an understanding of faith as being synonymous with assent to dogma, as Lee certainly characterises the traditionalists' view, but as the acceptance of God revealed in Christ which has an implication for the whole of life. Christians thus become aware of their faith through the process of catechesis. Faith is thus synonymous with revelation. It is something which is given and which is fundamentally Christocentric, so that 'in prayer we thank the divine Father for his gift of love; in prayer we reaffirm our willingness to follow Christ faithfully; in prayer we humbly ask for God's help that our life may correspond to our faith'. From this, although faith has a basically objective character, it is also talked of as a human activity of response to God. [26]

CONTENT: DOCTRINE

Clearly this discussion of faith relates closely to the understanding of doctrine held by the three writers.

Hofinger's view, as has been noted, is one of equating doctrine with systematic teaching: 'doctrine' means systematic catechesis following the order of a catechism and presenting good tidings as a logical structure. It is the fundamental content of catechesis, that stands alongside the Bible, the liturgy and Christian living. More specifically, this means a fairly traditional syllabus in systematic theology: 'God as Creator (Creation, Elevation, The

Fall-Original Sin); Christ the Saviour (The Incarnation, The Birth of Christ, The Public Life of Christ, The Passion and Death, The Resurrection and Ascension); The Doctrine of the Church (the Church as the Family of God's Children, the Church-our Mother); The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit (the Holy Spirit, the Most Holy Trinity); the Sacraments (The Effect of Baptism, The Obligation Contracted at Baptism, The Institution of the Holy Eucharist, The Sacrifice of the Mass, The Institution of the Sacrament of Penance, the Sacrament of Matrimony, Christian Suffering and Death, and Our Sacramental Preparation for Definitive Union with Christ); The Last Things (Death and The Particular Judgment, The General Judgment, Hell, Heaven).'[27] This is followed by a section headed: 'The Response Of Our Grateful Love' or 'How we are to answer God's Love By Christian Living'.

If Hofinger's understanding of doctrine is very clearly one of identification with systematic theology, it is already equally clear that neither Westerhoff or Lee can agree with this. Westerhoff's understanding, as has been noted, is not too clearly expressed. Nevertheless, it would appear to be fairly firmly placed within the cognitive dimension, 'the intellectual manifestation of faith' (see above). Although this includes scripture and tradition (the story owned and shared by the community of faith), it is a more dynamic entity than that conceived by Hofinger. 'Without present experience' argues Westerhoff 'we are reduced to passivity and memorization'. He points out that both the Hebrew Yada and the Greek γινωσκειν have the dual meanings of knowledge and lovemaking. So that, for example, 'for St. Paul, true knowledge of God is always a dynamic relationship which finds expression in our daily experience'.[28] Westerhoff understands the purpose of theology as 'to rationally explore our every dealing between God and humanity.' A catechetical way of doing theology is according to Westerhoff, 'the art of releasing the two poles (of the Christian heritage as it is continually reshaped and the experience of catechesis within a community of faith) in ways that maintain the particular integrity and inherent value of each'.[29] Christian Doctrine on the other hand, according to Westerhoff, is not always as rational as he would suggest theology must be. He cites the Apostles' Creed as

'not so much a rational statement of cognitive beliefs to be analysed and debated as an act of the heart in trust'.[30] Westerhoff is here concerned about the use of the Apostles Creed within the baptismal liturgy. In Lee's terms, he is arguing that in this context, the Apostles' Creed should be an example of religious rather than theological language. Catechetics, in Westerhoff's view, would seem to be an attempt to facilitate this cross-over; to enable people to so internalise the Christian story, as they experience God in the present, that theology becomes religion. Theological language about God becomes religious language expressed to God or is expressive of God.

Westerhoff contends that we live in a period of radical transition, a move away from a secular, scientific materialistic society and from lives lived individualistically, and so lacking in integrity that they are moving towards disintegration. (Many other commentators would argue that we are moving precisely towards such a scenario!) It is in response to this, however, that Westerhoff believes that the Christian faith offers hope 'best expressed in the language of poetry and song'. Here he cites, printing it out in full, the 'symbolical narrative'[31] at the opening of the Church's Eucharistic Prayer. Surely this is another example of theological language and religious language moving together. One wonders whether Lee's insistence that the former is more intelligible than the latter holds true here, for theological technical terms are used in a highly affective religious way: an example of religious language borrowing theological language, which Lee considers to be improbable.

Whereas Westerhoff's vision seems to be at times frustratingly elusive, one turns to Lee in the hope of finding clarity. However, although the clarity is clearly discernible, Lee will not offer us quite such a neatly contained definition of doctrine as he is able to present to us in the case of either religion or theology. His offering of 'religionology' as an understanding of active religious living is much more fully described than Westerhoff's catechetical way of doing theology. In particular it does full justice to Lee's behavioural understanding of religion; but the two writers do not seem to be so very far removed from one another when Lee declares

that 'what fundamentally unites the active and the passive modes of religious living is love'. [32]

As already noted, doctrine for Lee 'whole and entire is lived religion' and 'cognitive doctrine forms only one aspect of Christian doctrine whole and entire'. [33] Thus Lee could perhaps have retitled or sub-headed his 'The Content of Religious Instruction' as 'The Content of Christian Doctrine'.

Both Lee and Westerhoff agree that cognitive doctrines always follow from experience and not vice versa. Lee emphasises the normative nature of the Church's ecclesial lifestyle and so does Westerhoff. Westerhoff understands the immense power of liturgy to shape and alter doctrine understood in a narrow cognitive sense, but Lee goes very much further and offers us a staggeringly full analysis of the role and character of product content, process content, cognitive, affective, verbal, nonverbal, conscious, unconscious and, above all, lifestyle contents. It is not difficult to sympathise with Lee's frustration with Westerhoff's approach, which he so often dismisses as 'unscientific' or 'anecdotal', when Lee himself demonstrates so persuasively the full extent of a social scientific analysis of religious instruction. When Westerhoff shies away from this kind of analysis preferring to stress the unpredictability and open-endedness of catechesis, Lee interprets Westerhoff's hesitancy as a lack of intellectual and scientific competence.

It seems that we are faced with a fairly straight choice between the more narrowly traditional understanding of doctrine offered to us by Hofinger and a much fuller all-embracing vision offered by Westerhoff and Lee (admittedly in rather different forms). The difference between the two approaches is profoundly theological. Although the reason for Lee's adoption of a social science approach had its origins in his own unhappy first few years school teaching, his shift of understanding represents a change of theological prospective from the strongly transcendent and traditional stance as represented by Hofinger, to one which stresses God's immanent activity in the world. Indeed, although Westerhoff expresses discontent with the values and lifestyles of modern Western societies, both he and Lee put forward a dominantly world-affirming

and optimistic position. Lee himself is most anxious to refute the charge that his own world view has rendered his macro-theory not fully 'generalizable to all religion teachers in all conditions and in all settings'. He states that it is an error to assert that 'the religious educator's own personal world view forms the necessary theoretical matrix for devising pedagogical practice' (see above on the position of role models and the so-called witness theory). But it may also be an error to assume as Lee does, that a social-science approach does not involve its own values and assumptions, so that it is perfectly possible to construct a somewhat different social-science approach which is just as scientifically thorough-going as Lee's work, but which has a different starting point. One example of such might be developed, for example, from Westerhoff's position. It is necessary here to state again David Heywood's conclusion that what is essential is a consistent and workable understanding of the relationship between theology and social-science of the sort which Lee tries to supply, but Westerhoff never really attempts.

Lee's understanding of doctrine is perhaps more satisfying to the modern person than that which Hofinger offers, not least because it demands an integration of the whole field of human experience with the living, but historically-based tradition of the Church. Theologically, Westerhoff and Lee offer a different view of revelation to that propounded by Hofinger, and this is perhaps the crucial difference between them, even though all three admit to the necessity of a present experience of the living God as fundamental to truly Christian living. Admittedly also, Hofinger does not provide an adequate explanation of teaching-learning theory, no more than does Westerhoff; but this failure is for theological reasons. Lee of course, regards this failure as good reason to damn theological imperialism.

If one of the prime functions of doctrine offered by Lee is that of being expressive of religion, as well as being the content of that which is being taught, it is also clear that traditional, rational, cognitive systematic theology is an essentially limited enterprise. It goes so far, but not far enough to satisfy the whole range of contexts possible for knowledge of God and the expression of a

relationship with God. If such a view of doctrine is to be adopted, the nature of the relationship between the narrow traditional view and the broad brush approach offered by Lee has to be adequately worked out. To some very considerable extent Lee does just this, but there are still a number of problems outstanding and a number of fruitful contexts which invite further exploration.

One such area of concern is the extent to which Westerhoff is correct to stress the place of the unknown and the unknowable in religious instruction. To some extent, Lee would have to acknowledge that his adoption of achievable, behavioural, proximate goals is a compromise, because the ultimate aim of religious instruction that he propounds is too broad in scope to be practicable. However, a more positive approach to what Skager terms 'open ended goals' (see chapter on evaluation - below) may not do the damage to Lee's approach which he seems to fear. Thus some discussion of open-ended and specified goals forms an important element of the chapter on evaluation. Not unrelated to this is the need for further comment on the nature of theology and the task of the theologian. This must be important for (as has been argued) it is necessary to be aware of the proper relationship between theology and social-science. Similarly, more needs to be said about the nature of Christian doctrine.

A further point is that it is clear that although Lee does not share Westerhoff's view that an affective dimension is a proper part of theology done catechetically, there does seem to be a need to explore further the relationship between the cognitive and affective dimensions within some of the kinds of non-verbal, non-cognitive content described by Lee; for here some further practicable clues may be discovered to the way in which ontically different entities (in Lee's eyes) may indeed have an effect on each other. Lee does not discuss music in any great detail, but he does acknowledge that 'music perhaps more than any other form of creative art, has the capacity to take a person out of himself and plunge him into a world which many characterise as divine'.[34] If this is true, this offers a particularly appropriate opportunity to explore the nature of a means of expression which is affective, and

also cognitive and to try to relate this to Lee's understanding of the nature of religion and the learning of religion. It may also shed more light on the significance of symbol which Westerhoff regards as being so important.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Burgess (1975)
2. Hofinger (1962) pp. 9-33; also Burgess (1975) pp. 30-32
3. Burgess (1975) pp. 130-2
4. Lee (1971) pp. 195-6 Lee is here quoting (disapprovingly) Gabriel Moran: 'The Spirit works where He wills, and it is not for man to control Him. The catechist, like the apostle, invites man to respond to God, but when, where, and under what conditions is not for the catechist to decide. What the catechist can do is show what a Christian life is by living one'. Lee concludes that 'The notion of willy-nilly chance promoting the effective operation of the Spirit seems quite foreign to the activities recounted in the bible'.
5. Lee (1973) pp. 275-7
6. Ibid p. 277
7. Ibid pp. 276-7 also see Burgess (1975) p. 158
8. Burgess (1975) p. 51
9. Hofinger (1962) pp. 200-1
10. Westerhoff (1982) p. 222 and p. 230
11. Heywood, D. (1986) Theology or Social Science? The Theoretic Basis For Christian Education. NEICE., Durham
12. Burgess (1975) p. 142 and also Lee (1973) p. 229 The personality 'theory' is said to hold that the sole basic variable in teaching religion is the religion teacher's personality. Lee agrees that a winning personality is an important quality in a religion teacher, but he contends that other, more controllable, variables are necessary for an adequate theory of teaching religion. The authenticity 'theory' holds that the authentic, here-and-now manifestation of the religion teacher's genuine personality is the basic variable involved in modifying the student's behavior along religious lines. This position, in spite of some empirical support, 'imprisons the teacher in the web of his own presently experienced feelings.' Therefore it is said to be inadequate as an overarching theory for the teaching of religion. The witness 'theory' holds that as the religion teacher witnesses to the Christian message in word, deed, and lifestyle the student's behavior will be modified along religious lines.

There is the implicit notion in this 'theory' that it is the teacher's personal holiness rather than his skill in facilitating religious learning which is the supreme criteria of the good religion teacher. Lee rejects the witness 'theory' on the grounds that, among other weaknesses, it is too vague in its delineation of antecedent-consequent relationships in the teaching act. The fourth theoretical approach to teaching religion noted by Lee is the blow 'theory.' This 'theory' holds that the incomprehensible action of the Holy Spirit is the basic causal variable involved in the teaching of religion. Lee maintains that the blow 'theory' is not adequate as a macrotheory for religious instruction because 'its power of prediction is little or nothing, and its explanatory capability is shrouded in opacity and mystery.'

The dialogue 'theory' suggests that modification of the student's behavior along desired religious lines grows out of an interactive teacher-pupil relationship - a deep personal encounter. Lee argues that despite a number of praiseworthy aspects (such as a emphasis upon both teacher-student interaction and process content) the dialogue 'theory' is deficient as a macrotheory for explaining and predicting effective religious instruction because it fails to generate a consistent, interconnected series of pedagogical practices targeted toward the specifically religious aims characteristic of religious instruction.

The proclamation 'theory' of teaching religion is based upon the notion that announcing or heralding the good news of salvation is the primary variable in bringing about religious learning; its emphasis is upon transfer of solid product content. This 'theory' incorporates a number of weaknesses in that it pays little attention to learner behavior or to the environment and also that it requires the learner to be largely inactive during the religion lesson. In addition, it generates mostly transmission strategy and lecture techniques. Thus, Lee asserts that the proclamation 'theory' fails to meet the criteria of multidimensionality which must characterize an adequate theory of religious instruction. The dedication

'theory' of religious instruction holds that the teacher's dedication is the most important variable in religion teaching. Lee suggests that this 'theory' merits little consideration as a religious instructional theory because it generates few, if any, educational practices. Furthermore, it fails to specify antecedent-consequent relationships at any level in the religious instructional act. Dedication can, however, be helpful variable in the religion teacher's personality structure, Lee notes.

13. Ibid pp. 149-50
14. Lee (1985) pp. 618-648 and 701
15. Westerhoff (1981) pp. 299-302
16. Hofinger (1962) pp. 197-202
17. Lee (1973) pp. 164-174
18. Lee (1985) p. xvi.
19. e.g. 'Lifestyle content can be acquired only in an experiential fashion in which the learner is afforded the opportunity to live one or more patterns of lifestyle behavior' - Ibid p. 701
20. Westerhoff (1982) pp. 223-5
21. Ibid p. 227
22. Lee (1985) p. 615
23. Westerhoff (1982) p. 225. See also: Westerhoff (1976) p. 23
24. Lee (1985) p. 217
25. Ibid p. 759
26. Hofinger (1962) p. 20
27. Ibid passim
28. Westerhoff (1982) p. 228
29. Ibid pp. 218-220
30. Ibid p. 226
31. Ibid pp. 232-3
32. Lee (1985) p. 654
33. Ibid p. 637
34. Ibid p. 395

CHAPTER THREE

CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE, THEOLOGY AND THE LIFE OF FAITH

There is no universal agreement about the nature of Christian Doctrine and its relationship both to theology and the life of Faith. That is already clear from the above discussion.

There is, perhaps, less problem in describing 'doctrine' than in describing 'theology'. A simple definition of 'doctrine' is 'what is taught', [1] and so, as has already been argued, it would not be unreasonable to change Lee's book from 'The Content of Religious Instruction' to 'The Content of Christian Doctrine' (in as far as by 'Religious Instruction' Lee means Christian Religious Instruction - which he does). If this simple definition were the only definition of doctrine in current use, all would be well; but it is not. Shirley Guthrie points out that there is a narrower understanding of 'doctrine' by which Christians describe 'particular aspects of their faith: the doctrine of God, human nature and destiny. Christ, salvation, the Holy Spirit, the church and the like,' [2] in other words, the narrower understanding of doctrine as held by Hofinger. Perhaps the only necessity for doctrine, in either sense, is that, to some extent, it should be understandable, and hence to some extent also, cognitive. Writing in 1919, [3] E.J. Bicknell argued that 'we cannot teach what we do not in part understand'. And yet this is not just a cognitive activity: 'Christian dogma begins at the mother's knee' and Christian doctrines are the guardians of bold feelings and standards. Bicknell saw the relationship of doctrine to theology as essential: 'the moment that any teaching about religion begins, the rudiments of theology are found'. All theology is, he says, the placing of doctrines in a connected and orderly system. [4]

Bicknell's scheme is neat and helpful. Experience, comes first; reflection on experience produces doctrine and the systematisation of doctrine constitutes theology. Lee would argue that 'what is taught' may also include primary religious experience, and hence he has a broader understanding of doctrine; but the 'scientific' role of theology suggested by Bicknell fits very well with Lee's own understanding of theology.

This fairly precise definition of theology is not, however, adequate. Or rather, it does not satisfy all the uses of the word 'theology' current today. Stephen Sykes has pointed out that the term 'theology' has had a number of meanings at different times in history,[5] and Robert H. King remarks that 'at the present, there is no general agreement even as to what theology is'. King describes the current position as a 'tendency toward a kind of laissez-faire eclecticism'.[6] King's essay is a concise and informative overview of the task of theology and especially systematic theology from Christian beginnings through to the present day. In his description of theology in the past century, he notes positions as different as Barth's re-working of Reformation models; Rahner's 'transcendental method'; Tillich's 'method of correlation' of existential questions and religious symbols; the 'new hermeneutic' of Ebeling, Fuchs and others leading to the work of Paul Ricoeur, Gordon Kaufman and David Tracy and their investigations of religious language and theological imagination; and also the 'liberation theologies' of Gutierrez and others, which have emphasised the experience of oppressed peoples and broken away from the Western idea of theology as an activity undertaken by the intellectual elite'.

In this context, is Lee right to argue that theology is a science which is 'primarily speculative rather than empirical; primarily deductive rather than inductive; primarily supernatural rather than natural; primarily rational rather than intuitive'?[7] What are the norms on which theology is built? (Lee regards the 'incredible number of competing theologies' - as, perhaps, evidenced by King's list above, as an indication that theology itself has an 'erratic normative base'.)[8]

Useful help comes in John McIntyre's 1976 essay in honour of T.F. Torrance on the subject of 'Theology and Method'.[9]

McIntyre first discusses the question 'What is theology?' and then proceeds to examine the nature of theological method. McIntyre's answer to the question 'What is Theology?' is in two parts. The first part is extensive: a listing of cognate subjects and disciplines which may be found together in the syllabus of a

theological degree or placed together under 'theology' in a library. The list, he readily concedes, is heterogeneous, and includes literature, history, ethics, metaphysics, logic and psychology. Moreover, there are still more disciplines which are closely related to 'theological' disciplines, the nature of the relation of which to theology must, at times, be elucidated. Included in this list are, philosophy, archaeology, epistemology, ethics, sociology, psychiatry and several language systems, along with several of the disciplines previously listed such as metaphysics, logic, history, psychology and linguistics. In other words, it is unclear whether all the 'theological' disciplines constitute one unitary field distinct even from the penumbral disciplines which may be thought to constitute adjacent fields. Or again, is, for example, 'the philosophy of the Christian religion more akin to philosophy than it is to church history?' [10]

McIntyre goes on to argue that 'theological disciplines exhibit unity of centre rather than unity of system. They derive their character from the relation in which they stand to the central facts of the Christian faith, and not primarily at any rate from the relationships which they set up with one another. At a later stage these lateral relationships develop; but they are only possible because of a primary radial relationship which the disciplines hold to the centre'. [11] One immediate problem with this view is that, as Sykes has shown, [12] there is no real agreement as to what constitutes those 'central facts' of the Christian faith. Nevertheless, although this cannot easily be gainsaid, for most practical purposes MacIntyre's analysis seems to hold good.

Clearly it follows that with the heterogeneous nature of disciplines which constitute (for McInytre) Christian theology, we must expect a similar variation of procedures and operations in their necessarily varying methods. Clearly also, as Torrance has pointed out, method in any discipline must be congruent with the proper nature of the object of that discipline. However, the nature of the relation of method to object is not a simple one. McIntyre points out that it is not adequate to argue that the object <u>determines</u> the method in any study for two reasons. First,

because the object of any study is not 'apprehended in some veridical way at the very outset of the study'.[10] (Even physicists cannot claim certainty about the nature of the object they investigate; and although the object of theological disciplines, namely God, may be believed to be self-revealing, nevertheless, the content of that revelation is certainly contested.) Second, the relationships between object and method is subtle, so that if the object does not begin to become clear until a late stage in the process, then also the method will become, and will need to become, gradually more sophisticated.[13]

There are, according to McIntyre at least six senses in which the concept of the 'given' in any discipline may be understood:

1. The directly intuitable - which is self-evident.
2. What is sensed cannot be sensed in its purity, but must also be conceptualised as one element in a complex situation.
3. A system of parameters within which our thinking or action on a certain matter has to operate - a kind of existential blindness.
4. The Euclidean given, which may be part of an aprioristic system, but which is recognised and accepted - a working hypothesis.
5. A problem confronting us which requires a solution.
6. A group of apparently related 'givens' in the sense of 5, which become the subject-matter of a discipline, or the starting point of it.[14]

As a discipline develops, the givens on which it is based must be put to work. One essential part of this process is interpretation. If interpretation is to be successful it must be sympathetic to the material to be interpreted, in its use of models, paradigms, analogies and symbols. These must be readily assimilable by those to whom they are directed, capable of deployment as the description proceeds; and must be ready and able to rally to the defence if the original comes under attack. McIntyre claims that the history of theology is full of models which have met these tests, but also includes some that have totally failed.[15]

The criteria used by theologians in the course of their argument are many. McIntyre suggests at least fourteen/(!) see below/. What is clear from these is that some norms are 'extra-theological' and others 'intra-theological'. This is of significance in the context of the argument that each field employs arguments relevant to itself, and, of course, to Lee's contention that disciplines such as theology and social-science are ontically different and operate in quite different ways. An example of an intra-theological norm given by McIntyre is that of Pannenberg's statement about Jesus' resurrection: 'The natural sciences cannot be the final court of appeal in the decision as to the possibility or impossibility of Jesus' resurrection.[16] 'Extra-theological' criteria (e.g. the critical investigation of historical evidence) may also, however, be used intra-disciplinarily in theology. McIntyre's fourteen criteria employed by theologians are as follows:

1. Coherence - any proposition which does not contradict the already established system of true propositions is itself true. (McIntyre quotes Bernard Russell to support this: The mark of falsehood is failure to cohere in the body of true propositions'.)
2. Correspondence - again McIntyre quotes Russell: 'a belief is true when it corresponds to an associated complex and false when it does not'.
3. Scripture - with its sub-criterion of canon, which allows greater dependence on some parts of the Bible than others.
4. Tradition - not just in the specifically Anglican or Roman Catholic sense, but also 'quod semper, quod ubique quod ab omnibus creditur'.
5. Scripture and Tradition in tandem - a characteristic criterion of all branches of the Christian Church.
6. God's self-revelation - what it is that Christ reveals of God. The content of revelation is more ultimate here than the medium.
7. The Word of God- revealed, written and preached (the latter two become the first, which is the criterion here of theological truth).
8. Revelation - a difficult term to define. McIntyre argues that Brunner equates this with Jesus Christ and others the Bible,

but that in both cases something more is meant than the original terms, but what is unclear.

9. Jesus Christ - the supreme subject of faith, and also the object towards which theological statements point.
10. Existential significance - The criterion of truth here is its convertibility into existential significance. For example John Macquarrie writes: 'The story of the ascension would be senseless if regarded as an account of a journey into the upper regions of the sky, but it makes sense if we regard it as expressing what has happened to Jesus in the experience of his disciples. The crucified One has become the exalted Lord of their existence'.
11. Existentialia - a more 'hard line' existentialist position. 'Man's' - existence in-the-world is the true criterion which determines all truth be it theological or anthropological, there being no real difference'.
12. Compatability with contemporary culture - negatively in that 'what is unacceptable to modern man is out' (e.g. demon-possession) and positively in that it 'blesses a theory or principle which appears to get backing from some modern discipline'.
13. Logical performance - both the capacity of a theological statement to 'make the right logical noises' and also (after D.D. Evans) the performative function of theological statements as a locus of their meaning (a 'type of religious positivism').
14. The Dominant motif - hermeneutical categories (e.g. Heilsgeschichte), also the deliberate adoption of the paradiams of other disciplines such as natural science, psychology or sociology.[17]

McIntyre does not wish to suggest that any of these criteria can be prioritised, and clearly they demonstrate the broad and varied nature of theology and of theological method. No one theologian will use all these criteria, and indeed, few will explain the criteria they are employing.

What is also very clear is that if McIntyre is correct, Lee's

definition must be modified at least in part. Of course, this is not to say that the criteria used in theological argument are so widely drawn that theology is omni-competent. Theology does not properly set out to explain, verify and predict the nature of the teaching-learning act, but it cannot help but overlap with the social-sciences if it is to make sense of, for example, the human response to the 'central facts of the faith', which is an integral part of our knowing God (McIntyre quotes Torrance's statement that 'the fact of our knowing God enters into the context of that knowledge, so that there is an interplay between human subject and divine object).[18]

The starting point of theology would also seem to be rather different from the logical order which Lee believes is characteristic of it (see above). McIntyre argues that the theologian cannot avoid the conclusion that we must begin where we are because of the nature of the 'given' as described above - 'the "given" is what is given to us ... it confronts us where we are,and even when we try to disentangle say, church history from Christian origins. The very process of disentangling required is to begin where we are'.[19]

A further useful elucidation of the nature and starting point of theological disciplines is given by Timothy Radcliffe in the context of a discussion of the relationships between theology and sociology.

Radcliffe argues that theology 'in itself, has neither a particular perspective or methodology', rather it makes use of many other disciplines and methodologies, in just the way that McIntyre explains. What is 'theological' in this enterprise is not therefore something determined by a peculiar content or method of the discipline but by its purpose which is, says Radcliffe, 'that praxis or activity by which the meaning of the Gospel becomes articulate as the illumination of the world, and by which the meaning that men succeed in making of themselves and their experience is transformed to become a disclosure of that meaning that we call God'.[20] Because Radcliffe (following Cornelius Ernst) regards theology thus as 'encounter', he finds it

inappropriate and indeed illegitimate to talk about a 'theological perspective'; or even to identify any distinctive language which may be called 'theological language'. He admits to the existence of some theological words such as 'grace', 'justification', 'salvation' etc., but argues that 'they only remain properly 'theological' for us as long as they remain capable of making possible that creative encounter'. On the other hand, contra Lee, Radcliffe is quite content to describe the New Testament as a 'theological' work, because 'it represents the initial encounter of the Church and world, in which the gospel became articulate as an illumination of that world' etc. [21]

Radcliffe's stress on the creative nature of theology as encounter is particularly worth noting. By it he is able to argue that theology and religion cannot be regarded as alternative forms of explanation. Indeed, because theology is concerned more with meaning than with explanation, it is possible, he says, that sociology itself may be a locus of encounter between the gospel and the world. [22]

Such a view of theology opens up the possibility of breaking down the distinction Lee wishes to draw so strictly between theology and religion. (Lee after all regards the Bible as a 'religious' and not a 'theological' book). Perhaps Radcliffe's understanding of theology as creative praxis is close to Lee's understanding of religion (at least in its cognitive form), especially as Radcliffe is prepared to go so far as to argue that 'those theologians who write boring humdrum books that fill the shelves of our theological libraries ... can be accepted as genuine theologians only in the sense that 'they perpetuate or extend some original and creative theological insight. Thus the theological perspectives of Thomas, Luther, Barth, etc., will continue to be explored by their disciples, but many of these disciples will only be creative by virtue of some sort of participation in the original, founding, creative praxis of their masters'. [23] (It is these writers, however, presumably that Lee would be happiest to regard as theologians.)

Yet another barrier which is broken down by Radcliffe's view of

theology is that of the conventionally academic understanding of theology. Other valid loci of the encounter between gospel and world and of attempts to express meaning in that encounter must also include, he argues, poetry, drama, painting and music. Thus this definition of theology must make room for example for the poems of St. John of the Cross, which are 'the secular songs he heard outside his prison walls transformed in the light of the gospel'.[24] (The possibilities inherent in music for enabling people to make sense of their experience will be discussed in much more detail below.)

Before leaving Radcliffe, it is also interesting , in the context of his claims, to examine briefly some of his observations about the nature of sociology and of the differences between sociological and theological argument, because they raise doubts about the validity of some of Lee's most strongly expressed opinions. Lee goes to considerable lengths to declare his belief that social-science is 'value-free'. In one of his most recent articles he re-states his belief with some force and explains that it is value-free in that it is not instrinsically bound up with any one particular set of religious values (hence, he argues, it may be applied to any religious value-system).[25] It is not true, Lee realises, that there are no values underlying a social-science macro-theory, but that, in practice these are 'either sufficiently filtered out or made to conform to the canons of the macro-theory so that these values do not significantly alter the basic character, procedures, or results of this approach in itself'.[26] Lee's rather particular and narrow understanding of the purity of empiricism is not shared by Radcliffe. He argues that sociological explanations '<u>always</u> derive from and express some prior implicit or explicit interpretation of the meaning of man's existence and destiny'.[27] For example, Radcliffe argues that a Marxist sociological explanation of Christianity is bound to be controversial; (and yet, the debate must be carried out using sociological criteria and methodology. It will not do for a theologian to attempt to refute such a position by arguing that the sociologist has an unacceptable world-view). Both the theologian and the sociologist are bound to begin 'where they are'.[28] They can do no other, as Lee's own life shows (<u>his</u> development of a

'social-science' approach stemmed directly out of the given which was the problem and problems of trying to teach efficiently and successfully New York school children; and his outbursts against theology express the inadequacy of his own theological and religious background in that it did not equip him to deal with the problem that confronted him). To argue this is not, as Lee suggests 'to basically vitiate any sort of objectivity or generalizability of science, and to reduce all science to a hopeless relativism',[29] rather it is to take seriously the nature of the 'given' as McIntyre has attempted to do, and to realise that any methodology must be continually refined as the object which it seeks to understand or explain becomes more clear. It is to take seriously the necessity of 'beginning where we are'. Hence also, whilst a sociologist may explore the relationship between social structures and language, the same sociologist must understand, argues Radcliffe, the limitations of the explanations that he proposes.' Hence, he uses the example of 'Hamlet' to show that that play is not merely a significant example of Elizabethan English, but a highly creative piece of writing which by metaphors and analogies poetically engenders new meaning in a way that a knowledge of Elizabethan English would not enable one to anticipate. To this extent theology 'is as inexplicable in sociological terms as those other activities that man practises when he attempts to explore and establish the meaning of his existence, whether through philosophy, poetry, drama or even sociology!' (To this extent, and perhaps to this extent only, theology and sociology are indeed 'ontically' different.)[30]

Radcliffe gives as an example of the way in which a sociological explanation of theology may be limited, Peter Berger's failure in 'The Sacred Canopy' to sustain the identification of meaning with order or nomos. In Berger's consideration of the Book of Job, Radcliffe argues that Berger is mistaken to hold that the book is 'an example of the legitizimation of suffering by the affirmation of a nomos which confirms the structures of society', but rather it demonstrates 'the way in which our nomoi break down in their attempts to explain'. Similarly, although the sociologist may liberate the theologian studying the Chalcedonian Definition through a study of the very different societies - Alexandrian and

Antiochean which came together to create the text - yet the 'creative interplay of two quite different theological languages' results in a document that is 'poetic, creative and deeply theological'.

All this demonstrates the frustratingly elusive nature of theology as a discipline, and it is not difficult to sympathise with Lee's irritation when theology is apparently misused in an attempt to gain control of a different discipline, be it philosophy, physics or even religious instruction. On the other hand, it is also clear that Lee's understanding of theology is inadequate. He holds that to be rigorous and valid theology must remain true to itself, that is true to its nature and to its parameters' [32] (although, as has already been noted (page 59), Lee himself recognises that theology has an 'erratic normative base'); but its nature and parameters are broader than Lee would like, and the distinctions he wishes to draw between religion and theology, and hermeneutic, hermeneutics and doctrine, are very hard to sustain.

In order to define the nature and parameters of theology, Lee appeals to the writings of several major theologians of the twentieth century. He insists that his investigations support his contention that theology is abstract and objective, a speculative science. He also states, quite bluntly, that there is no empirical evidence which indicates that personally lived faith is necessary for theologizing. Theology, according to Lee, is the 'act of theorizing about religious life'. Living out a religious life, he maintains, is a wholly different matter. [33]

Lee's position needs to be examined. Further consideration of the definitions of theology and its relationships to the life of faith as put forward by the writers Lee himself cites does not really support his conclusions. Amongst these writers are Barth, Brunner, Rahner, Schillebeeckx and Lonergan. In addition, Hans Küng offers some helpful insights:

Hans Küng - quotes the physicist and philosopher Freidrich von Weizsäcker's charge to theologians that 'they hold the sole truth which goes deeper than the truth of science which will be

convincing when it is lived.'[34] Küng's method is to 'start out each time as consistently as possible 'from below', from man's first questions, from human experience.' And again 'we are not discussing any rational arguments of pure reason. We are in fact seeking out 'the' modern man in the place where he is actually living in order to relate the knowledge of God to the things that stir him'.[35]

Küng recognises the necessary limitations of theology and warns against any falsely elitist claims. He admits to the wide range of disciplines from which theology must draw, and whilst stating that 'theology - no more than any other science - can take as its object all aspects of human life and action ... but for the theologian it is a question of ultimate interpretations, objective, values, ideals, norms, decisions, attitudes'.[36]

The decisive criterion is the Gospel, and the purpose of the enterprise is to provoke 'a recognition in trust of the truth of God as it discloses itself to him.'[37]

Theology for Küng then, is not dissimilar to Radcliffe's idea of 'encounter' and whilst it is never wholly irrational, subjective, or unjustifiable (in the worst or perjorative sense "poetic"), it is concerned with far more than cognition or the systematisation of that. It has a profoundly affective purpose.

Karl Rahner - Rahner directly addresses our subject in a section entitled The Prospects for Dogmatic Theology.'[38]

For Rahner, 'theology is an endeavour of the spirit and a science which has to be of service to its own time'. It is the failure of religious life and theology to form 'a truly living unity' which is the cause of the chill, lifeless theology which Rahner observes and attacks. Historical theology, for example, is criticised for being 'too much lecture-room disquisition and too little 'συνθεολογειν' In order for dogmatics to come to life it must do one thing says Rahner: 'devote itself to the reality in question with that passionate sympathy which this unique reality can demand more than any other, and without which it does not become truly

accessible'.[39]

'Every Catholic theology' says Rahner, must be a theology of both essence and existence, or putting it simply, it must both look for necessary and intrinsic structures and connections and it must report what in fact, without metaphysical or logical necessity took place in saving history.' Yet more simply still, Rahner declares that 'theology is thinking!'[40]

Karl Barth - argues that theology, if it is talked of as a 'science', cannot either function in the way that other sciences function, or can be judged by the standards of other sciences. In as far as theology is a science, there are three ways in which this is so: First, 'it is a human concern for truth' and so is subject to the 'secular' limitations inherent in any human concern. Second, the other sciences assume a 'quasi-religious certainty', which must be disputed by the Christian Church. And third, theology must not 'take the heathenism of the understanding of ('science')' by other disciplines: 'It believes in the forgiveness of sins, and not in the final reality of a heathen pantheon.'[41]

Barth's most succinct definition of 'dogmatics' is 'the self-examination of the the Christian Church in respect of the content of its distinctive talk about God'. This assumes, of course, that the 'time content' of this talk about God is knowable; which Barth asserts is the case through the revelation of in and by Jesus Christ to the Church (the being of which is Jesus Christ). This revelation is 'given' and 'complete in itself'. Every statement in dogmatics is a statement of faith and in faith: 'It knows even as it seeks. It teaches even as it learns.(It is tested by its 'conformity to Christ which is never clear and unambiguous, hence Barth calls for unwearied and honest persistence, so that the results of earlier dogmatic work are 'basically no more than signs of the coming of truth'. 'Dogmatics is possible only as a theologia crucis (it is not the task of repeating or transcribing 'truths of revelation already to hand)'. God reveals himself in Jesus Christ, in the Church.[42]

Necessarily 'dogmatics is a part of the work of human knowledge';

but Barth holds that 'over and above all this, it demands Christian faith ... (it) is a function of the Christian Church'. Indeed he stresses that 'there is no possibility of dogmatics at all outside The Church'. And again: 'dogmatics is quite impossible except as an act of faith, in the determination of human action by listening to Jesus Christ and as obedience to Him. Without faith it would be irrelevant and meaningless.' Dogmatics is therefore also to be understood as the real encounter between God and man, which is faith.' Barth is equally emphatic in pointing out that faith depends upon God's grace.

Barth supports this view with reference to the writings of Anselm, Luther and Melancthon, and warns against the human-centredness possible, for example, if too great a dependence is placed upon existentialism. There is a danger of engaging in 'a-theology' if the fear of the Lord is not recognised as the beginning of Wisdom.' This is not to say that categories such as 'existential thinking on the basis of a preceeding existential encounter' or indeed even faith are not prerequisites of dogmatic work, rather it is to stress the need for dependence, above all, on God's grace.[43]

Barth is quite open about the consequences of insisting upon this understanding of theology (and especially dogmatics) and the theological task. He admits that 'there always seems to be an element of presumption in it, and that the popular suspicion ... is only too well founded.' On the other hand, he concedes that this is an intractable problem. The theologian cannot (humanly speaking at least) deny the problem. The proper attitude for the theologian must be one of prayerfulness 'which can be: 'the expression of our human willing to do the will of God.'[44]

Much more is said by Barth and could properly be said about Barth (indeed much has been said); but I hope that the main points of his argument as shown above are, at least, both characteristic and central.

Emil Brunner - Brunner also regards Christian doctrine as 'a form of revelation', and at the root of formation of doctrine must be a concern to distinguish 'sound' from 'unsound' doctrine, in order to

express and to maintain the unity of the Church. Like Barth, Brunner places great emphasis on the centrality of Christ 'The revelation' (towards which doctrine points and which it seeks to express) is Jesus Christ Himself, not a doctrine about Jesus Christ.'

Furthermore, Brunner regards faith as encounter with Christ, and not 'submission to a doctrine about Him'. Indeed to do the latter is and has been, according to Brunner, to slip into belief in dogma which is 'Catholic error' against which the Reformation tradition emerged. [45]

Brunner quotes Barth with approval in that 'we do not possess Jesus Christ Himself otherwise than in and with the doctrine about Him'; But on the other hand Brunner is quite scathing elsewhere in his rejection of Barth's extremism in placing 'faith' in a very subordinate place in comparison with the revelation of God.' [45] Both Barth in one extreme, and Bultmann on the other 'bypass truth as encounter' argues Brunner. The very title of Brunner's book leaves us with very little doubt about his own position.

Brunner has a strong concern for the 'teaching ministry' of the Church, and in the introduction to The Christian Doctrine of God sets out his views on the 'position' of dogmatics and its relationship to this teaching function. The two are not the same, but are related in that teaching is the cause of dogmatics. 'Teaching and doctrine', are however, equated, and Dogmatics is the science of Christian teaching and doctrine.' [47] Dogmatics is also defined as an 'academic study' - a reflection on the Church's teaching.

There is then a tension between this view and the more open 'encounter' understanding of doctrine. Brunner is fully aware of this, and speaks of a 'curious dualism' in all dogmatic labour. This is an uncomfortable position, which cannot easily be resolved. [48]

Edward Schillebeeckx - In his book Christ - The Christian Experience in the Modern World, Schillebeeckx begins with some

helpful reflections on the nature of experience, revelation and truth, which are highly relevant to any discussion of the nature of theology, its norms and methods.

He argues that theology does not and must not be thought to begin either with scripture and tradition or with present experience. This is, he says, a 'false dilemma'. There is a gulf pushed between faith and experience, which is exceedingly damaging and which prevents a proper understanding of God's revelation.[49]

He makes the point that experience is always interpreted experience - new experience is always related to the knowledge that we have already gained. For the human being, experience has always a cognitive dimension: 'on the one hand thought makes new experience possible, while on the other, it is experience that makes new thinking necessary.'[50] This is also related to Wittgenstein's 'seeing - as', by which, he argues we see something, as we interpret it, and as McIntyre goes on to point out - the believer does not simply see the world as if it were the Creation of God; for them it is the creation of God.[51] Schillebeeckx also makes much the same point. But this also poses a problem as we experience in the act of interpreting without being able to draw a neat distinction between the element of experience and the element of interpretation', this also raises the question of the objectivity and subjectivity of what we call 'new experiences'.[52] Schillebeeckx later argues that if 'statements are to have meaning and truth, they must be rooted in human existence as experience'. It is therefore mistaken to contrast propositional or experiential understanding of, for example, revelation (although a 'propositional language' must always be kept in a right relationship to the experience with which it is associated'). Hence he states that 'the element of 'revelation' can thus be known in the experiential encounter with the reality of the world, in the interpretation of this experience as an intrinsic element in that encounter, and in the religious language of faith'.[53]

For this reason also, it is a 'false alternative' to pose the question that so many do in theology 'do we begin from scripture and tradition or from contemporary experience?'. The present,

states Schillebeeckx, is the dividing line between past and future, but cannot be an absolute starting point and our relationship to the future is only possible by means of our relationship to the past. Hence, Christian theology is concerned with an interrelationship; between an 'analysis of the present' on the one hand and an analysis of the historical experience of Christian Life and hermeneutical reflection on this life on the other.[54]

Bernard Lonergan - Lonergan argues that theology 'makes thematic what is already a part of Christian Living'; and that the various functional specialities of theology combine and interact in order to meet the needs of Christian Living - 'actuating its potentialities, and taking advantage of the opportunities offered by world history'.[55]

One of the (eight) functional specialities outlined by Lonergan is that of 'communications', which, he considers, is essential if theology is to bear fruit. Indeed he stresses that engagement with the other seven specialities (research, interpretation, history, dialectic, foundations, doctrines and systematics) is in vain if communication does not take place. He believes that the communication of the Christian message is to 'lead another to share in one's cognitive, constitutive, effective meaning'.[56]

Lee picks up this point (and directly quotes it) but contends that Lonergan here does not include religious instruction within the communicative task of theology. Rather, he continues, this is an example of theology communicating theology. He proceeds to argue firstly that it is possible to 'theologize and not communicate the efforts of this work to others' (an exercise which Lonergan would consider to be wholly vacuous); and secondly, that as the 'nature and structure of communication are ontically different from that of theologizing - this fact explains why there is no necessary correlation between the quality of a theologian's theology and the effectiveness by which he communicates this theology'.[57] Lonergan diagrees. He insists that the message about which he speaks must be known, lived and practised: 'one cannot lead another to share what one oneself does not possess'. When, in the Church, the gospel is preached, 'conjoined with the inner gift of God's

love; the result is Christian witness, fellowship and service. He recognises that the cognitive meaning of that message is on its own, inadequate; but theology is concerned, just as much, with constitutive and effective meaning.[58]

These few examples do seem to bear out the validity of McIntyre's analysis. Theology does depend on a wide range of norms and criteria and is a multi-disciplinary activity. No one definition is adequate, although those gathered around the idea of encounter seem to be more widely accepted than those which seek to limit a definition to a fairly restricted, solely cognitive, analytic, academic enterprise. Certainly Lee's definition does not reflect the present scene (in general). He wishes, perhaps for reasons of his own life-story, to cling to an outdated and particular view of theology, which most theologians recognise as being quite inadequate. The very nature of the theological norms and givens illustrated above make this very clear. Lee, unfortunately, is still fighting a battle which others have long since forgotten, and therefore sets up an 'Aunt-Sally' which is not only inappropriate, but is also damaging in that it detracts from the highly perceptive and useful advocacy of the 'social-science approach' as a valid model of religious instruction (to concede to Lee's own terms). No-one still using 'theological' language and insisting upon 'theological' objectives in religious instruction necessarily understands theology as Lee wants us to. In this sense 'theological imperialism' is not what Lee sees it to be.

Lee's narrow view of theology is such that he is able to contend that there is no necessary connection between lived religion and theology. He has to admit that theology is impossible without some faith, some religion, but this need not be owned and lived by the theologian. This view does not seem to be shared by the major thinkers discussed here. Not only do they make much of the necessity of, for them, a personal faith before they could engage in theology, but they are far more confident than Lee is in the power of theology, as they understand it, to effect the learning of religion and not just of theology.

Having said this, the language systems which theology cannot avoid

using fail to express or communicate fully the experience of faith, or the encounter between the gospel and the world which is the ground of theology. And if Radcliffe is right to argue that theology is more concerned with meaning than with explanation, the limitations of language to serve this can be frustrating indeed.

It is, perhaps, this limitation and frustration which allows some observers, like Lee, to suggest that theology is objective and scientific; but language is not the only medium of meaning. Lee himself recognises the power of creative art and notes not only the close bond between religion and the arts, but also the ability of art, in the religious context, to communicate meaning.[59]

It is now appropriate to turn to one aspect of art, that of music, to explore the way in which it may communicate meaning and how this may relate to the learning of Christian truth.

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CHAPTER FOUR

MUSIC, THEOLOGY AND MEANING

Radcliffe has argued that a valid focus of the encounter which we call theology between the Gospel and the World is music. Lee too has recognised the power which music exercises to take someone 'out of himself' and to plunge him into a world which may categorize as divine'. What then is the nature of this locus? How does music exercise this extraordinary power to transport someone into the realm of the divine? What part may music play (if any) in enabling adult lay Christians to 'do theology' or to 'learn Christian doctrine'? Indeed what light does music shed on the nature and truth of theology itself?

In this chapter it is argued that the act of performing and listening to music provides an illuminating analogy for the way in which theology is communicated. It is also shown that music has the capacity, of its own right, to communicate truth, in a way complementary to traditional theological formulations and which language fails to express adequately.

Various philosophical descriptions of music are discussed. Whether or not music is mimesis (Adorno) or poiesis (Steiner), or functions by means of catharsis (Aristotle) or sympathy (Plato) it is clear that its function and meaning change in differing contexts of performance and reception. This not to say that music is an unreliable, unsteady symbol or metaphor for human emotion or religious truth; rather it is argued that a proper ambiguity exists which human passions, religious truth and music all share. The 'logic' of music is both subjective and objective and such is also the logic of religion. To be understood, both the arts and religion have to be understood 'in performance' and by analogy.

The emotional power of music has been recognised and recorded as long as the means of recording history has been available to the human race. Some music possesses a power which transcends divides of class and culture, and yet music is also one of the most vivid aids to the description of class and culture. But, like theology, there is no general agreement about the way in which music communicates and even less about what it communicates. It is just

not possible to detect a simple or single theory of musical communication. This does not, however, mean that an attempt to find such is futile, for the fact remains that music is highly communicative and profoundly expressive.

For Theodor Adorno, music is, or should be, mimetic - a 're-presentation' of the social world. He praised the music of Beethoven and of Schoenberg, the former for what he saw as the clearest possible embodiment of practical reason in sensuous terms and the latter for his eschewing of the false consolation which he considered had reached its climax in Wagner and which ultimately fed fascism by its surrender to forces beyond human control (dream-like escapism, acceptance of cruel fate as necessity, lack of the Beethovenian principle of development rather the reliance on infinite melody etc.).[1] Adorno's Marxist analysis also railed against the 'culture industry' which regards music as a commodity to be bought and sold. So also, but from a very different perspective, George Steiner denounces the 'pornography of insignificance' which is produced solely for monetary and propagandistic ends.[2] But Steiner cautions against the Marxist concern for attempting to align too closely historical context, with artistic product. It is not that 'reciprocal interpenetration' is absent, just that its chemistry is too complex and varied, even too unpredicatable to be properly understood and systematized. Mimesis is an insufficient description of music for Steiner. The mimetic principle applies 'only to the more trivial, programmatic modes of music'. The mimetic principle otherwise leaves 'too much unanswered'. Steiner prefers to see great art as poiesis, or the creation of a counter-world 'mundus contra mundum'. There is in great art an irreducible 'otherness' which might be described as 'transcendent'. This transcendence, argues Steiner, is ultimately theological. Indeed 'music brings to our daily lives an immediate encounter with a logic of sense other than that of reason. Hence, Steiner suggests that questions of meaning in art, even 'What is poetry, music, art?' How can they not be?' 'How do they act upon us and how do we interpret their action?' are, ultimately, theological questions.'[3]

The experience of 'otherness' seems to be a common factor in

artistic composition, however the artist chooses to describe the basis of that otherness. Steiner quotes D.H. Lawrence: 'I always feel as if I stood naked for the fire of Almighty God to go through me - and it's rather an awful feeling'; and also Yeats: 'No man can create as did Shakespeare, Homer, Sophocles, who does not believe with all his blood and nerve, that man's soul is immortal'.[4] There are many other examples, Michael Tippett for example, who would not claim to be (at least conventionally) religious: 'This process of imagination is outside our control. It lives on, rather than we live it'. The world of the imagination for Tippett is expressed in Schoenberg's experience. 'I feel an air from another planet'.[5]

If music may point to something 'other' and the act of composition includes an unpredictable element which many describe as 'inspiration', it is the communication of this experience which must be examined carefully. As Steiner asks 'How does music act upon us and how do we interpret its action?'.

The 'meaning' of music is much bound in the manner of its reception. It must be performed and the performance received. Today there is more opportunity to hear music, and to listen to it, indeed music is difficult to avoid. The function of much of it is to bolster a materialistic culture. 'Music while you work' enables people to carry on with a task that would otherwise be intolerable and music in the supermarket or television advert gently (often) but insistently subverts one's free will and induces one to spend money that is beyond prudence. As has been noted, this commercialisation of art is attacked by analysts as diverse as Adorno and Steiner. It is even held to be unethical.

A fascinating study of the impact of recorded music on culture has been provided by Evan Eisenberg, with some surprising conclusions.[6] Eisenberg does not dismiss the 'culture industry' but examines its nature and effects from a sympathetic but critical perspective. He argues that in traditional societies music is part of life, and closely linked with ritual. In the West however, since about the eighteenth century, this link has been severed, and yet with the advent of recording, music has again entered many

aspects of life. The second coming of music is, however, rather different in its social function. Used to evoke a mood or aid working efficiency, music sometimes fails to impose a common time on those who listen as it does during ritual or the invented ritual of the concert. Music has also become a convenience: Now the 'Symphony of a Thousand' could play to an audience of one. Now a man could hear nocturnes at breakfast, vespers at noon and the Easter Oratorio on Chanukah. He could do his morning crossword to 'One O'Clock Jump' and make love right through the 'St. Matthew Passion'!.[7] On the other hand, although records fracture society, radio can unite it. It is for this reason that totalitarian states, be they the Soviet Union of the 1920s, Nazi Germany of the 30s, or the Ayatolla's Iran of the 80s have sought to ban music which might be thought to be subversive (Eisenberg notes the ironic fact that Hitler was incensed to learn that 'Ja, wir haben keine Bananen heute" - 'Yes, we have no bananas today' - 'the smash hit of 1923 and a personal favourite, had been written by Jews').[8]

Many such societies, including Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany, have also deliberately looked to music and to music on the radio, to provide a very particular form of social cohesion.

The need for public ritual and for a public 'architecture of time' that music in particular makes possible is now countered by the freedom to control the use of music in our lives, with the possible result predicted by the Canadian pianist Glenn Gould, who abandoned the concert platform in favour of the recording studios, that when music thus becomes more fully a part of our lives, it will change them much more profoundly.[9]

What kind of effect takes place? Eisenberg discusses the question of whether music works by sympathy or by homeopathy. Plato who plumped for sympathy explained this by suggesting that music directly impresses its character on the listener. It also has a distinctly ethical role to play: 'Education in music is most sovereign, because more than anything else rhythm and harmony find their way to the inmost soul and take strongest hold upon it, bringing with them and imparting grace, if one is rightly trained,

and otherwise the contrary'. Because music can exercise such power, Plato demonstrated less than complete approval of it. Aristotle on the other hand favoured homeopathy. Whilst agreeing that music may have a moral function, he argued that it provides intellectual pleasure, relaxation and 'catharsis' (a synonym for homeopathy). Eisenberg makes much of the property of catharsis: 'Catharsis can refer to the purification of the soul, the evacuation of the bowels, the clearing of a forest, the pruning of a tree, the winnowing of grain, menstruation, the cleansing of food, the cleansing of the universe by primordial fire, or the explanation - cleaning up - of a concept like this one'. [10]

Neither sympathy or catharsis provides quite sufficient explanation of the effects of music. Catharsis ('When we're blue, we listen to the blues') can be overdone, and our mood of melancholy (for example) be prolonged. Sometimes, Eisenberg points out, we just want to wallow; but here again music may enable us to 'feel good about feeling bad' (Eisenberg's description of Brahms - 'the great consoler'). [11] Much popular music is emotionally stable - be it expressive of good or bad emotions, but 'concert music' tends to develop emotionally, hence a symphony may lead us through moods. Hence Bernard Shaw suggested to Edward Elgar a financial symphony - 'Allegro: Impending Disaster, Lento maestoso: Stony Broke, Scherzo: Light Heart and Empty Pocket, Allegro con Brio: Clouds Clearing.' Eisenberg points out that emotional development of this kind need not, of course, always move to a happy ending; but it does provide the composer and listener with the opportunity to explore an experience and to work through it at a level not available to other modes of artistic expression. [12] A particularly poignant example of this is Suk's Asrael Symphony, in which the composer is able to express his grief both at the loss of his father-in-law Dvorak, but also (as he was working on the symphony) the still more devasting death of his wife Otilie. He does not find peace in this work, but the very composition of it moves through catharsis to acceptance.

It is easy to see how music evokes or sustains moods, but this is not a predictable process. Steiner likens it to the ancient 'buried meaning of the fable of the Sirens'. [13] Eisenstein notes the way in which: 'Swing, once subversive, is now so acceptable to

Platonists that it serves as elevator music'. He suggests that if music is too well understood it can fail in its cathartic function, instead it will sedate us, as in the elevator; or if it is beyond understanding, it will only serve to annoy us.[14]

But to what does music point us? There are many examples of people interpreting music in quite contradictory ways. The context of performance and of listening seems to be critical (and by context this must include the person and story of the performer and listener). Eisenberg quotes the nineteenth century conductor and critic Eduard Hanslick's argument that music may express 'a certain class of ideas' quite adequately, but it fails to describe other concepts fully. Ideas which Hanslick considered to be consistent to the 'sphere of music proper' include motion and ratio, intensity waxing and diminishing; and ingeniously complex and simple progression. Love, on the other hand cannot be adequately portrayed. All that can be expressed is 'those qualifying adjectives' such as gentle, impetuous or buoyant, because 'the feeling of love cannot be conceived apart from the image of the beloved being ...'.[15]

Music, argues Eisenberg is 'ambiguous not because it's vague, but because it is uncannily precise', in the sense that many opposed emotions may have the same dynamic in that they 'can actually <u>feel</u> frighteningly alike' (sorrow and joy for example).[16]

Susanne Langer argues that although music exhibits pure form as its very essence in that it has no obvious, literal content; nevertheless it holds a special power to evoke an emotional response, and she argues that the 'peculiar fact' that some piece of music seem to bear contradictory interpretations is one of the apparent paradoxes of musical expression, and yet 'some sad and happy conditions may have a very similar morphology' of feeling. For Langer, music is a language of emotion (even if it does not function quite like a language in that its forms lack a fixed connotation - they are strictly untranslatable), a language which is essentially symbolic.[17] The sense in which this is so described by Wagner: 'What music expresses, is eternal, infinite and ideal; it does not express the passion, love, or longing of

such-and-such an individual on such-and-such an occasion, but passion, love or longing in itself, and this it presents in that unlimited variety of motivations, which is the exclusive and particular characteristic of music, foreign and inexpressible to any other language". In other words, says Langer, music is the 'formulation and representation of emotions, moods, mental tensions and resolutions'. It is logical expression rather than self-expression.[18] Langer quotes a formidable array of psychological and musicological research to back her contention that 'there are certain aspects of the so-called 'inner life' - physical or mental - which have formal properties similiar to those of music - patterns of motion and rest, of tension and release, of agreement and disagreement, preparation, fulfilment, excitation, sudden change, etc.' So that there seems to be a connotative relationship between music and subjective experience. She proceeds to argue that music is able to express or articulate forms of experience which language fails to express adequately: 'Because the forms of human feeling are much more congruent with musical forms than with the forms of language, music can reveal the nature of feelings with a detail and truth that language cannot approach'.[19] The symbols of music are however inexhaustible - 'though clearly a symbolic form (it) is an unconsummated symbol'. It may be grasped or felt, but not defined. It possesses an ambivalence of content which language cannot contain. It can contain, and thus reveal, a 'transient play of contents'.[20]

Eisenberg, whilst generally approving Langer's thesis, criticises her for seeming to make the musician 'a species of psychologist'. The musician, he holds, is much more than this. Music too, may represent more than emotion (as Adorno, and Steiner would, in different ways, also declare). Eisenberg contends that Langer distinguishes too rigidly between the 'experience of emotions and the exposition of our knowledge about them. In fact our emotions and our knowledge of the emotions interpenetrate, so that it is impossible to say which is manifesting itself in a given poem, prelude or grunt'.[21] It is worth noting, in passing, that Solomon also wisely corrects the shortsighted view of our emotions as irrational forces beyond our control. He argues, most persuasively, that our emotions 'define us, ourselves, and the

world we live in'. [22]

Steiner concludes his study by arguing that 'we cannot devise a systematic theory of meaning in any but a metaphoric sense; and that we must be honest in admitting that we do not know exactly how aesthetic reception works. Aesthetic theory ultimately encounters an irreducible otherness. On the other hand, he claims that music 'means' it is both cerebral and carnal, and virtually inseparable from religious feeling. 'Music communicates to our senses and to our reflection what little we can grasp of the naked wonder of life. I take music to be the naming of the naming of life. It is in this way that music brings to our daily lives an immediate encounter with a logic of sense other than that of reason'. [22]

Both music and theology share this concern for a logic of sense other than that of reason, although both make use of reason in their form and construction. Both indeed are concerned with the expression or investigation of meaning, as for example, Radcliffe illustrates with respect to 'Hamlet' (see above page 67). Both point to an understanding of or encounter with truth which lies beyond the expressibility of language. This last point has been argued by Donald MacKinnon, in a paper which originally formed an interval talk during a broadcast performance of Schoenberg's opera 'Moses and Aaron'. MacKinnon suggests that a central question for theology must be 'what sort of silence ...best conveys the ultimacy of love'. [24] But silence and music are also closely related as Eisenberg argues quoting in defence Charles Lamb, Thoreau and John Cage. [25]

Another function of art, by provoking an encounter with the other, is to bring us up short and to make us realise that something else may be the case. The same, argues David Tracy, is true of the 'religious classic' or at least the recognition that 'something else may be the case' follows the initial impact of the artistic or religious experience. This artistic experience is like a religious experience in that 'we find ourselves in the grip of an event, a happening, a disclosure, a claim to truth which we cannot deny and can only eliminate by our later controlled reflexion'. [26] The religious classic leads to a heightened awareness of that which

Rudolf Otto termed the 'numinous' in that the interpreter is likely to be 'struck dumb with amazement'.[27] What is the religious classic? Tracy admits that it is far from easy to isolate 'the religious', and the 'capacity to experience revelation' is not the classic - the classic is the interpretation of it. He suggests that authors of religious classics include Job, Amos, Paul, Luther, Loyola, John of the Cross, Calvin or Wesley. Every classic, be it a classic of art or a religious classic (and it is clear that the two may be one and the same), 'is a sign, a testimony scattered in the cultural world, calling for a reader who will render an interpretation faithful to the testimony itself' (and one such mode of interpretation is systematic theology).[28]

Classics of any sort, religious or not in their explicit subject matter involve an openness of interpretation. They are 'instrinsically unsteady' in that meaning cannot be expressed with the same adequacy outside the form. Both seek to express 'the ambiguous and complex actuality of a lived existence of participation and non-participation in a reality greater than the self'. On the other hand, Tracy argues that not all religious classics need be literary classics, St. Mark's Gospel for example. The 'authentically religious impetus' involves a 'letting go' because one has experienced 'some disclosure of the whole which cannot be denied as from the whole'.[29]

Steiner understands the 'open-endedness' of art in a very similar way to Tracy. This 'unaccountability' he argues, 'is the essence of freedom' and the 'best access we have to the 'otherness', to the freedom, at once bracing and abyssal, of life itself'.[30]

The necessity for imagination in order to understand or glimpse meaning in a religious or aesthetic classic is clear, as Ratcliffe's example of 'Hamlet' or Tracy's example of St. Mark's Gospel shows. This point has also been argued most persuasively elsewhere by Mary Warnock. She argues that religion is concerned with the interpretation of meanings contained in symbols, tokens and the Christian story. In the story it is the aesthetic imagination which is at work, which is, at its most exalted, the passing on of a vision by means of non-literal language.[31] If it

is correct that the truth to which both religion and the arts point may only be grasped by means of the imaginative, non-literal, interpretation of meanings in this way. And if the claim that such truth is bound by a logic other than that of soley objective reasoning, it would appear that it is essential for a practical programme of adult lay religious education, and especially one concerned to explore 'Christian doctrine', should go all out to foster in adults a sense of wonder and amazement, in short it should seek to foster that 'analogical imagination' which Tracy holds to be of such central importance in the construction of any contemporary systematic theology. This argument is that, in a pluralistic society, the theologian always needs to recognise the insights which arise from outside traditional theological source material.) He insists that 'we understand one another, if at all, only through analogy'.[32] Many wise Christians have long understood this. One very vivid example is that of Hugh Maycock, one-time Principal of Pusey House Oxford, who is described by Kenneth Leech. Leech retells that 'amazement' and 'astonishment' were amongst Maycock's most frequently used words, and that he held astonishment to be the basis of all religion. Leech concludes that 'In our concern that our theology should not become abstract and dry, a regular and rich diet of novels, poetry and music will be of the greatest help'.[33]

Maycock is supposed to have shown little interest in systematic theologians who never read novels nor listened to Mozart, but here a word of caution is necessary. The aesthetic classic need not always be 'high-brow'. Popular music which expresses emotional stability may well serve to stimulate the analogical imagination, but with such music, art or literature there lurks the danger of a serious limiting of imagination; and if such material is used in worship, it may impose a totalitarian ethic on the worshippers. This is surely the hazard inherent in the simple, jolly, repetitive choruses which have gained such wide currency in the churches of Britain today. Chants such as that used by the ecumenical community of Taize in Burgundy may foster a common architecture of time which is appropriate to the ritual of worship, but their power is considerable and must be recognised for what it really is by those who would seek to use them.

Exposure to the arts as an essential element in fostering an analogical imagination is not, of course, confined to the arts in public worship or even to explicity 'religious' art. Indeed, it is almost impossible to distinguish between 'religious' and 'non-religious' art. Only extremes of one or the other are readily recognised. Whether the intention of the artist is specifically religious or not (for example Bruckner's Ninth Symphony dedicated 'Dem lieben Gott', or perhaps, Delius' humanistic 'A Mass of Life') its interpretation depends on other factors, primarily, during performance, that of the 'story' of the listener. It is, therefore, the analogy with the Christian's distinctively Christian story which gives insight to the believer into his or her faith. Clearly it will not do to say that the aesthetic experience alone is a sufficient locus of encounter with the truth to which religion points, it is as Radcliffe maintains, an encounter which also includes the Gospel which is needed. The Gospel in this instance is contained in the Christian's life story, which, because it <u>is</u> a story is best understood through analogy.

The aesthetic experience provides an important illustration of the need to insist that theology must be a multi-disciplinary activity, depending upon a very wide range of norms and criteria. In some sense too, it provides an argument, contra Lee, which suggests that artistic or theological criteria are a proper basic for the enterprise of religious education, if it is part of religion to explore a mystery which is replete with ambiguity; or more explicitly, as Tracy argues, a Christian story which has at its centre the Christ event - the disclosure of the 'not-yet, yet even now reality of the God who comes and will come in Jesus Christ'.[34]

NOTES

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3. Ibid pp. 168-227
4. Ibid p. 228
5. Tippett, M. (1974) Moving into Aquarius, London, pp. 14-18
6. Eisenberg, E. (1987) The Recording Angel: Music, Records and Culture from Aristotle to Zappa, New York
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9. Ibid p. 83
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19. Ibid p. 235
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23. Steiner (1989) pp. 214-8
24. MacKinnon DM (1976) 'The Inexpressibility of God' in Theology Vol. LXXXIX. No 670 July 1976
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29. Ibid pp. 200-201
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31. Warnock, Mary (1980) 'Imagination - Aesthetic and Religious' in Theology Vol. LXXXIII. No 696 November 1980 pp. 403-9

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CHAPTER FIVE

EVALUATION

If one of the main aims of encouraging people to engage in the process of theology is to foster their sense of wonder and amazement and to release that capacity of 'analogical imagination', in which music may play a significant part, then it is necessary to ask what kind of evaluation or assessment is appropriate to this. To what extent is Lee right to demand 'scientific' or 'objective' evaluation and can it be achieved anyway?

Evaluation is central to Lee's thesis. The advantage of the Social Science Approach is that it does not rely upon the Holy Spirit 'zapping' the learner in an apparantly unpredictable manner, rather it serves to emphasize that religion can be taught using the insights of teaching and learning from other fields and that the whole process is controllable and testable. It is no hit and miss affair.

For Lee the acid test is the achievement of specific behavioural outcomes, outcomes which have been carefully planned and expected. Moreover the process of evaluation must be both 'scientific' and 'objective'.[1] When, however, he discusses 'life-style' content it becomes difficult to envisage just what kind of 'scientific' or 'objective' evaluation is possible. 'Life-style' implies an integrity of response, uniting all the many types of content Lee describes. This, though, is an extremely subtle melange, and one which is made afresh for each individual. In as far as Lee admits that different people must adopt subtly different life-styles, then the 'scientific' or 'objective' assessment of specific behavioural outcomes must be a somewhat limited enterprise.

Westerhoff's approach, which admits that assessment may only be employed periodically, is perhaps more realistic if (in Randolph Crump Miller's words) 'the real question is whether the things happening in individual lives as a result of the educational program are consistent with the Christian truth'.[2]

The function of evaluation in human life is however, broader than that of its particular education application. It is not always

systematic or organised, but is, according to Skager, a process which is an 'integral part of the daily lives of individuals in all societies', 'a fundamental regulating mechanism' which implies three things: first 'an initial experience of 'finding out' which, secondly is 'interpreted by means of standards, rules, or principles', in order to arrive thirdly, 'at a judgement of goodness or desirability'. [3]

Evaluation is essential to the proper conduct of education, but it is not synonymous with assessment. In a recent and useful study of assessment in education, Robin Lloyd Jones and Elizabeth Bray define these terms and describe their relationship.

'Evaluation includes the process of identifying what are the actual educational outcomes, and comparing them with the anticipated outcomes, but goes beyond this. For evaluation involves judgements about the nature, value and desirability of educational outcomes'.

'Assessment ... covers any of the situations in which some aspect of a pupil's education is, in some sense, measured, whether this measurement is by a teacher, an examiner or indeed the pupil himself or herself. Broadly speaking, assessment is concerned with how well the pupil has done, evaluation with whether it was worth doing in the first place. Evaluation cannot take place without assessment; and assessment which is completely divorced from evaluation is a half-measure'. They also proceed to draw a distinction between assessment, and the practice of testing or examination, which is 'set up for the purpose of making an assessment'. [4]

Both assessment and evaluation can only take place meaningfully in conjunction with a well-defined educational objective. Trevor Kerry has stated that 'It is not possible to evaluate Religious Education until one decides what constitutes Religious Education'. [5] This observation will be explored more fully later; but it is worth noting at this point that assessment and evaluation need to be consistent with the whole teaching-learning act if they are to have any real meaning. More simply, evaluation is only possible within the consciously expressed aims of any educational

act. This is not a contradiction of the broadest, day in-day out function of the role of evaluation described above, because in that instance, the evaluation that takes place is also limited by the particular context of each action (it would not be possible to evaluate a preacher's skill as a pastoral minister just by listening to her sermons).

This being recognised, it can also be seen that particular objectives will only be able to be assessed, and thereafter evaluated, in particular, limited ways. For example, there is a commonly-made distinction between educational objectives of a cognitive and of an affective nature; and whilst the former may be assessed with a reasonable degree of confidence, the latter are notoriously difficult to assess satisfactorily. Bloom et al. claim that all educational objectives can be identified as belonging to three major "domains" - the cognitive, the affective and the psychomotor.

They describe them as follows -

1) Cognitive: Objectives which emphasize remembering or reproducing something which has presumably been learned, as well as objectives which involve the solving of some intellective task for which the individual has to determine the essential problem and then reorder material or combine it with ideas, methods, or procedures previously learned. Cognitive objectives vary from simple recall of material learned to highly original and creative ways of combining and synthesizing new ideas and materials. We found that the largest proportion of educational objectives fell into this domain.

2) Affective: Objectives which emphasize a feeling tone, an emotion, or a degree of acceptance or rejection. Affective objectives vary from simple attention to selected phenomena to complex but internally consistent qualities of character and conscience. We found a large number of such objectives in the literature expressed as interests, attitudes, appreciations, values and emotional sets or biases.

3) Psychomotor: Objectives which emphasize some muscular or motor skill, some manipulation of material or objects, or some act which requires a neuromuscular co-ordination. When found, they were most frequently related to handwriting and speech and to physical education, trade, and technical courses'. [6]

However, these authors also go on to point out that modern behavioural science indicates that 'each person responds as a 'total organism' or 'whole being', whenever he does respond'. Thus, any attempt to restrict education to any one of the three domains may be seriously defective. Instead it is much more helpful to try to understand how and where the various categories relate to one another and their effects upon one another. Of particular interest to all those involved in Religious Education is their suggestion that outcomes in the cognitive domain are regarded as public matters (so that names of the successful may be printed in newspapers), whereas outcomes in the affective domain are popularly thought to be a private concern (attitudes to God, family and home - 'private' matters which are (almost) universally respected as such). They also suggest that this division between cognitive and effective behaviours 'is deeply rooted in the Judaeo-Christian religion'. Moreover, with the adoption of this view by the traditions of Western democratic society, ie the privatisation of religion, there is a still further identification to be made, in that they see cognitive behaviour as being fostered by education; but indoctrination is the result of the teaching of affective as well as cognitive behaviour. [7] However, as John Hull has argued, these mutually exclusive activities are on either end of a common scale, between which there are many places held with integrity, not least by those seeking to undertake religious instruction. [8]

The nature of the relationship between affective and cognitive learning is examined in some depth by Bloom et al. They suggest ways in which cognitive objectives may be employed as means to affective goals and vice-versa; and that, as affective objectives always appear to contain cognitive components, so it is proper to seek affective and cognitive goals simultaneously. This synthesis parallels that between experiencing and knowing. Experience alone

is meaningless without reflection upon it, and no knowledge is possible without first experiencing. Hence, it is pointless and dishonest to pretend that experiential and didactic modes of education are distinct and may be separated one from the other.[9]

One example of the relationship between cognitive and affective objectives is provided by Festinger's theory of 'cognitive dissonance', which is discussed both by Bloom et al and by John Hull. Underlying this is the basic human need to feel comfortable about one's view of life - what we know and what we feel needs to be in some kind of agreement. The theory of cognitive dissonance tries to explain what happens when this coherence is threatened or broken. Hull explains: 'Conflicting beliefs will tend to cancel each other out or to devour each other, as in the case of the anti-semitic white Christian who was nonplussed to discover that Jesus was an Asiatic Jew. Here we find a little group of cognitions: 1) Jesus was a wonderful man 2) Jews are rather a miserable lot 3) Jesus was a Jew, and 4) I myself am a sensible person with responsible and well considered views. Something has to give'. Hull suggests that for religious believers there are at least three kinds of cognitive dissonance. These are - 1) 'Dissonance within the belief system itself' (such as the shattered complacency of some believers 'who discover an apparent discrepancy in the Bible or learn that the vicar is having an affair with the organist's wife'. 2) Conflict between alternative belief systems (such as the equally insistent belief of some Christians and some Muslims that the Bible or the Q'ran is the unique word of God). 3) Cognitive dissonance may be experienced when someone's beliefs held to be true and important, are regarded as being rather childish or unimportant by significant parts of society. According to Hull, the power of cognitive dissonance and its educational significance was recognised by both Socrates and by Jesus. For example in Jesus' stories of the Unjust Judge and the Good Samaritan; but Hull also warns that adults are highly sensitive and vulnerable to this kind of religious education and' it is worth remembering that both Socrates and Jesus were executed' (!)[10]

A more helpful distinction than that of between cognitive and

affective goals is offered by Skager in his definition of Specified and Open-Ended Goals, both of which may relate to both the affective and cognitive domains. 'Specified goals refer to domains of knowledge and skill for which states that are equivalent to full attainment or mastery can be defined and recognised in the performance of learners.' Open goals, on the other hand, are defined by Skager as 'ideal states that provide direction to efforts rather than inform that a goal has been reached.' In assessment of open-ended goals, a terminal state cannot be specified, nor all the possible outcomes predicted, but they may be otherwise recognised, and to some extent measured. Skager indicates how this might be possible with reference to three main types of open-ended goals which are - a) the 'situational' b) 'the structural' and c) 'the learner'.

In a), the situational, the learning situation is structured so that a diversity of outcomes may ensue, some of which may well be highly unusual, and others even unique. Evaluation here might 'provide information concerning how closely the actual learning situation corresponds to the ideal situation as defined in the teaching model', or 'whether or not a total effort has been successful in the special sense of whether the desired conditions and processes have been established and maintained over time'. (This account also reveals a commonly held distinction in assessment, between formative and summative assessment. Formative assessment is integral with the learning, and takes place throughout the learning ... Summative assessment, however, is concerned with the final summing up.)

In b), the structural type of open goal, evaluation whether it is formative or summative, seeks to measure the extent to which the learning situation is 'consistent with the principles that are to operate in the learning situation itself'.

Finally, in c), which concentrates on the place of the learner, evaluation is much more difficult since it relies on the learner to chose what is to be learned and how that is to be assessed. Learning here is to a large extent self-directed and self-evaluated. In this instance the teacher's role is that of a

guide or facilitator; but Skager also warns that a 'failure to provide learners with feedback on the quality of their performance is to deprive them of meaning.[11]

Both Bloom and Hull emphasize the importance for each adult of assimilating and incorporating new ideas and experiences, and the process by which this takes place. Whether it is called 'personal construct theory'[12] or the process of 'internalisation'[13], its function is very similar. It is the process by which new ideas and experiences are integrated into our existing world-view - a world view which is unique for every individual. It further serves to emphasize the importance of self-direction and self-evaluation in adult learning.

It also serves to re-inforce Lee's contention that, in some sense, 'Life-Style' as the outcome of the Religious Instruction Act cannot be anything other than personal and, in detail at least, infinitely variable.

Skager's open-ended goals are, perhaps, best seen as aims, such as that of fostering a lively analogical imagination, which may be contested, but only within any particular value-system. The aim of 'doing doctrine' or 'doing theology' or 'religious instruction', cannot therefore but avoid being theologically bound. On the other hand, specified goals, much more readily assessable, are akin to objectives, which can, as Lee rightly insists, be measured carefully (although to claim that this process is either or both 'scientific' and 'objective' is unrealistic).

Lee, in his concentration on specified goals and assessment, rather than on evaluation, is guilty, according to Lloyd Jones and Bray's views, of a half-measure. The 'Social Science Approach' which he preaches includes a summative aim of facilitating religious life-style, but this is not clearly related to ultimate values; rather Lee concentrates his attention on a myriad of proximate, formatively assessed, specified goals and avoids any summative assessment or evaluation. Only in as far as Lee concedes that life-style outcomes must be personal and almost infinitely variable does he come close to sharing Westerhoff's beliefs about the proper openness of catechesis. For Westerhoff, assessment is far less

important even than for Lee. Lee talks about evaluation, but really describes assessment, Westerhoff is suspicious of both. Hofinger, on the other other hand, remains unconcerned about both. The aim of his enterprise is to be Christ-like, which, by human means is impossible. All that Hofinger can insist upon is the faithfulness of the teacher to Christ and to the tradition about Christ and his church contained in the catalogue/catechesis which he outlines. Some form of cognitive assessment of certain specified goals, is, of course, perfectly consistent with this approach; but the real aim of becoming Christ-like is attained, imperfectly and through factors out of the teacher's control. Hofinger argues that affective outcomes should proceed from the learning of cognitive content, and would insist that the mode of teaching is not inconsistent with the content of what is taught, but, unlike both Westerhoff and Lee, he is concerned more with the teacher than with the learner.

Evaluation is concerned with ultimate values and can only take place within the framework of those values. It can never be truly objective; but it ought always to be reasonable. Its proper openness does not mean that it has no points of reference. This is true not only of religions, but also of aesthetic values. Because the givens on which both are founded are diverse, it is most important to describe them as accurately and honestly as possible. It is not enough, for example, to claim that art is 'meaningful', or indeed any particular work of art. Such a claim must be supported by an explication of the factors involved in the creative encounter which marks the conception, performance and reception of that work. The same is true of the creative encounter between the Gospel and the world which is Christian theology.

In the particular context of adult education, Lee is surely right to pay so much attention to the standpoint of the learner. Each learner must be helped to recognise what has been learned in the creative encounter of theology, an encounter greatly enriched by analogy. Not only must learning be recognised, but just as important is the need to assess how this has been affected by the learner's story and, of course, the extent to which that story is now altered. All this must also be related to the ultimate values to which theological education aspires, a task which is the responsibility of the Church.

As no single life-story or life-style will be identical with any other, it is the Church's responsibility in the assessment and evaluation of its adult educational programmes to ensure that a proper balance is maintained between genuine open-endedness and an acceptance of any outcome that results.

NOTES

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2. Quoted in Burgess (1975) p. 121
3. Skager, R. (1978) Lifelong Education and Evaluation Practice, Hamburg
4. Lloyd Jones, R. and Bray, Elizabeth (1986) Assessment from Principles to Action p. 1, London
5. Kerry, T. (1984) in Sutcliffe, J.M. (Ed) A New Dictionary of Religious Education p. 125, London
6. Bloom, B.S. Krathwohl, D.R. and Masia, B.M. (1964) Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Book 2: Affective Domain p. 6ff, London
7. Ibid p. 7ff
8. Hull, J.M. (1984) in Sutcliffe, J.M. (Ed) A New Dictionary of Religious Education p. 167, London
9. Bloom (et al) (1964) p. 54ff
10. Hull, J.M. (1985) What Prevents Christian Adults From Learning? pp. 91-143, London
11. Skager (1978) p. 54 and Lloyd and Bray (1986) p. 2
12. Hull (1985) p. 102ff - Hull uses a definition proposed by George Kelly
13. Bloom (et al) (1964) p. 29ff following Kelman

CONCLUSION

Neither Hofinger, Westerhoff nor Lee convincingly describes the proper nature, style and place of Christian doctrine in adult religious education. They hold distinct and often irreconcilable views about theology and education and disagree strongly about the relationship of those disciplines in religious education. Yet despite the strength of their disagreements, they each share an aim of facilitating Christian behaviour and belief which can be held together with integrity. Their common aim but widely differing views about content and process makes an investigation of the nature of those differences particularly fruitful, because it sheds light on the basic assumptions that lie beneath any attempt to encourage people to 'do theology', in the hope and expectation that, by it, their lives may be made more complete and more Christian.

As has been shown, they disagree both about theory and about practice, but, in general, it would be helpful if they could have each reflected more about their own practice. It is here that the apparently pragmatic and empirically-based Lee is most disappointing. He considers Hofinger's and Westerhoff's practice at some length, but apart from his obvious despair over his early experience of teaching, he concentrates on theoretical issues and leaves his readers to work out the down-to-earth, practical implications of them. It is to be hoped that Lee will provide further reflection on his macro-theory in the light of his and others attempts to put it to work.

Some issues do not emerge as clearly as one might like from a critical analysis of Hofinger, Westerhoff and Lee. None of them, for example, devotes much time to the distinctive needs of adult learners. Hofinger believes that his principles of catechesis are appropriate to suit the needs of learners of any age; Lee is more anxious to find evidence to support his macro-theory than to become entangled in particular issues of practical education and Westerhoff, like Hofinger, seeks to address the needs of all ages together, but often as a far more deliberately 'all age' approach.

Another important issue is that of the effect of culture and context in religious education. Hofinger, a European by birth, developed his thinking partly in the Philippines and partly in the United States, but he puts forward a way of working which he seems to regard as suitable for almost all situations. Although he makes much reference to the structure of the Roman Catholic Church in the late 1950s, and tailors his suggested programme to that, he certainly does not suggest that it is dependent on such a structure. Lee also pays remarkably little attention to cultural context, even though he clearly signifies his appreciation of its importance. He seems more interested in propounding the general principles of his macro-theory than in explaining what a Lee-inspired programme of religious education would look like in different cultural contexts. Westerhoff, on the other hand, is more aware of the effect of culture upon his own stance and work, and he does not suggest that it will fit the needs of a different situation without much thought and translation. It is therefore sad to note that his declaration that his is a particularly Anglican perspective may have influenced British Anglicans to embrace his work too uncritically. Westerhoff himself would be the first to warn of the dangers of this.

To a large extent, it has also been necessary to examine each writer's work on its own terms and to see how well it succeeds in fulfilling the aims it seeks to address.

Hofinger attempts to express the content of Christian faith in a clear, logical and concise form. But he does this in a highly cognitive way and sets forth Christian doctrine as a set of propositions which are to be learnt and assented to. In as far as he insists upon the personal faithfulness and Christ-likeness of the teacher, he clearly feels the need for some non-cognitive dimension to religious education, but his whole approach is geared to the acquisition of knowledge in the hope of persuading and thence transforming the learner. He does not value the learner's own life experience as part of the content of learning. Educationally this approach is of limited worth, because it fails to take account of the learners' needs and because it is even a demonstrably inefficient way of learning cognitive content.

Theologically it is limited because it expresses a very particular and constricted understanding of revelation. Although it is well-meaning, it is an approach which maintains the learner in a situation of dependency. Faced with the demands of the modern world, such dependency can easily become insecure and inward-looking.

Westerhoff concentrates his attention on the gathered faith community. The main drawback to this is that he is unable also to show how the faith community links with the rest of life, although he certainly recognises that such links ought to be made. The connections he explores between worship and learning are most helpful, but, overall, one is left feeling that more attention needs to be given to the needs of the individual and to the ways in which people actually learn. It is no surprise that Lee finds this approach so frustrating, for it seems as if Westerhoff, full of interesting ideas, is somehow unwilling to work through their implications. Westerhoff's understanding of doctrine is located in the story of the faith community as that story is recited and communicated today. This has much to commend it, but in his anxiety to avoid the 'sterility of a predictable future', Westerhoff lacks sufficient rigour in his thinking. His inability to recognise that doctrine is formed in dialogue with the totality of life's experience is a serious weakness.

Lee's frustration with Hofinger's approach, which comes close to that which he encountered in his youth, leads him to go overboard in his rejection, or at least his suspicion, of all theological activity. He wrongly assumes that Hofinger's highly cognitive, propositional and authoritarian system of dogmas is characteristic of all theology and spends rather too much time exposing the inadequacy of such a view. He is even drawn into the error of suggesting that the cognitive and affective domains are more distinct and independent than they really are. Westerhoff would probably accuse him of falling into the trap of opting for a predictable future. Lee certainly fails to recognise the proper open-endedness, mystery and transcendence of the Christian religion. He is also too blinkered in his concentration on the individual learner.

It has been argued here that theology is a multi-disciplinary activity, an encounter between the gospel and the world which requires the honest and whole-hearted participation of whoever engages in it. There is no fixed starting point, but in addition to the oft-quoted ingredients of scripture, tradition and reason, it is also essential to learn from experience, to refine and re-assess one's position in a continuing learning-spiral of encounter between the Christian story and human life, reflection on that, new action and fresh encounter. Doctrine, as an expression of the truths revealed in that encounter, is also continually re-made in relation to each Christian life and each new generation.

As any story is best understood by means of analogy, it is necessary to explore those analogies which shed light on the Christian story. Music offers this possibility, but it also provides an intriguing analogy for the process of doing theology itself. It draws attention to the central importance of the encounter between the composer, the composition, the performer and the listener in that moment of performance which is a new act of creation for each participant. It shows that God is not revealed in the un-read word of scripture, but in the present, lived encounter with the word. That encounter may be simple and direct, but it also involves a myriad of factors which together comprise the story and context of the scripture itself and the story and context of the person who reads it. It is the responsibility of the religious educator to try to understand both levels of encounter.

Because music combines and interweaves an affective with a cognitive component, it serves to illustrate a way in which these dimensions impinge upon one another, and in so doing, helps to bridge the false gap between religion and theology which Lee tries to establish. Fresh light on the Christian story may be glimpsed by those who are open to receive the imaginative, non-literal, passionate expression of meaning which music presents. Such fresh light may illuminate more brightly the mystery of truths such as love, hope and longing, which cannot be adequately illustrated by language alone.

Religious behaviour cannot be satisfactorily assessed by the scientific or objective means that Lee envisages, because it is not possible to prescribe such behaviour adequately. Consideration of current thinking about the possible assessment of affective goals only serves to endorse Westerhoff's argument that the outcome of religious education is properly open-ended. This does not mean, however, that Westerhoff is right to be so suspicious of 'curricular language'. Assessment and evaluation are essential tools for religious education, because in its struggle to relate to so many variables, there is a danger of it becoming dangerously unfocussed unless it is continually assessed. But the proper limits of assessment have also to be recognised.

In brief, Hofinger offers a limited vision of both theology and education; Westerhoff has too limited an understanding of education; and Lee far too narrow an understanding of theology. Somehow, the best aspects of Lee's and Westerhoff's work needs to be combined. Even then, it is necessary to suggest further principles if Christian doctrine is to be made, learnt and re-made by adults. Such principles might include:

1. The need to begin 'where we are' is common both to good educational practice and to honest theology. Neither theology nor adult learning should be concerned with the repetition of formulae, but both must be an interactive process in which a person encounters a given or givens (in many different forms) and from that is helped to create something new and appropriate to their present situation. The starting point for theology or for adult learning (where we are) cannot be prescribed or predicted, but the process of encounter remains the same. The advantage of the 'faith community' is that it will contain a richer seam of stories that together comprise the Christian story (this includes Bible and tradition) and it provides an essential check to rein in those stories which may tend to become unhelpfully eccentric. This does not mean that adult Christian education may take place only in this setting. It is both an individual as well as a group activity and takes place, wherever and whenever the Christian story encounters other areas of human experience.

2. If the narrowly propositional understanding of doctrine must be rejected, so also must the vague notion of 'all that is taught'. There is clearly a need to express one's beliefs in a coherent and communicable form. Doctrine, therefore, is both the expression of belief formed by others as a result of their encounter with the gospel and the world, and it is the continually changing, increasingly refined product of one's own encounter. Each person and each group makes, communicates and re-makes doctrine. It is formed through that process of 'doing theology' which is encounter and it is most easily communicated and understood by means of analogy.

3. Such a view of theology and of Christian doctrine ought to be accessible to all adult learners. No one need be excluded because of any felt or real lack of academic competence or religious knowledge. All will be able to offer a distinct experience of the encounter between the gospel and the world which is a resource to the theological understanding of others. This not a pooling of ignorance, but a recognition of the richness of God's revelation. What is needed, however, is a willingness to recognise that God is indeed revealed in this present encounter and that truth is uncontainable in a catalogue of propositional statements. A detailed knowledge of the history of Christian thought, or any other 'branch' of theology can always be made available to the learner, but the learner has to bring to the process that invaluable ability to be surprised and to use an analogical imagination. It is the ability to use an analogical imagination which brings the Christian story into dialogue with music, the other arts and good, ordinary story-telling which is the pearl of great price for the adult learner.

4. An element of risk is inevitably attached to a practical learning programme. Although it is important to push the social-science approach to its limits and to eschew the 'zap' theories which Lee hates so much, the outcome of adult religious education cannot just be measured in behavioural terms. Removal of all ambiguity would result in that sterile future which would mean the destruction of the very truth that

doctrine seeks to express. The open-endedness of religious education does not mean that learning is unassessable or impossible to evaluate. A patient, long-term, often individually-centred commitment to these is needed if real learning is to take place. The re-making of doctrine is a life-long process which depends upon reflection on past learning and the Church continually needs to revise its educational activity, if its mission and ministry is to be enlivened by it.

5. Although no-one need be excluded from doing theology, it has to be recognised that even Jesus did not succeed in engaging all who encountered him in his earthly life. Adults will always learn, because learning is basic to being human, but as Hull has shown, it is very much the case that many things prevent learning in certain aspects of life. Those factors which prevent Christian adults from learning about their faith and growing in faith are complex and cannot easily be swept away. It is here that Lee's insistence that the complex nature of learning must be understood and heeded. It is here too that the danger of developing too rigid a macro-theory must be avoided.

Further research is needed which focusses more clearly on reflection upon practice. More stories of those who have struggled to make and re-make doctrine according to the ways suggested here have to be written and told. Much more thought needs to be given to the inter-relationship of the cognitive and affective domains; and as music does indeed offer much to those who wish to facilitate the religious education of adults, more practical research and then analysis of that is urgently needed.

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