POPE JOHN PAUL II: A PSYCHOBIOGRAPHICAL STUDY

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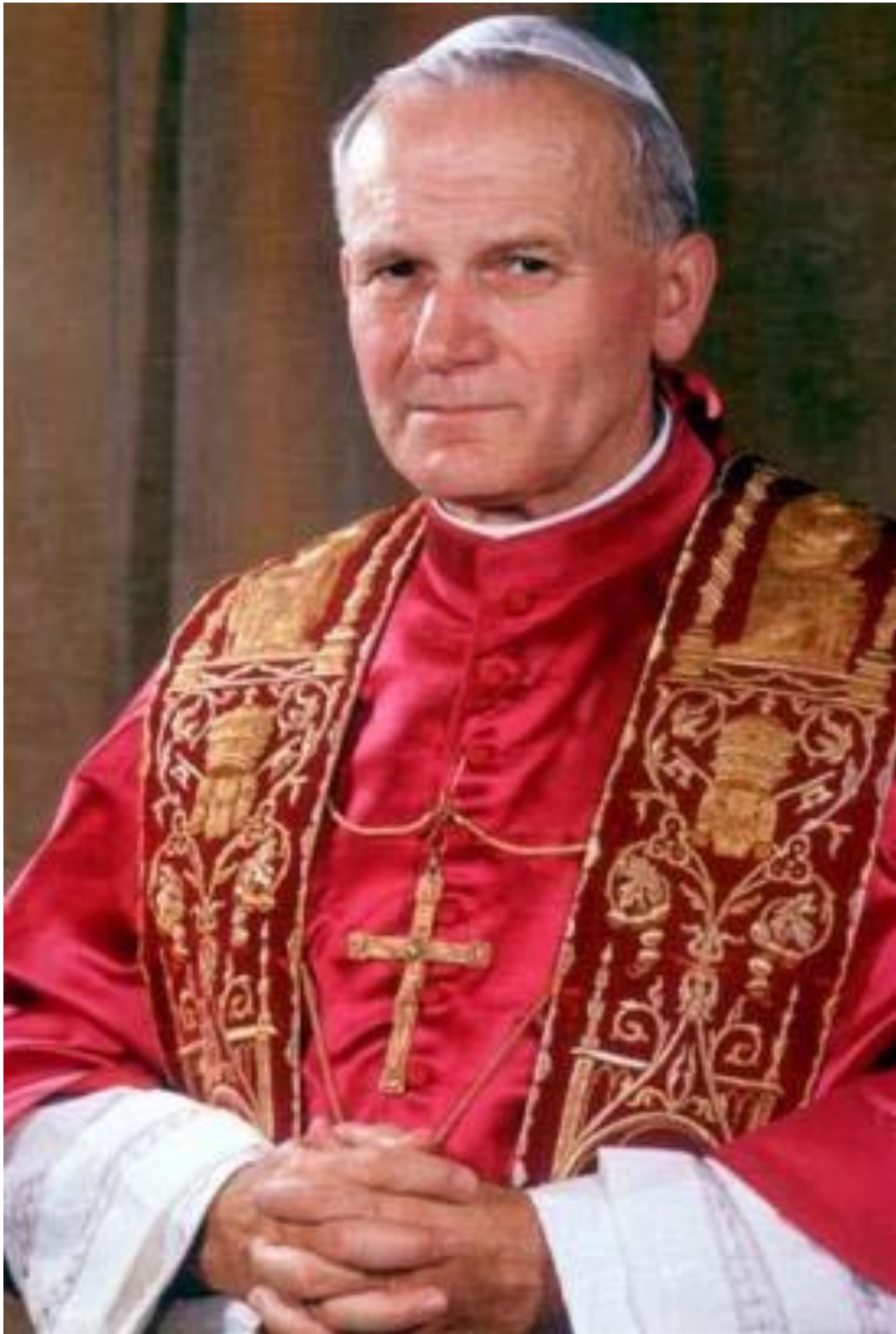
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Pope John Paul II

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DEDICATION

For Dad

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

DECLARATION

I, Koneshverrie Navsaria (841102 0120 08 6), hereby declare that this thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, is my own work; and that it has not previously been submitted for assessment or completion of any postgraduate qualification to another university or for another qualification.

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ABSTRACT

This psychobiography is focussed on the life of Pope John Paul II, whose historical personage epitomises the redemptive theme of triumph over tragedy and eternal hope. A phenomenological approach to the study allowed the researcher to observe the subject's lived experience through the theoretical lens of Erik Erikson's psychosocial development theory as well has having his faith development illuminated by Fowler's faith development theory. Together, these theories highlighted significant aspects of Pope John Paul II's personality development, for the greater purpose of uncovering the significance of his historical personage by reconciling his spiritual, political and academic attributes.

This psychobiographical undertaking was grounded in qualitative research in the form of a single case. Two methodological strategies were used in this study. Firstly, Alexander's model was used to organise, extract, prioritise and analyse data. The indicators of salience ensured that all significant parts of biographical data were carefully considered for analysis. Guba's criteria for trustworthiness guided the methodology to ensure reliable data extraction and interpretation. Posing specific questions to the data enabled the researcher to extract units of analysis relevant to the aim of the study. Secondly, the use of conceptual frameworks and matrices enabled the longitudinal exploration, categorisation and description of the stages of psychosocial and faith development.

The findings of this psychobiographical study of Pope John Paul II strongly support the importance of Erikson's (1950) theory in understanding the processes of personality development in an individual life. In this psychobiographical study, the complex process of adaption and growth was highlighted by Erikson's (1950) theory and placed periods of Pope John Paul II's development in context. This study also demonstrated that gaining meaning in life through faith (Fowler, 1981) provides the individual with greater internal support when

adjusting to life changes. Furthermore, greater intentionality on the part of therapists to thread faith and spirituality into their practice, is evidence of the eugraphic impact of this study.

Keywords: Psychobiography, Pope John Paul II, Erik Erikson, James Fowler, Faith development, Psychosocial development.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1 Chapter Preview

This chapter serves to introduce the reader to the study, firstly, by discussing its primary aim. Thereafter it provides a general orientation to the context of the research by outlining aspects such as the general problem statement, the subject under study, the psychobiographical approach, as well as the theoretical frameworks selected for this study. The researcher's personal passage is also introduced to the reader. In conclusion, the structure of this study is conveyed through the provision of a broad outline of the chapters in which this study is divided.

1.2 Introduction and Research Aim

This study, as an example of psychobiographical case study design and methodology, entailed the longitudinal study of a single case within a qualitative framework. The researcher aimed to provide a psychologically driven exploration and description of aspects of a single life (i.e., Pope John Paul II) within its socio-historical context through the application of psychological frameworks to biographical data. Two psychological frameworks were used in this study (a) a stage-based dynamic description of psychosocial development, and (b) a stage-based dynamic description of faith development.

The primary aim of this study was to explore and describe Pope John Paul II's psychosocial and faith development throughout his lifespan, more specifically, the significance of the historical personage of Pope John Paul II in reconciling his spiritual, academic and political attributes.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher engaged in a critical debate to establish the significance of Pope John Paul II's historical personage in depth, by focusing on the

ambivalences and synergies found between and within his spiritual, academic and political attributes. The conflict between them and within them, as well as the synergisms that link them together will be emphasized and discussed in depth.

The concepts that underlie this endeavour are introduced in the following section.

1.3 Context of the Research

In this section, the general problem statement is followed by a brief introduction to the psychobiographical subject, Pope John Paul II. Psychobiography as a research approach is briefly described and an outline is provided of the theoretical frameworks which guided data analysis in this study, namely, the psychosocial development theory (Erikson, 1950) and the stages of faith development (Fowler, 1981).

1.3.1 General Problem Statement

Psychobiography as a research approach has been neglected in the past even though many psychological theories can be implemented, tested and further developed with this approach. This may be due to several factors, including not being exposed to psychobiographical research as a method at both graduate and undergraduate levels (Runyan, 1988a). However, this has changed in the past few decades as this approach has gained popularity in the social sciences and in psychology in particular (McAdams, 2000; Runyan, 1982).

According to Elms (1994), psychobiography is not merely a way of doing biography but rather a way of doing psychology. He acknowledged that psychologists have much to learn from continually looking at one entire human being or one life at a time. Elms also affirmed that psychologists need to take responsibility with regard to making meaningful contributions towards psychobiography which will help in maintaining a high standard of work in the field. This, as well as the following, serves as possible motivating factors in adopting a psychobiographical approach:

• The researcher is able to accomplish a high level of consensual validation that is outside the possibilities of clinical case studies (Carlson, 1988).

• The researcher is able to trace human development in ways beyond the extent of the best longitudinal research (Carlson, 1988).

• By studying the life story of another individual, the researcher is given the opportunity to conduct extensive self exploration (Elms, 2005b).

• Life history material allows for a detailed reflection of a variety of socio-historical contexts (Carlson, 1988). This is particularly relevant to the study of South African figures from the socio-historical context of the 'apartheid' period within the current 'post-apartheid' atmosphere of reconciliation.

Criticisms against psychobiographical research concern the inability to generalise and subjective methodology (Roberts, 2002). Psychobiographies conduct individual accounts of life experiences within the contemporary cultural and structural settings, and have the important merit of aiding the task of understanding major social shifts, by including how new experiences are interpreted by individuals within families, small groups and institutions (Roberts, 2002).

1.3.2 The Psychobiographical Research Subject

Pope John Paul II sometimes, called Blessed John Paul or John Paul the Great, born Karol Józef Wojtyła, was the head of the Catholic Church from October 1978 to his death in 2005 (Stanley, 2007; Stourton, 2006). He was the second longest-serving pope in history and the first non-Italian Pope for 455 years (O'Connor, 2005; Weigel, 2001). John Paul II was one of the most influential leaders of the 20th century. He is recognised as helping to end Communist rule in his native Poland and eventually all of Europe (Stanley, 2007; Stourton, 2006). Pope John Paul II significantly improved the Catholic Church's relations with Judaism, Islam, the Eastern Orthodox Church, and the Anglican Communion (O'Connor,

2005). He was a keen academic, obtaining two doctorates, two honorary doctorates, a professorship, published five books, as well as studied several languages (Stanley, 2007; Stourton, 2006; Weigel, 2001).

Controversially, he upheld the Church's teachings against artificial contraception and the ordination of women. He supported the Church's Second Vatican Council and its reform, where he held firm orthodox Catholic stances (Stanley, 2007; Stourton, 2006). He is known for his implementation of several papal documents pertaining to the role of the Church in the modern world (O'Connor, 2005).

He was one of the most travelled world leaders in history, visiting 129 countries during his pontificate[1] (Stanley, 2007; Stourton, 2006). As part of his special emphasis on the universal call to holiness, he beatified 1,340 people and canonised 483 saints, more than the combined tally of his predecessors during the preceding five centuries (O'Connor, 2005; Stanley, 2007; Stourton, 2006). Pope John Paul II also named most of the present College of Cardinals, consecrated or co-consecrated a large number of the world's past and current bishops, and ordained many priests. A key goal of his papacy was to transform and reposition the Catholic Church. His wish was "to place his Church at the heart of a new religious alliance that would bring together Jews, Muslims and Christians in a great [religious] armada" (Pope John Paul II, 2005, p. 78). *Time* magazine named him Person of the Year in 1994 (Stanley, 2007; Stourton, 2006). In February 2004, Pope John Paul II was nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize honouring his life's work in opposing Communist oppression and helping to reshape the world (Stanley, 2007; Stourton, 2006). In December 2009, Pope John Paul II was proclaimed *venerable* by his successor Pope Benedict XVI and was beatified in May 2011 after the Congregation for the Causes of Saints attributed one miracle to him, the

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[1] A *pontiff* (from Latin *pontifex*) was, in Roman antiquity, a member of the most illustrious of the colleges of priests of the Roman religion, the College of Pontiffs. The term "pontiff" was later applied to any high or chief priest and, in Christian ecclesiastical usage, to a bishop and more particularly to the Bishop of Rome, the Pope or "Roman Pontiff"

healing of a French nun from Parkinson's disease. A second miracle, attributed to the late pope, was approved in July 2013 and confirmed by Pope Francis two days later. John Paul II was canonised in April 2014, and is now known as Saint John Paul II (Yardley, 2014).

1.3.3 The Psychobiographical Approach

Psychobiography entails qualitative analyses of single cases through an idiographic and longitudinal approach (Simonton, 2003). Psychobiography can be defined as the determined and explicit use of psychology in the interpretation of a single life, whereby the researcher develops an understanding of the individual life through the application of psychological theory and/or research principles, methods and themes (Kramer, 2002; Schultz, 2001a, 2001c). Therefore, it entails the "systematic use of psychological (especially personality) theory to transform a life into a coherent and illuminating story" (McAdams, 1988, p. 2) through which the researcher aims to make psychological sense of the subject (Schultz, 2001c).

In this study, the life of Pope John Paul II is explored through the lenses of two psychological frameworks: A psychosocial and faith development theory. Through the social constructivist paradigms central to psychobiography, psychological theory and research is applied to the biographical subject's life in order to promote the interpretation and understanding of the subject's life story (Fouché & Van Niekerk, 2005b). Psychobiography may also allow for the further development, refinement and testing of psychological theories (Runyan, 2005). This study not only highlights psychosocial and faith development in the life of Pope John Paul II as aspects which have not been investigated before, but it also provides an opportunity to informally test aspects and facets of the content of these psychological frameworks. Case study research such as the psychobiographical approach, therefore, allows for both inductive and deductive approaches and its nature can be described as exploratory-descriptive as well as descriptive-dialogic (Edwards, 1998; Yin, 2003) with the former being

the primary aim of this study. The descriptive-dialogic approach involves forming a dialogue between the exploratory-descriptive findings on the one hand and the theoretical conceptualisations and propositions on the other (Edwards, 1998).

This research project can, furthermore, be seen as an attempt to address the concerns raised by Elms (1994). He calls for psychobiography to: (a) move from theoretical narrowness to a range of theoretical choices, (b) shift from the methodological looseness to methodological restraint, (c) place greater emphasis on the development of psychological health instead of limiting itself to the practice of pathography, and (d) move away from the explanatory reductionism to the embrace of explanatory complexity (Elms, 1994). This study, therefore, (a) purposefully selected two theoretical frameworks, (b) carefully applied methodological guidelines for data selection and analysis, (c) employed theories which, in combination, had the potential to provide a eugraphic framework from which to view the individual, and (d) embraced explanatory complexity through the application of two dynamic theories. Detailed discussions of psychobiography as a research approach and its methodological considerations are presented in later chapters (see section 1.5).

1.3.4 Erikson's Theory of Psychosocial Development

Erikson's work investigated the relationship of the *ego* with the *environment* (Erikson, 1950) throughout human development, and as such, represented a shift in emphasis for psychoanalysis from the study of the individual's ego to the study of the ego's foundation in society (Erikson, 1968). Erikson's approach demonstrated the interplay between the socio-cultural and socio-historical processes of society and psychological development throughout the entire life cycle (Barresi & Juckes, 1997; Freiberg, 1987). Erikson conceptualised the ego as synthesising power within an individual, one that creates an identity through the process of dealing with personal, societal, historical and familial forces as the individual strives to master the environment (Gross, 1987; Wastell 1996).

Erikson's framework aimed to explain the emergence of different ego qualities during critical periods of the life cycle (Roazen, 1976; Stevens, 2008). His theory described psychosocial development across the lifespan as a series of crises caused by opposing psychological forces, unfolding epigenetically in the progression of eight stages (Erikson, 1963; 1997). Every one of these crises denotes a necessary turning point, brought on by the creative tension between the opposing forces during each stage of the life cycle (Gross, 1987; Kroger, 2005).The stages are, therefore, characterised by (a) the ego's task of integrating certain oppositional forces, and (b) the specific resulting ego strength which is gained should such integration take place successfully (Erikson, 1997). A detailed discussion of this theoretical approach is provided in Chapter 4.

1.3.5 Fowler's Stages of Faith

Erikson's (1950) explanation of stages provides evidence for understanding the natural relation of transitions in psychosocial development to structural state changes in faith development. Hence, there are clear parallels between Erikson's (1950) description of psychosocial stages and Fowler's (1981) faith stages. For these reasons, Fowler's (1981) Stages of Faith as a second theory of choice for this psychobiographical study is both appropriate and relevant.

Fowler (1981) describes faith as an individual or group's way of "moving into the force field of life" (Fowler, 1981, p. 4). In other words, it is the way individuals find coherence in and give meaning to the multiple forces and relations that make up their lives. Fowler (1981) placed importance on examining the structure of values, the patterns of love and action, the shape of fear and dread and the directions of hope and friendship in one's life.

Faith is not always religious in its content or context. According to Fowler (1981), faith is a person's way of finding coherence and providing meaning in one's life. Faith is also the manner in which we view ourselves in relation to others in terms of meaning and purpose

(Fowler, 1981). It is this world view of value and meaning that sustains a newly forming identity during the life course and across the life span. Fowler (1984) stated that faith is a human universal, meaning that there are collective features and dimensions of struggle and awareness within all human beings, such as the universal awareness of death.

Fowler's theory described faith development across the life span which unfolds epigenetically in the progression of seven stages (Fowler, 1981). These stages are characterised by (a) the ego's task of integrating a certain aspect of faith into self and (b) the specific resulting ego strength which is gained should such integration take place successfully (Fowler, 1981). A detailed discussion of this theoretical approach is provided in Chapter 5.

1.4 The researcher's personal passage

When first exposed to the concept of psychobiographical research, the researcher was immediately drawn to the in-depth and investigative nature of the approach. The opportunity to conduct qualitative research on a single case immediately appealed to the researcher's developing role as a psychologist. This would become her area of research for her Masters Degree in Psychology. The researcher conducted a psychobiographical study on Mahatma Gandhi in 2009 entitled, *Mahatma Gandhi: A Psychobiographical Study.* This study provided the researcher with good insights into understanding a historically and politically significant life from a psychological vantage point. When the prospect of conducting a second psychobiography arose, the researcher eagerly accepted. Upon deciding on the research subject, the researcher unhesitatingly chose Pope John Paul II. As a recently confirmed Roman Catholic and newly qualified psychologist, the researcher chose Pope John Paul II because of the personal interest and the value and significance of his life. At the beginning of each research session conducted by the researcher, a prayer was made for the intercession of Blessed John Paul II's, for guidance throughout the study. Refer to Appendix A for this prayer.

1.5 Overview of study

This manuscript, firstly, contains four chapters that comprise the literature review of this study. Chapter 2 provides a historical overview of the social-historical events in the life of Pope John Paul II. Chapter 3 provides an overview of qualitative and psychobiographical research. In Chapter 4, Erikson's psychosocial developmental theory is presented and discussed. Chapter 5 concludes the literature review by providing an overview of Fowler's stages of faith development.

Secondly, the methodological aspects of this study are described in two chapters. The preliminary methodological consideration regarding potential problems and issues inherent to psychobiographical research are discussed in Chapter 6. Chapter 7 then presents the reader with a thorough discussion of the psychobiographical research design and methodology as it applied to this study.

Thirdly, the findings and discussion thereof are presented in Chapters 8, 9 and 10. Chapter 8 is dedicated to the discussion of the findings as they relate to the psychosocial development of Pope John Paul II. Following this, findings and discussion related to the faith development of Pope John Paul II are provided in Chapter 9. Chapter 10 consequently integrates the research findings. Chapter 11 concludes the study by discussing the value and limitations of the study, providing recommendations for future research in the field of psychobiography and reflecting on the researcher's personal passage.

1.6 Conclusion

This chapter introduced the study by briefly describing the research aim and the context within which the research took place. The researcher introduced her personal passage to the reader. In conclusion, a broad outline of this study was given. The following chapter highlights the major socio-historical events in the life of Pope John Paul II.

CHAPTER 2

The Life of Pope John Paul II

It is Jesus who stirs in you the desire to do something great with your lives, the will to follow an ideal, the refusal to allow yourselves to be ground down by mediocrity, the courage to commit yourselves humbly and patiently to improving yourselves and society, making the world more human and more fraternal. (Pope John Paul II, 1996, p. 53)

2.1 Chapter Preview

This chapter is a reflection of the historical personage of Pope John Paul II. The aim of this chapter is to provide the reader with a brief introduction to the life and legacy of Pope John Paul II. This chapter is deemed necessary in order to provide clarity and context for the chapters that will follow it.

2.2 The Historical Personage of Pope John Paul II: A Reflection

Pope John Paul II viewed the Gospel parable of the good grains and wheat as a key to understanding the entire history of mankind. The parable reads that when the servants ask the householder: 'Do you want us to go and gather them (the weeds)?', his reply is highly significant: 'No, for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at the harvest time I will tell the reapers, "Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn"' (Matt. 13:29-30). Pope John Paul II believed that in different eras and in different ways, 'wheat' grows alongside 'weeds' and 'weeds'; alongside 'wheat'. The history of mankind is the 'theatre' of the coexistence of good and evil (John Paul II, 1994; 2005). So even if evil exists alongside good, good perseveres beside evil and grows from the same soil, namely human nature. This has not been destroyed, and has not become totally corrupt,

despite original sin. Nature has retained its capacity for good, as history confirms (John Paul II, 2005).

These viewpoints of human nature, as well as the importance of living in pre- and post-war Poland are one of the pertinent factors in explaining Pope John Paul II's personage and his characteristic way of living. One observer had said that he combined the fierce faith of the Polish Catholic with a sophisticated grasp of ancient theology and contemporary philosophy (Sullivan, 1999). When asked about the lesson of recent history, Pope John Paul II answered the following (Pope John Paul II, 2005, p. 17):

> I think we must learn to go to the roots. Only then can the harm done by Fascism or Communism somehow enrich us and lead us towards good, which is undoubtedly the proper Christian response. 'Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good' (Rom.12:21), writes Saint Paul.

One of the most well known aspects of Pope John Paul II's historical personage is that of his role in the fall of communism. That Pope John Paul II played an indispensable role in the demise of communism is now widely conceded by numerous historians (Weigel, 2001). But the terms in which the pope's role should be understood are likely to remain controversial. Former *Washington Post* reporter Carl Bernstein, who first wrote on this story for *Time* magazine, and Marco Politi, Vatican correspondent for the Italian daily *La Repubblica*, forcefully argue that the pope was a crucial protagonist in the struggle for freedom that began with the formation of Solidarity, the Polish trade union/political opposition, and ended with the implosion of the USSR (Weigel, 2001). Pope John Paul II brought a formidable philosophical and theological intelligence and a distinctive reading of twentieth-century history to the Chair of Saint Peter on Oct. 16, 1978, when he began his pontificate. As Pope John Paul II understood it, the division of Europe was primarily a moral catastrophe in which false conceptions of the human person, human community, and human destiny had been

imposed by raw force on historically Christian cultures (John Paul II, 1994; 2005; Weigel, 2001). Communism was not only stupid economics and brutal politics; it was, first and foremost, a false humanism. It violated his reverence for life. Thus the most effective antidote to the communist toxin, Pope John Paul II believed, was in the order of ideas and values: A truer humanism, defending basic human rights as undeniable attributes of human personhood, was the weapon with which communism could best be resisted (Pope John Paul II, 2004; 2005). And John Paul II had something more potent in his corner: a capacity to appeal to the consciences of peoples and nations, to the dignity of the human person, and to the vitality of ancient cultural traditions.

Amidst totalitarian oppression, Pope John Paul II devoted himself to the life of literature, drama and the theatre - and to the life of prayer and service (Sullivan, 1999; Szulc, 1996; Weigel, 2001). As a young priest, Wojtyla studied theology and philosophy, becoming a pastor and then a university professor of ethics before his appointment as bishop (Sullivan, 1999; Szulc, 1996; Weigel, 2001). This habit of emphasizing the importance of the moral-cultural sphere shaped Wojtyla as he became pope (Wojtyla, 1979). In his role as Pope, he encouraged his people to take up the deepest questions of human life: *"Who am I? Where have I come from and where am I going? Why is there evil? What is there after this life?"* As John Paul II described it, the human person is understood in a more complete way when he is situated within the sphere of culture through his language, history, and the position he takes towards the fundamental events of life, such as birth, love, work and death (Weigel, 2001). At the heart of every culture lies the attitude man takes to the greatest mystery: the mystery of God. Different cultures are basically different ways of facing the question of the meaning of personal existence (Pope John Paul II, 2004; 2005).

John Paul II instantly gave his 'reign' a human dimension—daring to give a talk at his very first appearance, following Pope John Paul I's example of saying 'I' instead of 'we',

weeping openly on at least three occasions during the first 24 hours after his election, driving across Rome to visit an old friend who was ill, asking the cardinals to bless each other and to bless him—instead of his giving the traditional papal blessing (Weigel, 2001). The pope faced and made many hard decisions that did not please liberals, conservatives and, possibly, even pragmatists (Szulc, 1996; Weigel, 2001). But he had the elusive quality of 'charisma'. This is more than kissing babies, and other popular antics associated with those courting public opinion, but in fairness, his involvement in dramatics as a young man may have helped. Once he was stopped during a public appearance, by the sight of an eight-year-old boy with tears in his eyes. "What's the matter?" he asked. "My father died three days ago," the boy said, "but they told me you too were my father. Is that true?". The pope bent down and hugged him. "Certainly it is", he said. "And you may call on me as you would your father". He made sure an aide got the boy's name and address (Foley, 1979).

John Paul II brought a fresh new strength to the papacy; his pontificate was energetic, courageous and very human (Szulc, 1996; Weigel, 2001). Unconditional positive regard, as Carl Rogers (1951) called it, was something that Pope John Paul II had developed from his faith (Pope John Paul II, 1984):

> Nothing surpasses the greatness or dignity of a human person. Human life is not just an idea or an abstraction. Human life is the concrete reality of a being that is capable of love and of service to humanity. (p. 12)

This unconditional positive regard for all people allowed him to cross boundaries of culture, religion and political view (Sullivan, 1999; Szulc, 1996; Weigel, 2001). Because of this, he demanded more discipline from the Church than ever before, and a greater commitment to respecting the human dignity and securing the human rights of every human being—a political-spiritual task (Weigel, 2001). His ideal may well be summed up by the famous line of St. Irenaeus (Delhaye, 1987, p. 6): "The glory of God is man fully alive".

It is interesting that his dissertation was written on the Spanish mystical poet St. John of the Cross, for whom faith appears as a series of paradoxes, a darkness that illuminates, a music that is soundless (Sullivan, 1999; Weigel, 2001). "A complex man, remarkable in that it is impossible to pin a label on him," is the verdict of a renowned handwriting analyst, Robert Wasserman (Foley, 1979). "The one characteristic that stands out clearly is his genuine fondness for people. He is a person of deep warmth, willing to change but not quick to change" (Foley, 1979).

Perhaps he stated his ideal when he quoted Isaiah (42:1-4 The African Bible) in his first New Year's greeting after being elected head of Catholic Church:

> Here is my servant whom I uphold....He shall bring forth justice to the nations, not crying out, not shouting, not making his voice heard in the street. A bruised reed he shall not break, and a smouldering wick he shall not quench, until he establishes justice on the earth.

Gift and Mystery (Pope John Paul II, 1996) reveals a man who loved his Polish roots, where he talks about Adam Chmielowski, a Polish patriot who lost his leg in the 'January Uprising' of 1864. Later he devoted himself totally to the poor of Krakow, establishing a public dormitory for the 'street people' of that city. Although he died in 1918 (two years before the pope was born) that layman's example of 'radical choice' inspired young Karol Wojtyla to leave behind art, literature and theatre to follow a priestly vocation (Sullivan, 1999; Weigel, 2001).

Gift and Mystery, his autobiography, eludes to a man whom combining rootedness with expansiveness, shows another synthesis: the scholar and the man of the people. He is not an intellectual who adopts a folksy tone. Nor is he a pietist casting about for intellectual weapons to defend religiosity. Rather he dives into contemporary philosophy, especially the study of the human person, with an assurance that it can deepen faith (Wojtyla, 1979; Weigel,

2001). His studies did not remain in a dusty monograph; they became a cornerstone of his pastoral work as a priest and shortly after as archbishop of Krakow (Sullivan, 1999; Szulc, 1996; Weigel, 2001). Later, he engaged the modern world on exactly that point: the meaning of the human person. The pope's reflection on fifty years of priesthood (in *Gift and Mystery*) was a plea to his brother priests: celebrate the Eucharist with faith, hear confessions, be with young people, encourage married couples and above all, pray (Weigel, 2001).

As Pope John Paul II aged, his rhetorical style became simpler and purer, the distillate of decades of prayer and reflection (Sullivan, 1999; Weigel, 2001). Some things about Pope John Paul II did not change, though, even as he became physically more frail. Friends and visitors found that the Pope's encounters with pain and suffering had deepened his convictions that God is in charge of his life (Sullivan, 1999; Whitney, 1999), that everyone has a place in the great cosmic drama of creation and redemption, and that the world's various melodies have a divine composer – even those melodies piped by discordant flutes (Weigel, 2001). He remained a man with a profound sense of *kairos* (Greek word meaning the right/opportune moment), convinced that everything had its time, that time tests ideas and projects, and that one should not accelerate that testing process artificially (Pope John Paul II, 1996). His was the prayer of a joyful man and a witness to hope, who believed and wanted to affirm before the world "the value of existence, the value of creation and of hope in future life" (John Paul II, 2005, p. 22). Hope he believed was not optimism, which is a matter of optics, of how you look at things. For Pope John Paul II, hope was a sturdier reality, a theological virtue (Weigel, 2001). John Paul II's hope in the human capacity, under grace, to fulfil modernity's great aspiration to freedom and his hope that the future could bring springtime of the human spirit have been powerful forces in the last two decades of this century.

The pope was a thoroughly modern man who nevertheless challenged a lot of the conventional wisdom of self-consciously modern people (Weigel, 2001; Whitney, 1999). In a world dominated by the pleasure principle and by personal wilfulness, he insisted that suffering can be redemptive and that self-giving is far more important to human fulfilment than self-assertion (Pope John Paul II, 1994; Weigel, 2001). In an intellectual climate where the human capacity to know anything with certainty is under attack, he had taught that there are universal moral truths, that we can know them, and that, in knowing them, we encounter real obligations (Pope John Paul II, 2005). To a world that often measures human beings by their utility, he had insisted that every human being has an unbreakable dignity and worth (Szulc, 1996; Weigel, 2001). While others insist that the world runs by politics and economics, he had taught the priority of culture in the dynamics of history (Sullivan, 1999). Being this kind of a 'sign of contradiction' did not make John Paul II a pope against modernity, however. If the goal of freedom is human happiness, human flourishing, then a strong case can be made that the pope's 'contradictions' were very much in service to that goal.

In understanding Pope John Paul II's personage is to appreciate him as a believer of God. To speak in biblical terms, Pope John Paul II was seized early in his life by the 'more excellent way' of which St. Paul spoke to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 12:31): the way of Christian love, which the apostle described as the greatest of spiritual gifts. Having been seized by this, Pope John Paul committed his life to it (Sullivan, 1999; Weigel, 2001). To be seized by the 'more excellent way' – to be seized, ultimately, by Christ – was a life transforming truth, to whose lifting-up he committed his own life (Bakalar & Balkin, 2002). From his seminary days, Karol Wojtyla's life had been a continual encounter with those who understand the 'more excellent way' and those who do not, with those whose dedication to 'more excellent way' he would like to help deepen, and with those he would like to introduce

to it (Malinski, 1979). Nothing in his life happened outside of the truth of the 'more excellent way'. His faith was not one facet of his personality or one dimension of his intellect. His faith *was* Karol Wojtyla, at the most profound level of his personhood (Malinski, 1979; Weigel, 2001).

This intense rootedness can be startling, in a world in which assembling a personality from bits and pieces of conviction – religion or spirituality, politics, academic interests – is one of the hallmarks of modernity. But it is precisely this rootedness that has allowed Pope John Paul II to proclaim, without hesitation or fear of hypocrisy, "Be not afraid" (Weigel, 2001). His life, forged in the furnace of the great political and intellectual conflicts of the twentieth century, was an embodiment of that proclamation, just as his teaching was an explanation of the sources of his fearlessness and his public ministry was the action implied by it (Szulc, 1996). The ground on which he made that proclamation, which is universal in intention, is the conviction that Jesus Christ is the answer to the question that is every human life. To put it in a single word: to understand Pope John Paul II 'from inside' is to understand him as a *disciple.*

2.3 Conclusion

This chapter provided the researcher's personal reflection of the historical personage of Pope John Paul II. Chapters 8, 9 and 10, provide a more detailed account of the historical periods of the life of Pope John Paul II and the specific factors which influenced his psychosocial and faith development. The following chapter explains psychobiographical research within the qualitative research paradigm.

CHAPTER 3

Qualitative and Psychobiographical Research

3.1 Chapter Preview

This chapter seeks to explain psychobiographical research within the qualitative research paradigm. The relationship between psychology and biography is discussed in this chapter, as it seeks to expand the understanding of psychobiographical research. The qualitative method of research will be described in order to fully grasp the value of psychobiographical research. The value of life history research and psychobiographical research is also presented. This chapter concludes with a brief discussion of the relationship between psychobiography and psychology.

3.2 Qualitative Research in Psychology

Qualitative research in psychology can be defined as research whose findings are not arrived at by statistical or other quantitative procedures (Frost, 2011). Qualitative research is often described as *naturalistic* i.e., its aim is to understand behaviour in a natural setting (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). In addition to being naturalistic, two other aims of qualitative research are to understand a phenomenon from the perspective of the research participant and understanding the meanings people give to their experience (Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). It attempts to do this by using so-called naturalistic methods—interviewing, observation, ethnography, participant observation and focus groups (Frost, 2011). Each of these methods seeks to understand the perspective of the research participant within the context of their everyday life. Qualitative research in psychology, that is, psychobiography, is said to have as its goal the understanding of the individual studied, rather than generalizing from the individual to the population (Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008).

Alexander (1988) compares a single, individual personality with the distinctiveness of a human face. He explains that although one can conclude that all faces have the same constitutive aspects (a mouth, nose, two eyes), each face is equally distinctive and identifiable in its own right. Similarly is personality. There are factors about a person's life that enable researchers to generalise to other lives, and there are distinctive elements about the person's life that serve to enrich or build on theory. However, limitations in the research may occur when the driving force of the research is to generalise, that attention is drawn away from the features that are important to understanding the case in its individuality and uniqueness.

According to Smith (2003), qualitative approaches in psychology are generally engaged with exploring, describing and interpreting the personal and social experiences of individuals in an attempt to understand their own view of the world rather than trying to test a preconceived hypothesis on a large sample, as would be the case with qualitative research. The following section provides a context for qualitative research methods in psychology, and identifies the defining features of such research.

3.2.1 Defining qualitative psychology

Qualitative research is a field of enquiry in its own right – it crosscuts disciplines, fields and subject matter (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). A multifaceted, interconnected family of terms, concepts and assumptions surround the term *qualitative research*. These include the traditions associated with positivism, post-structualism, and the many qualitative research perspectives or methods, connected to these cultural and interpretive studies (Denzin & Lincoln (2011; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008).

Ashworth (2003) asserts that there are a number of different approaches to qualitative psychology but the common denominator is the concern with the human experience, in all its richness and detail. However, this commonality is not at variance with quantitative research as there are times when quantitative researchers provide descriptive statistical accounts and

times when qualitative researchers look for causal relationships and comparison between persons on various dimensions (Smith, 2003). Furthermore, Geertz (1973) described qualitative research as aiming to provide rich or 'thick' descriptive accounts of the phenomena under investigation, while quantitative research is primarily concerned with counting occurrences, or the size of associations between entities.

Furthermore, qualitative and quantitative approaches differ in the manner in which the data is analysed. Quantitative research requires the reduction of the phenomena to numerical values, in order to perform statistical analysis whereas qualitative research involves collecting data in the form of naturalistic verbal reports and then conducting textual analysis on this data (Smith, 2003; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). Therefore, the concern in qualitative research is to interpret the meaning of a piece of text, rather than finding the numerical properties of it. This interpretation will then be conveyed through detailed narrative reports of the participants' perceptions, understandings, or accounts of a phenomenon (Ashworth, 2003; Smith, 2008; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008)

Murray (2003) affirmed that because interpretation of an individual's perception is conveyed through narrative, most qualitative researchers will place some emphasis on language as this is a fundamental element of human communication, interpretation, and understanding. Individuals tend to express their view of their world linguistically and thus qualitative researchers place importance on analytic strategies that run in conjunction with the symbolic system in which that view is structured (Smith, 2003). With this in mind, the following section introduces the concept of 'epistemology' and some major epistemological positions in qualitative psychology, after which the different qualitative approaches, in terms of their theoretical assumptions, perceptive, and procedures, will be discussed.

3.2.2 Major Epistemological Positions

Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999) states that research methodology specifies the manner in which the researcher may go about studying basically whatsoever he or she believes can be known. It provides a framework within which to approach, and answer the research questions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Willig & Stanton-Rogers, 2008). In order to do this, the researchers need to identify what the goal of the research is, and then be able to justify their choice. For this to ensue, the researchers needs to decide on the nature of relationship with the research, the stance they will take, as well as having a sense of the kinds of things it is possible for them to find out. In other words, he or she needs to adopt an *epistemological* position (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). An explanation of some epistemological positions follows.

3.2.2.1 Positivism

One epistemological position is *positivism*, which suggests that there is a straightforward relationship between the world (i.e., objects, events, phenomena) and our perception and understanding of it (Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). Within the positivistic view, the researcher and the investigated subject are assumed to be independent entities and the researcher capable of studying the object without influencing it or being influenced (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Therefore, a positivist epistemology implies that the goal of the research is to produce objective knowledge (Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). Here the researcher takes the stance that what is to be studied consists of a stable and unchanging external reality and that the aim of such research would be to provide an accurate, objective description of laws and mechanisms that operate in social life (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999). However, it is now generally accepted that observation and description is selective, and for this reason our understanding of the world is only partial, at best. What people disagree about is the extent to which our understanding of the world can come close to

objective knowledge, or even some kind of truth, about the world. The varying responses to this question range from *naive realism*, which is akin to positivism, to *extreme relativism*, which rejects concepts such as truth or knowledge altogether. On the same continuum, we find positions such as *critical realism* and the different versions of *social constructionism* (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

3.2.2.2 Empiricism

Empiricism is similar to positivism, in that it aims to observe directly (i.e., knowledge is based on experience) and therefore is embedded in an objective standpoint (Schultz, 2005). Within this epistemological perspective, truth is defined as the "accurate representation of an independently existing reality" (Smith & Hodkinson, 2005, p. 916). In other words, sense perception provides the basis for knowledge acquisition, which proceeds through the systematic collection and classification of observations, including experiments (Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). According to this view, simple observations are combined to give rise to more complex ideas, and theory follows from observations. To be precise, theories are constructed to make sense of the data collected through observations (Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008).

As with *positivism*, perception is selective and tends to depend on the purpose of the observation. However, contemporary empiricists would argue that knowledge acquisition depends upon the collection and analysis of data. At this point, it is imperative to understand the difference between empiricism and empirical. *Empiricism* is the attitude that all knowledge claims must be grounded in data, while *empirical* is a descriptive term referring to research involving the collection and analysis of data (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

3.2.2.3 Hypothetico-deductivism

A range of practical as well as logical limitations and shortcomings of positivism and empiricism led to the development of one of the most influential alternative theories of

knowledge, namely *hypothetico-deductivism* (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). In Karl Popper's hypothetico-deductive method (Willig, 2001), theories are derived by putting hypotheses to the empirical test (e.g., through observation or experiment). The findings are then interpreted and the theory is adjusted to fit the newly discovered facts, all the while moving closer to the truth. In doing so, progress occurs through a process of disconfirmation, or falsification, where incorrect theories are rejected on the basis of empirical evidence, and by the process of elimination, only correct theories that stand for truth, remain (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

However, Popper's hypothetico-deductivism method has been criticised for failing to acknowledge the role of historical, social and cultural factors in knowledge formation. Hypothetico-deductivism may describe what happens within the *context of justification* (i.e., the arena of objective scientific observations and deductions) but it fails to take *the context of discovery* into account (i.e., the social and subjective world of scientist as human beings, with particular histories, experiences, values and beliefs) (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999). This method is also said not to provide sufficient space for theory development, and is described as being both elitist and a myth (Roberts, 2002). As Danziger (1990) states, it is not whether the lone investigator can verify his hypotheses in his laboratory but whether he can establish his contribution as part of the catalogue of scientific knowledge in his particular field.

3.2.2.4 Feminist Contributions

Feminist scholars in the 1960's and 1970's (Roberts, 2002) identified many of the problems and limitations associated with the established epistemologies outlined above. These scholars responded in different ways to the problems and limitations associated with positivism, empiricism, and hypothetico-deductivism, by developing alternative approaches. These approaches emphasised empowerment, collaboration, and raising consciousness and gave a much needed voice, attention, and meaning to the experience of women.

3.2.2.5 Social Constructivism

Social constructionism, as an epistemological position, insists that the researcher take a critical stance towards knowledge that is considered to be taken-for-granted, and urges the researcher to challenge the view that conventional knowledge is based upon objective, unbiased observation of the world (Willing & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). Social constructionism draws attention to the fact that human experience, including perception, is mediated historically, culturally, and linguistically (Stroud, 2004). In other words, what individuals perceive and experience is not a direct indication of environmental conditions, but must be understood as a specific reading of these conditions. In the late twentieth century, there was a definite shift away from realist and empirical theories towards more interpretive analyses, centred on the role of language in the construction of meaning (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). It was understood that the link between linguistic signs and meanings was a socially-agreed upon one rather than a natural one.

It is said that language is an important aspect of socially constructed knowledge (Denzin & Lincoln, 2001; Willig & Stainton-Rogers, 2008). The same phenomenon or event can be described in various ways, which give rise to varying ways of perceiving and understanding it, even so neither way of describing it is necessarily wrong (Denzin & Lincoln, 2001). With that being said, research from a social constructionist perspective is concerned with identifying the different ways of constructing reality that is available in a culture, to explore the conditions of their use, and to trace their implications for human experience and social practice (Willig, 2008).

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2011), qualitative psychologists tend to be concerned with the meaning of a particular phenomenon. They explore how people make sense of the world, and how they experience events. Qualitative researchers emphasise the socially-constructed nature of reality, and they stress the point that inquiry is valuable. They search

for answers as to how social experiences are created, and how people give meaning to these experiences (Willig, 2008). Qualitative researchers therefore tend to be concerned with the quality of texture of experience, rather than with the identification of cause-and-effect relationships. According to Willig and Stanton-Roberts (2008), the objective of qualitative research is to describe and possibly explain events and experiences, but never to predict them.

Several approaches to qualitative research exist, but the common thread of each would be the concern with human experience in its richness (Kőváry, 2011; Willig, 2008). Qualitative researchers may describe an individual's personal frame of reference and attempt to describe their experience within this particular frame, while another may focus on the range of social interpretations of events available to an individual, arguing that these interpretations are what give rise to the individual's experience (Kőváry, 2011). These qualitative researchers would avoid the term 'experience', with the belief that it points too much to the individual, and may instead, suggest studying the social nature of the constructions of the world that guide thought and action (Willig, 2008). Deviations like these within qualitative psychology do not dismiss the notion that qualitative research in psychology focuses on experience, but instead strengthen the suggestion that contemporary researchers who wish to investigate experience in detail, will often turn to qualitative means to accomplish this (Kőváry, 2011; Willig, 2008).

Qualitative psychology is not a standardized entity. There are a number of different approaches, each with common but varying theoretical and/or methodological emphases. The following section focuses on the different qualitative approaches in terms of their underlying theoretical assumptions, perspectives, and procedures.

3.2.3 Qualitative Approaches to Research

Madill, Jordan and Shirley (2000) have classified the six commonly used qualitative research methods on a continuum (from naieve realism to radical relativism) in terms of their epistemological positions. In terms of Madill et al.'s classification, *case studies* and the

realist version of *grounded theory* could be described as *realist*, *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis*, *memory work* and the *social constructionist* version of *grounded theory* take a *contextual constructionist* approach, while *discursive psychology* can be described as *radical constructionist* perspective. These methods will be discussed briefly, using the following three questions as a guide (Willig, 2008).

1. What kind of knowledge does the method produce?

2. What kinds of assumptions does the method make about the world?

3. How does the method conceptualise the role of the researcher in the research process?

3.2.3.1 Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)

Interpretative Phenomenology is an approach that is informed by some of the principles and methods associated with a branch of philosophical thought known as *phenomenology*. Phenomenology explores the way in which human beings expand their knowledge of the world around them. Phenomenology identifies different approaches to human understanding, and it argues that certain forms of knowing may be more constructive than others. Phenomenology provides detailed guidelines as to how such advanced forms of understanding may be achieved. It is these recommendations or guidelines that have inspired phenomenological research methods (Giorgi & Giogi, 2003; Smith & Osborn, 2003).

IPA aims to understand how participants view and experience their world. While IPA acknowledges that it is not possible to obtain direct, unmediated access to someone else's personal world, IPA researchers are encouraged to engage with participants' accounts in such a way as to encounter an insider perspective. According to Willig (2008), the aim of the objective analysis is to obtain an insight into another person's thoughts and beliefs in relation to the phenomenon being explored.

IPA is concerned with the manner in which individuals perceive the world. Rather than the objective nature of this world (i.e., social or material), IPA seeks to understand the

participants subjective experience of the world. It also assumes that individuals can experience the same 'objective' conditions in completely different ways. This is because experience is mediated in relation to the individual's thoughts and beliefs, expectations, and judgments. In other words, individuals attribute meanings to events, which then shape their experiences of these events (Smith & Osborn, 2003; Willig, 2008).

While the aim of IPA is to gain a better understanding of the participant's psychological world, IPA researchers accept that such understanding can only be gained through the researcher's engagement with, and interpretation of, the participant's account. For this reason, the researcher is essentially implicated in the analysis. As a result, the analysis is both phenomenological (i.e., it aims to represent the participant's view of the world) and interpretive (i.e., it is dependent upon the researcher's own conceptions and viewpoint). Therefore IPA requires a reflexive attitude from the researcher (Smith & Osborn, 2003).

IPA is merely one version of the phenomenological research methodology, which, according to Smith (2003), in turn grew out of a rich tradition of philosophical thought. A phenomenological perspective includes a focus on the life world, an openness to the experiences of the subject, a primacy of precise description, attempts to bracket foreknowledge, and a search for the invariant meanings in description (Willig, 2001, p. 67).

3.2.3.2 Grounded theory

Grounded theory was designed to identify and explain contextualised social processes. These methods consist of systematic inductive guidelines for gathering, synthesising, analysing, and conceptualising qualitative case data to construct theory (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Its techniques for data gathering and analysis are designed to allow concepts and categories to emerge from the data. Grounded theory has a realist orientation (Willig, 2008). The kind of knowledge that grounded theory aims to produce is knowledge of processes which reside in the data, and which can emerge from the data (Charmaz, 2003).

Grounded theorists explore the ways in which individuals negotiate and manage social situations, and how their actions contribute to the unfolding social processes. In grounded theory, the researcher's role is to use his or her skills to represent, in a systematic accessible manner, a clear depiction of what is going on in a snapshot of social reality they have chosen to study. In grounded theory, it is the researcher's skills and his or her ability to collect and analyse the data, which determine the outcome of the research. However, the researcher's identity and standpoint must remain secondary (Willig, 2008).

Social constructionist view of grounded theory differs in terms of the role of the researcher in the process. Here the researcher's role surpasses that of just a witness. He or she actively constructs a particular understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. In terms of a social constructionist viewpoint, grounded theory does not capture a social reality – instead, it is a social construction of a reality (Charmaz, 2003).

In summary, a grounded theory study (from a realist of social constructionist viewpoint) aims to generate or discover a theory as it relates to specific phenomena. That is, a theory is developed that is grounded in data from the field.

3.2.3.3 Discursive psychology and Foucauldian discourse analysis

Discourse analysis has gained popularity and acceptance as a method of qualitative research in psychology in recent years. As a result of this, it is worth exploring within this relevant chapter. More specifically, Discursive psychology and Foucauldian discourse analysis which are two versions of the discourse analytic method proposed by Willig (2003; 2008) that will be discussed.

Theories and research that had developed within other disciplines over a period of time inspired psychologists to explore languages (Drew, 2003; Murray, 2003; Roberts, 2002; Willig, 2003; 2008). Following the 1950s, philosophers, communication theorists, historians, and sociologists became increasingly interested in language as a social performance (Willig,

2003). It was during this time that the assumption that language provides as set of unequivocal signs with which to label internal states, and with which to describe external reality, began to be challenged. As a result of this, language was reconceptualised as productive. In other words, language was seen to construct versions of social reality, and it was seen to achieve social objectives. The focus of inquiry shifted from individuals and their intentions, to language and its productive potential. Yet the field of psychology remained somewhat unaffected by these intellectual developments throughout the 1950s and 1960s (Willig, 2003). Instead, it was concerned with the study of mental representations, and the rules which to control cognitive mediation of various types of input from the environment. In the 1970s, social psychologists began to challenge psychology's cognitivism (Gergen & Gergen, 1991), and in the 1980s the progression to language gained serious traction in psychology.

Discursive psychology is concerned with how the particular versions of reality are manufactured, negotiated, and deployed in conversation. The nature and scope of 'psychology' is understood very differently in discourse analytic work compared to other approaches such as social cognition. Instead of starting with inner mental or cognitive processes, with behavioural regularities, or with neural events that are happening below and behind interaction, it starts with the public displays, constructions and orientations of participants (Potter, 2012).

Discursive psychology starts with discourse because discourse is the primary arena for human action, understanding and intersubjectivity (Potter, 2012). We communicate with one another, express our desires and fears, and come to understand others feelings and concerns primarily though talking. However, discursive psychology is a very different project to the psychology *of* language. A central feature of discourse analytic work on psychological topics in the past few years has been the excitement of working directly on action and interaction as

it unfolds in real time in real situations. Indeed, a case could be made that an empirical programme that started with life as it is lived is long overdue and ought to be foundational to other kinds of psychological perspective (Edwards, 1998). The conclusion of this programme of work is that social life is organized with an extraordinary degree of granularity and orderliness, which is best seen as it unfolds in real time as people respond to one another's talk and display, moment by moment, a subtle practical understanding of one another. In real life psychology is in motion; discursive psychology is an approach that attempts to capture that motion. Discursive psychologists are interested in the ways in which language is constructive and functional, and the role of the researcher is that of an author of the research. According to a discursive perspective such a thing as 'the truth' is constructed through language (Potter, 2012).

On the other hand, Foucauldian discourse analysis is concerned with language and its role in the constitution of social and psychological life. This method tries to analyze how the social world, expressed through language, is affected by various sources of power (Given, 2008). *Foucauldian discourse analysis*, drew upon post-structuralist theorists, such as Foucault, Barthes and Derrida, cultural studies and social theory and was informed by feminism and Marxism (Arribas-Ayllon & Walkerdine, 2008; Burman & Parker, 1993). Foucauldian discourse analysis focuses on discursive resources and examines the ways in which discourses construct objects and subjects and create, in this way, certain versions of reality, society and identity as well as maintaining certain practices and institutions (Willig, 2008).

As such, this approach is close to social constructivism, as the researcher tries to understand how our society is being shaped (constructed) by language, which in turn reflects various power relationships. From a Foucauldian point of view, discourses facilitate and limit, enable and constrain what can be said, by whom, where, and when (Parker, 2002).

Foucauldian discourse analysts focus upon the availability of discursive resources within a culture, and its implications for those who live within it. According to Parker (1994, p. 245), discourses may be defined as "sets of statements that construct objects and an array of subject positions". These constructions, therefore, make available certain ways of seeing the world and certain ways of being in the world.

The Foucauldian approach of discourse analysis is concerned with language and language use (Parker, 2002; Willig & Stanton-Rogers, 2008). However, its interest in language takes it beyond the immediate contexts within which language may be used by speaking subjects. Thus, unlike discursive psychology, which is primarily concerned with interpersonal communication, Foucauldian discourse analysis asks questions about the relationship between discourse and how people think or feel (subjectively), what they do (practices) , and the material conditions within which such experiences may take place (Given, 2008).

Similar to discursive psychologists, Foucauldian discourse analysts do not seek to understand the true nature of psychological phenomena, but rather the ways in which particular versions of such phenomena are constructed through language and other symbolic practices (Given, 2008; Parker, 2002).

According to this approach, there are many versions of the world, each of which is constructed through discourses and practices. Foucauldian discourse analysis makes hardly any assumptions about the nature of the world. Willig (2001; 2008) states that it is based on the assumption that discourse plays a fundamental role in the construction of meaning, and that human subjectivity is (largely or wholly) structured through language.

Discourse analysis is not a means of data analysis in any simple sense. Instead, it presents us with a manner in which to think about the role of discourse in the construction of social and psychological realities, which facilitates creativity and innovation in approaching research questions.

3.2.3.4 Memory work

Memory work for the use of research uses written memories of the individual being studied. This is done in order to gain a clearer understanding of how individuals construct meanings, and thus also themselves, within particular social relations over time (Roberts, 2002; Willig, 2001; 2008). Memory work is based on the assumption that the way in which people experience the world is the product of the social construction of meaning within a set of social relations. In this case, an individual's reality is not directly determined by social and material structures, but rather the individual's psychological appropriation of these structures that gives rise to his or her experience in the world (Onyx, 2001; Willig, 2008). Memory work assumes that individuals internalise social relations and practices in the process of self-formation. The aim of this research is to trace the ways in which the individual engages with such discursive constructions, and (trans) forms him or herself in the process. According to Onyx (2001), memory is a highly reflexive exercise as it involves processes of discovery as well as construction.

Willig (2003) affirms that memory work is a developing approach to the qualitative study of self and identity. It is imperative to note that memory work breaks down the barrier between researcher and subject matter, and as such, it presents a personal challenge to the researcher. Memory work is therefore an influential research method that has the potential to change its practitioners.

3.2.3.5 Case studies

The case study (which is itself not a research method), constitutes an approach to the study of singular entities. These entities may involve the use of a broad range of varied methods of data collection and analysis. Therefore, the case study is not characterised by the methods used to collect and analyse the data, but rather by its focus upon a particular unit of analysis, that is, the case (Elms, 2005b). Bromley (1986) defined a case as a natural occurrence with

definable boundaries – thus a case can be an individual, an organization, a city, a group of people, a community, a patient, a school, an intervention, a situation or an experience. The case study involves an in-depth, rigorous and sharply focussed exploration of such an occurrence, and contains a number of defining features, some of which are discussed below.

Case study research takes a holistic approach, in that it considers the case within its context. This means that the researcher focuses on the ways in which the various dimensions of the case interrelate with environment (Willig, 2001; 2008). Case studies have an *idiopathic perspective*, i.e., focus on the specific rather than the general. The aim of a case study is to understand an individual case in its individuality (Elms, 1994; Willig, 2001; 2008).

Case studies integrate information from various sources in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under investigation (Elms, 1994). This may involve the use of a range of data collection and analysis techniques within the framework of one case study.

Case studies involve the investigation of occurrences over a period of time. This means that a focus on *change and development* is an important feature of case studies (Yin, 1994).

Case studies facilitate *theory generation*. The comprehensive study of a particular case can generate insights into social or psychological processes, which in turn, can give rise to theoretical formulations and hypotheses (Elms, 1994). According to Denzin and Lincoln (2011), Freud's psychoanalytic case studies provide a clear example of the relationship between case studies and theory development.

   Individual cases may be studied for various reasons. A researcher may focus on a particular case because is it interesting in its own right, or because it is seen as representative of a particular kind of situation. He or she may wish to explore a single case in as much depth as possible, or may seek to compare a number of cases with one another in order to arrive at a more general understanding of a phenomenon. The researcher's investigation of the cases may be purely exploratory, or it may be designed to test an existing theory (Elms, 1994). In

addition, it may be predominantly descriptive, or it may aim to generate explanations of occurrences (Willig, 2008).

The case study researcher needs to make a series of decisions about *what* (i.e., the unit of analysis/the case), *how* (i.e., the methods of data collection and analysis) and *why* (i.e., intrinsic interest or theoretical reasons) he or she is to conduct the research (Stroud, 2004). Researchers need to identify and select methods of data collection and analysis that will generate material suitable for case studies. Numerous methods can be used in case study research. Some of these are well-known qualitative techniques, such as semi-structured interviewing, participant observation, and diaries (Elms, 1994). Data for case studies can also be found in personal documents (e.g., letters, notes, photographs) or official documents (e.g., case notes, clinical notes, appraisal reports) (Elms, 1994).

Case study research relies on the researcher to produce an accurate and comprehensive description of the characteristics of the case, within the study's frame of reference, in order to generate new insights into the phenomenon under investigation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). For this reason, case studies are basically realist in orientation. They aim to improve our understanding of what transpires in a particular situation. According to Willig (2003), case studies take a close look at individual cases, so as to better understand their internal dynamics.

Within case studies, focus is placed on the explicit before moving on to the task of careful engagement with theory development or generalization. Each case is seen as unique, even in the instance of shared characteristics of between cases. Elms (2005b) states that case study research takes a holistic perspective, and perceives the world as an integrate system that does not allow us to study part of it in isolation.

3.2.3.6 Characteristics of qualitative design

In review of the general features of qualitative design that have been outlined in the above sections, the following is a summative list of these characteristics. This list is an adapted version of the list compiled by Janesick (1994, p, 212) and are not intended to be exhaustive but rather as a heuristic tool for the purpose and context of this study.

- Qualitative design is holistic. It looks at the larger picture, and begins with a search for understanding of the whole.

- Qualitative design looks at relationships within a system or culture.

- Qualitative refers to the personal, face-to-face, and immediate.

- Qualitative design is focussed on understanding given social setting, not necessarily on making predictions about that setting.

- Qualitative design demands that the researcher 'stays' in the social setting and develops a reflective understanding over time.

- Qualitative design requires the researcher to become a research instrument.

- Qualitative design incorporates room for description of the role of the researcher, as well as description of the researcher's own biases and ideological preference.

- Qualitative design requires ongoing analyses of the data.

Denzin and Lincoln (2011) define qualitative research as a form of social inquiry that is inherently multi-method in approach. In planning a qualitative study, the researcher should not look for answers in certain places simply because they are familiar or easily accessible. Instead, the researcher should explore places where the answer is likely to be, no matter how unwelcoming these places may be (Lorion, 1990).

3.3 Psychobiographical Research

The central idea in psychobiography is to describe an entire life, from birth until death, while applying a psychological theory to it or by directly structuring the individual's life

according to the psychological theory (McAdams, 2000). According to Runyan (1982) words, the psychobiographer attempts to discern, discover, formulate and understand the subject's experiences through the application of a theory. These experiences can inform and teach us about what it would have been like to live in different social and historical circumstances. On an emotional level, they have the ability to move us deeply (Runyan, 1982). Within the field of psychobiography, the uniqueness of the individual subject is of profound value. Therefore, individuals who are considered to have led exceptional, distinct and exemplary lives are generally chosen as psychobiographical subjects (Runyan, 1988a). Alexander (1990) supports this by expressing that understanding the subject is the ultimate goal. Therefore, psychobiography is characterised as a morphogenic approach. The term morphogenic stresses the individuality of the entire human being rather than that found only in particular elements, meaning that the person is described in a more holistic and in-depth manner (McAdams, 2000; Runyan, 1988a). Because there are very few things more captivating than learning about the experiences of other human beings, psychobiography is a rapidly developing discipline within the field of qualitative research (Jacobs, 2004).

3.3.1 The Development of Psychobiographical Research

Schultz (2001a) suggests that the roots of psychobiography can be found in the era of ancient Greece. However, Sigmund Freud's analysis of Leonardo da Vinci in 1910 - titled: *Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of His Childhood* - is generally considered to be the first modern psychobiography (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Due to Freud's role in the re-emergence of psychobiography, the research approach has historically retained a Freudian or psychodynamic orientation, but other more recently used theories include narrative models of identity, such as Dan McAdams's (1994) life story model.

Biographies and autobiographies are not new phenomena but have a long history as cultural practices (Mascuch, 1997). One, known as pathography, aims at exposing the

neurotic drives hidden in the lives and works of famous and influential people, for example, Lytton Strachey's biographical studies of eminent Victorians such as Florence Nightingale, in which selfish compulsions were found at the root of their good deeds (McAdams, 1988).

Only in recent years has psychobiography retreated from a psychoanalytic stance (Elms, 1994). Personal life histories have been involved in the creation and development of exploring and understanding personality in psychology (Schultz, 2005). The concept of psychobiography is defined as a biographical study which makes explicit use of any kind of formal or systematic psychology.

Burgers (1939) conducted the first analysis of an extraordinary South African life – that of Cornelius Jacobus Langenhoven. After a lapse of 60 years, the life of General Jan Smuts was explored by means of psychobiographical research by Fouché (1999). Chabani Manganyi published a biography on Gerard Sekoto (2004), in which he explored Sekota's life from a clinical psychological perspective. Since then, according to Fouché and Van Niekerk (2005b), psychobiographical research in South Africa has been nurtured in the departments of psychology at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, Rhodes University, the University of Johannesburg, and the University of the Free State.

3.3.2 Defining the Field of Psychobiographical Research

A psychobiography can be described as a way of doing psychology, not merely a way of doing a biography (Silverman, 2006). Psychobiography is the name given to life histories making substantial use of psychological theory and/or research as a means of shedding light on the interior lives of biographical subjects and the connection between the life and the work (Schultz, 2005). It is, therefore, a study of a complete life, from birth to death, with aims to discern, discover or formulate the central story of the whole life; a story structured according to psychological theory (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

3.3.3 The Value of Psychobiographical Research

3.3.3.1 The uniqueness of the individual case within the whole

Psychobiography is morphogenic in nature; it is a study of individualized patterning processes and 'wholes' in personality rather than specific fragmented dimensions of personalities (Elms, 1994). The life history approach provides a unique and holistic description of the person being studied (Elms, 1994; Runyan, 1984).

3.3.3.2 The socio-historical context

Runyan (1984) affirmed that by looking at a person holistically, as is the case with life history research and psychobiographical studies, attention is given to a larger contextualized background within which the individual existed. In addition, Goodson and Sikes (2001) affirmed that there is an essential interactive relationship between individuals, their perceptions and experiences as well as historical and social contexts with their associated events.

Pope John Paul ll lived in radical socio-historical times in Poland. In order to contextualize this background, emphasis is placed on his socio-cultural experience, the process of socialization and family history (Roberts, 2002).

3.3.3.3 Process and pattern over time

Life history is related to the complete explanation and understanding of behavioural processes and developmental patterns over time (Runyan, 1984). The researcher is able to trace patterns of human development from start till the end of a person's life due to the fact that psychobiographies tend to focus on finished lives (Carlson, 1988). It then becomes possible to form a more comprehensive understanding of personality in action which will enable the researcher to document different dimensions and processes of an individual's functioning at any point in time and in any specific situation (Fiske, 1988).

3.3.3.4 Subjective Reality

Life history research offers the researcher an enlightening description and understanding of the thoughts, feelings and inner experiences of the subject (Mouton, 1988). Watson (1976) claimed that it is significant to understand a subject's life history as a subjective document from the subject's point of view. This will allow the researcher to develop the required level of sympathy and empathy for the subject as he explores the subject's world (Runyan, 1984).

3.3.3.5 Theory testing and development

Life history material provides an ideal setting for validating and developing various personality theories. The story serves as a template against which the researcher can compare and analyse the collected data. This aids in the conceptualization and operationalising of case data within the framework of theoretical constructs, and allows for generalizing from the case study to the theory (Yin, 2003). Therefore, life history research provides a perfect opportunity for validating and developing various theories of human development (Carlson, 1988). Furthermore, Roberts (2002) suggests that new conceptual insights can be gained or existing theories can be illustrated during collection, interpretation and the presentation of the research.

3.4 Psychobiography and Psychology

Faust (2003, pp. 220) stated:

> We create ourselves out of the stories we tell about our lives, stories that impose purpose and meaning on experiences that often seem random and discontinuous. As we scrutinize our own past in the effort to explain ourselves to ourselves, we discover - or invent - consistent motivations, characteristic patterns, fundamental values, a sense of self. Fashioned out of memories, our stories become our identities.

Many personologists dedicated to the study of lives have suggested that a psychologically informed biography is probably the best means of capturing a human life placed in the context of time (McAdams, 1994). Yet, according to Anderson (1971a), psychologists have had trouble with biography, and despite the tempting claim that people may be best understood in their biographical contexts, biographical approaches to the study of a person have traditionally taken an uncertain and somewhat controversial status in psychology (Runyan, 1984). With that being said, the following are ways in which psychobiographical research could substantially remedy the relationship between psychobiography and psychology (Elms, 1994).

3.4.1 Testing the statistically significant against personally significant

Even though experiments and correlational studies, and statistical analyses of the data they generate, may identify significant variables in the lives of individuals, an individual cannot be seen as just that: a sum of statistical body parts. Statistical analysis, however, has become sophisticated enough to detect remarkably subtle experimental effects and very complex correlations. These effects and correlations need to be explored in terms of personal significance when we look at one life at a time, and psychobiography is a good tool to guide this exploration.

3.4.2 Making comparative analyses of an individual case through use of public data

A psychologist has a substantial history of studying one life at a time, however, the data collected is problematic more ways than one: (1) The data is pathographic in orientation (i.e., lives lived in less than optimal ways), (2) data collected is bound by legal and ethical constraints, (3) collected data is generated by questions and suggestions by the clinician, in a process largely unobserved by anyone else and thus may be subject to bias. However, when a psychobiographical study is published, other researchers can examine the same data and

evaluate the first researcher's interpretations, or even offer their alternative versions of the subject's life. In the process, the study of that life moves from case history to science.

3.4.3 Gaining ideas for new theories, new hypotheses, or new groupings of data

This is arguably the most readily accepted use of individual case-history research in psychology. Theory generation may be better served by narrowing the research focus that is most strongly represented in a particular life as is the case of this study.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed qualitative research methods and psychobiography as the research method that will be employed in this study. The development of psychobiography, qualitative research method, can be found in the publications of international and local scholars and students. The value of psychobiography to the scientific field of psychology should continue to grow through research studies locally and internationally, for the specific reason that psychobiography is a way of practicing psychology (Elms, 1994).

One of the frameworks used in this study, namely, the theory of psychosocial development, is discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 4

Erik Erikson's Psychosocial Stages of Development

4.1 Chapter Preview

This chapter focuses on Erik Erikson's 1950 psychosocial development stages across the human lifespan. In order to understand Erikson's theory, a brief account of his life is provided. This is followed by a discussion of Erikson's theory.

4.2 Significant life events contributing to the development of Erikson's 1950 theory

Erik Erikson's lifelong interest in the psychology of identity may be traced to his childhood. Erikson was born on the 15th of June 1902, from his mother's extramarital relationship, and the circumstances of his birth were concealed from him in his childhood (Welchman, 2000). His mother, Karla Abrahamsen, came from a prominent Jewish family in Copenhagen. Her mother, Henrietta, died when Karla was only 13 years old (Friedman, 1999). Karla's father, Josef, was a merchant in dried goods. Her older brothers Einar, Nicolai, and Axel were active in local Jewish charity and helped maintain a free soup kitchen for indigent Jewish immigrants from Russia.

Because Karla Abrahamsen was officially married to Jewish stockbroker Waldemar Isidor Salomonsen at the time, Erikson, who was born in Germany, was registered as Erik Salomonsen. There is little information available about his biological father, except that he was a Dane and his given name was probably Erik (Welchman, 2000). It is also suggested that he was married at the time that Erikson was conceived (Friedman, 1999).

Following her son's birth, Karla trained to be a nurse. She moved to Karlsruhe and in 1904 married a Jewish pediatrician, Theodor Homburger. In 1909 Erik Salomonsen became Erik Homburger and two years later he was officially adopted by his stepfather.

Erikson describes his mother as being "pervasively sad" (Erikson, 1975, p. 31). She appeared to be neither a fundamentalist nor a rebel but rather a woman with her own opinions which she kept to herself (Welchman, 2000). From the impression Erikson formed of his mother it would appear that she provided him with her consistent presence, sufficient strength, and dependability through his changing background. In later life, Erikson expressed fundamental hopefulness and trust in his environment to supply and respond to his needs, in spite of the distant relationship he had had with his mother. It should be noted, however, that doubt was prominent in his thoughts during his adolescence and early adulthood (Coles, 1970; Friedman, 1999). In addition, Erikson's issues around autonomy may possibly have led to the development of a continuing element in his search for identity which re-emerged in adolescence and which formed the focus of his creative work in understanding human development.

During this early stage of development, it is imperative to take into account the impact Dr Homburger's joining the family had on him. In *Life History and the Historical Moment* (Erikson, 1975), Erikson describes his bitterness surrounding Dr Homburger marrying his mother. He felt Dr Homburger intruded on the steady and consistent relationship he had with his mother.

During his adolescent years, Erikson found it difficult to be comfortable with who he was and who he was expected to be. At temple school, the children teased him for being Nordic; at grammar school, they teased him for being Jewish (Boeree, 2006). His conflicting identifications – as a German, a Jew and a Dane - made his quest for identity challenging. In addition, Erikson's father hoped he would become a doctor, even though Erikson was passionate about art and history. Erikson later affirmed in his theory that identity problems become apparent with that turn in puberty, in other words, when images of future roles become unavoidable (Erikson, 1975).

After graduating from high school, Erikson's primary focus was on becoming an artist. When not taking art classes, he wandered around Europe where he would visit museums and sleep under bridges. Erikson was grateful for his parents' attitude during this period in his life (Erikson, 1975). Although this time was untroubled and free from the obligations of the 'real world', he was aware that he would not be able to put off adulthood forever (Coles, 1970; Welchman, 2000). It was during this time of self-exploration that Erikson's friend, Peter Blos - a fellow artist and, later, psychoanalyst - suggested he apply for a teaching position at an experimental school run by Dorothy Burlingham, a friend of Anna Freud. Besides teaching art, Erikson obtained a certificate in Montessori education and one from the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society.

While teaching at the school, Erikson met Joan Serson, a Canadian dance teacher. They eventually married and had three children, one of whom became a sociologist (Coles, 1970; Welchman, 2000). Erikson took the decision to leave Vienna when the Nazis came into power. He first moved to Copenhagen and then to Boston in the United States. Erikson was offered a position at the Harvard Medical School where he practiced child psychoanalysis privately. During this time, he befriended psychologists Henry Murray and Kurt Lewin, and anthropologists Ruth Benedict, Margaret Mead, and Gregory Bateson. It can be argued that these friendships had as nearly as great effect on Erikson as Sigmund Freud and Anna Freud (Boeree, 2006). Later, he held teaching positions at University of California at Berkeley, Yale, San Francisco Psychoanalytic Institute, Austen Riggs Center, and Center for Advanced Studies of the Behavioral Sciences.

The following section contains Erikson's core ideas which form the foundation of his theory.

4.3 Development of personality: Erikson's psychosocial perspective

Erikson's theory of development affirms that psychosexual growth and psychosocial growth occurs simultaneously, and that at each life stage we are required to create a balance

between ourselves and our social world (Corey, 2005). Erikson realized that the psychological mind, cultural influences and the genetic biological programming of the human body also played an important role in the contribution towards the course of human development (Erikson, 1965). Erikson (1965; 1985) described development of an individual in terms of an entire lifespan. The lifespan of the individual is divided by specific crises that need to be resolved. Erikson saw these crises as a crossroads in the individual's life, where they had the potential to progress or regress. These crossroads can either allow the individual to find resolution to their conflicts or fail to master the developmental task (Corey, 2005). Erikson was careful not to use the word 'achieve' in the context of successful outcomes, because it implied gaining something specific and permanent (Chapman, 2009). Psychosocial development is not specific and is not irreversible. It is possible for a previous crisis to return to an individual, but in another form, with successful or unsuccessful results.

4.4 Foundation of Erikson's theory

The fundamental theme of Erikson's theory is that of balance. That is, the individual seeks to find a balance within every stage between the respective and opposite characteristics. Erikson believed in harmony which he considered to be the experience of both sides of the psychosocial continuum. The following section describes epigenesis, which is human development according to a genetic code.

4.4.1 The Epigenetic Principle

This principle states that we develop through a predetermined unfolding of our personalities in eight stages. Our progress through each stage is in part determined by our success, or failure, in all the previous stages (Welchman, 2000). Each stage involves certain psychosocial developmental tasks, which are referred to by two terms. For example, the infant's task is called 'trust-mistrust'. At first, according to Boeree (2006) it might seem obvious that the infant must learn trust and not mistrust. However, Erikson emphasized the importance of

learning balance in our life: Individuals need to learn trust; but also need to learn a little mistrust, which will help one from becoming easy to fool (Friedman, 1999). Each psychosocial stage has a certain *optimal time*. Boeree (2006) affirms that children should not be rushed into adulthood, as is so common among people who are obsessed with success. Welchman (2000) affirms the importance of managing each task well, stating that if this is done properly, a person will carry away a certain *virtue* or psychosocial strength which will help them through the rest of the stages of their lives. Conversely, if they do not manage the task appropriately, they may develop maladaptations and malignancies, as well as jeopardizing their future development (Boeree, 2006; Welchman, 2000). A malignancy is seen as being the worse of the two, and involves too little of the positive and too much of the negative aspect of the task, e.g., a person who cannot trust others. A maladaptation is seen as not as bad and involves too much of the positive and too little of the negative (Boeree, 2006). The following section provides Erikson's alternative avenues of thought from the traditional Freudian thought.

4.4.2 Alternative avenues of thought

Although much of Erikson's theory draws on the traditional psychoanalytic view, there are three particular ways in which Erikson's views diverge from it.

The first was Erikson's view of the autonomy of the ego; this he credited to his work with children. Erikson (1985) observed the manner in which children exceeded all adult expectations in their directedness and communicative expression. He found that the children he taught expressed a resourceful and inventive striving for experience and synthesis in spite of the intense conflicts they had (Erikson, 1985; Welchman, 2000). Erikson attributed his understanding of ego autonomy in the development of ego psychology to the influence of Heinz Hartmann, a top analyst and one of his teachers in Vienna (Welchman, 2000). The concept of ego is discussed in greater detail in section 2.4.3.

The second deviation of thought is that of the clinical and theoretical basis of psychoanalysis. The mechanistic and physicalistic phrasing of psychoanalytic theory confused Erikson throughout his early training (Erikson, 1985). Welchman (2000) noted that this distinction was apparent in clinical seminars which had a new movement toward social and inner problems and through his work with children. Erikson viewed clinical and theoretical language as having different attitudes toward human motivation (Erikson, 1985).

The third deviation from the traditional psychoanalytical view is what Erikson described as the configurational attention to the rich interplay of form and meaning (Erikson, 1985). He saw this as being linked to the training as an artist in more visual than verbal communication (Welchman, 2000). In an early psychoanalytic paper, based on children's picture books, Erikson related a configurational method of thinking to Freud's therapeutic approach of equal attention and suspension of judgment. He believed that Freud's (1900) *The Interpretation of Dreams* was the model for this approach. Welchman (2000) noted that it was Freud's characteristically instinctive and artistic style of writing as well as his inquisitiveness of human nature and his pleasure of inquiry that appealed to Erikson the most. Erikson (1985) also found that the configurational approach could easily be applied to the observation of children.

4.4.3 Erikson's 'ego'

Erikson (1965) considered the ego to be the internal guide to individual development in relation to society. It is the conscious sense of self that we develop through social interaction. Identity is seen as the product of the work of the ego. According to Erikson, our ego identity is constantly altering due to new experience and information we obtain in our daily interactions with others (Van Wagner, 2005). In addition to ego identity, Erikson believed that a sense of competence also motivates behaviours and actions. As a result, Erikson believed that a strong ego is the unwavering foundation which is "firm and flexible enough to

reconcile the necessary contradictions in any human organization" (Erikson, 1965, p. 179). He also considered a strong ego to have the ability to integrate individual differences and more importantly, to have developed a sense of identity and integrity.

Erikson highlighted three fundamental elements which provide a basic sense of ego-identity in the infant, namely, continuity, consistency and sameness of experience. These elements continue to be essential to an established sense of self and it was for this reason that Erikson viewed stability as a crucial factor for a child to become familiar with the actions of the parent in various settings (Erikson, 1965).

4.5 The eight psychosocial stages

Erikson proposed the concept of human life following a cycle of eight ages, from infancy to old age. Essentially, the theory states that each person experiences eight *psychosocial crises* (internal conflicts linked to life's key stages) which help to define an individual's growth and personality (Chapman, 2009). People experience these *psychosocial crisis* stages in a fixed sequence, but timings vary according to people and circumstances. For example, there are no chronological age indicators in adulthood (Redfern & Ross, 1999).

4.5.1 Trust versus mistrust (birth to about 18 months)

Erikson (1965; 1968) proposed that in this first stage, the first task of the ego is to establish stable patterns for the solution of the conflict of basic trust versus basic mistrust. Morris (1996) states that an infant is torn between trusting and not trusting his/her parents. Meyer et al. (2003) suggested that the extent to which infants learn to trust their environment depends mainly on the quality of the mother-child relationship. Trust can be seen as a state of being and responding (Welchman, 2000). Erikson believed that in order to trust oneself and the capacity of one's own organs to cope with urges, we need to trust in the likeness and stability of our "outer providers" (Erikson, 165, p. 239).

If an infant's basic physical and emotional needs are provided for by a caregiver but not over-indulged or over-protected, the infant will develop a sense of trust (Corey, 2005). According to Santrock (2006), physical comfort and a minimal amount of fear and apprehension about the future ensures a sense of trust. Infants who grow up to trust are more able to hope and have faith that 'things will generally be okay' (Chapman, 2009). The virtues of *hope* and *drive* result from a successful resolution of this stage (Erikson, 1978b). On the other hand, abuse/neglect/ or cruelty will destroy trust and promote mistrust and increase an individual's resistance to risk and exploration (Welchman, 2000). Chapman (2009) uses the analogy 'Once bitten twice shy' to describe this. If an infant's world is inconsistent, painful and stressful, he/she will learn to expect more of the same and come to believe life is unpredictable and untrustworthy (Boeree, 2006; Craig & Baucum, 2002). In addition, the infant will have an attitude of mistrust toward interpersonal relationships (Corey, 2005).

The *maladaption* of this stage is 'sensory distortion' and later 'sensory maladjustment' which manifests as unrealistic, spoilt and deluded cognitions/behaviour. The *malignancy* of this stage is 'withdrawal' which manifests as neurotic, depressive and fearful cognitions/behaviour (Chapman, 2009).

4.5.2 Autonomy versus shame and doubt (18 months to about three years)

This stage occurs in late infancy and toddlerhood, when a child's growing physical development allows them increasing autonomy and greater contact with their environment (Morris, 1996). The central struggle of this stage is between a sense of self-reliance and a sense of self doubt (Corey, 2005). During this stage the balance between loving goodwill and hateful self-insistence is paramount (Sadock & Sadock, 2003). Autonomy means self-reliance, that is, independence of thought and the confidence to think and act for oneself. The terms shame and doubt is self-explanatory, it hinders self-expression and developing one's own ideas, opinions and sense of self (Chapman, 2009).

After gaining trust in their caregivers, infants begin to discover that their behaviour is their own (Santrock, 2006). Children need to explore the world around them and experiment in it, to make mistakes and to test limits (Corey, 2005). When they begin to succeed in doing things for themselves, they gain a sense of self confidence and self-control. The virtues of willpower and self control result from a successful resolution of this stage (Erikson, 1978b). According to Craig and Baucum (2002), if they continually fail and are punished as messy, sloppy, inadequate, or bad, they learn to feel shame and self doubt. In addition, if parents encourage dependency, a child's autonomy is inhibited and their ability to deal with the world effectively is hindered (Corey, 2005).

According to Chapman (2009) toilet and potty training is an important part of this crisis, where feedback from parents, encouragement and patience play a vital role in determining the child's experience and successful progression through this period. Chapman further notes that the 'terrible twos' and 'toddler tantrums' are obvious analogies which represent these internal struggles and parental battles. The parental balancing act is a challenging one, especially since parents themselves have to deal with their own particular psychosocial crisis, and of course deal with the influence of their own emotional triggers which were conditioned when they themselves passed through earlier formative crisis stages (Chapman, 2009).

The *maladaptive* tendency of this stage is 'impulsiveness', which is described by Boeree (2006) as a shameless willfulness that guides the individual in later childhood and early adulthood, to jump into things without proper consideration of their abilities. The *malignancy* of this stage is 'compulsiveness' which sees the compulsive person striving for perfection in everything they do.

4.5.3 Initiative versus guilt (about three years to about five years)

The basic task of this stage is to achieve a sense of competence and initiative (Corey, 2005). According to Chapman (2009) initiative is the ability to plan actions or projects

confidently even with a risk of failure or making mistakes. Guilt in this context is the feeling that it is wrong or improper to instigate something of one's own design. Chapman (2009) further explains guilt as being the result of believing that something is wrong or likely to draw disapproval, whereas initiative grows when adventure is encouraged.

According to Santrock (2006), as preschool children encounter a widening social world they are challenged more than when they were infants; therefore, active, purposeful behaviour is needed to cope with these challenges. Children are asked to assume responsibility for their bodies, their behaviour, their toys, and their pets. They also become increasingly active due to their increasing mastery of locomotor and language skills (Sadock & Sadock, 2003).

Developing a sense of responsibility increases initiative (Santrock, 2006). Parents, caregivers and older siblings are faced with a challenging task of finding the correct balance between giving young children adequate space and encouragement in order to foster a sense of purpose and self-belief, but also to shield against danger and enable a sensible exposure to trial and error (Chapman, 2009). If a child is allowed the liberty to personally select meaningful activities, their view of themselves will increase positively and they are more likely to accomplish the task they set out to do (Corey, 2005). The virtues of *purpose* and *direction* result from a successful resolution of this stage (Erikson, 1978b). However, according to Corey (2005) if they are not permitted to make their own decisions, they tend to develop guilt over taking initiative. Consequently, they then avoid taking an active stance and rather permit others to decide for them. Also, if a child is severely criticised or punished, they learn to feel guilty for many of their own actions (Boeree, 2006). Furthermore, a child's guilt may also come from wanting to contend with the parent of the same gender for 'ownership' of the other parent, at the same time as experiencing anxiety for anticipated punishment (Sadock & Sadock, 2003).

The *maladaption* of this stage is 'ruthlessness' which manifests in exploitative, uncaring and dispassionate cognitions/behaviour. The most extreme form of ruthlessness is antisocial behaviour (Boeree, 2006). The *malignancy* of this stage is 'inhibition' which manifests as risk-savers and unadventurous cognitions/behaviour (Chapman, 2009). The inhibited person will not try things because they believe that 'nothing ventured, nothing lost' (Boeree, 2006).

4.5.4 Industry versus inferiority (about five years to about 13 years)

Erikson described this stage as a kind of 'entrance to life' (1965). This stage is characterized by the child's need to develop a sense of industry by taking pride in their production, an outcome of goals achieved through their newly acquired skills (Morris, 1996; Sadock & Sadock, 2003). Children develop numerous skills and competencies in school, at home and in the outside world. A sense of self is enriched by the realistic development of such competencies and comparison with peers is increasingly significant (Boeree, 2006; Craig & Baucum, 2002).

Industry within this context refers to purposeful or meaningful activity, the development of ability and skills, and a confidence to use a 'method' (Chapman, 2009). According to Corey (2005) children should continue to develop appropriate gender-role identity, broaden their understanding of the world and learn the essential skills necessary for school achievement. Children who experience the satisfaction of achievement will be able to successfully move on from this stage, with the virtues of *competence* and *method* (Erikson, 1978b). On the other hand, if a child experiences failure at school tasks and work, he/she is more likely to feel inferior and useless (Chapman, 2009). Also, if children are allowed few accomplishments, because of harsh teachers or rejecting peers, they will develop a sense of inferiority or incompetence (Boeree, 2006). Erikson also mentions other sources of inferiority are racism, sexism, and various forms of discrimination (Erikson, 1965). A negative evaluation of self as inferior compared to others is especially disruptive at this stage. Connecting with others and

using tools or technology are also important aspects of this stage. Chapman (2009) describes this stage as a rehearsal for being productive and being valued at work in later life.

The *maladaptive tendency* of this stage is 'narrow virtuosity' and manifests as workaholic and obsessive specialist cognitions/behaviour. This includes children who are not allowed to be children but are rather pushed into one area of competence, without allowing the development of broader interests, for example, child actors, child athletes, child musicians (Boeree, 2006). The *malignant* tendency of this stage is 'inertia' which manifests as lazy, apathetic and purposeless cognitions/behaviour. This includes those people who suffer from the inferiority complexes (Boeree, 2006).

4.5.5 Identity versus role confusion (about 13 years to about 21 years)

During this stage, described by Corey (2005, p. 63) as "a time of transition between childhood and adulthood", individuals are finding out who they are and where they are going in life. Puberty's social and physiological transformation fuel the changing adolescent to become concerned with the question of identity (Sadock & Sadock, 2003). According to Chapman (2009) adolescents struggle to fit in, be accepted and affirmed, and also to become individuals. This transition period is also a time for testing limits, becoming independent and for establishing a new identity (Corey, 2005).

The manner in which a person sees themselves in relation to their world is an identity, that is, a sense of individualism in the context of life and what the future holds (Chapman, 2009). Role confusion or the absence of identity is seen as the negative perspective. This means that the person is unable to clearly perceive who they are and how they can relate positively to their environment (Chapman, 2009). The most important conflicts within this stage are concerned with the clarification of self-identity, life goals and life's meaning. Failure to attain a sense of identity result in role confusion (Corey, 2005). The virtues of *fidelity* and *devotion* results from a successful resolution of this stage (Erikson, 1978b). According to Erikson

(1978b), individuals seek basic values and attitudes that cut across their various roles. If they fail to form a central identity or cannot resolve a major conflict between two major roles with opposing value systems, the result is what Erikson called ego diffusion.

The *maladaption* of this stage is 'fanaticism' characterized by self-important and extremist cognitions/behaviour. A fanatic believes that his/her way is the only way and usually only see things in black-and-white (Boeree, 2006). The *malignancy* of this stage is 'repudiation' characterized by socially disconnected and cut-off cognitions/behaviour. These individuals will reject their need for an identity and is more likely to join a group that is eager to provide the individual details for their identity, for example, religious cults, militaristic organizations (Boeree, 2006).

4.5.6 Intimacy versus isolation (about 21 years to about 40 years)

At this time, individuals face the developmental task of forming intimate relationships with others. The identity which was established in the previous stage is now attempted to be shared with another person (Corey, 2005; Erikson, 1978b). Santrock (2006) suggested that if the young adult forms healthy friendships and an intimate relationship with another individual, intimacy will be achieved; if not, isolation will result. The virtues of *love* and *affiliation* result from a successful resolution of this stage (Erikson, 1978b).

Erikson (1950) described intimacy as finding oneself yet losing oneself in another. He further explained intimacy in terms of sexual mutuality with a strong reciprocal feature, that is, the giving and receiving of physical and emotional connection and other elements that we would usually associate with healthy, adult relationships. Chapman (2009) described intimacy as the process of attaining relationships with family and marital/mating partner(s). Conversely, isolation means being and feeling excluded from the typical life experiences of dating/mating/mutually loving relationships. Understandably, this is characterised by feelings of loneliness, alienation, social withdrawal or non-participation (Chapman, 2009).

The *maladaptive* tendency of this stage is 'promiscuity' which is characterized by sexually needy and vulnerable cognitions/behaviour (Chapman, 2009). These individuals tend to become intimate easily, without restraint and without any depth to their intimacy (Boeree, 2006). The *malignant* tendency of this stage is 'exclusivity' characterized by reclusive, cold and self-contained cognitions/behaviour (Chapman, 2009).

4.5.7 Generativity versus stagnation (about 40 years to about 60 years)

In this stage there is a strong need to go beyond self and family and be concerned with helping the next generation; it is a time to decipher the difference between one's dream and one's actual accomplishments (Corey, 2005).

The establishment and guidance of the next generation is known as generativity (Sadock & Sadock, 2003). Generativity originates from the word generation, that is, parents and children, but more specifically, the unconditional giving that represent parental love and care for their children (Chapman, 2009). According to Santrock (2006), a chief concern is to assist the younger generation in developing and leading useful lives. This supervision of the next generation does not only refer to the next of kin, but to humanity in general (Meyer et al., 2003). Having children of you own is not a requirement for generativity, in the same way that being a parent is not a guarantee that generativity will be realized (Chapman, 2009). Erikson (1965) acknowledged that this stage also extends to other productive activities, e.g., work. Positive outcomes of this crisis stage depend on contributing positively and unconditionally, resulting in the virtues of *care* and *production* (Chapman, 2009; Erikson, 1978b). Conversely, the feeling of having done nothing to help the next generation is stagnation (Erikson, 1965; Sadock & Sadock, 2003). According to Chapman (2009) stagnation is the internal, expansion of intimacy in the form of self-centeredness and vanity.

The *maladaption* of this stage is 'overextension' which manifests as busy-body and meddling behaviour. These individuals usually 'bite off more than they can chew' which

results in them no longer have time for themselves (Boeree, 2006). The *malignancy* of this stage is 'rejectivity' which manifests as disinterested and cynical cognitions/behaviour. This is the stage where a 'midlife crisis' may occur, whereby the individual question their experiences and accomplishments and attempt to recapture their youth (Boeree, 2006)

4.5.8 Integrity versus despair (about 60 years to death)

This stage can be seen as a powerful lens through which to view one's life, even before old age is reached (Chapman, 2009). Typically, this is the stage where individuals look back over their lives and judge themselves. Chapman (2009) described integrity as having no regrets or blame but rather a feeling of peace with oneself and the world. Erikson (1963b; 1965; 1978b) believed integrity was the product of seven stages resulting in the virtues of *wisdom* and *renunciation* if effectively resolved. Despair within this context is seen as feelings of wasted prospects and regrets (Chapman, 2009). Boeree (2006) stated that if, when looking back, people find that they are satisfied that their lives had meaning and involvement, the result is a sense of integrity. However, if life seems to have consisted of a series of misdirected efforts and lost chances, the outcome is a sense of despair, hopelessness, guilt, resentment and self rejection (Corey, 2005). The *maladaption* of this stage is 'presumption' which is characteristic of conceited, pompous and arrogant cognitions/behaviour (Chapman, 2009). The *malignancy* of this stage is 'disdain' (by which Erikson means contempt of life, one's own or anyone's) which is characteristic of miserable, unfulfilled and blaming cognitions/behaviour (Chapman, 2009).

4.6 Features of the life cycle

The effect of Erikson's psychosocial theory does not only lie in the detail of every stage, but also in what characterizes it. Erikson noted that it is the overall thought and reflection which allows features of methodology and terminology for further study. The following are principles of the design of Erikson's theory, as highlighted by Welchman (2000):

1. A complete life cycle is encompassed and viewed within a sequence of generations.

2. Human development is formulated by consistently applying a procedure that links biological, psychological and social processes.

3. The *epigenetic principle* presents a unique contribution to the nature versus nurture dilemma in human development.

4. The psychosocial stages are illustrated in terms of a nuclear conflict between divergent outlooks. Erikson viewed each crisis as a turning point which must be resolved in a balance between positive and negative. The negative is seen as important as the positive because one needs a certain amount of displeasure for optimal psychosocial development.

5. The stages are interrelated. The resolution of a stage is never complete and is prefigured in and affected by earlier stages.

6. The design is focused on typical rather than pathological development.

7. The design is aimed at showing a pattern of healthy development.

8. Erikson provides the relation between particular stages and institutions of society.

9. Erikson provides the relation of certain ego qualities derived from the nuclear conflict at a particular stage.

4.7 Critique of Erikson's work

There are four main criticisms to be considered. The first is Erikson's idealism whereby he evades negative aspects of life and seems unable to determine what is, with what he would like or thinks should happen. The second criticism is associated with the social and political implications of his work, whereby his work seems to bash traditional culture and values as well as support and justify an unfair status quo. The third critique is that his work is distorted by his own assumptions. The fourth criticism concerns his method, that is, his rigid thinking and style which is described as being vague.

4.7.1 Erikson the idealist?

Roazen (1976) claimed that Erikson's work is distorted by his idealism. He views Erikson's theory as only focusing on the optimistic view of nature and evading the negative view. In addition, Kovel (1988) noted that Erikson confused values with analysis, stating that Erikson would rather project what he wants to see onto a situation rather than what he really sees. Erikson (1978b) understood material reality at a particular historical time to depend as much on what was hoped to be true as on what was certain to be true. Erikson's idealism also seems to be detached from the basic conflicts in society. Also, his ethics were ideal but impractical in nature and did not involve an argument with differing goals (Roazen, 1976).

In Erikson's defense, Welchman (2000) argued that Erikson's theory used a dialectical approach which involved a crisis of conflict and struggle. He also noted that Erikson did not reject the role of conflict from his idea of wider identities, but highlighted the hazardous consequences these identities may incite.

4.7.2 Social and political implications

Kovel (1988) disapproved of Erikson's lack of commitment to political change and political clarification of human affliction, saying that Erikson decided to remain fixed and not make reference to political and societal change in his theory. Welchman (2000), however, is of the view that Erikson was not conservative in opposing change as he evidently supported change and growth through conflict in the individual and society.

4.7.3 The developmental stages

According to Welchman (2000) there are three categories of criticisms for the developmental stages of Erikson's stages. The first regards the details of the stages, that is, the particular description of each stage, the attribution of a certain crisis to a certain stage, the order which the stages occur and the need for sub-stages and for overlap between stages. The second concerns the extremely different developmental concepts as proposed by other

theorists. The third category of criticisms pertains to the fact that there are individuals who dispute the validity of any developmental scheme as a sufficient manner in which to make sense of human behaviour. Wrightsman (1994) considered Erikson to be a leading stage theorist and recognized a dialectical influence in Erikson's theory in that there is evidence of the modification of themes from earlier stages throughout life.

4.7.4 Gender assumptions in Erikson's work

Welchman (2000) noted that Erikson's use of the male pronoun emphasizes a male bias in his descriptions of experience as well as the fact that he used only male subjects for his psycho-histories. Erikson was criticized by Roazen (1976) as receiving traditional male-female stereotypes too willingly. Furthermore, Erikson had acknowledged his suggestion that females may yet contribute something specifically feminine to thus far masculine fields, which could have been seen as discriminatory.

4.8 Erikson's Impact

Stevens (2008) describes Erikson as being important not only for his considerable influence he had in disseminating psychoanalytic ideas, but also because his work exemplifies key developments in psychoanalytic thought since Freud. Erikson's work in the field of psychology and particularly areas of identity development, psychohistory and psychosocial development, were revolutionary and continue to have significance in the study of human psychological development. (Kincheloe & Horn, 2007).

The following section discusses the two main areas of Erikson's influence, namely, developmental psychology and interdisciplinary studies.

4.8.1 Developmental Psychology

Erikson's developmental theory is generally viewed as one of the most influential in the 20th century (Kincheloe & Horn, 2007; Van Wagner, 2005; Welchman, 2000). Particularly influential was Erikson's stages of youth with its concepts of identity, role confusion and

crisis (Bernard, 1975). By utilizing the knowledge he gained of cultural, environmental, and social influences, he further developed his psychoanalytic theory (Van Wagner, 2005). Erikson took into account both subjective and objective phenomena in individual and social development (Welchman, 2000). Most empirical research into Erikson's theories has focused on his views regarding the establishment of identity during adolescence. James Marcia has studied Erikson's theory extensively and supports it, particularly regarding adolescence. Marcia expanded Erikson's theory by differentiating different forms of identity. Marcia's findings provide evidence for the correlation between coherent self concept in adolescence and the ability to make intimate attachments in early adulthood. These findings support Erikson's theory, in that it suggests that the individuals best equipped to resolve the crisis of early adulthood are those who have most successfully resolved the crisis of adolescence (Marcia, 1966).

Erikson's psychosocial stage theory was the groundwork for personality development in adulthood (Wrightsman, 1994). Havighurst (1972), Gould (1977) and Levinsons' (1978) adult development theories were influenced by Erikson and can be seen as elaborations of Erikson's ideas. In addition, Erikson's lifecycle has contributed considerably to the study of the aged. Erikson and wife, Joan, assisted in a study of elderly participants which began 50 years earlier. The findings validated this period of life as one with its own tasks and crises and also confirmed how earlier themes are taken up yet again in this final stage of life (Erikson, Erikson & Kivnick, 1989).

4.8.2 Interdisciplinary influence

In Erikson's obituary in the New York Times, he was described as a thinker, whose ideas had effects far beyond psychoanalysis, shaping the emerging fields of child development and life-span studies and reaching into the humanities (Stevens, 2008).

A discussion of Erikson's influence in the fields of psychohistory, sociology and social psychology as well as politics and psychology will follow.

4.8.2.1 Psychohistory

Belzen (2001) praised Erikson for his insightful studies on Martin Luther King and Mahatma Gandhi, stating that Erikson is considered the originator of psychohistory and psychobiographical studies. Kovel (1988), being an ardent critic of Erikson, recognized Erikson's significant contribution in establishing the field of psychohistory, which he described as challenging but promising. Belzen (2001) believed criticisms of Erikson's psychohistorical work was methodological in that he "wove" a fascinating tapestry of details of life history, interpretations and elements of psychoanalytic theory, and made it difficult to discern what was fact and what was fiction, what verifiable historical detail and what speculation, what psychic ability and what analytic interpretation (Belzen, 2001, p. 35). In addition, Thompson (1996) affirmed that although Erikson's theory endured constant criticism, it was well received by others, who found in his psychosocial stages an effective paradigm in the application of psychoanalytic theory.

A good feature of Erikson's approach to psychohistory is that it is comprehensive and life-span orientated. Erikson (1968) also stresses the importance of an awareness of the life context of all observers including that of the writer.

4.8.2.2 Sociology and social psychology

Erikson's term 'psychosocial development' illustrates how the fields of sociology and social psychology overlap with the subject matter of psychology (Welchman, 2000). Erikson viewed sociology as a 'nomothetic' discipline, with regards to the development of abstract theories and empirical generalizations to explain current events in modern-day society (Boyd, 1999). In *Experiencing Identity*, Craib (1998) claimed that sociology appeared to have a great deal to say about identity, stating the following: "Social identities can come and go but my

identity goes on as something which unites all the social identities I had, have or will have. My identity always overflows, adds to, transforms the social identities that are attached to me" (Craib, 1998, p. 4).

Over the past few years, the discipline's concerns shifted from class identity towards gender and ethnic identity. Hall (1996) noted that in recent years there has been an upsurge of interest and discussion surrounding the concept of identity. At the same time, many sociologists have tried to diminish the importance of identity, defining it as the function of social forces or reject it altogether. However, according to Hall (1996) the concept of identity cannot simply be discarded as it is usually the centre of the most difficult and challenging human dilemmas. Sociologists on the other hand, are concerned about how subjective experience may influence sociological observations (Welchman, 2000).

An additional area of sociological exploration influenced by Erikson is on material possessions. Dittmar (1992) applied Erikson's model of identity and the life cycle to explain changes in favourite possessions as indicators of age, sex and culture. Furthermore, Dittmar (1992) noted how Erikson's three adult identity phases mirrored how adults described their attachment to possessions. For example, the manner in which men and women prefer different possessions and relate to their possessions differently (i.e., a man's motorbike is seen as powerful and allowing him to be differentiated from others as a biker whereas a woman's motorbike is more likely to be named and seen as more important to her if it were given to her by someone as it symbolizes a relationship).

4.8.2.3 Politics and psychology

Erikson (1978a) attempted to link childhood play and political imagination by aiming to relate the inner life of an individual to the crises of social institutions. *In Toys and Reasons* Erikson wrote "the psychoanalytical assessment of political reality can help us to recognize that a combination of inner defenses and communal deals which is inherent in the distribution

of power" (Erikson, 1978a, p. 174). Erikson (1978a) emphasized that modern day life, with its political and technological imperatives, was interfering excessively with 'playful experimentation within limits'.

Erikson's believed that there was an interdependence of the psychological issues of the leader and the led. This view resulted in a number of studies such as *The Leader and the led: dyadic relationship* (Moses, 1990a) as well as one which linked the psychological issues of Presidents and the electorate in the USA (Offerman-Zuckerberg, 1991). In his autobiography, *Search of Identity* (1993), President Sadat of Egypt illustrates Erikson's view of how a politician both experiences and manipulates an idealized identification with 'his' people. Erikson's influence is also shown in the practical application of political conflict resolution. This was noted by Volkan (1988) in his work titled *The Need to Have Enemies and Lies*, in which he described a series of US-Soviet relations seminars in the 1980's which, he says derived much of their vitality from the presence of the pre-eminent psychoanalysts, Erik Erikson and his wife Joan (Volkan, 1988).

Furthermore, Erikson's notion and assertion on the possibility (despite impending risk and restriction) of an inclusive human identity influenced writers such as Oliner (1991). Oliner's work - which was based on the study of altruism among individuals who assisted the persecuted in Nazi Germany – found that a vital factor was an ability to identify with a common humanity instead of an identity which is defined by what it hates as much as by what it loves.

4.9 Conclusion

Erikson is viewed by many as one of the leading figures in the field of human development. His theory of psychosocial development helped create interest and research on human development through the lifespan. It was also valuable in that it illuminated why individuals who had been thwarted in the healthy resolution of early phases (e.g., learning

healthy levels of trust and autonomy in toddler-hood) had difficulty with the crises which arouse in adulthood. Erikson's theory appears to be an apt theory for psychobiographical study as indicated by similar studies previously executed utilizing his theory, and which contributed to the present researcher's motivation.

The second framework used in this study, namely, the theory of faith development, is discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 5

Faith Development

5.1 Chapter Preview

> Faith is a person's or group's way of moving into the force field of life. It is our way of finding coherence in and giving meaning to the multiple forces and relations that make up our lives. Faith is a person's way of seeing him or herself in relation to others against a background of shared meaning and purpose. (Fowler, 1981, pp. 4)

This chapter seeks to explore the development of faith in individual lives. Firstly, 'human faith' is defined in the broader sense. This is followed by a discussion on the dynamics of faith within a human development framework, as provided by Fowler in his stages of Faith.

5.2 Human Faith Defined

Faith is not about belief. Faith in fact has very little to do with what beliefs you hold, other than that it allows you to hold them. Faith is a sacred, deep, emotionally involved kind of trust. Faith is the kind of trust that you enter into with your whole being. Faith is the kind of trust that, when it has been broken, it hurts deep inside… but faith is the kind of trust that finds a way to trust again despite the hurt.

We are all people of Faith. Faith is a basic aspect of human nature (Fowler, 1981). We live in a universe that is so awe inspiring, so infinite, so grandly complicated that all of human knowledge amounts to only a tiny fraction of reality. Indeed, much of human perception about reality is pure construct… because the whole of infinity cannot be understood by finite human minds. The realization of just how little about the universe we actually understand exists in all of humanity, both consciously and un-consciously. This realization is one understanding of why humans created religion - but not the only one (Pyle, 2012).

Faith is what allows us to function despite knowing or sensing how little we actually know about all that surrounds us. This is where beliefs come into the definition of Faith. Faith does not equate to beliefs… but it is possible to hold faith in some of your beliefs.

5.2.1 The Meaningfulness of Faith

Fowler (1981) placed importance on examining the structure of values, the patterns of love and action, the shape of fear and dread and the directions of hope and friendship in one's life. He called these questions of faith. He believed that they aimed to help us get in touch with the dynamic, patterned process by which we find life meaningful. Furthermore, he claimed they helped us to reflect on the centres of value and power that sustain our lives. The persons, causes and institutions we really love and trust, the images of good and evil, of possibility and probability to which we are committed – these form the pattern of our faith (Fowler, 1981).

Faith is not always religious in its content or context. According to Fowler (1981), faith is a person's way of finding coherence and providing meaning in one's life. Faith is also the manner in which we view ourselves in relation to others in terms of meaning and purpose (Fowler, 1981). It is this world view of value and meaning that sustains a newly forming identity during the life course and across the life span.

Tillich (1957) believed in a more challenging identification of faith than just in easy relation to religion or belief. He challenged readers to ask themselves what values have centering power in their lives. He believed that the 'god values' in our lives are those things that concern us ultimately. Our real worship or true devotion directs us to the objects of our ultimate concern which may centre finally in our own ego or its extensions e.g., work, prestige and recognition, power and influence, wealth. Ultimate concern is a much more powerful matter than claimed belief in a creed or a set of doctrinal propositions (Tillich,

1957). Faith so understood involves how we make our life wagers. It shapes the ways we invest our deepest loves and our most costly loyalties.

Niebuhr (1960) believed that faith takes form in our earliest relationships with those who provide care for us in infancy. He saw faith growing though our experience of trust and fidelity – and of mistrust and betrayal – with those closest to us. He also saw faith in shared visions and values that hold human groups together. Furthermore, he saw faith, at all these levels, in the search for an overarching, integrating and grounding trust in a centre of value and power sufficiently worthy to give our lives unity and meaning.

Both Niebuhr and Tillich asserted that preceding our religious or irreligious standing, we are already engaged with issues of faith. Both suggested that our religious views are irrelevant, what becomes important to us is the manner in which we put our lives together and how we will make life worth living for ourselves.

5.2.2 Faith, Religion and Belief

Tillich (1957) and Niebuhr (1960) provide us a way of exploring our faith that widens the focus beyond the specific domains of religion and belief. This broader view of faith, however, gives rise to some problems we have to address as we go further (Fowler, 1981). Smith (1963) – a comparative religionist – clarified some of these issues by devoting himself to the task of researching and interpreting the contribution each of the central world religious traditions made to our understanding of faith.

Smith (1963) stated the importance of making a distinction between religion, faith and belief. According to Smith (1963), religion should be seen as a cumulative tradition i.e., the various expressions of the faith of people in the past. He said that a cumulative tradition may be constituted by texts of scripture or law, including narratives, myths, prophecies, accounts of revelations, and so forth. Furthermore, he stated that it may include visual and other kinds of symbols, oral traditions, music, dance, ethical teachings, theologies, creeds, rites, liturgies,

architecture and a host of other elements. Like a dynamic gallery of art, a living cumulative tradition in its many forms address contemporary people and becomes what Smith calls 'the mundane cause' that awakens the present faith (Fowler, 1981).

Smith (1963) defined faith as the person's or group's way of responding to transcendent value and power as perceived and grasped through the forms of the cumulative tradition. In this view, religion and faith are reciprocal. According to Smith (1963), each is dynamic; each grows or is renewed through its interaction with the other. Further explained, faith is awakened and nurtured by elements from the tradition. As these elements come to be expressive of faith of new adherents, the tradition is extended and modified, thus gaining fresh vitality. Smith (1963) stated that faith is deeper, richer and more personal than religion. He said that faith is engendered by a religious tradition and to some degree by its doctrines, however, it is a quality of the person not the system. That is, an orientation of the personality, to oneself, to ones's neighbour and to the universe. He described faith as total response and way of seeing whatever one sees and of handling whatever one handles. He added that faith is the capacity to live at more than a mundane level; to see, to feel, to act in terms of, a transcendent dimension.

Smith (1963) stated that belief was one of the ways in which faith expresses itself. He defined faith as 'holding of ideas', thus said that in religious contexts, belief arises out of the effort to translate experiences of and relation to transcendence into concepts or proposition. Smith (1963) wrote the following:

Faith, then, is a quality of human living. At its best it has taken the form of serenity and courage and loyalty and service: a quiet confidence and joy which enable one to feel at home in the universe, and to find meaning in the world and in one's own life, a meaning that is profound and ultimate, and is stable no matter what may happen to oneself at the level of immediate event. Men and women of this kind of faith face catastrophe and confusion,

affluence and sorrow, unperturbed; face opportunity with conviction and drive; and face other with cheerful charity. (Cited in Fowler, 1981, p. 12)

Thus, faith involves and alignment of the heart or will, a commitment of trust (Fowler, 1981). The Hindu term for faith, *sraddha*, is translated as, to set one's heart on without equivocation. Smith (1963) says that this describes faith aptly. Therefore, faith involves vision. It is a mode of knowing or acknowledgement: One commits oneself to that which is known or acknowledged, and lives loyally, with life and character being shaped by that commitment.

In reviewing Smith's (1977; 1979) thoughts regarding the distinction between faith, religion and belief, Fowler (1981) concluded the following:

Faith, rather than belief or religion, is the most fundamental category in the human quest for relation to transcendence. Faith, it appears, is generic, a universal feature of human living, recognizably similar everywhere despite the remarkable variety of forms and contents of religious practice and belief. Faith involves and alignment of the will, a resting of the heart, in accordance with a vision of transcendent value and power, one's ultimate concern.

Faith, classically understood, is not a separate dimension of life. Faith is an orientation of the total person, giving purpose and goal to one's hopes and strivings, thoughts and actions. The unity and recognisability of faith, despite the myriad variants of religions and beliefs, support the struggle to maintain and develop a theory of religious relativity in which the religions (and the faith they evoke and shape) are seen as relative apprehensions of our relatedness to that which is universal.

5.2.3 Faith and Relationship

The English language handicaps us when trying to speak of faith – it gives us no verb form of the word (Fowler, 1981). The Greek verb pistuõ and the Latin verb credo permitted writers and speakers to say, 'I trust, I commit myself, I rest my heart upon, I pledge alliance'.

These paraphrases show us that faith is a verb, it is an active mode of being and committing, a way of moving into and giving shape to our experiences in life (Fowler, 1981).

Fowler (1981) stated that our first experiences of faith and faithfulness begin with birth. We are received and welcomed with some degree of fidelity by those who care for us. By their consistency in providing for our needs, by their making a valued place for us in their lives, those who welcomed us provide and initial experience of loyalty and dependability. Even before we can use language, form concepts or even be said to be conscious, we begin to form our first basic intuitions of what the world is like, of how it regards us and of whether we can be 'at home' here.

This rudimentary form of faith exhibits what we may call a covenantal pattern of relationship (Fowler, 1981). In the interaction of parent and child, not only does a bond of mutual trust and loyalty begin to develop, but the child – albeit on a basic level – senses the strange new environment as one that is either dependable and provident, or arbitrary and neglectful. Fowler (1981) explains that this covenantal pattern of faith as relation becomes clearer as we reflect on what the parent or parents bring with them to the care and nurture of the child: (a) they bring their way of seeing and being in the world, (b) they bring their trusts and loyalties, and (c) they bring their fidelities (and infidelities) to other persons, and to the causes, institutions and transcending centres of value and power that constitute their lives' meanings. Fowler added that long before a child can sort our clearly the values and beliefs of their parents, he or she senses a structure of meaning and begins to form nascent images of the centres of value and power that animate the parental faith. As love, attachment, and dependence bind the new one into the family, he or she begins to form a disposition of shared trust and loyalty to (or through) the family's faith ethos. Faith can therefore be seen as a relational enterprise, which is triadic or covenantal in shape (Fowler, 1981).

There is an interchange between faith and identity in the triadic pattern of faith. Fowler (1981) stated that a commitment to centres of value and power refers to one's intensely personal relationships. He said that we do not commit ourselves, or rest our hearts upon, person's causes, institutions or 'gods' because the 'other' to which we commit has, for us, an intrinsic excellence or worth, and because it promises to confer value on us. Furthermore, we seek to align ourselves with powers that promise to sustain our lives. The centres of value and power that have god value for us, therefore are those that confer meaning and worth on us and promise to sustain us, in a dangerous world of power (Niebuhr, 1972). As Tillich (1957) asserted, faith is the relationship to that which concerns us ultimately.

Fowler (1981) discovered that our commitments and trusts shape our identities. He stated that, in a real sense, we become part of that which we love and trust. Interestingly, Niebuhr (1960) identified three major types of faith-identity relations, namely, the polytheist, henotheist, and monotheist. The polytheist has interests in many minor centres of value and power. The polytheist's pattern of faith and identity lacks any one centre of value and power of sufficient transcendence to focus and order his or her life. Conversely, a henotheistic pattern of faith and identity is characterised by the investment in a deeply transcending centre of value and power, finding it in focal unity of personality and outlook. However, this centre is inappropriate, false and not something of ultimate concern. The third faith identity relational pattern, radical monotheism, has traditionally meant the doctrine or belief that there is only one God. Nineteenth-century comparative religionists saw monotheism as commitment to one God, the transcendent creator, ruler and sustainer, depicted in the Jewish, Christian and Islamic traditions. It is this type of faith-identity relationship in which a person or group focuses its supreme trust and loyalty in a transcendent centre of value and power, that is neither a conscious or unconscious extension of personal or group ego, nor a finite cause or institution. In radical monotheistic faith, persons are bound to each other in trust and

loyalty i.e., bound to each other and to an inclusive centre of value and power (Kavanaugh, 1995).

5.2.4 Faith as Imagination

Imagination has been defined as a powerful force underlying faith and knowing (William and Lynch, 1973). Faith, according to Fowler (1981), affects the way in which people shape their initiatives and responses in everyday life. He stated that faith enables the person to see these aspects of everyday life against a backdrop of more a comprehensive image of what constitutes true power, true value, and the meaning of life. Furthermore, he said that this overall image may be largely tacit and unexamined, functioning without one's being aware of or reflective about it. Conversely, significant parts of it may have found expression or been made explicit in ritual, myth, symbol, or story, or in the more systematic conceptual elaboration of theology or philosophy. In faith, and through the use of imagination, Fowler discovered that a person has the capacity to compose comprehensive images of the ultimate conditions of their existence.

Fowler (1981) said that a person's experiences in infancy and early childhood give powerful form to their knowledge of self, others and 'the world'. He stated that faith could be defined as the person's way of seeing everyday life in relation to their images of what may be called the ultimate environment. According to Fowler, a person's ultimate environment is the largest theatre of action in which they act out their lives, and the way in which they arrange the scenery and grasp the plot in their life's play. Fowler stated that the images of a person's ultimate environment changes as they move through life. These images expand and grow, and the plot gets blown open, or has to be linked in with other plots. Various kinds of representations such as metaphors, symbols, and concepts serve to bring the person's image of an ultimate environment to expression.

These images that are composed by faith are not static. Fowler (1981; 1984) asserted that reasonably predictable developmental turning points in the way faith imagines, and in the ways faith's images interplay with communal modes of expression, can be identified in a person's life. What seem to be less predictable are those momentous changes in the life of faith, when the person's image of the ultimate environment undergoes a shift of centre when one of their deep investments of faith falls or collapses, resulting in dislocation, pain and despair. According to Fowler (1981), when a person is grasped by the vision of a centre of value and power more luminous, more inclusive and more true than to that which they are devoted, they initially experience the new as 'the enemy'. The person is faced with doubt, and their current imaginings of an ultimate environment are challenged. Nevertheless, this struggle is important in the person's defining of and development of faith, as it is only with death of a person's previous image, that a new more adequate one can arise (Fowler, 1981). Thus, it is apparent that substantive doubt forms part of the life of faith (Lamm, 1971).

5.2.5 On Seeing Faith Whole

On formulating a comprehensive perspective on faith, Niebuhr (1960) likened faith to a cube. He pointed out that from any one angle of vision, the observer can see and describe at least three sides of the cube. He added, however, the cube has back sides, a bottom and insides as well. This analogy of a cube, it can be said that several angles of vision have to be co-ordinated simultaneously to do real justice in a characterization of faith. The following is a list of the dimensions of the complex and dynamic phenomenon of faith as highlighted by Fowler (1981; 1984).

- The human side of faith involves a person being both engaged and involved in shaping their lives in the community and in relation to shared visions of transcendent value and power.

- Faith is both a human phenomenon and a general consequence of the universal human burden of finding or making meaning.

- Faith is a relational matter, and the patterns of faith that make selfhood possible and sustain a person's identity are covenantal or triadic in form. In addition, a person's relations of trust in, and loyalty to, their companions in the community are deepened and sanctioned by their shared trust in, and loyalty to, transcendent centres of value and power.

- Faith is imagination, as it composes a felt image of an ultimate environment and ultimate conditions of existence. As this reciprocal relationship between the imaged ultimate environment and everyday living suggests, faith's imaginal life is dynamic and continually changing.

- Growth and development in faith also result from life crises, challenges, and the kinds of disruptions that theologians call revelation. Each of these brings disequilibrium, and requires changes in our ways of seeing and being in faith.

Thus, having gained an understanding of personality development in Chapter 2, and having begun to conceptualise faith to some degree in section 5.2., the need to consider human faith as a powerful aspect of human growth and transformation becomes evident. It is necessary in this context to understand the changes in human thought and adaptation in largely formal terms, using Erikson's developmental theory. However, this must be considered to be "only half of a much larger and richer picture" (Fowler, 1981, p. 89). Therefore, in an attempt to acquire a greater understanding of human development and an individual's quest for meaning, an effort to clarify the developmental dynamics of faith as part of the human story becomes imperative.

5.3 The Developmental Dynamics of Faith

Personality psychologists may call the zone of mediation – where meaning is made – an array of terms, namely, the ego, the self or, the person (Kegan, 1982). Some perspectives view this among many functions, all of which together make up the person. Other perspectives view this as the very ground of personality itself. It is the person, and various functions are considered in its context. Despite the fact that any number of theorists and frameworks can be said to take an interest in the person as meaning-maker, Erikson's (1950) Psychosocial Development Theory has made valuable contributions to Fowler's (1981) Stages of Faith.

Following from this, we take the same position as Fowler (1981; 1984) did, at the intersection of psychology and theology, and are required to recognize some of the patterns of struggle, growth, and change that characterise human beings in the process of becoming aware, conscious, and increasingly responsive and responsible selves, as partner with God. In order words, how do we as human beings, as that species in nature which has the special calling to a reflective partnership with God, develop toward fulfilment of this calling? Is there perhaps a conceptual paradigm that can illuminate paths by which we emerge toward accountable awareness of ourselves, others, and our action worlds, as responsive to God's action? In endeavouring to answer these questions, a suitable theory which considers the developmental aspects of faith needs to be highlighted and considered.

While Erikson acknowledges the importance of a religious or philosophical world-view for expressing and grounding the conviction that life has meaning, his theory does not consistently or in any comprehensive way focus on the role of faith or the development of faith in the life cycle. Therefore, James Fowler's (1981) stage theory of faith development becomes a valuable source. His theory is particularly valuable in the context of this study

since it incorporates aspects of Erikson's (1956) Psychosocial Development Theory and serve to crystallize one's understanding of Pope John Paul II.

5.3.1 Fowler's Stages of Faith: Preliminary Assumptions

Fowler (1984) stated that faith is a human universal, meaning that there are collective features and dimensions of struggle and awareness within all human beings, such as the universal awareness of death. Human beings are burdened with having to make life-defining choices under conditions of uncertainty and risk (Fowler, 1984). In other words, human beings are creatures who live by faith. In addition to this, human beings are genetically potentiated for partnership with God as part of the planfulness and intention manifest in creation. Furthermore, Fowler (1984) asserted that human beings have, as part of their creatively evolved biological heritage, the generative deep-structural tendencies that make possible their development as partners with one another and with God.

According to Fowler (1984), part of the destiny as created and evolved beings is the genetic potentiation for reflective partnership with one another and with God. With that being said the genetically given capacities for faith and faithfulness toward God, nature, and other human beings, which make people distinctly human, can be corrupted, misshapen, and misdirected. The context in which individuals form stances and styles of faith is community (Fowler, 1984). Fowler stated that faith is awakened and formed in the matrix of relationship, language, ritual, and symbol.

Fowler (1984) lastly pointed out that the emergence of awareness of reflective consciousness, and eventually of various kinds of reflectiveness, forms in humans as a gradual and difficult sequence of developmental constructions. He said that only gradually and partially does a person become aware of, capable of expressing, an intentional about shaping, the pervasive disposition called faith. Fowler (1984) added that to call faith a disposition, is to acknowledge that it involves both emotions and a kinds of knowing or

cognition. He described faith as involving three significant facets: (1) a patterned knowing – sometimes called belief, (2) a patterned valuing – sometimes called commitment or devotion, (3) patterned constructions of meaning – usually in the form of an underlying narrative. Furthermore, by identifying the particular images, beliefs, symbols and themes that shape the individual's pattern of faith, the stages of the development of faith are clarified (Fowler, 1981).

5.3.2 Fowler's Stages of Faith: An explanation

Fowler (1981) believed that faith development and the life-long quest for meaning begins when infants learn to trust their caregivers. He said that these earliest interactions teach infants that they are separate from, but dependent upon, others, and they begin to realise that adults can protect them from dangers such as the threat of separation. This is the foundation on which Fowler developed his six stages of faith. A detailed description of Fowler's stages follows, and will include an elaboration of the content, emergent strengths and stage transition requirements for each stage.

5.3.2.1 Pre-stage: Undifferentiated Faith (infancy)

Formed in the profound symbiosis of prenatal life in our mother's womb, at birth we are thrust into a new environment for which we have the potential by not yet the fully viable abilities: All human beings begin the life-long journey of faith as infants. In Fowler's (1981) pre-stage called undifferentiated faith, the seeds of trust, courage, hope, and love, are fused in an undifferentiated way, and contend with the sensed threats of abandonment, inconsistencies and deprivations in the infant's environment. Though really a pre-stage and largely inaccessible to empirical research, the quality of mutuality and the strength of trust, autonomy, hope and courage (or their opposites) developed in this phase underlie (or threaten to undermine) all that comes later in faith development. A person's first pre-images of God have their origins here. Fowler named them pre-images because they are primarily formed

prior to language and concepts, and coincide with the emergence of consciousness. According to Fowler, the emergent strength of faith in this stage is the fund of basic *trust* and the relational experience of *mutuality* with one(s) providing primary love and care. Transition to stage 1 begins with convergence of thought and language, and the opening up to use of symbols in speech and ritual play.

5.3.2.2 Stage 1: Intuitive-Projective Faith (early childhood)

Intuitive-Projective faith is the fantasy-filled, imitative phase, in which the child can be powerfully and permanently influenced by examples, moods, actions and stories of the visible faith of primally-related adults. This stage is typical of the child of three to seven years of age, where in light of the cognitive developmental perspective, the child's thinking is fluid and magical and lacks deductive and inductive logic. It has an episodic flavour, in which associations follow one another according to imaginative processes not yet constrained by stable logical operations (Fowler, 1981).

Rizzuto (as cited in Fowler, 1981) discovered that religious symbols and language were so widely present in society that virtually no child reached school age without having constructed (with or without religious instruction) an image or images of God. She said that pre-school children typically did not yet generate narratives that could provide order and a type of causal connectedness to their image clusters. Children appreciate long stories and follow their details, but have limited abilities in retelling them. Moreover, while precursors of conceptual abstractions were present, only concrete symbols and images really addressed the child's way of knowing.

Within this stage, Fowler (1981) stated that fearsome archetypal creatures are what children dream and daydream about, and that reality and fantasy interpenetrate for them. He added that it is in this stage too that children begin to internalise (often with harshness far greater than parental adults intend) the taboos and prohibitions that surround and make sexual

and religious effects mysteriously attractive effects. The useful realism of fairy tales and many biblical narratives, provides indirect yet effective, ways for children to externalise their inner anxieties and to find ordering images and stories by which to begin to shape their lives. Fowler claimed that children in this stage are immensely responsive to symbols and images that awaken and shape their conviction.

Fowler stated that the emergent strength of this stage is the birth of *imagination*. That is, the ability to unify and grasp the experience-world in powerful images, as presented in stories that register the child's intuitive understandings, and feelings toward the ultimate conditions of existence. Fowler encourages parents and teachers to create an atmosphere in which the child can freely express (verbally and nonverbally) the images he or she is forming. Fowler added that where this expression is allowed and encouraged, while the child is taken seriously, the adults will be able to provide the appropriate help needed to deal with any crippling, distorted or destructive images the child has formed.

Fowler asserted that the main factor precipitating transition to the next stage is the emergence of concrete operational thinking. At the heart of the transition is the child's growing concern to know how things are, and to clarify for him or herself the bases of distinctions between what is real and what only seems to be.

5.3.2.3 Stage 2: Mythic–Literal Faith (school years)

In contrast with the preschooler, the school-going child constructs a more orderly, temporally linear and dependable world (Fowler, 1981). Where the Intuitive-Projective child simply fuses fantasy, fact and feeling, the Mythical-Literal child uses his new found induction and deduction skills. Fowler (1981) stated that the Mythic-Literal faith is the stage in which the child becomes a young empiricist, and begins to work hard and effectively at sorting out the real from the make-believe. Although he or she is still imaginative or capable of a highly developed fantasy life, the products of imagination are confined to the world of

play and will be submitted to more logical forms of scrutiny before admitted as a part of what the child knows.

The great gift to consciousness that emerges in this stage is the ability to narratise one's experience, and the ability to bind experiences into meaning through the rich medium of stories. This capacity for, and interest in, narrative makes the school-age child particularly attentive to the stories, beliefs, and observances that symbolise belonging to his or her community. Beliefs are appropriated with literal interpretations, as re moral rules and attitudes. Symbols are take as one-dimensional and literal in meaning, and marked by increased accuracy in taking the perspective of other persons. The emergent strength in this stage is the rise of *narrative* and the emergence of story, drama and myth as ways of finding and giving coherence to experience.

In Fowler's (1981) view, the factor initiating transition to Stage 3 is the implicit clashes or contradictions in stories that lead to reflection on meanings. The transition to formal operational thought makes such a reflection possible and necessary. Conflict between authoritative stories (e.g., Genesis on creation versus evolutionary theory) must be faced. The emergence of mutual interpersonal perspective-taking (e.g., 'I see you seeing me; i see me as you see me' I see you seeing me seeing you') creates the need for a more personal relationship with the unifying power of the ultimate environment. Although this is the faith stage of the school-age child, Fowler discovered these structures were dominant in adolescents and adults.

5.3.2.4 Stage 3: Synthetic-Conventional Faith (adolescence)

Puberty brings with it a revolution in physical and emotional life. Fowler (1981) stated that in the Synthetic-Conventional faith stage, a person's experience extends beyond the family to other spheres, namely, school or work, peers, society, media and religion. Fowler believed that faith should provide a coherent orientation in the midst of that more complex

and diverse range of involvements. That is, faith must synthesize values and information and provide a basis for identity and outlook. The individual's faith system within this stage, is conventional in that it is seen as being everybody's faith system or the faith system of the entire community. It is synthetic in that it is non-analytical as it comes as a sort of unified, global awareness.

Even though Stage 3 has its development and ascendancy in adolescence, for many adults it becomes a permanent place of equilibrium. It structures the ultimate environment in interpersonal terms. It images of unifying value and power derives from the extension of qualities experienced in personal relationships. It is a 'conformist' stage in the sense that it is acutely tuned to the expectations and judgments of significant others and as yet do not have a sure enough grasp on its own identity and autonomous judgement to construct and maintain independent perspective. While beliefs and values are deeply felt, they typically are unspoken. At Stage 3, the persona has an ideology, a more or less consistent clustering of values and beliefs, but he or she has not objectified it for examination and in a sense is unaware of having it. Differences in outlook from others are experienced as differences in 'kind' of person. Authority is located in the incumbents of traditional authority roles (if perceived as personally worth) or in the consensus of a valued, face-to-face group.

Fowler (1981) described the emergent capacity of this stage as the forming of a personal myth or *identity* (i.e., the myth of 'becoming' identity and faith). He said this was achieved by incorporating one's past and anticipated future into an image of the ultimate environment, and was unified by characteristics of one's personality. Fowler added that the factors contributing to the breakdown of Stage 3, and to the readiness of transition might include: (a) serious clashes or contradictions between valued and authority sources, (b) marked changes, by officially sanctioned leaders, or policies or practices previously deemed sacred and unbreachable, and (c) the encounter with experiences and perspectives that lead to critical

reflection on how one's beliefs and values have formed and changed, and on how relative they are to one's particular group or background. Fowler stated that frequently the experience of leaving home (emotionally or physically, or both) precipitates the kind of examination of self, background, and life-guiding values that gives rise to stage transition at this point.

5.3.2.5 Stage 4: Individuative-Reflective Faith (young adulthood)

During the Individuative-Reflective faith stage, Fowler stated that the person begins to take seriously the burden of responsibility for his or her own commitments, lifestyle, beliefs and attitudes. He described the person as having to face unavoidable tensions: (a) individuality versus being defined by a group or group membership, (b) subjectivity and the power of one's strongly felt but unexamined feelings versus objectivity and the requirement of critical reflection, (c) self-fulfilment or self actualisation as a primary concern versus service to and being for others, and (d) the question of being committed to the relative versus struggle with the possibility of an absolute.

Stage 4 most appropriately takes form in young adulthood, by many adults do not construct it, and for significant groups it only emerges in the 30s or 40s (Sigelman & Shaffer, 1991). Fowler stated that this stage was marked by a double development. The self, previously sustained in its identity and faith compositions by an interpersonal circle of significant others, now claims an identity no longer defined by the composite of one's roles or meanings to others. To sustain that new identity, it composes a meaning frame conscious of its own boundaries and inner connections, and aware of itself as a 'world-view'. Self (identity) and outlook (world-view) are differentiated from those of others, and become acknowledged factors in the reactions, interpretations and judgements one makes on the actions of the self and others. Stage 4 typically translates symbols into conceptual meanings (i.e., demythologising).

Fowler described the ascendant strength in this stage as being the person's capacity for *critical reflection* on identity (self) and outlook (ideology). Interestingly, Fowler said that the dangers in this stage lie in its strengths: an excessive confidence in the conscious mind and in critical thought and a kind of second narcissism in which the now clearly bounded reflective self over-assimilates 'reality' and the perspectives of others into its own world view.

Fowler claimed that, restless with the self-images and outlook maintained by Stage 4, the person ready for transition finds him or herself attending to what may feel like anarchic and disturbing inner voices. Elements from the childish past, images and energies from a deeper self, a gnawing sense of the sterility and flatness of the meaning one serves – any or all of these – may signal readiness for something new. Stories, symbols, myths and paradoxes from the person's own or other traditions may insist on breaking in upon the neatness of the previous faith. Disillusionment with their compromises, and recognition that life is more complex than Stage 4's logic of clear distinctions and abstract concepts, press the person toward a more dialectical and multi-levelled approach to the truth of life (Fowler, 1981).

5.3.2.6 Stage 5: Conjunctive Faith (midlife and beyond)

Fowler (1981) states that *Conjunctive Faith* involves the integration into self and outlook of much that was suppressed or unrecognized in the interest of the previous stage's self-certainty and conscious cognitive and affective adaptation to reality. Fowler also stated that during this stage, symbolic power is reunited with conceptual meanings. There is a reworking of the person's past and an opening to the voices of the person's deeper self. This involves a critical recognition of the person's social unconsciousness (ie., the myths, deal images and prejudices built deeply into the self-system by virtue of the person's nurture within a particular social class, religious tradition, ethnic group or the life). This stage strives to unify opposites in mind and experience. Ready for closeness to that which is different, and threatening to their self and outlook (including new depths of experience in spirituality and

religious revelation), the person in this stage's commitment to justice is free from the confines of tribe, class, religious community, or nation. And with the seriousness that can arise when life is more than half over, the person in this stage is ready to spend and be spent for the cause of conserving and cultivating the possibility of others' generating and cultivating identity and meaning.

According to Fowler, the new strength of this stage comes in the rise of *ironic imagination*. This is the capacity to see and be in one's most powerful meanings or those of the group while simultaneously recognising that they are relative, partial and inevitably distorting apprehensions of transcendent reality. A person in Stage 5 can appreciate symbols, myths and rituals (its own and those of others) because they have grasped in some measure, the depth of reality to which they refer. However, a person in this stage remains divided, as he or she lives and acts between an untransformed and transforming vision and loyalties. In a few cases this division allows the person to yield to the call of Stage 6.

5.3.2.7 Stage 6: Universalising Faith

Finally, Stage 6 is exceptionally rare. Fowler (1981) described the person in the Universalising Faith stage as having generated faith compositions in which his or her felt sense of an ultimate environment is inclusive of all being. He or she has become and incarnator and actualiser of the spirit of an inclusive and fulfilled human community. They are contagious in the sense that they create zones of liberation from the social, political, economic and ideological shackles we place on the human futurity. Living with felt participation in a power that unifies and transforms the world, Universalisers are often experienced as subversive of the structures (including religious structures) by which we sustain our individual and corporate survival, security, and significance, as such are often more honoured and revered after death than during their lives. "The rare persons who may be

described by this stage have a special grace, that makes them seem more lucid, more simple, and yet more fully human than the rest of us" (Fowler, 1981, p.210).

According to Fowler, people in Stage 6 have radical commitment to justice and love and feel a selfless passion for a transformed world, a world made over, not in their images, but in accordance with intentionality both divine and transcendent. To say that a person embodies the qualities of Stage 6 is not to say that he or she is perfect, nor is it to imply that he or she is a self-actualised person of fully functioning human being. In these persons of Universalising Faith, these qualities of redemptive subversiveness and relevant irrelevance derive, from visions they see, and to which they have committed their total beings. They are not abstract visions, generated like utopias out of some capacity for transcendent imagination. Rather, they are visions born out of radical acts of identification with persons and circumstances where the futurity of being is crushed, blocked or exploited (Fowler, 1981).

Fowler (1981) believed that these people kindle our imaginations in these ways because, in their generosity and authority, in their freedom and their costly love, they embody the promise and lure of our shared futurity. Fowler added that these people embody costly openness to the power of the future. They actualise its promise, creating zones of liberation and sending show waves to rattle the cages that we allow to constrict human futurity. In other words, their trust in the power of the future, or hereafter, account for the readiness to spend and be spent in making the Kingdom actual. Fowler (1981) descriptively stated that: "...these people have been selected by the great Blacksmith of history, heated in the fires of turmoil and trouble, and then hammered into usable shape on the hard anvil of conflict and struggle (p.202).

5.3.3 Optimal Parallels: Erikson's Psychosocial Stages and Fowler's Faith Stages

In the study of ego development, Fowler (1981) stated that Erikson (1950) attempted to relate biological maturation with changes in social role and coordinate both with an account

of person's conscious and unconscious psychic modes of adaption (Fowler, 1981). Fowler (1981) describes using Erikson's (1950) theory as a background against which he studied and analyzed the life stories which were used in his development of his theory. Fowler (1981) realized that a transition period from one of Erikson's (1950) stages to another frequently correlated with or promoted a change in structural operations of faith. He later discovered that an individual's structural stage of faith had important implications for the way the individual will construct the experience of crisis that initiates a new Eriksonian developmental stage (Fowler, 1981).

A reflective examination of the parallels between Erikson's (1950) and Fowler's (1981) theories suggests the following comparison. The first psychosocial stage of Trust vs. Mistrust coincides with the first faith stage of undifferentiated faith which occurs during infancy. Both these psychosocial and faith stages aim to develop a sense of trust with regards to the parents and universe/divine respectively. The following two psychosocial stages of Autonomy vs. Shame or Doubt and Initiative vs. Guilt overlap, and coincide with the Intuitive-Projective faith stage which occurs during early childhood. This faith stage is characterized by the psyche's unprotected exposure to the Unconscious. The fourth psychosocial stage of Industry vs. Inferiority coincides with the Mythic-Literal faith stage which stake place during the school years. This faith stage characterized by a strong belief in the justice and reciprocity of the universe. The fifth psychosocial stage of Identity vs. Role Confusion coincides with the Synthetic-Conventional faith stage which occurs during adolescence. Both these psychosocial and faith stages are characterized by the development of personal identity. The sixth psychosocial stage of Intimacy vs. Isolation coincides with the Individuative-Reflective faith stage which takes place in young adulthood. This faith stage sees an individual taking personal responsibility for his or her beliefs and feelings. The seventh psychosocial stage of Generativity vs. Stagnation coincides with the Conjunctive faith stage which occurs during

midlife and beyond. In this faith stage, the individual resolves conflicts from previous stages. Lastly, the eighth psychosocial stage of Integrity vs. Despair coincides with the Universalizing faith stage, which relatively few adults reach (Fowler, 1981). This faith stage can be described as 'enlightenment'. Significantly, Pope John Paul II is one of a few representatives of Fowler's (1981) final Universalizing faith stage.

The faith stages are not to be understood as an achievement scale by which to evaluate the worth of persons. Nor do they represent educational or therapeutic goals toward which to hurry people. Seeing their optimal correlations with psychosocial eras gives a sense of how time, experience, challenge and nurture are required for growth in faith. A preliminary look at the optimal relations between an individual's psychosocial development and their structural-developmental stages of faith may help to clarify in what sense faith stages may be said to be normative and part of human development and the quest for meaning (Fowler, 1981). Consequently, theories such as those of Erikson (1950) and Fowler (1981) are particularly well suited to a psychobiographical approach, as the development of the individual being studied can be traced over a full life span. The optimal parallels between Erikson's (1950) description of psychosocial stages and Fowler's (1981) faith stages are depicted diagrammatically in the Figure 1.

Table 1

Psychological and Faith Stages: Optimal Parallels

ERIKSON'S (1950) PSYCHOSOCIAL STAGES	FOWLER'S (1981) FAITH STAGES
Trust vs. Mistrust	Undifferentiated Faith (Infancy)
Autonomy vs. Shame & Doubt Initiative vs. Guilt	1. Intuitive-Projective Faith (Early Childhood)
Industry vs. Inferiority	2. Mythical-Literal Faith (School Years)
Identity vs. Role Confusion	3. Synthetic-Conventional Faith (Adolescence)
Intimacy vs. Isolation	4. Individuative-Reflective Faith (Young Adulthood)
Generativity vs. Stagnation	5. Conjunctive Faith (Mid-life and Beyond)
Integrity vs. Despair	6. Universalizing Faith

(Adapted from Fowler,1981, p.113)

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter considered faith development and the quest for meaning in individual lives with an elaborate definition of human faith, with its different facets. This was followed by an extensive description of the dynamics of faith and human development as portrayed by James Fowler in his theory of the stages of faith.

In the following chapter, the preliminary methodological considerations of this study are discussed.

CHAPTER 6

Preliminary Methodological Considerations

6.1 Chapter Preview

Anderson (1981a) affirms that even the harshest critics of psychological biography concede that the application of psychology to biography makes sense. Given that comprehensive biographical studies inevitably include an analysis of the subject's personality, it is reasonable to perform such analysis systematically and with psychological sophistication. But even the most ardent advocates of psychobiography will admit that psychobiographical studies tend to be reductionistic, narrow, and disparaging. There is a marked disparity between the potential and the execution of psychobiography. However, a substantial body of literature now exists which explains this disparity and formulates ways of lessening it (Denzil & Lincoln, 2011). This chapter synthesizes the work that has been done on the methodology of psychobiography, focussing on the eight principal difficulties that critics have identified as inhering in the psychobiographical approach. These difficulties will be discussed as well as the strategies which have been applied to minimize each of them. Through this discussion, an attempt is made to develop a coherent methodological approach, which offers the possibility of decreasing the disparity between the potential and the actual execution of this study.

6.2 A Question of Quality and Validity

Within the recent years, researchers have begun discussing the possibility of assessing the quality of qualitative research. According to Smith (2003), the catalyst of this has been the growing disapproval of reviewing qualitative research within the traditional framework of validity and reliability as applied to quantitative research. Many researchers believe that

validity and quality are important considerations, however, qualitative research must be reviewed by appropriate criteria.

Suggestions for the general guidelines for assessing the quality of qualitative psychological research have been put forth by researchers such as Elliot, Fischer and Rennie (1999) and Yardley (2000). Their suggested criteria are useful in that they offer a wide range of establishing quality and they attempt to offer criteria which can be applied regardless of the theoretical orientation of a qualitative study.

Yardley (2000) proposed three broad principles for assessing quality of qualitative research. The first principle is *sensitivity to context.* She stated that a good research study should demonstrate sensitivity to the context of the study. Furthermore, Yardley (2000) suggested a number of ways of establish this sensitivity. She suggested that researchers demonstrate an awareness of the existing literature, which can either be substantive or theoretical, the former related to the topic of investigation, and the latter to the underpinnings of the research method itself. Alternatively, the researcher might consider the degree to which the study is sensitive to the data itself. Another suggestion towards sensitivity to context is by attending to the socio-cultural mileu in which the study takes place may have influenced its conduct and outcome. Lastly, the relationship between the researcher and participant itself is another context to which one should be sensitive.

The second broad principle proposed by Yardley (2000) is *commitment, rigour, transparency* and *coherence. Commitment* can be displayed through the expanded knowledge of the substantive field. *Rigour* refers to the thoroughness of the study in terms of the appropriateness or the sample to the question in hand, and the completeness of the analysis undertaken. *Transparency and coherence* refer to the clarity of the stages of the research process as outlined in the write-up of the study. Yardley (2000) advised that *coherence* can

also refer to the fit between the research carried out and the underlying philosophical assumptions of the approach being followed.

The third principle as proposed by Yardley (2000) is *impact and importance.* She stated that the definitive test of a study's validity is whether it enlightens the reader to any use or importance, or makes any difference in understanding the research topic. In addition, the potential contribution the study can make in terms of change or practice is equally valuable.

Elliot et al. (1999) have also proposed guidelines for the appraisal of qualitative research reports and these are briefly outlined below.

1. *Owning one's perspective.* Qualitative researchers should disclose their own values and assumptions to allow readers to interpret the analysis and to consider possible alternative interpretations.

2. *Situating the sample.* Qualitative researchers should describe participants and their life circumstances in some detail to allow the reader to assess the relevance and applicability of the findings.

3. *Grounding in examples.* Qualitative researchers should use examples of the data to demonstrate the analytic procedures used, and the understanding they have generated. This also allows the reader to evaluate the fit between the data and the researcher's interpretations.

4. *Providing credibility checks.* Qualitative researchers should check whether their accounts are credible by referring to interpretations of the data of others (e.g., colleagues, participants, other researchers) or by applying other methods of analysis in relation to the same subject matter (e.g., other qualitative perspectives, quantitative data).

5. *Coherence.* Qualitative researchers should aim to present analyses that are characterised by coherence and integration while preserving nuances in the data.

6. *Accomplishing general versus specific research tasks.* Qualitative researchers need to be clear about their research tasks. If their research seeks to develop a general understanding of a phenomenon, they need to ensure that their study is based upon an appropriate range of instances. If they aim to provide insight into a specific instance or case, they need to ensure that it has been studied systematically and comprehensively. In both cases, limitations of the applicability of the findings beyond their original contexts need to be addressed.

7. *Resonating with readers.* Qualitative researchers should ensure that the material is presented in such a way as to stimulate resonance in the reader. Readers should feel that the research has clarified or expanded their understanding and appreciation of the subject matter.

Furthermore, Henwood and Pidgeon (1992) also provided guidelines for *good practice in qualitative research processes* which acknowledges idiosyncrasy and creativity in the research process whilst ensuring rigour. The following is a list of these factors.

1. *The importance of fit.* In displaying a good fit, the researcher needs to write in an explicit, clear and comprehensive account of why phenomena have been labelled and categorised in particular ways.

2. *Integration of theory.* Relationships between units of analysis should be clarified and their integration at different levels of generality should be clearly evident.

3. *Reflexivity.* Given that the research process unavoidably shapes the object of inquiry, the role of the researcher needs to be acknowledged in the documentation of the research.

4. *Documentation.* The researcher should provide an inclusive and comprehensive account of what was done and the reason therefore, throughout the research process.

5. *Theoretical sampling and negative case analysis.* The researcher should continuously seek to broaden and modify emerging theory.

6. *Sensitivity to negotiated realities.* Due to various personal or social reasons, people may disagree with the researcher's interpretation. Therefore, the researcher should anticipate this and attempt to explain differences between his or her own interpretation and those of others.

7. *Transferability.* The researcher should report the contextual features of the study completely. This will allow the readers to explore the extent to which the study may, or may not, have applicability beyond the specific context within which the data was generated.

As outlined in the abovementioned discussion, 'good practice' in qualitative research requires the systematic and comprehensible presentation of analyses, which are clearly grounded in the data, and which considers reflexivity issues. In addition, such work is characterised by an awareness of its contextual and theoretical specificity, and the limitations which this imposes upon its relevance and applicability.

6.3 Methodological Considerations in Psychobiography

The construction of psychological case studies has been widely criticised over the past few decades. Runyan (1988a) explains that much of this criticism in the course of psychological biographies, are related to the regular transgressions of either scientific psychology, history, or both of these disciplines. Anderson (1981a) considered that even though psychobiography has advantages relevant to its methodology, certain difficulties related to the implementation of psychobiographical studies have also been identified. These methodological considerations, as well as mechanisms for reducing their influence, are addressed below. These considerations also apply to the psychobiographical study of Pope

John Paul II specifically. Therefore, the relevant application of these considerations to the study of Pope John Paul II is also discussed.

6.3.1 Researcher Bias

The most pressing concern of psychobiographical methodology is the psychobiographer's tendency to idealize or disparage the biographical subject (Anderson, 1981b; Elms, 1994, 1994). Research literature reports that present a complete objective exploration of the life of any biographical subject is impossible (Anderson, 1981b; Elms, 1994; Meissner, 2003; Schultz, 2005b). Due to the fact that the nature of a psychobiographical study is long-term and in-depth, the researcher may develop intense and complicated emotional responses to the subject. Meissner (2003) cautioned that the biographical subject may become a projection more of the author than the subject – as in Freud's *Leonardo* (Elms, 1994; Elms & Song, 2005; McAdams, 1988).

Sometimes psychobiographers may idealize the subject and take pleasure in the position of being connected to an illustrious figure. Other times, psychobiographers may find fault with the subjects in order to convince themselves that they are more intelligent, sensible or friendly than the subject (Anderson, 1981a). These counter-transference reactions are often unconscious or non-deliberate and the authors may actually believe that they are only identifying and describing the subject's personality (Anderson, 1981a, 1981b; Meissner, 2003). Therefore, Erikson (1974) suggested that psychobiographers apply a level of *disciplined subjectivity* to recognize the subjective nature of interpretation and to be self-reflective on the impact of perceptions, emotions and personal history that are inevitably linked with qualitative psychobiographical research. This can be further achieved through data immersion and de-emphasis on pathological terminology and theory (Elovitz, 2003).

In order to minimize the concerns and counteract the criticism of researcher bias, the following five general strategies could be implemented. Elms (1994) noted that the

researchers should choose a subject about whom they feel considerable ambivalence, that is, a mixture of approval and disapproval, as a way to counter premature conclusions and remain objective. With this in mind though, Anderson (1981a) indicated that the researcher should develop a degree of empathy with the subject to safeguard against the tendency to be unfavourable. Anderson (1981a, 1981b) further suggested that psychobiographers continuously examine their feelings towards their subjects. This could be presented as an appendix to the written work to describe the feelings, biases and the way in which it was decided to write about the particular person. A fourth strategy may be to enlist the help of the subject's intimate acquaintances and other biographical specialists by allowing them to comment on the degree of subjectivity exhibited in the writing (Anderson, 1981b; Schurink, 1988). Also, should the subject still be alive, the subject should be allowed an opportunity to auto-critique the document and comment on the nature of the researcher-subject relationship (Schurink, 1988).

6.3.1.1 Mechanisms Applied

In the attempt to minimize the potential of idealizing or denigrating the research subject, the researcher purposefully employed several strategies. Upon starting the research process, the researcher was ambivalent towards Pope John Paul II as a human being, but fascinated by and driven to understand his individuality and uniqueness. The extensive research on Pope John Paul II's historical life and socio-cultural context provided the researcher the opportunity to explore her feelings and attitudes towards Pope John Paul II as these developed throughout the biographical study. These reactions were journalized throughout the study for reflexive analysis. Furthermore, the researcher regularly discussed her reactions with the supervisors of this study to uphold balance between empathy, subjectivity and objectivity.

6.3.2 Reductionism

Reductionism is the second major criticism against the psychobiographical methodology. According to Runyan (1988b) affirmed that there tends to be an overemphasis on the application of a fixed psychological formula in psychobiography, which may omit important external social and historical facts from the comprehensive analysis of the life of a historical figure. Because reductionism is used to explain complex processes with a single causal reasoning, Schultz (2005a) argued that psychobiography succeeds when it does the opposite, namely, tracing mysterious thought and action back to a variety of biographical origins. Reductionism is foremost noted in the explanation of adult character and behaviour predominantly in terms of early childhood experiences, thereby neglecting any later formative processes and influences (Capps, 2004; Runyan, 1982a, 1988b). Given that the continuity and consistency of personality from childhood into adulthood is controversial in personality and developmental psychology, the psychobiographer should recognize that early experiences involve complex – but not necessarily deterministic – choices and processes (Alter, 2002). Whilst childhood is no doubt integral in personality development, it is never the only key to personality (Schultz, 2005a). Erikson identified this second form of reductionism as *originology* (Anderson, 1981a; Erikson, 1969; McAdams, 1994). Psychobiographical studies have also been criticized for excessive focus on psychopathological processes at the expense of normalcy, health and creativity (Alter, 2002; Anderson, 1981a; Elms, 1994, 1994; Fouchè, 1999; Runyan, 1988b), which McAdams (1994) referred to as *overpathologizing*. Meissner (2003) noted that this reductionism distorts the researcher's ability to illuminate the complexity of the inner life of a subject. The pathographic orientation, which appears especially evident in the psychoanalytic psychobiographies, ignores the complexity of a subject's social, historical and cultural context and reduces an entire life to a neurotic tendency (Runyan, 1988b; Scalapino, 1999).

Instead, a life should be evaluated holistically, that is, in terms of the individual's strengths and weaknesses.

According to Fouchè and van Niekerk, (2005b), psychobiographers can reduce concerns related to reductionism by engaging in extensive research through the use of multiple sources during data collection and analysis. Furthermore, Atkinson and Delamont (2005) suggested the use of various methods of data analysis, which would explicate the social and cultural diversity of the particular subject. The ensuing interpretation should be a synthesis of the psychological with the socio-historical to achieve evidence beyond mere psychological reductionism (Anderson, 1981a; Fouchè, 1999; McAdams, 1994; Runyan, 1988b). Runyan (1988b) and Elovitz (2003) recommended that the researcher avoid the use of technical psychological jargon and rather use psychological terminology sparingly. This would reduce the probability that the researcher would explain all facets of an individual's life in solely reductionistic terms. Elms (1994) suggested that psychobiographers employ a eugraphic approach to research whereby normality and health are emphasized. As this approach contrasts the traditional pathographic alternative, the researcher would avoid over-pathologizing the subject (McAdams, 1994). Howe (1997) stated that this further promotes a holistic view of the individual as a complex personality that has been influenced by various factors within the prevailing socio-historical context. A complete understanding and explanation of human action and experience cannot ignore the fact that human beings are active agents with a degree of reasoned self-determination within the societies in which they are embedded and active (Danziger, 1990, 1997). The consequences of human agency are that human actions and experiences are meaningful, intentional, rational, authentic and normative (Martin & Dawda, 2002). According to Elms (1994) the study of individual lives emphasizes a move away from reductionism towards complexity, instead of assuming that a reductionistic psychological analysis can encapsulate personality.

6.3.2.1 Mechanisms Applied

To avoid producing a reductionistic psychological perspective of Pope John Paul II, the researcher heeded Elms' (1994) warning that inattention to context can distort psychological interpretations. Through the use of multiple sources, an extensive study of both the psychological and socio-historical materials related to Pope John Paul II and his cultural context was conducted. To facilitate a better understanding of Pope John Paul II's complexity the researcher employed a developmental perspective through the use of Erikson's (1950) Theory of Psychosocial Development and Fowler's (1981) Stages of Faith Development. By investigating Pope John Paul II's personality development across his lifespan, the researcher was better able to understand the complexity, multi-dimensional and context-dependent nature thereof. The present researcher therefore contends that the lifespan perspective minimized the criticism of originology by emphasizing the complex and contingent nature of personality development that extends beyond childhood.

6.3.3 Cross-cultural Differences

Anderson's (1981a, 1981b) understanding of psychobiography is that it is a form of cross-cultural research owing to the fact that the historical subject's culture traditionally deviates markedly from contemporary culture. Therefore, the cross-cultural criticism is based on the notion that modern psychological concepts would not necessarily be applicable to a subject's behaviour on account of their not being necessarily cross-culturally sensitive. Runyan (1982a) noted that this critique is common to all biographical and historical writing and warned that psychobiographers must recognize the context-bound nature of psychological concepts and examine which concepts of theories may be universally applied across cultures and periods. Anderson (1981a, 1981b) recommended that psychobiographers undertake extensive historical research of the prevailing time and social culture in order to develop a culturally empathic understanding of the subject. It is therefore essential that the researcher

should understand the culture from the viewpoint of those individuals who lived in it – especially from the subject's point of view – to interpret the meaning of specific actions or statements (Neuman, 2003). According to Anderson (1981a) and Greef (2005), this may be achieved through the literature review or by interviewing people who shared the subject's cultural values. Thus, Runyan (1982a, 2003) asserted that psychobiographical interpretation is an intellectual endeavour that must draw not only on theories that hold universally, but also on group and context-specific generalizations and the extensive idiographic study of the particular individual.

6.3.3.1 Mechanisms Applied

The researcher shared no similar cultural characteristics to Pope John Paul II who lived in a significantly different global, economic, socio-political and cultural period to the researcher. Thus, the researcher recognized the need to reduce cultural bias. In an attempt to bridge the gaping chronological and cultural divide and develop a historical empathy with Pope John Paul II, the researcher's literature study included readings of the historical, political and cultural texts related to the time in which Pope John Paul II lived.

The researcher acknowledges the difficulty in applying modern psychological concepts and theories to subjects from previous eras. Although both Erikson (1950) and Fowler's (1981) theories were posited more than three decades ago, they both emphasize the importance of society and culture on the individual's development. Whereas psychosocial development has a staged genetic disposition, faith development recognizes the importance of individual choice in the construction of a faith that may resonate with or contradict the cultural norm. Despite these theorists' cross-cultural awareness, their theories are inherently individualistic (Corey, 2005; Morris & Maisto, 2002).

6.3.4 Analysing an Absent Subject

In psychobiographical research, the researcher usually has to must create a portrait of the absent subject primarily from written sources (Anderson, 1981a, 1981b; Izenberg, 2003; Schultz, 2005b). It is for this reason that some researchers have reasoned that psychobiographers are disadvantaged by limited information because they rarely have direct contact with the subject being studied. On the other hand, psychobiographers may hold other advantages. For example, a psychobiographer has an advantage over a psychologist in their investigation of an individual life as they have access to information that covers the individual's entire lifespan as well as various informants other than the subject (Elms, 1994). These informants may be closely acquainted with the subject or biographers who have studied and documented a subject's life. Additionally, psychobiographers may draw information from various sources, such as family, friends, diaries, written works, photographs and other creations (Anderson, 1981a, 1981b; Izenberg, 2003; Runyan, 1982a). With that being said, the definitive prospect for psychobiographical research is when a living subject may be interviewed (Anderson, 1981a, 1988).

According to Anderson (1981a) the psychobiographical analysis of an absent subject to test theoretical concepts is advantaged by a greater availability and variety of information. The psychobiographer has an exclusive opportunity to observe behavioural patterns longitudinally – in terms of their eventual effects – and can therefore offer a more balanced description of the subject (Anderson, 1981a). In addition, Carlson (1988) stated that the psychobiographer is not restricted by informed consent or the need to uphold a continuous therapeutic atmosphere. Moreover, Elms (1994) noted that the psychobiographer does not need to disguise the subject's identity owing to the fact that the central aim of most psychobiographical research is to provide a clearer understanding of the psychology of a public figure.

6.3.4.1 Mechanisms Applied

In order to analyze an absent subject and base interpretations on a more complete view of the whole individual, the researcher collected a wide range of biographical data on Pope John Paul II. Thus, the criticism that the psychobiographer has less personal data has been largely overcome through an extensive literature study, including documents of a more personal and intimate nature. Amongst the myriad of sources collected were various books, such as *Crossing the threshold of hope* (Pope John Paul II, 1994), *Rise, let us be on our way* (Pope John Paul II, 2004), *Memory and Identity: Personal Reflections* (Pope John Paul II, 2005), *Pope John Paul II: Young Man of the Church* (Stanley, 2007), *The acting person* (Wojtyla, 1979); various newspaper and magazine articles as well as his speeches, encyclicals, homilies and letters before and throughout his papacy.

6.3.5 Elitism and Easy Genre

Aside from criticisms related to its design and method of psychobiographical research, it has also been criticized as being elitist and an easy genre (Runyan, 1988b). Simonton (1994) wrote that psychobiographers were often drawn to study royalty, heads of state, the privileged or individuals considered 'great', and because of this, is criticized as a means to ignore the experience of the masses (Runyan, 1988b; Schultz, 2005b). However, Howe (1997) and Runyan (1988b) asserts that in attempting to understand enigmatic figures in society, emphasis needs to be placed on human – and more specifically, personality – development in order to enhance the scientific body of knowledge in psychology. Runyan (1988b) noted that although it may be honourable to learn about the oppressed and neglected, social class should not be confused with the level of aggregation. It is essential that that large-scale experiments and detailed biographies could and should be conducted on individuals and groups regardless of social class (Runyan, 1988b). Owing to the fact that psychobiography is an approach that is suitable to study individual lives from any social level, the subject should be chosen

according to personal attributes, rather than social class. Elitism as a criticism for psychiography therefore depends on the person being studied as well as the interpretation offered by the qualitative psychobiography (Runyan, 1988b).

A second argument against biographical research is that some critics consider it too easy a genre. Runyan (1988b) and Elms (1994) opposed this allegation with the argument that superficial biographies are easily written, but that to write a good biography is an extraordinary challenge. Schultz (2005a) noted that a good psychobiography is well-argued and a comprehensive narrative of consistent and viable data that illuminates the mystery of an individual's life. A good psychobiography therefore demands: extensive research of numerous sources to understand the subject's socio-historical context; sound psychological knowledge; and substantial literary skilfulness (McAdams, 1994; Runyan, 1988b).

6.3.5.1 Mechanisms Applied

Many critics would argue that a biographical study of Pope John Paul II is privileged and elitist. However, Pope John Paul II's said the following to participants from the Second World Congress on Consecrated Lives, 'Humility is the platform of all virtues'. He was a humble man. During his early pontificate while still physically strong, he would bend down to kiss the ground at every country he visited, in doing so showing that he was a simple man. He enjoyed talking to the average person and enjoyed visiting the poor and therefore found it very rewarding to visit Mother Theresa in India (Tosatti, 2005). Thus the criticism of elitism cannot be justified in this psychobiographical study.

With regard to the criticism that a psychobiographical study of Pope John Paul II is an easy genre, the contrary can be argued. The multidimensional or holistic nature of his life from the perspectives of both human development and faith (quest for meaning) development made this a complex endeavour. The use and application of human and faith development

theory in this research, and the collection of a vast amount of salient data, also added to the complex nature of this undertaking.

6.3.6 Infinite Amount of Biographical Data

Psychobiographers are often challenged by an infinite body of available biographical information on the subject (Anderson, 1981b; McAdams, 1994; Schultz, 2005b). Anderson (1981b) proposed a split-half strategy in handling the data i.e., dividing the data into two parts. The one part is used to identify and examine the intended theoretical propositions and constructs, while the second part of the material is examined to compare and test it with the theoretical propositions identified in the first body of material. For example, the psychobiographer may split the data into categories of published and archival materials where identified constructs and hypotheses in the former are sought and either confirmed or contradicted in the latter.

Personal data can be approached in two different, but complementary ways, in order to reduce the data to manageable quantities (Alexander, 1988). According to Alexander (1988), the psychobiographer may first identify salience by sorting the raw data into nine categories and then further scrutinize the relevant data. These nine principle identifiers of salience are: primacy, frequency, uniqueness, negation, emphasis, omission, error or distortion, isolation and incompletion. The second method to approach the data involves asking the data a question (Alexander, 1988, 1990). This latter technique allows the psychobiographer to sort the vast amounts of data to answer specific questions, by specifying rules and guidelines to assess the categories of information. In this study Alexander's (1988) model was adapted and applied to the analysis of the biographical material on Pope John Paul II. Therefore, a more detailed discussion of this method is provided later in this chapter.

6.3.6.1 Mechanisms Applied

The primary sources utilized in this study were published materials. These materials were more convenient to access and provided the unique opportunity to cross-reference information and engage with the material on an extended basis. The diversity of published materials included academic and professional articles published on Pope John Paul II; newspaper publications; books and biographies that chronicled his lifespan. The advantage of including biographies in the literature study was that these provided the opportunity to collect and analyze personal, psychosocial and lifestyle data documented by biographers who either had direct contact with Pope John Paul II or those who were in contact with him.

6.3.7 Inflated Expectations

According to Fouché (1999) inflated expectations are not prevalent within the psychobiographical paradigm as yet and that it is rather a fear of critics than a specific widespread problem. However, psychobiographers should be mindful of two particular limitations of psychobiographical research. Firstly, psychobiographers should recognize that psychobiographical explanations do not substitute, but rather supplement existing explanations. Secondly, the psychological explanations should be recognized as purely speculative (Anderson, 1981a; Elovitz, 2003). Meissner (2003) noted that the psychobiographer's creation is merely an approximation of a historical figure, which remains tentative and heuristic – rather than definitively factual. Anderson (1981a) advised that psychobiographers be aware of the various limitations to the approach and admit that they cannot claim to have reported and interpreted the entire complexity of another's life.

6.3.7.1 Mechanisms Applied

While it is widely believed that Pope John Paul II was a uniquely gifted and complex individual, the focus of this study was specifically on his human development and faith (quest for meaning) development. To this end, the theories of Erikson (1950) and Fowler (1981)

provided the needed framework. The researcher recognizes and admits that there are limitations to this study being conducted primarily from a psychological perspective. However, in the researcher's opinion, the expectations are realistic in terms of what the study aims to achieve, and therefore other complexities are considered to fall out of the required range.

6.3.8 Validity and Reliability Criticisms

The most common criticism against the methodology of psychobiographical research is against its validity and reliability (Runyan, 1982a, 1983; Yin, 1994). With regards to a qualitative perspective, these criticisms relate to the trustworthiness of the study, where the processes of judging truth and logic in a qualitative study are shaped by process of understanding. Specific criticisms against the case study method relate to the lack of controls and difficulty in generalization (Runyan, 1982a, 1983, 1988b; Yin, 1994). In order to counter this criticism, Yin (1994) argued that four tests common to all social science research methods, namely: construct validity, internal validity, external validity and reliability, can be used to measure the quality of the case study design. To ensure trustworthiness in qualitative research, Guba (1981) and Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested that the qualitative findings be judged and found (a) systematically congruent with the context or valid; (b) not subject to aberrations in the research process or instruments, that is, reliable; and (c) not open to charges of bias or prejudice of the research, but objective. As such, the latter three constructs proposed by Yin (1994) are replaced with credibility, transferability and dependability. The fourth criterion of a trustworthy study is confirmability. The strategies and precautions to meet the five aggregate constructs are discussed below.

6.3.8.1 Credibility

Credibility is the first and perhaps the most important criterion (Krefting, 1991) of trustworthiness. It is based on methodological rigour, the credibility of the researcher and the

philosophical belief in the value of qualitative inquiry (Patton, 2002). Its quantitative counterpart, internal validity, relates to establishing a causal relationship between conditions (Neuman, 2003) and is considered more relevant to explanatory or causal studies than exploratory or descriptive case studies (Yin, 1994). The investigative nature of the interpretive process of psychobiography requires that the researcher identify and interpret recurrent themes in data related to a single life. Credibility can therefore be enhanced by the researcher's integrating loosely connected or atypical data into a logical, holistic picture (Krefting, 1991). The structural coherence and corroboration that underlie credibility can be achieved through prolonged exposure to the data, in-depth research and checks for any distortions (Rudestam & Newton, 2001) and submersion in the multiple realities of human experience (Krefting, 1991). The structural corroboration of the meanings inferred and conclusions drawn must be internally substantiated and self-evident from the way that data is displayed (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, 1988). In order to further credibility, a critical analysis of multiple sources of data should be conducted (Rudestam & Newton, 2001). Willig (2001) commented that case study research, such as psychobiography, should always involve triangulation.

Triangulation is a powerful strategy to enhance the quality of research, particularly credibility (Krefting, 1991). The principle of triangulation is that the convergence of multiple perspectives provides mutual confirmation of data to illuminate themes or theory and to ensure that all aspects of the phenomenon are investigated (Flick, 2006). This multiplicity minimizes the distortion from a single source or biased researcher as data is cross-checked (Krefting, 1991; Tindall, 1999). Tindall (1999) mentioned four useful types of triangulation that could enhance credibility as they illustrate the deeper meaning within the study for maximum valid interpretations. Data triangulation maximizes the range of data that contributes to the complete understanding of the subject, which increases the accuracy and

decreases the chance that findings are based on biases or misperceptions (Schultz, 2005a). Similarly, referential adequacy of holistic, context-rich materials such as photographs, videotapes and audiotapes provide background meaning to support data analysis, interpretations and audits (De Vos, 2005). The second type is triangulation of methods, which allows for more holistic data collection. Theoretical triangulation recognizes the complexity and multiple nature of reality in the evaluation of a single life. Finally, investigator triangulation is used when different evaluators provide multiple perspectives into the interpretation of data (Tindall, 1999). Krefting (1991) suggested the use of peer examination to enhance credibility. Peer examination resembles investigator triangulation in that colleagues provide additional insights into the evolution of the study. Peer examination contributes to another vital method, reflexive analysis, which enhances credibility. Reflexive analysis provides an opportunity to describe how the researcher's perspective shaped the research (Taylor, 1999). As a participant whose emotional responses must be reviewed in the identification of recurrent themes and values in the representation of reality, the researcher must evaluate the influence his background and perceptions have upon data collection, organization, analysis and interpretation (Willig, 2001). By journalizing intentions, notes, decisions, rationales and interpretations the researcher acknowledges his central position in the construction of knowledge and thus increases credibility in the interpretive process (Krefting, 1991; Taylor, 1999; Willig, 2001).

6.3.8.1.1 *Mechanisms Applied*

The primary aim of the research was to explore and describe the complex psychosocial and faith (quest for meaning) development of Pope John Paul II across his lifespan. As such internal validity was not a major focus of this research study because it is more relevant for causal or explanatory case studies.

However, the researcher recognized that it was important to maintain credibility (Flick, 2006; Guba, 1981; Krefting, 1991; Lincoln & Guba, 1985, 1988) to make general inferences throughout the study. Credibility was achieved through prolonged engagement with, triangulation and in-depth analysis of the multiple sources of biographical materials related to Pope John Paul II. This increased the structural corroboration. The various data sources were examined and cross-referenced to minimize any distorted interpretations (Flick, 2006). Theoretical triangulation was used through the complementary use of the psychosocial and individual personality development theories. Further, investigator triangulation was employed. The supervisor and co-supervisor provided the researcher with constructive critique on the data analysis and collection procedures.

The researcher also engaged in reflexive analysis throughout the study by journalizing her thoughts, feelings, hypotheses, questions and frustrations. In addition to its facilitating the audit, the researcher utilized the journal in order to remain constantly aware of how she – as research instrument – influenced the way that data was collected, analyzed and interpreted.

6.3.8.2   *Transferability*

The second qualitative criterion of trustworthiness is transferability, which is used to judge the extent to which findings may be applied to other contexts (De Vos, 2005; Krefting, 1991; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Lincoln and Guba (1985, 1988) proposed this as an alternative to external validity in recognition that not all qualitative studies can be generalized. A prevailing criticism of the idiographic approach is, indeed, that it is difficult to generalize the findings (Runyan, 1988b) and notably arises when the case study researcher attempts to select a representative case (Yin, 1994). Willig (2001) argued that in case study research representativeness is not an issue because the aim of the research is most often to understand the internal dynamics of a singular case in-depth. Rather than to generalize findings to a larger population, case study researchers should employ analytical generalization whereby

the findings are generalized to a broader theory – in order to confirm or refute the theory (Yin, 1994). Transferability is thus a less significant criterion in psychobiographical research where the findings are viewed as being of inherent descriptive worth (Fouchè, 1999; Stroud, 2004), representing one life perspective to be generalized to a theory (Yin, 1994). As external generalization is not the aim of the qualitative approach, the researcher need only supply a sufficient database for other researchers to evaluate (Krefting, 1991; Yin, 1994). This database further increases the reliability of the results. In order to achieve a level of transferability, thick descriptions – often through triangulation of methods and sources – should be provided (Krefting, 1991; Rudestam & Newton, 2001) to aid in the interpretation of the complex issues addressed. This allows those readers, who are stimulated to conduct further research, to make a transferability judgement (De Vos, 2005; Krefting, 1991) about the appropriateness of applying the findings in other settings.

6.3.8.2.1   *Mechanisms Applied*

The criterion of transferability was not a major concern in this study because the research aim was not to generalize the findings to a larger population through statistical inference. Instead, Pope John Paul II was selected as a unique, complex personality whose life and development were intensively documented and investigated. The findings on Pope John Paul II's psychosocial and faith (quest for meaning) development were compared with and generalized to the psychosocial and individual personality theories through analytical generalization.

6.3.8.3   *Dependability*

In qualitative research, trackable variability (Guba, 1981) and unusual situations provide valuable opportunities to learn from, rather than control, information. The criterion of dependability is therefore invoked, rather than reliability. Dependability in qualitative research relates to the consistency of findings within the study's epistemology (Krefting,

1991; Lincoln & Guba, 1985, 1988), where the recommendations and conclusions are consistent with the presented data. Krefting (1991) argued that there must therefore be a fit between the research question, data collection procedures and analysis techniques to present all the interpretive elements with purpose and focus. In order to ensure dependability, Flick (2006) indicated that the research process be documented in comprehensive detail – thereby emphasizing thick descriptions of the procedures used. To facilitate this process, Yin (1994) suggested that as many steps as possible should be operationalized and that a case study protocol that specifies all the operational steps be compiled. By following a comprehensible and systematic coding procedure, the auditability and dependability of the themes extracted from the data would be enhanced (Rudestam & Newton, 2001). This means that the data is coded in such a way that others can understand, and arrive at, similar conclusions. Further suggestions to enhance dependability include: (a) to consult supervisors and methodologists throughout the research process; (b) the use of a code-recode procedure whereby the research can, after two weeks, recode information to compare thematic extraction (Krefting, 1991); (c) triangulation – to ensure an inclusive exploration of the multiple realities of subjective experience (Krefting, 1991; Lincoln & Guba, 1985, 1988; Willig, 2001); and (d) an audit, which also enhances confirmability (Flick, 2006).

6.3.8.3.1 Mechanisms Applied

In order to enhance dependability, the researcher employed a systematic and consistent coding scheme to sort the raw biographical data. The coding system consisted of a conceptual and operational matrix wherein the relevant salient evidence was placed and evaluated. The conceptual framework was grounded upon the psychosocial and lifestyle constructs – as well as Alexander's (1988, 1990) guidelines to extract salient data. A more detailed discussion and exposition of the conceptual framework is provided in Chapter 7.

6.3.8.4 Confirmability

The fourth indicator of trustworthiness is neutrality, which is indicated in qualitative research through data and interpretational confirmability (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, 1988). Confirmability is the degree to which the findings are a function solely of the information and conditions of research, free from researcher bias (De Vos, 2005). Confirmability is similar to replicability - which means that a study should produce the same results if repeated exactly (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Krefting (1991) noted that neutrality in data is achieved when credibility and transferability are established. The audit is a major strategy to enhance confirmability and dependability (Krefting, 1991; Yin, 1994). According to Yin (1994), a chain of evidence must be produced whereby the process of uncovering evidence – through the appropriate consideration of all relevant data – can be traced. Should this objective be achieved, Yin (1994) argued that the construct validity would have been determined and the overall quality of the study increased. Krefting (1991) suggested that research can be subjected to an audit. The aim of the audit is for an external auditor to follow the study's progression and understand the decision-making process and nature of the interpretations (Creswell, 1998; Flick, 2006; Krefting, 1991; Yin, 1994). The auditor determines whether other researchers, when faced with the data, would draw similar conclusions (Krefting, 1991). Further suggestions to increase confirmability are the use of reflexive analysis and triangulation to test the strength of ideas, guard against bias and help to ensure accurate evaluation of research findings (Krefting, 1991; Taylor, 1999).

6.3.8.4.1   Mechanisms Applied

Due to the iterative process of qualitative research, a continuous audit was used. The research supervisors acted as auditors who evaluated the researcher's work to determine the interpretational confirmability of the research. An audit trail (Krefting, 1991) was maintained by keeping a meticulous record of the process of the study. The researcher kept all

documentation regarding raw data; data reduction and analysis; data reconstruction and synthesis; process notes; and materials related to intentions and dispositions to facilitate the audit. Documentation and resourced justification for decisions were made available to the research supervisors to follow the study's progression and understand the decision-making process and nature of interpretations. Reflexive analysis and triangulation methods were further used to enhance the confirmability of the study.

6.3.8.5 Construct Validity

Construct validity refers to the establishment of the correct operational measures for the concepts studied (Yin, 1994). The objective of the study should be used to guide the selection and conceptualization of the constructs and variables to be used. By clearly conceptualizing which indicators would be operationalized during data collection, the researcher ensures that the intended theoretical constructs are measured (Neuman, 2003).

6.3.8.5.1 Mechanisms Applied

In order to overcome a criticism of low construct validity in this case study research, the researcher conceptualized the components of psychosocial and lifestyle development in a clear and unambiguous fashion. The conceptualizations were based on the research literature on psychosocial development (see Chapter 3) and faith development (see Chapter 4). In order to operationalize each construct, a clear set of guidelines was composed and paralleled with the historical eras in Pope John Paul II's personality development over his lifespan. The conceptualizations and operationalizations are discussed further in section 6.7.2.

This section (section 6.3) examined the various methodological considerations inherent in psychobiographical research, provided suggestions to minimize these difficulties and explored their relevant applications to the study on Pope John Paul II. In addition to these considerations, the psychobiographer is faced with various ethical considerations throughout the research study. The next section is a discussion of the important ethical considerations

inherent to the psychobiographical study of lives and the application of these ethical principles within the present study.

6.4 Psychobiographical Ethics

As a window into a subject's private world, the nature of a psychobiographical study raises ethical concerns about privacy and confidentiality (Elms, 1994; Runyan, 1982a). The psychobiographer, as a collector of lives, orders data into a coherent and balanced portrayal of an individual's lived life. The psychobiographer is thus forced to consider and resolve the ethical considerations of the research during the preparations of the case study (Elms, 1994). Elms (1994) noted that the first issue that arises relates to choosing whether the psychobiographer will study living individuals or those already deceased. Further issues that arise may relate to questions about what kind of data is permissible to use (Fouchè, 1999), for example, officially archived materials, materials deemed suitable by a subject's family or all available material. Also, the psychobiographer who aims to publish the findings must decide what goes to print, whether the publication is to be a diplomatic, but honestly-phrased presentation or only what the subject's family wishes to hear (Elms, 1994; Fouchè, 1999).\

Elms (1994) highlighted that there are few explicitly stated ethical guidelines for psychobiographical research – and noted the limited involvement of the American Psychological Association in this regard. The American Psychiatric Association, however, has paid greater attention to the ethics of psychobiography and psychohistory. Runyan (1982a) reported that in 1976 the American Psychiatric Association set up a taskforce to formulate ethical guidelines after psychiatrists' opinions were polled about Goldwater's fitness to become the American president. The resultant guidelines were ethically stipulated and are presumed to still be in effect.

These ethical guidelines stipulated that, firstly, psychobiographies should ideally be conducted on long-dead individuals, who preferably have no close surviving relatives who

may be embarrassed by any revelations (APA, 1976). Secondly – and with greater ethical concern – psychobiographies may not be conducted on any living person without his prior consent to being studied or interviewed, information collected, or any subsequent publication of findings (APA, 1976). Runyan (1982a) noted an interesting exception to this latter guideline, whereby psychiatrists may ethically prepare official psychobiographical profiles of significant international figures or criminals whose personality development requires understanding in the interest of national safety and security.

Although the aforementioned guidelines do not significantly emphasize confidentiality, Elms (1994) suggested that the psychobiographer should treat all intimate knowledge and documentation with respect. Further, Elms noted that every psychobiography needs to be ethically justified to some degree.

6.4.1 Mechanisms Applied

The researcher chose to study a deceased individual, Pope John Paul II, which posed fewer ethical considerations. However, the researcher heeded Runyan's (1982a) warning that psychobiographical studies as a whole pose various ethical concerns. The issues, as applied to this study, included privacy and the potential embarrassment to the subject's family. The information collected on Pope John Paul II was based predominantly on published materials that exist in the public domain and are freely accessible. Elms (1994) noted that the psychobiographer has a similar right in research as a journalist to access public sources. No informed consent from close family was required because of the academic nature of the study and that it is not intended for publication. The researcher aimed to produce a valuable academic study with an accurate narrative conceptualization of a deeper psychological understanding within the specific case of Pope John Paul II.

6.5 Conclusion

   This chapter highlighted the importance of recognizing preliminary methodological issues and the minimization of criticisms associated with psychobiographical research methodology. Further, the researcher explored the need to ensure trustworthiness in qualitative research as well as the ethical considerations of psychobiography. In Chapter 7, the research design and methodology of this psychobiographical case study are presented.

CHAPTER 7

Research Design and Methodology

7.1 Chapter Preview

Qualitative research is an iterative process that aims to illustrate and describe the relationships between people, objects and situations in order to elicit the meanings attributed to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Rudestam & Newton, 2001). In this chapter the research design and the psychobiographical subject are presented and the research objectives and method are described. Further, the data collection, extraction and analysis procedures are delineated and discussed. In conclusion, a brief overview of the strategy of reflexivity in qualitative research is explored.

7.2 Research Design

The present research study on the life of Pope John Paul II may be generally described as life history research (Plummer, 1983; Runyan, 1982a, 1988b) with a qualitative single-case research design (Yin, 1994). Life history research tracks the course and variety of experiences in an individual life (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Runyan, 1982a) and a single-case design is used to test, clarify or challenge the propositions of a theory, particularly against a unique individual case (Yin, 1994). Thus, the research design may be specifically defined as a single-case psychobiographical study over an entire lifespan (Fouchè, 1999). The design serves as a means of inquiry into an individual case through the systematic use of psychological theory to coherently reconstruct and reinterpret a life through an illuminating narrative that contributes to both knowledge and theory-building (McAdams, 1988, 1994).

This qualitative psychobiographical study can further be described as both exploratory-descriptive and descriptive-dialogic in nature. The exploratory-descriptive nature refers to the provision of a rich and accurate description of Pope John Paul's personality development over his entire lifespan that provides an in-depth understanding of his individual case within

his socio-historical context (Fouché & de Vos, 2005; Gilgun, 1994; Neuman, 2003). The descriptive-dialogic nature refers to the faithful portrayal and description of a phenomenon and to the clarification and testing of the content of specific theories (D. Edwards, 1990; Martin, 1996; McLeod, 1994), such as the theories of Erikson (1950) and Fowler (1981) highlighted in this study.

7.3 The Psychobiographical Subject

Pope John Paul II (1920 – 2005), served as the single case whose life history was uncovered in this psychological biography. A non-probability sampling procedure, purposive sampling, was employed to select the psychobiographical subject. In purposive sampling, the researcher's judgement is particularly prominent in determining the characteristic attributes desired and to ensure the richness of data (Strydom & Delport, 2005b). Neuman (2003) noted that purposive sampling is effective in conjunction with case study research where (a) the case is especially unique; (b) a part of a difficult-to-reach or specialized population; or (c) where the study's purpose is less to generalize to the larger population than it is to gain a deeper understanding of a type or specific individual. Pope John Paul II - who has been acclaimed as one of the most influential leaders of the twentieth century, served as Supreme Pontiff of the Catholic Church and Sovereign of Vatican City from 1978 until his death in 2005, was instrumental in ending communism in his native Poland and eventually all of Europe – serves as the single individual selected for study in this qualitative case study. He was selected on the basis of the interest value, uniqueness and significance of his life.

7.4 Primary Aim of the Research

The primary aim of this study was to explore and describe the significance of the historical personage of Pope John Paul II by reconciling his academic, spiritual and political attributes, through detailing his life in terms of Erikson's (1956) theory of Psychosocial Development and Fowler's (1981) theory of Stages of Faith.

Edwards (1990) stated that this primary aim is reflective of the exploratory and descriptive nature of the study in that it entails a thorough and precise description of an individual case, with the aim of providing an in-depth understanding of the individual case within a specific social setting. In addition, for the purpose of this study, the descriptive-dialogic approach was adopted which involves a *dialogue* between the exploratory-descriptive findings and the theoretical concepts and propositions.

7.5 Research Method

The psychobiographical research method can be described as qualitative-morphogenic in nature (Elms, 1994). This method refers to the conceptualization of individuality within both the nomothetic and idiographic approaches (Elms, 1994; Runyan, 1983; Wallace, 1989). This research method and its complementary single-case design emphasize the individuality of the whole person through the holistic, qualitative description and interpretation of a single, time-bound, socio-historical entity (Elms, 1994; Runyan, 1982b, 1983; Schultz, 2005a).

The qualitative methodology of psychobiographical research presents the researcher with numerous challenging obstacles (Fouchè, 1999). These were discussed in Chapter 6 as preliminary methodological considerations that the researcher has identified, recognized and attempted to surmount in this psychobiographical study of Pope John Paul II.

7.6 Data Collection Procedures

The basic units of analysis in the psychobiographical study on Pope John Paul II were biographical materials collected in accordance with the primary aim of the study. The data sources used to collect evidence on Pope John Paul II's life included a variety of published materials. The biographical materials were defined and demarcated as either primary or secondary sources. Primary sources are materials produced by the subject, including excerpts from interviews (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Plummer, 1983; Strydom & Delport, 2005a).

Secondary sources included biographical literature produced by others that focused on Pope John Paul II's life history, development, personality and individuality across his lifespan.

The search for, selection of and collection of published data sources on Pope John Paul II were conducted via the Internet and the information-system services at the Library of the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. Several published documents were retrieved from the journal and book collections in various South African universities to supplement the researcher's existing library of text related to Pope John Paul II's life. The diversity of used data sources that were collected and consulted are indicated in Chapter 6 and the References. The benefit of documenting all the data sources is that it enhances the study's reliability during the data collection phase (Fouchè, 1999; Krefting, 1991; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This provides other researchers with an existing database that can be accessed for later inspection (Yin, 1994).

The analysis and interpretation of biographical materials allowed the researcher to engage with an inaccessible and intriguing subject at a deeper level. The use of personal documents confronts the researcher with more truthful and detailed information to uncover the intricacies of the subject's worldview that the data was not necessarily designed to reveal (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Plummer, 1983; Simonton, 2003; Strydom & Delport, 2005a). Further advantages of collecting and analyzing published materials in this psychobiographical study were that published materials are (a) stable data sources that could be reviewed repeatedly; (b) useful to verify dates and the correct spelling of names and titles; (c) able to corroborate information from other sources for factual accuracy; (d) relatively accessible; and (e) convenient to access and retrieve in the researcher's own time (Rudestam & Newton, 2001; Yin, 1994).

However, Yin (1994) warned that published materials are subject to the disadvantage of author bias. Especially in light of the world reknowned context of Pope John Paul II's life,

the material may have been reported in a biased fashion which thereby compromises its credibility. To overcome author bias and to enhance the internal validity and objectivity of the study, multiple sources of published materials were collected and consulted (Krefting, 1991; Willig, 2001; Yin, 1994). This triangulation of data sources (Neuman, 2003; Tindall, 1999) aided the process of data corroboration (see section 6.3.8).

Arguably the most difficult task that confronts the psychobiographer is the examination, extraction, categorization and analysis of the collected materials (Alexander, 1988, 1990; Fouchè, 1999; McAdams, 1994; Schultz, 2005b). The following section is a discussion of the data extraction and analysis procedures utilized in this study.

7.7 Data Extraction and Analysis Procedures

Schultz (2005b) described human life as a dynamic collaboration of events across a lifespan that contribute to the full view of the person of interest. He added that there are certain events in an individual's life that are judged central or defining – and combined, form a major component of personality. Therefore, the more ambiguous and complex the personality, the more complicated the task is to interpret. Data in qualitative analysis is usually in the form of textual narrative that can be analyzed by extracting emergent themes or constructs (Creswell, 1994; Schurink, 1998). Qualitative data analysis highlight the words and phrases in a subject's vocabulary that capture and elucidate meaning (Creswell, 1998; Neuman, 2003).

Owing to the fact that the psychobiographer is faced with an excess of fact and opinion, he or she is required to clearly differentiate what content may be set aside and safely ignored and which content will be privileged (Schultz, 2005b). After this process of differentiation, the information needs to be placed in a particular way that reveals the data it contains (Alexander, 1990). The purpose of psychobiography is to highlight significant events of an individual life and apply psychological theory in order to organize the data into a compelling

narrative. Therefore, the psychobiographer must be sensitive to the clues in the data that suggest how the story of a person's life is to be discovered, created and told (McAdams, 1994). The individual's life must be understood within its particular social, cultural and historical context – and not merely reduced to causal notions of early experience or force-fitted into theory (McAdams, 1994; Schultz, 2005a).Psychobiographical sophistication is based on the balance between data and theory, where the researcher has applied psychological theory to interpret the complexity of a human life (Alexander, 1990; Carlson, 1988; Elms, 1994; McAdams, 1994; Schultz, 2005a).

According to Yin (1994), case study analysis is the process of examining, extracting, categorizing and recombining evidence. Yin suggested that the collected data be approached from a systematic and general analytic stance and proposed two strategies: (1) data analysis guided by the theoretical approaches and objectives and (2) a case description. In the first strategy, the researcher relies on the theoretical orientation and research objectives to identify and selectively focus attention on salient data in the collected material. This process requires the researcher to raise questions that will provide answers to, or insight into, both the objectives of the study and the content of the theoretical approaches utilized (Fouchè, 1999). In the second strategy, the researcher develops a descriptive framework to organize and integrate case information. An example of this specific analytic technique is to develop a conceptual matrix that facilitates data extraction (Fouchè, 1999).

7.7.1 Alexander's Model

Yin's (1994) model to organize, prioritize and analyze biographical data follows a similar analytic structure to that proposed by Alexander (1988, 1990). Alexander's model was utilized in this study as a means to extract core-identifying units from the biographical data, which are also referred to as themes or schemes. The extraction of these core units occurred through two methods: (1) asking the data questions i.e., by extracting and systematically

categorizing information into themes of personality development that correspond to the theories used to achieve the aim of the study; and (2) letting the data reveal itself i.e., by identifying salient data that helps to reduce information into manageable quantities. According to Miles and Huberman (1994) the use of this method increases the trustworthiness of a study as a vital dialogue was created between the extracted data and the theory (Alexander, 1990; D. Edwards, 1990) for analytical generalization (Yin, 1994).

7.7.1.1 Questioning the data

The first method of extraction of core units from the biographical data involved 'asking the data questions'. This method assisted with the sorting of large amounts of information to answer questions operationalized within the personality theories of this study, in order to reveal significant information about the research subject (Alexander, 1988, 1990). The researcher approached the collected materials on Pope John Paul II with two general questions that served to extract relevant core identifying units that attempted to reach the objectives of the study.

The first question is: "How is personality and faith development conceptualized in this study?". To answer this question, the researcher conceptualized Pope John Paul II's personality and faith development across his lifespan according to (a) Erikson's (1950) psychosocial theory of personality development and (b) Fowler's (1981) stages of faith respectively. A comprehensive theoretical and literature review of the two theoretical frameworks highlighted the parallels of the two perspectives. Both Erikson and Fowler emphasized the biopsychosocial nature of personality development as well as the importance of the individual's choice of response to life events. Yin (1994) suggested that clear conceptualizations in case study research enhances the operationalization of significant units of analysis.

The second question is: "How will a dialogue be created between the data extracted and the content of the theories of personality and faith development applied in this study?". To answer the second question, the researcher implemented the technique of analytical generalization (see section 3.3.3.5). Through the process of informally testing the applied theories, the researcher critically compared the extracted units of information with the conceptualizations and propositions of Erikson's (1950) psychosocial development theory and Fowler's (1981) stages of faith development.

7.7.1.2 Letting the data reveal itself

The second method of data extraction is 'letting the data reveal itself'. While examining the collection of materials for this study, the researcher took note of the manner in which biographers and authors imparted the significance of the content in their written work. In this instance, the construct, *significance*, refers to principle identifiers of salience (Alexander, 1988; Fouchè, 1999; Schultz, 2005b). The researcher adhered to a set of rules which were proposed by Alexander (1988, 1990) and that was designed to identify which sections of the material required further scrutiny, in order to sort the raw data and reduce it to manageable proportions. These nine guidelines ensure extraction of salient data and provided the researcher with an overall impression of what information or descriptions were significant in terms of the study. Each guideline is described below and an example provided as to how the researcher applied it to the database of this particular study.

1. *Primacy* refers to the fact that information presented first is commonly perceived as being most significant or foremost in mind (Elms, 1994). In psychotherapy, the first few minutes within the initial session are seen as crucial to unravel what ensues (Fouchè & van Niekerk, 2005b) and in writing, paragraphs are begun with a topic sentence whose meaning is elaborated in the sentences that follow (Alexander, 1990;). According to Elms (1994), early memories, first experiences and an autobiography's introductory comments are noteworthy.

These provide the foundation upon which further communication is built and an initial sense of the themes that may emerge (Schultz, 2005b).The notion of primacy is evidenced when, at the age to of 20, Karol Wojtyla met Jan Tyranowski who became the central figure in his spiritual formation. Jan was a man of profound spirituality. He was a youth leader and student mentor in Karol's university parish. Jan introduced young Karol to St. John of the Cross – a saint and founder of the Carmelite order which is calls on disciples to engage in contemplative prayer. Jan encouraged Karol to be a strict disciple of God through the Carmelite order and recommended that he keep a diary with view to bring God directly into every moment of the day. Two years later, after weekly meetings with Jan, Karol began clandestine studies for priesthood and was ordained a priest in 1946. Therefore, the meeting of Jan Tyranowski can be seen as a primal incident impacting on Pope John Paul II's development.

2. *Frequency* refers to the repetition of information. Alexander (1988) stated that repeated or recurring reference to a message or incident is an indication of increased certainty regarding its importance. While monotony may decrease awareness or perceived importance of a message, Elms (1994) suggested that the significance thereof should be investigated. A frequently occurring statement made regarding the significance of Pope John Paul II, is that he was instrumental in bringing down communism in central and Eastern Europe (Hebblethaite, 1995; O'Connor, 2005; Noonan, 2005; Tossati, 2005; Weige, 2001) . It is often said that he was the spiritual inspiration behind its downfall and catalyst for 'a peaceful revolution' in Poland (Dominquez, 2005; O' Connor, 2005; Weige, 2001).

3. *Uniqueness* refers to divergence in the collected information that are worth closer inspection because they are unusual or singular (Alexander, 1988; Elms, 1994). Clear examples are often preceded by exclamations of 'nothing like this has happened to me before' or 'the strangest thing happened to me' (Alexander, 1988, 1990). The researcher must also detect

more subtle expressions of discrepancy within the body of biographical data. Alexander mentioned that the use of various comparative baselines of normalcy in accepted language or cultural expectations facilitates the identification of indicators of uniqueness. There a few instances of uniqueness in the life of Pope John Paul II. He was the second longest serving Pope in history and the first non-Italian pope since 1523 (Stanley, 2007; Tossati, 2005). As part of his special emphasis on the universal call to holiness during his papacy, he beatified 1,340 people and canonised 483 saints, more than the combined total of his predecessors during the preceding five centuries (O' Connor, 2005; Tossati, 2005).

4. *Negation* refers to that which is denied or tuned into its opposite (Alexander, 1988; Elms, 1994). A subject's perception of who he is, is as imperative as his emphasis on who he is not (Elms, 1994). According to Fouchè and van Niekerk (2005b) negation statements are often indicators of possibly repressed or unconscious material or 'truths' that the person wants others to believe, or wants to believe himself (Elms, 1994). It is cited that Pope John Paul II was an intense man and was unapproachable to many. However, because he belonged to the Carmelite order, he spent most of his free time in contemplative, solitary prayer, which possibly gave rise to the notion that he was an intense man as well as unapproachable.

5. *Emphasis* refers to information that has been excessively stressed or noticeably underscored. Alexander (1988) noted that information may be overemphasized, underemphasized or the emphasis misplaced. According to Elms (1994) and Schultz (2005b) the psychobiographer must be aware when an ordinary event is given excessive attention; when a major life experienced is glossed over with deficient comment; or when irrelevancy is stressed with undue force. A literature review of Pope John Paul II's life revealed that whilst his actions over the years of his papacy have been thoroughly covered –both triumphs and criticisms - biographers have generally underemphasized his personality development. Significant life events and the developmental consequences of them, such as the death of his mother and

brother at an early age, have been merely documented as an ordinary occurrence. Insufficient time was spent on uncovering the significance that this may have had in his life.

6. *Omission* refers to that which is missing – particularly the absence of expected content (Schultz, 2005b). Elms (1994) termed this the 'Sherlock Holmes' rule whereby questioning what is missing, a vital clue in the puzzle of the whole life may be identified. Alexander (1990) noted that the nature of the omission must be investigated for its repetitive properties. Pope John Paul II's life work has received much literary and media attention, however little attention has been afforded to the changes in his personal make-up that have appeared to have transpired over his lifespan.

7. *Error or distortion* refers to the presence of mistakes, often related to person, place or time (Schultz, 2005b). From a psychoanalytic perspective, errors may highlight hidden motives or conflicts that require closer attention (Alexander, 1988; Elms, 1994). A commonly occurring error or distortion that relates to Pope John Paul II is the criticism of his traditional positions on the roles of women, which included rejecting women priests (Berry & Renner, 2003). However, in an apostolic letter on *The Dignity and Vocation of Women*, he highlighted the following, 'The hour is coming, in fact has come, when the vocation of women is being acknowledged in its fullness, the hour in which women acquire in the world an influence, an effect and a power never hitherto achieved. That is why, at his moment when the human race is undergoing so deep a transformation, women imbued with a spirit of the Gospel can do so much to aid humanity in not falling' (Pope John Paul II, 1988).

8. *Isolation* refers to information that stands alone or does not 'fit' (Alexander, 1988; 1990). According to Elms (1994), important material is contained in instances where one questions the sense or logic of information within the presented context. Schultz (2005b) argued that such instances serve as markers whose optimal purpose is to uncover the deeper meaning of the isolated fragment of the unconscious. Pope John Paul II was known to become

uncharacteristically furious when accused of trying to influence the politics of the countries he visited as pontiff. These instances of fury can be interpreted as isolated instances as it was uncharacteristic of him to display this intense emotion.

9. *Incompletion* refers to that which is not finished. Incompletion is essentially an indication of a topic that is introduced, but terminated without closure (Alexander, 1988; Elms, 1994). The outcome lacks an explanatory means-end relationship (Fouchè & van Niekerk, 2005b), that is, one is left with the distinct impression that an essential aspect required to understand the person is lacking. Schultz (2005b) described instances of incompletion as avoidance of certain thoughts or actions and any associated potentially negative emotional consequences. Lent is a solemn observance in the liturgical year of many Christian denominations – arguably the most important - , lasting for a period of approximately six weeks leading up to Easter Sunday. For the first time in his 26 year pontificate, John Paul II was unable to preside at the Palm Sunday Mass on 20 March 2005 due to his failing health. He died two weeks later. This can be described as incompletion as he was not able to fulfil his duties as supreme pontiff of the Catholic Church and bishop to the Vatican.

The nine identifiers of salience provided the researcher with guidelines to reflect on the collected material in a consistent and systematic fashion (Alexander, 1988, 1990; Fouchè, 1999). By following the guidelines to extract salient data and asking questions related to the theoretical perspectives and research aim, the researcher attempted to establish a consistent analytic approach in order to enhance the study's trustworthiness (Fouchè, 1999; Fouchè & van Niekerk, 2005b). The researcher further developed a conceptual framework as a matrix of categories wherein to contextualize the information and facilitate data analysis towards a greater understanding of the psychobiographical subject. The use of a systematic model based

on the theories applied served to enhance the auditability of the study (Fouchè, 1999). The next section provides a more detailed discussion of this conceptual matrix.

7.7.2 A Conceptual Framework: Optimal Parallels between Psychosocial and Faith Stages

Miles and Huberman (1994) indicated that a clear working framework is essential in the data management process. Data management is the systematic, logical process of data collection, storage and retrieval (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Thus, in order to facilitate the process of the data's revealing itself, the researcher developed a conceptual framework to organize and integrate psychobiographical data in relation to the personality theories applied in the study. A matrix was used to categorize the stages of Erikson's (1950) psychosocial theory and the components of Fowler's (1981) faith stages across the major life periods over Pope John Paul II's lifespan. These periods facilitated a consistent and systematic method whereby the collected data was used to illuminate Pope John Paul II's personality development.

7.8 Reflexivity

Our lives are filled with judgments which are based on sets of assumptions about the world we live in (Stroud, 2004). The language that we choose to describe our perceptions is not neutral, nor is it private. It is rather loaded with meanings that people create in association with one another in specific contexts (de Lauwere, 2001; Winter, 1996).

Reflexivity is arguably the most idiosyncratic feature of qualitative research (J. A. Smith, 2003; Tindall, 1999). The concept of reflexivity acknowledges that the researcher and the researched are collaborators in the construction of knowledge (Ashworth, 2003; Taylor, 1999; Tindall, 1999) and description of meaning (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994; Willig, 2001). Reflexivity or reflexive analysis advises researchers to acknowledge, explore and demonstrate the way in which their perspectives and involvement in the context and process

of research influences and informs the research findings (Silverman, 2001; Taylor, 1999; Willig, 2001). According to Roberts (2002), qualitative biographical work is imaginative, that is, creative, image-laden, exploratory and reflexive, wherein researchers are participants whose lifeworlds are integral to qualitative research. Tindall (1999) warns that researchers' failure to be critically aware of their central position in the social construction of knowledge can weaken the validity of the research. In addition, Maturana (1991) stated that the complex relationship between the researcher and subject in terms of experiences and their descriptions of social realities can also undermine the validity of research. Reflexive analysis may be described as researchers' awareness and understanding of their role in the construction of meaning throughout the research process (Wilkinson, 1988; Willig, 2001) as well as the acknowledgement of the impracticality of complete objectivity (Hart, 1998; Tindall, 1999; Willig, 2001).

Reflexive analysis warrants the scrutiny of the entire research process and ensures that researchers continuously review their role in the research, which discourages impositions of meaning and thus promotes validity (Willig, 2001). Reflexivity gauges the influence of the researcher's background, perceptions and interests on the qualitative research process (Krefting, 1991). According to Stroud (2004), this critical reflection allows researchers to assess the restrictions they impose on research.

Personal reflexivity relates to the researcher's reflection of her values, experiences, interests, beliefs and social identity that shaped the research (Tindall, 1999; Willig, 2001). Epistemological reflexive analysis encourages researchers to reflect on the assumptions about the world and knowledge employed in the course of research and assists in the exploring the implications of such assumptions for the research findings (Hart, 1998; Willig, 2001). Reflexivity acknowledges that each reader will create a new meaning (Parker, 1999). Meaning is therefore the product of the interdependent collaboration between the subject,

researcher and observers (Stroud, 2004). The collaboration between the researcher and subject should be shared in order to invite other researchers to think differently about their way of practice and research (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994; Richardson & St Pierre, 2005).

In order to maintain reflexivity, the researcher used a journal (Krefting, 1991; Tindall, 1999) to describe, explore, reflect and interpret her experience within the context of the research. The researcher examined her choice of topic, initial purpose and intention, experiences, notes, decisions, rationales, feelings and interpretations. Krefting (1991) noted that in journalizing thoughts and feelings researchers may recognize any preconceived assumptions and biases in order to alter the way in which data is collected and interpreted, which further enhances the credibility of the study.

7.9 Conclusion

In this chapter the research design and methodology of this psychological biography on Pope John Paul II's life were discussed. Specific attention was given to the 'questioning' of the data, identifying salience and the use of a conceptual framework to categorize data. Finally, reflexivity and its significance to this study were discussed. The following chapter endeavours to present and discuss the findings of this study in a comprehensive and integrative manner.

CHAPTER 8

Findings and Discussion: Erikson's Psychosocial Development

8.1 Chapter Preview

In this chapter, the psychosocial development of Pope John Paul II is presented and discussed. The chapter firstly provides the reader with a conceptual outline followed by the presentation of the biographical data as it relates to the concepts and propositions of the Erikson's Theory of Psychosocial Development (1950). The findings are presented across the eight stages as proposed by Erikson (1950) as they relate to the major historical periods of Pope John Paul II's life. Finally, the chapter concludes with a pictorial reflection of his psychosocial development.

8.2 Findings and discussion

Table 2 provides a graphic reflection of the way in which the researcher chose to represent and structure the findings and discussion of this study according to Erikson's psychosocial stages. Pope John Paul II's life was firstly divided into 4 main biographical headings. These four main headings were then subdivided in accordance with Erikson's (1950) proposed psychosocial stages. In the sections below, each of these five main headings will encompass a brief explanation of the relevant psychosocial stage, a detailed biographical account of Pope John Paul II's life at each given stage, and a discussion of the findings by the researcher.

Table 2

A Graphic Reflection of the Structure of the Findings of Erikson's Psychosocial Stages

Biographical Main Headings	Erikson's Psychosocial Stages	Biographical Subheadings
Lolek: **Childhood and Adolescence** **1920 – 1938** This section maps Pope John Paul II's life from birth to 18 years old.	**Basic Trust vs. Mistrust** (birth to about 18 months)	• A child is born • Discussion of the stage
	Autonomy vs. Shame/Doubt (18 months – 3 years)	• Where there's a will • Discussion of the stage
	Initiative vs. Guilt (age 3 – 5 years)	• Blueprint • Discussion of the stage
	Industry vs. Inferiority (age 5 – 13years)	• School boy • Discussion of the stage
	Identity vs. Role Confusion (age 13 – 21 years)	• The Living Word • Discussion of the stage
Karol, the Disciple **Young Adulthood** **(1938 – 1960)** This section maps Pope John Paul II's life from 18 years to 40 years old.	**Identity vs. Role Confusion** (age 13 – 21years)	• Alma Mater: The Jagiellonian University • Discussion of the stage continued
	Intimacy vs. Isolation (age 21 – 40 years)	• Call me wujek *(uncle)* • Discussion of the stage
Father to All **Middle Adulthood** **1960 – 1985** This section maps Pope John Paul II's life from age 40 to 65 years old.	**Generativity vs. Stagnation** (age 40 – 65 years)	• The Making of a Philosopher • Discussion of the stage
Pope John Paul, The Great **1985 – 2005** This section maps Pope John Paul II's life from age 65 to his death at age 85.	**Ego Integrity vs. Despair** (Age 65 - death)	• Toward Freedom • Discussion of the stage

8.2.1 Lolek: Childhood and Adolescence (1920 - 1938)

8.2.1.1 Basic Trust versus Mistrust (birth to 18 months)

Erikson proposed that the first psychosocial crisis occurs during the first year of life - approximately from birth to 18 months. During this stage, unconscious attitudes of trust or mistrust towards oneself and the world become the opposing forces in need of integration (Erikson, 1963). Crucial to the achievement of this sense of basic trust is the relationship with the primary caregiver, most often the mother. Should the infant achieve such integration during this first stage of development and acquire a sense of basic trust in his or her environment as well as in his own coping abilities, the ego quality of *hope* emerges (Erikson, 1963). If basic trust is not achieved, mistrust is the result and is a consequence of inevitable natural frustrations, parental inadequacy and absences (Welchman, 2000).

A child is born

Wadowice in 1920 was a town of 6000 Catholics and 1500 Jews, among them farmers, professionals and merchants. Located in the Carpathian foothills southwest of Kraków, Wadowice derived its character from the mountains and wondrous medieval Renaissance town (Malinski, 1979; Wiegel, 2001).

Karol Jozef Wojtyla (named after his father), was born on May 18, 1920 in Wadowice. Karol, or Lolek as his parents called him, was the third child to his parents. Edmund, his eldest brother was 14 years older than him. His sister, Olga, died before he was born. His father was a lieutenant in the Polish army and his mother, Emilia, a housewife who was a skilled in embroidery, took in sewing to help supplement the family's income. The family had a modest, middle-class apartment.

Discussion of the stage

The first psychosocial stage of Trust vs. Mistrust occurs during infancy. This psychosocial stage aims to develop a sense of trust with regards to the parents and significant others.

According to Erikson (1950) the development of trust is based on the quality of relationship between the infant and the primary caregiver: in this case, between Karol and his mother, Emilia. The development of the attachment bond is an important aspect of emotional and social development as it promotes contact and intimacy (Erikson, 1968; Shaffer, 1999).

Infants test the environment and the response elicited from the caregivers shape not only expectations, beliefs and attitudes about interpersonal relationships, but also a pattern of behaviour (Erikson, 1950, 1963a). The interaction with, and feedback from, the environment creates a sense of reality and an estimation of self-worth and self-esteem (Erikson, 1968; Keppel & Birnes, 1997). Infants therefore learn (a) whether the primary figure can be depended on to consistently satisfy the needs of sustenance, care, contact and a sense of safety (Craig & Baucum, 2002; Erikson, 1963a) and (b) a representation of self – a numinous sense of being (Erikson, 1977) – and whether or not that self is the type of person to whom anyone is likely to react positively (Erikson, 1950, 1963a).

Basic trust is seen as related to mutuality of life's first relationship, with Erikson noting that "basic trust in mutuality is that original 'optimism', that assumption that 'somebody is there, 'without which we cannot live" (Erikson, 1958/1993, p. 118). Sullivan (1999) wrote that Helena Szczepanska, a neighbour who used to baby-sit Karol once recalled, 'His mother used to yell up to us to say, "You will see what a great man will grow from this baby", 'We all used to laugh at her and she had a loving heart but could not predict the future. But everyone fussed over him as if he was a prince, so you never can tell' (Sullivan, 1999, p. 11). This suggests that young Karol's early experiences were characterised by trust, consistency, continuity and reliability.

Pope John Paul II's interactions with others remained deep and meaningful throughout his life (O' Connor, 2005; Weigel, 2001). The most striking instance was evidenced in his relationship with God – which he viewed as the most important relationship in his life. Pope

John Paul II had complete trust in God. He nurtured this relationship from a young child to his last days, praying daily, through hardship and immense emotional anguish, and in the spirit of mutuality, made his vocation as a priest his life's work and passion. His trust in the God can be seen as the bedrock on which he built his entire existence.

Based on this successful resolution of this stage's conflict, the researcher infers that Karol would most likely have developed the ego strength specific to this stage, namely *hope*. Its emergence depends on the infant's ability to achieve integration of the opposing conflicts during this first stage and acquire a sense of basic trust in his or her environment as well as in his or her own coping abilities (Erikson, 1997). According to Erikson (1963, 1997), hope is crucial for the development of will, purpose, competence, fidelity, love and care due to its inherent orientation towards the future. Hope forms the basis for many other stages and will find renewed expression later in the life cycle (Erikson, 1997). The word *hope* and Pope John Paul II seemed to go hand in hand during his life and papacy. In 1994, he wrote the book '*Crossing the Threshold of Hope*' which he outlined his life's work, his vision and the importance of hope or 'crossing the threshold of hope' in order to live a good and fulfilled life. In this book, he called on the youth to trust and believe in God. Addressing the United Nation in 1995, Pope John Paul II defended the universality of human rights and described himself as a "witness to hope at the end of a century of unprecedented wickedness" (Pope John Paul II, cited in Weigel, 2001, p. 4). In one of the most popular biographies of Pope John Paul II, aptly named '*Witness to Hope*', George Weigel describes Pope John Paul II as a rational yet optimistic man with great hope for the his country, the church and the world (Weigel, 2001).

8.2.1.2 Autonomy versus Shame and Doubt (age 18 months – 3 years)

The second of Erikson's stages takes place approximately between the ages of 18 months and three years. This stage entails the balancing of the forces of autonomy versus that of

shame and doubt (Erikson, 1963). *Autonomy* is connected to a sense of inner goodness, self control, good will and pride, which will enable children to become appropriately assertive whilst protecting them against a loss of self esteem (Erikson, 1963). As opposites to autonomy, *shame* indicates self-consciousness and *doubt* refers to the fear of the unknown (Erikson, 1963). According to Erikson's theory, emergence of *will* as resulting ego strength holds important implications for future development and will inevitably play a part in the psychosocial crises to follow (Erikson, 1963), as the sense of autonomy and the development of will "are orientated toward a future that will remain open, in play and in preparatory work, for the choices of one's economic, cultural and historical era" (Erikson, 1997, p. 79).

Where there's a will

Biographical data at this stage of Pope John Paul II's development is sparse, but suggest that no major changes took place during this time. Lolek and his parents still resided in their same apartment in Wadowice. His father, Karol, continued to work for the polish army and his mother continued her role as homemaker and cared for Lolek at the same time (O'Connor, 2005; Weigel, 2001).

Discussion of stage

Erikson (1963, 1997) noted that, as children begin to explore their environment, caregivers should strike a delicate balance between being restrictive and being permissive. Ideally, they should set boundaries for exploration that promote the child's curiosity without letting the child cross the boundaries of safety or social mores (Graves & Larkin, 2006). Sullivan (1999) describes how Emilia would "walk him in a pram in Wadowice" (p. 28), visiting friends and neighbours, where the children would be allowed to play whilst the mothers swapped recipes and stories before returning to finish their chores at home. This would have allowed young Lolek to explore his immediate environment autonomously and independently, under the watchful eye of his mother. The condition would therefore have

been favourable for the development of autonomy, as the young Lolek's environment was neither restrictive nor permissive. Sullivan (1999) also noted that once Lolek was able to walk, was allowed to go "down to the candy store holding the hand of his older brother, Edmund, to buy ice-cream cakes" (p. 11). This too suggests that Lolek's parents were not too restrictive on him as long as the necessary precautions were taken.

Based on the successful resolution of the central conflict of this stage, the researcher proposes that Pope John Paul II had developed the ego strength of *will*. Erikson (1963, 1997) commented that rudimentary will power supports the development of exercising both free choice and self restraint, in spite of the unavoidable instances of early shame and doubt. This strength relates to a "future ability to combine an unimpaired will with ready self-discipline, rebellion with responsibility" (Erikson, 1958/1993, p. 255). Irrefutable evidence of this can be seen in Pope John Paul II accepting his vocation as a priest, which required him to have a great amount of self restraint, will power and self discipline. As part of the vocation as a priest, he was called to make an oath of poverty, chastity and obedience to God. Undoubtedly, attaining these virtues would require a tremendous amount of will. Another feat of Pope John Paul II's will can be seen in the time of his life where he was forced to study in an underground seminary in order to become a priest. He refused to leave the seminary, and attended secret classes even though there were constant threats on his life if he continued (Weigel, 2001).

8.2.1.3 Initiative versus Guilt (age 3 – 5 years)

Erikson proposed that between the ages of three and five years, the antitheses of *initiative* versus *guilt* present the pre-school child with the third psychosocial crisis (Erikson, 1963). During this stage, the child develops a sense of morality regarding what is permissible, as well as the imagination to envisage what may be possible (Erikson, 1963). Should the child

be able to balance and integrate the opposing forces of initiative versus guilt, they develop the resulting ego strength – a sense of *purpose*.

Blueprint

Lolek's brother, Edmund or 'Mundek' as the family called him, was a fine student and active athlete, remembered for his exceptional charm (Malinski, 1979; Weigel, 2001). From 1924 to 1929, Edmund studied towards the degree doctor of medical sciences at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków. This left Lolek as the only child in his household. At the same time, Emilia, who was "always of somewhat delicate health as a young woman" began to have bouts of illness (Weigel, 2001, p. 27). Lolek was left to occupy himself which often took him out of the house and into the town's square, up to the hills hiking or playing soccer on the field.

Discussion of stage

During this stage of development, children should use play to turn towards setting goals for adulthood through work-identification with adults (Erikson, 1963), as well as listen to stories which offer them "cultural templates for initiatives they themselves may someday sustain" (Stevens, 2008, p. 49). In the Wojtyla household, prayer was a daily ritual. At night, as in the early morning, the whole family would pray together on their knees, his father offering reflections of bible passages (Weigel, 2001). This was the beginning of Lolek's daily identification with his parents...that of prayer and reverence to God. This can also be seen as his own template for initiative of which be sustained throughout his life.

Erikson argued that a sense of initiative is necessary for every action or learning a person can undertake (Erikson, 1963, 1980). He described the child's sense of initiative as a surplus energy which enables him or her to forget failures quickly and to approach goals with improved effort (Erikson, 1980). Owing to his mom's ill health and his older brother's absence, Lolek's sense of initiative grew as he helped plan many outdoor activities with his

friends to keep himself occupied of which he thoroughly enjoyed (Weigel, 2001). This love of the outdoors continued into his adulthood, where he would spend many hours hiking and kayaking (Sullivan, 1999).

> When they weren't playing in town or at home, the boys could swim in the Skawa during the summer months or skate and play a primitive game of ice hockey on its frozen surface. Hiking, for the most of the year, was another youthful recreation. Soccer was their favourite team sport. (Weigel, 2001, p. 28)

Based on Pope John Paul II's successful resolution of this developmental stage, the researcher infers that he had developed the ego strength of *purpose*. Lolek's self-reliance and goal directed efforts are indicative of the beginnings of a sense of purpose. Even on the frequently increasing occasions of his mother's ill health, he would kneel next to her bedside and pray for her comfort and healing, believing that his prayer, even as a child, had a purpose. Because that is what he was taught by parents (O'Connor, 2005; Weigel, 2001). As a young man, Karol's sense of purpose was realised when he became a priest. Pope John Paul II described the source of his vocation: "I set off in search of the source of my vocation. It is beating there...in the Upper Room in Jerusalem, where the last supper took place" (John Paul II, 2004, p. 3). A vocation to the priesthood is seen as God's calling, not a career. Entering priesthood solidified his life's purpose. The sense of purpose of this stage develops into an ethical sense later in life and, should playfulness be retained, a driving force throughout the lifespan, also giving rise to the development of a sense of humour (Erikson, 1997). Later in life, Pope John Paul II was seen as a man of great ethical and moral standing, even holding a post as a professor of moral theology and social ethics in the major seminary of Kraków and in the Faculty of Theology of Lublin (O'Connor, 2005).

8.2.1.4 Industry versus Inferiority (age 5 – 13 years)

The fourth stage of Erikson's proposed stages spans from age five until age 13 (Erikson, 1997). Erikson (1963) described *industry* as the sense that one has adapted to the laws of the *tool world* as well as to the rules of cooperation inherent to the structured tasks one is faced with. In psychosocial theory, children can be at risk for developing a sense of *inferiority* when they fail to achieve recognition for their efforts or when they are criticized for inadequacy or mediocrity while their peers are praised and recognized (Erikson, 1963). Should the child successfully navigate the conflict between industry and inferiority, he or she develops the ego strength of *competence* and feels ready to handle the tools and utensils used in the adult world and to learn to do so in collaboration with others (Erikson, 1963).

Schoolboy

In 1926, Lolek began grade one at the local elementary school where he was a "gifted student from the start" (Weigel, 2001, p. 29) and showed early on the inquisitive, contemplative, philosophical bent that would be a hallmark of his adult personality. Which is not to say he was just a bookworm; after school he played soccer (he was a good goalkeeper) and skied in Winter. Indoor activities ranged from listening to his father read history, to ping-pong games at a friend's house to priest-playing. Polish Catholics are among the world's most devout, and expressions of their faith are ubiquitous and colourful. The boys of Wadowice would dress as priests and enact rituals of mass. Emilia even made Lolek a robe to wear while praying and built a small altar for his room. Most of the young 'priests', including Lolek, were in fact, altar boys at the church (Malinski, 1979; Sullivan, 1999).

Though, the carefree innocence usually associated with early school years was not destined to last very long. In April 1929, Emilia, his mother died of kidney failure and congenital heart disease at the age of forty-five (Malinski, 1979; Weigel, 2001). Lolek was just eight years old at the time. Although deeply saddened by the death of his mother,

everyone marvelled at Lolek's self possession, "It was God's will", he said upon being called from class and told the news (Karol Wojtyla, cited in Weigel, 2001, p. 30). It was not until years later that he began writing poetry at Jagiellonian University in Kraków that he found the means to express his grief and sense of loss:

Oh, how many years have gone by

Without you – how many years?...

Over Your white grave

O Mother, my extinct beloved,

For a son's full love,

A prayer:

Eternal Rest –

(Karol Wojtyla, cited in Sullivan, 1999, p. 16)

Lolek also drew close to his brother who returned from university and worked in a nearby hospital. His brother took him to soccer games, sometimes seating him on his shoulders (Weigel, 2001). Lolek, for his part, visited the hospital Edmund worked at and put on one-man shows for the patients (Stanley, 2007; Weigel, 2001). This blossoming friendship between brothers was not to last, though, for in December 1932, Edmund died a few days after contracting scarlet fever from one of his patients. Again, Lolek, who was twelve years old at the time, attributed his brother's self-sacrifice as a lesson in God's will (Malinski, 1979; Stanely, 2007; Weigel, 2001).

His father, Karol, was now his primary caregiver. He was described as a gentleman of the old school and a man of granite integrity, whose army career, in the judgment of his superior offices, was based on a combination of intelligence, diligence, dependability, and, above all, honesty (Malinski, 1979; Weigel, 2001). Karol Senior was described as fair but strict and always approachable. He was also a patriot devoid of xenophobia who was widely conversant

with Polish literature, to which he introduced his son (Stanley, 2007). Life's rhythms changed for Lolek after the passing of his mother and brother. In the new ritual, Lolek and his father would sleep in the same room, and upon waking, pray together (Malinski, 1979; Weigel, 2001). After school and sports, Lolek would meet his father at home, and they would take walks through the streets of Wadowice. His father's deep spirituality was handed down daily (Malinski, 1979; Stanley, 2007; Weigel, 2001).

Discussion of stage

During this stage children develop a sense of industry by taking pride in their productions, which is a result of goals achieved via their newly developed skills (Boeree, 2006; Meyer et al., 2003; Morris, 1996). They also develop numerous skills and competencies in school, at home and in the outside world. A sense of self is enriched by the realistic development of such competencies, and comparison with peers is increasingly significant (Boeree, 2006; Craig & Baucum, 2002; Sadock & Sadock, 2003). As mentioned above, Lolek was a gifted student, receiving among the highest grades in his class (Weigel, 2001). He was also good at outdoor activities like skiing and swimming and was described as a good goalkeeper (Sullivan, 1999). Lolek was a devout Catholic and altar server of which the parish priests were very fond of his contemplative nature (O'Connor, 2005).

The researcher infers from the aforementioned evidence regarding Pope John Paul II's sense of industry and the manner in which it was supported by his environment, that this stage was navigated successfully. This inference is further supported by the absence of any evidence suggesting a tendency towards experiencing a sense of inferiority during this stage of his development.

Based on this successful resolution of the conflict of this stage, the researcher infers that Pope John Paul II would have developed the ego strength of *competence* (Erikson, 1997).

Evidence of this is shown in Pope John Paul II's ordination into priesthood at age 26, his call to be a bishop at age 38, and then cardinal at age 47 and finally chosen as pope at age 58. He also obtained two doctorates, two honorary doctorates, a professorship, published five books, as well as studied several languages.

8.2.1.5 Identity versus Role Confusion (age 13 - 18 years)

This stage, which lasts through adolescence, approximately from the ages of 13 to 21 years, is marked by the challenge to resolve successfully the conflict between identity and role confusion (Erikson, 1963; 1997). Erikson's theory of psychosocial development refers to the sense of identity as individuals' conscious sense of their uniqueness, as well as their unconscious striving towards continuity of experience (Kroger, 2005). The potential core pathology of this stage is role confusion, which manifests as an uncertainty about one's sense of self and often leads to the imitation of others (Freiberg, 1987). According to Erikson (1997), the successful outcome of the adolescent struggle for identity is the ego strength of *fidelity*. This refers to the ability to sustain commitment and loyalty to the adolescent's chosen roles, beliefs, and affiliations despite the inevitable contradictions and confusions inherent to different value systems (Stevens, 2008).

The Living Word

The secondary school Lolek attended offered an excellent classical education. Latin and Greek were staples of the curriculum, in addition to courses in Polish language and literature, history and mathematics. Lolek began to study Latin when he was thirteen and developed a fondness for the language that continued throughout his life; his study of Greek began a year later. Throughout his high school years, he continued to receive top grades, even as his extracurricular activities expanded (Weigel, 2001). He became a member of the Sodality of Mary, a society of young men dedicated to fostering devotion to the mother of Christ, and

came to know its chaplain, Father Zacher (Malinski, 1979). During his last two years of high school, he was elected to two terms as the Sodality's president (Weigel, 2001).

Wadowice had a proud reputation as a regional centre of literary culture, including amateur and civic theatre which Lolek eagerly entered into. Always landing the lead roles, Lolek often played opposite Halina Króliliewicz, the school's leading actress whose father was principal of the school (Malinski, 1979; Tossati, 2005). In the many speculations made about Pope John Paul II's possible youthful romances, it is Halina with whom he is usually linked. However, Halina, for her part, has denied any serious romantic involvements until her marriage years later (Tossati, 2005; Weigel, 2001). Pope John Paul II wrote in 1996 that, while he had many friends among girls with whom he went to school and with whom he worked in the theatre, he had no special friendship that was an emotional obstacle to his entering the seminary (John Paul II, 2006).

In 1936, Lolek met Mieczyslaw Kotlarczyk, a history teacher with a passion for theatre. Mieczyslaw, a deep Christian believer, believed that drama in theatre was the perfect means to transmit the Word of God (Malinski, 1979; Weigel, 2001). Lolek became a regular visitor at Mieczyslaw's home where he was tutored. By the end of his career as a high school actor and occasional director, which his father encouraged, Lolek was involved in something that went considerably beyond the aesthetic and intellectual boundaries of the typical theatre (Sullivan, 1999; Weigel, 2001). Mieczyslaw's emerging theories and Lolek's immersion in the literature of Polish Romanticism had planted seeds for the future reflection about the relationships between emotion and intellect, and between our perceptions of reality and the truth of things. Lolek had also begun to think about power of the word to transform history despite enormous material obstacles (Weigel, 2001).

In 1937, he completed a mandatory course in military preparedness at the national cadet camp. The final year of high school also included preparations for the sacrament of

confirmation – seen as a mature statement of faith – which Lolek received in 1938 (Malinski, 1979; Weigel, 2001). Shortly afterward, the archbishop of Kraków, Adam Stepan Sapieha, visited the school where Lolek, the school's premier student, was chosen to give a welcoming address. He evidently impressed Sapieha, who enquired from Father Zacher whether Lolek would enter the seminary to become a priest. When Father Zacher replied that Lolek intended to pursue literary and theatrical interests, "A pity," the archbishop is said to have replied (Sullivan, 1999; Weigel, 2001). Years later, when asked about this incident, Pope John Paul II replied that he had other things on his mind, being "completely absorbed by a passion for literature, especially dramatic literature, and for the theatre" (Sullivan, 1999, p. 14). It was a passion that he had absorbed from his home, his education, his town, where he had been saturated with Polish Romantic literature and drama. Its themes would shape his thinking for decades to come.

Lolek graduated from high school in 1938 as class valedictorian. That summer he and his father moved to Kraków , where Lolek would begin studies at the Jagiellonian University.

Discussion of stage

When one considers Pope John Paul II's later perception of himself as 'witness to hope' and his ideal of 'universal truth', the inference can be made that his developing sense of identity had already incorporated themes surrounding love, truth and hope. This reflects Erikson's notion of the importance of ideology for the young person in that it presents them with different beliefs and social values to investigate in the development of their identity (Erikson, 1963). Karol's identity was becoming multi-faceted: An ardent and hardworking individual, a devout Catholic with a sense of responsibility towards self and others and a passionate actor with a love for literature. These facets were formed in this period of his life but the seeds had been sown years before. Karol's father can be credited as having had the

biggest influence on his son with regards to these components of his identity. He himself was a very spiritual and religious man with a love for literature.

8.2.2 Karol, the Disciple (1941 – 1960)

8.2.2.1 Identity versus Role Confusion continued (age 13 – 21 years)

A brief explanation of this stage was provided in section 8.2.1.5 in which it was highlighted that this stage is marked by the conflict between identity and role confusion, with the successful resolution being the ego strength of fidelity.

Alma Mater: The Jagiellonian University

Karol and his father moved into a basement flat which was often referred to by friends as 'the catacombs'. The apartment was dark and damp, and in Winter the old-fashioned, coal-fired tile stoves were not even able to keep the chill out of the air (Weigel, 2001). Its lack of creature comforts was likely lost on young Karol, who was used to austerity and who was soon in the multiple worlds of undergraduate life at the Jagiellonian Universtiy (O'Connor, 2005; Weigel, 2001). Founded in 1364, The Jagiellonian Universiy was one of Europe's most distinguished centres of learning (Sullivan, 1999). For six centuries, the Jagiellonian was a crossroads of Christian and humanistic culture. As Karol commented years later, it was difficult to study at such a university without being moved emotionally; its pathways could not be walked "without piety" (Wojtyla, 1993, p. 264).

In his freshman year, Karol took a demanding academic load: courses on Polish etymology, phonetics, and inflection and on the interpretation of literary texts; surveys of medieval, modern, and contemporary Polish poetry, dramas and novels; introductory courses in Russian; and a survey of the grammar of Old Church Slavonic, the historic basis of modern Slavic languages. He also immersed himself in theatrical activities – acting in a variety of productions. Karol also joined several student groups involved in poetry. He took private French lessons, wrote poetry and worked as a volunteer librarian.

In 1939, World War II began as Germany invaded Poland. At the outbreak, Karol and his father fled their apartment to Debniki. But they soon returned after learning that the Russians had invaded Poland from the East. Kraków, even under Occupation, was preferable to summary execution or deportation by the advancing Red Army (O'Connor, 2005; Sullivan, 1999; Weigel, 2001). On their return, they saw the swastika flag flying from Wawel Castle – the Germans had imposed themselves with ruthless efficiency. At the Jagiellonian, they arrested professors who refused to stop lecturing; they looted the halls, wrecked the libraries and destroyed laboratories. In a defiant act of self-preservation, Jagiellonian University reconstituted itself underground, operating clandestinely with five faculties. During the three years of the university's clandestine existence, 136 professor risked instant death by teaching 800 students (including Karol), often at night in private homes (Tossati, 2005; Weigel, 2001).

In addition to keeping fed – potatoes were the staple diet – Karol had to get a work card that would permit him to stay in Kraków. The alternatives were to be shipped off to concentration camp or to be summarily executed. For the first year of war, Karol worked as a store messenger for a restaurant. It was light work, and it suited Karol's interest in continuing his education, his theatrical career, and the cultural resistance activities in which he was becoming involved (O'Connor, 2005; Weigel, 2001). In 1940, he began work at the Solvay quarry which mined limestone. Although Karol would later mine his experience at the quarry for his literary, philosophical, and theological purposes, it was hard and dangerous work (O'Connor, 2005; Tossati, 2005).

During his second year of life in occupied Kraków, Karol was introduced to the world of intense religious contemplation as a direct result of the Nazi attack on Poland's Catholic clergy. The local parish of St. Stanislaw was systematically stripped of its clergy, shipping them off to concentration camps (Sullivan, 1999). This led to clandestine ministry, whereby laymen were called to conduct underground catechetical programs. One such lay leader was

Jan Tyranowski. Jan was in his forties, trained as an accountant, but supported himself and his mother by working as a tailor (Tossati, 2005; Weigel, 2001). More significantly he was a man with an extraordinary prayer life. He devoted four hours every morning to meditation as well as other prayer periods throughout the day (Sullivan, 1999). Karol began attending weekly meetings which Tyranowski entitled The Living Rosary. At these gatherings he introduced his new band of disciples to a brand of religion that was deeply mystical, and he encouraged them to apply it to every area of their lives. He called them to a strict discipline and recommended that they keep a diary with a view to bringing God directly into every moment of their day (Sullivan, 1999; Weigel, 2001).

Discussion of stage

Individuals in this stage become increasingly aware of the adult tasks that await them, such as finding an occupational direction and forming their own political, social, religious, and economic values (Freiberg, 1987). Karol's identity that began emerging in the previous years was solidified by the experiences that took place within this stage. In relation to his occupational direction, he continued his hardworking demeanour and took on more that was required during his first year of university study. He also mined lime at the Salvoy quarry (seeing this experience as an opportunity to learn instead of the hard and dangerous work that it was) – this industrious attitude would also become an engrained part of his identity as Pope. Even when the university was overtaken by German troops, he refused to quit and took up studies clandestinely. In relation to his religious values, Karol continued to develop his faith and spirituality, becoming involved with The Living Rosary and beginning a life of contemplative prayer which would comfort him throughout his life. In relation to his political values, he continued to be involved in cultural resistance activities, even becoming involved with talks on the restrictions on Jews studying at the Jagiellonian.

Based on the facts from the two previous discussion paragraphs which show the resolution of this stage's conflict, the researcher infers that Pope John Paul II had developed a sense of *fidelity*. An expression of the development of fidelity is seen in the generally ideological nature of the values youths initially aim to uphold to the exclusion of other ways of life. In the case of Pope John Paul II these values are, namely, industriousness or diligence, piousness and social responsibility. *Fidelity* also refers to the ability to sustain commitment and loyalty to the adolescent's chosen roles, beliefs and affiliations despite contradictions and confusions inherent in different value systems (Markstrom et al., 1998; Stevens, 2008). As evidence to his ego strength of *fidelity*, Pope John Paul II continued to study clandestinely after the university was shut down as well as his choice to become involved in cultural resistance activities because of his beliefs.

8.2.2.2 Intimacy versus Isolation (age 21 – 40 years)

Occurring approximately between the ages of 21 to 40 years, this stage is the first of Erikson's stages to focus on the developmental crises occurring exclusively in adulthood (Shaffer, 2002). According to Erikson's theory, young adults who have successfully resolved the crisis of identity versus role confusion develop the urge to reach out and fuse their identity with that of others (Erikson, 1963). The capacity for *intimacy*, balanced with the need for some isolation, enables the individual to love and be loved and to engage with others with true mutuality (Erikson, et al., 1989). Therefore, the successful outcome of this stage results in the ego strength of *love*. *Isolation*, as the antithesis of intimacy, entails distancing oneself from people and forces that are seen as a threat to an unstable sense of identity (Erikson, 1963).

Call me Wujek (*uncle*)

Death was an ever-present reality in occupied Kraków. Before his twenty-first birthday, Karol had seen a lot of it: He witnessed violent deaths on the refugees' road to Tarnow, his

professors summarily arrested and taken to concentration camps and the Gestapo had

kidnapped the parish priests of Debiniki, many whom would be subsequently martyred.

Although Karol's father grew old and became progressively weaker over the years, he was an

anchor for his son in those troubled waters (Tossati, 2005; Weigel, 2001). Karol had his

friends, his underground studies, and his clandestine theatrical life. He had found a new

spiritual mentor in Jan Tyranowski. But his father was the sole surviving member of his

immediate family.

   In February 1941, Karol's father passed away. Karol returned from work at the quarry to

find his father, who was bedridden since 1940, lifeless in their basement apartment

(O'Connor, 2005; Weigel, 2001). Karol blamed himself for not being present when his father

died (Sullivan, 1999; Weigel, 2001). Karol spent the entire night on his knees beside his

father's body, praying. Pope John Paul II recalled years later that despite his friend's presence

in the room, he had never felt so alone (Tossati, 2005; Weigel, 2001). As mentioned

previously, Catholicism considers priestly vocation as a 'calling', a complex work of the

Holy Spirit. Being orphaned before his twenty-first birthday certainly had its effect on

Karol's discernment of a call to the prieshood (Weigel, 2001). It took almost a year and a

half for the decision to mature, which suggests that considerable inner wrestling occurred

before the final step was taken. He said the decision was a result of an 'interior illumination'

(Tossati, 2005; Weigel, 2001). In 1942, Karol was accepted as a candidate for the priesthood,

and Karol began to lead a new, double life – that of a quarry worker by day and a seminarian,

clandestinely studying at night. However, he began to sense in himself a "progressive

detachment from my earlier plans" (John Paul, 1996, p. 34). The priesthood began to loom

larger as a way to live in resistance to the degradation of human dignity by brutal ideology

(Weigel, 2001).

In 1941, Karol was transferred to the Solvay chemical factory which used the mined limestone for the production of soda. Fellow workers remember Karol praying on his knees at the plant, unafraid of ridicule and seemingly able to tune out the racket around him to concentrate on his conversation with God (Weigel, 2001). In 1944, Karol was struck by a German truck while walking home from a double shift at the quarry (Stanley, 2007; Sullivan, 1999; Tossati, 2005; Weigel, 2001). He suffered a severe concussion, numerous cuts and a shoulder injury. He spent the next two weeks in hospital, recuperating and pondering his luck, which seemed a confirmation of his priestly vocation.

In November 1946, Karol was ordained a priest (Stanley, 2007; Sullivan, 1999; Tossati, 2005; Weigel, 2001). Merely two weeks after that he travelled to Rome for postgraduate studies. By the middle of the following year, he had obtained a high level pass in the exams for a teaching certificate. In 1948, he returned to Poland - a Poland that was soon to disappear again, this time behind the Iron Curtain (Sullivan, 1999).

In 1948, Karol was sent to Rome for two years where he finished his doctorate in theology with a thesis on the subject of faith in the works of St. John of the Cross (introduced to him by Jan Tyronowski) (Tossati, 2005; Weigel, 2001). At that time, during his vacations, he exercised his pastoral ministry among the Polish immigrants of France, Belgium and Holland (Berger, 1988).

Karol returned to his native Poland in 1948 and served in several parishes in and around Krakow as well as Chaplain to university students - where he asked his students to call him 'wujek' meaning 'uncle' (O'Connor, 2005). This period lasted until 1951 when he again took up his studies in philosophy and theology (Johnson, 2007). He received his doctorate in philosophy in 1954. He later became professor of moral theology and social ethics in the major seminary of Krakow and in the Faculty of Theology of Lublin (O'Connor, 2005).

In July 1958, Karol was appointed titular bishop of Ombi and auxiliary of Krakow by Pope Pius XII (Tossati, 2005).

Discussion of stage

Erikson (1980) noted that a secure sense of identity allows the young adult to establish a sense of intimacy with another person, and even with the self. The more certain the young adult becomes of him- or herself, the more he or she seeks out to establish psychologically intimate relationships with others (Erikson, 1980). The crisis they now face is that of integrating the conflicting forces of *intimacy* and *isolation*. As the resolution of the previous crisis will attest, Karol developed a solid identity grounded with strong values and beliefs, there is no evidence that Karol was part of a conventional romance or partnership. However, the most important relationship in Karol's life was with God: a relationship that began when he was a child, fostering and nurturing it throughout the years. It was the love from this relationship that provided him solace and comfort through the many dark periods in his life, including the deaths of his family members. A relationship that no war or space or time could degrade or diminish. Karol's relationship with God provided him with his ultimate need: that of universal truth. It is this that he built his vocation as a priest and eventually his papacy. Erikson defined intimacy as the ability to commit oneself to concrete partnerships even though it may entail significant personal sacrifice and compromise (Erikson, 1963; 1987). Karol's commitment to his relationship with God was solidified in his vocation to become a priest where a life-long oath of poverty, chastity and obedience to God was taken. It is safe to deduce that this commitment entailed a great amount of personal sacrifice and compromise.

Karol's relationship with God was not the only one being of an intimate nature. Jan Tyranowski, became Karol's confidant and spiritual father. They shared many hours of intense conversation and religious contemplation. Another intimate relationship in Karol's

life was with Kazimierz Figlewicz, who served as the vicar and religion teacher at the Wadowice church when Karol was a young boy. Apparently, he reached the young detached Lolek at a very deep level and soon after he became Wojtyla's confessor. Later on, when he was Archbishop, Karol described Father Kazimierz as the guide to his young and complicated soul. In addition to this, Karol befriended many of his university students – often taking them on hikes which ended in religious debates. He would ask them to call him 'wujek' meaning 'uncle' indicating the level of intimacy that had developed between him and his students.

These examples from the gathered biographical data, therefore, show that Pope John Paul II was experienced numerous kinds of intimate relationships and situations that could have necessitated differing degrees of self-abandon. There is no indication from the available historical data that Pope John Paul II approached these situations with a fear of loss of identity. Furthermore, no instances from literature could be found to indicate that Pope John Paul II's psychosocial development favoured isolation during this period. Therefore the researcher infers that Pope John Paul II had gained the ego strength of *love* as a result of the successful resolution of this stage's crisis. Karol, or Wujek as he liked to be called at the time, said the following about love (Weigel, 2001):

> Everyone lives, above all, for love. The ability to love authentically, not great intellectual capacity, constitutes the deepest part of a personality. It is no accident that the greatest commandment is to love. Authentic love leads us outside ourselves to affirming others: devoting oneself to the cause of man, to people, and above all, to God (p. 101).

This quote shows Pope John Paul II's idea of love and how he felt it should drive our actions. His vocation as a priest is a testament to his developed ego strength of l*ove*: devoting himself to the cause of man and God. Further evidence of this ego strength is given by Karol's seminary confessor who described him as, a man who loved easily (Weigel, 2001).

8.2.3 Father to All (1960 – 1985)

8.2.3.1 Generativity versus Stagnation (age 40 – 65 years)

Erikson's seventh stage occurs during middle adulthood and is, therefore the longest stage in the life cycle of most individuals. During middle adulthood, individuals may find themselves in the position of having to guide their offspring through the stages of psychosocial development (Freiberg, 1987). Outside the context of the nuclear family, adults acquiring a sense of generativity are required to be productive members of their communities (Erikson, 1963; 1997). For the successful development of the ego strength of *care* in this stage, individuals need to shift their focus from themselves towards the teaching, guidance and encouragement of children or younger protégés (Graves & Larkin, 2006). Erikson (1997) noted that the acquisition of the previous ego strengths (i.e., hope, will, purpose, fidelity and love) is essential for this task of guidance, seeing that the generative term is relating to promoting these ego virtues in the next generation.

The Making of a Philosopher

Professor Karol's work as a philosopher, like his literary activity as a poet and playwright, developed in concert with his work as a priest, that is, bishop. His intellectual product was influenced, indeed driven, by his pastoral experience. In 1960, Karol published his book *Love and Responsibility* which is described as a defense of the traditional Church teachings on marriage from a philosophical standpoint.

Considered one of the Catholic Church's leading thinkers, Karol participated in the Second Vatican Council (Berger, 1988). The council began reviewing church doctrine in 1962 and held several sessions over the course of the next few years (Berger, 1988; O'Connor, 2005). In 1963, Karol was named Archbishop of Kraków. He continued to engage with council members at the Second Vatican Council after his election as archbishop. The issue that placed Karol squarely in the limelight was debated by Vatican II in 1964. This was

ecumenism: the Church's relation to the world at large and to all other world religions. Karol urged the Church to stand for human rights, not just for Catholics but for all. In 1967 Karol was made a cardinal and was said to be chosen for his intellectual, missionary and leadership qualities (Tossati, 2005; Weigel, 2001). In 1978, at the age of 58, Karol is elected as pope and breaks the precedent by addressing the crowd in St. Peters Square in Italian (O'Connor, 2005; Weigel, 2001). The broad job description for the role of pope is the head of the Catholic Church and the Bishop of Rome. As pope, John Paul II was also the head of the sovereign city-state, Vatican City. Therefore, his duties included both political and religious. His responsibility as pope included meeting with heads of state and maintaining diplomatic relationships with more than 100 nations. In addition to that, he also conducted liturgies, appointed new bishops and travelled throughout the world as requested by his people.

Discussion of stage

Erikson stressed that adults are as dependent on children as they are on them, due to their significant "need to be needed" (Erikson, 1963, p. 1993). The   researcher infers that Karol's experience of *generativity* could, therefore, have been facilitated in roles as professor, priest, bishop, cardinal then pope - all these titles having a considerable amount of people under his care and guidance. As pope in particular, his biggest responsibility yet, he was responsible for religious and spiritual guidance of more than a billion Catholics across the world.

Erikson (1963) stated that the establishment of generativity involves more than producing and caring for offspring and included "the ability to lose oneself in the meeting of bodies and minds" (Erikson, 1963, p. 258) which leads to the expansion of one's ego interests "and to a libidinal investment in that which is being generated" (p. 258). Karol's vocation from priest to pope during this period in his life possibly reflects such an expansion of interests and investments.

Generativity as an involvement in and contribution to one's environment and the welfare of future generations, is often expressed through nurturing, mentoring, or contributing through civic and community causes (Freiberg, 1987). During his freshman year at university, Karol joined the Circle of Scholars of Polish Studies, a student organization that did literary readings, discussed curriculum reform, and resisted restrictions on Jews studying at the Jagiellonian. He was also involved in social resistance activities during the beginning of World War II. In addition to this, as a young priest, he was a university chaplain – his responsibilities entailed mentoring and guiding young Catholic university students in living a spiritually grounded life (Weigel, 2001). These activities can be regarded as an early act of *generativity*.

As noted by Erikson et.al (1989), *generativitiy* involves the responsibility of the individual to maintain and develop the societal institutions necessary for the survival and development of successive generations. Pope John Paul II had a great love for young people and this led him to establish the World Youth Days in 1985 – where the most emphasized and well known traditional theme is the unity and presence of different cultures. Flags and other national declarations are displayed amongst people to show their attendance at the events and proclaim their own themes of Catholicism. Such is usually done through chants and singing of other national songs involving a Catholic theme. A unity of acceptance among people is also common, with all different cultures coming together to appreciate one another.

The 19 World Youth Days celebrated during his pontificate brought together millions of young people from all over the world (O'Connor, 2005). At the same time his care for the family was expressed in the World Meetings of Families, which he initiated in 1994 which seeks to support and strengthen families throughout the world. Both these initiatives can be regarded as an act of *generativity* for the maintenance and development of future generations.

According to Erikson et. al. (1989), pathology in this psychosocial stage may also be characterised by an overextension of generative concern and care to people and interests which are beyond the capacity of the individual. As Erikson's theory proposes that a balance between the two opposing forces is necessary for optimal development, the over-development of generativity would also be considered maladaptive. Despite Pope John Paul II's high degree of commitment to his vocation and academic career, instances of a possible balance between the expansion of ego interests and a capacity for self-absorption could be identified in his frequent recreational outdoor activities. Since a young boy, Pope John Paul II developed a love for the outdoors – hiking in the nearby hills, swimming and skiing (which was his favourite). This passion for the outdoors continued throughout his life. During an interview with *Time* magazine when as a bishop, he gazed out of his window and said, "I wish I could be out there now somewhere in the mountains, racing down into the valley. It's an extraordinary sensation" (Jones, 2009). Throughout this psychosocial stage, a balanced yet productive lifestyle was evident which the successful resolution of the conflict between generativity and stagnation can be inferred.

The final aspect of this psychosocial stage is the resulting ego strength which stems from the successful balance of these opposing forces of generativity and stagnation, namely *care* (Erikson, 1997). Based on the aforementioned evidence of Pope John Paul II's ability to develop a sense of generativity, as well as his successful acquisition of the previous ego strengths during earlier psychosocial stages, the researcher infers that the ego strength of care would have resulted from his development during this psychosocial stage. Further evidence of this is given in the following statement by Pope John Paul II: "Anything done for another is done for oneself" (John Paul II, 1994, p. 51). Furthermore, during the Second Vatican Council, he urged the Church to stand for human rights, not just for Catholics but for all.

Both these instances showed his immense capacity to care for others – not just Catholics, but for all people.

8.2.4 Pope John Paul, The Great (1985 – 2005)

8.2.4.1 Ego Integrity versus Despair (age 65 years – death)

In late adulthood the final conflict occurs between the antitheses integrity and despair (Erikson, 1963). During this psychosocial stage the individual is tasked with developing a sense of integrity and safeguarding themselves from the overemphasis on despair (Erikson, 1963). During this final stage of development, the individual should ideally consolidate their sense of wisdom without excluding legitimate feelings of hopelessness and cynicism, but rather integrating some realistic feelings of despair as an unavoidable component of old age (Erikson et al., 1989). The successful outcome of this stage results in the ego strength of *wisdom*.

Toward Freedom

During his papacy, which lasted twenty-seven years (one of the longest terms in the history of the church), Pope John Paul II travelled the world, visiting more than 129 countries to spread his message of faith and peace (Johnson, 2007).

Pope John Paul II used his position as pope to influence leaders towards peace and freedom. In 1978, he resolved conflict between Argentina and Chile when they were on the brink of a violent clash (O'Connor, 2005; Weigel, 2001). In 1991, he wrote letters to the president of the United States, George Bush and the president of Iraq, Sadam Hussein, in an attempt to avert the Gulf War (Tossati, 2005; Weigel, 2001).

Karol's election as pope in 1978 armed him with an international following that cowed even the Soviet empire. 'Be not afraid' became his rallying cry, and following a 1979 address to the U.N. General Assembly in which he challenged the free world to defend human rights, he embarked on a courageous but dangerous nine-day public pilgrimage to 'strengthen the

brethren' in Poland (Gertz, 2008). There he warned Communist authorities that the papacy would watch them closely, and he reminded them of their responsibility 'before history and before your conscience' (Gertz, 2008). The people responded to John Paul II's visit with loyalty borne of years of shared suffering—banners with the Communist party slogan 'The Party Is for the People' sported the daring addition, '. . . but the People are for the Pope' (Gertz, 2008). John Paul II's example encouraged other leading church authorities, such as the Czech Cardinal Frantisek Tomasek, to become fierce critics of Communism (Weigel, 2001). His visit also inspired an unemployed electrician named Lech Walesa to form in 1980 the Soviet Union's first and only trade union—Solidarity—that in the words of French political scientist Alain Besancon gave the Poles back 'the private ownership of their tongues' (Gertz, 2008; Hebblewaite, 1995). Soviet authorities feared Solidarity could undermine Soviet power, and the Warsaw Pact planned an invasion and mass arrest of Solidarity's leaders. John Paul II intervened by writing directly to Soviet president Leonid Brezhnev, giving his support to Solidarity and warning against the consequences of such an action. While this only delayed a crackdown, the pope had set a precedent. In 1989, when Solidarity swept available seats in a semi-free election, no one doubted who to credit for the moral fibre that had held the party together (Gertz, 2008; Weigel, 2001). On December 1, 1989, Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev visited John Paul II in the Vatican. It marked the extraordinary end to hostilities between Rome and Moscow—and the triumph of Christian faith over Communism. Taking his wife Raisa by the hand, Gorbachev introduced her to John Paul II, saying to her that he was the highest moral authority on earth (Gertz, 2008; Weigel, 2001).

During his pontificate, Pope John Paul II also published five books: *Crossing the Threshold of Hope* (1994), *Gift and Mystery, on the fiftieth anniversary of my ordination as priest* (1996), *Roman Triptych poetic meditations* (2003), *Arise, Let us Be Going* (2004) and

Memory and Identity (2005). He also received a honourary doctorate from the University of Rome as well as an honourary citizenship from the city of Rome (Weigel, 2001).

In May 1981 in St. Peters Square, Pope John Paul II was shot and critically wounded by Mehmet Ali Ağca - an expert Turkish gunman who was a member of the militant fascist group. The assassin shot the pope in the abdomen and perforated his colon and small intestine multiple times, losing nearly three-quarters of his blood (Weigel, 2001). He underwent five hours of surgery to treat his wounds. The pope stated that Our Lady of Fátima helped keep him alive throughout his ordeal. Two years later he visited his assassin in prison, where he forgave him (Sullivan, 1999).

In February 2004, Pope John Paul II was nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize honouring his life's work in opposing Communist oppression and helping to reshape the world (Noonan, 2005). In June 2004, President George W. Bush presented the Presidential Medal of Freedom, America's highest civilian honour, to Pope John Paul II during a ceremony at the Apostolic Palace (Stanley, 2007). The president read the citation that accompanied the medal, which recognised 'this son of Poland' whose 'principled stand for peace and freedom has inspired millions and helped to topple communism and tyranny'. After receiving the award, Pope John Paul II said that he hoped the desire for freedom, peace and a more humane world (symbolised by the medal he received), inspire men and women of goodwill in every time and place.

Discussion of the stage

Integrity reflects an acceptance of responsibility for one's own life and the defence of one's lifestyle despite being aware of the relativity of various possible lifestyles (Erikson, 1980). During this historical period, Pope John Paul II was nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize, presented the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President George Bush, received a honourary doctorate from the University of Rome as well as an honourary citizenship from

the city of Rome and published five books from 1994 to 2005. The researcher argues that the recognition of his efforts may have facilitated Pope John Paul II's sense of integrity by acknowledging the importance of his lifework and vocation.

Erikson et al. (1986) noted that in order to achieve ego integrity, the elderly need to engage in the process of finding their own guides for the progression through this stage, and often do so by looking back to the elders they had previously admired, such as their own parents or grandparents. Pope John Paul II's close relationship with his father might have facilitated such a model for him. Being a deeply religious and spiritual man himself, his father had never discussed a possible vocation to the priesthood, but Pope John Paul II would later recall his father's life of prayer and self-sacrifice as "a kind of domestic seminary" (John Paul II, 1996, p. 34). Pope John Paul II also had many guides and mentors throughout his life including Jan Tyranowski (his spiritual guide as a young university student), Kazimierz Figlewicz (who served as the vicar and religion teacher at church when Karol was a young boy) and Archbishop Stefan Sapieha, who was described as Karol's "angel on earth" (Sullivan, 1999, p. 40) and his "onetime scout and eternal protector..." (Sullivan, 1999, p. 44) was his mentor since his ordination as a priest.

Erikson noted that the lack or loss of this accrued ego integration is signified by fear of death: the one and only life cycle is not accepted as the ultimate life (Erikson, 1963). Literature suggests that Pope John II's approach to his own mortality did not seem to be characterised by the fear of death. The traditional Catholic teaching regarding death is that by God's help every man can face death with confidence and peace of mind, that it is certain that there is life after death on the word of God and that if you remain in Christ you will receive eternal life after death (Weigel, 2001).

The ego quality of *wisdom* results from the balancing of integrity and despair, and is defined as a "detached concern with life itself, in the face of death itself" (Erikson et al.,

1989, p, 37). Pope John Paul's successful balancing of the opposing forces of integrity and despair form the basis of the researcher's inference that he had developed *wisdom* as an ego strength during the final stage of psychosocial development.

8.3 Generativity and Beyond

Pope John Paul II's life transcended that of Erikson's psychosocial stages. Where his physical life on earth ended in his death, his legacy continued. The seeds of this legacy were sown at his papal coronation and came to full bloom at his canonization into sainthood, and will continue to bear the fruit of hope, will, purpose, competence, fidelity, love, care and wisdom for all future generations of the Church.

When Karol Wojtyla was elected Pope in 1978, he said he had come from a far country; but he made that country near to all. He knew that the experience of his homeland, and the remarkable witness of the Catholic Church there, had much to teach the world, and to teach the Church (Malinski, 1979; Szulc, 1996).

Along with the Polish nation, John Paul II witnessed the worst of evils of which human beings are capable: totalitarian oppression, massacres, the desecration of nation and soul. An orphan by the age of 20, the young Wojtyla had also known, in his own family, the most searing experience of bereavement and loss; and he saw his Jewish friends being taken from him to the Holocaust (Sullivan, 1999; Weigel, 2001).

Deprived, therefore, of what most of us take for granted -- security, family, hope and meaning -- John Paul II was thrown back, at an early age, on the only resources a human being can ever truly rely on: the irrefutable knowledge that we are divinely created; the unalterable fact that we were created in dignity and for dignity; and the reassurance that God is the Good Shepherd, who walks with us and guides us and heals us, calling us constantly to him (Pope John Paul II, 1996; 2004).

Figure 1. Karol with his mother, Emilia and father, Karol.

Figure 2. Karol with his father after the passing of his mother

Figure 3. Karol at his First Holy Communion

Retrieved from

http://tautur.comyr.com/gallery/autoviewer/index.php?galleryID=5726821551470984385

Figure 4. Karol in youth as an altar server

Retrieved from

http://tautur.comyr.com/gallery/autoviewer/index.php?galleryID=5726821551470984385

States and powers come and go, and inflict what seem for a time horrendous evils; but in time they pass away, while human culture, and our capacity to love and to serve and to build, live on, like a candle that cannot be extinguished even by the most ferocious winds. That was John Paul II's experience, and that was his faith.

For 26 years, his papacy tenaciously witnessed to the power of that faith: He saw Communism collapse, and Western leaders come and go, and when he came to leave this earth, in a long struggle with his failing body, the world gathered round him in a mixture of awe and affection, because they knew that here was a greatness that could only have one source.

Pope John Paul II invited all, after his election as Pope, to open wide the doors to Christ, to open our hearts and minds. And it is for this that he shall be remembered: for breaking down walls, for crossing borders, for opening new spaces in us, especially where Christ could enter and speak to us.

Karol Wojtyla wrote an early book called *The Acting Person* (1979). He was theatrical in the best sense: He understood, as Bishop of Krakow and later as Bishop of Rome, the power of symbols; and he knew that actions speak louder than words. As the world began to close behind defensive walls of fear and religious intolerance, he called the world's religious leaders together to pray for peace; he prayed at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem and inside the mosque at Damascus; he asked for forgiveness for the sins of the Church's history.

Wherever there was fear and mistrust, he sought to bring strength and reassurance and the message of God's love. He invited people to the mountain, to the feast of rich food and well-aged wines of which the prophet Isaiah speaks; and wherever there was a shroud over humanity he sought to lift it. Whether it was the grinding poverty of economic injustice or the death penalty or war or the denigration of life at the beginning and the end of our existence, he was never afraid to speak out and to challenge received orthodoxies.

But he was never afraid of argument; and his service of the Gospel through the power of reason is one of his great legacies. Never before has a Pope produced so much food for the Church's journey, and the church shall be digesting his teaching for generations to come.

Jesus tells Peter, the first head of the Church, that a belt will be put round him and that he will be led where he did not want to go. From the very beginning, John Paul II welcomed that similar belt. As Pope Benedict said, his life can be summarized in the two words: *fidelity* and *commitment* (Pentin, 2014).

Figure 5. Pope John Paul II prays at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem

Retrieved from http://www.vosizneias.com/29138/2009/03/19/jerusalem-despite-israeli-gov-ok-western-wall-rabbi-insists-the-pope-must-hide-his-cross/
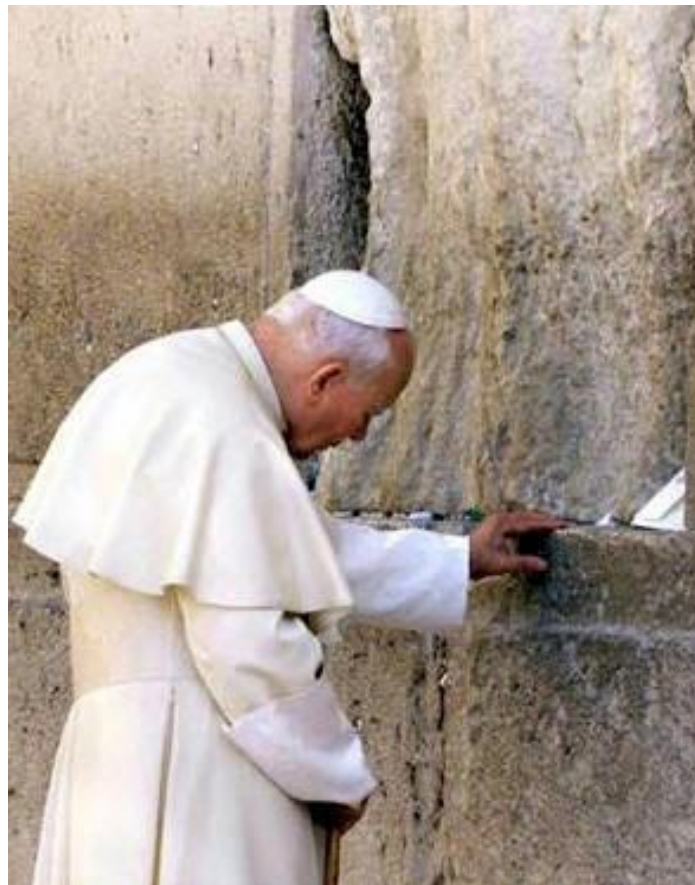
He did not hesitate when he was made a young bishop of Krakow, and he did not waver when the College of Cardinals elected him in 1978. What God asked of him, he accepted, and he placed his gifts at the disposal of each new mission. As a powerfully athletic younger man, he worked tirelessly in the service of others; as an elderly Pope, barely able to speak, he allowed his suffering to comfort others who were suffering, and to speak on their behalf.

In 1984 at the close of the Holy Year of Redemption, over 300,000 young people from around the world responded to the invitation of Pope John Paul II for an International Jubilee of youth on Palm Sunday in St. Peter's square. Looking out to the crowds who answered his invitation he expressed his excitement and rebuked the notion that the youth had lost their sense of values and that they could be counted on (Szulc, 1996). It was at this gathering that the Pope entrusted to the youth what is now known as the World Youth Day Cross, to be carried throughout the world as a symbol of the love of Christ for humanity. This revolutionary concept of a World Youth Day, which was the vision of Pope John Paul II, can be seen as his greatest reflection of generativity. The first World Youth Day was held in 1986 in Rome. Thereafter, at each World Youth Day until 2002, he addressed hundreds of thousands of youth from across the world, guiding, teaching and encouraging them to be a witness to hope.

Figure 6. Karol as a young chaplain, hiking with his students

Figure 7. Pope John Paul II at the World Youth Day 2002 in Toronto

'Suffering is present in the world in order to release love,' he wrote in his apostolic letter *Salvifici Doloris* (1984), 'in order to give birth to works of love toward neighbour, in order to transform the whole of civilization into a civilization of love'. This was his task in his final months. Up until his last, faint breath, he knew God had a mission for him, and would speak through him in sickness as much as in health. And in this way, Pope John Paul II became the free-est of human beings, because his will and God's were so closely tied together.

On April 27, 2014, Blessed John Paul II was canonized becoming a saint a mere nine years after his death. The usual five year waiting period (see Appendix B) was waivered for this process to begin. The canonization took place at St. Peter's Square, where about 150 cardinals and 700 bishops concelebrated the Mass, and at least 500,000 people attended the mass with an estimated 300,000 others watching from video screens placed around Rome. Seen as one of the highest levels in terms of spirituality and discipleship in the church, Pope John Paul II's becoming Saint John Paul II through his canonization, marked his integrity and generativity in the history books forever.

Figure 8. Thousands gather in St. Peters Square to see the canonization of John Paul II

Retrieved from http://www.genopro.com/articles/john-paul-ii/

There is so much to learn from John Paul II. The courage to accept what God has in store for us and the capacity for keeping our minds and hearts on what is essential. Above all, we can be inspired by John Paul's remarkable reliance on prayer. He was a man of contemplation as much as action; he knew when to withdraw, to be silent. He knew that his strength came from the only strength that is real and lasting in our world, namely the constant love of God. He lived that love in the core of his being and dedicated himself wholly to that love. Why, therefore, be afraid?

8.4 Conclusion

This chapter presented the findings and discussion of the psychosocial development of Pope John Paul II throughout his lifespan. The findings were presented across the eight stages as proposed by Erikson's (1950) theory of Psychosocial Development as they relate to the major historical periods of Pope John Paul II's life. The next chapter presents the findings and discussion as it relates to Pope John Paul II's faith development.

CHAPTER 9

Findings and Discussion: Fowler's Stages of Faith

9.1 Chapter Preview

To understand Pope John Paul II 'from inside' is to understand that, for him, hope for human prospect is rooted in faith. And that faith is not the assertion of one religious option in a supermarket of possible truths. It is, to his mind, the truth of the world. It is the truth that had seized him in his youth and had formed his adult life. It is the truth to which he was obliged to bear witness.

Being a philosopher, theologian, keen academic and critical thinker, Pope John Paul II's ideas on faith and reason were explored in his original 108 point encyclical[2] letter from 1998, titled *Fides et Ratio* (Faith and Reason). The first part of the chapter provides a synopsis of Pope John Paul II's encyclical, whereby the researcher extracted the core ideas and concepts as they relate to this study. This synopsis is followed by memories and reflections of Pope John Paul II's faith and spirituality from some of his closest friends and colleagues. This section of the chapter eludes to Pope John Paul II's perception of faith and therefore contexualises Fowler's stages of faith in this study. This sets the scene for the reader in order to understand Pope John Paul II's faith development through Fowler's (1981) lens.

Following this synopsis and personal encounters, the faith development of Pope John Paul II is presented and discussed, providing the reader with biographical data and possible clues to his faith development. This is followed by a conceptual outline of the stages of faith as proposed by Fowler (1981). The scene is then brought to life by presenting the findings across the seven stages proposed by Fowler (1950) as they relate to the major historical periods of Pope John Paul II's life.

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[2] A Papal encyclical, in the strictest sense, is a letter, usually treating some aspect of Catholic doctrine, sent by the Pope and addressed either to the Catholic bishops of a particular area or, more normally, to the bishops of the world

9.2 Faith and Reason

> Faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth; and God has placed in the human heart a desire to know the truth—in a word, to know himself—so that, by knowing and loving God, men and women may also come to the fullness of truth about themselves.
>
> (Pope John Paul II, 1998, p. 1)

9.2.1 Know Yourself

In both East and West, we may trace a journey which has led humanity down the centuries to meet and engage truth more and more deeply. It is a journey which has unfolded—as it must—within the horizon of personal self-consciousness: the more human beings know reality and the world, the more they know themselves in their uniqueness, with the question of the meaning of things and of their very existence becoming ever more pressing (Pope John Paul, 1998). This is why all that is the object of our knowledge becomes a part of our life. Moreover, a cursory glance at ancient history shows clearly how in different parts of the world, with their different cultures, there arise at the same time the fundamental questions which pervade human life: *Who am I? Where have I come from and where am I going? Why is there evil? What is there after this life?* These are the questions which we find in the sacred writings of Israel and India; we find them in the writings of Confucius and Lao-Tze, and in the preaching of Tirthankara and Buddha; they appear in the poetry of Homer and in the tragedies of Euripides and Sophocles, as they do in the philosophical writings of Plato and Aristotle (Pope John Paul, 1998). They are questions which have their common source in the quest for meaning which has always compelled the human heart. In fact, the answer given to these questions decides the direction which people seek to give to their lives.

Pope John Paul II (1998) writes that the Church is no stranger to this journey of discovery, nor could she ever be. From the moment when, through the Paschal Mystery[3], she received the gift of the ultimate truth about human life, the Church has made her pilgrim way along the paths of the world to proclaim that Jesus Christ is "the way, and the truth, and the life" (*John* 14:6). It is her duty to serve humanity in different ways, but one way in particular imposes a responsibility of a quite special kind: the *diakonia of the truth* (Pope John Paul, 1998). This mission on the one hand makes the believing community a partner in humanity's shared struggle to arrive at truth; and on the other hand it obliges the believing community to proclaim the certitudes arrived at, albeit with a sense that every truth attained is but a step towards that fullness of truth which will appear with the final Revelation of God: "For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall understand fully" (1 Cor 13:12).

Men and women have at their disposal an array of resources for generating greater knowledge of truth so that their lives may be ever more human. Among these is *philosophy*, which is directly concerned with asking the question of life's meaning and sketching an answer to it. Philosophy emerges, then, as one of noblest of human tasks. According to its Greek etymology, the term philosophy means 'love of wisdom'. Born and nurtured when the human being first asked questions about the reason for things and their purpose, philosophy shows in different modes and forms that the desire for truth is part of human nature itself (Pope John Paul, 1998). It is an innate property of human reason to ask why things are as they are, even though the answers which gradually emerge are set within a horizon which reveals how the different human cultures are complementary.

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[3] The Paschal Mystery is one of the central concepts of Christian faith relating to the history of salvation. Its main subject is the passion, death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ – the work God the Father sent his Son to accomplish on earth. Catholic, Anglican and Orthodox Christian churches celebrate this mystery on Easter.

Philosophy's powerful influence on the formation and development of the cultures of the West should not obscure the influence it has also had upon the ways of understanding existence found in the East. Every people has its own native and seminal wisdom which, as a true cultural treasure, tends to find voice and develop in forms which are genuinely philosophical (Pope John Paul, 1998). One example of this is the basic form of philosophical knowledge which is evident to this day in the postulates which inspire national and international legal systems in regulating the life of society.

Nonetheless, it is true that a single term conceals a variety of meanings. Hence the need for a preliminary clarification. Driven by the desire to discover the ultimate truth of existence, human beings seek to acquire those universal elements of knowledge which enable them to understand themselves better and to advance in their own self-realization. These fundamental elements of knowledge spring from the *wonder* awakened in them by the contemplation of creation: human beings are astonished to discover themselves as part of the world, in a relationship with others like them, all sharing a common destiny (Pope John Paul, 1998). Here begins, then, the journey which will lead them to discover ever new frontiers of knowledge. Without wonder, men and women would lapse into deadening routine and little by little would become incapable of a life which is genuinely personal.

Through philosophy's work, the ability to speculate which is proper to the human intellect produces a rigorous mode of thought; and then in turn, through the logical coherence of the affirmations made and the organic unity of their content, it produces a systematic body of knowledge (Pope John Paul, 1998). In different cultural contexts and at different times, this process has yielded results which have produced genuine systems of thought. Yet often enough in history this has brought with it the temptation to identify one single stream with the whole of philosophy. In such cases, we are clearly dealing with a 'philosophical pride' which seeks to present its own partial and imperfect view as the complete reading of all reality. In

effect, every philosophical *system*, while it should always be respected in its wholeness, without any instrumentalization, must still recognize the primacy of philosophical *enquiry*, from which it stems and which it ought loyally to serve.

Although times change and knowledge increases, it is possible to discern a core of philosophical insight within the history of thought as a whole. Consider, for example, the principles of non-contradiction, finality and causality, as well as the concept of the person as a free and intelligent subject, with the capacity to know God, truth and goodness. Consider as well certain fundamental moral norms which are shared by all. These are among the indications that, beyond different schools of thought, there exists a body of knowledge which may be judged a kind of spiritual heritage of humanity. It is as if we had come upon an *implicit philosophy*, as a result of which all feel that they possess these principles, albeit in a general and unreflective way. Precisely because it is shared in some measure by all, this knowledge should serve as a kind of reference-point for the different philosophical schools (Pope John Paul, 1998). Once reason successfully intuits and formulates the first universal principles of being and correctly draws from them conclusions which are coherent both logically and ethically, then it may be called right reason or, as the ancients called it, *orthós logos, recta ratio* (Pope John Paul, 1998).

 On her part, the Church cannot but set great value upon reason's drive to attain goals which render people's lives ever more worthy (Pope John Paul, 1998). She sees in philosophy the way to come to know fundamental truths about human life. At the same time, the Church considers philosophy an indispensable help for a deeper understanding of faith and for communicating the truth of the Gospel to those who do not yet know it.

Modern philosophy clearly has the great merit of focusing attention upon man. From this starting-point, human reason with its many questions has developed further its yearning to know more and to know it ever more deeply. Complex systems of thought have thus been

built, yielding results in the different fields of knowledge and fostering the development of culture and history (Pope John Paul, 1998). Anthropology, logic, the natural sciences, history, linguistics and so forth—the whole universe of knowledge has been involved in one way or another. Yet the positive results achieved must not obscure the fact that reason, in its one-sided concern to investigate human subjectivity, seems to have forgotten that men and women are always called to direct their steps towards a truth which transcends them. Sundered from that truth, individuals are at the mercy of caprice, and their state as person ends up being judged by pragmatic criteria based essentially upon experimental data, in the mistaken belief that technology must dominate all (Pope John Paul, 1998). It has happened therefore that reason, rather than voicing the human orientation towards truth, has wilted under the weight of so much knowledge and little by little has lost the capacity to lift its gaze to the heights, not daring to rise to the truth of being. Abandoning the investigation of being, modern philosophical research has concentrated instead upon human knowing. Rather than make use of the human capacity to know the truth, modern philosophy has preferred to accentuate the ways in which this capacity is limited and conditioned (Pope John Paul, 1998).

Sure of her competence as the bearer of the Revelation of Jesus Christ, the Church reaffirms the need to reflect upon truth (it was for this reason that Pope John Paul II addressed his Bishops in this encyclical letter) as he shared the mission with them of "proclaiming the truth openly" (*2 Cor* 4:2), as also theologians and philosophers whose duty it is to explore the different aspects of truth, and all those who are searching. He felt impelled to undertake this task above all because of the Second Vatican Council's insistence that the Bishops are 'witnesses of divine and catholic truth'. To bear witness to the truth is therefore a task entrusted to Bishops; seeing renouncing this task as failing in the ministry which they have received. In reaffirming the truth of faith, John Paul II believed that he along with his

Bishops could both restore to their contemporaries a genuine trust in their capacity to know and challenge philosophy to recover and develop its own full dignity.

There is a further reason why Pope John Paul II wrote this encyclical letter - to reflect on and draw attention to 'certain fundamental truths of Catholic doctrine which, in the present circumstances, risk being distorted or denied'. In order to do so, he concentrated on the theme of *truth* itself and on its *foundation* in relation to *faith*. For he thought it to be undeniable that this time of rapid and complex change could leave especially the younger generation, to whom the future belongs and on whom it depends, with a sense that they have no valid points of reference. The need for a foundation for personal and communal life becomes all the more pressing at a time when we are faced with the patent inadequacy of perspectives in which the transient is affirmed as a value and the possibility of discovering the real meaning of life is cast into doubt. This is why many people stumble through life to the very edge of the abyss without knowing where they are going. At times, this happens because those whose vocation it is to give cultural expression to their thinking no longer look to truth, preferring quick success to the toil of patient enquiry into what makes life worth living. With its enduring appeal to the search for truth, philosophy has the great responsibility of forming thought and culture; and now it must strive resolutely to recover its original vocation. This is why Pope John Paul II had felt both the need and the duty to address this theme so that, on the threshold of the third millennium of the Christian era, humanity may come to a clearer sense of the great resources with which it has been endowed and may commit itself with renewed courage to implement the plan of salvation of which its history is part.

9.2.2 The enduring originality of the thought of Saint Thomas Aquinas

Pope John Paul II believed that Saint Thomas was an authentic model for all who sought the truth. Pope John Paul stated that in Saint Thomas' thinking, the demands of reason and

the power of faith found the most elevated synthesis ever attained by human thought (Weigel, 2001).

Pope John Paul II stated that quire a special place in his understanding of faith belonged to Saint Thomas, not only because of what he taught but also because of the dialogue which he undertook with the Arab and Jewish thought of his time (Weigel, 2001). In an age when Christian thinkers were rediscovering the treasures of ancient philosophy, and more particularly of Aristotle, Thomas had the great merit of giving pride of place to the harmony which exists between faith and reason (Weigel, 2001). Both the light of reason and the light of faith come from God, he argued; hence there can be no contradiction between them. More radically, Thomas recognized that nature, philosophy's proper concern, could contribute to the understanding of divine Revelation. Faith therefore has no fear of reason, but seeks it out and has trust in it. Just as grace builds on nature and brings it to fulfilment, so faith builds upon and perfects reason ("St. Thomas Aquinas," 2014). Illumined by faith, reason is set free from the fragility and limitations deriving from the disobedience of sin and finds the strength required to rise to the knowledge of the Triune God ("St. Thomas Aquinas," 2014). Although he made much of the supernatural character of faith, the Angelic Doctor did not overlook the importance of its reasonableness; indeed he was able to plumb the depths and explain the meaning of this reasonableness (Weigel, 2001). Faith is in a sense an 'exercise of thought'; and human reason is neither annulled nor debased in assenting to the contents of faith, which are in any case attained by way of free and informed choice ("St. Thomas Aquinas," 2014). This is why the Church has been justified in consistently proposing Saint Thomas as a master of thought and a model of the right way to do theology.   Another of the great insights of Saint Thomas was his perception of the role of the Holy Spirit in the process by which knowledge matures into wisdom. From the first pages of his *Summa Theologiae* (1265-1274), Aquinas was keen to show the primacy of the wisdom which is the gift of the Holy Spirit and

which opens the way to knowledge of divine realities ("St. Thomas Aquinas," 2014). His theology allows us to understand what is distinctive of wisdom in its close link with faith and knowledge of the divine. This wisdom comes to known by way of connaturality (i.e., belonging to a person by nature); it presupposes faith and eventually formulates its right judgement on the basis of the truth of faith itself: The wisdom named among the gifts of the Holy Spirit is distinct from the wisdom found among the intellectual virtues ("St. Thomas Aquinas," 2014). This second wisdom is acquired through study, but the first 'comes from on high', as Saint James puts it. This also distinguishes it from faith, since faith accepts divine truth as it is. But the gift of wisdom enables judgement according to divine truth.

9.2.3 An after-thought

Pope John Paul II believed that the importance of philosophical thought in the development of culture and its influence on patterns of personal and social behaviour is apparent for all to see. In addition, he thought philosophy exercised a powerful, though not always obvious, influence on theology and its disciplines. For these reasons, he had judged it appropriate and necessary to emphasize the value of philosophy for the understanding of the faith, as well as the limits which philosophy faces when it neglects or rejects the truths of Revelation. The Church remains profoundly convinced that faith and reason 'mutually support each other'; each influences the other, as they offer to each other a purifying critique and a stimulus to pursue the search for deeper understanding.

A survey of the history of thought, especially in the West, shows clearly that the encounter between philosophy and theology and the exchange of their respective insights have contributed richly to the progress of humanity (Pope John Paul II, 1998). Endowed as it is with an openness and originality which allow it to stand as the science of faith, theology has certainly challenged reason to remain open to the radical newness found in God's Revelation;

and this has been an undoubted advantage for philosophy which has thus glimpsed new vistas of further meanings which reason is summoned to penetrate.

Precisely in the light of this consideration, and just as Pope John Paul II had reaffirmed theology's duty to recover its true relationship with philosophy, he felt equally bound to stress how right it is that, for the benefit and development of human thought, philosophy too should recover its relationship with theology. In theology, philosophy will find not the thinking of a single person which, however rich and profound, still entails the limited perspective of an individual, but the wealth of a communal reflection. For by its very nature, theology is sustained in the search for truth by its *ecclesial context* and by the tradition of the People of God, with its harmony of many different fields of learning and culture within the unity of faith.

Insisting on the importance and true range of philosophical thought, the Church promotes both the defence of human dignity and the proclamation of the Gospel message. Pope John Paul II believed that there was no more urgent preparation for the performance of these tasks than this: to lead people to discover both their capacity to know the truth and their yearning for the ultimate and definitive meaning of life. In the light of these profound needs, inscribed by God in human nature, the human and humanizing meaning of God's word also emerges more clearly. Through the mediation of a philosophy which is also true wisdom, Pope John Paul II believed that people today will come to realize that their humanity is all the more affirmed the more they entrust themselves to the Gospel and open themselves to Christ.

Philosophical thought is often the only ground for understanding and dialogue with those who do not share our faith. The current ferment in philosophy demands of believing philosophers an attentive and competent commitment, able to discern the expectations, the points of openness and the key issues of this historical moment. Reflecting in the light of reason and in keeping with its rules, and guided always by the deeper understanding given

them by the word of God, Pope John Paul II asserted that Christian philosophers can develop a reflection which will be both comprehensible and appealing to those who do not yet grasp the full truth which divine Revelation declares. Such a ground for understanding and dialogue is all the more vital nowadays, since the most pressing issues facing humanity—ecology, peace and the co-existence of different races and cultures, for instance—may possibly find a solution if there is a clear and honest collaboration between Christians and the followers of other religions and all those who, while not sharing a religious belief, have at heart the renewal of humanity.

This next section provides the reader with personal reflections from Pope John Paul II, his closest friends, colleagues and biographers regarding his faith development. It provides the reader with a glimpse of the man we will uncover towards the Findings and Discussion section of this chapter.

9.2.4 Faith as the Cornerstone

For all the questions this Pope has raised, there is one that burned for John Paul II - the question of faith. For him faith was the first, the ultimate reality. He had circled the globe without cease, swimming in people, touching them, provoking them...putting his faith in their faces. But for what purpose?

The Pope insisted that God exists and yearns for human contact and without this, human beings cannot themselves live. He believed mankind, in fact, cannot be good without God (Weigel, 2001). For this Pope, the totalitarianisms that have dominated the 20th century have prevailed for one reason only - man has lost its connection to the transcendent (John Paul II, 2005). So the God question, the faith question, was all consuming for him. He wondered whether the human race, especially those who have power and influence, be able once again to consider its link to the transcendent? (John Paul II, 2004; 2005). To him the very survival of mankind depended on how that question is faced. But why did the Pope need to travel the

world and display his faith so publicly? Even when he could barely walk or speak, he planned visits to India, China, and Israel. Why could his numerous writings not suffice? His friend, Monsignor Lorenzo Albacete explained it this way (Whitney, 1999):

> John Paul II knows that no one reads the encyclicals of a dead Pope. They will die with him. He knows that intellectual arguments don't persuade, that you have to be given these Pentecostal moments of having been touched by grace. That is why he has taken to the streets, to bear witness to the reality of his faith. His motorcade is a stunning show and he is the drama at the centre. It can only last a minute, but you'd think people had ten hours of the most intimate mystical experience. For many people it is that one moment when they say 'I saw another possibility in life.' That is why the Pope uses every media toy of our age - CDs, cameras, videos, visits that are beautifully orchestrated.

But in the end the Pope also knew, as Monsignor Albacete said, that he cannot give his faith to anyone (Whitney, 1999). All he could do was to offer clear testimony and bear witness to what he believes is the deepest part of the self. The Pope had spent his life writing, talking and bearing witness to faith. It was for him, private and mysterious. However, if it was not possible to hold the Pope's faith in the palm of a hand, if it could not be bent or shaken, how could people relate to it? What was his testimony? Where did his faith come from? How did it sustain him? How did he sustain it? On the surface, Pope John Paul II's faith seemed contradictory:

   He was a man of fierce Catholic emotion and sensibility: passionately devoted to the Virgin Mary and the saints, attentive to - and accepting of - the miraculous and the inexplicable. At the same time, he was a professional modern philosopher, defending the capacity of the human intelligence and profoundly respectful of the scientific quest for truth. He had lectured at Harvard University, but has also travelled devotedly to the tomb of a

southern Italian miracle worker who was able to be in two places at the same time (O'Connor, 2005; Weigel, 2001). He believed in absolute truth and absolute moral values, and yet he had devoted his entire efforts as a moral philosopher to the modern notions of experience and subjectivity (John Paul II, 2005). He passionately defended the rights of the individual and just as passionately defended ancient dogmas that seem to restrict that freedom (Weigel, 2001). It is not enough to say that from the Pope's perspective these are not contradictions. Nor is it enough to recognize that the modern papacy placed conflicting demands on the Pope who as preacher had praised things, and which as an administrator of a complex bureaucracy, he had to limit, manage, even condemn. What we can do is acknowledge these 'contradictions' but also see them as more apparent than real. 'Layers' is perhaps a more searching and useful term than 'contradictions'; it leads us into the heart of the mystery rather than into a debate about consistency.

Karol Wojtyla's truth - his faith - is profoundly layered, starting at the deepest level with his having to find meaning in a stunning catalogue of personal losses: his mother died, his only brother died, his father died, his nation was occupied and his culture was threatened with extinction, his university was closed and many of his professors were executed, his Jewish friends and families were uprooted and killed in the Holocaust - all by the time he was 25 years old. The young Wojtyla found strength in what he believed was the will of an unfathomable God.

The total mystery of God led in turn to an experience of what he understood as the 'mystery' of man, namely, the link with the Absolute which he identified with the deepest level of personal experience (John Paul II, 2005). This link with the Transcendent became for him the defining experience of personhood, present and perceived each time the human person expressed his identity through action (John Paul II, 2004). His passion for poetry and drama was born from this conviction, and they became the principal weapon in his opposition

to the humanisms that denied this spiritual root of human activity (Malinski, 1979; Weigel, 2001). According to Weigel (2001) his philosophy sought insights of the existentialists and phenomenologists with their emphasis on human interiority. Although eventually he was to find their thought inadequate, he saw their mission as opening up traditional Catholic thought to the reality of experience and subjectivity (Pope John Paul II, 2005). His rejection of much of modern thought as leading to 'the culture of death' was born from what he claimed is the absence of the truly spiritual in modern ways of thinking about human life (John Paul II, 2005; Weigel, 2001).

The dramatic nature of Polish Catholicism, and its application of the Christian doctrine of the Incarnation, Death and Resurrection to the efforts to defend Polish identity from extinction, led John Paul II to the centrality of the person of Jesus Christ (O'Connor, 2005; Weigel, 2001). The horrific potential of mankind that Karol Wojtyla experienced close up made the question 'Who is Man?" all the more urgent (John Paul II, 2005). The Christian answer - that it is only the mystery of Christ that reveals the mystery of the human being and the mystery of creation - is the key to Wojtyla's theology (John Paul, 2005; O'Connor, 2005; Weigel, 2001). It led him to theologians of the back-to-the-source school who insist that the most basic characteristic of Christian thought is the acceptance of 'paradox' (John Paul II, 2005; Weigel, 2001)

It could be said that the efforts to bring together in perfect harmony the human and the divine, the eternal and the timely, the unlimited and the limited, the historical and the unchanging, the physical and the spiritual is the source of the apparent 'contradictions' in Pope John Paul's faith. The powerful and paradoxical image of Christian triumph - the crucified God - sustained him. It allowed him to find gain in loss, hope in suffering, and purpose amidst chaos (John Paul II, 1996, 2005; O'Connor, 2005; Weigel, 2001).

There was a fiery, mystical core to the young Karol's faith. It was the deepest, darkest

layer of the soil which had nourished him throughout his life. All his early heroes were passionate visionaries: the strange, otherworldly Jan Tyranowski; the Spanish mystic, St. John of the Cross; the stigmatic faith healer, Padre Pio (Sullivan, 1999; Weigel, 2001). Their emotional, poetic view of the world had sustained him throughout his life. This was a man for whom the great religious truths were viscerally experienced. Christ is alive and walks the earth; the Virgin is a real woman; the Devil is a person not an abstraction. Good and evil are powerful autonomous forces battling each other - the powers of darkness and light (John Paul II, 2005). As Pope, he attended exorcisms, and even officiated at one (O'Connor, 2005; Weigel, 2001).

Over the years, his readings and discussions, his dissertations and sermons, and, ultimately, his many encyclicals and many pronouncements, have added important layers of thought and feeling to the young Karol's passionate mysticism. His study and reflection only deepened his faith and gave him confidence, as he wrote: "I lived in a world of faith in an intuitive and emotional fashion that it is a world that can be justified by the most profound as well as the most simple reasons" (John Paul II, 2005, p. 29). As with so many of the great themes of this man's life, the origins of his piety are revealed in his life's work; a life whose roots are sunk deeply into the richly layered Polish soil. We must go back to Poland to find the clues and intimations suggesting the origins, the texture and the singular intensity of Pope John Paul II's faith.

Karol Wojtyla was born in the town of Wadowice, near the city Krakow. He was baptized on June 20th in a little church on the square (Sullivan, 1999). His family lived in a modest apartment directly across from the church. The bells marking the religious devotions of the day filled the apartment with their noisy pealing (Weigel, 2001). One of the Pope's biographers, Jonathan Kwitny, stated that the apartment was so close to the church that a priest with an average nose would have smelled the family dinner - the church virtually cast a

physical shadow over Karol's home and probably had cast a spiritual shadow as well (O'Connor, 2005; Weigel, 2001).

Karol's parents were intensely religious, unusually so, in a time where religious devotion was normal in Polish families. Upon entering Wojtyla's small apartment, there was a bowl of holy water in the hall blessed by a priest (Sullivan, 1999). His mother had created a small altar in the parlour where the family would gather for morning and evening prayer (Weigel, 2001). The seeming contradictions in John Paul II's faith start here in the discrepancy between his school and the church; between his training in reason and in his exposure to mysticism.

After his mother died his father immediately took Lolek (as his family and friends called him) and his brother to pray at the Kalwaria Zebrzydowska sanctuary (John Paul II, 1996; Weigel, 2001). In addition to everything this experience must have meant to him about Mary, it was also a primary source of his deep mysticism (John Paul II, 2005). He would have seen (and joined) along with tens of thousands of fellow Poles, the crowds of believers on their hands and knees, praying and chanting as they re-enacted Christ's Passion, his betrayal, his crucifixion and his resurrection. These processions lasted for days and were intensely dramatic theatrical spectacles (O'Connor, 2005; Weigel, 2001).

The Pope has mentioned Kalwaria in his writings, and in private conversations with friends, as a powerful shaping influence on his spiritual life (John Paul II, 1996; Weigel, 2001). Adam Bujak, one of Poland's most celebrated photographers (and a friend of the Pope), described the effect of this pilgrimage on him as a young boy of twelve. Bujak watched the procession from a tree and experienced this drama as "shattering, indelibly marking his faith" (Weigel, 2001, p. 25). Some people view these pilgrimages as an expression of the depth of Poland's religiosity where every road at Easter becomes a sacramental byway for pilgrims. Other Poles see Kalwaria as an expression of the

theatricality (and thinness) of Polish faith. Halina Bortnowska (philosopher and writer who he had asked to revise the later edition of Love and Responsibility) described his unique spirituality: "It was very unusual for a Polish clergyman to write his dissertation on St. John of the Cross. We are a theatrical, ritualistic people. He is private, mystical, and altogether different" (Halina Bortnowksa, cited in Weigel, 2001, p. 324).

Looking back years later, John Paul II remembers the profound effect his mother's death had on his father's spiritual life, and on his own (Weigel, 2001):

> The violence of the blows that struck him opened up immense spiritual depths in him; his grief found its outlet in prayer. The mere fact of seeing him on his knees had a decisive effect on my early years...Even now when I awake at night I remember seeing my father kneeling and praying. He was so hard on himself that he had no need to be hard on his son; his example alone was sufficient to inculcate discipline and duty...My father was the person who explained to me the mystery of God. (p. 30)

Lolek was remembered by his childhood friends as an unusually pious but not a pompous young man. Many of them recalled the unusually long time that he would pray (Weigel, 2001). He would stop by the church before school and stay longer on his knees than any of his classmates, lost in thought, mouthing his prayers silently. His preferred place of meditation was not the main sanctuary but a tiny chapel off to the side which had a statue of Mary (O'Connor, 2005). His complete absorption in prayer would grow over the years (both in duration and in intensity).

Sometimes his entire body would express this intensity of abandonment. When Karol felt he was alone - or in great danger - he would pray face down on the stone floor, arms outstretched in the shape of the cross (Sullivan, 1999; Weigel, 2001). His university friend, Wojciech Zukrowski, said that when the Nazis made a sweep of Krakow rounding up young men for the work camps, they searched Karol's house. Karol had hid in the basement, praying

face down on the damp floor, arms outstretched, while he heard the thud of Nazi boots overhead (Sullivan, 1999; Weigel, 2001). His chauffeur, Josef Mucha, recalled that "one morning I forgot to knock, my hands were filled with his breakfast, and when I entered I found him asleep on the floor, arms straight out, his body a perfect cross, a rug thrown over the lower half of his body. Clearly he had slept this way the entire night" (Josef Mucha, in Weigel, 2001, pp. 243).

While his father played an extraordinarily important role in shaping his son's religious life, there were others who influenced his growing vocation. Father Kazimierz Figlewicz, who served as the vicar and religion teacher at the Wadowice church, had a remarkable touch with young students; he was not only able to recognize their gifts but to communicate with them with ease and intimacy (Weigel, 2001). Apparently, he reached the young detached Lolek at a very deep level and soon after he became Karol's confessor. Later on, when he was Archbishop, Karol described Father Kazimierz as the guide to his young and rather complicated soul (Weigel, 2001).

There were other events, other mentors, who helped to shape his spiritual life. His high school teacher, Father Edward Zacher, was a brilliant scientist as well as a theologian who constantly encouraged his students to look deeply and without fear into the mysteries of the heavens and the secrets of the microcosmos (Weigel, 2001). He was an unusual priest for his time and place; his confident faith is unusual even today. For Zacher, there was no conflict between faith and reason. This theme is, of course, defining of John Paul II. As Pope, John Paul II encouraged scientific research; he listened rapt to the latest discoveries of scientists who gathered at his summer retreat at Castle Gondolfo; he urged a Church commission to clear the name of Galileo (Weigel, 2001). One of his later encyclicals, 'Fides et Ratio' (Faith and Reason), is the final expression of this deep-rooted conviction.

Arguably the most important of all his spiritual mentors was Jan Tyranowski. He met

Tyranowski on a cold Saturday afternoon in February 1940, at a weekly discussion group in the parish church; it was a crucial moment in Karol's life (Stanley, 2007; Sullivan, 1999; Tossati, 2005; Weigel, 2001). Tyranowski was a strange man, a forty year-old tailor with white-blond hair, a high-pitched laugh and piercing eyes. He was a bachelor who lived with his mother in a small apartment across the street from the Wojtylas. Tyranowski's small rooms were filled with stacks of religious books, sewing machines and several cats (Stanley, 2007). He would stop young men on the street and try to interest them in joining his 'Living Rosary', a praying circle and theology discussion group for young people (Stanley, 2007; Weigel, 2001). Karol, however, was immediately gripped by Tyranowski's personality and the power of his ideas (Sullivan, 1999). Tyranowski and Karol spent an increasing amount of time together discussing the Scriptures and mystical philosophers such as St. Theresa of Avila and St. John of the Cross (Tossati, 2005; Weigel, 2001). Malinski tried to argue with Karol about this strange man and even brought up rumours that he had been in a mental institution (O'Connor, 2005). Father Malinski wrote about Karol's response in his own biography of the Pope: "Tyranowski has gone through a major life-changing conversion. Look at what is inside him, not his outward experience. Yes, he speaks in a slightly odd, affected manner, but look beyond that. He is a man who lives truly close to God" (Malinski, 1979, p. 28) For Karol, Tyranowski was aflame with God and this closeness to the flame was an irresistible quality for the young Karol and would remain so for the rest of his life (Sullivan, 1999).

Ultimately, Father Malinski grew attached to Jan Tyranowski and entered the rigorous world of The Living Rosary: "When Karol and I committed ourselves to this prayer group, it was all-encompassing. Every moment of the day was organized around activity and relaxation. We were asked to keep detailed records of our prayers and thoughts. Tyranowski took us through each stage very calmly and methodically until we reached the central core of

his teaching - what he called the plenitude of inner life. His influence on Lolek was gigantic. I can safely say that were it not for him, neither Karol nor I would have become priests" (Malinski, 1979, p. 30). Karol later wrote about this defining experience: "What Tyranowski wanted to do was work on our souls - to bring out the resources he knew existed within us" (Karol Wojtyla, in Weigel, 2001, p. 70). Karol was particularly struck by the quiet, mystical core of his teaching and he remembered vividly the day and hour when his teachings sank into him (Weigel, 2001):

> Once in July when the day was slowly extinguishing itself, the word of Jan Tyranowski became more and more lonely in the falling darkness, penetrating us deeper and deeper, releasing in us the hidden depths of evangelical possibilities which until then we had tremblingly avoided...Tyranowski was truly one of those unknown saints, hidden among others like a marvelous light at the bottom of life at a depth where night usually reigns. He disclosed to me the riches of his inner life, of his mystical life. In his words, in his spirituality, and in the example of a life given to God alone, he represented a new world that I did not yet know. I saw the beauty of a soul opened up by grace (p. 61)

One of the Pope's most insightful biographers, Tad Szulc, believes that the influence of Tyranowski on the young Wojtyla flowed from their shared attraction to the mystical quality of spiritual life: "Tyranowski gave a wholly new dimension and understanding to Karol's instinctive mysticism and, as much as any profound experience of his young years, it set him on a course towards the priesthood...his mystical legacy to Karol Wojtyla was the 16th century poet and mystic, St. John of the Cross and the desire for the contemplative life" (Tad Szulc, 1996, p. 36). In fact, after he became a priest, Karol, on two separate occasions, requested permission from his superiors to enter a Carmelite monastery; each time they refused, believing his gifts lay elsewhere (Sullivan, 1999; Weigel, 2001).

Dr.Susan Muto, an expert of the life and work of St. John of the Cross, speculated on why Karol's first encounter with St. John was so overwhelming (Whitney, 1999):

> Of all the writers in the mystic tradition, he is the most riveting. The sheer metaphoric power of his language is stunning, filled with images of darkness and light, and it must have been a transforming experience for this young man witnessing the horrors of the war...Karol was obviously drawn to this mystic and influenced by him at the very deepest level. St. John's clarion cry is that the proximate way to wisdom is through purgation, through profound suffering, both physical, emotional and spiritual.

While each of the Pope's biographers might emphasize different influences shaping Karol's spiritual life, all of them agree that it is impossible to overestimate the impact of St. John of the Cross. However, it is important to place the experience of Karol encountering this powerful mystic in the context of his life. By 1939, Karol had experienced the death of his mother and brother and then his father. Close friends were dying in the war, or simply disappearing off the streets never to be seen again. His country might well be destroyed. These losses opened him to ultimate questions and to the particular vision of St. John of the Cross. As the Catholic writer, Michael Sean Winters, explained the following (Whitney, 1999):

> St. John allowed Karol to integrate these horrific losses in his life and to find meaning in what he was going through. For St. John of the Cross, there is great spiritual value and meaning in privation, in suffering, in the 'Via Negativa'. Each loss hastened Wojtyla's thoughts beyond the horizon of human cognition, beyond the traditional Catholicism of his upbringing. Perhaps it is the absoluteness of death that helped shape the young Karol's conviction that the world has no answers to this enigma. So far his God has taught him that he must find life in death, gain in loss. St. John was the perfect guide. So, in the place of his revered but departed earthly mother, his

devotion to the Virgin Mary, the heavenly mother, became more pronounced. The mystical 'Via Negativa' of St. John of the Cross opened up a world for Karol in which loss was gain, death was life and the Church was seen as the ultimate paradox, the sign of contradiction.

On February 18, 1941, exactly one year after he met Tyranowski, Karol suffered possibly his greatest loss...the death of his father. Unlike his calm demeanour and stoic submission to God's will following the deaths of his mother and brother, the loss of his father provoked a torrent of tears and visible pain. He lamented bitterly that he had not been present when his father died. His friend, Maria Kydrynska, was with Karol when they returned home to discover that Karol Wojtyla Sr. had died of a heart attack in bed. She described the scene vividly: "Karol, weeping, embraced me. He said through his tears, 'I was not present when my mother died, nor when my brother died'" (Kydrynska, in Wiegel, 2001, p. 68). The apartment was too painful to stay in alone, so he moved in with the Kydrynskas. Years later, John Paul II told the writer Andre Frossard: "I never felt so alone" (Frossard, in Weigel, 2001, p. 68). His friend Father Malinski observed him going to the cemetery every day to pray at his father's grave and stating that Karol was so distraught that he was truly worried about him (Weigel, 2001). Some of Karol's friends have said to us that they felt that this wrenching blow of his father's death was decisive and that it led ultimately to his decision to become a priest. It was almost as if the smell of death was ammonia to him. It awakened him. It helped convert him. It sharpened his focus. It gave him his vocation. It also freed him. As Maria Kydrynska said that the fact that he was alone without his parents, it was as if it was his destiny (Weigel, 2001).

From that point onwards, Karol spent a great deal of time with his mentor, Jan Tyranowski, but it would take a year and a half for his vocation to take final shape. Years later the Pope would reflect on the mystery of his vocation in his memoir (Weigel, 2001):

At 20 I had already lost all the people I loved. God was, in a way, preparing me for what would happen....After my father's death I became aware of my true path. I was working at a plant and devoting myself, as far as the terrors of the occupation allowed, to my taste in literature and drama. My priestly vocation took place in the midst of all that. I knew that I was called with absolute clarity (p. 69).

Father Malinski was present at this spiritual turning point and wrote about it in his own biography: "It was 1942, bitter cold, I was waiting outside the priest's residence at Wawel Cathedral for Karol to finish his confession with Father Kazimierz. Their conversation went on for hours and I became restless, even worried. When Lolek emerged he was very quiet as we walked across the bridge. Finally he said to me, 'I have decided to become a priest and that is what we were talking about'" (Malinski, in Weigel, 2001, p. 69). Father Kazimierz had taken him to Archbishop Sapieha immediately who interviewed him and accepted him for his underground seminary.

Most of the students in this wartime underground seminary had been living in various 'safe houses' in the countryside and travelling to secret locations for theology classes. Karol's job at the Solvay plant kept him in Krakow where his life became even more regimented and compartmentalized (Weigel, 2001). Up at dawn, he crossed the river to the Archbishop's palace to assist secretly in celebrating Mass, and then he raced off to work at the plant (O'Connor, 2005; Weigel, 2001). Late afternoons were devoted to his religious studies, then rehearsals with the Rhapsodic Theatre and the nightly visit to his father's grave. In March 1943, Karol finally told members of the Rhapsodic Theatre of his decision to become a priest (Weigel, 2001). They were stunned; none of them had any idea that he was contemplating a vocation to the priesthood. While they knew he was devout, he had never confided in any of them about what must have been an intense inner conflict between two vocations (O'Connor, 2005).

His detachment is exemplified in his friendship with the theatre director, Mieczyslaw Kotlarczyk. Biographer Tad Szulc has described him as "Karol's intellectual, cultural and thespian mentor, the most important person in Karol's life after his father and Tyranowski" (Szulc, 1996, p. 45). For an entire year during the Nazi occupation when all travel was restricted, Karol and Kotlarczyk wrote letters to each other that would be smuggled back and forth from Krakow to Wadowice. Karol's letters were unusually revealing, up to a point: "I will surround myself with Books. I put up fortifications of Art and Learning. I work. Will you believe me when I tell you that I am almost running out of time? I read, write, learn, pray and fight within myself. Sometimes I feel horrible pressures, sadness, depression, evil".
(Karol Wojtyla, in Weigel 2001, p. 71)

What is striking about this letter is that Karol could not share, or would not share, his great inner conflict. His friend Lorenzo Albacete described Karol's unusual detachment saying that he lived in the most intense solitude of burning loneliness, and to some extent it was self-imposed. H believed that it all went back to St. John of the Cross, to his exhortation of emptying yourself, stripping away ordinary human supports (Weigel, 2001). Kotlarczyc stated the following about Karol's decision to become a priest (Weigel, 2001):

> He finally revealed how fiercely he had tried to talk Karol out of his decision to join the priesthood and how fiercely Karol had resisted him. They stayed up all night talking. He used every stratagem, even quoting Scripture - multiply your talents, don't hide your light under a bushel - but to no avail. What he was able to accomplish was to persuade Karol to become a priest and not a contemplative monk hidden away in a monastery. And considering Karol's career in the Church, this was no small achievement (p. 70).

After the Nazi roundup in August 1944, when Karol escaped only through hiding in the basement of his house, Archbishop Sapieha decided that all of his seminarians would be safer

in his residence. So one by one, each of them moved surreptitiously, sometimes in disguise, past the German troops into the palace to begin their studies (Weigel, 2001).

Karol was ordained October 3, 1946, in Archbishop Sapieha's private chapel and soon after celebrated his first Mass in the Wawel Cathedral (O'Connor, 2005; Sullivan, 1999). The central truth about Wojtyla's faith is that every conviction which John Paul II would make an issue central to his Papacy was already in young Karol Wojtyla's heart when he was ordained a priest. By the age of 26 the structure of his faith had been shaped - the bones had been set. The themes of suffering, the centrality of Christ and the belief in God's ongoing supernatural intervention in our lives were the bedrock. Over the years, these subjects would be elaborated upon, deepened and refined. Other themes would emerge as his intellectual horizons widened; these themes would layer, complicate, but never change these early convictions.

Within a week after his ordination, Karol travelled to Rome to study for his doctorate in theology. His new mentor, Archbishop Sapieha, recognized Karol's unusual intellectual gifts and decided that his protégé needed a thorough grounding in moral theology. It was in Rome that Karol encountered Father Reginald Garrigou-LaGrange, a formidable theologian and the reigning expert on Thomism. Garrigou-LaGrange would become one of the important influences on Karol's spiritual life; he would open Karol up to St. Thomas.

As Karol rose in the Church, he read and wrote voraciously. He discussed the great theological ideas with students and colleagues. Karol immersed himself in German phenomenology especially Max Scheler and Edmund Husserl. Karol embraced the Swiss theologian Balthasar who, like Luba, urged his fellow theologians to return to the source of Christianity, to recognize its stupendous claims about the supernatural (Weigel, 2001). Karol devoured the French existentialists even though they were not on the approved list. Most decisively, he grappled with and to some extent accepted St. Thomas Aquinas's world of immutable and timeless essences, the traditional Catholic theology for the last 500 years, and

a rational, objective world view very much at odds with his early heroes (Weigel, 2001). Karol would flirt with but finally reject the 'softer' more experiential world of the phenomenologists, but not before he borrowed from their contemporary language of feeling and experience.

Though Karol modified Thomism in his work as bishop and cardinal, he drew on that tradition's moral absolutes. Love and Responsibility, for example, goes to great lengths to appreciate the complexity of sexual feeling and response, but basically it accepts the Thomist view that all sexuality must be generative (Weigel, 2001).

What is also clear is that the theme of redemptive suffering so central to the young Karol's spiritual life had only intensified and deepened over the years. The mystery of suffering had pervaded his thinking, his writing, his spirituality from the earliest years onwards. It has also become the defining theme of his Papacy. While redemptive suffering is, of course, at the heart of traditional Catholicism, Pope John Paul II has embraced suffering in a way that is uniquely his own. Pope John Paul II spoke about his conviction that the most important events in his life have been connected to the suffering of his friends (Weigel, 2001). Monsignor Albacete stated that Karol came to see the deaths in his family "as a sacrifice...which gave direction to his life. Not only did it set him free from family responsibilities, but the pain was part of the energy which compelled him to move ahead with his life in the Church. I don't think he has a clear answer and it is a great mystery before which he bows his head" (Monsignor Albacete, in Weigel, 2001, p. 85).

Pope John Paul II has written an extraordinary number of encyclicals, letters, homilies. Among his most important encyclicals is his very first, 'Redemptor Hominis' (The Redeemer of Man), in which he laid out the program for his entire pontificate (Weigel, 2001). It offered a searching examination of man's capacity for good and evil and asks the question, "Where do we go now?" In a later encyclical, 'Veritas Splendor'(The Splendor of Truth), John Paul II

talks about morality itself - how it attracts us by its beauty. Not surprisingly, a large number of his writings deal with suffering. 'Salvific Doloris' (On the Christian Meaning of Suffering), for example, is arguably his most personal statement about the meaning and value of human suffering. The shifting relations between his fiery core of mysticism and his quest for truth is a common thread running through all of his written work. In one of his last encyclicals, in 'Fides et Ratio' (Faith and Reason), he showed how both are approaches to God.

With all of his writings, his sophisticated discourses, his conversations with cutting-edge thinkers at his summer retreat at Castle Gondolfo, Pope John Paul II was a man of mystical persuasions for whom signs and symbols are the alphabet of God's loving language. The earliest, deepest Polish soil nourished him; the fiery mystical core of his faith remained intact throughout all the years, all of his extraordinary encounters with history.

One of the most dramatic and life-threatening of these encounters occurred on May 13, 1981 just as Pope John Paul II was to announce the creation of an institute devoted to the study of contemporary science and philosophy. Its purpose was to provide a dialogue between Catholic theology and modern thought. He never got a chance to speak. He was shot and almost killed as he triumphantly rode into St. Peter's Square to make the announcement and to greet hundreds of thousands of pilgrims who hailed him as the man who would lead the Church into the new millennium.

Pope John Paul II seemed to be seeking to live several lives: the life of a thinker, at home in the world of concepts and scientific theories, the life of a mystic of the sublime and the indescribable, and, the life of a peasant child unable to read or write. Marina Warner, a writer and Marian expert, said the following about his 'apparent contradiction' (Whitney, 1999):

The Pope is a populist and he is a pioneer in this. Popes usually come from the elite.

They tend to be very sceptical about the faithful who need to be controlled and to be told what to think. So he's reversed that direction. He likes it when there's a new vision...

9.3 Findings and discussion

The previous section of this chapter set the scene of Pope John Paul II's faith and spirituality as reflected by himself and those close to him. The following section of the chapter allows the reader to understand this faith development through the lens of Fowler's faith stages.

Table 3 provides a graphic reflection of the way in which the researcher chose to represent and structure the findings and discussion of this study according to Fowler's Faith Stages. Pope John Paul II's life was firstly divided into four main biographical headings. These four main headings were then subdivided in accordance with Fowler's (1981) proposed faith stages. In the sections below, each of these five main headings will encompass as brief explanation of the relevant psychosocial stage, a detailed biographical account of Pope John Paul II's life at each given stage, and a discussion of the findings by the researcher.

Table 3

A Graphic Reflection of the Structure of the Findings of Fowler's Faith Stages

Biographical Main Heading	Fowler's Faith Stages	Biographical Subheadings
Lolek: **Childhood and Adolescence** **1920 – 1938** This section maps Pope John Paul II's life from birth to 18 years old.	**Undifferentiated Faith** (0 - 3 years)	• A child is born • Discussion of the stage
	Intuitive-Projective Faith (age 3 -7 years)	• Where there's a will • Discussion of the stage
		• Blueprint • Discussion of the stage
	Mythic-Literal Faith (age 7 – 13 years)	• School boy • Discussion of the stage
	Synthetic-Conventional Faith (13 – 18 years)	• The Living Word • Discussion of the stage
Karol, the Disciple **Young Adulthood** **(1938 – 1960)** This section maps Pope John Paul II's life from 18 years to 40 years old.	**Individuative-Reflective Faith** (age 18 – 40 years)	• Alma Mater: The Jagiellonian University • Discussion of the stage continued
		• Call me wujek *(uncle)* • Discussion of the stage
Father to All **Middle Adulthood** **1960 – 1985** This section maps Pope John Paul II's life from age 40 to 65 year old.	**Conjunctive Faith** (age 40 – 65 years)	• The Making of a Philosopher • Discussion of the stage
Pope John Paul, The Great **1985 – 2005** This section maps Pope John Paul II's life from age 65 to his death at age 85.	**Universalising Faith** (age 65 - death)	• Toward Freedom • Discussion of the stage

9.3.1 Lolek: Childhood and Adolescence (1920 - 1938)

9.3.1.1 Undifferentiated Faith (birth to 3 years)

Stage 0 of faith development according to Fowler (1981) occurs from birth to approximately 2 years. It is characterized by an early learning of the safety of their environment (i.e. warm, safe and secure vs. hurt, neglect and abuse). If the child experiences consistent nurturance, he or she will develop a sense of trust and safety about the universe and the divine. Conversely, negative experiences will cause the child to develop distrust with the universe and the divine. Transition to the next stage begins with integration of thought and languages which facilitates the use of symbols in speech and play.

A child is born

Discussion of the stage

Raised with God as an omnipresent being, Lolek's family's home was '..in the shadow of St. Mary's Church...(where) a font filled with fresh holy water (was kept) in the apartment' (Sullivan, 1999, p. 8). His mother had created a small altar in the parlour where the family would gather for morning and evening prayer (Weigel, 2001). This suggests that even before his birth, Lolek's parents were devout Catholics of which prayer was a daily practice. In the light of Fowler's Undifferientiated faith description, the beginnings of Pope John Paul II's lifelong pilgrimage are clearly reflected. Through the fund of basic trust and relational experience of mutuality with his parents (as discussed win section 8.2.1.1), who provided him with consistent love and care, his pre-images of God were put in place. Mother Theresa, cited in Nabicht and Cronin (1999), said: "It is very important for children to hear their parents talk about God. The children must be able to ask about God" (p. 56).

The researcher, therefore, infers that Pope John Paul II developed a sense of *trust* – the emergent strength of this stage - and safety about the universe/divine.

9.3.1.2 Intuitive-Projective Faith (age 3 – 7 years)

Stage 1 of faith development according to Fowler (1981) occurs from the ages of three to seven and is characterized by the psyche's unprotected exposure to the *Unconscious*, and marked by a relative fluidity of thought patterns. Religion is learned mainly through experiences, stories, images, and the people that the child comes into contact with.

Where there's a will / Blueprint

Discussion of stage

Later in life, Pope John Paul II described himself as a man for whom signs and symbols were the alphabet of God's loving language (Weigel, 2001).

Being a devout Catholic, and through the example of his parents, Lolek found value in the language and rituals of the Roman Catholic faith. This facilitated his transition to the *Intuitive-Projective* faith stage. This is the fantasy-filled, imitative phase, in which the child can be powerfully and permanently influenced by examples, moods, actions, and stories of the visible faith of adults (Sigelman & Shaffer, 1991). It is clear that Lolek was strongly influenced by his parents' example, as well as through his participation in church as an altar boy. As a young boy, he and his friends would dress as priests and enact the rituals of mass – his mother sewed him a robe to wear while praying and built a small altar for his room. This gives evidence as to the emergent strength of this stage, namely, *Imagination.* Nabicht and Cronin (1999) quote Mother Teresa as having said: "Children watch...they watch and they grow with that. They will learn that it makes a difference how they live their lives by watching what their parents do" (p. 56).

9.3.1.3 Mythical-Literal Faith (age 7 – 13 years)

Stage 2 of Fowler's stages of faith occurs from the ages of seven to 13 years. During this stage, children begin to have a strong belief in the justice and reciprocity of the universe, and their deities are almost always anthropomorphic or personified. During this time metaphors and symbolic language are often misunderstood and are taken literally.

Schoolboy

Discussion of stage

According to Fowler (1981), Mythic-Literal faith is the stage in which the child begins to work hard and effectively at sorting out the real from the make-believe. The emergent strength in this stage is the rise and development of *narrative*. As discussed in section 8.2.1.4, Lolek's mother passed away when he was nine years old. Although deeply saddened by the death of his mother, everyone marvelled at his understanding of her death: "It was God's will" (Karol Wojtyla, cited in Weigel, 2001, p. 30). Later, when his brother passed away, he also attributed his brother's self-sacrifice as a lesson in God's will (Weigel, 2001). These reactions show young Lolek's strong belief in the justice and reciprocity of the universe. The researcher infers that this illustrates the development of *Mythical-Literal* faith and resulting in the emergent strength, namely, the *Narrative*.

It is important to note that after his mother had died, Lolek's father immediately took him to pray at the Kalwaria Zebrzydowska sanctuary. Here he witnessed and participated with thousands of believers on their hands and knees, praying and chanting as they re-enacted Christ's Passion, his betrayal, his crucifixion and his resurrection. The researcher postulates that this would have had a lasting impression on his mind as during this stage, metaphors and symbolic language are often misunderstood and are taken literally. In later years, Pope John Paul II had mentioned Kalwaria in his writings, and in private conversations with friends, as a powerful shaping influence on his spiritual life (John Paul II, 1996; Weigel, 2001).

9.3.1.4 Synthetic-Conventional Faith (age 13 – 18 years)

Stage 3 of Fowler's stages of faith arises in adolescence, approximately from the age of 13 to 18 years. This stage is characterized by conformity to religious authority and the development of a personal identity. Any conflicts with one's beliefs are ignored at this stage due to the fear of threat from inconsistencies.

Discussion of stage

Fowler (1981) stated that in the *Synthetic-Conventional* faith stage, a person's experience extends beyond the family to other spheres (i.e., school or work, peers, society and religion) demanding attention. Fowler (1981) believed that this stage of faith must provide coherent orientation in the midst of a more complex and diverse range of involvements. In other words, faith must synthesise values and information, and must provide a basis for identity and outlook. During this period in his life, Lolek began secondary school where he extended his curriculum of conventional subjects to include Latin and Greek. He also became a member of the Sodality of Mary, a society of young men dedicated to fostering devotion to the mother of Christ, where he was elected to two terms as the Sodality's president. He became involved in theatre and literary activities. These new roles and responsibilities that Lolek initiated in this time indicates a synthesis of his values (industriousness or diligence, piousness and social responsibility) and the basis of his newly developing identity (i.e., an ardent and hardworking individual, a devout Catholic with a sense of responsibility towards self and others and a passionate actor with a love for literature). Thus, the researcher infers that this illustrates the development of *Synthethic-Conventional* faith, resulting in the emergent strength of this stage, namely, a sense of *identity.*

9.3.2 Karol, the Disciple (1941 – 1960)

9.3.2.1 Individuative-Reflective Faith (age 18 – 40 years)

Stage 4 of Fowler's stages of faith occurs approximately between the ages of 18 and 40 years. This stage is characterised   by angst and struggle. The individual takes personal responsibility for his or her beliefs and feelings. As one is able to reflect on one's own beliefs, there is openness to a new complexity of faith, but this also increases the awareness of conflicts in one's belief.

Alma Mater: The Jagiellonian University/Call me Wujek (uncle)

Discussion of stage

According to Fowler (1981), in the *Individuative-Reflective* faith stage, the person begins to take seriously the burden of responsibility for his or her own commitments, lifestyle, beliefs, and attitudes. He described the person as facing unavoidable tensions (a) individuality versus being defined by a group or group membership, (b) subjectivity and the power of one's strongly felt but unexamined feelings versus objectivity and the requirement of critical reflection, (c) self-fulfilment or self-actualisation as a primary concern versus service to, and being for, others, and (d) the question of being committed to the relative struggle with the possibility of an absolute. These struggles are clearly evidenced in Karol's life at this particular time. His sense of self (identity) and outlook (world view) were starting to become differentiated from those of other people in his immediate world (i.e., classmates and fellow actors). Weigel (2001) stated that the theatre members were stunned at his decision to become a priest as none of them had any idea that he was contemplating a vocation to the priesthood. While they knew he was devout, he had never confided in any of them about an intense inner conflict between two the vocations – theatre or priesthood (O'Connor, 2005).This concurs with Fowler's description of the person as developing the capacity for critical reflection on their own identity and outlook. With the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience for life that Karol had taken, was coupled with the growing sense that something more was being asked of him. Through Karol's inner recognition and understanding that life was more complex than the *Individuative-Reflective* faith stage's logic of clear distinction and abstract concepts, he felt himself being pressed towards a more dialectical and multi-layered approached to the truth of life. And so it was that Karol was called to another form of work and service: his vocation to the priesthood that would eventually see him becoming a bishop

at the young age of thirty-eight. The researcher, therefore, infers that Pope John Paul II developed the emergent strength of this stage, namely, *critical reflection*.

9.3.3 Father to All (1960 – 1985)

9.3.3.1 Conjunctive Faith (age 40 – 65 years)

Stage 5 of faith development according to Fowler (1981) occurs approximately from the age of 40 to 65 years. Individuals within this stage acknowledge paradox and transcendence relating reality behind the symbols of inherited systems. The individual resolves conflicts from previous stages by a complex understanding of a multidimensional, interdependent 'truth' that cannot be explained by any particular statement.

The Making of a Philosopher

Discussion of stage

According to Fowler (1981), *Conjunctive* faith involves the integration of identity (self) and outlook (world view). It was during this stage in his life that Karol was able to do just that: integrate his well developed identity and his multi-layered outlook of life. In fact it was his faith development that provided him the foundation on which to built his identity and outlook simultaneously throughout the years. With his progression through the church from priest to archbishop to cardinal and then Pope, he was able to integrate his identity (i.e., the pious and industrious leader of the church, the ultimate moral compass and spiritual guide) with his world view (i.e., love, universal truth, peace, freedom and social justice for all). His various positions in the church also allowed him a platform from which he was able influence decisions towards his world view. He was a vital contributor in the Second Vatican Council where he urged the church to stand for all human rights, and not just for Catholics (Weigel, 2001).

According to Fowler (1981), a person in the *Conjunctive* faith stage can appreciate symbols, myths, and rituals (it's own and others) because he or she has grasped, in some

measure, the depth of reality to which they refer. Evidence of this is shown in Pope John Paul II's acceptance and tolerance of all religions. As the newly elected Pope, John Paul II made efforts to improve the relations between Catholicism and Islam, Buddhism, Anglicanism and Judaism. The researcher therefore infers that Pope John Paul II had developed the emergent strength of this stage, namely, *ironic imagination* (i.e., a capacity to see and be in one's most powerful meanings, while simultaneously recognizing that they are relative, partial and inevitably distorting apprehensions of transcendent reality (Fowler, 1981).

9.3.4 Pope John Paul, The Great (1985 – 2005)

9.3.4.1 Universalising Faith (age 65 – 85 years)

Stage 6 of Fowler's stages of faith occurs from the age of 65 years to death. The individual in this stage would treat any person with compassion as he or she views people as from a universal community, and should be treated with universal principles of love and justice.

Toward Freedom

Discussion of the stage

According to Fowler (1981), people in the *Universalising* faith stage have a radical commitment to justice and love of selfless passion for a transformed world, a world made over not in their images, but in accordance with intentionality both divine and transcendent. To say that a person embodies the qualities of this stage is not to say that he or she is perfect. Nor does it imply that he or she is a self-actualised person or fully functioning human being. To be in this stage does not mean to be perfect, whether perfection is understood in a moral, psychological or leadership sense. In light of this, Pope John Paul II was not without critics. He was criticized for his support of the Opus Dei (an institution of the Catholic Church that teaches that everyone is called to holiness and that ordinary life is a path to sanctity) (Duffy, 2006). His defense of traditional moral teachings of the Catholic Church regarding gender

roles, sexuality, euthanasia, artificial contraception and abortion also came under attack (Berry & Renner, 2003). He was also criticized for his traditional positions on the roles of women, which included rejecting women priests (Berry & Renner, 2003). He was criticized by gay activists for maintaining the Church's unbroken opposition to homosexual behavior and same-sex marriage. Furthermore, Pope John Paul II's position against artificial birth control, including the use of condoms to prevent the spread of HIV, was harshly criticized by doctors and AIDS activists, who said that it led to countless deaths and millions of AIDS orphans (Berry & Renner, 2003). However, the above criticisms may be viewed as part of wider criticisms regarding established doctrines of the Catholic Church, and not solely directed at Pope John Paul II.

In these persons of *Universalising* faith, they have committed their total beings to visions born out of radical acts of identification with persons and circumstances where futurity of being is being crushed, blocked or exploited (Fowler, 1981). To this end, Pope John Paul II self-sacrificially devoted his life and being to the Catholic Church and its people. His spirituality was a question of thinking, reasoning and logic as well as transcending rational thought.

According to Fowler (1981), it is exceedingly rare for a person to reach the *Universalising* faith stage. He described the person in this stage as having generated faith compositions in which his or her felt sense of an ultimate environment is inclusive of all being. These people have become 'incarnators' and 'actualisers' of the spirit of an inclusive and fulfilled human community. They are 'contagious' in the sense that they create zones of liberation from the social, political, economic, and ideological shackles we place on human futurity, and are often more honoured and revered after death than during their lives. Pope John Paul II used his position as pope to influence leaders towards peace and freedom. In 1978, he resolved conflict between Argentina and Chile when they were on the brink of a violent clash

(O'Connor, 2005; Weigel, 2001). In 1991, he wrote letters to the president of the United States, George Bush and the president of Iraq, Sadam Hussein, in an attempt to avert the Gulf War (Weigel, 2001). He challenged the free world to defend human rights, embarking on a courageous but dangerous nine-day public pilgrimage to 'strengthen the brethren' in Poland (Gertz, 2008). Pope John Paul II's example encouraged other leading church authorities, such as the Czech Cardinal Frantisek Tomasek, to become fierce critics of Communism (Weigel, 2001). He also inspired Lech Walesa to form the Soviet Union's first and only trade union—Solidarity—that in the words of French political scientist Alain Besancon gave the Poles back 'the private ownership of their tongues' (Gertz, 2008). Pope John Paul II wrote directly to Soviet president Leonid Brezhnev, giving his support to Solidarity and warning against the consequences of such an action, setting an all important precedent. In 1989, Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev visited John Paul II in the Vatican, marking the extraordinary end to hostilities between Rome and Moscow—and the triumph of Christian faith over Communism. Gorbachev introduced his wife to John Paul II commenting that the John Paul II was the highest moral authority on earth (Gertz, 2008; Weigel, 2001).

After Pope John Paul II's death in 2005, Pope Benedict XVI announced that the normal five-year waiting period before beginning the cause of beatification and canonization (i.e., the process of becoming a saint) would be waivered for the late Pope John Paul II (Johnson, 2007) – one of the highest honours received in the Catholic Church. The researcher infers from the events listed, that Pope John Paul II had successfully reached the stage of *universalising* faith.

Fowler (1981) stated that people within this faith stage kindle individual imaginations because of their generosity and authority, in their freedom and their costly love; they embody the promise and lure of a shared future, or hereafter. Furthermore, he said that their trust in the power of the future account for their readiness to spend and be spent in making the

Kingdom actual. Evidence of this in the life of Pope John Paul II is shown in the pope calling himself a 'witness to hope' at a United Nations address in 1995, where he defended the universality of human rights (Weigel, 2001).

The following is an apt statement by Fowler with regards to the *universalising* faith stage as it relates to Pope John Paul II: 'These people have been selected by the great Blacksmith of history, heated in the fires of turmoil and trouble and then hammered into usable shape on the hard anvil of conflict and struggle' (Fowler, 1981, p. 202). The researcher infers that it was his devout Polish-Catholic roots, the turmoil of a war and losing his loved ones at an early age and the hammering into shape by university professors and spiritual mentors on the hard anvil of faith that shaped Lolek into the Pope that he was. Therefore the researcher infers that Pope John Paul II had developed the emergent strength of this stage, namely, *subversiveness*.

9.4 Conclusion

The first part of the chapter provided a brief synopsis of Pope John Paul II's encyclical letter, titled *Fides et Ratio,* highlighting key points on faith and reason and the relationship between the two. It provided the reader with an understanding of Pope John Paul II's perception of faith through the personal accounts of some of his friends and colleagues**.** The findings and discussion of the faith development of Pope John Paul II throughout his lifespan was then presented. The findings were presented across the seven stages as proposed by Fowler's (1981) Stages of Faith Development as they relate to the major historical periods of Pope John Paul II's life. The following chapter provides an integration and discussion of Pope John Paul II's psychosocial and faith development.

CHAPTER 10

Integration of Findings and Discussion

10.1. Chapter Preview

This chapter provides an integration and discussion of Pope John Paul II's psychosocial and faith development. Firstly, the two theoretical frameworks used in this study are compared by highlighting their points of similarity and divergence. Thereafter, comparative conclusions are presented by presenting a comparative summary of the biographical findings of Pope John Paul II's life history within the frameworks provided by the psychosocial and faith development theories.

10.2 Conceptual outline to the integration of findings

Two psychological frameworks were used in this study: (a) a stage-based theory of psychosocial development, and (b) a stage-based theory of faith development. The presentation and discussion of the findings related to Pope John Paul II's psychosocial and faith development in this chapter aimed at integrating the sets of findings presented in chapters 8 and 9. The researcher, firstly, presents the similarities and differences between the two theoretical frameworks relevant to their use in this psychobiographical study. Thereafter, comparative conclusions of the findings are discussed for all four historical periods of Pope John Paul II's life. The main summative points of the findings of each approach are tabled and contrasted in order to explore the degree to which the frameworks complemented each other when applied to a particular historical period.

10.3 Similarities and divergence of the theoretical frameworks

The two theoretical frameworks used in this study, namely, Erikson's theory of psychosocial development (Erikson, 1950) and Fowler's theory of faith development (1981), show some common features as well as a few differences. Before the findings relating to the biographical data on the life of Pope John Paul II can be meaningfully integrated, these points of similarity and departure need to be considered.

The theory of psychosocial and faith development have demonstrated the following similarities:

1. *Eugraphic focus*

   In both psychosocial and faith development, the stages are characterised by (a) the ego's task of integrating certain oppositional forces, and (b) the specific resulting ego strength or quality which is gained should such integration take place successfully (Erikson, 1997). Erikson refers to these ego strengths and virtues which develop if the ego is able to create a working balance between opposing forces during a developmental stage (Gross, 1987; Roazen, 1976). According to Fowler (1981), each stage has emerging strengths that will assist in the successful faith development within the next stage.

2. *Integrative approach*

   One of Erikson's fundamental assumptions was that human development continuously depends on three complimentary processes of organisation, namely, the *soma* (i.e., the biological, hierarchical organisation of organ systems), the *psyche* (i.e., the psychic organisation of individual experience through the process of ego synthesis) and the *ethos* (i.e., the social milieu) (Erikson, 1997; Stevens, 2008). Erikson's approach is, therefore, an integrative one, taking into account the different aspects that may interact to produce human behaviour and experience. Fowler's approach, one that "rely on Erikson's theory as more as a background against which to hear and analyze life stories..." (Fowler, 1981, p. 106), is also an integrative one. Fowler also used the work of Piaget and Kohlberg as a basis on which to understand faith development (Fowler, 1981).

3. *Developmental orientation*

Both theories of psychosocial and faith development is conceptualised as a progression of stages which cover the entire human life cycle (Erikson, 1963, 1997; Fowler, 1981). While the stages in Erikson and Fowler's theories focus on the different aspects of psychosocial and faith development respectively, they both are designed according to an epigenetic viewpoint.

4. *Dynamic focus*

The epigenetic viewpoint in Erikson and Fowler's stage-based approach also proposes that the different growing parts are interrelated (Erikson, 1997; Fowler, 1981). This gives the theories of psychosocial and faith development a dynamic quality which allows for the explanation of developmental processes throughout the lifespan.

It is important to note that Fowler used Erikson's theory as a 'background' in order to analyze life stories which would later give rise to his theory (Fowler, 1981). Therefore Erikson's theory somewhat parallels Fowler's. However, Fowler said that, "in terms of structural stages, normal persons can reach a long lasting equilibrium at any Stage from 2 on. This fact affects the way they experience and deal with psychosocial crises Erikson has identified, but in no way means that they will avoid or bypass them" (Fowler, 1981, p. 107).

11.4 Comparative Conclusions

In the following sections, the main findings from both psychological frameworks are presented in table format for all the historical periods of Pope John Paul II's life. The two sets of findings are then compared to highlight where the frameworks could be seen to offer complementary, or contrasting, findings.

10.4.1 Childhood and Adolescence (1920 – 1938)

Summaries of the findings from the two psychological frameworks for this historical period, ranging from Karol's birth until the end of his high school career at 18, are presented in Table 4. During this historical period, Karol's psychosocial development progressed

through the stages as proposed by Erikson (1950) and at the same time, he also developed a strong sense of faith.

Table 4

Psychosocial and Faith Development in the Childhood and Adolescence

Psychosocial Development	Faith Development
Trust versus Mistrust: 1. Karol's early experiences were characterised by trust, consistency, continuity and reliability. 2. Karol appeared to have developed the ego strength of *hope*.	*Undifferentiated Faith :* 1. Karol experienced consistent love and care from his parents. 2. As a result of his environment as an infant, Karol appeared to have developed the emerging strength of *trust* and *mutuality*.
Autonomy versus Shame and Doubt: 1. The conditions were favourable for the development of autonomy, as young Karol's environment seemed neither restrictive nor permissive. He explored his immediate environment autonomously and independently. 2. Karol's development seemed to have cultivated in him an autonomous ability to exercise free *will*.	*Intuitive-Projective Faith:* 1. Karol leant about his religion through experiences, stories, images and the people he came into contact with, namely his parents and parish priests. 3. Karol appeared to have developed the emergent strength of this stage: *imagination*
Initiative versus Guilt: 1. Karol displayed initiative through his resilience (after his mother became ill and brother left for university) and active efforts in planning outdoor activities for himself and his friends. 2. Karol appeared to have developed the ego strength of a sense of *purpose*.	
Industry versus Inferiority: 1. Karol demonstrated a sense of industry through his above-average ability, his	*Mythic-Literal Faith:* 1. Karol's mother and brother passed during this stage, where his reactions showed a strong

participation in extracurricular activities and his contemplative, inquisitive and philosophical manner. 2. Karol's development seemed to have enabled him to experience a sense of *competence*.	belief in justice and reciprocity of the universe. This illustrated the development of mythical-literal faith. 2. This experience of death and dying, initiated the development of the emergent strength of this stage: *Narrative*
Identity versus Role Confusion: 1. Karol entered this stage without any apparent delays in psychosocial development. He demonstrated development regarding an individual identity (i.e., industrious scholar), a social identity (i.e., establishing healthy peer group relations at the theatre) and a spiritual identity (i.e., confirmed as a Catholic). 2. This developmental stage continued into the next historical period.	*Synthetic-Conventional Faith:* 1. Karol initiated development of his identity and outlook/ideology by the synthesis of his values (industriousness, piousness and social responsibility). 2. This synthesis of values initiated the development of Karol's emergent strength of this stage: *Identity*

From Table 4, certain similarities can be observed between the descriptions offered by the two psychological frameworks. The first psychosocial stage of *Trust vs. Mistrust* coincides with the first faith stage of *undifferentiated* faith which occurs during infancy. Both these psychosocial and faith stages aim to develop a sense of trust with regards to the parents and universe/divine respectively. Findings from this stage show that Karol experienced a consistent and reliable sense of trust and care from his parents, resulting in him developing a basic sense of trust. The following subsequent two psychosocial stages of *Autonomy vs. Shame or Doubt* and *Initiative vs. Guilt* overlap, and coincide with the *Intuitive-Projective* faith stage which occurs during early childhood. The researcher postulates that these psychosocial stages and the coinciding faith stage had a mutually beneficial development outcome for Karol. Karol's newly developed imagination (i.e., emergent faith strength) would allow him the self-efficacy to be autonomous and use his initiative in the same manner his autonomy and initiative would allow his imagination to develop. The fifth psychosocial

stage of *Identity vs. Role Confusion* coincides with the *Synthetic-Conventional faith* stage which occurs during adolescence. Both these psychosocial and faith stages are characterized by the development of personal identity. Karol's successful progression through both these psychosocial and faith stages resulted in a multi-faceted identity.

In summary of this historical period, Karol developed a consistent sense of trust and mutuality with parents. As a result of these favourable conditions and owing to his mother's illness and his brother's absence, Karol's sense of autonomy and initiative was soon developed. Simultaneously, his imagination grew as he learnt about Catholicism through experience, stories and modelled behaviour from his parents and parish priests. Karol's efforts at school and in his extracurricular activities led him to develop a sense of industry while simultaneously building his narrative after the death of his mother and brother. Karol initiated the development of his identity by the synthesis of his values (i.e., industriousness, piousness and social responsibility). All the ego strengths gathered through the successful resolution of the conflicts within each of the previous psychosocial stages, namely, hope, will, purpose, competence, would be incorporated into Karol's identity and this identity would become solidified in the next historical period of his life.

10.4.2 Young Adulthood (1941 – 1960)

Summaries of the findings from the two psychological frameworks for this historical period, ranging from Karol's freshman year at university to the age of 40, are presented in Table 5. During this historical period, Karol's psychosocial development progressed through the stages as proposed by Erikson (1950) and at the same time, his faith development deepened.

Table 5

Psychosocial and Faith Development in the Young Adulthood

Psychosocial Development	Faith Development
Identity versus Role Confusion: 1. Karol's developing identity is solidified by the experiences that took place in this historical period (i.e., World War II began, forcing Karol into clandestine university studies and spiritual counselling and hard labour at a quarry). 2. Karol seemed to develop a sense of *fidelity* in relation to his individual identity as a student/academic and his spiritual identity.	
Intimacy versus Isolation: 1. Karol developed the capacity for intimacy in numerous situations – With God, his young students who he asked to call him 'wujek' (uncle) as well as his many spiritual guides and mentors. 2. Karol seemed to have gained the ego strength of *love* based on his successful resolution of conflict in this stage.	*Individuative-Reflective Faith:* 1. Karol decides to become a priest and this decision shows characteristics of the individuative-reflective faith stage i.e., taking responsibility for his beliefs and feelings. 2. Karol goes on to develop the emergent strength of this stage: *Critical reflection* (of self and outlook/ideology.

In summary of this historical period, Karol's identity was solidified by the experiences of this historical period. He would go on to develop a sense of fidelity towards his identity and world view, after the critical reflection of both of these aspects in his life. The end of this historical period shows intimacy growing in his relationship with God and other spiritual guides and mentors as he goes on to become a priest and then bishop.

10.4.3 Middle Adulthood (1960 – 1985)

Summaries of the findings from the two psychological frameworks for this historical period, ranging from ages 40 to 65 years, are presented in Table 6. During this historical

period, Karol's psychosocial development progressed through the stages as proposed by

Erikson (1950) while his faith development expanded.

Table 6

Psychosocial and Faith Development in the Middle Adulthood

Psychosocial Development	Faith Development
Generativity versus Stagnation: 1. Karol's expansion of ego interests could have been facilitated by his role as professor, priest, bishop, cardinal and then Pope. 2. Karol also displayed generativity by initiating causes for the youth and families for the development and maintenance of future generations. 3. A balance between expansion of ego interests and a capacity for self-absorption could be identified. 4. Karol seemed to have developed the ego strength of *care* based on her successful resolution of the conflict within this stage.	*Conjunctive Faith:* 1. Karol's ability to integrate his identity and world view successful and his acceptance and tolerance of other religions illustrated his development of conjunctive faith. 2. Karol seemed to have developed the emergent strength of this stage: *ironic imagination*

In summary of this historical period, Karol's ego interests expands and he develops a

sense of generativity. This allows him to develop care which shows in his conjunctive faith of

acceptance and tolerance of other religions and cultures. *Ironic imagination*, which Karol

developed within the only faith stage in this historical period, allows Karol the capacity to see

meaning in himself, while simultaneously recognizing that they are relative, partial and

inevitably distorting apprehensions of transcendent reality. Fowler (1981) stated that the next

faith stage, that of Universaling faith, is one that most people do not reach. However, the

researcher infers that the development of ironic imagination in this historical period, would

have been the catalyst Karol needed to reach the final stage of faith development that occurs in the next historical period.

10.4.4 Maturity (1985 – 2005)

Summaries of the findings from the two psychological frameworks for this historical period, ranging from ages 65 to 85 years, are presented in Table 7. During this historical period, Karol's psychosocial development progressed through the stages as proposed by Erikson (1950) while his faith development extended to the last faith stage.

Table 7

Psychosocial and Faith Development in the Maturity

Psychosocial Development	Faith Development
Ego Integrity versus Despair: 1. The public recognition of Karol's efforts through various awards served as an acknowledgement of the importance of his life's work. Karol has also had many people in his life who served as guides and mentors for the progression though this stage. 2. Karol's religious understanding of death prevented him from having a fear of death. 3. Karol's progression through this stage seems to have enabled him to develop the ego strength of *wisdom.*	*Universalising Faith:* 1. Even though a difficult stage to reach, Karol transitioned into this stage based on his universal principles of love and justice. 2. As a result of this, he developed the emergent strength: *Subversiveness*

In summary of this historical period, Karol developed the emergent strength of subversiveness which allowed him to be a revolutionary figure, influencing the fall of communism as well as other social injustices across the world. As a result of this, the public's recognition of Karol's efforts through various awards served as an acknowledgement of the

importance of his life's work which led to the development of ego integrity. Finally, Karol developed a sense of wisdom as a result of the successful progression through these stages.

10.5 Conclusion

This chapter provided an integration and discussion of findings regarding Pope John Paul II's psychosocial and faith development. Prominent points of similarity were highlighted, following by a comparative summary of biographical findings of Pope John Paul II's psychosocial and faith development. This chapter demonstrated how Pope John Paul II's life transcended Fowler's stages of faith, evidenced by him becoming a saint shortly after his death. In the following chapter, the conclusions and limitations of the study, as well as recommendations for future research, are presented.

CHAPTER 11

Conclusion, Limitations and Recommendations

11.1 Chapter Preview

In this final chapter, the researcher presents the concluding comments regarding this research project by, firstly, revisiting the research aim and providing a brief summary of the findings. Thereafter, the points of the value of this study are highlighted and the study's limitations are explored. Recommendations for future research are proposed. Finally, the researcher presents her final thoughts and remarks regarding her personal passage as an exploration of the process of reflexivity.

11.2 The research aim revisited

The researcher aimed to provide a psychologically driven exploration and description of a single life within its socio-historical context through the application of psychological frameworks to biographical data. The primary aim of this study was to explore and describe Pope John Paul II's psychosocial and faith development throughout his lifespan, with specific focus on his spiritual, academic and political attributes. The aim falls within an inductive research approach, and reflects the exploratory-descriptive nature of the study. The researcher, accordingly, conceptualised the subject's life in terms of specific psychological perspectives by applying two psychological frameworks to the historical and biographical information available on Pope John Paul II. The descriptive-dialogic nature of case study research within the deductive approach also provided the opportunity to *informally test* aspects and facets of the content of the theory of psychosocial and faith development.

11.3 Summary of findings

Pope John Paul II's life was, firstly, explored and described from the perspective of the psychosocial development theory. When the biographical data on his life were examined and

selected for interpretation, it became apparent that Pope John Paul II's psychosocial development closely followed the 'blueprint' as proposed by Erikson (1950) and that he accrued all eight proposed ego qualities over his lifespan.

Secondly, Pope John Paul II's life was explored and described through the application of Fowler's (1981) stages of faith development, yielding sufficient evidence to illustrate that every stage of faith was achieved. In the following section, the researcher outlines the points of value of this study. Where applicable, recommendations are proposed for future research.

11.4 The value of the study

In this section, the value of this research study will be outlined and discussed by referring to (a) the two conceptual models of psychosocial and faith development, (b) the psychobiographical case study research method and (c) the psychobiographical subject, Pope John Paul II.

11.4.1 The two conceptual models

The value of approaching this psychological biography from two conceptual models, namely, psychosocial personality development and faith development, is mainly related to their (a) multi-dimensional and systemic nature and, (b) developmental orientation. With regards to the two conceptual models' multi-dimensional and systemic nature, the following values of the study could be highlighted:

1. Both models provided useful multi-dimensional frameworks to explore and describe a variety of factors that influenced Pope John Paul II's psychosocial and faith development. Examples of these included the social, occupational, self regulatory and spiritual tasks that he faced throughout his life. This multiplicity of dimensions in the view of Pope John Paul II's life provided the study with a grounded holistic focus, which is central to the re-contextualization of the lived lives of enigmatic figures (Carlson, 1998; McAdams, 1994; Runyan, 1982b; Schultz, 2005a).

2. Both theories provided useful systematic frameworks to explore and describe the influence that various systemic forces, such as family and the socio-cultural and historical environment had on Pope John Paul II's psychosocial and faith development. Thus, both models provided contextual paradigms within which to explore and describe Pope John Paul II's identity and lifestyle development.

With regards to these two conceptual models' relatively positive definition of personality development, the following values could be highlighted:

1. Erikson's (1950) psychosocial theory provided a valuable staged view of life crises to the evaluation of Pope John Paul II's psychosocial development and highlighted certain contrasts to optimal identity development. Fowler's (1981) faith stages viewed optimal correlations with psychosocial eras as a sense of how time, experience, challenge and nurturance are required for growth in faith.

2. The findings of this study regarding psychosocial and faith development generally indicated that both conceptual models are theoretically relevant and practically applicable to the research and understanding of identity and lifestyle development.

With regards to the developmental orientation of the two theoretical models, the following values of the study could be highlighted:

1. Both models provided a useful framework to explore and describe the development of Pope John Paul II's personality throughout his lifespan. This study provided a description of the important development of faith which was the foundation of both his personal and occupational life.

2. The use of the two theories in this study also had methodological value in their contribution to the study's construct validity and reliability. The construct validity of this psychobiography was enhanced by psychosocial theory and faith development theory's provision of clear conceptualizations of the factors that influence personality development.

This enabled the researcher to operationalize, with a higher degree of reliability and clarity, the salient biographical data related to Pope John Paul II's psychosocial and faith development. Further, the theories contributed to the reliability of the study through the construction of a conceptual framework that was used to extract, analyze and contextualize salient biographical data on Pope John Paul II's personality development. This resulted in a consistent pattern of data extraction and categorization that enhanced the consistency, auditability and reliability of the psychological biography.

11.4.2 Psychobiographical case study research

The value of this psychobiographical case study is similar to the value of life history research that was discussed in Chapter 3. The value of following a psychobiographical research approach is outlined below.

First, the study highlighted a 'new and different dimension' (Fouchè, 1999) Pope John Paul II's life that has not been presented before in biographical form. This refers to the psychological focus on his personality development, with specific emphasis on his faith development across his lifespan.

This study illustrated the value of biography for psychology and, conversely, the value that psychology holds for biographical research. Biographical materials provide invaluable sources of information to study human development and personality from a developmental psychological perspective. In turn, psychology provides functional and scientific conceptual models within which to conduct biographies. Thus, psychobiography represents the effective synthesis of psychology and biography (Fouchè, 1999; Fouchè & van Niekerk, 2005b).

Further, this psychobiographical study reflected the value and importance of studying individual lives within their socio-cultural and historical contexts. Life history materials provided the psychobiographer with insight into the influence that contextual forces have on human development. This psychobiographical study on Pope John Paul II illustrated the

value of uncovering his psychosocial and faith development against the background of the larger societal contexts that influenced his life. Further, the researcher found that the utilization of a developmental perspective facilitated the analysis and understanding of the subject as the researcher had to re-contextualize the data in terms of the historical period.

The study of finished lives (Carlson, 1988) through psychobiographical enquiry enabled the researcher to trace human development over time. The longitudinal life history approach served to illustrate the value of biography as a means to study the behavioural processes and patterns unique to psychosocial and faith development over the lifespan. A further advantage of the biographical approach to the study of Pope John Paul II was that the researcher was able to triangulate the salient biographical findings with the various biographical sources that were available. This useful corroboration enhanced the relevant internal validity of the findings related to Pope John Paul II's psychosocial and faith development.

This psychobiography contributes to the limited, but growing, number of biographies that have been completed within academic psychology in South Africa. The growing interest and popularity of qualitative life history research – such as the use of the psychobiographical research design and methodology – has enriched the understanding of developmental areas of, for example, health, personality, leadership and career development (Fouchè, 1999; Fouchè & van Niekerk, 2005b; Jacobs, 2004; Kotton, 2002).

11.4.3 The psychobiographical subject

The inclusion of Pope John Paul II in this psychobiography had various advantages for the study. The first advantage of studying the life of Pope John Paul II is that a fair amount of rich and comprehensive resources were available to tap and cross-corroborate salient information. However, despite their corroborating information, the literature focused predominantly on the papacy of Pope John Paul II. It is recommended that psychobiographers

include the consideration of the availability of sufficient biographical sources as well as the breadth of such resources as important criteria in their choice of psychobiographical subject.

A second advantage of Pope John Paul II as a subject is related to his 'greatness' as a Pope and world figure. Life history researchers, such as Simonton (1994) and Howe (1997), have advocated the importance of studying great figures in an attempt to unravel not only the reason for their greatness but also what 'lessons' they can teach humanity. Pope John Paul II was viewed as a one of the greatest teachers of our time. He not only taught about the power of forgiveness but he modelled it; he not only taught the power of faith and discipleship in discovering the truth and meaning in life but he lived it; he not only taught the importance of hope in all aspects of life but he advocated it.

As evidenced in this psychobiographical study of Pope John Paul II, there is much value in studying the lives of great individuals. The psychosocial and faith paradigms together provided a more comprehensive understanding of the psychosocial, cultural and historical forces that contributed to his greatness.

11.4.4 General thoughts and remarks

In addition to the values listed above, relevance of a study of this nature lies in the psychological exploration and description it provided on a significant world figure. None of the existing works on Pope John Paul II provided a formal psychological perspective on his life – filling the void in the current body of knowledge on him.

As an individual who led a long and extraordinarily productive life, Pope John Paul II proved a suitable example for the study of optimal psychosocial and faith development. This study, therefore, contributed to the existing body of knowledge in these two areas. In addition, demographic and contextual variables unique to his life created a real-world scenario for the testing of the psychological frameworks used in this study. As Elms (1994) noted, apart from the quantitative tests that can be conducted to examine the validity of

psychological hypotheses, psychologists need to test the personal significance hypotheses by applying it to a single life at a time. Exploring Pope John Paul II's life through these lenses also created a platform for the informal testing of these theoretical frameworks by assessing the applicability and relevance of psychosocial and faith development on a single life.

The psychological frameworks utilised in this study also proved to be of value. This study utilised two psychological frameworks in the interpretation of aspects of the subject's life, which enabled the researcher to consider a broader range of biographical information than would have been possible had only one psychological theory been used. Furthermore, the use of multiple psychological frameworks highlighted some of the complexities of the single life and as such guarded against the oversimplification of the subject's life story.

The value of using Erikson's theory of psychosocial development in this psychobiographical study was that it highlighted the complex process of adaption and growth, and placed periods in the subject's life into developmental context. The value of utilising the Fowler's faith development theory was that it provided a useful, systemic framework for exploring the influence that various systemic forces (e.g., family, community, culture and religion) had on faith development. The combination of these two frameworks also proved valuable. Firstly, their shared eugraphic focus (see section 10.3) enabled the researcher to dynamically describe human development and ensured that the aspects of faith development present in the subject's life could be explored. The combination of these frameworks therefore allowed the researcher to describe some of the subject's positive attributes as well as gain insight into the origins of some of these strengths. Secondly, the integrative nature of these two psychological frameworks enabled a detailed and broad exploration and description of various constructs and dimensions. The interrelatedness of these constructs and dimensions were illuminated by both psychological frameworks chosen for this study. This also ensured that the subject was not considered in isolation, but rather

seen within his socio-historical context as both frameworks emphasise the influence of the broader environment on the individual.

In addition to contributing to the body of knowledge on Pope John Paul II as well as frameworks of psychosocial and faith development, this study also contributed to the current body of knowledge in the field of psychobiography. The use of specific methodological strategies in this study proved useful in the extraction and analysis of data. Firstly, Alexander's model (1988, 1990) was used to organise, extract, prioritise and analyse the date. This methodological approach was discussed in section 7.7.1. The indicators of salience helped ensure that significant pieces of biographical data were carefully considered for analysis. Posing specific questions to the data enabled the researcher to extract units of analysis relevant to the objectives of the study. Secondly, the use of the conceptual framework and matrix proposed by Yin (2003), enabled the researcher to aim for systematic and consistent analysis of the biographical data collected on the life of Pope John Paul II. The study's findings could therefore be presented as a longitudinal exploration and descriptions of the stages of psychosocial and faith development.

In terms of using this study for the practical application in therapy, this study provided an understanding of the importance of faith in the lives of clients. Faith, through this study, can be seen as a unyielding support system (available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week). The study also illustrated how faith can provide a manner in which to understand and process traumatic experiences in the lives of clients. Faith, and its associated vernacular, provides the clinician with a particular language through which to communicate with a client. This will foster a good therapeutic relationship between clinician and client, and in doing so, the clinician is able to extract information otherwise guarded by the client. Through this study, it became clear that the client's faith, depending on the level, should be considered in choosing a therapeutic approach with specific clients. The Jungian approach, in particular, seems an

appropriate school of thought (Analytical Psychology) in which to formulate and develop a treatment plan for these types of clients. The aim of the Jungian approach is to achieve a meaningful life through a continuous cyclical process of self-awareness, transformation, and self-actualization. Jung believed that the spiritual aspects of an individual's identity are crucial in this cycle.

Karol Wojtyla, as a young man, did not have his eyes set on greatness or becoming Pope but rather to be a true follower of Christ, a disciple. And in doing so, in dedicating his life and work to God, he became what many consider the most influential man of our time. The message seems simple but in fact is a great, redeeming one: If you live a life of faith and love, you will be blessed eternally.

Finally, the message of hope is another product of this study – the concluding echo which reverberates from its pages. Karol Wojtyla lost his mother and brother at an early age and eventually his father by the time he was 21 years old. In the midst of all his personal loss, he also lived in a time of immense political strife. However, this did not deter him. He took to his religious studies clandestinely – knowing all the while that he could be killed for what he was undertaking. When he finally became Pope, he had many critics and enemies. He was shot and almost killed but after recovering, he forgave his assassin. During his pontificate, he achieved the unachievable. Pope John Paul II was a true 'witness to hope', and through this study, the source of this hope was identified - his faith.

11.5 Limitations of the study

Elms (1994) discussed various limitations related to the methodology of the psychobiographical case study. The researcher has provided preliminary considerations in the form of discussions on reductionism, cross-cultural differences, researcher bias, validity and reliability, elitistim and easy genre, analysis of an absent subject, the infinite amount of biographical data, and inflated expectations (see section 6.3). In terms of the preliminary

methodical considerations, the researcher is able to comment retrospectively on the experience of conducting a psychobiographical case study.

With regard to *researcher bias*, the researcher stated that she chose Pope John Paul II as a subject, unhesitatingly, based on interest value, uniqueness and significance of his life. However, in doing an extensive literature review, the researcher was able to gain an objective understanding of the man behind the legend, with all his trials and tribulations. In addition, the researcher was guided by her promoter to be introspective with regard to her emotions toward Pope John Paul II. Therefore, the researcher explored her feelings and attitudes towards Pope John Paul II throughout the study, journaling her feelings and attitudes that developed during the literature study, data collection and analysis phase. In doing so, the researcher remained objective towards the subject.

With regard to *reductionism*, the researcher had no trouble in obtaining personal data pertaining to the life of Pope John Paul II as multiple sources were used in data collection. The researcher also had the advantage of using many of Pope John Paul II's autobiographical work to corroborate this information. In addition, the researcher had access to primary material (i.e., first-hand letters) for the use of this study.

The psychobiographical criticism of *elitism and easy genre* does not appear justified in the application to the study of Pope John Paul II. Although, he has received much media attention and various books have been written about him, they were more contemporary sources that added dimension. Concerning the criticism of a psychobiography being an easy genre, the contrary can be argued in that the multidimensional nature of Pope John Paul II's life and personality made this a complex undertaking. It was also challenging to remain objective and refrain from researcher bias.

The criticism of *analyzing an absent subjective* was sidestepped as the researcher was not required to follow typical formalities such as informed consent, maintaining a safe

therapeutic relationship, abiding by ethical guidelines of therapeutic practice and devising a biographical questionnaire.

With regard to the criticism of having an *infinite amount of biographical data* to work with, the researcher had to establish the relevance and irrelevance of all the material. The relevancy of the data was based on the assessment of how the data would contribute to the aims of the study.

As the study progressed, the researcher became increasingly aware of *inflated expectations* of the study. This study attempted to test and challenge existing knowledge rather than replace it.

11.6 Recommendations for future research

The researcher concludes from this research project that the examination of the lives of great figures who promoted values of equality, piousness and social justice, especially within the time that we live in, remain an important endeavour. The researcher maintains that future research may find the psychobiographical approach, and in particular, the methodological strategies as used in this study, useful in addressing the abovementioned research aim. Furthermore, the application of alternative theories to examine the life of Pope John Paul II, could provide valuable descriptions and explanations which were beyond the scope of this study, and is therefore recommended for future research.

The psychosocial development theory has been found to well suited for psychobiographical studies and its future use is therefore recommended. However, two specific recommendations can be made regarding the psychosocial theory. Firstly, the application of rigid age ranges poses certain difficulties within the psychobiographical context as these opposed Erikson's intentional vagueness regarding delineation of psychosocial stages. Age ranges as used in this study were, however, useful in organising biographical data and establishing a framework for data analysis. The researcher, therefore,

recommends cognisance of the potential limitations of such operationalisations. Secondly, utilising the ninth stage of the psychosocial theory of development as described by Joan Erikson (1997) could provide future psychobiographers with valuable additional information.

11.7 Final thoughts and remarks on the researcher's personal passage

The following is a personal reflection and synopsis of the historical personage of Pope John Paul II as experienced by the researcher. This synopsis evolved over the course of the four years of the duration of the study, as seen through her personal lenses as a researcher, psychologist, Roman Catholic and critical thinker:

> Modern assertiveness notwithstanding, we are neither self-constituting nor self-defining. Family, education, physique, languages, native culture, friendships, vocation, hobbies, religious and philosophical convictions – these constitute the many rails on which our lives run. That all life journeys run along such rails is a given of human condition, but the gauge of the rails differs (Weigel, 2001, p. 13)

One way to think of Pope John Paul II's historical personage is to think of it as running along a particularly broad-gauged rail bed.

- He was an intellectual, not interested in the status of the professoriate, who had a deep appreciation for untutored piety.

- He was an accomplished philosopher, recognized as such by his peers throughout the world

- He was a contemplative mystic who was an enthusiastic sportsman for almost seventy years

- He was a celibate with a remarkable insight into human sexuality, especially as viewed from the perspective and experience of women

- He lived from age 19 – 58 years under totalitarian regimes and has written clearly about the cultural factors that make democracy possible

- He was a Pole with marked sensitivity toward Jews and Judaism

- He had a considerable impact on world affairs and the life of the Church while not having the slightest interest in the conventions of politics

- He was arguably the most well-informed man in the world, yet he rarely read newspapers

- He was notably a successful statesman without extensive preparation for the job

- He was blessed with great mentors as a young man, but he is primarily self taught, who learns quickly from experience

- He was a disciple known for the intensity of love, who was called to exercise an office of authority an jurisdiction in the Church

- He was a man of faith, whose faith is who he *was* – and which gave him a great hope for humanity

Studying a man of this calibre (from humble beginnings), cannot leave the average person without moments of self reflection. The ripple effects of this study are felt in all areas of my life. As a Catholic, my reflection of the Church and the doctrine has shifted. It is not simply a set of rules that we are meant to abide by. But rather an understanding that if we live by the word of God, the *must* abide becomes a *need* to abide. In fact, it becomes a *want* to abide. My thoughts and consequently the manner in which I approach the sacrament of confession have changed. It has become a more enlightening experience. I believe that this is the true nature of confession. As a therapist, the aspect of faith and spirituality of my clients have become an integral part of their intervention. Previously, I allowed the client to lead in all religious or spiritual conversation. However, most people drift away from their faith and spirituality during trials and tribulations and therefore this vital facet of their lives were untold and unheard. I have come to realise, though, that enquiring about faith and spirituality in the initial history-taking session is as crucial as enquiring about any other support systems they

may have at the time. It has become an important part of establishing rapport as it provides me with an intimate aspect of the person's personality. It allows me to connect with the client at a deeper level. And the results have been incredible. I can honestly say, that the interventions that include faith and spirituality as an aspect of therapy, has allowed those clients to process loss, hurt, anger and disappointment easier and with an understanding of a greater purpose to it all.

11.8 Conclusion

This chapter concluded this psychobiographical study of the life of Pope John Paul II. The research aim was revisited in this chapter and the study's value and limitations were discussed. The researcher offered suggestions for future research and provided the reader with her concluding personal reflection and synopsis of the historical personage of Pope John Paul II.

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Appendix A

A prayer for the intercession of Pope John Paul II

Prayer for graces through the intercession of servant of God

Pope John Paul II

O Blessed Trinity
We thank You for having graced the Church
with Pope John Paul II
and for allowing the tenderness of your Fatherly
care, the glory of the cross of Christ,
and the splendor of the Holy Spirit, to shine
through him.
Trusting fully in Your infinite mercy
and in the maternal intercession of Mary,
he has given us a living image of Jesus the
Good Shepherd, and has shown us that
holiness is the necessary measure of ordinary
Christian life and the way of achieving eternal
communion with you.
Grant us, by his intercession, and according to
Your will,
the graces we implore,
hoping that he will soon be numbered
among your saints.

Amen
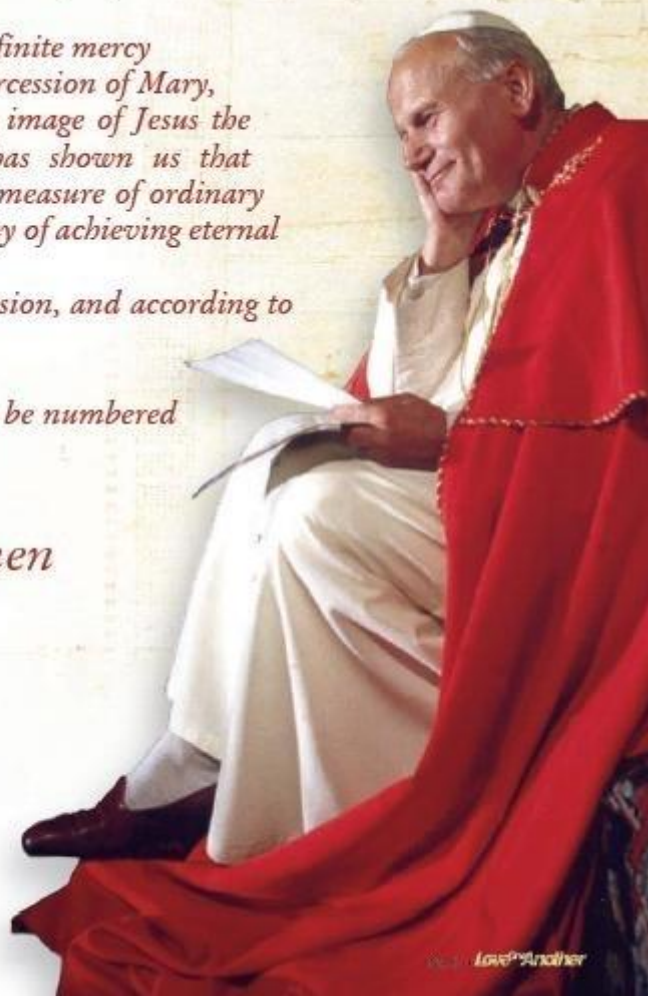
<center>**Appendix B**</center>

The Process of Beatification & Canonization

 The process of documenting the life and virtues of a holy man or woman cannot begin until 5 years after death. This waiting period insures that the person has an enduring reputation for sanctity among the faithful. It can be waived by the Supreme Pontiff, and has been done on two occasions. Pope John Paul II waived 3 years of the waiting period in the case of Mother Teresa of Calcutta, and Pope Benedict XVI waived all five years in the case of his predecessor, Pope John Paul II.

After the five years have concluded, or earlier if all or some of the period is waived, the Bishop of the diocese in which the individual died can petition the Holy See to allow the initialization of a Cause for Beatification and Canonization. If there is no objection by the Roman Dicasteries, in particular the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, the permission, or *nihil obstat* (nothing stands in the way), is communicated to the initiating Bishop.

Servant of God

Once a Cause has begun, the individual is called a *Servant of God*, for example, the Servant of God Karol Wojtyła or the Servant of God Pope John Paul II.

Diocesan Tribunal: Informative Process

During this first phase the Postulation established by the diocese, or religious institute, to promote the Cause must gather testimony about the life and virtues of the Servant of God. Also, the public and private writings must be collected and examined. This documentary phase of the process can take many years and concludes with the judgment of a diocesan tribunal, and the ultimate decision of the bishop, that the heroic virtues of the Servant of God have or have not been demonstrated. The results, along with the bound volumes of

documentation, or *Acta* (Acts), are communicated to the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints.

Congregation for the Causes of the Saints: Positio

The *Acta* resulting from the documentary or informative phase of the process are committed by the Congregation to a Relator appointed from among the Congregation's College of Relators, whose task is to superintend the Cause through the rest of the process. Working with a theological commission established by the Congregation, the Relator ensures that the *Positio* summarizing the life and virtues of the Servant of God is properly prepared. When the Positio is finished, the theological commission votes affirmatively or negatively on the Cause. This recommendation is then passed to the cardinal, archbishop and bishop members of the Congregation who in turn vote. Their vote determines whether the Cause lives or dies. If the vote is affirmative, the recommendation of a Decree of Heroic Virtues is sent to the Holy Father, whose judgment is final.

Venerable

Supreme Pontiff: Decree of the Heroic Virtues of the Servant of God

Once the person's Heroic Virtues have been recognized by the Pope, they are called Venerable, e.g. Venerable Servant of God John Paul II, or Venerable John Paul II.

Diocese: First Miracle Proposed in Support of the Cause

The remaining step before beatification is the approval of a miracle, evidence of the intercessory power of the Venerable Servant of God and thus of his or her union after death with God. Those who propose a miracle do so in the diocese where it is alleged to have occurred, not in the diocese of the Cause, unless the same. The diocese of the candidate miracle then conducts its own tribunals, scientific and theological.

The scientific commission must determine by accepted scientific criteria that there is no natural explanation for the alleged miracle. While miracles could be of any type, those almost

exclusively proposed for Causes are medical. These must be well-documented, both as regards the disease and the treatment, and as regard the healing and its persistence.

While the scientific commission rules that the cure is without natural explanation, the theological commission must rule whether the cure was a miracle in the strict sense, that is, by its nature can only be attributed to God. To avoid any question of remission due to unknown natural causation, or even unrecognized therapeutic causation, theologians prefer cures of diseases judged beyond hope by medicine, and which occur more or less instantaneously. The disappearance of a malignancy from one moment to another, or the instantaneous regeneration of diseased, even destroyed, tissue excludes natural processes, all of which take time. Such cases also exclude the operation of the angelic nature. While the enemy could provoke a disease by his oppression and simulate a cure by withdrawing his action, the cure could not be instantaneous, even one day to the next. Much less can he regenerate tissue from nothing. These are, therefore, the preferred kinds of cases since they unequivocally point to a divine cause.

The theological commission must also determine whether the miracle resulted through the intercession of the Servant of God alone. If the family and friends have been praying without cease to the Servant of God exclusively, then the case is demonstrated. However, if they have been praying to the Servant of God, to the Blessed Virgin, St. Joseph and others, then the case is clouded, and probably cannot be demonstrated. Thus, the task of the theological commission is two-fold, judge whether the cure was a miracle, and judge whether this miracle is due to the intercession of the Servant of God. The decision is forwarded to the Congregation in Rome.

Congregation: First Miracle Proposed in Support of the Cause

As occurred at the diocesan level, the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints establishes both scientific and theological commissions. The affirmative vote of the

theological commission is transmitted to the General Meeting of the cardinal and episcopal members, whose affirmative judgment is forwarded to the Supreme Pontiff.

It should be noted that in cases of martyrdom the miracle required for beatification can be waived - martyrdom being understood as a miracle of grace. In this case, the vote of the Congregation would establish the death of the Servant of God as true martyrdom, resulting in a Decree of Martyrdom by the Holy Father.

Supreme Pontiff: Decree of a Miracle

With the Holy Father's approval of a Decree of a Miracle, the Servant of God can be beatified.

Blessed

Supreme Pontiff: Beatification

With the beatification rite, conducted on the authority of the Supreme Pontiff, the Venerable Servant of God is declared Blessed, e.g. Blessed John Paul II.

Blessed's may receive public veneration at the local or regional level, usually restricted to those dioceses or religious institutes closely associated with the person's life. 'Public veneration' in this use of the term doesn't mean that it is done *in public*; rather, that it is an act done by the clergy, or delegated laity, *in the name of the Church* (Mass, Divine Office, images in churches etc.), even if done in private. On the other hand, 'private veneration means veneration by individuals or groups acting *in their own name*, even if done 'in public'. While the Church restricts the public veneration of Blessed's, Catholics are free to privately venerate them.

The reason for this distinction and its disciplinary norm is that beatification is not considered an infallible papal act, and so it is not yet appropriate that the entire Church give liturgical veneration to the Blessed. Perhaps to reinforce this distinction, Pope Benedict XVI has restored the practice, in use prior to Pope Paul VI, of having the Prefect of the

Congregation conduct the beatification, rather than the Pope doing it himself. He has made exceptions, one of which is his predecessor, Pope John Paul II.

In the case of Blessed John Paul II, the Holy See in a Decree Concerning the Liturgical Cult of Blessed John Paul II has determined that public veneration is lawful in the Diocese of Rome and the nation of Poland. Other nations, dioceses and institutes may petition the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments for the Indult to render *cultus* (veneration) to the Blessed. Without an Indult, however, public veneration is illicit, and even harms the possibility for Canonization of the Blessed.

Diocese: Second Miracle Proposed in Support of the Cause

After beatification the Church looks for a second miracle before proceeding to canonization. The process is the same as it was for the miracle which made beatification possible. The alleged miracle is studied by scientific and theological commissions in the diocese in which it is alleged to have occurred.

Congregation: Second Miracle Proposed in Support of the Cause

After the diocesan process is concluded the proposed miracle is studied by a scientific and then a theological commission of the Congregation for the Causes of the Saints. The vote of this commission is forwarded to the episcopal members of the Congregation whose affirmative vote is communicated to the Holy Father.

Supreme Pontiff: Decree of a Miracle

The consent of the Holy Father to the decision of the Congregation results in a Decree of a Miracle. Canonization is now possible.

Saint

Supreme Pontiff: Canonization

By the Rite of Canonization the Supreme Pontiff, by an act which is protected from error by the Holy Spirit, elevates a person to the universal veneration of the Church. By

canonization the Pope does not make the person a saint. Rather, he declares that the person is with God and is an example of following Christ worthy of imitation by the faithful. A Mass, Divine Office and other acts of veneration, may now be offered throughout the universal Church.

If the saint has some universal appeal he may be added to the general calendar of the Church as a Memorial or Optional Memorial. If the appeal is localized to a region of the world, a particular nation, or a particular religious institute, the saint may be added to the particular calendars of those nations or institutes, or celebrated by the clergy and faithful with a devotion to the saint with a votive Mass or Office.

(Retrieved from https://www.ewtn.com/johnpaul2/cause/process.asp)