

INTRODUCTION

1.0 CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND OF THE CURRENT PROBLEM

Less than a century ago schools and churches were seen as institutions of socialisation that conserved the cultural norms of society and church. The context in which teachers now work is one that has been rapidly changing, particularly over the last two decades, as a result of cultural, political and educational shifts. The context has been affected, too, for religious educators, by accelerated changes in the educational theory of religious education and by a growing pluralism in theologies in the Catholic church. As will be argued there has never been a period in education in Australia, and in religious education in Catholic schools, when teachers experienced greater need to deepen their understanding of society; to master new professional insights; to address the literature generated by scholars in religious education and its related disciplines and to increase their self-knowledge. As a consequence of these changes ongoing professional development has become mandatory for teachers who want to adjust to a new role and to demonstrate an ability to respond to change. Professional development to meet these needs will not happen by accident; it must be planned to generate the acquisition of knowledge that is contextually relevant and constitutes for teachers the possibility of autonomy and responsibility for their personal and professional needs.

1.1 The Current Problem

In this country, as in many others, teachers are members of a social group which is experiencing an accelerated awareness of career opportunities accompanied by the need to upgrade their qualifications (National Board of Employment, Education and Training, 1990a:104-117). Experienced teachers are

now ready for promotion and new challenges at a time when their profession is undergoing a tremendous transformation while increasing in sophistication and complexity (National Board of Employment, Education and Training, 1990a). Educational trends emerging from the devolution and the changing role of teachers (Beazley, 1993) suggest that career opportunities will increasingly be the prerogative of those with advanced qualifications in areas of special expertise. Teachers are, therefore, engaging in professional development programmes to renew discipline knowledge and skills and to further their career prospects. This upsurge in the demand for more, and higher, qualifications has its genesis in policies formulated by education departments at national and state levels to address the changing agenda for teaching. Teachers in Catholic schools have been caught up in this national demand for higher qualifications. At the same time employing agencies in the Catholic education system have published policy documents that make most promotions for their teachers dependent on specialist qualifications in religious education: these policies, (e.g. Catholic Education Commission of Canberra and Goulburn, 1991a:3-4) detail the criteria for promotion and nominate graduate degrees in religious education as the preferred qualification for teachers seeking promotion in Catholic schools. To meet the growing expectation that teachers in executive roles in Catholic schools will have specialist qualifications in religious education, many teachers, in the system, therefore have chosen not only to upgrade their qualifications but to do so by enrolling in graduate studies in religious education.

As well as changes in society and education the ecclesial-historical factors of the Australian Catholic church have influenced changes in the content, purpose, nature and function of religious education in the school curriculum and this has impacted on the professional lives of religious educators in Catholic schools. Many of these teachers were educated between 1960-1975. Although, at that time, the traditional pedagogical approaches (Rummery, 1975:2) were on the wane, religious education remained influenced by ecclesial power and culture that defined the boundaries of knowledge and practice with hierarchically determined

knowledge and institutionalised regulations that, if idealised, could induce a technocratic silence in teachers and lead them to accept a taken-for-granted reality. It was a perception of this phenomenon that provided the starting point for this investigation.

1.2 Ecclesial-Historical Factors

Since 1965 the Catholic church has experienced a period of accelerated change. The Second Vatican Council met from 1962-1965 at a time when there was a level of change in the social order which impacted upon psychological, moral and religious dimensions of human life. The Council stood at the crossroads of historical events and theological battles when cultural Christianity was undergoing a radical change and moving towards greater maturity. The pre-conciliar church had been characterised, in the main, by members with unquestioning loyalty and non-critical conformity to the church: members who identified with the church as a sub-culture of society.

Many of the documents that emerged from Vatican II were visionary and courageous and testified to the conviction of the Council members that the church is continually being incarnated in a world of change and development. One of the most significant changes made by the Council was the shift in emphasis in ecclesiology which was promulgated in the *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church* (Abbott, 1966:9-96). This signalled the end of a withdrawn, defensive and counter-reformation church and gave prominence to the church as a community with principles of subsidiarity and collegiality. In this document the Council recognised the reality that the church lives out its mission in particular historical contexts; it acknowledged, too, that in a world that is constantly evolving history demands a willingness in the church to develop and renew. This position spelt death to the Tridentine model of a church whose hierarchical structure was related to its power to teach, to sanctify and to govern; the new emphasis was on collegiality. As the basis of its new self-understanding Vatican II accepted that a Christian church,

specifically the Roman Catholic church, that wants to be true to its concern 'to read the signs of the times' cannot simply preserve its past. The Council was concerned, therefore, not with promoting a new conservatism, but with a transformation which would allow individual church members to enjoy freedom observed within the moral principle of personal and social responsibility. It envisaged, in its documents, a church in which a diversity of Christian horizons could be accommodated in unity. Vatican II, therefore, invested energy in incarnating a new vision of church that would lead to dialogue, growth and consensus.

This vision resulted in an ecclesiology which is pivotal to potential for change in religious education; it set the scene for a church that had the capacity to be creative of plurality and diversity; it heralded a church that would be structured less on strategic action and would be characterised more by communicative action. Lakeland (1990:137) argues that the emergent ecclesiology of Vatican II changed the image of the church from one that was a strategic institution to one that exemplifies what Habermas (1970) calls a 'communicative action community' that pursues truth through dialogue that respects 'the force of the better argument'. Such a church can only fully realise itself when it is oriented towards understanding that is arrived at through openness and freedom. By implication this meant the end of a process of religious education that aimed at the authoritarian reproduction of doctrine and practices. This researcher will argue that in the light of these developments there is a need for professional development of religious educators that constitutes for them new criteria for conceptualising their discipline.

1.3 Shifts in Religious Education

Changes in religious education in the past have been neither separate from, nor different from, most general changes that have occurred in society at large and in the church. The church's teaching has always, to some degree, reflected that its members are historically and sociologically subject to the same laws of change as

society. This has resulted over the years in expressions of Christianity that varied from categories that reflected the Jewish and Hellenistic worlds of the first century Christians to categories influenced by the post-reformation world and the emerging pluralism of the world of twentieth century Christians.

In the early twentieth century the religion text for Catholics was the catechism: this focused on revealed truth and was a digest of theology, in question and answer form, that was to be memorised. This was taught and accepted as an authoritative statement on those doctrines and morals which were to be known and believed and practised by Catholics. In the middle of this century the traditional catechetical approach gave way to kerygmatic catechesis: this focused on the bible as its content and emphasised the faith commitment of the individual as well as an acceptance of doctrine. Although this signified a shift towards the importance of the bible, the emphasis on content, rather than on method, remained. After the Second Vatican Council there was a further change in direction, as a result of developments in such areas as incarnational theology and the theology of revelation, which discerned Christ's presence everywhere and as entering 'experience at the point of historical experience rather than at some point beyond it' (Scott, 1981:2). Religion teachers embraced this new understanding of revelation in a life-centred catechesis which focused on a God who speaks in the events of life as well as through tradition and scripture. This approach was inductive and process-oriented, and the language was secular and experiential. By 1980 the life-centred catechesis lost favour because it was judged to be theologically and educationally inadequate. Teachers of religion began to argue that religious education was a discipline in its own right which embraced other cognate disciplines such as theology. This new focus on the nature of religious education created challenges and brought significant changes in the content and methodology of religious education. The challenge has been met by scholars, such as Groome (1980), Boys (1989) and Lovat (1989) who have designed approaches to religious education that establish an interplay between theological and educational factors. The journey from the demise of the catechism, with its focus

on revealed truth, statically conceived, to a religious education built on critical theory has been a journey of over forty years.

Together, the changes in church and society have brought about epistemological shifts in religious education as a discipline in the Catholic school curriculum. Caught in this multi-factored situation, many teachers in Catholic schools experienced cognitive conflict and found themselves without the adequate philosophical and theological background for religious education. This absence generated a need for an intellectually rigorous, upgraded preparation for the professional practice of religious educators.

2.0 CONCERN OF THE THESIS

In the light of the above context the concern of this thesis is to examine the extent to which graduate studies in religious education, that are undertaken as a professional development programme, can offer religious educators the opportunity to refashion and renew themselves and their profession in the changing ecclesial-historical circumstances; the extent to which religious educators come to understand and change their own oppressive realities and gain a sense of their own power as critical religious educators.

For a critical religious educator there is little, or no, potential in knowledge, values and beliefs that are unexamined, unchallenged or unknowingly internalised. The critical religious educator will be characterised, rather, by examining the taken-for-granted nature of previously held assumptions, norms and beliefs. In order to change these realities critical learners 'must develop criteria and theory to distinguish between reasoned rejections of interpretations and theoretical argument and false consciousness' (Fay, 1977:59). It is important, therefore, to ascertain if professional development programmes focus on content and processes that encourage religious educators to experience their role as transforming rather than as determining the *status quo* of a knowledge that is static and dysfunctional and, therefore, out of harmony with their experiences of a changing world.

In essence the concern of this thesis is to ascertain if, and to what extent, religious educators, through graduate studies in religious education, engage in transformative learning that is an acquisition of knowledge that is free from internalised myths of the past and empowers them to be critical religious educators.

2.1 The Research Problem

Given the contextual background and the concern of the thesis, as described above, the problem has been identified with specific reference to religious educators who teach in Catholic primary schools in the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn and who pursued their graduate studies in religious education at the Australian Catholic University, Signadou Campus. The problem to be addressed is:

Whether in the light of increasing national demands for professional development, and significant changes in the Catholic church since the Second Vatican Council, there is evidence that religious educators who engage in university graduate study develop as critical religious educators.

The claim of the thesis is that professional development, by way of graduate university study has the potential, which may not always be fully achieved, to foster in religious educators a heightened critical consciousness of the essential tradition of Christianity and a commitment to shape the future rather than reproduce the past. This claim will be tested from conceptual literature which will be analysed to identify key concepts that relate to the question. It will also be tested from the contextual evidence. The contextual data were gathered by analysis of relevant documents to reveal the power relations embodied in the national reports on continuing teacher education; in the policies of the Catholic Education Office of Canberra and Goulburn relating to professional development, and in the course documents of the Australian Catholic University, Signadou Campus for the Graduate Diploma of Education (Religious). The claim will be backed by

empirical data from a case study that involved three groups of research participants.

This thesis is located within the framework of critical theory paradigm, with insights from poststructuralism. This kind of social theory is rooted in the belief that people are shaped by language and culture both of which are socially constructed (Clark, 1993:30).

2.2 Significance of the Thesis

The significance of this study relates to the direction taken by the Catholic church since 1965 in relation to the content and task of religious education as well as the recent move by employing authorities in Catholic education, towards the necessity for recognised formal qualifications for religious educators. The changed emphasis in content and purpose of religious education emerged from many of the documents of Vatican II but probably none was as immediate in its impact on the content of religious education as the decree of the Council on the theology of revelation.

The issue of revelation was addressed by the *Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation* (Abbott, 1966:107-132) which centred specifically on scripture and tradition as the source of Christian revelation. This document also stressed the use, by scholars, of modern critical methods of interpretation of scripture with regard for literary forms and this changed the abstract, static and more impersonal teaching on revelation that had emanated from the First Vatican Council (1870). The new notion of revelation was concrete and relevant, historical and existential, actual and dynamic, social and communitarian. It concerned itself with persons in history, subject to process (Amalorpavadass, 1972:264-266). The kind of religious education that is needed to take into account such teaching on revelation is very different from previous religious education that was concerned with the transmission of a body of knowledge that was to be learnt. The development in the concept of revelation by Vatican II points to the need for a praxis epistemology

and a religious education that is concerned with relevant interpretation of personal and relational experiences that relates the present with the past and the future.

The Council sought to respond to human beings' perennial questions. It acknowledged that Christians must understand the world in which they live and must respond 'in language intelligible to every generation' (Abbott, 1966:202). Although there are inconsistencies between them the documents of Vatican II did provide the impetus for unprecedented changes in the church — a potential that many consider has not yet come to maturity. However the modal shifts that came from Vatican II are some of the essential factors in the challenges facing religious educators. The Council set the scene for a religious education in which human freedom is integral and which eschews all manipulation and indoctrination.¹ All this called for a form of religious education which emphasised dialogue rather than transmission and aimed at emancipation of the learners. Lonergan (1974:1-9) has summed up the changed context for religious education in the church in terms of a fundamental shift from the normative, unchanging, classical culture to a new kind of modern, historically conscious culture which is open-ended and unfinished.

In terms of bringing to life a church that is open-ended and unfinished a shift of knowledge is necessary for all Christians who experience tension and conflict as a result of previous understanding and acceptance of beliefs and practices. The earlier way of engagement with the church, by acting out of assumed truths, accounted in the past for blindness to actual contexts and for an 'illusionary or false consciousness created by institutions and ideologies through which people involve themselves in destructive action as if they were doing the right thing' (Baum, 1978:288). Religious educators who undertake graduate studies in their discipline will, of necessity, bring with them an understanding of the church and its teaching: they will, at the same time, encounter a church and its teaching at a point of new historical experience. In this situation there is potential for creative tension where learners, can through dialectic, move through the tension

¹ Comment will be made later about the concept of indoctrination, *vis-a-vis* this research, in the following section of this writing that deals with significant concepts.

and apparent contradictions of knowledge rather than choose one or other form of it. This opportunity has the potential to be productive of growth where 'truth emerges as new assertions are derived from the previous assertion and as one understands the opposing position' (Daloz, 1986:151).

As long as schools, in Australia, remain the Catholic Church's principal vehicle for its educational ministry, the relevance of the Church and the emancipation of its members from the dependency on dogmatic statements will rely largely on the capacity of its religious educators to understand and act on new insights of truth.

2.3 Argument of the Thesis

Fundamental to the argument of this thesis is that the concept of professional practice, that is most consistent with the current philosophy of religious education, is based on an emancipatory epistemology. The assumption that a professional's knowledge is provisional and in constant need of reflection to ensure that it does not become irrelevant, distorted and static is basic to the argument. According to Durka (1981:279-280) professional competence requires teachers of religion to possess a body of knowledge that surpasses their own experiences and is accompanied by the obligation of professional self-criticism to ensure that the epistemology of religious education is disabused of hegemonic ideologies and of unexamined tradition. Professional competence depends, too, according to Macklin (1981:34-35), upon teachers becoming aware of the influence on their values, attitudes, beliefs and actions of professional experiences in their own biographies. Professional development, therefore, for religious educators will depend on the adequate preparation of teachers with non-alienating technical, practical and emancipatory knowledge that issues from a capacity for critical self-reflection and action. Thus it will be argued that the religious educator requires a professional development that equips him/her to engage in assessment of the evidence of the substantive content of the Christian tradition and interpret it, in

dialogue with the Christian community, in a way that builds one's own truth and helps to transform inequality and injustice in societal structures.

A further concept that is fundamental to the argument of this study is the concept of adulthood. Recent psychological literature on adulthood emphasises that there has been 'a paradigmatic change in the understanding of adulthood' (Confoy, 1982c:69-72). Adulthood is now portrayed as a process, and not as a plateau that follows adolescence, and the literature shows that there is a great interdependence amongst the theories that describe the psychosocial, faith, moral and religious development of adults. One of the main concerns of the influence of contemporary philosophy, as evidence for this work, is that adults today are more critical of the 'institutional apparatus of a religious tradition' (McKenzie, 1982:98). Therefore, when adults enter into critical dialogue with the tradition it could bring them to confront hegemonic ideologies and to acquire a new consciousness and a new perception of how they previously saw their world.

An analysis of the professional growth of adults must, therefore, look to the totality of the theories of human growth and to contemporary philosophy to contextualise the world of the religious educator. The concern is whether graduate study in religious education avoids engaging learners in a search for new absolutes to replace old ones and whether it brings them to challenge and resist knowledge that is not in harmony with their reality. The question, therefore, is whether graduate programmes will equip the learners to discern that 'they have silenced themselves, falsely believing that self-directing action is impossible in the complex world of institutional gains — but have now broken out of that silence' (Agger, 1991:154).

3.0 SIGNIFICANT CONCEPTS

3.1 Professional Development

The concept of professional development, for the purpose of this study, is underpinned by two assumptions. The first is that teaching is 'a profession and its

practice is founded upon a fund of knowledge that is organised into a systematic body of theory. This constitutes the knowledge base of the profession' (Scott, 1982:598). The second assumption is that knowledge is 'dynamic... never static ... and there will always be an expanding theory base to professional knowledge and practice' (Beare, 1992:67).

Built on these assumptions professional development is perceived as one element in the process of continuing teacher education. At a time of dramatic change, in the context already described, professional development is happening when teachers recognise that their knowledge and practices are becoming less appropriate in the light of the emergence of radical changes that confront society and in the light of the policies of employing authorities that are regulating promotions and salary increments according to certain forms of qualification and certification. It represents a situation where teaching is driven by external policy that is perceived by employers as a way to correct a deficit. However, as will be argued, it can become for the individual a way to a 'closer integration of individual growth with the evolution and improvement in the organisation system' (France, 1982:6). Because professional development has not always played an important role in education and has now been accelerated by official policies, at a time when the profession is no longer tranquil, an assumption can be made that, to a certain extent, the phenomenon of accelerated change in the practice of engaging in professional development has been imposed. However, as Fullan (1982:24-26) claims, 'the crux of change is how individuals come to terms with the reality of the change in the context of their familiar framework of reality'. Teachers will be successful to the extent that they see change as endemic to understanding themselves as active subjects and bringing harmony to how they think, feel and act.

3.2 Critical Social Theory

Some of the terms in an eclectic version of critical social theory have been modified by the insights of the poststructuralists. Ideology remains one of those

disputed terms (Lather 1991a:14). It is sometimes used, in the orthodox Marxist sense, as synonymous with false consciousness where the dominant ideology suppresses ideas and constrains individuals; others, including Tripp (1988:95) and Lather (1991a:14), reject the reductionist Marxist usage and argue that ideology is inescapable and that it is impossible and undesirable to deliver a person from 'absolute ideological enclosure' (Hull, 1985:109). From a poststructuralist perspective 'Foucault argues for the concept of power-knowledge to replace the Marxist usage which he believes is too embedded in assumptions of false consciousness and a human essence awaiting freedom from constraints' (Sholle, 1988:18). Ultimately what is at issue, as one of the significant areas where critical theory and poststructuralism both critique and complement each other, both intrinsically and for this work, is the concept of knowledge. Allen (1992a:224-225) has compared the epistemological positions of the critical theorists and poststructuralists:

Knowledge... [for the critical theorist] ... can be 'empowering' and can help us uncover the 'real' world around us. We can then use it to change our situation, to liberate and emancipate (free) us from the constraints of society... Unlike the critical theorists, however, knowledge... [for the poststructuralist]... cannot empower members of society. Knowledge is not a search for objective or subjective truth, but a recognition that truth is always distorted. The aim is not to change the dominant ideology... but rather to change the system of power relations. Knowledge is not a commodity, to control yourself and others, but to describe, examine and challenge specific institutional practices.

These understandings throw light on the concern of this study but, at the same time, are in some ways problematic because constraints and the power-knowledge relationship are often not recognised by those whom they dominate; people appear to be controlled sometimes unconsciously and uncritically by someone else's assumptions and beliefs. This would seem to have been the case, in the past, for some Catholic teachers who have passively accepted knowledge, transmitted by the church, to make sense of traditions and concepts. For them the

need is to become conscious of the taken-for-granted assumptions of the socially constructed realities of the church in which they were socialised and to understand the ways they are still being socialised. This can lead Catholic teachers to raise new questions and seek, through critical hermeneutical dialogue, to come to a new historical consciousness with a 'focus on what can be changed in the present for the sake of the future' (Lane, 1986a:149). The need is for an increase in self-knowledge and critical awareness so that educators can reframe their questions, challenge dichotomies and 'negotiate meanings and purposes instead of accepting passively the previous defined social realities of others' (Bowers, 1984:2).

An approach to professional development that uses critical social theory, but also draws upon poststructuralist perspective, will challenge a teacher's taken-for-granted knowledge and lead to reappraisal and appreciation of knowledge. This argues for a process that questions assumptions and challenges the constraining structures that limit and control 'access of individuals to certain kinds of discourse' (Ball, 1990:3).

3.3 The Nature of Religion, Theology and Faith

Although religion is often talked about as though it is an ahistorical phenomenon it finds itself expressed in history and people. Religion is not necessarily public and organised, although it is an organised religion, namely Christianity, and in particular Roman Catholicism, that concerns this work. The Christian religion, in common with many other religions is ideological, ritualistic, intellectual, consequential and experiential. It should not be an absolutised philosophical-moral system for living and, unless one's interpretation and understanding of some of its principles change, it becomes irrelevant and static — it suffers decay and is in danger ultimately of *rigor mortis*. A currently valued conceptualisation of religion sees it as a living activity, stimulating and enhancing the growth of an integrated person as an amalgam of 'self and situation, of one's

personality and the tradition-dimension of one's interactive environment' (Lee, 1982:102).

Theology is a systematic study of and reflection on the data of a religious tradition. It must continually uncover, through a process of questioning and creative tension, the values of the data for new generations and new cultural contexts (Baum, 1984:14). Tracy (1985:455) describes theology as a discourse that is in dialogue with the social sciences in a dialectical relationship that seeks integrity with pluralism:

In properly general and heuristic terms ... theology is an intellectual enterprise that may be described more exactly as the hermeneutical attempt to establish mutually critical correlations between the claims to religious meaningfulness and truth of a religious tradition and the claims to religious meaningfulness and truth within the historical situation for which that tradition is being interpreted.

Critical theology, therefore, will avoid closure and will develop 'new understandings of the Christian tradition ... that were not previously in human consciousness' (Lohse, 1982:20).

Faith, on the other hand, is the experiential element of religion that integrates the other elements. It is the element that is deeper, more individual, more personal and more intimate: it focuses more on perceptions and values of an ultimate nature which are part of an individual's life, and provides basic and fundamental attitudes and values which shape a person's response to life events. Although faith is the most personal element of religion, a community faith sustains the perception and expression of a personal faith and the beliefs, doctrines and theology of the community help to sustain the faith of the individual. One's experience of personal faith necessitates an alignment of heart and will to accommodate its cognitive and affective decisions which are necessary for knowledge and for commitment based on religious grounds. Faith should also be dynamic — a quality which ensures it will not be limited by static, attained belief,

but will reinterpret the cognitive content of faith in the light of history and ongoing revelation.

While the concepts of faith, theology and religion are distinct, they are also related concepts. In this relationship faith is the dynamic element in a person's religion which expresses itself in such ways as trust and response to what is believed in. Its growth, throughout life's course, depends on a continual critical search for meaning and value. Theology is primarily a cognitive affair and need make no demands on one's life-dimensions; it is the cognitive vehicle of religion and can reinterpret intellectual formulations of belief. Finally religion is a way of living that integrates the individual's understanding of theology with personal internalised values of faith.

3.4 Christianity

The problem identified as the concern of this thesis is bound in scope as an issue in Christianity, specifically in the Catholic church. Therefore conceptual clarity about Christianity is important because it is the perspective from which the research has been done and to which the writer is personally committed. Christianity is built on the teaching of Jesus Christ which was not given as a body of abstract truths but as a way of life. It, therefore, is not 'a prefabricated reality but is coming into being as an historical process of acting-in-faith in this world' and 'is not a purely hermeneutic understanding or a question of pure theoria; it is ultimately a question of action in faith' (Schillebeeckx, 1974:11,59). A consequence of seeing Christianity as a way of life is that each person's way of being Christian is likely to be challenged, differentiated and reconstituted several times during life's pilgrimage. This will be influenced by experience and education that inform one's beliefs and ethical concerns. True Christian orthodoxy accommodates a plurality of expressions and, if only one limited system of expression is identified, orthodoxy has become heresy and one would claim it has lost touch with historical sensibilities that recognise reality (Schillebeeckx, 1974).

A sense of mission and identity for the individual Christian and the church must be constantly renewed in specific cultures by each generation because, in their existential lives, critical Christians are called to transform their faith tradition. They are called to dialogue with the past and the present and to appropriate a living tradition of Christianity that is expressed in language, rituals and behaviour that are comprehensible to today's generation and are a living expression of what constitutes Christianity.

3.5 Tradition

Perceptions of tradition range from a misconception of it as a 'concern to repeat the past without taking account of the present' to ensuring that 'each generation will refuse to accept whatever cultural distortions exist in tradition' (Lane, 1986a:158). If one accepts that, in order for tradition to remain authentic it will need to be challenged it follows that an interpretation of Christianity will be alert to both the past historical emphasis as well as to present experiences. Tradition that accommodates both the past and the present allows the religious educator to engage in praxis, as Augustine (*The Teacher*, Ch. 12.) did, by turning people 'to what was already in their own memories as well as to the memory of the community and its faith narrative in scripture and tradition' (Groome, 1991:54).

Boys (1989:203) speaks of an 'intrinsic connection between tradition and transformation'. Tradition gives access to the accumulated wisdom of the Christian community — people are invited to access the past and appropriate from it what leads to transformation and renewal. Boys (1979:13) also warns that if tradition is absolutised and accepted uncritically it degenerates and is unable to create a future. The same warning is given by Huebner (1974:36-53) who claims that 'like all pilgrims we move forward on the basis of where we have been yet our future can never be a repetition of our past' because this would be the reification of past practices leading to maintaining rather than to renewing and revising Christianity. A critical religious educator will need to engage dialectically with

tradition and, while recognising the limitations of tradition in each particular time and place, will discern what truth can be retained from tradition and move beyond to transform that tradition by what Gadamer (1979:43) explains 'as a new creation of understanding'.

3.6 Religious Education and Indoctrination

The main model of religious education that concerns this study will be shown, in Chapter 3, to be a revisionist approach. The literature for revisionism in religious education presents one possibility for religious educators to examine beliefs, values and social practices and to reinterpret the traditional understanding of Christianity. A revisionist model of religious education, therefore, calls for the teaching of doctrine to be done critically, without coercion or violence to the freedom of the learner. In the light of the nature and process of such religious education the inappropriateness of indoctrination should be a non-issue for this study. However, the writer acknowledges that historically there has been much emotive polemic and the charge has been made that religious education is the paradigmatic case of indoctrination. Perhaps a case can be made that religion, both historically and in contemporary times, has been used as a vehicle of indoctrination when the beliefs, doctrines and creeds of some religions were considered too 'sacred' for critical evaluation. While it is conceded that religion is prone to indoctrination, it does not follow that religious education must be conceived in terms of indoctrination.

Indoctrination disregards the freedom of the individual and attempts to transmit and impose authoritatively beliefs which require rational acceptance. Thus it lacks the critical function of education that invites investigation and analysis which promote worthwhile knowledge and understanding that are 'rooted in the agent's own free and rational acceptance' (Chazan, 1972:252). For religious education to be conceptualised as authentic education, investigation and analysis are mandatory to promote a liberating freedom and 'a search for truth within a

critical environment' (Reuter, 1981:83). The work of theologians such as Metz, Schillebeeckx, Gutiérrez and Lakeland has shown the possibility for theology and, therefore, the doctrinal content of religious education, to be critiqued in the cause of a search for truth.

4.0 SUMMARY

The evolution in religious education and the recognition of it as a discipline that is related to, and affected by, what is developing in related disciplines is relatively recent. Most religious educators, whatever branch of Christianity they come from, whose preservice teacher preparation predated the early 1980s are not necessarily familiar with the new scholarship, in such areas as theology and scripture, that has changed the nature of religious education. However, they appear from their professional practice to know intuitively that there is a gap between the way they want to engage in religious education and with the requisite knowledge and skills they need to clearly conceptualise, and knowingly act.

Evidence is needed about if, and how, graduate studies for religious educators can be conceived as opportunities for them to become critical professionals. Are these studies an opportunity for critically remembering the past and reinterpreting it with new and authentic insights? Will they generate insights that lead religious educators to be active in reconstructing their role? Will religious educators become aware of constraints that control their operation as critical actors? Do religious educators arrive at authentic and communicable insights that constitute critical knowledge through graduate studies, that they are engaged in for professional development?

The early chapters of this study will examine the conceptual literature and the contextual factors related to the concern of the thesis. Further chapters will explore the discourse of research, within a critical theory paradigm, to establish the philosophical and theoretical principles for the design, data collection, analysis and interpretation of the critical case study that has been used to generate the empirical

data. The final chapters will present the significant outcomes of the case study and comment on how they test or expand theory in the field of professional development of the religious educator. These chapters will also identify where this work opens up areas for future research.

CHAPTER 1: TRANSFORMATIVE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1.0 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

... A social system does not move smoothly from one state of its culture to another... Something old must come apart in order for something new to come together. But for individuals within the system, there is no clear grasp of the next stable state — only a clear picture of the one to be lost. Hence the coming apart carries uncertainty and anguish for the members of the system since it puts at risk the basis for self-identity that the system had provided.

(Schön, 1971:51)

Many teachers are moving from 'one state of its culture to another' and are experiencing feelings of confusion and inadequacy, similar to the situation described by Schön, as a result of the invasive nature of changes in society and in the culture of teaching that have impacted on them personally and professionally. This reality has manifested itself in a sense of powerlessness, alienation and dysfunction that calls for renewal, adjustment and a redefinition of knowledge, values and beliefs by those teachers who prefer to confront the contextual constraints and master, rather than dismiss, what they are experiencing. The journey to new understanding and autonomy will be one of opening themselves to new possibilities. The task ahead, in a society that is likely to remain unstable, is one of reconstruction and transformation that is both personal and societal, and which 'can only be done in an atmosphere which is free and always agitated by permanent criticism — the search is not for something predetermined' (Foucault, 1982:34).

Dewey maintained that engaging people in democratic enquiry to deal with change will keep a culture vibrant. This principle can be used to argue for professional development programmes for teachers to focus on understanding human and social relationships as problematic in order to discover any

misconception of reality that represses their development. Alexander's (1987:272) summary of Dewey's position points the way to how this can be done:

The key is to develop a culture that is consciously aware of itself as a shaping and shapable power. This is to say that culture must recognise itself as a creative project in which the need for critical self-reflection, re-evaluation and exploration of the possibilities of life are of utmost importance.

Dewey's process for maintaining a culture, that is vibrant, is grounded in a method of genuine criticism and self-criticism and looks to knowledge that is fluid, provisional and tentative — not absolute, and never final. Implicit in Dewey's process of enquiry is the possibility for professional development to re-evaluate not only the language that creates the culture of teaching but also of the silences in the taken-for-granted discourse of the culture.

Professional development, in a culture of teaching, where the political and educational shifts are some of the contextual factors that impact upon it, is complex and is beleaguered by countless possibilities of interpretation and description. An understanding of professional development, when there is 'uncertainty and anguish' in the culture of teaching, suggests that an investigation of the concepts of emancipatory education and transformative learning could offer a synthesis that is inherent in a process of professional development that engenders empowerment for teachers. Such professional development would engage them in an analysis of ideas and causes of powerlessness and of their relationship with societal structures. When an analysis of taken-for-granted practices produces evidence of constraints then reorganisation of past experience, consistent with that evidence, becomes a rational response in thinking and acting. (Diamond, 1988:137, 139). Professional development that has a transformative agenda will, as Mishler (1986:119) maintains, empower teachers to see 'patterned inequalities in institutional power and ideologies' and to act upon their understanding. It thus 'give[s] them a sense of their own power and a new relationship with their own

contexts' (Fox, 1988:2). An alternative to a form of transformative professional development is one that generates helplessness from an inability to

... critically analyse and apprehend the false and distorting messages of the dominant ideology... in a world where human experience is so often misrepresented or mystified by those who present us with the shared meanings of our culture.

(Shapiro 1984:16)

While this work will explore the current literature on professional development the writer wants to register, at the outset, that the whole issue of professional development, with a radical agenda, is larger than the concern of this study because professional development, with a radical agenda, appears to be related to a concept that has not yet been voiced in the literature. The overt message, from the literature, is that professional development is perceived as a process of continuing education which is often addressed with the application of funding to short seminars and workshops. The evidence (Paulston, 1976; Connelly & Ben-Peretz, 1980; De Young, 1986) demonstrates that short, sharp bursts, aimed at involving the teacher as user or technician, are not effective of radical change. The literature shows that such *ad hocery* has limited outcomes and does not address the problem of bridging the gap between the knowledge the teacher has and the knowledge needed by teachers to operate within the new philosophic frameworks such as critical theory and poststructuralism. Such knowledge, marked with an ethical perspective and concerned with justice and freedom, will not be gained from the short, discrete programmes that are currently provided. These usually have an instrumental outcome as their goal. It is one of the concerns of this study to establish what counts as professional development which goes beyond instrumental outcomes.

The concept that has not as yet been voiced in the literature is that of re-education for a professional activity where change is not about the icing on the cake but rather about a change in the ingredients — about philosophic positions that have shifted perspectives on issues as fundamental as forms of knowledge, views

of the human person and of society. There is a silence in the literature about the need for radical re-education, rather than continuing education. Authorities have either ignored the need or consciously omitted the issue from the discourse because of the implications it would have for a reconstruction of the whole education system in its policies and practices and the economic factors inherent in re-education for such things as professional leave and salaries. The issue is one that could be, and indeed should be, addressed by further research.

1.1 Concept Structure

The purpose of this section is to examine the relevant intellectual literature for a theory to determine a concept structure that is likely to underpin a transformative professional development of educators. At the outset an assumption is made that it is insufficient to talk about professional development in terms of the less contentious issues such as structures, resources and performance that amount to technical rationality. The need is to address the subjective and objective realities of the situation to create a critical consciousness about social, moral and ethical considerations that can address the transformation of both the person and the profession and [can] perceive the teacher as one for whom 'knowing and doing are inseparable' (Kremer-Hayon, 1991:82). According to Fullan (1982:24-26) '[t]he implementation of change is influenced by teachers' ideologies, beliefs and values ... which they hold about ... life'. Therefore to be empowered as agents of change teachers will need to achieve a deepening awareness of themselves and society and to recognise what is likely to create desirable knowledge and action for them.

In the theories and interpretive practices of educational discourse (Huberman, 1992; Krupp, 1989) a profile of professional development is currently emerging as a multi-stage process throughout the career of an individual teacher. It is increasingly perceived as synonymous with a further qualified status through formal, accredited courses in special discipline content (*National Board of Employment, Education and Training*, 1990a:92). While professional development

is being externally enforced by the regulations made by educational authorities it also requires personal commitment and 'control of the process' (Dean, 1991:7) on the part of the individual if it is to be effective. The view of professional development argued for in this study as suitable for the 1990s is one that reflects 'Auchmuty's conception of the professional teacher as an intellectually able, highly educated and scholarly person' (Walker, 1990:142). The process for this is conceived as one that aids teachers to be 'active subjects who are self-determining... [and] ... change their understanding of themselves ... from an attitude of dependence to autonomy and responsibility' (Fay 1977, 210). This presupposes:

... a process of dialogue and diagnosis ... in which the meaning of present practice is subjected to critical appraisal.... [it is] concerned about making provision for the growth of people — the growth of their capacity to understand what is good and to pursue it. These goods are sought through critical self-awareness ... awareness of the larger context of one's practice and the moral dimensions that inform it.

(Butt & Olson 1983:8,10)

What is envisaged is a conception of professional development that has more potential than one-shot sessions and knee-jerk reaction programmes. In most instances these are inadequate styles (Connelly & Ben-Peretz, 1980; De Young, 1986) and are often initiated by employers to develop their human and institutional resources. These approaches risk treating teachers as instruments of the system. In these cases, where the need is not mutually negotiated and accepted, the experience may well be less than significant because the subject-agent does not determine the goals and level of involvement in the task and thus becomes a passive receiver of information. Such an approach would be in danger of leaving teachers without the means of reflection on the consequences, and without ownership of the resulting knowledge and, therefore, with a lack of consciousness about alternatives that would stimulate formation and 'encourage transformation for changed professional action' as educators in a social world of increasing uncertainty (Calareso & McCormick, 1991:34).

A range of assumptions about what constitutes professional competence, according to different traditions of educational study, is proposed from five different perspectives by Carr & Kemmis (1983:29-34). They aim to identify the potential of different approaches to either facilitate or constrain professional development characterised by autonomy and responsibility. They describe the *Commonsense View* as equated with increasing skill in the 'use of an existing stock of pedagogical knowledge'. The *Philosophical View* incorporates a reflective stance on the part of the teacher for a professional competence that 'is guided by a self-conscious understanding of basic educational principles rather than by narrow concern with instrumental ... goals or motives'. The *Applied Science View* measures professional competence by the effectiveness of teaching. The *Practical Approach* assumes that teaching is a profession and that teachers 'profess an ethic' and it assesses professional competence in terms of 'moral and prudential answerability for practical judgements actually made within the context of existing educational institutions'. The *Critical View* subscribes to self-critical reflection on the part of the teacher and claims that educational problems may relate to social as well as individual matters and, therefore, professional competence 'requires a capacity for continuous deliberation and critical discussion by the teaching profession as a whole, of the way political and social structures relate to and influence educational aims and practices'.

These views presented by Carr & Kemmis (1983) are clearly subsumed into layers of philosophy and theory that have shaped and reshaped the changing views of the character of society, the role of education and changing images of teachers. Teaching has been, and often still is, perceived as a delivery system of existing knowledge by teachers who conform as technicians engaged in a task that is not susceptible to political influence. The emerging, and more complex, image is shaped by an understanding that the teacher is engaged in an interactive, social-historical profession as a reflective agent whose 'educational actions are consequences of ... moral choices and commitments and can only be understood in the context of ... values, aspirations and intentions' (Carr & Kemmis, 1983:26).

The emerging view of professional competence, and of the professional development it requires, is being shaped significantly by the framework of critical social science. The emphasis in this approach is on the contextual nature of education as a product of human and social interaction. Inherent in this view is the form of reasoning called praxis, that is, 'informed action which by reflection on its character and consequences, reflexively changes the 'knowledge-base' which informs it' (Carr & Kemmis, 1983:33).

1.2 Linguistic Clarity

The researcher considered the option of using the terms *development* or *growth* to describe one of the constitutive elements of this research. The notion of *growth* was attractive because it conveys a sense of qualitative change and can accommodate acceleration or decline in the rate of reaching a target, and, as Dewey (1916:19-53) claims, when an individual's learning results in growth it can influence others towards growth. However, a decision was made in favour of *development* as a more comprehensive term that more appropriately described the activity of this work. Buchmann succinctly captures the elements of the term 'development' which made it an appropriate choice:

[Development]... is typically conceived as an unfolding in which something grows from a rudimentary condition into a condition that is fuller and higher, or more mature; an absolute presupposition underlying this notion is that whatever develops will not be past redemption or beyond the pale of improvement.

(Buchmann, 1990:1)

Buchmann's (1990) concept of professional development reflects the writer's concern in this study, that professional development is about moving towards personal and professional maturity – maturity where there is always the possibility of further development. Thus professional development is not merely

about increasing skills and knowledge but is about growth and competence to meet the cognitive and affective needs of the individual.

As well as the lack of consistency noted above in the literature of professional development, inservice education and staff development are often used as interchangeable and synonymous terms. This lack of precision in the use of terms can result in confusion and, in some cases, totally contradictory concepts are described by the same terms. The Board of Teacher Education, Queensland (1990:48) is one source that attempts to clarify the terms. It describes inservice education as the totality of all learning experiences and names professional development as one of the four major components of inservice education. It describes these four components as formal studies at academic institutions for recognised qualifications; as staff development dealing with elements a teacher has to know to function in a system; as professional development that is concerned with the competence of the teacher for the classroom and finally as informal situations where educational issues are discussed.

The distinction made by the Board of Teacher Education Queensland would seem to be a rare example in the literature of an attempt to produce a typography to distinguish the difference in the nature and purpose of related activities of post pre-service education. However, while it is useful to find this effort at linguistic clarity, the explanation that is offered as the document's concept of professional development confines the activity to one that addresses pragmatic tasks and procedures and hence proves to be a limiting notion. In Habermasian (1972) terms professional development, as described in the Queensland document aims at knowledge constituted by technical interest. While the technical level of interest is an important one for teachers it restricts the outcome to one of technical rationality and addresses only part of the reality of the current contextual situation in the culture of teaching. An activity that aims merely at 'what' to teach in the classroom is likely to generate knowledge that is constructive only of past practices that have resulted as an 'internalization of assumptions, definitions and arbitrary-typifications for taken-for-granted communication of significant others' (Bowers,

1984:39). Such uncritical assimilation of unquestioned knowledge involving social and cultural codes could conceal or mask ideologies that could distort, repress and control one's activities. Giroux (1985:377) cautions that 'an emphasis on procedures identified by the institution is based on the assumption that the standardization of school knowledge is in the interests of managing and controlling it'; such controlled knowledge stands in contradiction to knowledge that aims at genuine self-understanding and emancipatory knowledge.

1.3 Subject Matter

There is an argument that teachers are engaged in an activity that has the essential characteristics of a profession (Downie, 1990:154-155) which has its basis in 'a body of knowledge and skills continually modified and improved by research' (Brennan, 1990:111) and is concerned with the 'imparting and gaining of knowledge and understanding' (Buchmann, 1982:67). Such an understanding of the profession implies that the professional development of teachers needs to address the intellectual substance, specifically the subject-matter or content knowledge, of the discipline. It implies that professional development should help teachers overcome gaps and deficiencies in the specialised knowledge of the cognate fields that underpin their activity but it should also address the lived history of the learner. The shifts in the philosophical stances underpinning education have, of necessity, shifted the perspective from which knowledge is formulated. In many disciplines, for example religious education, the formulation of content knowledge is in a state of crisis and calls for teachers to grasp an understanding of the historical changes and the new perspectives from which the subject matter of their discipline is now formulated. The knowledge that is being argued for is more than information, although that is basic and necessary for a teacher's professional credibility. What is called for is also more than interpretive knowledge of the substantive content although that is necessary for understanding of tradition. What is needed is knowledge that is inseparable from the lived

history of the learner and the social relations in and through which it is communicated. Knowledge at these three levels that gives an understanding of subject-matter and connects knowledge to action could provide the teacher with the possibilities of epistemic control (Freeman, 1980). While this study will argue that subject matter is necessary for transformative professional development, to the extent that such subject matter becomes epistemic power and marginalises others it could become 'an apparatus of power and control' (Foucault, 1980:229-260).

Professional development that focuses on expanding knowledge and skills, related to subject matter and procedures, will tend to emphasise an increase of technical knowledge and a concentration on how the authorities conceive what is to be taught rather than on why to teach certain things; such a process is likely to increase dependency in teachers rather than encourage them to reflect critically on their teaching. Competence and proficiency in teaching are not to be dismissed as unimportant because technical knowledge, born of a technical interest, equips the educator with a knowledge of subject matter plus an ability to describe and explain the information. However, mere reconstruction of past knowledge, and perhaps even new, practice stops short at including ethical and political concerns in relation to the teacher's role. Therefore a dimension of self-reflection needs to be added if the process is to be one that achieves more than technical proficiency. The challenge is to ensure that teachers can exercise professional autonomy and responsibility in interpreting and communicating their theoretical knowledge.

A perception of professional development that moves beyond an epistemological orientation, and is more than technical competence, is one that relates to emancipatory knowledge (Habermas, 1971:208) and engages the cognitive interests of the subject-agent. A knowledge base that constitutes desirable professional development, that will impact positively on the learner will focus primarily on the needs of the learner, and will be critical rather than manipulative. In the case of the problem that concerns this research it will be argued that a mutual process of dialogue and diagnosis is required between the institution and the learner. Such dialogue should acknowledge that knowledge is

culturally bound and fragile. The fragility of the institution's knowledge must be critiqued to disclose whether it has been oppressive. To be emancipatory knowledge must be refashioned and renewed so that it can adequately address and transform the changing circumstances of both the institution and the individual.

A concept of critical professional development, therefore, is one informed by emancipatory knowledge. It encourages learners to question critically and to analyse the principles, and taken-for-granted assumptions, of their knowledge and practice. Such knowledge depends upon learners becoming aware of contradictory influences in their own biographies, and in the corporate history of the group.

1.4 Teacher Life-Cycle

Research by Huberman (1988:123) shows that there is a teacher life-cycle which exhibits a predictable pattern of experiences, perceptions and attitudes in the culture of teaching. The everyday concerns, realities and interaction shape the behaviour of teachers as members of specific age groups and thus generate shared meanings of the world they live in. As well as this phenomenon, which can be a somewhat self-perpetuating aspect of the profession, there is a variety of constraints, for example from time and work commitments, that results in a lack of opportunity for teachers for professional development. Identity with peers, in the events of a shared professional life-cycle, can be used to resist and avoid change (Dale 1988:58) and according to Argyris & Schön (1980:154), 'create a behavioural world in which people have a low sense of effectiveness, self-worth and vitality and learning...'. This work will argue that appropriate professional development is one way of addressing this.

Recent accountability movements and legislation by education authorities (e.g. Beazley, 1993:3-6) have identified what they perceive as the changing role for teachers and have attempted to engage teachers in professional development that will help them examine and change their past practices. As a result of legislation and policy-making '[T]hree approaches have emerged: a professionalist view

stressing professional judgement and self-regulation; an economic rationalist view stressing efficiency and contribution to national economic goals, and a corporatist view stressing the role of the state in ensuring that education serves national goals' (Walker, 1990:142). None of these approaches can be dismissed as irrelevant in a social world where teaching needs to be a profession that exercises self-regulation and where, because of the political nature of education, the consequences of economic management and accountability are inevitable. However, much that needs to be done in the profession may not happen by legislation and the pressure of these current political movements may well support 'conformity and conservation' (Boberg, 1985:69) in teachers, who as a group, tend to be 'bourgeois' (De Young, 1986:82) and measure their professional development by the norms and values of the institution: the ensuing change may be incremental rather than radical. Skilbeck (1983:12) says that teachers cannot be held to be educationally engaged with knowledge that is presented authoritatively for utilitarian purposes. Knowledge that is determined by authority for utilitarian purposes can go unexamined, divorced from 'socially constructed human interests'. Knowledge, in this technocratic sense, is grounded in a technical knowledge constitutive interest (Habermas, 1972); it is isolated from the operative contradictions and tensions in social relationships and it remains separated from the life experiences of the learner and risks legitimating the power and control of the authority (Giroux, 1981:154-155). Teachers, whose professional development is restricted to the acquisition of technocratic knowledge will fail to question and control structures and to reconceptualise their knowledge and will 'fall back on acting from collectively held assumptions' (Buchmann, 1990:6).

1.5 Teacher As Person

The teacher as person is central to a concept of professional development that will encourage, rather than silence, the voice of the teacher. The teacher as a person and the teacher's purpose, as well as the world context of the teacher and

the culture of teaching, are essentials in a framework of professional development which gives teachers the opportunity to 'confront the assumptions and beliefs underlying their practices' (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1992:5). If the teacher's voice is to be heard — in the concept of professional development for which this study argues — then staff development activities *per se* are not synonymous with professional development. Little (1989:170-193) is representative of the literature (Fullan, 1982; Griffin, 1983, Guskey, 1986) that addresses the detailed and complex relationship between staff development and professional development. The very definition of staff development has an expedient end and has a very pragmatic and limited orientation that defines it as 'any activity that is intended partly or primarily to prepare paid staff members for improved performance in present or future roles in the school district...' (Little, 1989:171).

There is research evidence (Fullan, 1982; Harris, 1980; Rowe & Sykes, 1989) that staff development can be a purposeful endeavour that generates change in teachers' attitudes, change in teaching and change in learning outcomes and that the relationship amongst these outcomes of staff development is reciprocal and interdependent. However, research (McLaughlin & Marsh 1978; Harootunian & Yargar, 1980) also shows that teachers' perceptions of successful staff development programmes measure success in relation to specific and concrete application of them to the classroom — a stance that confuses technical solutions and teacher effectiveness with a much broader concept of professional development of the kind that will raise teachers' consciousness about the principles and assumptions of the 'official stock of knowledge' and the social relationships of their unexamined habits and practices (Sachs & Logan, 1990b:476).

Concepts of professional development that have so far been identified are summarised in the mapping sentence in Figure 1 (p.35). The summary identifies the concepts that describe professional development. Central to the description is the concept of the teacher as the one whose preferred values give meaning to life and are integrated into his/her professional practice. Throughout the learner's life-cycle the patterns, perceptions and attitudes must be constantly examined and, if

necessary, revised to take account of cultural and political changes that impinge on teaching. Essential to the concept of professional development, that will be pursued in this research, is the deconstruction of discourses to recognise silences, or inclusions, that have been taken-for-granted. (The importance of such deconstruction is discussed below.) Teaching is increasingly perceived as a multi-stage process synonymous with gaining further academic qualifications to deal with changes in the special discipline content of the profession. These data, in Figure 1 (p.35) will be used later in this work as part of the conceptual framework in respect of the problem that gives focus to this research.

2.0 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CRITICAL THEORY

Many of the philosophical views and epistemological assumptions which shape the theoretical landscape of this study come from critical theory which is committed to analysis of ideologies; to questioning constraining structures and to increasing awareness of contradictions. This study will also take account of poststructuralism which emphasises the indivisibility of knowledge and power and the inseparability of individuals and society. Poststructuralism is of value in this context because of the critiques and insights it offers to critical social science. Before exploring the major concepts of critical theory for what it might contribute to a conceptual framework for a transformative professional development, a brief examination will be made of critical social science from a Habermasian perspective to establish its essential features as well as some of its limits and strengths. This will be followed by an examination of some features of poststructuralism which are relevant to this work. Finally consideration will be given to ways in which poststructuralism and critical theory both critique and complement each other. It should be noted, that for the purposes of this thesis, neither critical theory nor poststructuralism is described or analysed in detail. Rather, the important elements and principles which contribute to the conceptual framework of the thesis are explained.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IS CONCEIVED IN TERMS OF:	
TEACHER AS PERSON with	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ideologies • beliefs • values
LIFE-CYCLE which exhibits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • patterns • perceptions • attitudes
CHANGE that is	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cultural • political • educational
CONTEXTUAL FACTORS related to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • personal freedom • professional autonomy • societal uncertainty • cultural codes
RENEWAL that calls for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adjustment • redefinition • permanent criticism
DECONSTRUCTION OF DISCOURSES that have	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inclusions • exclusions
STAGES of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • formal courses • special discipline content

Figure 1: Concepts of Professional Development

2.1 Critical Social Science

Critical theory is a social science with practical intent where ‘this practical intent is the commitment to render humans the autonomous subjects of their actions’ (Benhabib, 1986:253). Critical theory aims to engage individuals in questioning and analysing their taken-for-granted views of the world and to articulate a critique of the structures of authority and their power. Its concern is to generate critical knowledge and to integrate this with the determination to act towards transforming practices that are unjust or inequitable (Adler & Goodman, 1986; Bell & Schniedewind, 1987; Fay, 1987; Lather, 1986a). Critical theory is, therefore, ‘rooted in the belief that when people come to act on the basis of rational reflection and not as a result of causes that are, as it were, external to them, that they can alleviate... elements of frustration, anxiety, boredom and terror...’ (Fay, 1977:228-229). From Fay’s (1987:31-32) point of view critical social science operates when a group of people engage in a critique of ideology. As a result of this they come to an understanding of the social structures responsible for what has been called ‘false consciousness’ (Geuss, 1981). Lather (1991b:59) explains ideology as ‘a denial of how our common sense way of looking at the world is permeated with meanings that sustain our disempowerment’ Consequently the group that engages in such a critique determines a plan of action that is necessary for transformation.¹

Critical theory is about relationship — about the relationship between the individual and society; about the relationship between action and reflection; about the relationship between interest and knowledge; about the relationship between critical analysis of ideas and ‘liberation from dogmatic dependence’ (Habermas, 1971:208); about the relationship between dialogue and critique of the social order (Agger, 1991:152); about the relationship between theory and practice — about praxis.

¹ Habermas (1974) discussed the relationship between the critique of ideology, enlightenment and action in the Introduction to *Theory and Practice*.

In summary a critical social science sees society as humanly constructed and, in turn, human nature as a collective self-construction. This emphasises the historicity of social structure, processes and meanings and directs attention to the possible world immanent in present formations.

(Comstock, 1982:377)

The Habermasian perspective of critical social science has its critics. One of the criticisms (for instance Groome, 1980:174) relates to the excessive power given by Habermas to critical reason alone to change the world. While Groome acknowledges that 'critical reason is essential for a transforming human praxis' he denies that reason alone is a sufficient condition for transformation. For Groome it is 'the enlightening Spirit and God's grace of discernment [which] is the *a priori* gift by which it takes place'. There is, of course, no room for agreement between Groome's Christian position and Habermas' sole reliance upon rationality. However, despite this difference, both Groome and Habermas acknowledge that human freedom is essential to human existence and human dignity. Therefore the recognition that Habermasian theory gives to critical reason and emancipation is of importance to this study. Habermas can be understood as offering a liberating form of education that questions power relations and leads the learning subjects to a consciousness that can expand and transform their framework of reality.

Because Habermas fails to give his theory 'concrete practical realisation' Bernstein (1976:225) queries whether Habermas' work is practical enough to balance reason and action. A further criticism is of the 'strictly cognitive or mentalist tradition of a principle-based ethics' that is constituted by Habermas' communicative ethics (Hart, 1990:133-134). This tradition neglects dimensions of human action and interaction which cannot be reduced to the 'rational will' of acknowledging no force except that of the better argument' (Habermas, 1975:108).

While the above criticisms draw attention to the limits and limitations of critical theory they do not destroy its value as a tool for social analysis. In essence the contribution of Habermas to a critical social science is the facilitation of a movement away from the notion of the objectivity of the positivists towards

encouraged, authentic dialogue as a way of challenging repression in socio-cultural situations.

2.2 Poststructuralism

Poststructuralists see the individual and society as inseparable and power and knowledge as indivisible. Poststructuralism is, therefore, a radical way of examining the apparent dichotomy between the individual and society and forming an alliance between the individual and society.

Discourse, which is a central concept in the theory of poststructuralism (Foucault, 1980) is used to describe the relationship between power and knowledge. Discourse theory posits that neither knowledge nor power exists as separate entities. Rather, each is produced through the dynamic interplay of persons with each other and their social environment. Knowledge and power are inextricably linked and embedded within systems of social relations which are themselves not essential but are discursively produced and determined. It is through discourse that the 'social production of meaning takes place and... subjectivity is produced and power relations are maintained' (Kenway, 1990:173). The concept of power in Foucault is not necessarily repressive because it does not act directly on people but 'it acts upon their actions' (Foucault, 1982:789); it is neither moral nor immoral but rather amoral. The effects of power, however, may well be repressive since power may maintain discursively produced, but nevertheless, unequal social relationships. Such discourses operate as 'regimes of truth' in a way that does not allow participants to question their taken-for-granted knowledge.

Henriques *et al* (1984:92, 204) offer a critique of poststructuralism that recognises both positive and negative aspects. They support the poststructuralists for removing the individual-society dichotomy by 'deconstructing the monolithic, unitary nature of power in the social domain' and 'displacing the individual as a simple agent' of social production. However, they argue that this also creates a

problem because the subject exists, as ‘a set of multiple and contradictory positions or subjectivities’ and becomes ‘mechanically positioned’ through the determinism of discourse without the possibility for effecting or resisting change. Jansen (1989:2-3), in her critique, applauds the potential of poststructuralism to give voice to biases and silences in discourse through its ‘fully human modes of discourse and rationality’. However, she considers that the deconstruction of poststructuralism lacks ‘praxiological intent’ and fails to employ strategies for reconstructing socially structured practices that have been silenced.

For the purposes of this research poststructuralism acts as a reminder to scrutinise, and continually question, the taken-for-granted patterns of biases and omissions in discourses which constitute objects ‘and in the practice of doing so conceal their own conventions’ (Foucault, 1974:49). This is an important point to note, in relation to this research, because it can be argued from history that the Catholic church has often controlled access to ideas and practices and consequently controlled what was internalised from its discourses.

The challenge to interrogate and contest the knowledge-power relationship of such discourses is supported by the poststructuralist view of history as discontinuous. However this very aspect of poststructuralism can be seen as a cause of relativism ‘when all truths are seen as the *effects* of the discourses and thus when all discourses are equivalent with regard to their status of truth’ (Henriques *et al.*, 1984:109).

The contribution that poststructuralism makes to this thesis is explored through examining the possibilities of the complementarity of critical theory and poststructuralism.

2.3 Complementarity of Critical Social Science and Poststructuralism

While ‘critical theorists argue there is no end of ideology and no part of culture where ideology does not permeate ... poststructuralism argues that no discourse is innocent of the will to power’ (Lather 1991a:11-13). This attempt, by

Lather, to capture the essence of the two theoretical perspectives explains why there is potential for creative tension and complementarity between the two perspectives that will be useful for this study. The underlying philosophic principles of the two traditions in fact, reflect that there is as much to unite as to divide the positions because both share a 'common view of the human person-in-community, constituted by relationship to other persons [and] to social structures' (Slee, 1993:335). However, in contrast to the rationalism of critical theory 'poststructuralist thought is not bound to reason but to discourse' (Ellsworth, 1989:304). Therefore neither the critical nor the poststructuralist stance alone serves transformative professional development well enough because both are problematic — the rationalism of critical theory by constituting 'rational competence as a series of exclusions' and poststructuralism by its 'dependence on discourses ... about the world that are admittedly partial' (Ellsworth, 1989:304). The possibility of a relativist position where all 'discourses are equivalent with regard to their status as truth' (Henriques *et al*, 1984:109) is a further aspect of concern in the poststructuralist position.

Critical theory that is informed by, and takes into account, poststructuralism has a concern for critical, emancipatory and transformative paradigms that critique and challenge the power-knowledge configuration that is culturally constructed, taken-for-granted and sometimes submerged or silent. It seeks a reciprocal relation between theory and practice that grows out of context-embedded data that will 'move people from articulating what they know to theorising about what they know' (Lather 1991b:62) and taking action. In essence its fundamental concern is with praxis 'which is the self-reflective activity through which we make the world' (Lather 1991b:11). It is a discourse that is dialogical and democratic and focuses on analysis and evaluation of contextual situations with a commitment to generating an understanding that is beyond the level of superficial objective appearances by exposing hidden individual and social relationships. Critical theory articulates a critique of the current social order and is 'a philosophical apprehension of society as a totality of humanly alterable processes, not as a

plurality of reified fetishes, and in a historical not abstractly timeless way' (Quinton, 1974:51). It is a discourse whose 'authority is provisional, contingent primarily on its ability to hear voices not yet heard and to provide for the sustained and critical examination of realities that exceed the grasp of already institutionalised discourses' (Brodkey, 1987:139).

Both critical theory, from a Habermasian perspective, and Foucault's poststructuralism aim to address emancipatory practice and expose hidden social relations and both approaches have been shown to have strengths and weaknesses. However, this work, as previously noted, will be mainly within the critical theory paradigm because it is that paradigm which offers a stronger social, moral and ethical vision for emancipatory knowledge and critical praxis as defined by a participant's own needs. It challenges norms that serve to legitimate existing values and beliefs that dominate an individual's understanding. Furthermore it advocates knowledge that is constituted by historical-social conditions. The contribution of poststructuralism, to this work, will be its concept of discourse in the sense that discourse embodies 'meanings and social relationships' and allows for the paradox that meaning arises, not from language, but from institutional practice and power relations (Ball, 1990:2). Poststructuralism perceives knowledge as never final but as constituted to give meaning and reality in a new relationship between individuals and society.

3.0 CONCEPTS FOR A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Fay (1987:89) refers to the educative process of social theory as a means of achieving a clearer meaning of self and society and of becoming different people in a changed society. Fay's perception of the contribution of critical theory to change suggests that the main tenets of critical theory can be explored for concepts in relation to transformative professional development. In this section, therefore, some of the major concepts of critical theory will be examined to determine how each contains criteria pertaining to transformative professional development.

Finally a summary, derived from the theory, will be constructed as a way of disclosing a systematic composition of the characteristics of transformative professional development.

3.1 Critical Knowledge

Habermas (1972, 1974) postulates that knowledge is shaped by socio-historical conditions and is the outcome of human interests that generate knowledge that is technical, practical and emancipatory. Technical interest is concerned with information as a means for controlling the environment and is derived from the empirical-analytical sciences; it is concerned with the facts and concepts of special disciplines and it relates to effectiveness and efficiency in work in a way that facilitates control through instrumental action. Practical knowledge is founded on historical-hermeneutic science and is derived from an interest in communicative action from dialogue and understanding of the substantive content of one's culture and tradition and aims to achieve consensual validation for one's own assertions; it is knowledge that is interpretive and explanatory and makes links between culture and the individual's frames of meaning. Emancipatory knowledge, from critical analysis and self-reflection 'is at once intuition and emancipation, comprehension and liberation from dogmatic dependence' (Habermas, 1971:208) and is intent on freedom and social action and on preventing knowledge from becoming static. Van Manen (1977:226) speaks of this as 'critical knowledge' that is directed to praxis and aims at 'emancipatory practical action, self-determination and liberation'. Lovat's (1992a:10) comment about the Habermasian perspective of emancipatory knowledge is that

In Habermas' terms one does not know in a true sense, however, until one knows in the way impelled by the cognitive interest in emancipation, in being free, including free to know that what one knows is true, non-coercive and the result of personal and informed attachment. This is a critical form of knowledge born of self-reflection.

An analysis of Habermas' three domains of knowledge implies that critical knowledge offers an epistemological basis for a reconceptualisation of professional development. Because critical knowledge is constituted by emancipatory interest it is a development of critical analysis of ideas and propositions and it will, therefore, 'face the danger of rampant subjectivity' (Lather, 1986b:259) by increasing the individual's awareness of contradictions in everyday understandings of knowledge that has been produced culturally and historically. However, knowledge that is truly interactive and contextualised and authentically critical will go beyond 'any narrow concern with subjective meanings in order to acquire an emancipatory knowledge of the objective framework within which communication and social action occur' (Carr & Kemmis, 1983:136): it will have a commitment to identify and rectify distortions and effect a synthesis of individual needs and social justice. It follows then that such knowledge is not purely for the individual but one that has a role in reconstructing the individual and society. As a co-participant, in the life and work of society, the learner 'pursues the true and the good in transforming and being transformed by society' by mediating understanding and challenging structural factors (Kemmis *et al*, 1983:11).

From an examination of critical knowledge some of the criteria for its acquisition, and of its characteristics, are identified as an interactive process of critique and collaboration between the individual and society. Such a critique presumes that knowledge is not available in absolute terms and is 'socially constituted, subject to constant refinement, growth and change' (Inkster, 1988:156) and is directed to an understanding of reality accompanied by a willingness to transform that reality. The goal is not merely to establish a cause-effect relationship but to understand the contextual nature of knowledge as a social reality and 'to seek rather than necessarily find ... what lies beyond the totally rational' (Lovat, 1992a:13).

Outcomes in the specialised knowledge that is related to the technical, practical and emancipatory domains of learning are all important for professional

development. The technical will bring new criteria for understanding ideas and efficiently implementing such things as practices, rules and laws. The practical will be interpretive of past practices and critical of established answers and capable of effecting expansion; the emancipatory knowledge will be non-alienating and reconstructive of past practices with a commitment to liberation and action, marked by freedom and justice, and to facing the future rather than maintaining the past – a future that itself will need to be refashioned and renewed ‘to address adequately those shifting conditions and circumstances that are its ground’ (Solomon-Godeau, 1988:204).

The knowledge of teachers has often been passively received from culture-bound texts and discourses that have been unconsciously assimilated into their specific knowledge as normative. Such knowledge can sometimes be experienced as dysfunctional and alienating. Professional development, therefore calls for the learners to be active in interpreting and negotiating knowledge that is in harmony with their own conceptual schemes and is constituted from new criteria for assessing and refining one’s personal perception of knowledge. The non-static nature of knowledge will demand that any new position is not seen as permanent and absolute but rather as a passage that produces ‘an awareness of the complexity, contingency and fragility of historical forms and events’ (Foucault, 1983:135).

When these insights are applied to professional development it follows that by pursuing critically the content of their professional development learners come to a relationship of autonomy and responsibility. This leads them to articulate their own knowledge as a transformative experience from actively participating as agents with a ‘measure of personal independence and initiative towards sociocultural situations’ (Groome, 1991:103).

Critical knowledge is presented in Figure 2 (p.54) as one of the major tenets of critical theory that characterise transformative professional development. With critical knowledge learners discover the reality of the socially constructed data of their consciousness. They move from the information of their special discipline to

understanding and synthesising it and finally claiming from it the ideas and practices that are emancipatory and life-giving.

3.2 Critical Dialogue

The concept of critical dialogue is used here as a broad brush term for examining insights about the relationship between the individual and society and the relationship of power and knowledge in critical theory and poststructuralism. In respect of critical dialogue Habermas' underlying theory of 'dominance-free forms of social relations ... [is an attempt to speak] ... of forms of life which are not power-bound, but which are based on and allow for authentic consensus among all those concerned about what norms shall guide their actions' (Hart, 1990:126). Likewise in respect of critical dialogue Foucault's interrogation of the power-knowledge relationship is a challenge to the taken-for-granted social relations constructed by discourse and its problem of exclusions and inclusions. While both perspectives are criticised — Habermas, because it is 'self-contradictory and contradicted by the conditions and constraints of real communication processes' (Agger, 1981) and Foucault's for its pessimism (Gore, 1992) — both have insights to contribute to the concept of critical dialogue as a process that characterises transformative professional development.

Habermas' (1979, 1984) idea of critical dialogue is inherent in his concern with 'dominance relations' (Hart 1990:129) in his primary categories of communicative and purposive-rational action within the framework of his critical theory which is a process to 'investigate and denounce social and individual damages caused by power' (Hart, 1990:128). It follows that critical dialogue is related to Habermas' (1984) three closely-related dimensions of communicative action, namely the social-cultural, where 'distortions can be investigated in respect to ideologies or value and belief systems'; the interpersonal, where 'norms and normative systems establish self-perpetuating forms of power-bound, distorted human interaction'; and the subjective, where 'unconscious motivations or

repressed needs' of the individual create a problem of internal power (Hart, 1990:131-133). Thus the thrust of critical dialogue in Habermas is to nurture an understanding of non-individual causes of power in historically-socially constructed knowledge that has settled in individual consciousness. This points to the need for a critique of both the external and internal factors with the aim of effecting mutual relationship and responsibility between the individual and society. Such mutual relationship recognises reciprocal expectations and power for individual and collective action to change relationships as a result of an 'honest and fair conversation of partners in quest of truth' (Groome, 1991:108). Such an 'honest and fair conversation' suggests that critical dialogue has the potential to promote a relationship between knowledge and action and to negotiate meaning and purpose within the framework of both the individual and society. It discloses ways that the power-knowledge configuration can be addressed contextually and relationally to contribute to transformative professional development.

For Foucault (1977:100-102) the concept of power-knowledge is 'an inseparable configuration' (Ball, 1990:5) in which power is always present in knowledge and knowledge is always present in power. In Foucault's theory power is not a commodity to be owned but something that is exercised in a way that is not necessarily immoral or repressive but rather amoral. Foucault proposes, in relation to knowledge, that it can fix meaning and reason; it is not about either subjective nor objective truth and is often locked into discourses as 'regimes of truth' (Foucault, 1980:133) that do not necessarily challenge the control of repressive and dominating power. In essence inherent in the task of Foucault's power-knowledge configuration is a challenge, not to change dominant society nor discourses, but to change the system of relations. Foucault's analysis points the way to a radical way of arriving at knowledge while at the same time raising questions about the possibility of a guaranteed outcome. However, in spite of its tendency to nihilism and relativism Foucault's contribution is a warning against an individual-society dichotomy and for that reason offers valuable insights into ways

for professional development to take into account how professional knowledge operates in various ways as 'regimes of truth'.

Inasmuch as critical dialogue can give access to an understanding of power and human interaction and generate an awareness of how structurally constructed meanings and realities can be mediated it will give learners a new relationship with their own contexts and a sense of their own power. In this case dialogue will be a 'source of the critique of the existing order... and ... a model of all possible nondominating relationships' (Agger, 1991:152) and, therefore, ultimately a way of reassessing the system of relations between the individual and society. Transformative professional development will be facilitated by critical dialogue that makes the individual aware of the dilemmas that underlie practice and generates an 'awareness ...[that]... is a way back to values that inform that practice' (Butt and Olson, 1983:7).

In summary (Figure 2:p.54) critical dialogue is about examining relationships between the individual and society and between knowledge and power. It leads learners to a new relationship within their own context and a sense of their own power.

3.3 Critical Consciousness

... [E]ducation must be an instrument of transforming action, as a political praxis at the service of permanent human liberation. This does not happen only in the consciousness of people but presupposes a radical change of structures in which process consciousness will itself be transformed.

(Freire, 1984:545)

Critical consciousness is the essence of Freire's concept of conscientization that 'energizes participants towards knowing reality in order to transform it' (Lather, 1991b:66). In employing conscientization Freire's emphasis is on education that addresses the learners in the context of their personal and historical relationships and promotes human emancipation 'for a new future that is a transformation of the present and its past' (Groome, 1980:9). This points to an

education that is concerned with critical reflection on present reality and with decisions about shaping a new future. In employing conscientization Freire went beyond working solely on the learners' expressed needs and was more concerned with the causes of the needs so that learners could reorder realities by recognising the constraints that masked the possibility of a new reality; education, for Freire (1974:23) is essentially about a critical approach to reality. The process involves making problematic the taken-for-granted practices, and the expectations that are constituted by those practices, through becoming critically conscious of how and why we have defined the problem and ourselves in relation to it. The process is 'dialogical, political, cultural action that fosters critical consciousness, transforming action and cultural synthesis' (Lee, 1988:15-16).

A critical consciousness of one's understanding of self and of social contexts takes seriously Freire's claim for making a person's historicity the starting point of learning that generates conscientization as 'a critical unveiling of, and insertion into, one's sociohistorical context' (Butkus, 1989:575) which Freire (1972:87) claims brings learners to a new state of awareness and objective reality. The criticism made by Moran (1974:93-94) that Freire's approach to education is a new form of individualism can to some extent be understood because Freire uses the individual's felt needs as a point of departure. However, the individual's needs and perception of reality are just that — a point of departure to transform reality with liberating alternatives for both the individual and society. Ultimately Freire (1972:76-81) aims, through dialogue, that presupposes critical thinking on past constructive practices, to engage the learner in action and reflection (praxis) that is a 'way of both transforming the individual's entire life context as well as a mechanism for restructuring the society' (Wilson & Burket, 1989:8) in which the learner is situated.

At the heart of Freire's concept of conscientization is his theory of learning as a process concerned with moving from one level of consciousness to another. At the lowest level of consciousness which Freire calls *intransitive consciousness* persons are almost ahistorical in their consciousness which leaves them unaware of

their relationship with the sociohistorical situation that has formed them. At the second level of *semi-intransitivity* or *magical consciousness* learners passively internalise the negative values of the dominant culture and have an excessive emotional dependence on those who are able to supply interpretations that are unquestioningly accepted because of discourse. Freire's third level of consciousness is the *semi-transitive* or *naive consciousness*. At this level learners engage in questioning the situation: however, the sense of power over their own lives is a reflected power of the popular leaders. Because the content of consciousness at all levels is the view one has of one's existence in the social world it is only at the fourth level of *heightened critical consciousness*, which is achieved through a process of conscientization, that a person creates a new reality (Freire, 1973:16-22). Freire's concept of change is committed to bringing learners to this final level of critical consciousness where education 'is not merely passing on absolute truths but questioning, defining, observing, classifying, generalising, verifying, applying, valuing, and deciding upon which criteria are to be applied to knowledge' (Young, 1971; Apple, 1979 in Elias 1986:124).

Essential to this is the 'intrinsic connection between tradition and transformation' (Boys 1989:203) and the consequent need for learners to access tradition critically in order to create a future. The past, or received tradition, does not figure largely in Freire's theory and this raises a question of the extent to which Freire's concepts are applicable to the professional development of Christian educators for whom a critical appropriation of tradition is important. However, although Freire was basically concerned with critical reflection on present reality and with decisions about shaping a new future, Elias (1986:125) argues that Freire (1973:155) was in fact interested in how a critical entry could be made into the tradition that would result in 're-entering the world through the entering into of the previous understandings which may have been arrived at naively because reality was not examined as a whole.'

The very fact that Freire calls for 're-entering' the situation, after false assumptions have been examined, confirms that critical consciousness, that results

in reappropriation of the tradition, is called for as part of transformation. Freire's call for re-entering the situation, with a sense of a new reality depends, within the principles of conscientization, on a free and uncoerced communication where learners can come to terms with silences and distorted truth that they have internalised and develop the 'power to perceive critically the way they exist in the world with which and in which they find themselves; ... [and] come to see the world not as a static reality, but as a reality in process, in transformation' (Freire, 1970:70-71). To relate this to professional development, that is transformative of the person and institutional practices, argues for a process that utilises 'the dominant themes and issues embedded in a group's present experience which can then be placed in dialogue with whatever information, input, or tradition is being made accessible for them' (Butkus, 1989:580). Thus the process of professional development, from Freire's stance about learning, is one stimulated by experience and characterised by dialogue that stimulates new knowledge and gives access to the tradition.

As one of the concepts of transformative professional development critical consciousness (Figure 2:p.54) is a dialectical activity between the learners and their personal and historical relationships. It develops a power of critical analysis that decodes the reality of the present and past and gives direction for the future.

3.4 Critical Praxis

One of the most important features of critical theory is critical praxis which 'combines collaboration in the process of critique with the political determination to act to overcome contradictions in the rationality and justice of social action and social institutions' (Carr & Kemmis, 1983:144). Habermas' (1972:198) concept of critical praxis and its relationship of theory and practice, and of action and reflection, each of which is dialectically influenced and transformed by the other, is particularly important in relation to transformative professional development. It is the questioning and discerning in dialogue that constitutes praxis and its potential

for action to effect professional development that is transformative of self and society.

Within the perspective of critical praxis the concept of critical reflection constitutes an integral component and is fundamental to a framework of learning committed to transforming and liberating the reality of self and society. Allen (1992b:273) develops a theory of critical reflection as an ongoing developmental learning process that highlights a search for meaning and links theory and practice. This suggests that critical reflection will be an exercise that is about interaction and not one that is restricted to ascertaining the causes of, nor the preservation of, prevailing patterns in the social order. The orientation is not merely towards awareness of preconceived assumptions about knowledge but it is an orientation towards action. Critical reflection as a self-conscious process, as well as a social critique, calls for dialectical attention to both the 'personal and social genesis' of attitudes, belief and behaviour in an attempt to 'create beyond them' (Groome, 1980:172, 174). This results in a form of mutual understanding and practical action that uncovers both the source and consequences of the contradictions or justice in social institutions that bear on transformation.

Aoki (1983) contends that critical reflection is making conscious the unconscious by disclosing assumptions and implications for action. When teachers, who have been raised in a technical-rational approach use the power of critical reflection to examine their previously unexamined practices, and come to recognise that the aim of critique is not abstract theory but the indivisible relationship between theory and practice, they have moved beyond the empirical-analytic and hermeneutic paradigms to an emancipatory knowledge. This, then, is praxis which is directed towards the sort of action that is basic to a transformed self-understanding and to a critical reconstruction of social structures that are more just.

From a critical frame Van Manen (1977:226-227) outlines 'levels of reflectivity of deliberate rationality, associated with corresponding interpretations of the practical'. The first level of reflectivity focuses on techniques and instrumental knowledge — means rather than ends and involves a pragmatic form of deliberate

rationality. When this is found constraining for teachers the need for a higher level is recognised. The second level is governed by criteria from the teacher's 'value commitments' that interpret the relationship between principles and practice as discerned by the teacher. The goal of the third level (critical reflection) is freedom from delusion and it challenges the worth of the knowledge for society on the 'basis of justice, equality and freedom': at this highest level critical reflection is related to emancipatory action.

Lather, (1991b:267) proposes that:

Critical reflection then is more than relaying subjective self-understandings that are personally biased 'truths'; it is discovering those influences that have distorted the interpretation of what is 'truth'.

Praxis, as 'a self-reflexive critique that turns back on itself even as it promotes a realignment in the forces of power that construct social relations', (McKerrow, 1989:91) integrates the power-knowledge configuration in society. Hence critical praxis is a 'mode of transformative activity' (Benhabib, 1986:67) that 'opens new possibilities for thought and action' (Rajchman, 1985:4) and by which ethical values are reordered.

It follows from the principles of critical praxis and critical reflection, which are integral to it, that teachers are capable through critical reflectivity of recognising and questioning taken-for-granted aspects of constraint that come from ethical, political and cultural domains. As a result of the process a form of consciousness arises that can nourish the transformation of self and, in turn, engage the learner in acts of reconstruction of their socio-historical context.

Critical praxis, as a conceptual frame for transformative professional development (Figure 2: p.54), can be said to be a process of critical reflection and social critique. It operates with political determination to discover and make conscious, the contradictions from power-knowledge relationships and orientates the learner to action.

From the examination of the major concepts of critical theory the criteria pertaining to a concept of transformative professional development are represented in Figure 2 (p.54).

4.0 SUMMARY AND SIGNIFICANCE FOR THESIS

The demand for ongoing professional development, by society and by employers, has become mandatory if teachers want to adjust to a new role and demonstrate an ability to respond to change. Hence, the process of professional development calls for growth in competence and maturity in personal and professional knowledge and understanding. If professional development is an exercise of bureaucratic control it will serve an institution's needs for knowledge that it can manage and control. This knowledge, however, may be in conflict with knowledge that aims at genuine self-understanding and emancipatory knowledge: the knowledge needed is one in which the cognitive interests of the learner will give direction to the epistemological orientation of the activity and is generated by a consciousness of the need for mutuality between the relations of the individual and the system. It has been shown that the emerging view of transformative professional development perceives teachers as reflective agents who become aware of social-historical factors that shape their experiences. This work will argue that a professional development for religious educators is accompanied by the obligation of professional self-criticism to ensure that the epistemology of religious education is disabused of hegemonic ideologies and unexamined tradition. This work will further argue that professional development, shaped by critical social science, will help the religious educator engage in rational assessment of the evidence of the substantive content of the Christian tradition and interpret it in dialogue with the Christian community in a way that builds a personal emancipatory religious truth. Van Manen (1977:222) characterises such truth as 'social wisdom', free from repressive interests, with the possibility of new and undistorted ways of life.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMES	TRANSFORMATIVE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
<p>CRITICAL KNOWLEDGE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is identified as an interactive process of critique and collaboration between the individual and society • is marked by freedom and justice in facing a future that will itself need to be refashioned and renewed • is committed to identifying and rectifying distortions and effecting a synthesis between individual needs and social justice
<p>CRITICAL DIALOGUE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is a critique of both the external and internal factors with the aim of effecting mutual relationship and responsibility between the individual and society • is a challenge not to change dominant society nor discourse but to deconstruct inclusions and exclusions in the discourse
<p>CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is an education that addresses the learners in the context of their personal and historical relationships and promotes emancipatory action • is an education that engages dialogue to stimulate new knowledge and give access to the present and past
<p>CRITICAL PRAXIS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is essentially constituted by critical reflection that relates theory and practice • is an orientation not merely towards an awareness of preconceived assumptions about knowledge but is an orientation towards action

Figure 2: Characteristics of Transformative Professional Development

It is this concept of truth that Habermas (1970:372) argues is impossible apart from conditions of freedom and justice.

Throughout this chapter points have been made, and are summarised in Figure 1 (p.35) and Figure 2 (p.54), that show how professional development is conceived, and how transformative professional development is characterised. In essence the literature argues that by using critical theory criteria, informed by poststructuralism, for assessment of knowledge that is constructive, interpretive and reconstructive of past practices and contradictions, the learner can engage in an activity that is both deconstructive and reintegrative of past, present and future reality.

Although in this chapter an exploration has been made of the ways in which transformation is theoretically possible the question that obviously arises is: does such transformation occur in graduate professional development programmes? This question became the focus for this thesis and was conceived specifically as an examination of data to address the issue of whether

participants, specifically religious educators, in graduate professional development courses, demonstrate communicative practices that can be interpreted as indicative of transformation.

CHAPTER 2: ADULT DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING

1.0 INTRODUCTION

To exist humanly is to *name* the world, to change it. Once named, the world in its turn appears to the namers as a problem and requires of them a new *meaning*. Men are not built in silence, but in a word, in work, in action/reflection.

(Freire, 1970:76)

In this quote from Freire there is a sense of a transforming human praxis oriented to questioning and challenging contextual silences in the lived history of the learner in order to reflect on experience, interpret it and name reality. This concept of conscientization as 'a mode of transformative activity' (Benhabib, 1986:67) relates to one aspect of the argument of this study, namely that through the process of graduate studies in religious education individuals experience, as one outcome of their studies, the disintegration and reintegration of past and present human growth. Hence the process of professional development calls for growth in competence and maturity in personal as well as professional knowledge. It also calls for understanding that engages the learner in an activity that is both deconstructive and reintegrative of past, present and future realities to become 'renewed, transfigured in another pattern' (Eliot: *Little Gidding*).

Through these processes of disintegration and reintegration professionals are able to make meaning of their experiences — both personal-biological and cultural-sociological. The process of meaning-making is central to learning. Clark & Wilson (1991:85), however, remind us that learning (meaning-making) 'is always an interpretation from a contextually defined perspective'. It is an exploration of this process of learning (meaning-making) that comprises this chapter.

Chickering's (1981:2) assertion that 'adult development should be the unifying idea of higher education' is accepted as a starting point for this

exploration. It is acknowledged, however, that human development is enormously complex and is directly influenced by multiple contextual factors. It is, therefore, brought into focus through many lenses because changes in any area of life 'closely influence and are influenced by other areas' (Wortley & Amatea, 1982:478). Such a view of human development claims that the changes in the behavioural and mental processes, through one's life span, contribute to an understanding of adult learning.

It follows, therefore, and will be argued later, that learners who pursue graduate studies stand to gain not merely career status but 'sometimes expand and develop a new inner self' (Daloz, 1986:49) from a qualitative developmental change which impacts on how they think about and understand themselves, the world and their role in that world (Clark, 1993b:31).

2.0 PERSPECTIVES ON ADULT DEVELOPMENT

It can be argued that there are 'successive levels of complexity or maturity in development' (Tennant, 1990:227), and it would be overly simplistic to claim that change is regulated merely by normative stages of development. However, it is also acknowledged that both the stage and function developmental theories offer insights that relate to the argument of this work. The evidence, however, that more effectively takes the argument of this research forward acknowledges the contextual and dialogical perspectives of theories of development. This section will explore how these perspectives on adult development advance the argument of this study.

2.1 Adult Development and Adulthood

Development means that there is direction but not a point of termination; there is improvement but never a finished state; there are ends within human activity but no end external to human activity.

(Moran, 1991:150)

It is not the present writer's intention to engage in a detailed analysis of the two domains of research in adult development, namely the intellectual/cognitive and the personality/role development. Evidence will be used, where necessary, from both traditions because '... all address the issues of growth and decline in the adult years ... [as well as] the relevance of the contextualisation of knowledge and the impact and role of accumulated experience' (Tennant, 1990:231). The intention is to consider the development of adults, not in terms of discrete theories, but as a collage of macro-theory and micro-theory that attempts to detail the level of interaction of individuals with the total context of the inner and outer forces that impinge on their life and results in an increased capacity in the areas of development. The task, then, of this section is to review the concepts for a balanced approach to adult development from competing, but not necessarily contradictory, perspectives within the traditions. This perhaps smacks of a lack of theoretical specificity but '... current research suggests that in the immediate future life-span developmental psychology will not be identified with a single theory' (Baltes, 1987:612).

Broadly speaking research supports the fact that adults, as they move through life, are affected by physical, psychosocial and social patterns that are related to changing needs, interests and responses (e.g. Erikson, 1978; Havighurst, 1972; Levinson, 1978). Some theories present empirical evidence for a typical sequence of development while others 'posit a normative progression from simple, more infantile and less adaptable stages to more complex, adult, adaptable stages' (Stokes, 1982:27). The theories do not ignore the uniqueness of the individual nor the existential situation of the individual: they imply rather that personal maturity is always in the process of being achieved; it dynamically continues and is never an accomplished fact. An analysis of the theories also implies that a human growth pattern is not separate from biological and psychological phenomena nor from external influences. In essence the theories suggest, rather, that human development is made up of fully integrated past and present existential factors

through which adults come to terms with tension and conflicts that are productive of change.

Many adults still operate on the assumption that adulthood is a stable condition or a plateau that follows childhood. This assumption obscures the fact that 'a paradigmatic change has taken place in our understanding of adulthood' (Confoy, 1982c:69) as a process of active and systematic change. McKenzie (1982:85-99) explains this paradigmatic change in terms of a transformation of consciousness — a concept that is pivotal to this study. McKenzie details the change as a phenomenon that is a result of 'secularization, sophistication, individualization and liberalization.' He maintains that the contemporary adults, through a transformation of consciousness, have a new orientation towards reality, act with greater perceptual powers, are more competent in analysing their own life and experience relationships in a new way. Most adults no longer lack education, nor are they bound by immediate experiences that limit them to the culture-bound life, (and, for the research participants in this study, the culture-bound values and norms of Christianity) that they have assimilated. 'The cumulative result of this over ... centuries has been the development of a consciousness in many adults that is both sophisticated and critical' (McKenzie, 1982:95). Adults today will less frequently take the party line and will more readily exercise choice of personal values in shaping their own knowledge, values and beliefs. In respect of this present research the transformation of consciousness is an important factor because adult members of the Catholic church are also now more likely to exercise this choice in religious matters.

2.2 Adult Development as Dialectical and Contextualist

The concept of the dialectical process of development (Daloz, 1986) presumes that change integrates the old and the new through a process of relationships and thus presumes that life is not a static reality. As such the dialectical development of the adult stresses internal as well as external

contradictions, and the consequent struggles to synthesise these positions are seen as an intrinsic part of being human where:

[D]evelopment proceeds through the resolution of contradictions and the eventual emergence of new contradictions. This conception is one of an active agent in his world who creates and is created by it. (Okun, Fisk & Toppenberg, 1978:318)

Important to this work is the image of adults as active agents who create and are created by their world. This suggests a symbiotic relationship between the interests of self and the world: a conception of socially-constructed subjectivity rather than an irreducible subjectivity of interests. The value of this concept is that it accommodates the possibility of constant reflection 'over self-understanding and insight which may lead to reimagining the self' (Gooden, 1982:88) in the inevitable crises of life and within a social context. This removes the dichotomy between the individual and society and opens up a perspective of divergence and multiplicity between a developing person and a developing society. This perspective is an important one in relation to one aspect of the problem that concerns this research. The question is: to what extent will it be possible for the research participants to enjoy positions of divergence and multiplicity in the Catholic church?

Most theories of adult development speak of it 'as a sequential series of adaptations to the interaction between the organism and its environment' (Daloz, 1986:65). There is, however, 'some degree of radicalism' (Baltes, 1987:612) in recent work in the study of lifespan development which argues for conceiving of development as contextualist (Dannefer & Perlmutter, 1990). This perspective implies it is a 'multidimensional process that has both individual and social constituents' (Clark, 1993a:53) that directly influence and shape development. Recent theory posits the relevance of the contextualisation of knowledge; it also posits that a complex of multiple environmental, intrapersonal and intrapsychic factors has a greater impact on development than differences in biological or psychological phenomena, chronological age or psychosocial expectations.

Contextualism as a paradigm of development (Dixson, 1986; Lerner & Kauffman, 1985) emerged from an interest in Marxist and Hegelian thought and follows the work of Riegel (1973). The contextual position argues that human beings are socially and historically interactive: contextual development, therefore, is about the concrete actions of the individual in a concrete world: it is about a changing individual in a changing world. The theory takes into account the transactions between the individual and society and as such is in harmony with the critical theory paradigm of this study.

Riegel (1976:696) offers, in contrast to Piaget's theory of cognitive development, a dialectical interpretation of human development, as an ongoing process, that emphasises the dynamic tension that exists between adults and their life experiences. In Riegel's long-term conception of dialectics the concern is with 'developmental changes in the individual and with historical changes in society ... an orientation [which] points at the necessary interdependence of both'. Riegel argued that development in adulthood was the consequence of both inner-biological change and cultural-sociological change and his approach aimed to synthesise the theory of internal change, emerging from the psychological tradition, with the sociological tradition and its concerns with external change.

In Riegel's orientation the phenomenon of development occurs when there is asynchrony between the patterns of change in the inner-biological and the cultural-sociological domains: development, then, is the product of the resolution of internal contradictions. Riegel's theory focuses on contradiction rather than identity and the contradictory conditions are to be regarded not from a fatalistic point of view but rather as times of crisis and opportunity which 'represent constructive confrontation leading to new developments' (Riegel, 1976:693) in the individual and in the history of society. In the dialectical interpretation of development dissonance and conflict are essential features to allow new questions and doubts to arise and cause continuous change. The value of Riegel for the theoretical underpinning of this work is his dialectical conception of the person-in-community as constituted by relationship between the person and society.

It follows that a dialectical image of the human person accommodates the image of a learner who is consistently confronted by a need for tolerance and a capacity for dealing with ambiguity and whose professional development calls for adjustment, redefinition and permanent criticism (see Figure 1: p.35). It is important to note that the research participants of this study live not only in a socio-cultural environment of society but also in a church that is rapidly changing and constantly impacting on them and their careers as religious educators.

2.3 Individual-Society Dialectic in Stage Theory

Insights from Erikson will be used as one example of what the constructive developmentalists offer to the argument that context plays a significant role in human development. Erikson's work is important here because, as Buss (1979:327) claims, he is 'probably the most successful revisionist in offering a psychosocial theory of development'. It is, therefore, Erikson's position, aligned with revisionism, that is valuable to this present work.

At the outset it is acknowledged that the concept of contextual development is problematic in all the developmental theories which emanate from a psychological tradition that focuses primarily on the individual apart from contextual factors within which the individual is situated. Erikson's theory, however, is concerned with the historical dimension of the individual-society relationship and thus 'can be interpreted at least to some extent according to a dialectical model or within a contextualist perspective' (Allman, 1983:114) — a claim that can be substantiated by an examination of the principal elements of Erikson's theory.

Erikson's theory is usually described as a psychosocial model of ego development and it identifies eight successive stages of maturity in development that move onwards and upwards through a path that is universal, sequential and hierarchical. Each of the stages has a negative as well as a positive component (e.g. Intimacy vs. Isolation) and they identify responses to crises in the life-cycle of

an individual, and are representative of differing ego functions, in which a new dimension of social interaction becomes possible: they are not tied to biological age *per se* but to factors that are both internal and external to the individual. Erikson proposes that the stages of ego development result from the interaction of the individual and society: ‘... the social context introduces crucial issues with which the individual must deal if development is to proceed.

As Erikson (1963:282) himself acknowledges, the very genesis of his theory was ‘to conceptualise matters of identity at the very time in history when they become a problem’. His theory took into account the new historical realities confronting the individual in new socio-cultural roles and responsibility. Thus Erikson viewed development as two-dimensional where the development of the individual is parallel to, and also interpenetrates, the social evolution of society and where the stages of individual development correspond with stages of social development (Buss, 1979:325). As already noted the participants of this research are affected, not only by stages of development in society but also by stages of changes in the Catholic church – hence the significance, of this aspect of Erikson’s theory, for this work.

There are some problems related to Erikson’s interpretation of the role of society *vis-à-vis* the individual. He criticised society for its alienating structures and yet at the same time saw it as supportive of an individual’s development. The thrust of Erikson’s theory towards integration of the individual and society has been charged as conformist (Jacoby, 1975; Roazen, 1976) because it appeared to give unqualified support to the *status quo* of society and the role it plays in the individual outcomes of the various stages. On the other hand his developmental concepts arose out of his primary concern with the individual life course (Levinson, 1986:3).

Erikson emphasises that life means constant change and that there is no guarantee that a particular issue previously confronted at one stage in life will not reappear later and need new solutions. It is likely that the stage of Intimacy *vs.* Isolation and the stage of Generativity *vs.* Self-absorption characterise the functions

of the ego development discernible in the research participants of this study: these are the stages adults are likely to negotiate and renegotiate in order to establish new orientations for themselves and their social world.

2.4 Development: Deconstruction of Inclusions and Exclusions

Kegan's (1982) constructive-developmental framework for human maturity is derived from the work of Piaget (1973), Kohlberg (1981) and Loevinger (1976) and offers a more explicit possibility than other developmentalists for explaining the transformation of the 'evolving self' and of the deconstruction of inclusions and exclusions in the learner's socio-historical context.

Kegan proposes his framework as a theory of life-span development: he presents it as a process of meaning-making evolutionary activity, which shapes one's entire reality, through a creative motion where the relation of self to others goes on in partnership. At every point in the evolution of the evolving self attention is given to the social context in which the meaning of oneself and others 'is negotiated and renegotiated' (Conn, 1989:50) in a way that rescues development from an ahistorical, asocial individualism. It follows that human development in terms of the evolving self is conceived of as a relationship, between the interests of self and the world.

Kegan (1982) explains his constructive-developmental framework as five stages, namely, impulsive, imperial, interpersonal, institutional and interindividual, which are ways of explaining human development in terms of a series of transformations of how we see ourselves in relation to others. These stages may, or may not, be universal in each person's history because, as Kegan maintains, how (or if) we grow is highly interdependent with the nature of our living world and how it confirms, contradicts and provides continuity. Each stage works out temporarily, and dynamically maintains, a certain kind of balance between differentiation and integration and between the human longing for both autonomy and inclusion.

Of specific interest to this study is the movement, in Kegan's construct, from Stage 3 (interpersonal) which is characterised by mutually reciprocal one-to-one relationships, to Stage 4 (institutional) where the self becomes a more separate self, to Stage 5 (interindividual) where there is a new synthesis between self and others. Maturity, that finally characterises the fifth stage, is the outcome of a process of balancing the lifelong tension between the yearnings for inclusion and distinctness. It recognises a plurality of institutional selves and it values interdependence for self-definition (Kegan, 1982:106, 227). Kegan holds that it is important to bear in mind 'the distinction between *abandoning* the old longing on behalf of the new and *integrating* the new with the old, a distinction between the dichotomous and the dialectical' (Kegan, 1982:154) — a distinction that will be explored later in this writing in relation to what the research participants experienced by way of synthesising the old and the new.

The dance imagery influenced Kegan's use of a spiralling helix, instead of a linear diagram, for his visual summaries of the stages, which he also calls balances, because this metaphor better conveys the dynamic nature of development. The notion evoked by the dance image of a process of creative motion, that changes form through time in space, is characteristic of Kegan's concept of the 'evolving self' and it is important to note its significance for this research. This metaphor can be applied to the process of transformative professional development that is concerned with people in history (e.g. the research participants), subject to a process of dynamic movement that reinterprets and refashions knowledge, values and beliefs.

The insights of Kegan's theory, and his use of dance as a metaphor of human development, conjure up notions of a process of movement and partnership: in turn this calls forth an image of development that is essentially a dynamic dialogue between the individual and society. It calls for a mutuality and respect in the relationships where both are subject to process and where neither the individual nor society dominates or manipulates. It recognises historical consciousness in a way that accepts change and evolution as desirable, necessary and possible and

thus integrates the evolution of the individual with the evolution of society. This thrust in Kegan reflects the poststructuralist position that neither the individual nor society is the ultimate and unrelated cause of disparity in knowledge-power.

2.5 Overview

In this section the argument has been that human development is holistic and integrative of personal-biological and socio-cultural domains. Therefore, how an individual develops at any period of life cannot be anticipated without reference to a complex set of factors; the bilateral individual-social purpose of human development delineates major life changes and influences life's alternatives. It is the intention of this study to examine to what extent graduate studies in religious education influence life's changes and alternatives for the participants of this research. However, development is more than adjustment to a particular society; it is a qualitative change in how one views the world and it involves tension and struggle that are productive of change and transformation which occur through a dialectical process that calls for movement through the contradictions from an old style of meaning to a reconstruction of meaning that is a synthesis of the old and the new. Movement through the contradiction that leads to the dissolving and reforming of one's systems of meaning can involve pain and loss, reaching out and letting go.

The shape and motion of adult development from a transformative perspective reveals the concepts of an eclectic critical social theory, modified by insights from the poststructuralists. The adult who participates in professional development projects is already, by the nature of adulthood, engaged in an ongoing process of personal development and the degree to which it is transformative will impact, positively or negatively, on the individual's professional practice and in acts of reconstruction of their socio-historical context.

3.0 FOUNDATIONAL FRAMEWORKS OF TRANSFORMATIVE ADULT EDUCATION

An earlier concept of adult education (Lindeman, 1926:166) portrayed it in terms of a bilateral, unified purpose, of changing individuals in continuous adjustment to changing social functions. The more recent philosophical and theoretical foundations of adult education are in critical theory with a contextual dimension which concentrates on the tension between the individual's history and the structures of society. Thus the swing in the focus of adult education has been from defining it in terms of the individual's adaptation to defining it in terms of learning that is negotiated in critical discourse where meaning is contested, confirmed or negated (Freire 1970, 1972, 1973; Brookfield 1985a; 1985b, 1986, 1987, 1991; Jarvis 1983c, 1983a, 1987a and Mezirow 1978, 1981, 1991a, 1991b).

3.1 Transformation and Transformative Learning

Transformation is a reforming of persons, of societies, and of historical tradition itself. It is rooted in our historical tradition, in the dynamics of our present social situation, and in our vision. This means that we cannot hope for transformation if we deny our past or ignore our present situation or future hope.

(Moore, 1984:21)

Inherent in Moore's concept of transformation is a double-edged sword of change and of continuity from the perspective that neither the individual nor society is the ultimate and unrelated cause of disparity in the power-knowledge relationship. This argues that transformation will take place through dialogue where individuals and institutions actively interact to recreate both the person and the tradition. The interactive nature of the engagement between the individual and society highlights the point that the learner has a 'dual responsibility to construct meaning and to justify that meaning through critical discourse with informed others' (Garrison, 1992:139). This makes for an interrelationship between personal and contextual judgement: it creates a dialectic that gives new direction and increases

inclusiveness, differentiation and integration in the assumptions, rules and criteria that inform, interact with and transform the learners and the environment in which they live.

It has already been argued that, within the perspective of critical praxis, questioning and discerning in dialogue constitute the potential for the transformation of self and society. If one accepts this, as well as the claim (Merriam, 1993:107) that transformative learning is often linked to development in a positive growth-enhancing direction then transformation and transformative learning are significant factors in adult development. Clark (1993a:47) suggests that

Transformation is about change, so transformational learning must be related to learning that produces ... more far-reaching changes in the learners than does learning in general and that these changes have a significant impact on the learner's subsequent experiences... [T]ransformational learning **shapes** people; they are different afterward, in ways both they and others can recognise.

The theories of both Moore (1984) and Clark (1993a) give direction for this section of the study that will explore the elements that are foundational to transformative learning.

3.2 Critical Learning

Attention will be given first to dimensions of adult education in the writings of Brookfield (1985a;1985b) and Jarvis (1987b). Although both Brookfield's model of the critical learner and Jarvis' model of the experiential learner have limitations they attempt to define adult education in a way that is designed to challenge the problem posed by modernity where the subject-person is emphasised to the neglect of recognising the complementarity of the individual and society.

Brookfield's model of critical learning is foreshadowed in his definition and conceptualisation of adult education *per se*. He proposes that in adult education:

... all involved assist each other to identify the external sources and internalised assumptions framing their conduct, and ... [are] ready to assess these critically.
(Brookfield, 1985b:46)

Broadly speaking, Brookfield's (1987:1-14) concept of adult education has a key proposition, namely, that critical thinking is both a rational, emotional and contextual process that is essential to human development and that it seems to operate more specifically in adulthood than in childhood and adolescence. He relates critical learning to emancipatory learning (Habermas, 1979); to dialectical thinking which focuses on understanding and resolving contradiction as stimulus to development (Riegel, 1973; Basseches, 1984b; Daloz, 1986; Morgan, 1986); and to reflective learning which creates and clarifies meaning (Boyd & Fales, 1983). Brookfield (1985b:15) makes reference to giving adults a sense of personal worth, autonomy and control in their lives and of thus influencing the future by interacting with and transforming the environment in which they live. This could be interpreted as a process that unilaterally favours the learner and assumes that the personal growth of the individual is beneficial for society (Finger, 1990b:27). The present writer concurs, to a point, with Finger's conclusion; however, while Brookfield emphasises an internal change of consciousness, as a result of reflection on what has been uncritically assimilated, he does so with an appreciation of 'the contextuality of knowledge and an awareness of the culturally constructed form of value frameworks, belief systems and moral codes that influence behaviour and the creation of social structures' (Brookfield, 1985b:15).

A further dimension in Brookfield's (1985a:47) position is that critical learning may also engage the individual in political action to alter forms and structures because for critical learners 'the world is not composed of fixed and unchangeable givens of belief and conduct but ... it is malleable and open to

continuous recreation'. This reveals the possibility that the model proposed by Brookfield is a discourse that approaches the poststructuralist position that critiques and challenges the individual-society dichotomy. It can be argued that critical learning is dialogical and evaluates contextual situations with a commitment to understanding the partnership between the individual and social relationships.

To the extent that critical learning is a process of dialogue that addresses the learners in the context of their personal and historical relationships and is oriented towards new knowledge and action it helps conceptualise adult education and, as a consequence of its critical and dialectical nature, it can be considered as a significant concept in the personal and professional development of teachers.

3.3 Learning in the Social Context

While Brookfield's model of adult education has elements of the humanistic approach Jarvis on the other hand is more dependent on the pragmatism of Dewey (1933, 1938, 1958), the reflective/experiential theories of Schön (1983) and Kolb (1984), and the symbolic interactionism of Mead (1934). Jarvis (1987b:11, 87) claims that adult education is about responding to questions that are involved when people have experiences that are historically context-dependent. Questions that are historically context-dependent can show a contradiction and cause dysfunction between the present system of meaning and the learner's new knowledge. In essence Jarvis' approach takes into account the critical factors of rational and cognitive reflection, as well as the power of the social and cultural variables, and attends to a learner's unique situation and its interaction with the social context. The approach is from a sociological perspective of adult education: its function is to develop the 'self' as a societally relevant individual, i.e., as an individual who develops alongside the needs of society' (Finger, 1990b:28) and who is socialised, to some extent, by the values and knowledge of society.

Finger (1990b:28-29) dismisses Jarvis' model of the experiential learner as inadequate for adult education to 'reconcile and link individual demands and

societal needs'. Finger argues that Jarvis does away with the subjective dimension and reduces personal development to adaptation to societal demands. If in fact the paradigm does allow for the possibility for society to be the dominant partner then it could be, as Finger claims, problematic from a critical theory perspective. On the other hand, the model has a paradoxical counter image of socially-constructed subjectivity arising from reflective/experiential learning within the social context that begins with an experience the adult does not fully understand. Implicit in Jarvis' model of reflective learning and experiential action in the social context is the possibility for adult education that begins with contradiction and questioning in a continuing search for certainty, and functions in favour of individuals who can transcend, or transform, the social environment and demonstrate their individuality (Jarvis, 1992:97).

When one examines what defines Jarvis' concept of adult education it is found to be a reflective interactive process between the individual and society. It can, therefore, be argued that Jarvis' reflective/experiential approach need not show a bias in favour of society but can function as an interactive process of critique that favours the interests of the individual as well as society. Jarvis is flagging an understanding of adult education where experience and context are dependent, reflexive and interactive.

3.4 The Nature of Learning

The orientation to learning that harmonises with this work is one that meets the criteria of critical praxis; it will, therefore, be one that has the characteristics of critical and reflective learning, that is embedded contextually in the social environment: the concept of learning will be examined from that viewpoint. Kolb (1984:38) defined learning as a process, dependent on the centrality of reflection, whereby 'knowledge is created through the transformation of experience.' Learning, in this definition, is essentially an exploration of experience, through critical and affirming dialogue, 'in a conscious manner, in order to lead to a new

understanding and perhaps a new behaviour' (Jarvis, 1987c:168). Such learning, will aim at questioning assumptions, beliefs and values about interpersonal relationships and society that have been uncritically assimilated. The goals will recognise that power and knowledge are linked; they will aim to avoid a dichotomy between the individual and society; they will encourage processes that are democratic, yet may be subversive; and they will ultimately aim at outcomes that reconcile a transformation that intrinsically links the individual and society. Thus the epistemological basis of such an activity will be characterised by the transformation of experience and must 'integrate both the private and shared worlds of the learner' (Garrison, 1992:146). A true integration requires that the knowledge be confirmed objectively and be acted upon from a perspective that is conscious of the laterality between self and society. It follows that the learner is characterised by receptivity and openness with a reflexive capacity for the new and unfamiliar (Stanage, 1986:126) and less dependent on concrete, stylised systems of thought and information. Paradoxically a transformative learner will welcome anxiety and ambivalence, that generate contradictions and discrepancies in one's knowledge, as opportunities for a more inclusive and integrative understanding of one's experience. 'In transformational learning we reinterpret old experiences (or new ones) from a new set of expectations, thus giving a new meaning and perspective to the old experience' (Mezirow, 1991b:11).

3.5 Perspective Transformation

Mezirow (1981:7) considers that his concept of perspective transformation is synonymous with what Freire refers to as conscientization so it will be helpful here to note how the theories of Freire and Mezirow are related conceptually before embarking on an examination of Mezirow's concept of perspective transformation. The theories of Freire (1970, 1972, 1973) and Mezirow (1978, 1981, 1991b) both posit learning that changes consciousness in the learner, as transformative, albeit with different characteristics. Freire's writings present both a

theoretical background and practical aspects of critical pedagogy as a socially transformative process to meet his goal of social change, through conscientization, for a radical democracy. To this end his concept of education is both subversive and liberating with a commitment to transformation that is concerned with transforming both the individual and restructuring the society that is the context in which the individual exists. Mezirow's work is directed towards personal development, in terms of the power of individuals to change their meaning perspectives and in turn change their world; his is a theoretical conceptualisation of transformative learning for which dialogue is the essential condition to enable adults to make meaning of their experience. The relationship between the theories of Freire and Mezirow comes from three elements that are common to both, namely, the philosophical assumptions about the nature of human beings, beliefs about knowledge and ideas about the relation between the individual and society (Clark, 1993a:49-53). In the adult education literature Mezirow's (1981, 1991b) is a significant theory that integrates both personal growth and the learning process. His focus is not primarily on learning as the accumulation of knowledge but on the transformation of experience that is called for when there is a 'gap between old givens and new discoveries' (Daloz, 1986:238) in the journey of human development — a journey which Mezirow accepts is not one of invariant stages of development but rather a form of developmental progression as adults become critically aware of, and respond to, life's experiences. The major concept of his theory is the process of perspective transformation which relates to 'the process of transition between stages of adult psychological development in major life-span theories' (Mezirow, 1981:9). Critics have raised questions about some aspects of Mezirow's theory so a brief reference will be made to some of the criticisms. In essence the critiques by Collard & Law (1989) and Clark & Wilson (1991) are that Mezirow gives power to the individual to change individual perspectives before social transformations can succeed and that he thus fails to show how perspective transformation can extend beyond the individual. His critics see this as contradictory to his claim (Mezirow, 1991b:xiii) that his transformation theory has

as its context constructivism, critical theory and deconstructivism in social theory. In defence of Mezirow it can be argued that his theory of meaning perspective is based on the epistemological notion of meaning as a construction of the individual in society and that it accommodates a partnership between the individual and the socio-cultural context. Certainly he claims that no need is more fundamentally human than the need for individuals to understand the meaning of their experience; however, Mezirow in no way dismisses the social perspective: his theory acknowledges that the individual can be subject to constraints from social institutions and practices.

A dimension of Mezirow's theory as evidence that is of value to this study is his understanding of adult learning in terms of the restructuring of meaning and expansion of consciousness when adults participate more fully and freely in reflective critical discourse to validate how they are caught up in their history and are reliving it (Mezirow, 1978:101). In terms of transformative learning the restructuring of meaning, through critical reflective discourse, is a crucial dimension in reordering reality and redefining action that leads to successive levels of self development. This argument implies that moving through adulthood involves recognising when a meaning perspective is no longer functional, and reacting critically to appropriate a new meaning perspective and subsequent action. It recognises that knowledge that was previously taken-for-granted and assimilated must be examined critically and confronted and contested as part of a lived experience of adults who strive to change meaning perspectives to effect transformation in self and society – and in societal institutions such as the church.

It is noted at this point that a movement forward from one perspective of meaning to another is not automatic and does not constitute a universal process. It depends on the individual's decision to act, or not to act, at each stage of the transformative learning process, in response to the challenges to current meaning systems, that are precipitated by life's dilemmas. Therefore moving to a more developmentally progressive meaning perspective involves an awareness of the critique of the epistemic, sociolinguistic and psychological factors and a decision to

replace an old perspective with a new one or to synthesise the old and the new and the 'desire to fit the new perspective into the broader context of one's life' (Mezirow, 1991b:161). One can conclude that with a new self-understanding, and with a new awareness of the assumptions that were previously unquestioned, the learner recognises that alternative decisions and actions are possible to those who found meaning in the values and beliefs of earlier meaning schemes and meaning perspectives.

Mezirow's theory of meaning perspective is based on the epistemological question of meaning as a construction of the individual in society and he suggests that the transforming of these meaning perspectives is a function of adult learning. He explicitly relates perspective transformation to the process of negotiating an irregular succession of transformation in adulthood and he argues (1978:106) that an adult develops towards maturity by meaning perspectives that are 'progressively more inclusive, discriminating and more integrative of perspectives' through life's stages. Mezirow (1978:105-106) speaks of growth towards maturity through changes in meaning perspectives in terms of organic social relationships. These place great value on the primary group, and its values and practices in terms of social contractual relationships which emphasise the individual. This aspect is of particular interest for this research in the light of the conclusion that when 'societies [are] in the process of transformation from organic to contractual relationships ... the individual is most likely to come into possession of consciousness of self and be exposed to a variety of communities and perspectives ... [and, therefore, movement from] ... an uncritical organic relationship to a self-consciously contractual relationship with institutions' (Mezirow, 1978:106, 108). Given that some members of the Catholic church can be seen to be in the process of transformation from an uncritical organic relationship to a self-consciously contractual relationship with the institutional church this suggests that these members may be moving towards more inclusive, discriminating, integrative perspectives.

3.6 Overview

Two of the objectives of transformative adult education focus on related ends; one orientation is towards performance and achievement while the other, and collateral purpose, is to help learners to reflect critically on assumptions that constrain them personally and in their relations with society in order to act upon new understandings. It can be argued, therefore, that adult education that fosters critical awareness and critical consciousness is likely to be creative in learners of an awareness of how pre-assimilated patterns of interpretation and acceptance of established cultural values and beliefs of social institutions structure the way they see themselves and others. The passage through adulthood towards achieving the two objectives may not be a smooth one as some inherent difficulties will be encountered when the learner addresses the values, beliefs and hopes of their own biographies that condition knowledge. It follows that difficulty will be encountered when adults critique the socially constructed world views, including those of such institutions as the church, that have been formative of earlier meaning schemes and meaning perspectives and must now be contested as new understandings are developed and new choices are made. By transforming meaning schemes and meaning perspectives the individual gains a competence to negotiate meaning instead of passively accepting 'previously defined social realities of others' (Bowers, 1984:2).

A concept of transformative adult education that has its philosophical and theoretical foundations in critical theory can be defined in terms of learning that is negotiated in critical discourse where meaning is a construction between the individual and socio-cultural context. This view of adult education advances the argumentation of the problem that is under consideration in this work. The epistemological basis for what has been discussed allows for learners to clarify underlying assumptions that were unquestioned and placed social, political and intellectual constraints on the learner.

4.0 ADULTS AND THE TRANSFORMATIVE JOURNEY

New knowledge that leads to a heightened awareness of the relevance of context and has implications for human development, has implications also for faith development that will enable adults to deal more adequately in meaning-making in faith in the light of changes and social circumstances as well as from changes in knowledge and self-understanding. Implicit in this is the need for adults to assess critically the harmony between previously accepted beliefs and their present reality. It can be argued that this is particularly so when individuals encounter cognitive dissonance and experience contradiction that causes them to reframe their questions about belief, in terms of their new modes of consciousness, and reframe belief structures for a more realistic future. Since there are linkages between personal development and faith development it can be assumed that many adults, who take seriously the responsibility for their personal development, are concerned also for the development of their own belief structures as part of their human growth. This could be especially pertinent where they come to adulthood from a history of socialisation into a childhood faith that internalised the expectations of others and that now seems infantile and incoherent when confronted with today's questions in a changing world.

4.1 Stages of Faith

Fowler (1991b:19) recognises faith development theory as one component in the acting and self-understanding of both believers and non-believers. For that reason, among others, Fowler's theory of faith development is important to this present study. While his theory is indebted to psychosocial theories of development 'its principal theoretical grounding is in the constructivist tradition' (Fowler, 1991b:24). It is a dynamic, dialectical and multi-dimensional process referring to 'the way in which all individuals make meaning of the relationships of their lives to the ultimate conditions of their existence' (Basseches, 1984:246).

Fowler draws on Smith (1962, 1977, 1979) for his concept of faith as well as for its distinction from religion and belief. He accepts a broad understanding of it as a generic and universal religious (and human) category which includes, but is not limited to or identical with, religion but which at the same time is able to be interpreted theologically and filled with substantive beliefs (Fowler, 1991b:21). This broad concept of faith is foundational to Fowler's theory of faith development which refers to the 'developmental process of finding and making meaning as a human activity' (Fowler *et al.* 1991:1). Thus the concept refers to meaning-making in its most comprehensive dimensions and is intended to be 'equally applicable to religious and non-religious interpretations of the world'. A significant dimension that is inherent in Fowler's concept of faith development is the notion of it as an ongoing process of forming and reforming one's way of being in and seeing the world.

A deliberate choice was made to use Fowler as data for this research so what follows offers some reasons for, as well as reservations about, choosing his theory in preference to others such as Westerhoff's (1976), Boelen's (1978) and Oser's (1980) all of which are theories that relate to faith development or stages of religious judgement and maturity. Essentially Fowler's model, which is heavily indebted to Piaget (1932), Kohlberg (1973) and Erikson (1963) is embedded in the theory of the cognitive-structuralists.

As with the cognitive-structuralists, Fowler's stages run the risk of showing a preference for subjectivity but he emphasises the exchange between individuals and society and seeks to take account 'of the relativity of construing and constructing life-orienting meanings into the shallowness of dogmatic relativism' (Fowler, 1991a:42). His approach moves beyond the subjective and relies on constructive and evolutionary perspectives from philosophy, psychology, theology, history and education that are consonant with recent epistemological breakthroughs and 'moves beyond Cartesian subjective-objective dichotomization towards a hermeneutical perspective' (Fowler, 1991a:42).

Although Fowler writes as a Christian theologian and psychologist his theory of faith development is not intended to be directly concerned with creed, dogmas, statements and doctrines — faith is a generic act of knowing and valuing the content of belief that accounts for what is positive and negative in the living, acting and self-understanding of both believers and non-believers. His concern is to use faith development theory and employ empirical enquiry, as well as theological and psychological theory, in a partnership to help in the understanding of the human dynamics of faith (Fowler, 1982:87-90).

Fowler's theory of faith development is grounded in the constructivist tradition and has theoretical relations to Erikson and Levinson. Both personal and faith development theories within the constructivist tradition rest on the individual's sequential acquisition of the competencies in each stage before a person may choose to move or not to move to the next stage. In respect to the hierarchical aspect of faith stages Fowler (1976b) insists that each stage is potentially worthy and each is important for the individual at a particular time. Fowler's theory has been developed and refined, both by his own ongoing research and in response to critical insights from others over more than a decade. An account of his current position, his revised description of the stages of faith, which are pivotal to his theory, is attached as Appendix A (p.325) which is an account of the structural developmental stages presented as structured wholes, as distinctive ways of being in faith. Although it does not describe the stages by the seven structural aspects that are part of Fowler's theory it has been chosen as adequate for the present purpose because it is not intended to make empirical measures of faith as part of this research. This research will be concerned only with the characteristics of structural changes which describe the distinctive ways that human beings find meaning and coherence in their lives.

Three of the stages, namely Stages 3-5 (Appendix A: p.325), are pivotal to Fowler's theory and they are also the ones of most importance to this research as they are the stages that have the most significance for adults in general. Stage 3, which is characteristic of early adolescence, persists throughout adulthood if adults

conform to objective, unexamined facts and function according to group expectations. It is a faith received from the group in which one is socialised, with which one conforms and from which one gets security as a reliable source of authority in this stage there is little affinity with the problems of persons beyond the group. Kohlberg (1976:215-216) would call this a stage of conventional moral judgements maintained by rules and stereotyped behaviour where change is feared as an enemy that could break down the system of defined rules and roles. It seems clearly to be what Perry (1970) would describe as a stage marked by pre-relativistic thinking, dualism and formal operations. Stage 3 persons are characterised by the tacit approach of their faith knowing and are unaware of any systematic structure in their beliefs; it is a stage that lacks the critical reflection and the dialogue necessary for mature decision-making and as a consequence the individual has not yet taken on the burden of life-synthesis for himself/herself. Transition from Stage 3-4 is a move from the faith values of the immediate group at a time when the individual, in the light of a new mode of consciousness, begins to assume responsibility for a personal faith system, life-style, beliefs and commitment. This often entails an agonising reappraisal by the individual in order to authenticate and own what was experienced in the third stage in a way that leads to a revised position but does not necessarily reject out-of-hand the faith system of Stage 3. A tension emerges when the adult is facing a genuine transition from Stage 3 towards Stage 4 because universal tensions, such as subjectivity vs. objectivity and the relative vs. the absolute which will characterise Stage 4, but were not issues for the adult in Stage 3, have to be negotiated. (Basseches, 1984b:248).

Stage 4 requires a qualitatively different kind of self-awareness to handle the often dichotomous polarities that emerge from reappraisal when the adult feels the necessity for taking personal responsibility for action. Authenticity, internal consistency and conceptual clarity now become important and there is a broadened perspective which prompts an outreach to race, class and national groups who have different values and lifestyles. Kohlberg (1973) sees this group as making moral

decisions from a postconventional stage and striving for ideals of justice albeit, with a prejudice for the views of one's own group; the formal thought that marks this stage corresponds to Perry's (1970) relativism. Fowler considers that Stage 4 marks an important transition for adults; it marks the emergence of a more self-chosen, explicit system of knowing; faith coherence is critically examined as the adult attempts to handle paradoxes, polarities and tension. The critical reflection and dialogue of this stage are significant for new and revised meanings for life. There is also an awareness that 'one's outlook is vulnerable and can shift, and also of the relativity of one's way of experiencing to that of others whose outlook and loyalties are different' (Fowler, 1978:20).

Stage 5 which Fowler, in his more recent writing (1991b:24-25), calls conjunctive faith is characterised by the integration of opposites or polarities in a person's life and by interdependence, empathy and a commitment to justice. The adult in this fifth stage has a readiness to be genuinely open to the truth of other traditions and can affirm what is true in the lives and commitment of others where there is an ideological difference. There is now a 'further internalization of authority' and 'disciplined subjectivity' (Fowler 1978:81-83) which can be matched by autonomous morality (Kohlberg, 1973) and a post-relativistic commitment-making (Perry, 1970). The adult in Stage 5 can live with ambiguity and 'deal with paradox and dialectic: logic *and* intuition, organization *and* individual uniqueness, loyalty *and* independence' (Walsh, 1982:7). There is now a consciousness in adults of the sources of contradiction in their vision of meaning, coherence and value and the response to this is an openness towards a more inclusive truth by striving to unify opposites. While each stage has distinct characteristics they are not conceived as watertight and there will always be an overlapping across the stages. The distinctive characteristics are significant for the adult at a certain point in time.

Although there are apparent inadequacies and points of debate in Fowler's theory it remains a significant complementary perspective from religious psychology to the overall data of cognitive-structural theories of development and

can be valuable if it is used in a way that avoids making the stages normative. An aspect that particularly recommends it for this research is the dialogue it has established between theology and the social sciences and the possibility it offers, as one way, in which the development and transformation of the Christian can be interpreted as an evolving relationship with self, society and an ultimate reality. The writer acknowledges that Fowler's theory is only one way of interpreting faith development and does not assume it accounts fully for faith development and religious consciousness. The advantage of Fowler's theories in spite of the issues raised for debate has been summarised by Parks (1991:102):

Faith development theory responds to this contemporary situation in three primary ways.

- 1) It offers a way of speaking of faith and holding traditional religious and secular symbols, stories and practice that does not foreclose the conversation about ultimate values and commitments within a pluralistic world.
- 2) It manifests the conviction that even faith — the centering ground of human trust — can change, undergo transition and transformation and retain its integrity.
- 3) It does so in a manner that potentially illumines the relationship between the individual and his or her context, thus holding the tension (increasingly felt particularly in the individualistic milieu of western culture) between the claims of the individual and the individual's necessary dependence on the wider human community.

4.2 Maturing Adult Believers

Discussion of human development and faith development have pointed to the fact that in the contemporary situation there is an increasingly felt need to acknowledge the tension between the claims of the individual and, at the same time, the individual's dependence on the wider human community. In the case of this research one of the institutions of the wider society is the Catholic church

which is part of the contextuality and, therefore part of the meaning structure, for the human and faith development of its members. The church is one place where adults can experience cognitive dissonance and contradiction that causes them, as they move through their life experiences and faith development, to raise their questions about belief and relationship with the institution, in terms of their new modes of consciousness, and to reframe belief structures for a more realistic future.

The opportunity for individuals to develop in faith and to struggle towards maturity through contradictions, polarities and ambiguities in the cause of growth is important. However, equally important is the ability of churches, as communities of faith and as a contextual dimension for the individual's growth, to recognise that the creative tension and conflict that are essential to human growth are also essential to institutional growth. Implicit in this is the need for churches to acknowledge the legitimacy of questions and contradictions that surface at times of personal and societal change and to confront the polarities by examining the relevance of their structure and, where necessary, by dismantling old structures and constructing new ones that are capable of accommodating new knowledge and new questions. If adults are to avoid a dichotomy between religious faith and life experience then their questions about the irrelevance of practices and their difficulties with the theological language that has a metaphysical thrust have implications for the church which is their faith community.

It is not the intention of this research to establish empirical evidence about the perceptions adults have about what is happening in the Catholic church, although it is an issue that could be a valuable subject of further research. Experience points to the fact that there is an increasing gap between the official position of the Catholic church and its members about ethical convictions and moral teachings and this is made very obvious in the *vox populi*. While research has not yet determined with what degree of maturity individuals make their decisions there is an increasing number of adults who trust their own unique process of meaning-making and their own judgement to provide alternative interpretations that they find authentic. These adults are, therefore, following their

consciences, despite church law, in relation to issues such as divorce and remarriage. If, as a consequence of transformative learning, adults remove themselves outside an institution without changing the system it could be a lost possibility for both the individual and the institution: it could be argued that ignoring the institution rests on a unified rather than contested subjectivity which fails to account for the impact the sociocultural context has on the individual (Clark & Wilson, 1991:79).

One aspect of the essential task of an adult's journey towards transformation is to be in touch with the living faith tradition of their community and together with the community to prune and graft to conserve what is life-giving from the past. Transformative learning creates a critical perspective for dialogue and action and while it may expand critical consciousness which leads to such things as an awareness of context that restrains freedom it does not of itself produce freedom. Freire (1970) points out that real freedom can never emerge out of the unexamined struggle of the oppressed against the oppressor, for in that struggle are the seeds of a new oppression.

Throughout history the message of Christianity has suffered reductionism and it has suffered 'the transposition of a system-bursting message into a system-conforming one' (Welton, 1993:110). According to Schaefer (1982) to avoid this and to accommodate the maturing adult believer the Catholic church will have to:

... embrace a theory of developing dogma that welcomes the insights and beliefs of all Christian people.

... affirm the assumptions about human personhood which incorporate cocreative autonomy within a pattern of God's design.

... arrange for mutual negotiation of needs and goals by participants, resource persons and ecclesial leaders in ... adult program design.

... relativise authoritative moral teaching in light of its origins and in view of its applications.

... recognise the radically personal but tendentially objective value and limits of individual conscience.

... acknowledge propensity of the sense of the faithful to outstrip church law at a given historical moment.
(Schaefer, 1982:28)

4.3 Overview

The essential dimensions of the process of the transformative journey of the adult are portrayed in Figure 3 (p.86) that summarises the conceptual resources of this chapter. Figure 3 also demonstrates the parallels in the discourses of adult development and adult learning. Furthermore it brings into focus a fundamental factor in relation to this research, namely, that in the case of the professional development of the religious educator the epistemological basis for transformation is provided from several discourses.

The transformative journey (Figure 3: p.86) of the adult is an interactive process, of all the aspects of development, in the direction of knowledge that accommodates the past and present situations of the learner's contextual experiences and looks to the future. In the process of relating the past to the present and to the future adults need self-understanding and insights to re-image self and world. Confronting one's past to grow beyond present understanding can involve transitions coloured by loss and pain as well as by gain and satisfaction. The truth, reality and integrity of such experiences is described by Sheehy (1976:29) who says:

We are not unlike a particularly hard crustacean. The lobster grows by developing and shedding a series of hard, protective shells. Each time it expands from within, the confining shell must be sloughed off. It is left exposed and vulnerable until, in time, a new covering grows to replace the old.

With each passage from one stage of human growth to the next we, too, must shed a protective structure. We are left exposed and vulnerable — but also yeasty and embryonic again, capable of stretching in ways we hadn't known before.

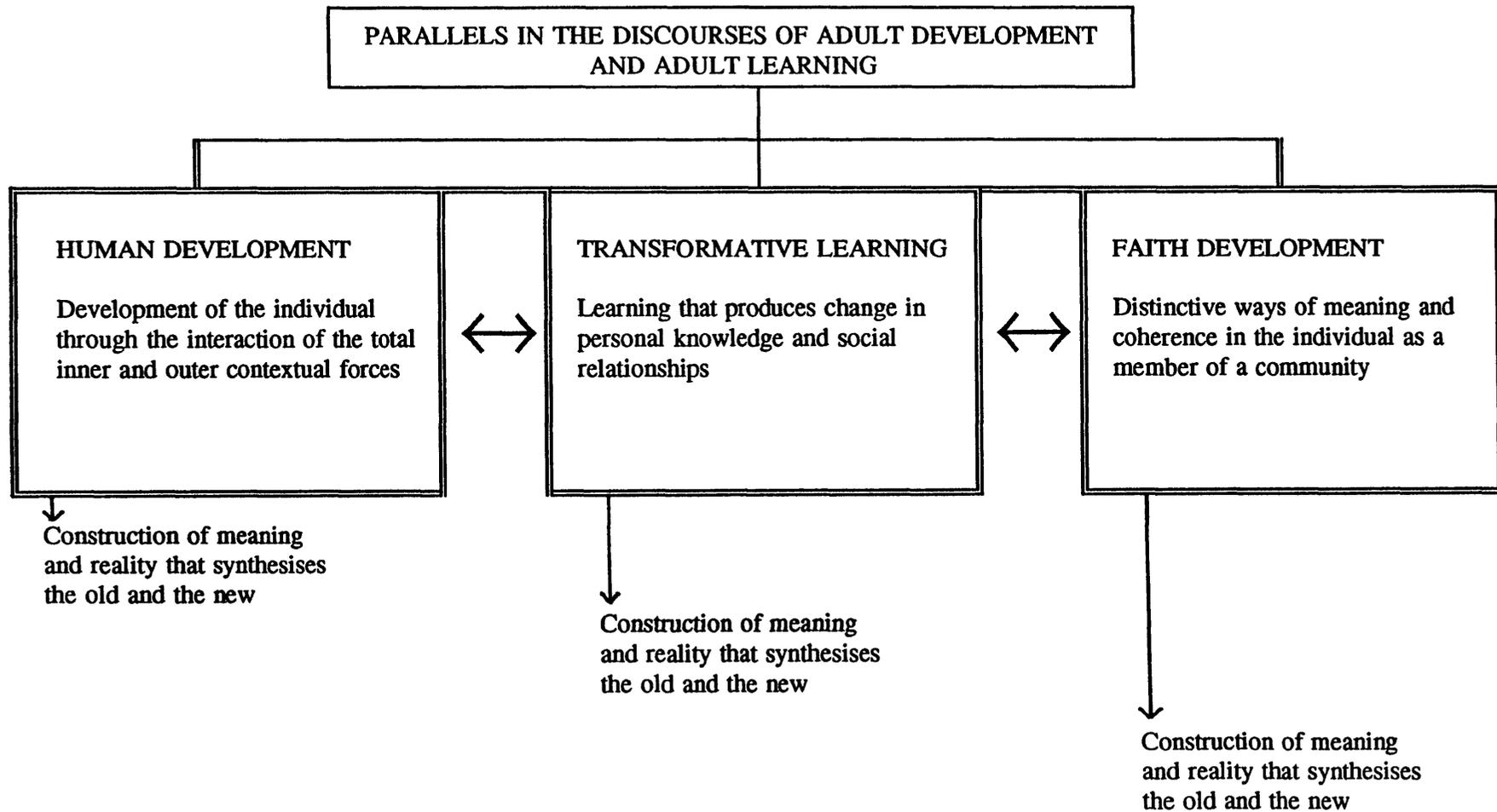


Figure 3: The Transformative Journey

5.0 SUMMARY AND SIGNIFICANCE FOR THESIS

The role of adult education finds its purpose in the social status of adulthood with its changing biological and sociological factors. The participants in this research are essentially locked into adult education *per se* and the goal intrinsic to adult learning, namely, to enable learners to stand both within and beyond society by imagining other ways of thinking and feeling and other sets of values and social relationships. It is these human and social sources of change that give direction to adult education: they associate it with one's age-related, and changing life and occupational experiences, as well as to the multiplicity of the social and cultural contexts that define the adult's life-world. Adult education is aimed, therefore, at realising the changing needs of adults. Its purpose is to respond to the educational needs associated with adults' personal, occupational and social functions that are continuously changing.

The purpose of adult education is about making sense of diverse and conflicting patterns of relationships between the self and the world. It is about making qualitative changes that delineate and integrate major life and career changes that may be neither discrete nor sequential and are exacerbated by the uncertainty of post-modern society.

Interest, unsatisfied needs and motivation are powerful stimuli in making the learner the protagonist. However, while the purpose of adult education begins with the learner it has a bilateral individual-social purpose and 'is always individual and social at the same time' (Finger, 1990a:99). In the light of the recent emergence of adult education as a discipline its theorists continue to struggle for a definition of it that is fully satisfactory. The evidence in the literature gives weight towards defining it within a paradigm of critical theory.

Christianity is a way of life where the past, present and future interact dialectically. Therefore the historicity of both faith and church, including change and ongoing identity, is a vital aspect in the history of humankind as a whole and in the development of the individual Christian (Rahner, 1978:330). It follows,

therefore, that since Christianity relates to its historical context it is not 'a prefabricated reality but ... a coming into being as an historical process of acting-in-faith in this world...' (Schillebeeckx, 1974:11) and as a consequence each person's way of being Christian is likely to be challenged, differentiated and reconstituted several times during life's pilgrimage.

Individuals during the course of their life-cycle enter every experience with the baggage of their own personal history and education. These will inform their beliefs throughout the dynamic process of change that is endemic to human development and which never reaches a terminal state. When an individual's knowledge and understanding no longer fit present needs tension and contradictions can ensue which may be constructive of new development. As in dialectical theories of human growth, Christian growth takes place most readily when it is spurred by dissonance and discomforting discrepancies between one's actual experience and one's present beliefs (Wilson & Burket, 1989:295). In dialectical theory personal growth is advanced, not primarily by eliminating contradiction, but by tolerating it and thus allowing new questions and problems that are integral to authentic human growth to emerge (Allman, 1983:111); likewise Christian growth can emerge in times of conflict, contradiction and struggle. It can be argued that adult learners who engage in a praxis activity cry out for resolution of the contradictions which are seen as gaps between things as they are and things as they might be. The opportunity to consider alternative possibilities involves exploring ways to reduce dissonance through a form of critical, dialectical thinking. It involves acceptance of responsibility for defining alternatives and interpreting new assertions that emerge as a synthesis of new and previous understanding (Daloz, 1986:142).

Some religious educators, including those who participated in this research, are amongst the generation of Catholics who, since Vatican II, have felt alienated from a church that they felt they knew and understood. Too little has been done by way of education to relieve their confusion and disorientation. Professional development of religious educators should engage them in a process that has regard

for rationality and facilitates the development of a critical faith that comes from the ability to synthesise individual growth with new meanings that interpret the community's tradition. This will be done by their capacity to assimilate new data, new insights and new modes of thinking and acting. Professionalism may be a mixed blessing but Christian realism demands that teachers who engage in a discipline such as religious education with its own cohesive, comprehensive and heuristic body of knowledge must be educated in the new knowledge that is relevant to their discipline.

In the aspects of human and faith development that have been discussed the concept of context has emerged as one that links the individual with society and as one that is critical to the processes of transformative learning and, therefore, to the qualitative series of changes adults make in letting go of earlier assumptions and constructing a new reality from each new standpoint of development. The understanding of transformation presumes a synthesis of the old and the new 'truth', rather than an adjustment or demolition of one's previous position. This implies that the route to transformation lies in acknowledging contradictions and differences and working through them, as opposed to ignoring or circumventing them.