Mater Dei Institute of Education

# An Investigation of how the Catholic Tradition of Educational Thought might be given New Articulation in the Light of Selected Aspects of the Work of Three Contemporary Philosophers

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A Thesis written in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

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July 2014

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# Contents

# Abstract

An Investigation of how the Catholic Tradition of Educational Thought might be given New Articulation in the light of Selected Aspects of the Work of Three Contemporary Philosophers.

Michael J. Foley

This thesis examines the work of three philosophers – Jacques Maritain, Bernard Lonergan and Terence H. McLaughlin – with a view to recovering from their educational writings important insights and approaches pertinent to the task of giving new articulation to Catholic philosophy of education today.

Having noted the virtual disappearance of the Thomist-Aristotelian tradition in Catholic educational discourse over the past half-century, the thesis seeks to identify in these authors elements that suggest new perspectives on the Catholic educational tradition in a postmodern age.

The thesis selects aspects of the work of these thinkers that merit critical appraisal in any attempt to give a systematic and detailed expression to the Catholic tradition of educational thought today, namely: (1) Maritain's integral Christian humanism, (2) Lonergan's transcendental method, and (3) McLauglin's notion and practice of pedagogic *phronēsis*.

This study concludes with a reflection on how selected aspects of the work of these scholars might complement and strengthen the Congregation for Catholic Education's discourse in terms of the provision of a philosophic basis and framework of analysis.

# Acknowledgements

# List of Abbreviations

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| CCE: | Congregation for Catholic Education. |
| *CPMS (2002):* | *Consecrated Persons and their Mission in Schools: Reflections and Guidelines*, CCE, 2002, Vatican City. |
| *CS (1977):* | *The Catholic School*, [S]CCE, 1977, Vatican City. |
| *CSTTM (1997):* | *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, CCE, 1997, Vatican City. |
| *DH (1965):* | *Dignitatis Humanae, Declaration on Religious Liberty*, Second Vatican Council, 1965. |
| *DIM (1929):* | *Divini Illius Magistri, The Christian Education of Youth* |
| | Encyclical Letter of Pius XI, 1929, AAS, Vol. XXII, 1930, Num. 2. |
| *EC (1943):* | *Education at the Crossroads*, Jacques Maritain, Newhaven & London: Yale University Press, 1943. |
| *EGHL (1983):* | *Educational Guidance in Human Love: Outlines for Sex Education*, CCE, 1983, Vatican City. |
| *EID (2013):* | *Educating to Intercultural Dialogue in Catholic Schools: Living in Harmony for a Civilization of Love*, CCE, 2013, Vatican City |
| *EM (1962):* | *The Education of Man: The Educational Philosophy of Jacques Maritain*, ed. Donald and Idella Gallagher, Notre Dame, IND: University of Notre Dame Press, 1962. |
| *ETCS (2007):* | *Educating Together in Catholic Schools: A Shared Mission Between Consecrated Persons and Lay Faithful*, CCE, 2007, Vatican City. |
| *ETT (2014):* | *Educating Today and Tomorrow: A Renewing Passion*, CCE, 2014, Vatican City. |
| *GE (1965):* | *Gravissimum Educationis, Declaration on Christian Education*, Second Vatican Council, 1965. |
| *GS (1965):* | *Gaudium et Spes*, Second Vatican Council, *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*, 1965. |

*LCS (1982):*          *Lay Catholics in School: Witnesses to Faith*, [S]CCE, 1982, Vatican City.

*RDECS (1988):*     *The Religious Dimension of Education in the Catholic School: Guidelines for Reflection and Renewal*, CCE, 1988, Vatican City.

[S]CCE (1967-1982):  [Sacred] Congregation for Catholic Education.

*Topics:*            *Topics in Education*, Bernard Lonergan. Ed. Robert M. Doran & Frederick E. Crowe, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, Vol. 10, Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

**Chapter One: Purpose and Context of the Study; Review of Related Literature**

## Research Question

How might contemporary Catholic philosophers of education, by providing a philosophical basis and a sense of coherence for the literature of the Holy See's Congregation for Catholic Education, contribute to the re-articulation of a Catholic philosophy of education for the Twenty-first Century?

I begin this dissertation by addressing its research question and elucidating the specific aims of the thesis. A brief comment upon the terms of the research question seems appropriate as well as a few tentative statements that would indicate the kind of framework in which its several elements could be brought together. Such a reflection will serve to situate the main objectives for this dissertation and for the introductory chapter as set out below.

When the demise of the ancient tradition of Catholic educational thought was considered imminent, if not, indeed, an already accomplished fact, the Holy See's Congregation for Catholic Education (hereafter, CCE) began the publication of a series of documents centred on the nature, aims, and process of Catholic schooling. Two distinct, but in some ways complementary approaches, therefore, are now endeavouring to give new articulation to traditional Catholic educational thought. On the one hand, there are the reflections of a number of contemporary philosophers of education who have either commented directly upon particular aspects of Catholic education, or whose work in other areas of their professional life can be seen clearly to have the potential to be fruitfully applied to key questions within the context of Catholic educational theory and practice. Then, on the other hand, there has become available today the well-articulated body of educational thought originating from the CCE that, although strictly speaking is theological in nature and pastoral in its presumptions and positions, is nevertheless, potentially at least, capable of being melded with more patently philosophical insights and enabling one to build there-from a viable theory of Catholic education in a way reminiscent of that characteristic approach of the Catholic intellectual tradition of relating reason and faith.

John L. Elias writes of recent development in Catholic educational thought that, 'with the eclipse of a distinctive Catholic philosophy of education', when many Catholic educators no longer appear to be writing on the subject 'from a specific philosophical

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position', and recent Church documents on education have 'made few explicit appeals to the Thomistic position', what appears to have emerged within the Catholic educational community may best be described as 'a theology of education based on principles drawn from Vatican documents and Catholic theologians'.[1] A question then arises as to whether the Catholic educational community should abandon its philosophical reflection, if that were possible, or at least change its priority in this regard, and fully engage with a theological approach to the study of education. But an equally pressing second question can readily be imagined, namely, whether the CCE corpus, alone and unsupported by any explicit philosophical considerations, is capable of providing a substantial philosophic basis and framework of analysis for the study of Catholic education in today's postmodern world. The CCE literature undoubtedly reflects an implicit philosophical orientation, namely, Thomistic personalism, but the adequacy of this position for a re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education today may be queried with some justification.

If Elias is correct about the direction being taken in the study of Catholic educational theory and practice today, both of these questions become centre-stage and need to be addressed as a matter of some urgency. The question of the pertinence of the CCE corpus for the articulation of a Catholic philosophy of education for our times, and similarly the query about the availability of contemporary philosophic insight on the theory and practice of Catholic education, are at the heart of this thesis. A significant challenge for Catholic educators is to find in this officially endorsed theological-pastoral statement of Catholic educational thought, in some way strengthened and supported by contemporary philosophical insight, a relevance either directly in their own work, or in their dialogue with others beyond the Catholic sector.

The process followed throughout this dissertation is, firstly, to indicate in very summary form some of the major themes that may be considered educationally central in the CCE discourse, depending upon the particular hermeneutical focus chosen in reading the text, and to highlight certain aspects of this discourse that might be considered somewhat problematic in terms of incorporating these themes into a philosophical study of education. Thus, in relation to three specific themes in the CCE discourse, namely, 'the integral formation of the human person', 'the integration, or synthesis, of faith, culture

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[1] See, John L. Elias, "Whatever Happened to Catholic Philosophy of Education?" *Religious Education,*

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and life', and 'the holistic influence of the Catholic school as educative community', each of which is ultimately derived from a theologically based understanding of education, I shall argue that a largely visionary and theological presentation of these themes results in an apparent under-theorisation of the discourse, and thereby constitutes a problem for its integration into any formulation of a renewed philosophy of education for today. It is not its theological vision *per se* that risks our under-valuing of the CCE discourse. It is the vision-guided theory and practice of Catholic education openly espoused in these documents, rather than their theological reference, that is problematic in a sense to be explained presently.

Secondly, I shall endeavour to demonstrate that the scholars studied here can remedy this potentially defective rendering of Catholic educational discourse, serve to re-orient it, and give it improved coherence and balance. The problem is not one that is insuperable, nor is it such that it rules out altogether vision-guided thinking and practice in the context of a re-articulated Catholic philosophy of education. On the contrary, the Catholic tradition of educational thought, in common with Catholic thinking generally, has room for both theological vision and rational philosophical under-pinning. Reason and philosophical insight together with theological reflection play their part in Catholic scholarship in education. The critical point is the manner and the measure in which both disciplines work together to give a coherent, balanced and rich rendering of the nature and purpose of Catholic education.

Thirdly, the burden of the argument of this dissertation is that what is needed for a harmonious melding of theological vision and philosophical insight in the elucidation of a reformulated Catholic philosophy of education is the construction and deployment of an interrogative framework, that would allow these different discourses to engage in mutual questioning, interpolation, and cross-examination, in pursuit of description, explanation, clarification, and understanding, of respective positions and priorities regarding centrally substantive issues of interest to both disciplines. A necessary and sufficient condition for such reciprocal interpretation must be the availability of philosophical insight that is able sympathetically to critique theological vision.

The problem and the challenge of giving new expression to Catholic philosophy of education is not simply a preference for a theology of education, in itself a perfectly valid position to adopt for the elucidation of Catholic perspectives in education. That

there exists a theological viewpoint on education, materially and formally distinct from a philosophical approach, is a fact well-attested to. Thus, John M. Hull discusses the nature of the relationship between theology and educational theory and rejects the claim that there can be 'no useful and coherent relations between theology and educational theory'.[2] Similarly, Leslie J. Francis argues that a theology of education is 'something to be taken seriously', though theologians need to be 'convinced that the subject matter of education is worthy of theological scrutiny', and educationalists need to be convinced that 'the methods of theology are worthy of serious consideration within the educational arena'.[3] Hull and Francis, among many other scholars, maintain that the theology of education has 'a crucial contribution' to make in the evaluation and development of the work of schools and colleges, 'of equal standing to the perspectives offered by the philosophy of education, psychology of education and sociology of education'.[4] Recently, too, Brian J. Kelty has examined the change of theological focus in recent Catholic educational theory and has proposed for adoption by Catholic educators 'an emerging theology of education', that would focus on the themes of 'the nature of the person, the function of knowledge, human destiny within history, and the individual's stance towards society'.[5]

The very real problem that arises here lies in the virtual impossibility in this particular context of Catholic education of distinguishing between 'philosophical' and 'theological' perspectives relating to substantive themes like those just mentioned by Kelty, and similar to the key themes characteristic of the CCE discourse. This is not simply a matter of semantics. Tempting as it might be to designate the kind of discourse used by the CCE as of a 'philosophical-theological' genre and not, therefore, in need of analysis into separate disciplinary types, this is not a solution to the problem. It might be argued that there is no need to distinguish between these dominant perspectives, but that a synthesis of these complementary viewpoints should be attempted. But if synthesis is

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[2] John M. Hull, "Christian Theology and Educational Theory: Can there be Connections?" *British Journal of Educational Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 2 (Jun., 1976), pp. 127-43.

[3] Leslie J. Francis, "Theology of Education", *Educational Studies*, Vol. 38, No. 4 (Nov., 1990), pp. 349-64.

[4] Leslie J. Francis & Adrian Thatcher (ed.s), *Christian Perspectives for Education: A Reader in the Theology of Education*, Leominster, HR: *Gracewing* / Fowler Wright Books, 1990; Bob Freathy & Leslie J. Francis (ed.s), *Religious Education and Freedom of Religion and Belief*, Oxford: Peter Lang, 2012; Jeff Astley, Leslie J. Francis, Mandy Robbins, & Mulla Selcuk (ed.s), *Teaching Religion, Teaching Truth: Theoretical and Empirical Perspectives*, Oxford: Peter Lang, 2012.

[5] Brian J. Kelty, "Towards a Theology of Catholic Education", *Religious Education*, Vol. 94, No. 1 (Winter, 1999), pp.6-23.

to be more than mere aggregation or addition, it is difficult to envisage how it can be undertaken without a clear analysis and identification of the elements that will constitute it. It is the distinction between two elements that invites the question of how they come together or coalesce.

A central focus of this thesis will be an examination of how the CCE visionary discourse can be made relevant to a study of Catholic education from the perspective of a contemporary Catholic philosophy of education that is probably correctly described as being in a process of evolution. This is considered to be worth-while since, from the moment of publication, there were not only Catholic educators, some of whom, like Pádraic O'Hare, were glad to see, with the demise of traditional Catholic philosophy of education, the disappearance, as they interpreted it, of 'deeply rooted integralism', 'classicism', 'didacticism', and 'moral and philosophical absolutism', but also influential Catholic philosophers of education, who saw value in this literature despite its heavily-laden theological and visionary nature.[6] Thus, Terence H. McLaughlin could divine in the CCE corpus 'a rich source of Catholic educational principles', and regard the discourse as representing 'some of the central educational documents of the Church', though he acknowledges certain 'drawbacks' when it comes to the 'interpretation and elaboration' of all such documents.[7]

Church documents of this kind, McLaughlin wisely notes, 'are not fully self-sufficient', but need to be 'understood by reference to the wider belief, tradition and practice of the Church', and 'in the light of *inter alia* sustained philosophical analysis'.[8] McLaughlin speaks of the dangers of lifting isolated phrases from these documents and basing discussion of Catholic educational principles upon them. An 'adequate account of these principles', he says, cannot be derived from such documents alone, though 'the documents can provide a guide to central themes and elements of Catholic educational principles'.[9] What is needed, though, claims McLaughlin, is for

> [a] distinctively Catholic philosophy of education to be developed which can draw not only upon the philosophical resources of notable Catholic thinkers such as Aquinas, Newman, Maritain,

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[6] Pádraic O'Hare, "Catholic Ambiguity or Sectarian Certainty?", *Religious Education*, Vol. 94, No. 1 (Winter, 1999), pp. 111-16.
[7] Terence H. McLaughlin, "The Distinctiveness of Catholic Education", pp. 136-154 (139). In: Terence McLaughlin, Joseph O'Keefe SJ & Bernadette O'Keeffe (ed.s), *The Contemporary Catholic School: Context, Identity and Diversity*, London: RoutledgeFalmer, 1996.
[8] Ibid., p. 139.
[9] Ibid., p. 140.

Chesterton and Lonergan but which will also address directly matters of current educational concern.[10]

McLaughlin's programme for a Catholic philosophy of education indicates concisely what might be a worthwhile undertaking in the context of this dissertation. I intend to bring into dialogue certain features or themes of the CCE discourse, that are integral to, and highly characterise the nature and aims of Catholic education described therein, with the kind of 'sustained analysis' McLaughlin envisages that can be made available from a study of selected aspects of a number of well-known philosophers of Catholic education.

The introductory section of this thesis will, therefore, indicate briefly the origins, nature and content of the CCE discourse and identify the themes selected for analysis. Next, the reasons will be provided for the choice of three Catholic philosophers of education in the task of analysing these CCE themes. A summary of important understandings that might emerge from this correlation of educational theme and philosopher's insight is attempted. Finally, I will suggest how, in the course of the dissertation, it will be possible to see a progressive building-up of what it is hoped will amount to an appropriate philosophic base for the CCE discourse, one that will permit the development of a sense of coherence in relation to those aspects of the discourse selected for study. The structure of the thesis will become clear in the course of elucidating these objectives.

# I

**The Documents of the Congregation for Catholic Education (CCE) on the Catholic School and Catholic Education (1977-2014): A Resource for the Articulation of a Catholic Philosophy of Education.**

This section begins by presenting the major documents of the CCE published during the past forty years, relating directly to the Catholic school and having obvious implications for the on-going debate about the nature and purposes of Catholic education.[11] Their origin in the post-Vatican II era of renewal within the Catholic Church is well recorded.

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[10] Ibid., p. 139.
[11] Documents of the CCE corpus (1977-1997) referred to in this thesis are available in a collection of official Catholic teaching on education edited by Leonard Franchi. See, Leonard Franchi (ed.), *An Anthology of Catholic Teaching on Education*, London-New York: Scepter, 2007. All these documents may be downloaded from the Vatican's website(s).

In accordance with the wishes of the world's Catholic bishops, after lengthy and often acrimonious debate about what the Council should say, and do, in relation to Catholic schools and their 'role in the progress and development of education', the Council decided to limit itself to 'the declaration of certain fundamental principles of Christian education especially in schools', adding that these principles will have to be 'developed at greater length by a special post-Conciliar commission and applied by episcopal conferences to varying local situations'.[12]

No such 'special commission' appears to have been established and, accordingly, the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, metamorphosed from the Sacred Congregation for Seminaries and Universities, eventually undertook the responsibility. The Congregation, now comprised of a third section, the Schools Office, was intended to 'develop further the fundamental principles of education, especially in schools', called for by the bishops in *Declaration on Christian Education* (1965).[13] Some ten years, however, were to elapse before the Congregation in question published its first reflections on Christian education, and in doing so it considerably narrowed its remit by 'limiting itself to a deeper reflection on the Catholic school', albeit situating its discussion in the context of what it regarded as 'the serious problems which are an integral part of Christian education in a pluralistic society'.[14]

In the years following the publication of *The Catholic School* (1977), the Congregation published further documents relating to various aspects of the Catholic school and offering an account of Catholic education very largely from the perspective of schooling as understood throughout this discourse.

## A. The Catholic School / Catholic Education Corpus of the CCE (1977-2014)

The major documents comprising this corpus are as follows:

I.     *The Catholic School* (1977).[15]

II.    *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith* (1982).[16]

III.   *Educational Guidance in Human Love* (1983).[17]

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[12] *Gravissimum Educationis, Declaration on Christian Education*, Second Vatican Council, Paul VI, 1965, Introduction. Hereafter: *GE* (1965).

[13] See: Apostolic Constitution, *Regimini ecclesiae universae*, 1967.

[14] Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School*, 1977, No.s 1, 2.

[15] Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School*, 1977. Hereafter: *CS* (1977).

[16] Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *Lay Catholics in Schools: Witnesses to Faith*, 1982. Hereafter: *LCS* (1982).

IV.    *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School: Guidelines for Reflection and Renewal* (1988).[18]

V.    *The Catholic School on the Threshold of The Third Millennium* (1997).[19]

VI.    *Consecrated Persons and their Mission in Schools: Reflections and Guidelines* (2002).[20]

VII.    *Educating Together in the Catholic School: A Shared Mission between Consecrated Persons and Lay Faithful* (2007).[21]

VIII.    *Circular Letter to the Presidents of Bishops' Conferences on Religious Education in Schools* (2009).[22]

IX.    *Educating to Intercultural Dialogue in Catholic Schools: Living in Harmony for a Civilization of Love* (2013).[23]

X.    *Educating Today and Tomorrow: A Renewing Passion* (2014).[24]

## B. Major Themes of the CCE Discourse on Catholic Education.

No attempt is made at this point to analyse in detail, or to summarise the overall importance of this discourse, in terms of a complete understanding of the nature and practice of Catholic education. It is clearly possible to adopt a number of distinctive hermeneutical foci in the study of this substantial body of discourse, such as a theological-pastoral viewpoint, or a Catholic social teaching perspective, in addition to the philosophy of education approach preferred in this thesis. The particular focus of study will determine the selection of themes in any summary of the material offered. It is therefore important to bear in mind that, in addition to the preferred perspective, there are distinct theological underpinnings, largely reflecting a Vatican II vision, that are not highlighted in this review. It would be generally agreed that the composite picture of

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[17] Congregation for Catholic Education, *Educational Guidance in Human Love*, 1983. Hereafter: *EGHL* (1983).

[18] Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School: Guidelines for Reflection and Renewal*, 1988. Hereafter: *RDECS* (1988).

[19] Congregation for Catholic Education, *The Catholic School on the Threshold of The Third Millennium*, 1997. Hereafter: *CSTTM* (1997).

[20] Congregation for Catholic Education, *Consecrated Persons and their Mission in Schools*, 2002. Hereafter: *CPMS* (2002).

[21] Congregation for Catholic Education, *Educating Together in Catholic Schools: A Shared Mission between Consecrated Persons and Lay Faithful*, 2007. Hereafter: *ECTS* (2007).

[22] Congregation for Catholic Education, *Circular Letter to the Presidents of Bishops' Conferences on Religious Education in Schools*, 2009. Hereafter: *CLRES* (2009).

[23] Congregation for Catholic Education, *Educating to Intercultural Dialogue in Catholic Schools: Living in Harmony for a Civilization of Love*, 2013. Hereafter: *EID (2013)*.

[24] Congregation for Catholic Education, *Educating Today and Tomorrow: A Renewing Passion*, 2014. Hereafter: *ETT (2014)*.

Catholic education and schooling drawn by these documents taken as a whole, examined from the perspective of their common underlying foundation in the Catholic tradition of education, would be as follows.

I.    A Catholic understanding of education is based on a distinctive Christian anthropological vision derived from its understanding of the nature and destiny of the human person. This fact dictates that Catholic education's central focus is on the integral formation of the human person.

II.   The specific purpose of Catholic education, its ultimate end, is inspired by its Christian supernatural vision of human life and of all reality. This end or goal of education necessarily entails a spiritual, religious and moral/ethical dimension in education.

III.  A synthesis of faith and life is a primary goal of Catholic education. This synthesis demands the formation of the whole person, including intellectual, emotional, aesthetic, religious and moral development, the education of conscience, formation in virtue and the building of character.

IV.   This synthesis between faith and life provides a link to Catholic education's aspiration to exert holistic influence throughout the Catholic school, imbuing the whole school community with a Catholic world-view and permeating the entire way of life and curriculum of the school.

V.    The curriculum of the Catholic school is founded on a synthesis of faith and culture. One of the most significant elements of the Catholic school's educational project, namely, the integral formation of the human person is to be achieved through a living encounter with a cultural inheritance illuminated by the light of Christian faith. The whole practice of the school, its teaching and learning, is based on and reflects the integration of faith, life and culture.

VI.   The Catholic school is conceived primarily, not as an institution, but as an educative community, in recognition that at its centre is Christian belief about the social nature of human beings and the reality of the Church as 'the home and the school of communion'.[25] The school community is more than a network of persons with common interests, goals and intentions. The community dimension of the Catholic school is to be recognised as primarily

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[25] *CSTTM (1997)*, No. 9; *ETCS (2007)*, No.s 12-17.

a theological concept rather than a sociological category. The Catholic school community is symbolically constructed and at the heart of its communal life the sacramental nature of reality is celebrated.

VII.    Catholic education and Catholic schools are tasked to recognise, respect, and enhance the diversity of learners in the various contexts and circumstances in which the Church carries out its educational mission. A singular contribution that Catholic education must aim to make to intercultural dialogue is in its reference to the centrality of the human person.[26]

# II

## Three Contemporary Philosophers of Education as Dialogue Partners with the CCE Discourse

The nature and scope of a Catholic philosophy of education in this dissertation will be sought largely in the interaction and the dialogue between the official tradition of Catholic educational thought, of which recent CCE discourse is representative, and a selected range of scholars who, though perhaps not formally constituting a discourse community as such, are nevertheless interested in philosophical enquiry about education and find a well-spring for their thought in the Thomist intellectual tradition. Of course, the Catholic educational community, recognising that 'the Spirit breathes where he wills' (Jn. 3:8), has never restricted itself to finding resources for the articulation of its thought within the bounds of its own fold and a more extensive investigation of Catholic philosophy of education than is envisaged here would look to the wisdom and philosophical acumen of other scholars in addition to those whose work is directly addressed here.

The three scholars to be studied here, namely, Jacques Maritain (1882-1973), Bernard J.F.Lonergan (1904-1984), and Terence H. McLaughlin (1946-2005), clearly illustrate each in his own unique discourse, how Christian philosophical reflection might give the

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[26] The outline drawn here reflects substantially the description of the Catholic school in terms of 'Five Marks' described by Archbishop J. Michael Miller, CSB, Secretary to the Congregation for Catholic Education (2003-2007). See, J. Michael Miller, CSB, *The Holy See's Teachings on Catholic Schools*, Atlanta: Sophia Institute Press, 2006. Several writers select more or less the same elements in their characterisation of the nature and essence of Catholic education. See, for instance, Kevin Williams, "The Common School and the Catholic School: A response to the work of T.H. McLaughlin", *International Studies in Catholic Education*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (March, 2010), pp. 19-36 (24).

CCE discourse a rational grounding that it sometimes seems to lack and thereby better equip it to communicate its insights and understandings of the aims and processes of Catholic education in a postmodern age. The main part of this dissertation is an investigation of how selected aspects of the work of these philosophers, especially their philosophical perspectives on the theory and practice of education, might be identified as apt for this task. A priority will be to identify features of these three quite different philosophical discourses that would enable their correlation with selected constitutive themes of the CCE discourse, namely, the integral formation of the human person, the integration of faith and culture, and the construction of the Catholic school as an educational / educative / educating community, to take place.

## A Basis for Correlation

Among the features that will need to be identified in the work of each philosopher in order to achieve the kind of correlation, or mutual interrogation, envisaged as integral to the melding of CCE vision and philosophical insight in a re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education, one might isolate, somewhat artificially perhaps, the following. Firstly, it will be necessary to identify and characterize the substantive philosophical base of each philosopher and the 'impulse' that drives his philosophical endeavour. Secondly, it is important to become aware of the dominant and distinctive methodological approach of the philosopher in question and of his underlying rationale for that approach.[27] Thirdly, it is necessary that consideration of the discourse of each philosopher must be limited to matters directly connected with his recommendations, and/or prescriptions, for the understanding and practice of education.

## Maritain's 'Perennialist' Philosophical Discourse

Thus, in the case of Maritain, the subject of chapter two of this dissertation, I shall firstly indicate how his perennialist discourse faithfully reflects the Thomist-Aristotelian tradition of educational thought and provides a sense of the continuity in important respects of Catholic philosophy of education with that tradition. Secondly, attention will be drawn to the characteristic methodology employed by Maritain, the impulse for which he acquired from the self-imposed injunction that he claimed guided all his

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[27] I borrow the term 'impulse' from Nicholas C. Burbules as a kind of shorthand way of indicating what has drawn a philosopher into this kind of activity in the first place, and as a means of summarising what he sees as the ultimate purpose of philosophy of education. See, http://education.stateuniversity.com/pages2321/Philosophy-Education.html. Accessed 16/09/2012

philosophy: 'Woe to me if I do not Thomisticize!'[28] For Maritain, distinct Thomist principles of a metaphysical, epistemological, and axiological nature could be identified and their perennial validity meant that they could not only be applied to any human situation, political, social, cultural, or educational, but their permanently true character across time, society and culture made it prescriptive or normative that they be so applied. Thirdly, Maritain's understanding of what for him was a 'liberal education' will be addressed. Maritain regarded 'liberal education' as an education for freedom, directed toward wisdom, and centred on the humanities, aiming to develop in people the capacity to think correctly and to enjoy truth and beauty.[29]

In this context, it will be noted how Maritain's personalism and his Christian humanism became key drivers of his philosophy of education. It is suggested that the CCE discourse, indubitably influenced by Maritain's philosophy, may in consequence have taken up the themes of the integral formation of the human person and the integration of faith and culture as archetypal aims of Catholic education. Chapter two of the thesis comments in some detail on Maritain's once well-known little work, *Education at the Crossroads* (1943), in which he warned educators that they stood at a 'crossroads', where they would have to choose between 'a humanistic education based on Christian tradition' or 'an instrumentalist, pragmatic perspective'.[30] Maritain's central argument in this work, that the architectonic aim of education is to nurture the intellect and strengthen the will, is rehearsed. Basing himself upon his Judaeo-Christian image of humanity, Maritain was convinced that failure to follow the Christian humanist model of the human person would result in an education he deemed unsuitable to the dignity and freedom of human beings.[31] The sufficiency of Maritain's metaphysical discourse for a re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education is assessed in a context where philosophers of education have by and large already moved away from explicit attempts to use metaphysics to answer questions about the aims and processes of education.

**Lonergan's Subject-Centred 'Cognitional Discourse'**

Chapter three of this dissertation shifts the focus from the prescriptive perennialist discourse and conceptualist rationality of Maritain to the discourse of interiority and

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[28] Jacques Maritain, *St Thomas Aquinas*, London: Sheed & Ward, 1930, p. viii.
[29] Jacques Maritain, "Thomist Views on Education", pp. 57-90. In *Modern Philosophies and Education*, Nelson B. Henry (ed.), Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955.
[30] Jacques Maritain, *Education at the Crossroads*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1943, pp. 117-18.
[31] Ibid., pp. 4-14.

intentionality analysis that is essentially characteristic of the thought of Bernard Lonergan, and which shall be referred to throughout as his 'cognitional discourse'. Lonergan, for whom cognitional theory and epistemology take priority over metaphysics, sees reflective understanding of the data of sense and consciousness as leading to judgment. He understands 'the full act of meaning', that which 'settles the status of the object of thought', as being an 'act of judging'.[32] As such, his discourse might be termed 'critical', in the sense of the root meaning of 'judgment' (Gk. *krisis*). Since there is likely to be some confusion with modern usage of the term 'critical', however, as for instance in reference to 'critical pedagogy', to denote a philosophical impulse to critique ideology, power and authority in the cause of promoting the interests of disadvantaged groups, 'critical' is perhaps best not used in the present context without due qualification. The term is used quite appropriately in regard to Lonergan's description of his philosophical stance as a 'critical realist' perspective.[33]

Lonergan's philosophic base and driving impulse, arising out of the 'detached, disinterested, pure, and unrestricted desire to know', is exemplified in his cognitional theory, his understanding of the process of knowing.[34] His methodology, variously termed, 'general empirical method', 'transcendental method', 'intentionality analysis', is based on his understanding of the 'procedures of the human mind', wherein can be discerned 'a basic pattern of related operations employed in every cognitional enterprise'.[35] Lonergan's method represents the process of 'objectifying the contents of consciousness' that occurs as we move from the data of sense and consciousness through inquiry, understanding, reflection, and judgment to an awareness and appropriation of our conscious and intentional operations whereby we are able to answer three basic questions.[36] What am I doing when I am knowing? (cognitional theory) Why is doing that knowing? (epistemology) What do I know when I do it? (metaphysics).[37]

Lonergan is a scholar who has been hugely influential in advocating the transition from a 'classical', neo-scholastic form of philosophical and theological thinking to a more

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[32] Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1972, p. 74.
[33] See, *Method in Theology*, pp. 76, 206, 238-241, 263-264.
[34] Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, London: Longmans, Green & Co Ltd, 1968, pp. xiv, 4, 9, 74, 220-22, 348-50, 380-81, and *passim* in this book.
[35] Ibid., p. 4.
[36] Ibid., pp. 13-25.
[37] Ibid., p. 25.

'historically-minded' and critical form of enquiry and this work is directly relevant to the re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education.[38] Patrick D. Brown notes Lonergan's use of the term 'transposition' in relation to the tasks associated with this transition to mean a re-statement of an earlier position in a new and broader context.[39] Lonergan might well have predicted the demise of Catholic philosophy of education, as reported by Elias, when he described 'classicist education' as a matter of 'models to be imitated, of ideal characters to be emulated, of eternal verities and universally valid laws'.[40] One could perhaps say that he bequeathed to Catholic philosophy of education the task of 'transposing' Catholic educational thought into what Brown describes as, 'a more contemporary and adequately theoretic context', while preserving its basic elements in a 'new effort of analysis and synthesis'.[41]

## McLaughlin's 'Analytic' and 'Phronetic' Discourses

Chapter four of this dissertation explores the analytical and phronetic approaches of Terence H. McLaughlin, whose largely positive opinion of the CCE corpus has already been referred to above. The impulse that drives much of McLaughlin's philosophy is 'analytical', and part of that approach as McLaughlin understands this tradition, is the attempt to spell out the set of rational conditions that educational aims and practices must satisfy in a liberal democratic society. There is much in McLaughlin's analytical approach, understood in both this sense and in the narrower sense of conceptual and ordinary language analysis, from which students of the CCE discourse might profit in attempting to bring about a re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education. This chapter limits itself to a brief examination of his work in relation to the question of the 'distinctiveness of the Catholic school'.[42] Already in this sample of McLaughlin's regrettably meagre (at least by size, if not by significance) Catholic corpus we are offered important insights for the re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education, and provided with a range of analytic skills and dispositions entirely appropriate for the study of all aspects of the CCE discourse.

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[38] Bernard Lonergan, "The Transition from a Classicist World-View to Historical-Mindedness", pp. 1-10. In *A Second Collection*, William F.J. Ryan SJ & Bernard J. Tyrrell SJ (ed.s), London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1974.

[39] Patrick D. Brown, "*Aiming Excessively High and Far*: The Early Lonergan and the Challenge of Theory in Catholic Social Thought", *Theological Studies*, Vol. 72, 2011, pp. 620-644.

[40] Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, p. 301.

[41] Patrick D. Brown, "*Aiming Excessively High and Far*", pp. 629-32.

[42] "The Distinctiveness of Catholic Education", pp. 136-54.

In chapter four, also, another feature of McLaughlin's work, what can be termed his 'phronetic discourse', that arises out of his practice of 'pedagogic *phronēsis*', is equally if not more pertinent to the contribution he might make to providing a philosophic basis for selected major themes of the CCE discourse, such as the developing of the Catholic school as an educational / educative / educating community.[43] What is very significant about McLaughlin's understanding of the Catholic school as an educative community is that the vision arises out of the practice, and cannot be imposed from without by whomsoever, and howsoever authoritatively, proposed or imposed.

## Philosophic Interrogation of the CCE Discourse

Chapter five of this dissertation seeks, by means of a comparison of discourses, to identify how the work of each of these three philosophers - Maritain, Lonergan, and McLaughlin – may offer critical but sympathetic perspectives on major themes of the CCE discourse. Thus, in the first place, aspects of Maritain's work, notably his personalism and Christian humanist philosophy, are put in dialogue with the aim of formative education announced in the CCE theme of the integral formation of the human person'.[44] Indeed, the CCE text already emphatically echoes the aims and processes of Maritain's 'liberal education' when it asserts that the Catholic school 'must begin from the principle that its educational programme is intentionally directed to the growth of the whole person'.[45] As the CCE document in question asserts, 'the purpose of instruction at school is education', that is, 'the development of man (sic) from within, freeing him from that conditioning that would prevent him becoming a fully integrated human being'.[46]

Secondly, Lonergan's cognitional theory and his accompanying notion of culture offer an appropriate elucidation of the CCE theme of the integration of faith and culture.[47] The process of human knowing, involving the multiple, cumulative and dynamically related operation of experience, understanding, judgment and decision, enable the

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[43] Kevin Williams has advised that it may be somewhat problematic to designate McLaughlin's phronetic approach as 'discourse', in view of the limited opportunity he had to develop this aspect of his work more fully. Nevertheless, purely for the sake of convenience in referring to the work of all three philosophers as 'discourse', I have retained the descriptor 'phronetic discourse' for this aspect of McLaughlin's work, always of course recognising the limitation of the term specifically in reference to McLaughlin.
[44] *GE (1965)*, No. 8; *CS (1977)*, No. 29.
[45] *CS (1977)*, No. 29.
[46] Ibid.
[47] *GE (1965)*, No. 8; *Cs (1977)*, No. 37.

human subject to progress from the realm of common sense meaning, through theory, to interiority and self-transcendence, and thereby become authentically human.[48] The CCE discourse, in the effort to achieve through the medium of its education, an integration of faith and culture, enjoins upon the Catholic school 'a deep awareness of the value of knowledge as such', and forbids it from 'wishing to divert the imparting of knowledge from its rightful objective'.[49] Lonergan's cognitional theory suggests that true integration of faith and culture is not to be found in subjects, singly or in any kind of curricular combination, but, rather, in the person of the knower as he self-consciously appropriates his knowledge and learning through his relationship with significant others in his/her life.[50] All human knowledge is to be regarded as 'truth to be discovered' and the achievement of an integration of faith and culture 'depends not so much on subject matter or methodology of the school as on 'the people who work there'.[51] The integration of culture and faith, the CCE text concludes, 'is mediated by the other integration of faith and life in the person of the teacher'.[52]

Finally, McLaughlin's phronetic approach is proposed as an essential requirement for both comprehending what is involved in the project of re-articulating Catholic philosophy of education, and authentically contributing to the realistic construction of the Catholic school as an 'educational / educative / educating community', as envisaged in the CCE discourse.[53] How the Catholic school might become capable of delivering, through its goal of desiring to 'exert holistic influence', the kind of intellectual, moral and religious formation that 'embodies the meaning of the human person and of human life' that it professes, is indeed, a matter demanding much practical wisdom and knowledge.[54] Foremost in that conception of the human person is his/her God-given freedom, the source of dignity and right, of uniqueness and responsibility, that autonomy of the person, as Maritain puts it, which is 'in conformity with the nature of

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[48] See, Fellows of the Woodstock Theological Centre, *The Realms of Desire: An Introduction to the Thought of Bernard Lonergan*, Washington, DC: The Woodstock Theological Centre, Georgetown University, 2011.

[49] *CS (1977)*, No.s 37-43.

[50] Richard M. Liddy, "Bernard Lonergan on a Catholic Liberal Arts Education", *Catholic Education*, Vol. 3, No. 4 (Jun., 2000), pp. 521-528 (525).

[51] *CS (1977)*, No.43.

[52] Ibid., No. 43.

[53] Multiple references to the Catholic school as 'educational/educative/educating community' are to be found in the CCE literature. See, for example, *CS (1977)* No.s 53-56; *RDECS (1988)* No. 3; *CSTTM (1997)* No. 4, 11, 13, 16, 18, 20.

[54] "The Distinctiveness of Catholic Education", pp. 140-45.

things' and therefore ultimately more 'theocentric' than 'anthropocentric'.[55]

It will be argued here that it must be to McLaughlin's phronetic discourse, as well as to Maritain's metaphysical one, that Catholic educators in a pluralistic world should look for the practical wisdom of pedagogic *phronēsis* in the construction of a community characterised by Gospel values. The Catholic educative community is expected to provide a genuine experience of community, but that is a goal that must be sought after in crucially important ways that are able to safeguard human freedom in the integral formation of the human person. The whole way of life of the Catholic school needs to reflective of and guided by the kind of phronetic approach exemplified by McLaughlin.

**CCE Discourse and the Need for Philosophy**

It is nowhere throughout this dissertation suggested that the CCE discourse is devoid of philosophical insight or foundation. Even a passing acquaintance with the discourse would reveal the presence of a pronounced personalist strain of thought throughout the corpus. Several of the characteristic features of personalist thought, as described by Thomas D. Williams and John Olaf Bengtsson, for instance, can be readily identified in the various documents of the CCE discourse.[56] Thus, one can recognise in the CCE discourse an insistence on the radical difference between persons and the non-personal, an affirmation of the dignity and inherent value of the person, a concern for the person's subjectivity and self-determination, and a particular emphasis on relationality and communion arising out of an understanding of the person's social being.[57]

It is a central hypothesis of this dissertation that a measure of engagement with, and dialogue between, the CCE literature and a body of more traditionally philosophic discourse on education could achieve a greater degree of appreciation for, and a clearer perception of the relevance of the theological-pastoral discourse of the Holy See in the field of Catholic philosophy of education in contemporary society. The over-arching aims of Catholic education suggested here as in need of support from a more explicit philosophical insight might require, in any case, measures to ensure their coherence, since the different discourses emphasise different goals, priorities and values.

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[55] Jacques Maritain, "The Conquest of Freedom", pp. 159-179. In: Donald & Idella Gallagher (ed.s), *The Education of Man*, Notre Dame, IND: University of Notre Dame Press, 1962.

[56] Thomas D. Williams & John Olof Bengtsson, "Personalism", *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/personalism/. . . Accessed: 04/08/2014.

[57] Ibid., pp. 12-20.

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McLaughlin's work on values and coherence in the school context, for example, could provide the kind of explicit philosophical perspective needed to bring coherence to the different discourses of a re-articulated Catholic philosophy of education.[58] While it might reasonably be argued, as in fact John Sullivan does, that, from amongst the CCE's architectonic themes, the integral formation of the whole person can be singled out as having an over-riding priority, there still remains the question of the 'inter-connectedness' of these aims.[59] This would suggest a further task for philosophy in the elucidation of the interrelationship of the various aims of the Catholic school

McLaughlin's philosophical reflections on the task of making the educational values of the school coherent, and the matters he identifies as being necessary for achieving coherence in practice, can contribute to this discussion of inter-connectedness in general and specifically in relation to the CCE aims under discussion here. In any case, it remains true that a better understanding of the three major themes of the CCE discourse, which one might expect from their being put into dialogue with our three philosophers, offers a fruitful way to appreciate the Catholic concept of education in the school context.

Admittedly there is a certain degree of artificiality about the alignment of specific CCE themes with the named philosophers in this study since, in a real sense, each of these scholars has a positive contribution to make to understanding the tasks allocated to the others, as indeed each might competently achieve the whole range of tasks solely. Nevertheless, on the basis that it is possible to identify features in each philosopher's characteristic discourse, whether it be Maritain's prescriptive discourse, or Lonergan's cognitional discourse, or McLaughlin's phronetic discourse, it is legitimate to appeal in this way to an individual philosopher to bring light to bear on a particular CCE theme where there is some correspondence between issues central to that theme and the insight that dominates the work of the philosopher. A more comprehensive treatment, where all three philosophers are engaged in an analysis of the several themes (including those identified here) that comprise the CCE discourse is beyond the remit of this thesis.

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[58] See, Terence H. McLaughlin, "Values, Coherence and the School", *Cambridge Journal of Education*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (Nov., 1994), pp. 453-71.
[59] John Sullivan, *Catholic Education: Distinctive and Inclusive*, Dordrecht/Boston/London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2001, pp. 85-89.

# III

# A Review of the Related Literature

The subject of this dissertation was chosen following a comprehensive literature search of studies relating to the recent educational discourse of the Holy See's Congregation for Catholic Education (1977-2014) revealed that none had addressed the matter at issue here, namely, the project of bringing the CCE discourse into dialogue with the earlier and mainly philosophico-theological discourse that comprised the tradition of Catholic educational thought prior to Vatican II (1962-1965).

No study was found in the published, or unpublished matter reviewed, which considered the need to provide a more explicit and patently philosophical basis for the mainly theological-pastoral discourse of the CCE corpus. A study of this nature was considered worthwhile, firstly, to identify in the CCE discourse valuable insights from the earlier tradition and, secondly, thereby better to enable the CCE discourse to engage more vigorously, and at a higher level of generality, in contemporary scholarly conversation relating to the nature, aims and practice of education. Within the overall theme of how the Catholic tradition of educational thought might be given new articulation for today, it was argued that a project of this kind would make a significant contribution.

Several authors, recognising the salience of the CCE literature for an understanding of the theory and practice of Catholic education today, incorporate themes and concepts from that discourse, some at greater length than others, but few with an overtly philosophical goal to the fore. The exception would probably be Terence H. McLaughlin, who, in *The Contemporary Catholic School*, when writing on 'the distinctiveness of Catholic education', considers that the Church documents with a directly educational focus are 'a rich source of Catholic educational principles' that reveal a number of distinctive features of Catholic education. Among these principles McLaughlin lists Catholic education's 'embodiment of a view about the meaning of human persons and of human life', 'an aspiration to holistic influence', and 'a commitment to religious and moral formation'.[60] McLaughlin is convinced of the need for a Catholic philosophy of education, furnishing Catholic concepts and arguments,

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[60] Terence McLaughlin, Joseph O'Keefe & Bernadette O'Keeffe (ed.s), *The Contemporary Catholic School: Context, Identity and Diversity*, London: RoutledgeFalmer, 1996, pp. 140-145.

which would 'illuminate the nature not merely of Catholic education, but of education as such'.[61] Due to his untimely death he was tragically unable to indicate in any detail how the documents of the CCE might be used to develop such a Catholic philosophy of education. Chapter four of this dissertation will record the vitally important first steps he was able to take in this direction.

John Sullivan, albeit from a less pronounced philosophical perspective, in *Catholic Schools in Contention*, makes several references to the documents of the CCE as he seeks to map out the contours of Catholic education and examines 'the implications, dilemmas and value clashes' that arise from the use of 'competing models and metaphors' for Catholic schools.[62] Later, in *Catholic Education: Distinctive and Inclusive*, Sullivan, seeking to understand 'the interconnectedness and coherence' of the various themes and principles which together constitute a distinctively Catholic educational philosophy, identifies a number of these principles from the CCE document, *The Catholic School* (1977), including the 'integral formation of the whole person', the 'synthesis of culture and faith and of faith and life', the 'autonomy of the subjects taught', and the 'development of the critical faculties of the pupils'.[63]

James C. Conroy and his fellow contributors, in *Catholic Education: Inside Out, Outside In*, are concerned to open up a dialogue with others working from both within and from without the Catholic tradition. One of their concerns is 'to offer an account of not only the nature and aspirations of Catholic education' but also what it may or may not 'provide to the wider democratic polity'.[64] Although reference to the CCE literature is sparse, the effort of the essayists 'to ground Catholic education either implicitly or explicitly in a self-reflective and critical discourse', regarding what Catholic identity and an education system premised upon such an identity might mean, is certainly within the spirit of the CCE discourse.[65]

Kevin Williams has highlighted the importance of the CCE literature by acknowledging that the tradition of reflection on Catholic education from a Catholic perspective has found 'authoritative expression' in recent Vatican documents and, because of its

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[61] Ibid., p. 139.
[62] John Sullivan, *Catholic Schools in Contention: Competing Metaphors and Leadership Implications*, Dublin: Veritas, 2000, p. ix.
[63] *Catholic Education: Distinctive and Inclusive*, pp. 74-81.
[64] James C. Conroy (ed.). *Catholic Education: Inside Out, Outside In*, Dublin: Veritas, 1999, pp. 7-11.
[65] Ibid., back cover.

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intrinsic value, this source has attracted the attention of a number of contemporary educational philosophers.[66] In his article, "The common school and the Catholic school: a response to the work of T. H. McLaughlin", Williams attributes to the CCE doctrine, in part at least, the 'explicit remit' of Catholic schools to 'uphold and promote thick or maximal values'.[67] It is very likely that Williams would consider a role for philosophical reflection in 'providing traction' for these CCE values in the Catholic school, a matter he considers 'problematic for a number of reasons', not least in what concerns the 'dilemma of substantiality'.[68]

Among other published sources, such as, for example, articles in various journals, or those made available on the internet, scholars such as Stephen J. Denig and Anthony J. Dosen, and Denis McLaughlin, to select but a few, show appreciation for various aspects of the CCE literature, though none appears to express disquiet about its subdued philosophical tone and content. Thus, Denig and Dosen, writing on the 'mission of the Catholic school in the post-Vatican II era', examine how the mission of Catholic schools was 'transformed'.[69] The goals of the Catholic school were 'modified' during the post-Vatican II era, say these authors, and they highlight four themes that now become prominent and are attested to by the CCE literature. These themes are: 'evangelization, community, holistic influence, and public worship'.[70] At the same time, they note, in many parts of the world it became an imperative for Catholic schools to be 'centres of social justice and liberation' - and of outreach to individuals and groups of people beyond the school.[71]

These new priorities, Denig and Dosen claim, originated in the Vatican II *Declaration on Education* (*GE, 1965*) and are reflected in the subsequent CCE publications which sought to bring about a change of perspective in Catholic schools worldwide in accordance with the *Declaration's* vision. The authors identify the emphasis on the Catholic school in the CCE literature as 'a community animated by the Gospel spirit of

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[66] Kevin Williams, "Education and the Catholic Tradition", pp. 167-180 (167). In: *The Sage Handbook of the Philosophy of Education*, ed. Richard Bailey, Robin Barrow, David Carr & Christine McCarthy, London: Sage Publications Ltd, 2010.
[67] Kevin Williams, "The common school and the Catholic school: a response to the work of T. H. McLaughlin", *International Studies in Catholic Education*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (March, 2010), pp. 19-36 (26).
[68] Ibid., p. 24.
[69] Stephen J. Denig & Anthony J. Dosen, "The Mission of the Catholic School in the Pre-Vatican II Era (1810-1962) and the Post-Vatican II Era (1965-1995): Insights and Observations for the New Millennium", *Catholic Education*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (Dec., 2009), pp. 135-156.
[70] Ibid., pp. 142-146
[71] Ibid., p. 147.

liberty and charity' as being indicative of a foundational principle for Catholic education.[72] Interpreting the wishes of the Council through a pastoral-theological rather than a philosophical reading, the American Catholic bishops asserted that 'the Christian vocation is a call to transform oneself and society with God's help', whence the educational efforts of the Church 'must encompass the twin purposes of personal sanctification and social reform' in the light of the Christian vision.[73]

Denis McLaughlin, writing on the theme of, "The Catholic School: Avenue to Authenticity", analyses a document from the CCE, *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium* (1998), and concludes that its essential message is that the fundamental purpose of the Catholic school is to create an educational environment that promotes authentic humanity.[74] McLaughlin believes that this position has its basis in 'the Catholic concept of personhood' which he claims underpins the CCE document.[75] This is the kind of philosophical reference point which the present dissertation hopes to identify in its study of the CCE literature. Contrary to McLaughlin's goal of incorporation of this philosophical concept into a wider pastoral-theological framework, however, it is the aim of this thesis to investigate how the concept of person might be enhanced in this context with reference, for instance, to the work of Jacques Maritain, in the hope of providing a re-articulated Catholic philosophy with a concept and a principle that could be shared with educators in other contexts.[76]

Among un-published sources, a number of recent dissertations appear to have taken an interest in the CCE discourse and its importance in relation to elucidating the Church's educational mission. The authors have variously concentrated on identifying key themes in the CCE literature and have not usually been concerned about their philosophical or theological nature or emphasis. None of these studies has expressed an interest in the overtly philosophical dimension of education.

Thus, Anthony Raymond Densley, conducted historical research into the 'evolution of the philosophy of Catholic schools' at Fordham University, in 1990, by means of

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[72] *GE (1965)*, No. 8.
[73] USCCB, *To Teach as Jesus Did*, 1972, No. 7.
[74] Article available at: http://dlibrary.acu.edu.au/research/cel/cathschool1htm. Accessed: 19/05/2012.
[75] CCE, *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, 1998, No.s 8-10.
[76] Jacques Maritain's philosophy of education is treated in chapter two below; the dialogue between Maritain's philosophy of the person (as given expression in, for example, J. Maritain, 1973, *The Person and the Common Good*, South Bend, IND: University of Notre Dame Press) is commented upon in chapter five below.

'documentary analysis of recent church documents'.[77] Densley's focus is on the explication of 'change, shift and refinement' to be found in the 'philosophy of Catholic education' as revealed in the documents studied.[78] His reference to 'philosophy', however, evokes a very weak sense of the notion and is virtually identical with a theological perspective on education. Densley's interest does not lie in an assessment of the depth or shallowness of the strictly philosophical foundations in the CCE's contemporary expression of Catholic philosophy of education, nor does it entail a judgment as to its sufficiency for the purpose of its engagement in a shared dialogue with other philosophical perspectives on education, both concerns of and indicators of the goal of the present dissertation.

William Francis Sultmann submitted a doctoral thesis at the Australian Catholic University, Victoria, in 2011, entitled, "Stones Cry Out: A Gospel Imagination for Catholic School Identity", which purported to examine the nature of Catholic school identity within a changing social and educational context.[79] Sultmann conducted an empirical study in relation to four CCE publications in order to identify a number of 'identity concepts', from which he then extracted a number of themes characteristic of each identity concept, and then finally formulated a set of principles of an integrative nature that would serve to characterise the identity of the Catholic school. Although this study makes copious reference to CCE documents, as an inter-disciplinary study featuring theological discourse and statistical research, it contains little in the way of philosophical explication or elucidation and does not therefore overlap with the aims or content of the present study.

As has already been indicated, the present study seeks to investigate how an interrogative framework might be established that would allow the CCE discourse to engage in dialogue and discussion with aspects of the earlier (that is, the pre-Vatican II) tradition of Catholic philosophy of education. When I began to focus on what aspects of the earlier tradition might be brought into relationship with selected themes and concepts of the CCE literature, it seemed a sensible and viable way forward to select, as it were, significant 'dialogue partners' from that pre-Vatican II tradition of educational

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[77] Anthony Raymond Densley, *The evolution of the philosophy of Catholic schools: An analysis of recent church documents, 1929-1990*, Fordham University Graduate School, 1990.
[78] Ibid., p. 2.
[79] William Francis Sultmann, *Stones Cry Out: A Gospel Imagination for Catholic School Identity*, School of Theology, Australian Catholic University, Victoria, 2011.

thought, who would have this precise capacity to interrogate the CCE discourse and converse with it in a gainful manner.

Thus, three scholars were chosen for this purpose, namely, Jacques Maritain, Bernard Lonergan and Terence McLaughlin, each of whom has made significant contributions regarding the nature and practice of Catholic philosophy of education. Maritain and Lonergan were considered representative of two different, contrasting styles of Thomism, the discourse of the former being correctly described as 'perennialist' and 'conceptualist', while that of the latter could be described as 'cognitional' and 'subject'-focused. McLaughlin was not chosen on the basis of any Thomist credentials, since there is some uncertainty about this matter as to whether it applies to McLaughlin or not. McLaughlin was chosen, rather, because of his analytical and phronetic skills in the study of the philosophy of education, which he was unfortunately unable to develop fully in the context of Catholic education. McLaughlin is seen as a kind of bridge-builder between earlier and later phases in the tradition of Catholic educational thought.

It is actually the case, though this might come as a surprise to some, as far at least as Maritain is concerned, that any literature search today relating to these three philosophers can reveal several titles relating to their work that continue to make claims for the relevance of these philosophers and invite our reconsideration of them. Thus, in Maritain's case, the published papers of a recent symposium, *Teaching, A Secular Contract, A Sacred Calling*, compare and contrast several aspects of the work of John Dewey and Jacques Maritain in the field of philosophy of education, and make clear why it might be an error to simply dismiss Maritain as no longer relevant to our reflections.[80] Books and journal articles continue to be published on Maritain, mainly in connection with his integral humanism and political philosophy, though now fewer and fewer titles appear that argue for his relevance in the field of education.

As far as Lonergan is concerned, more than one dedicated Lonergan website appears to be active in quarrying Lonergan's major works for insights and understandings into several areas of thought, some of which could potentially contribute to the project of reformulating a Catholic philosophy of education for today. Numerous publications, both books and journal articles, appear with regularity from these sources, although

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[80] See, *Teaching, A Secular Contract, A Sacred Calling*, ed. W. A. Carpenter, *Educational Horizons*, Vol. 83, No. 4 (Summer, 2005), pp. 241-301.

very few treat questions relating to the philosophy of education, and I have found none that use Lonergan's work in connection with an analysis of CCE documents. We are largely left to our own devices to use our ingenuity in interpreting and applying Lonergan's complex thought to our chosen field of interest. An unpublished doctoral thesis by Ivan K. Gaetz explores Lonergan's intentionality analysis as a way of understanding selected topics in the field of 'secular education and educational philosophy'.[81] In chapters three and five of this dissertation I select aspects of Lonergan's thought that appear promising for my declared purposes in this dissertation.

It is obviously the case that other scholars might have been chosen for this study, since the three scholars actually chosen do not exhaust the whole spectrum of philosophical perspective on education represented in the Catholic tradition. Scholars such as, for example, at one end of the spectrum, John Henry Newman, and, at the other, Paulo Freire, each with distinctive and contrasting philosophical inclinations and motivations, the former an important intellectual influence on both Maritain and Lonergan, the latter with the ability to introduce a critical pedagogical approach to Catholic philosophy of education. Contemporary literature continues to record opinion relating to both these scholars but this is by and large beyond consideration for inclusion in this study. A good case might be made for the inclusion of John Paul II (Karol Wojtyla) as an important Catholic philosopher relevant to the task of the re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education. His influence is noteworthy in the CCE literature since the 1980s in the form of his Thomist personalism. His non-inclusion is regrettable but has to be understood as an inevitable consequence of the limited scope of this thesis.

At the conclusion of this literature search, I felt justified in selecting the theme announced above as an appropriate area of investigation within the overall context of a project considering how new expression might be given to the tradition of Catholic educational thought for today. There is no prior investigation that had chosen an identical goal, or had achieved substantially the same result perhaps starting from a different perspective and intention. It is recognised, of course, that this dissertation must in many respects be regarded as a preliminary study that others may in the future develop and modify.

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[81] Ivan K. Gaetz, *An Exploration and Expansion of Bernard Lonergan's Intentionality Analysis for Educational Philosophy*, Ph.D. Thesis, The Faculty of Graduate Studies, The University of British Columbia, 2003.

**Chapter Two: Toward a Re-Articulation of the Thomist Tradition of Catholic Philosophy of Education. A Perspective from the Work of Jacques Maritain (1882-1973)**

Jacques Maritain, the noted French Catholic philosopher, during his long life-time deeply influenced the philosophical, religious, social, and political aspects of life, not only of French Catholics, but of those of Europe at large, and of the North American continent as well. At the time of his death, William Street wrote that, 'Maritain was arguably the best known Catholic philosopher in the world'.[1] The 'breadth of his philosophical work', Sweet adds, his 'influence in the social philosophy' of the Catholic Church, and his 'ardent defence of human rights' made him 'one of the central figures of his times'.[2] Over the course of his life, John Macquarrie claims, Maritain became 'one of the Catholic Church's most outstanding intellectual leaders of recent times'.[3] Expressing little interest in the claims of other systems of philosophy, Macquarrie notes, Maritain was convinced that 'it is to the realism of neo-Thomist thought that we must turn for the solution to the intellectual and cultural problems of our time'.[4] John Haldane has described Jacques Maritain as 'the best-known neo-Thomist of the twentieth century', who devoted more than sixty years of his life to 'the elaboration of a comprehensive philosophical system based on the writings of Thomas Aquinas and his scholastic followers'.[5]

In this chapter I seek to assess the extent to which, and the manner whereby, Maritain attempted to articulate and promote the tradition of Catholic philosophy of education through his application of key elements of Thomism to the task of understanding and renewing that tradition. Maritain regularly declared that it was his vocation and duty to philosophize in the Thomist-Aristotelian tradition. He was utterly convinced that Thomism was not 'a museum piece', but 'a living tradition relevant to every epoch', able 'to answer modern problems, both theoretical and practical'.[6] Maritain's life-long effort was devoted to 'renovating' the Thomist philosophical tradition, and to ensuring that it remained 'a synthesis with a power to fashion and emancipate the mind in the face of contemporary aspirations and perplexities'.[7] It is appropriate, therefore, to begin to address the research question of this thesis with reference to a philosopher and

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[1] William Sweet, "Jacques Maritain", *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2008. http://www.plato.stanford.edu/entries/maritain/ . Accessed: 04/08/2011.
[2] Ibid., p. 1.
[3] John Macquarrie, *Twentieth-Century Religious Thought*, London: SCM Press, 1989, p. 284.
[4] Ibid., p. 285.
[5] John Haldane, "Jacques Maritain", p. 522. In Ted Honderich (ed), *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.
[6] Jacques Maritain, *A Preface to Metaphysics: Seven Lectures on Being*, London: Sheed & Ward, 1945, p. 1.
[7] Ibid., p. 1.

educator who, 'in the depths of the mind heard the summons to fashion a universal Christian wisdom', who then whole-heartedly accepted the challenge of the 'renewal' of Thomism for his times, and offered to all the fruits of his labour, together with the invitation if not, indeed, the injunction, that they too might perform a similar task in their time and place.[8]

To investigate the relevance of Maritain's work for the re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education in general, and to attempt specifically to identify what elements of his work might be appropriate to the task of engaging Catholic philosophy of education in explicit and constructive dialogue with major themes of the educational discourse of the Congregation for Catholic Education (CCE), this chapter sets down three objectives as follows.[9]

Firstly, the general philosophical basis, the driving impulse in the Thomism that Maritain appropriated from the renewal movement initiated by Leo XIII, and from his reading of certain medieval commentators on Aquinas's work, is identified.[10] It becomes evident that Maritain is pre-eminently a Thomist metaphysician, and an exemplar of the kind of metaphysics scholars such as John Haldane and Rachel M. Goodrich have identified as characteristic of the tradition of Catholic educational thought.[11] Maritain accepted from Aquinas both his metaphysics of the act of existence and his basic theory of knowledge. These provided him with the only foundation he considered necessary for the tasks of renewing philosophy and addressing the numerous social, political and educational issues of the day.

Secondly, an account of Maritain's central work in the philosophy of education is examined and its more notable features subjected to comment. The focus of attention is, in the main, on an analysis and an assessment of one of Maritain's most important contributions to the field of educational philosophy, namely, *Education at the Crossroads*, first published in 1943.[12] This is a short, but not insignificant discourse,

[8] Ibid., p. 12.
[9] The Holy See's Congregation for Catholic Education will be cited throughout the chapter as: *CCE*.
[10] Leo XIII, in his encyclical, *Aeterni Patris* (1879), promoted a renewal of the study of philosophy, and especially that of the work of St Thomas Aquinas. Maritain was much influenced in his understanding of Aquinas by John of St Thomas, or John Poinsot (1589-1644).
[11] See, for example: Rachel M. Goodrich, "Neo-Thomism and Education", *British Journal of Educational Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (Nov., 1958), pp. 27-35; John Haldane, "Metaphysics in the Philosophy of Education", *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, Vol. 23, No. 2, 1989, pp. 171-183.
[12] Jacques Maritain, *Education at the Crossroads*, New Haven, CN & London: Yale University Press, 1943.

and one of the relatively few immediate sources of Maritain's philosophy of education. The general contours of his philosophy of education are noted, and his distinctive perspective on the aims of education is delineated. The manner in which the argument central to his educational theory is developed throughout the work in question is examined, as is the context in which the discourse is being conducted. Here, too, Maritain's characteristic methodology of 'applying Thomist principles' to illuminate and bring resolution to the problematics of education becomes clearly evident.

Thirdly, an assessment of what Maritain's educational philosophy might have contributed, in the way of providing a new and coherent expression of the Catholic tradition of educational thought, is offered. In this connection, the judgment of an important group of Catholic scholars concerning the potential of Maritain's *Education at the Crossroads* (1943) to provide a basis for a specifically Catholic philosophy of education is critically assessed. The availability of Maritain's educational philosophy for engaging with the recent CCE discourse is investigated, both in terms of commonality of theme and over-riding intention, in relation to the aims of Catholic education. Common elements and themes in Maritain's perennial philosophy, and in the less philosophically nuanced discourse of the CCE, are identified with a view to bringing them into dialogue and facilitating a mutually interrogative relationship between them.

# I

## Maritain's Philosophical Basis, Guiding Impulse and Characteristic Methodology

This section commences with a brief resumé of Maritain's Thomist-Aristotelian metaphysics, the starting point for all his philosophizing, in education as elsewhere. Frederick C. Copleston's view of (neo-) Thomism as, 'a living and developing movement of thought, deriving its inspiration from Aquinas, but conducting its meditation on his writings, in the light of subsequent philosophy, and of subsequent cultural developments in general', is an accurate summation of Maritain's attitude to this tradition upon which his entire work is based.[13] Maritain identified three fundamental principles in Aristotle's metaphysics that he believed were taken over by

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[13] Frederick C. Copleston (1958). *Aquinas.* Harmondsworth, Middx: Penguin Books, p. 250.

the Thomist philosophical tradition. These principles, to be found in Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, he identified as *act* (actuality) and *potency* (potentiality), *causality*, and *knowledge*. Authentic Thomism accepted by and large that Aquinas had radically transformed Aristotle and produced a profoundly original philosophy. Maritain, however, in common with other Thomist interpreters such as Etienne Gilson, regarded Aquinas as far more than a mere synthesiser of the findings of human reason and the truths of Christian revelation. That Thomist-Aristotelian theory had, for Maritain at least, the capacity to illuminate every aspect of human life and to resolve a whole range of philosophical, moral, political, social, and cultural problems encountered in human society.

Rachel Goodrich suggests that, for Maritain, Aquinas's originality consists partly in the fact that as a metaphysician he adopts an 'existentialist' as distinct from an 'essentialist' approach.[14] For Plato, and even for Aristotle, the core of reality was to be found in the notion of 'essence'. Beings, or substances, consisted of 'form' and 'matter' – 'form' being the intelligible element which enables things to be classified and known in terms of concepts, and 'matter' that which distinguishes individuals within the class or species. It was through 'concepts' that one came to understand the 'essential' nature of substances. It was St Thomas's great achievement, Thomist philosophers believe, that while accepting these categories of 'substance' and 'essence', and of 'form' and of 'matter', he passed beyond them to a deeper level of reality by affirming an 'act-of-being' which is prior to essence, and constitutes the living actuality of each existent thing.[15]

A major emphasis in the Thomist-Aristotelian system of metaphysics adopted by Maritain is its focus on the study of 'first principles', or ultimate truths, as a means of comprehending reality as a whole. Such an orientation, or emphasis, ultimately brings the subject to focus upon the transcendent reality that is God. Maritain affords metaphysics so understood a privileged position in all his philosophizing, and not least in his elaboration of a Catholic philosophy of education. The kind of standard elements or ingredients that this metaphysics has offered traditional Catholic thought in the field of education as elsewhere would include the following. Firstly, belief in an ultimate origin, foundation, or first principle (*arché*) of all reality, including human beings;

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[14] Rachel M. Goodrich, *Neo-Thomism and Education*, p. 27.
[15] Ibid., p. 28.

secondly, the existence of a fixed form or essence (*eidos*) of everything that exists; thirdly, an end, completion, or purpose for all being (*telos*); fourthly, the state of completion, perfection, or complete actualization of being (*entelechia*); fifthly, actuality, activity or function (*energeia*) and potential for change (*dynamis*), and, sixthly, the notion of substance or subject (*ousia*).

When one lists these standard ingredients or elements of the Thomist-Aristotelian system upon which Maritain depended, it may all seem, as Jim Garrison rightly remarks, somewhat 'recondite and remote', and likely to be openly rejected by contemporary educators.[16] Yet philosophy of education must necessarily address essential and fundamental questions, often reflecting these elements, such as questions about the absolute foundation of human development; the ultimate, unchanging essence of human beings; whether human life has an end, purpose or *telos*; the limits of human potential and the actualization of human potential for both the individual and the human collective, and the whole question of whether perfect teleological actualization of the human essence is a valid educational goal, or can ever be achieved in practice.[17] Maritain never shirked the search for answers to these deeply philosophical questions at the core of educational thought and practice and invariably turned to Aquinas for the principles that would provide the leverage for their solution.[18]

Haldane acknowledges the educational viability and importance of these metaphysical questions in Maritain's philosophy. The view of metaphysics in education favoured and defended by Haldane himself provides an apt summary of Maritain's broadly similar expression of metaphysical intent in education.[19] Haldane states that the account of the nature and purpose of education that he would wish to uphold is 'an implication of a more general philosophical position', which is a form of 'naturalism' that is combined with 'a realist epistemology and metaphysics', and 'an objectivist theory of value'.[20] Unsurprisingly, in terms of his fundamental, metaphysical, epistemological and

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[16] Jim Garrison, "Some Remarks on Dewey's Metaphysics and Theory of Education", *Journal of Thought*, Fall-Winter, 2009, pp. 89-99 (89).
[17] Ibid., pp. 90-92.
[18] Maritain's major reflections on metaphysics are to be found in: *A Preface to Metaphysics* (1939); *Existence and the Existent* (1947); *The Range of Reason* (1948); *Science and Wisdom* (1940). *The Degrees of Knowledge* (1932) is important for an understanding of both Maritain's epistemology and his metaphysics.
[19] John Haldane, "Metaphysics in the Philosophy of Education", *Journal of the Philosophy of Education*, Vol. 23, No. 2, 1989, pp. 171-183 (173-1xx).
[20] Ibid., p. 173.

axiological principles, this is an accurate summary of Maritain's position.

For Haldane, education is 'a process of formation involving the realisation of certain potentialities'.[21] Education is always part of 'a general movement towards the full actualisation of the subject's nature'.[22] To formulate the goals of education, therefore, and to determine how best these might be achieved, one needs to have 'an account of what a human being is'.[23] There is required 'an organised set of descriptions of the various capacities characteristic of human beings', of 'the pattern of their development and inter-relations', and of 'the states and activities in which a developed human being most fully realizes his or her nature'.[24] An analysis of Maritain's understanding of the aims of education in the following section may be expected to fit remarkably closely to Haldane's account here.

Haldane further characterises his philosophical position by claiming that it is 'a version of Aristotelian naturalism'.[25] That is to say, education is aimed at 'developing our essential nature by systematically cultivating various capacities in accordance with their inbuilt structure and teleology'.[26] On this account, Haldane claims, 'education may be both instrumentally and intrinsically valuable'. Instrumentally it is of worth inasmuch as 'it satisfies a prerequisite of human flourishing'; education is needed because it is 'the means of developing those capacities the exercise of which is itself a precondition of achieving a good life'.[27] It is intrinsically valuable because 'some of the activities it involves are themselves realisations of capacities, the exercise of which is partly constitutive of human flourishing'.[28] The central philosophical concepts in a theory of education of this sort, according to Haldane, are those of the 'human person' and of 'human virtues', since a teleological theory requires an account of the agents involved and, when 'virtue' is conceived not in 'a restrictedly moral sense' but rather as 'an enduring excellence of character with respect to any given human activity', the role of the appropriate virtues also becomes clear. According to this view of education, therefore, the purpose of education is to promote good human lives by cultivating

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[21] "Metaphysics in the Philosophy of Education", p. 174.
[22] Ibid., p. 174.
[23] Ibid., p. 174.
[24] Ibid., p. 174.
[25] Ibid., p. 174.
[26] Ibid., p. 174.
[27] Ibid., p. 174.
[28] Ibid., p. 174.

virtue.[29] Once again, Haldane's account of his own philosophy of education is a perfect rendering of Maritain's position.

Maritain, as it were, insets this Aristotelian naturalist account of the theory and aims of education within the framework of his Thomist metaphysics and specifically locates it in relation to Aquinas's understanding of the nature and destiny of the human person. Maritain put his faith in Thomism and that, partly at least, because for him Thomism is a philosophy of 'common sense', that is, 'a spontaneous and naturally right use of intelligence'.[30] Thomist doctrine, for Maritain, 'establishes demonstratively the conclusions instinctively laid down by common sense'.[31] Thomism is a 'philosophy *par excellence*', both in regard to 'faith and revealed truth', and in regard to 'natural reason and common sense'.[32] Maritain often lamented the loss of our 'natural faith in reason to discover truth', because 'erroneous philosophies have been teaching that truth is an out-worn notion'.[33] But for him, in the depth of his Christian commitment, there was never any doubt about the usefulness, indeed, the necessity, of Thomism, as both a philosophy and a theology, to discover truth in every area of human life, and across every cultural boundary.

## Maritain and the 'Application' of Thomist Principles

William Sweet's judgment that Maritain's distinctive contribution is not to the 'details of Thomist metaphysics', or to a mere 'summary or restatement of Aquinas's views', but to 'a renovation of Aquinas's thought', and 'bringing it into relation with modern science and philosophy', is undoubtedly true.[34] Maritain's initiative in applying Thomist philosophy to concrete issues in society marks the beginning of a development in Thomist thought and practice that would single him out as a very special kind of Catholic philosopher. He would become one who worked above all for a 'synthesis' of human experience and traditional philosophical wisdom, and a man who strove throughout his life to form his followers in the pursuit of this kind of 'integration' of Thomism and contemporary life and culture. For Maritain, there was available to all an ancient source of wisdom 'to be mined for its precious ore', a wisdom that needed to be

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[29] Ibid., p. 174.
[30] Jacques Maritain, *Saint Thomas Aquinas*, London: Sheed & Ward, 1931, p. 145.
[31] Ibid., p. 147.
[32] Ibid., p. 150.
[33] *Education at the Crossroads*, pp. 114-115.
[34] William Sweet, "Jacques Maritain". 2008. *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/maritain/. Accessed 04/08/2011.

'extracted from a historically conditioned matrix' and 'shorn of the interminable controversies' that were no longer relevant to contemporary needs.[35] This philosophical wisdom of the past is to be used to grapple with modern questions, to challenge 'pseudo-philosophies', and to forge a new synthesis.

Several writers have noted this over-riding aim in the entirety of Maritain's work, namely, his desire to engage in the reconstruction of philosophy and society, to forge a synthesis between the Thomist philosophy he considered had an 'inexhaustible capacity for synthesis' and the rapidly developing and ever expanding knowledge and understanding of the contemporary world of science, technology and philosophy.[36] Thus, Mortimer J. Adler, speaking of Maritain's book, *The Degrees of Knowledge* (1932), wrote that he discerned in it 'the outlines, at least, of a synthesis of science, philosophy and theology' that would, he claimed, 'do for us what St. Thomas did for philosophy and theology in the Middle Ages'.[37] Adler added that it seemed to him that Maritain was 'the only contemporary philosopher who has deeply sensed the movement of history, and the point at which we stand'.[38]

Maritain himself expressed his commitment to the application of Thomist principles to, and their synthesis with, contemporary reality in the graphic imperative: *Vae mihi, si non Thomistizavero!* ('Woe to me, if I do not Thomisticize!').[39] The slogan, if one may call it that, serves to underline both Maritain's discovery of a personal vocation 'to Thomisticize', and the utter seriousness with which he took the world as being important in itself and which led to his intimate involvement with philosophic reflection on a comprehensive range of reality, with works on metaphysics and epistemology, the philosophy of culture, science, history, politics, aesthetics, and education. He singly-handedly directed the thought of Aquinas beyond the largely clerical audiences targeted by many in the early phases of the Thomistic revival initiated by Leo XIII. What is more, he often used Thomistic categories to argue in contexts, and for conclusions, that might well have surprised if not horrified St Thomas.

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[35] Jacques Maritain, *Notebooks*, Albany, New York: Magi Books, 1984, D. 135.
[36] Brooke Williams Smith, *Jacques Maritain, Antimodern or Ultramodern?*, New York/ Oxford/Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1976, p. 6.
[37] Donald & Idella Gallagher, *The Achievements of Jacques and Raïssa Maritain: A Bibliography, 1906-1961*, Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1962, p. 16.
[38] Ibid., p.16.
[39] Jacques Maritain, *St Thomas Aquinas*, p. viii. We should not think that, in adopting the words of St Paul (1 COR 9:16), Maritain is trivialising the original meaning of the text and simply putting Scripture to his own personal use.

The fundamental idea of his 'synthesis', Maritain tells us, is 'to bring into play at one and the same time', in the concrete problems and needs of our mind, 'things we know to be diverse in essence, but which we want to unify within us', such as reason and faith, philosophy and theology, metaphysics, poetry and politics, and the 'great rush of new knowledge and new questions brought by modern culture'.[40] Resorting on occasion to quite remarkable imagery, Maritain compares this synthesis, or integration, to 'throwing into the bath, Thomism all bristling with its quills', and discovering that 'it swims there with ease'.[41] It should be noted, however, that the whole idea of the Maritain 'synthesis', or 'application' of Thomist principles, to secure an understanding of, and guidance concerning appropriate action in concrete situations, is a notion that has been, and continues to be critiqued.

Maritain's 'synthesis', or application of Thomist principles to concrete situations, seems to express a preference for an understanding of the philosophy of education that justifies the importation of principles from without, as against the interpretation of situations from within, in the search for meaning and significance. Unless his 'synthetic' or 'integrative' activity is interpreted with great care, Maritain would appear to have ignored, or perhaps rejected, Dewey's admonition that philosophy of education should not be seen as an *application* of philosophy to practice.[42] The whole question of the validity of Maritain's approach becomes critical at a time when most contemporary philosophers of education do not appear to philosophise by 'applying' a philosophical position to a current educational situation or problem. This is a matter to which attention will be given below and it is an issue where appropriate comparison of Maritain's philosophy of education with the work of some other contemporary philosophers of education, such as, for example, Bernard J.F. Lonergan and Terence H. McLaughlin, might bear fruitful results.

The start of Maritain's life and work as a Thomist philosopher was fittingly signalled by the publication of his book, *St Thomas Aquinas*, in 1930. A clear message emerges from this book: Thomism is not to be 'relegated to the limbo of dead systems'.[43] Thomism, as Maritain outlines it here, and as Gerald B. Phelan correctly interprets him, is not 'an

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[40] Jacques Maritain, *Distinguish to Unite, or, The Degrees of Knowledge*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, [1932], 1959, p. 135
[41] Ibid., p. 136.
[42] See, John Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, New York: Macmillan, 1916.
[43] Christopher Dawson & J.F. Burns (eds.), *Essays in Order*, New York: Macmillan, 1931, p. xv.

archaeological Thomism', a mere historical thing, a system of thought, vital perhaps in the past, but interesting in our age merely as a historical phase of human reflection.[44] For Maritain, according to Waldemar Gurian, Thomism is, in its substance, 'an expression of universal truth, able to incorporate the truth of all times and capable of being liberated from its purely historical elements and conditions'.[45] Again and again, Maritain is at pains to stress that his Thomist doctrine is 'not a medieval Thomism', but a living and present system of thought: 'Thomism is truly the perennial philosophy'.[46]

Maritain resisted attempts to 'modernize Thomism', demanding that all abide by the letter and the spirit of Aquinas. He became irked with the whole notion of a 'neo-Thomist philosophy'. 'There is no *neo*-Thomist philosophy', he declared, 'there is only a *Thomist* philosophy'. Yet, paradoxically, he himself did modernize it, and in doing so added new insights to the thirteenth century philosophy of St Thomas which rendered it more capable of being applicable in modern times. Maritain found solutions to a whole range of modern problems in Thomism, making it for him at least, relevant to a whole spectrum of human and contemporary areas of life including education. He admitted, however, that Thomism does not profess to be the panacea for the ills of modern life and in any case its usage cannot dispense with the need for intellectual effort, especially that reason which is enlightened by faith, in the search for meaning that characterizes human life. Maritain frequently insists that he 'does not wish to destroy but to purify modern thought', and to 'integrate everything true' that has been discovered since the time of Saint Thomas.[47] Maritain's Thomist philosophy emphasizes more and more the dignity and proper ends of human nature and of temporal history in Christian thought. With the rise of totalitarianism, Maritain began to insist more emphatically on the fundamental value of a democratic philosophy of life and society.[48]

The never ending theme of the 'always newness and ever relevance' of Thomism continues to be stressed throughout Maritain's *St Thomas Aquinas*. Thomism is 'not a medieval mummy to be studied archaeologically, but an armoury of the living intelligence and the necessary equipment for the boldest explorations'.[49] Aquinas did

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[44] Gerald B. Phelan, *Jacques Maritain*, London: Sheed & Ward, 1937, p. 31.
[45] Waldemar Gurian, "On Maritain's Political Philosophy", *The Thomist*, January, 1943, pp. 9-12. This edition of *The Thomist* was a Special edition devoted to the life and work of Maritain.
[46] *Saint Thomas Aquinas*, p. 15.
[47] Ibid., pp. 18-19.
[48] "On Maritain's Political Philosophy", pp. 9-12.
[49] *Saint Thomas Aquinas*, p. 20.

not write for the thirteenth century but for our time; he is to be regarded as a contemporary writer, 'the most present of all thinkers'.[50] Maritain is certain that he is 'not trying to include the past in the present, but to maintain in the now the presence of the eternal'.[51] The philosophy of Aquinas is 'of its very nature a progressive and assimilative philosophy', a 'missionary philosophy' and, above all, it is 'not a relic of the Middle Ages'.[52]

One particular priority for this perennial philosophy was, in Maritain's view, the restoration of unity to Western culture. Donald A. Gallagher notes that a philosophical perspective on culture runs like a *leitmotiv* through Maritain's social and political writings and is a clear testimony to his belief that the philosopher 'should not dwell in an ivory tower' but should be concerned with the role of philosophy for all dimensions of human society.[53] Aquinas is our 'predestined guide in the reconstruction of Christian culture', Maritain declared.[54] The unity of a culture, he wrote, is determined by 'a common philosophical structure, a certain metaphysical and moral attitude, a common scale of values', and the Thomist synthesis offers 'a means *par excellence* of achieving the unity of Christian culture'. Maritain's views on education, as we shall see in the following section, have to be understood in this context since Thomist education is fundamentally about 'the salvation of the intellect' and 'the expansion of liberty', two essential conditions for human growth and unity.[55]

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[50] Ibid., p. 70.
[51] Ibid., pp 18-19
[52] Ibid., pp. 80, 103.
[53] Donald A. Gallagher, "The Philosophy of Culture in Jacques Maritain", pp. 277-285 (277). In: Peter A. Redpath (ed.), *From Twilight to Dawn: The Cultural Vision of Jacques Maritain*, Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 1990.
[54] Ibid., pp. 69, 84, 87.
[55] Ibid., pp. 61-62.

# II

## The Philosophy of Education of Jacques Maritain: *Education at the Crossroads* (1943) [56]

Jacques Maritain's philosophy of education, articulated on occasion quite briefly and in part only, on other occasions at greater length and in more depth, sometimes expressed by incidental remarks, at other times by deliberate reference, through many lectures and philosophical works, has been brought together in a relatively small number of published studies. The most notable of these is, without doubt, Maritain's *Education at the Crossroads*, first published in 1943.[57] Other important sources of Maritain's reflections on education have been collected, in whole or in part, by Donald and Idella Gallagher in *The Education of Man: The Educational Philosophy of Jacques Maritain*.[58] A third text of relevance for an understanding of Catholic education from a Thomist standpoint is Jacques Maritain, "Thomist Views on Education", a lecture published in 1955, in the *Fifty-Fourth Yearbook of The National Society for the Study of Education*.[59] These works will be sufficient to demonstrate the outline of a Catholic philosophy of education such as Maritain has drawn it during the latter half of the twentieth century.

A proper assessment of Maritain's philosophy of education should begin from as comprehensive and accurate a picture of his position as it is possible to give within the limits of this dissertation. A first priority in this section, therefore, must be to outline succinctly what might be considered to be the more enduring (and therefore more relevant) beliefs and philosophical principles which comprise Maritain's theory of education. As a matter of practical necessity in the main, the focus here will be on Maritain's flag-ship treatment of the 'aims, principles, and dynamics of education', as these are presented in *EC* (1943).

For a more complete appreciation of his educational thinking, this text needs to be complemented and reinforced by reference to various articles and books containing

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[56] Jacques Maritain, *Education at the Crossroads*, New Haven, CN: Yale University Press, 1943.
[57] This text will be cited throughout this section as: *EC (1943)*, followed by the relevant page number.
[58] Donald & Idella Gallagher (ed.s), *The Education of Man: The Educational Philosophy of Jacques Maritain*, Notre Dame, IND: University of Notre Dame Press, 1962. Herefafter: *EM (1962)*.

[59] Jacques Maritain, "Thomist Views on Education", pp. 57-90. In, Nelson B. Henry (ed.), *Philosophy and Education: Fifty-Fourth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955.

further philosophical reflection relevant to Maritain's study of education. Because Maritain was truly integral in his thinking, there are a number of key ideas throughout his work generally that might also be used, both to situate his educational thought in broader relief and to provide (in the final section of this chapter) a kind of internal standard for the assessment of his potential in regard to the task of re-articulating Catholic philosophy of education.

Maritain, as is apparent from the first section of this chapter, is an incredibly complex thinker, highly resistant to simplification, and his educational ideas are inextricably linked with more general features of his thinking. Maritain's educational thought as it is outlined in *EC(1943)* demands, therefore, to be read against the backdrop of the more distinctive features of his philosophy in general, if a truly comprehensive picture of his philosophy of Catholic education is to be presented. This is especially true in respect of *EC (1943)* both because of the particular setting in which this series of lectures was first delivered, and because this occasion was probably never intended by Maritain to be his definitive statement on the philosophy of *Catholic* education.

*EC (1943)* is a short, relatively condensed work which needs to have its high principles elaborated in greater detail, and the depth of their implications drawn out to a greater extent than it was possible for Maritain to achieve in the four short Terry Lectures delivered by invitation at Yale University before a largely non-Catholic audience in 1943. In the course of these lectures, Maritain did not make explicit reference to his Catholic identity or to the specificity of his Christian philosophy.[60] On the other hand, he made no attempt to disguise the fact that he was proud to philosophize in the tradition of Aquinas, nor would the temptation to do otherwise ever have been entertained by him.

That Maritain's Catholicism played a very unobtrusive part in these lectures on the philosophy of education is a fact worth noting. This may have been in deference and respect to the (then) Presbyterian ethos of Yale, or out of a desire to be generally pluralist in his remarks before an American audience. Maritain would certainly have welcomed this opportunity to be a participant in Yale's Terry lecture series on 'Religion

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[60] One might note two small exceptions to this remark. (1) Maritain, 'speaking from a Catholic point of view', comments on the need to create 'centres of spiritual enlightenment, or schools of wisdom' along the lines of Catholic religious and monastic orders and the confraternities of laymen associated with them. (2) Maritain expresses his opinion, 'as a Catholic', concerning 'the abiding sense of the reality of original sin'. See *EC (1943)*, pp. 85 and 94, respectively.

in the Light of Science and Philosophy'. For Maritain, there was never any question that religion should concern itself with the nature and problems of contemporary education. It is remarkable too that Maritain's Thomistic perspective on education was considered appropriate by this group of academics for the time and place in question.

Whatever Maritain's reasons for his discretion about his religious affiliation and philosophical stand-point, it is probably the case that the specificity of the situation precludes us from reading off directly from these lectures a comprehensive *Catholic* philosophy of education, despite the undoubted presence of the Christian (even the Thomistic) tradition of educational thought richly reflected in them. Much depends, of course, on the degree to which it is proper to identify Catholic philosophy of education with Thomist theories relating to key aspects of Catholic educational thinking and practice. Since this is a matter to be discussed in greater detail in a later section, it is appropriate and convenient to defer it for the moment and to turn to an analysis of some of the more important aspects of Maritain's philosophy of education in *EC (1943)*.

**Review of Selected Aspects of *Education at the Crossroads (1943)***

Two features might be selected as important for a study of Maritain's philosophy of education as it is developed in *EC (1943)*. Firstly, the context of the study needs to be commented upon; secondly, its extensive discussion of the aims of education and how these have been (in Maritain's judgment) 'misconceived' deserves to be noted.

***Education at the Crossroads:* General Introductory Comments on Context**

In the opening paragraphs of *EC (1943)*, Maritain asserts that 'the chief task of education is above all to shape man', or 'to guide the evolving dynamism through which man forms himself as a man'.[61] He remarks that he might for that reason have given this series of lectures the alternative title of *'The Education of Man'* (sic).[62] Here, Maritain situates himself in a long tradition of 'formative education', with historic roots in ancient Greece and Rome, a tradition appropriated by the Thomist-Aristotelian tradition of philosophical reflection, and becoming in time the most characteristic feature of the Catholic tradition of educational thought. Maritain further notes that the word

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[61] *EC (1943)*, p. 1.
[62] There seems to be no alternative but to retain Maritain's non-inclusive usage throughout, in the interests of accuracy and faithfulness to his text. Maritain uses the word 'man' to mean any person, male or female, of a rational human nature. There is no intention on his part, or mine, to engage in gender discrimination.

'education' has for him 'a triple yet inter-mingled connotation', that allows it to refer to either 'any process whatsoever by means of which man is shaped and led toward fulfilment', or to the 'task of formation which adults intentionally undertake with regard to youth', or, in its strictest sense, to 'the special tasks of schools and universities'.[63]

To conceive education as a process which 'shapes man and leads him toward fulfilment' posits two fundamental dilemmas for the educator, namely, the problem of having a clear understanding of the 'nature of man' as such, and the problem of comprehending what constitutes man's 'personal and spiritual awakening, his growth and fulfilment'.[64] These are issues which Maritain deliberately raises at the outset of *EC (1943)*. They are critical problems for a Christian philosopher who regards true education, which would secure the 'practical and concrete position of the human creature before God and his destiny', as a step on the way to an 'integral humanism'.[65] To the question concerning the nature of man, Maritain will advance as his view the 'Greek, Jewish and Christian idea of man', that is,

> [M]an as an animal endowed with reason, whose supreme dignity is in the intellect; man as a free individual in personal relation with God, whose supreme righteousness consists in voluntarily obeying the law of God; and man as a sinful and wounded creature called to divine life and to the freedom of grace, whose supreme perfection consists of love.[66]

For some educators, Maritain's Christian faith and the integral references in his arguments to the data of Christian revelation, as amply exemplified in this definition of the human being, make his anthropology somewhat problematical. On the other hand, the Catholic educator will easily recognise in Maritain's description of human beings echoes of a similar definition to be found in that classic statement of Catholic philosophy of education, namely, the encyclical letter of Pius XI, *Divini Illius Magistri, On the Christian Education of Youth* (1929). Pius XI wrote that

> [T]he subject of Christian education is man whole and entire, soul united to body in unity of nature, with all his faculties natural and supernatural, such as right reason and revelation show him to be; man, therefore, fallen from his original state, but redeemed by Christ and restored to the supernatural condition of adopted son of God.[67]

The encyclical added that

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[63] *EC (1943)*, p. 2.
[64] Frank O' Malley, "The Education of Man", in: *The Review of Politics*, Vol. 6, No. 1 (Jan., 1944), pp. 3-17 (3)
[65] Jacques Maritain, *True Humanism*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1938, chapter 1.
[66] *EC (1943)*, p. 7.
[67] Pius XI, *DIM (1929)*, No. 58.

> [T]here can be no true education which is not wholly directed to man's last end, since the whole work of education is intimately and necessarily connected with, and consists in, preparing man for what he must be and for what he must do here below, in order to attain the sublime end for which he was created.[68]

Maritain endorsed completely the essential teleology that is central to the Catholic vision of education.

Ascribing 'appropriate aims' to education, is a crucial consideration for Maritain's educational philosophy. His first concern in this series of lectures is to draw our attention to the fact that contemporary education is blighted by a serious of 'misconceptions' concerning not only the nature of man, but in equally disastrous measure, 'misconceptions' relating also to how the personal and spiritual awakening, the growth and fulfilment of the human person, might be enshrined as an over-riding aim in education. Maritain sets out, in characteristic fashion, on the basis of a considered philosophical analysis of human nature, to correct these various misconceptions and to propose instead a set of aims that will 'help and guide man toward his own human achievement'.[69] This path will lead him in the end to recommend a single basic type of humanistic education for all children that may be called *liberal*, both in the sense of liberating the energies of the human personality, and in preparing free men and women to live together in a democratic community.[70]

Before entering into detailed discussion about the substantive issues involved here, it is important first of all to comment upon Maritain's general approach to and analysis of the several 'misconceptions' concerning the aims of education he highlights. To fail to do so might run the risk of incorrectly interpreting the emphasis and sense of contrast with which he is accustomed throughout the first two lectures in *EC (1943)* to develop his argument. Maritain, as an accomplished philosopher, engages in a two-fold process of clarifying what he identifies as the critical problems of education before presenting what he regards as possible alternatives or solutions. His approach is broadly comparable to the analytical approach of Terence H. McLaughlin, the subject of discussion in chapter four below.

This two-fold process of 'analysis' followed by 'synthesis' is a methodology Maritain

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[68] Ibid., No. 7.
[69] *EC (1943)*, p. 4.
[70] John Herman Randall Jr, "Review of *Education at the Crossroads* by Jacques Maritain", pp. 609-614 (609). In: *The Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. 40, No. 22 (Oct., 1943).

considered to have been deployed in an excellent way by Aquinas, in whose footsteps he sought to follow, both in respect of the content and manner or style of argument. His preference for this approach to philosophising is clear in what is regarded by many as the most notable achievement of Maritain's long and fruitful literary career, namely, his book entitled *Distinguer pour unir: Ou, Les degrès du savoir,* (1932).[71] The usual title, *Degrees of Knowledge,* and its effective sub-title, 'Distinguish in Order to Unite', describes precisely what Maritain is doing constantly throughout his philosophizing and is exemplified here in his discussion of the 'seven misconceptions of aims' of modern education he identifies. No doubt, too, Maritain was perfectly aware of an earlier and most eminent proponent of the art of 'analysis - synthesis', namely, Augustine, a process he directed ultimately toward an integral understanding of all reality. 'Whether I divide things up or join them together, I have the same end in view, the same object of love', wrote Augustine. 'But, when I divide (analyse) them, I aim at their purification; when I rejoin (synthesise) them, it is with a view to their integration'.[72]

The 'making of distinctions' was another characteristic procedure of scholastic philosophy and remains an important element even in much contemporary analytic philosophy. Maritain's distinction between 'true' and 'false' conceptions of the aims of education is not simply for effect; it is no mere charade, nor an exercise in knocking down 'straw men'. It is a characteristic strategy of Maritain, a feature of his 'dialectic' one might say, to teach us something in two contrasting ways: we learn from what he specifically asserts about a given reality, and we also learn from the erroneous understandings that he identifies in the assertions of his opponents. Maritain analyses situations in the light of his Thomistic creed, high-lights the errors therein, and removes the falsity. Then, following the example of Augustine and Aquinas (not to mention Aristotle, Socrates, and Plato), he seeks to generate true insight in a synthesis with the unquestioning truth which derives from Christian revelation and Thomist doctrine. This is essentially what Maritain intends when he tells us that he is 'applying Thomist principles' in all areas, including education, of contemporary life.

Being thus aware of Maritain's intention and methodology throughout this series of lectures on the meaning and goals of education, we are better placed to appreciate the

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[71] Jacques Maritain, *Distinguish to Unite: Or, The Degrees of Knowledge,* New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1959. Hereafter cited as: *Degrees of Knowledge.*
[72] St. Augustine, *De Ordine (On Order), 2.18.48.* Cited in: Jean Guitton, *The Modernity of St Augustine,* London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1959, p. 34.

rich and positive vision of education presented here, and especially its role in the promotion of an integral humanism, the foundation upon which Maritain believed both earthly and heavenly fulfilment and salvation, under the action of God's grace, ultimately depended. Maritain's prime goal, Donald A. Gallagher claims, is the provision of 'an integral education for integral humanism', a watchword uttered by Maritain himself and not a mere slogan.[73] 'Liberal' education, as Maritain understands it, is critically important for the promotion of a 'new humanism' that is the only answer to the contemporary crisis in civilisation.[74]

### *Education at the Crossroads:* 'Misconceptions' About the Aims of Education

In discussing the aims of education Maritain highlights what he regards as 'significant misconceptions' about aims, ranging from either a 'disregard of the ends' of education, or 'false ideas about ends', both defects stemming from a common source, namely, the 'absence of the Christian idea of man', to misunderstandings about approaches to education (such as 'pragmatism') and methods of education (such as 'social conditioning'), finally to over-emphasis on, and exaggerated optimism about, the direction and development of intellect ('intellectualism'), and will ('voluntarism').[75] There is no need to discuss all of these 'misconceptions' to an equal extent since all are not equally relevant or urgent for the contemporary educator. 'Misconceptions', like the 'conceptions' of which they are a mis-construal, always arise within a particular social and historical context and are thus historically sensitive.

Neither is it necessary here to present every detail of these 'misconceptions', nor does it seem realistic to try to make a summary of what is already a brief and compact discussion of the issues by the author. Instead, I shall attempt to identify in each case the process of Maritain's argument in terms of the analysis/synthesis methodology implicit in his 'making of distinctions' to which I have drawn attention above. I shall also note Maritain's substantive conclusions about the true aims of education as he conceives them. Throughout his presentation, it is important to note that, for Maritain, education is primarily an intellectual activity aimed at the formation of the intellect and the life of reason.

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[73] Donald A. Gallagher, "Integral Education for Integral Humanism", pp. 274-288. In; Deal W. Hudson and Matthew Mancini (ed.s), *Understanding Maritain: Philosopher and Friend*, Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1987.
[74] See, *EC(1943)*, pp. 88-118.
[75] *EC (1943), pp.* 2-28.

## Education and the Christian idea of Man

According to Maritain, the most glaring weakness of much education is the failure to keep in mind that its aim is 'the perfection of the humanity of human beings'.[76] If, however, the aim of education is conceived as the 'helping and guiding of man toward his own human achievement', then education 'cannot escape the problems and entanglements of philosophy', for it must of necessity have an answer to the question, 'What is man?'[77] Maritain clearly distinguishes between the 'scientific' and 'philosophical-religious' answers that have been given to this question and concludes that 'the complete and integral idea of man which is the prerequisite of education can only be a philosophical and religious idea of man', though he readily admits that there are 'many forms of the philosophical and religious ideas of man'.[78]

Maritain emphasises that the identity of man is fundamentally a philosophical issue because the idea 'pertains to the nature or essence of man' and has, therefore, an 'ontological content' that deals with 'the essential and intrinsic, though not visible or tangible character of that being which we call man'.[79] He insists equally that the idea of man is a religious one because of 'the existential status of this human nature in relation to God'.[80] Maritain does not envisage, in this particular context at least, the contribution that the social sciences such as psychology and sociology make to our understanding of the nature and functioning of human beings. This might be considered a distinct weakness in his theory of education, but it cannot be assumed that he did not consider this dimension important. One must rather accept the priority he gives here to metaphysical reflection and assess his work on that basis.

Maritain concludes that the education of man, in order to be 'completely well-grounded' must be based upon 'the Christian idea of man', because 'this idea of man is the true one'.[81] Maritain does not here set out to justify this claim, so remarkably similar to that of Pius XI, that the Christian idea of man is 'the true one', and that it is essential for the theory and practice of education. Maritain, however, is well aware of the fact that 'the universal assent of all minds' is impossible to obtain but, in any case, he does not regard

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[76] *EC (1943)*, pp. 3-4.
[77] *EC (1943)*, p. 4.
[78] *EC (1943)*, pp. 4-6.
[79] *EC (1943)*, p. 5.
[80] *EC (1943)*, p. 6.
[81] *EC (1943)*, p. 6.

this as necessary.[82] He recognises the existence of 'diverse great metaphysical outlooks', and 'forms of Christian creeds, or even of religious creeds in general', but if the former recognise 'the dignity of the [human] spirit', and the latter, 'the divine destiny of man', this makes it possible, he is convinced, 'even for those who do not share in the creed of its supporters', for all 'to play an inspiring part in the concert' that is a 'well-founded and rationally developed' Christian philosophy of education.[83]

## 'Person' and 'Individual'

From a philosophical point of view, Maritain contends that the main concept to be stressed concerning the nature of education and its aims is that of the 'human person'.[84] Man is a person, says Maritain, who 'holds himself in the hand by his intelligence and will'.[85] Human beings are not to be understood as mere physical beings, or their existence to be fathomed and explained in terms of sense experience alone. Man has 'a spiritual super-existence', manifest through his capacity to know and to love.[86] At the root of this unique power to know and to love, Maritain asserts, is 'the full philosophical reality that is the concept of the soul'.[87] The human person exists by virtue of the existence of his or her soul. It is the spirit which is the root of personality.[88] It is this 'mystery of our nature', Maritain writes, which religious thought designates when it says that 'the person is in the image of God'.[89] A person possesses 'absolute dignity' because he is 'in direct relationship with the realm of being, truth, goodness, and beauty, and with God, and it is only through this relationship that he can arrive at his complete fulfilment'.[90]

Of all the distinctions made by Maritain in order to create his integral vision of humanity, synthesised by faith and reason, the distinction between 'personality' (or personhood') and 'individuality' is perhaps the most crucial in the context of his educational thought. Personality is only one aspect, or one pole of the human being, according to Maritain.[91] The other pole is 'individuality'.[92] The same man, the same

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[82] *EC (1943)*, p. 7.
[83] *EC (1943)*, pp. 6-7.
[84] *EC (1943)*, pp. 7-10.
[85] *EC (1943)*, p. 8.
[86] *EC (1943)*, p. 8.
[87] *EC (1943)*, p. 8.
[88] *EC (1943)*, p. 8.
[89] *EC (1943)*, p. 8.
[90] *EC (1943)*, p. 8.
[91] *EC (1943)*, p. 9.

'entire person' who is, in one sense, 'a person or a whole made independent by his spiritual soul', is also, in another sense, 'a material individual, a fragment of a species, a part of the physical universe'.[93] In graphic terms, Maritain declares that a man's humanity is still 'the humanity of an animal', living by sense and instinct as well as by reason.[94] Man is a horizon in which two worlds, the spiritual and the material, meet, Maritain concludes.[95]

In the context of this distinction between 'personality' (or, perhaps, being more true to Maritain's thinking, 'personhood') and 'individuality', Mario D'Souza has drawn attention to the fact that postmodernism has much to say about the nature of the human subject and what it terms the development of human subjectivity that is at odds with Maritain's view.[96] One of the implications of postmodernism, according to Tom Kitwood, is 'the collapse of the unitary subject', that is, 'the one who knows his or her aims and desires, and works towards their attainment through an instrumental rationality'.[97]

In a later chapter of this thesis, Bernard Lonergan will be seen to offer an approach to the human subject, based on his cognitional theory, which in many respects diverges from Maritain's understanding but, perhaps, enables us to avoid some of the difficulties encountered in Maritain's person / individual distinction. Lonergan, as we shall see, does not accept the Aristotelian account of the soul that is at the basis of Maritain's distinction and he, therefore, avoids the temptation to resort to faculty psychology in describing the capacities of the human soul. While Maritain is concerned with the faculties of the soul that make knowledge and freedom possible, Lonergan places his emphasis on what constitutes knowledge, on the nature of human knowing, and its invariant structure and method.

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[92] Elsewhere, Maritain has much to say on the distinction he makes between 'person' and individual' and the significance of his notion of 'integral humanism' which seeks to bring the different dimensions of the human person together, without ignoring or diminishing the value of either. See, for example, *Integral Humanism: Temporal and Spiritual Problems of a New Christendom*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, [1936], 1968.
[93] *EC (1943)*, p. 9.
[94] *EC (1943)*, p. 9.
[95] *EC (1943)*, p. 9.
[96] See, Mario D' Souza, "Jacques Maritain's Seven Misconceptions of Education", *Catholic Education*, Vol. 5, No. 4 (Jun., 2002), pp. 435- 453 (437-438).
[97] Tom Kitwood, "Psychotherapy, postmodernism and morality", *Journal of Moral Education*, 1990, Vol. 19, No. 1, pp. 3-13 (3).

## Education and Freedom

Maritain regarded the 'aspirations of the human person to freedom' as a critically important matter in education and understood the purpose and function of education to be about 'the conquest of internal freedom'.[98] In this context, also, Maritain makes a number of important distinctions as he develops his argument. One such distinction is that between what he terms the freedom deriving from free will, 'human nature's gift to us', by means of which we make free (but situated and necessarily restricted) choices, and the freedom which is 'spontaneity, expansion, or autonomy', which is not given, but which we have to 'gain through constant effort and struggle'.[99] One of the most 'profound and essential forms' of such an aspiration to freedom, Maritain maintains, is the 'desire for inner and spiritual freedom', identified by Aristotle as the 'independence which is granted to men by intellect and wisdom as the perfection of the human being'.[100] This inner and spiritual freedom is also to be identified with the 'perfection of love and the freedom of those who are moved by the divine Spirit', of which the Christian Gospel speaks.[101]

The 'prime goal of education' for Maritain is the 'conquest of internal and spiritual freedom' to be achieved by the individual person, or, in other words, 'his liberation through knowledge and wisdom, good will, and love'.[102] This freedom is not, for Maritain, to be identified with 'a mere unfolding of potentialities without any object to be grasped', or 'a movement of the will undirected toward any specific aim or objective'.[103] Maritain recognises that the conquest of 'internal and spiritual freedom' may well be an aim which, 'here on earth, will only ever be grasped in a partial and imperfect manner'.[104] Yet, Maritain is certain, the aim will somehow be grasped, even if only partially.

Echoing the Gospel message that 'the truth shall make you free' (Jn. 8:32), Maritain expounds upon his understanding of truth, stressing that 'truth does not depend on us but on what *is*'.[105] Truth cannot be regarded as 'a set of ready-made formulae to be

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[98] *EC (1943)*, pp. 10-12.
[99] *EC (1943)*, pp. 10-11.
[100] *EC (1943)*, p. 11.
[101] *EC (1943)*, p. 11.
[102] *EC (1943)*, p. 11.
[103] *EC (1943)*, p. 11.
[104] *EC (1943)*, p. 11.
[105] *EC (1943)*, p. 12.

passively recorded', for this inevitably results in the mind being 'closed', according to Maritain. Truth is 'an infinite realm, as infinite as being', whose 'wholeness transcends infinitely our powers of perception'.[106] This conquest of truth, the 'progressive attainment of new truths', or the 'progressive realization of the ever-growing and ever-renewed significance of truth already attained', opens and enlarges our mind and life, and situates them in freedom and autonomy'.[107]

Much of what Maritain asserts here on the conquest of internal freedom through the acquisition of truth is reminiscent of Newman's well-known description of 'enlargement of the mind'.[108] 'Enlargement', or 'enlightenment of the mind', Newman writes, consists, 'not merely in the passive reception into the mind of a number of ideas hitherto unknown to it', but in the mind's 'energetic and simultaneous action upon, and towards, and among those new ideas.[109] An education that has as its priority the 'enlargement' or 'enlightenment of the mind' is a challenging goal for Catholic philosophy and practice of education, when society generally conceives a largely instrumental purpose for schooling. In chapter five, this dissertation will consider whether, and how, the engagement of a philosopher like Maritain with the recent educational discourse of the CCE might promote this kind of 'fine-grained' education and provide all children and young people with a 'liberal' education so defined.

Maritain's education posits a distinctive emphasis on the 'transcendentals' – on unity, truth, goodness, and beauty – that is a striking feature of his educational reflection. The 'transcendentals' are, according to Maritain, following Aquinas, the essential properties of every real being. They are what educators wish to inspire in and elicit from students and it is precisely through these properties of being claims Gregory Kerr, interpreting Maritain, that man can arrive at his complete fulfilment.[110] For Maritain, 'the moment one touches a transcendental, one touches being itself' and he adds that, 'it is remarkable that men really communicate with one another only by passing through

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[106] *EC (1943)*, p. 12.
[107] *EC (1943)*, p. 12.
[108] John Henry Newman, *The Idea of a University*, Garden City, New York: Image Books, 1959, Discourse V, "Knowledge Its Own End".
[109] Ibid., p. 156.
[110] Gregory Kerr, "The Elements of Discord: The *Sine Qua Non* of Education", pp. 92-101 (96). In: Daniel McInerny (ed.), *The Common Things: Essays on Thomism and Education*, Washington, DC: American Maritain Association, 1999.

being, or one of its properties'.[111] Human nature's ultimate aspirations, Maritain suggests, are 'along the pathway of the transcendentals', and may be promoted educationally by three different means. Firstly, towards true understanding of, and judgment about the real, including the knower's authentic understanding of himself as knower; secondly, towards an appreciation of what is truly good and the fulfilment of the person's own nature, including the realization of his freedom and responsibility; and thirdly towards an appreciation of the beautiful, including the development of the capacity to discover the ordered beauty and intelligibility of things.[112]

Maritain's efforts to get as complete a picture as possible of the aims of education, makes it necessary for him to focus on the intentional spiritual activities of the human being that are related to intelligence and free will. Yet, he is by no means unaware of the fact that human existence is an embodied and social existence and that the 'formative tradition' of Christian education to which he is heir must also address these dimensions of human life.[113] Maritain, from very early on in this work, makes us aware of the 'practical aim of education', which however, is 'best provided by the general human capacities developed'.[114] He offers us a comprehensive description of the aim of education in the following terms:

> It is to guide man in the evolving dynamism through which he shapes himself as a human person
> - armed with knowledge, strength of judgment, and moral virtues - while at the same time
> conveying to him the spiritual heritage of the nation and the civilization in which he is involved,
> and preserving in this way the century-old achievements of generations.[115]

For Maritain, 'the utilitarian aspect of education must surely not be disregarded', but, equally, this 'practical aim', and the 'ulterior specialized training' that may be required, must never 'imperil the essential aim of education'.[116]

## The 'Social Dimension' of Education

Besides the aspiration of the human person to 'inner and spiritual freedom', Maritain reflects on what he sees as another form of this desire, that is, the 'desire for freedom

[111] Jacques Maritain, *Art and Scholasticism*, Notre Dame, IND: University of Notre Dame Press, 1974, p. 32.
[112] Gregory Kerr, "The Elements of Discord", p. 101.
[113] It would be interesting, but unfortunately beyond the scope of the present work, to investigate Maritain's philosophy and practice of education in relation to *Bildung*, echoes of which are not infrequent in *EC (1943)*.
[114] *EC (1943)*, p. 10.
[115] *EC (1943)*, p. 10.
[116] *EC (1943)*, p. 10.

externally manifested', which he understands lies at the very root of social life.[117] Social life, life in society with others, is absolutely necessary for the full development and growth of the human being. Social life allows human beings to benefit from the 'common good', while at the same time rightfully 'subordinating the individual to the common good for the sake of that good as a whole.[118]

It is obvious for Maritain that man's education must be 'concerned with the social group' and have, as one of its aims, his preparation to play a part in society.[119] Shaping man 'to lead a normal, useful and cooperative life in community', claims Maritain, or 'guiding the development of the human person in the social sphere', awakening and strengthening both his 'sense of freedom and his sense of obligation and responsibility', is an essential aim of education.[120] But the social purpose of education, for Maritain, Michael Tierney argues, is best attained not by any special 'conditioning for social ends', but by so 'developing the citizen's personality', in harmony with, but not enslaved to the traditions of his community', that he can ultimately take his place in society as an 'autonomous person'.[121]

For Maritain, this social aim is 'not the primary, but a secondary essential aim' of education.[122] The distinction between 'primary' and 'secondary' aim, or 'ultimate' and 'proximate' ends in education, allows Maritain to allocate to society two quite distinct roles for the education it provides. The ultimate end of education concerns 'the human person in his personal life and spiritual progress', not in his 'relation to the social environment'.[123] Maritain regards 'social conditioning', even as a secondary aim of education, as a misconception of what is an important aim of education. The 'essence' of education, he insists, 'does not consist in adapting a potential citizen to the conditions and interactions of social life', but first in *making a man*', and by this very fact preparing a citizen.[124] To be a good citizen and 'a man of civilization' what matters above all is 'the inner centre, the living source of personal conscience', in which

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[117] *EC (1943)*, p. 14.
[118] *EC (1943)*, p. 14.
[119] *EC (1943)*, p. 14.
[120] *EC (1943)*, pp. 14-15.
[121] Michael Tierney, "Monsieur Maritain on Education", in: *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review*, Vol. 33, No. 129 (Mar., 1944), pp. 21-29 (25).
[122] *EC (1943)*, p. 15.
[123] *EC (1943)*, p. 15.
[124] *EC (1943)*, p. 15. If comparison with Pius XI on this matter were required, *DIM (1929)*, No.54 provides a remarkably close parallel.

originate idealism and generosity, the sense of law and the sense of friendship, respect for others, but at the same time deep-rooted independence with regard to common opinion.[125] The final end of education, the fulfilment of man as a human person, is regarded by Maritain as an extremely high and broad aim, since it deals with 'our very freedom and spirit, whose boundless potentialities can be led to full human stature only by means of constant, creative renewal'.[126]

## Twin Heresies: 'Intellectualism' and 'Voluntarism'

Two further 'misconceptions' about the aims of education, two 'contrasting heresies' as it were, arise, according to Tierney, like all heresies, from an unhealthy 'over-emphasis of what is right in its own place'.[127] These Maritain refers to as 'intellectualism' and 'voluntarism' respectively, and they come, he claims, from 'a failure to preserve due proportion in regard to the powers of the human soul'.[128] Commentary upon the details of these misconceptions is less pressing than to be clear about the role of Maritain's 'faculty psychology' in understanding their origins.

This is a feature of their thinking where Maritain and Lonergan, the subject of the following chapter in this dissertation, differ sharply. Lonergan, as we shall see, rarely speaks of 'intellect' and 'will', or their functions, on the grounds that they are 'not given directly to consciousness' but rather are reached through metaphysics.[129] While Maritain appears to have little problem in subscribing to the Aristotelian doctrine of the soul and its powers, Lonergan, though admitting that Aristotelian psychology is not without 'profound insight into human sensibility and intelligence', nevertheless, maintains that 'its basic concepts are derived, not from intentional consciousness, but from metaphysics'.[130] Since metaphysics follows intentionality analysis for Lonergan, he prefers to foreground the conscious, intending subject rather than the soul.

For Lonergan, the Aristotelian concept of 'soul' does not mean the 'subject', but an 'act', the 'first act of an organic body'.[131] In Aristotle, Lonergan admits, there exists 'a systematic account of the soul, its potencies, habits, operations, and their objects', and

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[125] *EC (1943)*, p. 16.
[126] *EC (1943)*, p. 18.
[127] Michael Tierney, "Monsieur Maritain On Education", p. 25.
[128] *EC (1943)*, pp. 18-22.
[129] Bernard Lonergan, *A Second Collection*, London: Darton, Longman & Todd, p. x. Hereafter cited as *A Second Collection*.
[130] *Method*, p. 95.
[131] Ibid., pp. 95-96.

though in some respects it is 'startlingly accurate', it is 'incomplete and throughout presupposes a metaphysics'.[132] Since Maritain accords a priority to metaphysics, this is not a problem for him and, in addition, he would probably point out that the Arisotelian notion of soul has been 'complemented by the fuller theory of Aquinas'.[133]

It is probably important not to exaggerate these differences between the scholars as far as the practical implications for education are concerned. Lonergan's notion of the 'existential subject', as we shall see in the following chapter, while it might have been overlooked, or under-emphasised to some extent, by the traditional categories that distinguished faculties of the soul, such as intellect and will, makes common cause with Maritain's notion of the final end of education that is focused on 'the fulfilment of man as a human person'.[134] Lonergan, too, believes that the human subject, both as 'a knower' (one that experiences, understands, and judges), and as 'a doer' (one that deliberates, evaluates, chooses, acts), by his or her own knowledge and acts, makes himself or herself what he or she is to be, and does so freely and responsibly. Indeed, he or she does so precisely because his or acts are the free and responsible expressions of himself or herself. 'We are', as Lonergan emphatically puts it, 'subjects by degrees', and education has an essential role in assisting our authentic becoming.[135]

It is a matter worth noting, perhaps, that the Christian anthropology that silently underpins the CCE discourse does not appear to mention the human soul. A more existential and personalist philosophy seems to be the basis for characterising the activities of the human subject. A more biblical based understanding regards the human person not in any sort of dualistic fashion but considers the bodily and the spiritual dimensions as united in the most intimate of relationships. 'Though made of body and soul, man is one'.[136] Human beings have certain interior qualities (*interioritas*) that make them distinctive.[137]

Maritain's position on intellectualism as an over-emphasis on intelligence, often involving the instrumental and over-specialized use of learning, should make Catholic educators want to reflect on how academic disciplines, including the liberal arts and the

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[132] Ibid., p. 260.
[133] Ibid., p. 261.
[134] *EC (1943)*, p. 18.
[135] Bernard Lonergan, "The Subject", *A Second Collection*, pp. 69-80 (80).
[136] *GE (1965)*, No. 14.
[137] Ibid., No. 14.

humanities, contribute to the humanising process of education and the promotion of the student's growth towards personhood, and how the relation between universal values and growth in humanity may be compromised through premature specialization. 'The intellectual nature of the human person is perfected by wisdom. Wisdom gently attracts the mind of man to a quest and a love for what is true and good'.[138]

'Voluntarism' in general is a kind of excessive reaction that subordinates human intelligence to the will.[139] Again, voluntarism is a question of mis-placed emphasis. Education is expected to concentrate either on the will which is to be disciplined, or on the free expression of nature and natural potentialities which are to be encouraged. Voluntarism, Maritain argued, cannot succeed in forming and strengthening the will, but is more likely to deform and weaken the intellect, by the very fact that it exaggerates the role of will in thought, and tries to make everything a matter of one's will to believe.[140] The primacy of the will in human thought 'reduces everything to arbitrary opinions or academic conventions', says Maritain.[141] Education of the will, education of feeling, even formation of character, may in fact amount to no more than a form of 'educational voluntarism' designed to compensate for the ill effects of intellectualism.

It is important to make it clear that, for Maritain, the task of institutional education is primarily 'intellectual' in nature. Where a school imparts moral education, it must do so through the enlightenment of the intellect; it does not rightly engage in a direct formation of the will. The 'direct and primary responsibility of the school', Maritain writes, 'is not moral, but intellectual in nature' – namely, 'responsibility for the normal growth of the intellect of the students', the 'acquisition by them of articulate and sufficiently universal knowledge', and 'the development of their own inner intellectual capacities'.[142] At the same time, Maritain believes that 'formation in moral life and virtues is an essential part', indeed, he would say, 'the most important part', of the primary aim of 'education in the *broad* sense of the word'.[143]

School and college education, he argues, is not equipped to secure moral formation in 'a

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[138] Ibid., No. 15.
[139] *EC (1943)*, p. 20.
[140] *EC (1943)*, p. 21.
[141] *EC (1943)*, p. 21.
[142] Donald & Idella Gallagher (ed.s), *The Education of Man*, Notre Dame, IND: University of Notre Dame Press, 1962, p. 104. Hereafter cited as: *EM (1962)*.
[143] Jacques Maritain, "Thomist Views on Education", in Nelson B. Henry (ed.), NSSE Fifty-fourth Yearbook, 1955, p. 83.

full and complete manner'; yet it is bound to contribute positively and efficaciously to the moral formation of youth.[144] The responsibility for moral education rests, 'directly and primarily on the family' on the one hand, and on the other hand 'on the religious community to which the family of the young person belongs'.[145] Maritain also believes that since the 'assistance of religious education is basically needed to convey to young people the treasure of moral ideas and the moral experience of mankind', it is, therefore 'an obligation of the school and the college, not only to enlighten students on moral matters, but also to allow them to receive full religious education'.[146]

Maritain is at pains to stress the relationship between the will and the intellect. He believes that intelligence is, in and by itself, 'nobler than the will of man, for its activity is more immaterial and universal'.[147] Yet, he also believes that in regard to the things or the objects upon which intelligence bears, 'it is better to will and love the good rather than simply to know it'.[148] Moreover, Maritain concludes, it is through his will, when it is good, not through his intelligence, however perfect, that man is made good and right.[149]

In the context of institutional education, where intellect is dealt with directly, according to Maritain, and will is addressed indirectly through the enlightenment of the intellect, the roles of both intelligence and will are to be respected. Maritain underlines the importance of the relationship between intelligence and will, which, as Mario D'Souza puts it, he regards as the foundation for the metaphysical and ontological formation of the person.[150] The upbringing of the human being must 'lead both intelligence and will toward achievement', and the shaping of the will is more important to man than the shaping of the intellect.[151] It is a matter of some regret to Maritain that, in his experience, while the educational system of many schools and colleges 'succeeds as a rule in equipping man's intellect for knowledge', it seems to be 'missing its main achievement, the equipping of man's will'.[152]

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[144] Ibid., p. 83.
[145] *EM (1962)*, p. 104.
[146] "Thomist Views on Education", p. 83.
[147] EC (1943), p. 22.
[148] *EC (1943)*, p. 22.
[149] *EC (1943)*, p. 22.
[150] Mario O. D'Souza, "Maritain's Philosophy of Education and Christian Religious Education", *Catholic Education*, Vol. 4, No. 3, March 2001, pp. 375-395 (376).
[151] EC (1929), p. 22.
[152] EC (1943), p. 22.

## Maritain and Contemporary Pedagogy

Maritain's opening Yale lecture also affords us some light into his understanding of, and attitude to the 'means/end' problem, which has so often dogged modern educational discourse. In distinguishing between 'ends' and 'means' in education, Maritain, further to his belief that by definition there must be ends in education, is in no way oblivious to the question of means. It is certainly his position that 'the supremacy of means over end' contributes to the 'collapse of all sure purpose and real efficiency' (understood in terms of means not actually leading to the intended aim, or the loss of sight of that aim) and thus becomes 'the main reproach to contemporary education'.[153] Nonetheless, Maritain has much praise to bestow on contemporary pedagogy and the sane means education regularly adopts in pursuit of legitimate goals. Thus, he admits that 'modern pedagogy has made invaluable progress in stressing the necessity of carefully analyzing and fixing its gaze on the human subject'.[154] For Maritain, the wrong begins when the 'primacy' of the object to be taught is forgotten, and when 'the cult of the means, not to an end, but without an end', results in a form of 'psychological worship' of the subject.[155]

Maritain is quite prepared to admit that, in contemporary pedagogy, 'the means are not bad'; on the contrary, 'they are generally much better than those of the old pedagogy'.[156] In fact, Maritain complimented his American audience on the discovery of 'educational ways and means better fitted for the nature and dignity of all the children of man', and went so far as to say that the 'democratization of education' which facilitated this, 'constituted one of the glories of the country'.[157] Maritain welcomed too what was perhaps the main discovery of so-called 'progressive education', namely, that 'the principal agent and dynamic factor (in education) is not the art of the teacher but the inner principle of activity, the inner dynamism of nature and the mind of the child'.[158] The goals and techniques of progressive education he found in large measure promising, always provided, of course, that the due and irreplaceable role of the teacher is not overly restricted. Such a positive attitude contrasts sharply with

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[153] *EC (1943)*, p. 3.
[154] *EC (1943)*, p. 14.
[155] *EC (1943)*, p. 14.
[156] *EC (1943)*, p. 3.
[157] *EC (1943)*, p. 118.
[158] *EC (1943)*, p. 82.

what was then the official attitude of Catholic educators generally to Dewey's work.[159]

To have 'made education more experiential', Maritain also acknowledged, 'closer to concrete life', and 'permeated with social concerns from the very start', is an achievement of which modern education is 'justly proud'.[160] He is, nevertheless, careful to add that 'without abstract insight and intellectual enlightenment the more striking experiences (of human life) are of no use to man'.[161] In connection with the question of 'experience' and the focus on the child in pedagogy it is worth recalling that Maritain was in no way hostile to the teaching methods as such promoted by John Dewey and his followers. In the following passage, although he is not explicitly named, Maritain appears to offer a fair appreciation of Dewey's approach and methodology in education. Maritain writes that

> [T]he conception which makes education itself a constantly renewed experiment, starting from the pupil's present purposes and developing in one way or another according to the success of his problem-solving activity with regard to these purposes and to new purposes arising from broadened experience in unforeseen directions, such a pragmatist conception has its own merits when it comes to the necessity of adapting educational methods to the natural interests of the pupil.[162]

What Maritain would be most concerned with in regard to this is, of course, 'the standards for judging the purposes and values' thus successively emerging in the pupil's mind, and the question of whether the teacher has, or has not, 'a general aim and a set of final values to which the whole process is related'.[163]

In his comments about 'pragmatic, instrumentalist, and progressive education', Maritain expresses concern about 'a pragmatic over-emphasis in education'.[164] The 'crossroads' of the title of Maritain's premier work on philosophy of education focuses precisely on the important distinction Maritain made between 'pragmatic and instrumentalist philosophy' and the 'personalist and humanist venture' in education.[165] It would be a mistake, however, to interpret Maritain as rejecting out of hand the notions of 'action' and 'praxis', which he considers essential to the notion of

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[159] Here, if one were interested in comparing Maritain with, or assessing him in relation to Pius XI's teaching, there is an interesting contrast between Maritain's position and what the pope dubbed, perhaps somewhat unfairly, 'pedagogic naturalism'. See *DIM (1929)*, No.s 60, 61-63.
[160] *EC (1943)*, p. 16.
[161] *EC (1943)*, p. 16.
[162] *EC (1943)*, p. 17.
[163] *EC (1943)*, p. 17.
[164] *EC (1943)*, pp. 12-14; p. 118.
[165] *EC (1943)*, p. 118.

'pragmatism', or to think of him as being diametrically opposed to all aspects of the work of John Dewey, with whom he probably identifies the philosophy of pragmatism here.[166]

While Maritain is hesitant about the philosophical basis of Dewey's problem solving approach in education, he actually applauds many essential features of his pedagogy, in practice at any rate.[167] Maritain admired much about the genius and work of the great American educator, while disagreeing fundamentally with his 'functionalist theory' of truth. Thus, despite his general antipathy towards pragmatism, and his personal conviction that 'this philosophy will naturally lead to the denial of the objective value of any spiritual need', Maritain's generous spirit allowed him to express genuine admiration for 'a great thinker like Professor John Dewey who is able to maintain an ideal image of all those things which are dear to the heart of free men'.[168]

The central difficulty for Maritain concerning 'pragmatism' and 'instrumentalism' hinges on the under-lying theory of human knowledge common to both. It is 'an unfortunate mistake', he says, 'to define human thought as a response to various stimuli and situations in the environment'.[169] This is tantamount to equating human knowledge with animal knowledge and thus failing to appreciate the uniqueness of human knowledge, and specifically, of over-looking reason in the human being. For Maritain, human thought is able 'to illumine experience, to realize desires which are human because they are rooted in the prime desire for unlimited good, and to dominate, control, and refashion the world'.[170]

The reason for this, Maritain argues, is because: (i) every human idea, to have a meaning, 'must attain in some measure to what things *are*, or consist of unto themselves'[171] ; (ii) human thought is 'an instrument, or rather a vital energy, of knowledge into (rather than about) things, a spiritual intuition'[172]; (iii) human thinking begins, 'not only with difficulties or problems, but with insights', and ends up in insights, which are made true by rational proving or experimental verifying, not by

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[166] See, John Dewey, *Democracy and Education,* 1916, New York: The Free Press.
[167] *EC (1943),* p. 115.
[168] *EC (1943),* p. 115.
[169] *EC (1943),* p. 12.
[170] *EC (1943),* p. 13.
[171] *EC (1973),* p. 13.
[172] *EC (1943),* p. 13.

pragmatic sanction'.[173] 'At the beginning of human action, insofar as it is human', Maritain concludes, 'there is truth, grasped or believed to be grasped for the sake of truth'.[174] Such is the chief criticism to be made of the pragmatic and instrumentalist theory of knowledge, he confidently assures us.[175]

Maritain has a real fear about the effects of a pragmatic theory of knowledge in the field of education. He accepts that 'many things are excellent in the emphasis on action and *praxis,* for life consists of action'.[176] But 'action' and 'praxis', indeed 'life' itself, 'aim at an object, a determining end, an end which makes life worthy of being lived'.[177] Contemplation of life's end or purpose, and the conduct of life in pursuit of self-perfection are likely to 'escape the purview of the pragmatic mind', according to Maritain.[178] Maritain believes that where there is an over-emphasis on pragmatism, 'education can hardly produce in youth anything but a scholarly scepticism', which will be 'unnaturally used against the very grain of intelligence', so as to 'cause minds to distrust the very idea of truth and wisdom' and to 'give up any hope of any inner dynamic unity' in human knowledge and learning.[179]

Richard Pring has recently pointed out that Dewey saw in pragmatism 'a middle way between dualist and idealist ideas of truth', both of which were unsatisfactory to his mind.[180] Dewey, on the one hand, could not 'ignore the experiences that constantly impact upon our minds, experiences not of our own making'.[181] On the other hand, he was clearly aware that 'such experiences do not come, as it were, raw, un-interpreted by the thought system of the person doing the experiencing: they do not give us direct access to a world independent of our thinking'.[182] As experiencing and thinking human beings, we are 'not waiting passively for further experiences'; we are 'actively seeking perceived goals or ends-in-view, and having to adapt to, and to interpret, experiences as they occur'.[183] It is likely that Maritain's metaphysical realism and epistemological

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[173] *EC (1943),* p. 13.
[174] *EC (1943),* p. 13.
[175] *EC (1943),* p. 13.
[176] *EC (1943),* p. 12.
[177] *EC (1943),* p. 12.
[178] *EC (1943),* pp. 12-13
[179] *EC (1943),* p. 13.
[180] Richard Pring, *John Dewey: A Philosopher of Education for our Time?,* 2007, London: Continuum, p. 149.
[181] Ibid., p. 149.
[182] Ibid., p. 149.
[183] Ibid., p. 149.

stance aggravated his real difficulties with pragmatism. One might, therefore, just add in passing that Bernard Lonergan, the subject of the following chapter in this dissertation, might have been better placed, on the basis of the critical realism that accompanied his cognitional theory, to engage in conversation with Dewey about the nature of knowledge, truth and meaning.

## 'Paradox' and 'Prudence'

Maritain's first Terry lecture ends with a note on what he refers to as the 'paradoxes of education', and an attack on a final 'misconception' that concerns the 'proper object of education and its boundaries'.[184] For Maritain, 'paradox' is an inevitable reality in the field of education. 'Paradox' is much more than a figure of speech here. It entails the notion of 'contrariety' and raises the spectre of 'un-intelligibility' in respect of certain decisions arrived at in the practice of education. Maritain reflects briefly on how Aristotle developed the doctrine of *phronēsis*, or 'prudence' (*prudentia*), to guide practical decision-making. The notion of *phronēsis*, or 'prudence', is important in the context of this analysis by Maritain of 'misconceptions' in relation to the aims of education. It is in reality the ambiguity of modern educational theory that Maritain addresses in this final part of his opening lecture.

It will be interesting in a later chapter of this thesis to compare the phronetic reasoning of Maritain with that of Terence H. McLaughlin in the context of the re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education. For now, one should focus on Maritain's 'right appreciation of practical cases', that is, *phronēsis* or 'prudence', as he concludes his reflections on the aims of education, specifically within the context of institutional education, or schooling.[185] Prudence (*phronēsis*) is described by Maritain as 'an inner vital power of judgment developed in the mind and backed up by a well-directed will, which cannot be replaced by any learning whatsoever'. It is a 'cardinal virtue' in the life of man.[186]

A problem that much concerned Maritain arose out of contemporary education's goal of

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[184] EC (1943), pp. 22-27.
[185] *EC (1943)*, p. 23.
[186] EC (1943), p. 23. See, Josef Pieper, *Prudence: The First Cardinal Virtue*, London: Faber & Faber, 1939.

equipping young people with what are regarded as essential skills for living.[187] Here, as in so many (if not all) facets of education, the role of judgment and practical wisdom is critical. Maritain, D'Souza notes, has been criticised frequently for what is described as 'an overly intellectual agenda in education', but he also stresses 'the spiritual dimension of knowledge and learning, the contemplative dimension of education, and the roles of intuition and love'.[188] As far as Maritain is concerned, this is the fundamental paradox in education, that through none of its courses or initiatives can education impart the gift of practical wisdom we need throughout life.

There are courses in philosophy, but 'no courses in wisdom', says Maritain. 'Wisdom is gained through spiritual experience'.[189] For man and for human living nothing is more important than 'intuition and love'; yet, 'neither intuition nor love is a matter of training and learning', for these are, he says, 'gift and freedom'.[190] In spite of this, Maritain is certain that intuition and love are matters about which education should be 'primarily concerned', irrespective of the fact that 'not every love is right, nor every intuition well directed or conceived'.[191] Education ought to teach us 'how to be in love always, and what to be in love with', Maritain concludes, making his own the words of John U. Nef, a contemporary writer, to the effect that 'the great things of history have been done by the great lovers, by the saints and men of science and artists; and the problem of civilization is to give every man a chance of being a saint, a man of science, or an artist'.[192]

Maritain's understanding of 'intuition' is complex and its elaboration largely beyond the scope of this chapter.[193] As well as stressing its importance here in this discussion of the aims of education, Maritain returns to the matter of 'intuition' when, during the course of his second Yale lecture, he returns to the subject of 'the freeing of the intuitive power of man'.[194] Intuition and intuitive judgment cannot, as far as Maritain is concerned, be promoted through training or methods, but only through attention to the

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[187] The kind of 'skills' listed by Maritain include matters that might make contemporary educators bristle, such as, courses on 'getting married, or the scientific means of acquiring creative genius, or of consoling those who weep, or of being a man of generosity'. See EC (1943), pp. 22-23.
[188] Mario O. D'Souza, "Maritain's Seven Misconceptions", p. 448.
[189] EC (1943), p. 23.
[190] EC (1943), p. 23.
[191] EC (1943), p. 23.
[192] EC (1943), pp. 23-24. See, John U. Nef, The US and Civilization, Chicago, 1943, p. 265.
[193] For a fuller treatment of intuition than is possible here, see Jacques Maritain, Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry, New York: Pantheon Books, 1953.
[194] EC (1943), pp. 42-45.

life of the imagination and human creativity. Maritain understands that an essential aspect of the teacher's role consists in engaging the life of the imagination and gradually linking it to the life of reason and rational knowledge. One might mention that intuition is yet another matter where Maritain's understanding of how we know being, and Lonergan's study of insight and human understanding, might bear fruitful comparison in connection with the re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education.

Given the paradoxes that he sees at the heart of the educational process, Maritain is led to question the whole matter of the relationship between the learner and his/her environment. Once again, he considers it highly paradoxical that what he terms the 'extra-educational sphere' - that is, the 'entire field of human activity' (daily work and pain, experiences in friendship and love, social customs, etc.), the 'common wisdom embodied in the behaviour of the people', the 'inspiring radiance of art and poetry', the 'penetrating influence of religious feasts and liturgy' – all this, in Maritain's judgment, 'exerts on man an action which is more important in the achievement of his education than education itself'.[195] It might occur to one reading Maritain's remarks today that living in our contemporary society and culture is likely to exert a far less unified impact upon the learner than Maritain appears to envisage here. Nonetheless, the impact remains widespread and critical. Within this same context of the influence of various 'educational' and 'extra-educational' environments on learning, Maritain comments wisely upon the mutual and reciprocal educational roles of family, school, state, and Church, including the call that each becomes more aware ('and more worthy') of its call and that each recognizes not only its limitations and the necessity of mutual help but also the inevitability of a reciprocal tension between the one and the other.[196]

Maritain, as has already been remarked, belongs integrally within the Christian tradition of formative education, and his comment upon how education, formal or informal, affects the shaping of the will and the formation of the intellect is an important reflection of that tradition. Maritain is happy to set boundaries to what society must expect or demand of its schools and their characteristic activity. He is adamant, as noted above, that school-based education has only a partial (but necessary) task, and 'this task

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[195] *EC (1943)*, p. 25.
[196] *EC (1943)*, p. 24. Here again clear parallels and echoes between Maritain and Pius XI in *DIM (1929)* are easily detected. See *DIM (1929)*, No.s 28-33, 35-52.

is primarily concerned with knowledge and intelligence'.[197] Teaching's domain is the domain of truth, speculative as well as practical truth, he asserts.[198] In terms reminiscent of Newman's *Idea of a University*, Maritain emphasizes that 'the one influence that should dominate' in school and college must be 'that of truth, and of the intelligible realities whose illuminating power obtains by its own virtue, not by virtue of human authority'.[199] The task of the teacher, in Maritain's view, is to promote the assent of an 'open mind' in the child, who, at first, is reliant on the trust he can place in his teacher, before he becomes capable of judging 'according to the worth of evidence'. [200] The teacher must 'respect in the child the dignity of the mind', must 'appeal to the child's power of understanding', and conceive of his own effort as 'preparing a human mind to think for itself'.[201]

Maritain concludes that the paradoxes that are at the heart of modern education can be resolved only through the realization that what is most important in the upbringing of man, that is, 'the uprightness of the will and the attainment of spiritual freedom, as well as the achievement of a sound relationship with society, is truly the main objective of education in its broadest sense'.[202] In what concerns 'direct action' on the will and the shaping of character, 'this objective chiefly depends on educational spheres other than the school', says Maritain, adding wryly, 'not to speak of the role which the extra-educational spheres play in this matter'.[203]. On the other hand, concerning 'indirect action', school and college education 'provides a basis and necessary preparation for the main objective in question by concentrating on knowledge and the intellect, not on the will and direct training', and by keeping sight, above all, of the 'development and uprightness of speculative and practical reasoning'.[204] School and college education 'has indeed its own world', and for Maritain that essentially consists of the recognition of 'the dignity and achievements of knowledge and the intellect', that is, of 'the human being's root faculty'. And 'that knowledge which is wisdom is the ultimate goal' of this world.[205]

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[197] *EC (1943)*, p. 26.
[198] *EC (1943)*, p. 26.
[199] *EC (1943)*, p. 26.
[200] *EC (1943)*, p. 26.
[201] *EC (1943)*, p. 26.
[202] *EC (1943)*, p. 28.
[203] *EC (1943)*, p. 28.
[204] *EC (1943)*, p. 28.
[205] *EC (1943)*, p. 28.

It is chiefly through the instrumentality of intelligence and truth that the school and the college may affect the powers of desire, will, and love in the young. Moral education is considered by many to play an essential part in school and college education. But it is essentially and above all by way of knowledge and teaching that school education must perform this moral task, 'illuminating and giving rectitude to practical reason'.[206] The main duty in the educational spheres of the school as well as of the state is not to shape the will and directly to develop moral virtues in youth, but to enlighten and strengthen reason. Maritain conceives that the appropriate relationship here is that of exerting an indirect influence on the will, 'by a sound equipment of knowledge and a sound development of the powers of thinking'.[207]

Maritain is acutely aware of the centrality of aims to education but he is equally conscious of the need for educators to reflect on the actual process of education, that is, on the complex and subtle interaction that takes place between learner and teacher. Having guided his audience in his opening lecture by the beacon of his Thomist light in a lengthy reflection on the aims of 'liberal' education, and alerted them to some of the more prevalent misconceptions concerning these aims, Maritain next turns his attention to what he designates the 'instrumentalities and dynamics of education', that is, to the fundamental processes and interactions that characterize true education. Among the factors he identifies are: (i) the 'dynamic agents at work in education', notably, the 'inner vitality of the student's mind' and the 'activity of the teacher'; (ii) the 'basic dispositions to be fostered in the pupil'; and (iii) a set of four rules, or 'fundamental norms' to assist the teacher in enabling the student 'to grow in the life of the mind'.[208]

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[206] *EC (1943)*, pp. 26-27.
[207] *EC (1943)*, p. 27.
[208] EC (1943), pp. 29-57 (29, 36, 39).

# III

## *Education at the Crossroads* (1943): 'A Distinctive *Catholic* Philosophy of Education?

In this section an attempt is made to assess the claim that, in *Education at the Crossroads*, Maritain offers a *distinctive Catholic philosophy of education* congenial to, and foundational for, the need for a systematic and detailed expression of Catholic educational thought for the twenty-first century. That claim is to be adjudicated by means of a critique of the study of Carr and his colleagues, "Return to the Crossroads: Maritain Fifty Years On", regarding the potential and value of Maritain's *Education at the Crossroads* for the task of the re-articulation of a distinctive Catholic philosophy of education.[209] I share their aim of providing a proper and fair assessment of Maritain's contribution to the articulation of Catholic philosophy of education, and agree broadly on the value they attribute to his perennial discourse in this context. I differ, however, both in my assessment of the priority to be given to the text they have chosen for this specific purpose, and the conclusion they draw from it concerning its capacity to establish a specific Catholic philosophy of education for today.

With regard to the re-articulation of a Catholic philosophy of education for our times, David Carr and his fellow contributors turned to Maritain to discern 'what might be the form of an adequate Catholic philosophy of education' for our time, a philosophy in continuity with its traditional roots, while remaining open to contemporary scholarship.[210] The writers make clear from the start that they see a Catholic philosophy of education as 'an understanding, from what claims to be a universal standpoint, of education as such', and not, 'save by inclusion', 'a theory of Catholic education'.[211] This group of eminent scholars conclude, on the basis that it is 'hardly possible even to entertain the idea of Catholic philosophy without thinking of Thomism', that, in Maritain, 'who looked primarily to the philosophy of Aquinas for inspiration', 'important resources for the rational articulation and defence of a distinctively Catholic

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[209] David Carr, John Haldane, Terence McLaughlin, and Richard Pring, "Return to the Crossroads: Maritain Fifty Years On", *British Journal of Educational Studies*, Vol. 43, No. 2 (Jun., 1995), pp. 162-178. Hereafter cited as: "Return to the Crossroads".
[210] Ibid., p. 163.
[211] Ibid., p. 163.

conception of education are indeed to be found'.[212]

These authors concur that 'a detailed philosophical exploration and justification' of Maritain's Thomist inspired study on education is 'a task worthy of much serious attention'.[213] While it is possible to agree with their general conclusion, one might wish to address a number of questions arising out of the assessment by these scholars of the potential of *Education at the Crossroads* for a re-articulation of a distinctively Catholic philosophy of education. Their opinion that Maritain is an 'important resource' for this task is not disputed; I question their conclusion as to whether the case for a *distinctively Catholic* philosophy of education can be established on the basis of a study of this single Maritain text.

To put the matter in clear context, it appears that *EC(1943)* was primarily intended by Maritain to be an elucidation and defence of 'liberal education' as he understands the term. Thus, education is conceived of as, the 'conquest of internal and spiritual freedom by the human person' through the liberation of the inner resources of the human spirit: knowledge, wisdom, good will and love.[214] This integral education for an integral humanism necessarily involves the confrontation of the intelligence of man with the wisdom of the humanist tradition.[215] One of Maritain's key intentions for recommending this kind of liberal, humanist education is to enable full participation by all citizens in the democratic way of life. In view of these explicitly stated intentions, a number of questions need to be asked if this text is to be read as an articulation of a distinctively Catholic philosophy of education.

Firstly, therefore, I ask whether Maritain's *Education at the Crossroads* (1943) is intended in fact to portray a 'distinctive *Catholic* philosophy of education', after the manner envisaged by Carr and his fellow contributors.[216] This initiative, undertaken in 1995 by a group of eminent British Catholic philosophers in response to a remark by Robert Dearden, sought to outline, on the basis of a re-consideration of Maritain's 1943 Yale Lectures, 'a distinctively Catholic systematic account of the nature and role of

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[212] Ibid., p. 176.
[213] Ibid., p. 176.
[214] *EC(1943)*, pp. 10-12.
[215] *EC(1943)*, p. 10.
[216] Ibid., pp. 162-178.

education', in other words, 'a Catholic philosophy of education' for our times.[217] Their under-taking needs to be critiqued, to begin with in relation to the degree of Catholic 'distinctiveness' intended by Maritain in his series of lectures, but also in respect of their reliance on only one source of Maritain's educational thought to the apparent neglect or exclusion of other available material.

Secondly, the manifest assumption of the authors that a 'Catholic' philosophy of education must of necessity be a 'Thomist' philosophy of education, must at least be queried. In view of several levels of criticism directed at Maritain's entire approach to the application of Thomist principles generally, and specifically in the field of educational reflection, one might speculate as to whether the 'undiluted Thomism' of Maritain might not rightly be regarded as problematic for Catholic philosophy of education in a post-modern age. The question might be raised as to whether Maritain's Christian philosophy ultimately represents what Bernard Lonergan would call 'a classicist worldview', where reality is envisaged as 'static, fixed, and governed harmoniously by immutable laws', and where 'truth is discovered deductively through the application of abstract, universal and objective principles'.[218]

Thirdly, I focus on some of the more frequent criticisms levelled at Maritain generally and attempt to assess the extent of their validity or otherwise. In summary, I ask whether, in the context of the time, and in view of the availability of alternative philosophical perspectives on education, even within Catholic circles, the attempt of Carr and his fellow contributors at recovering a Thomist philosophy of education from Maritain's *Education at the Crossroads* should be considered a failure, and a missed opportunity, rather than a promising way forward, for Catholic philosophy of education.

**Context and Aims of "Return to the Crossroads" (1995)**

It may be recalled that Carr and his fellow contributors, responding to Robert F. Dearden's 'interesting observation', as they term it, that 'the nearest thing to a distinctive Catholic philosophy of education' then existing in 1982 was probably

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[217] Ibid., p. 163. See, Robert F. Dearden, "Philosophy of Education, 1952-82", *British Journal of Educational Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (Feb., 1982), pp. 57-71. Dearden, *apropos* the dearth of alternative approaches to conceptual analysis, suggested Maritain's *Education at the Crossroads* might be assessed in this connection.

[218] Bernard Lonergan, "Transition from a Classicist World-View to Historical Mindedness", pp. 1-7, *A Second Collection*, London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1974. See chapter three below of this thesis for an extensive discussion of Bernard Lonergan's work in relation to the renewal of Catholic philosophy of education.

Jacques Maritain's *Education at the Crossroads*, undertook 'to offer an account and an assessment of Maritain's text'.[219] These authors clarify their intention when they say that they wish to pursue the question of 'the form of an adequate Catholic philosophy of education' in discussing Maritain's text, and they do not seek 'to articulate a full-blown account of Catholic educational philosophy', but merely 'to determine some likely features of such an account drawn from an admittedly limited source'.[220] It is important to note the authors' insistence that 'the text in question is not a comprehensive and detailed treatment' of the major elements of Catholic philosophy of education and that, in any case, it is a work 'that is now virtually unheard of'.[221]

Having noted the limitations of Maritain's text, it is not surprising that these authors seek to supply for its limitations by considering Maritain's views within the broader context of 'important resources for the rational articulation and defence of a distinctively Catholic conception of education' to be found in the philosophy of St. Thomas.[222] What is perhaps curious, at least in hindsight, is why the authors in question, each of whom might justly have boasted of his back-ground in, and record of skilful exercise in the techniques and procedures of analytical philosophy, made no attempt to complement the chosen Maritain text by introducing an alternative approach into their selected assignment. In seeking to outline the form and features of a distinctively Catholic philosophy of education they have not sought to integrate another perspective along-side Maritain's Thomism, or even to investigate the possibility of so doing. This, to my way of thinking, must be regarded as a missed opportunity to build upon Maritain's insights and conclusions and thus to further the task of re-articulating a Catholic philosophy of education for today.

The decision of Carr and his fellow contributors to situate their comments about Maritain within the Thomist tradition is obviously justified, even demanded, one might say, since this is the conviction and perspective that dominated his thinking in every sphere of his work. The conclusion of the authors that, 'notwithstanding the range of philosophical perspectives adopted by Catholic thinkers, it is hardly possible even to entertain the idea of Catholic philosophy without thinking of Thomism', might nevertheless, be considered to be insufficiently supported in the present context and

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[219] "Return to the Crossroads", p. 163.
[220] Ibid., p. 163.
[221] Ibid., p. 163.
[222] Ibid., p. 176.

regarded as at least contestable in any context.[223] The witness of history, and the fact that 'the Thomistic influence has been ever present, particularly in official documents', makes it 'reasonable' for these authors, particularly in the present context, to interpret *Catholic* as Thomist, and so to ask, 'what might a Thomist philosophy of education be'.[224] The fact also that Maritain appreciated that, in the *Summa Theologiae*, a Thomistic approach to educational questions has available to it a much richer and wider-ranging treatment of fundamental issues than is necessarily available from a single work of Aquinas's, such as *De Magistro*, a work of a largely scholastic style of argument and unlikely as such to attract much attention, seemed convincing to Carr and his fellow contributors.[225]

My intention here is not to provide a detailed critique of Carr and his colleague's analysis of the ideas of Maritain and Aquinas relating to education, since there is little to dispute concerning many of the major points of interpretation. Thus, in relation to their discussion of how Maritain conceives the aims of education, one can readily accept their identification of his starting point in the realist metaphysics and epistemology of Aquinas, which conceives human beings as possessed of a transcendent destiny, able through their intellectual powers to grasp the intelligibility of reality, and, as social animals, able to realise themselves as persons through their participation in the common life of humanity.[226] Carr and his fellow contributors judge correctly that the ideas presented by Maritain in his opening lecture on the aims of education are 'philosophically rich' and their examination 'likely to be both rewarding and profitable'.[227] Similarly, in relation to Maritain's formulation of appropriate procedures for education, Carr and the others are right in characterising Maritain's approach as 'a critical examination of both sides of a familiar dualism in educational theory', namely, that between traditional and progressive perspectives.[228]

### *Catholic* Philosophy of Education is *Thomist* Philosophy of Education?

The identification by Carr and his colleagues of aspects of Maritain's educational thought that can be considered 'evidently derivative of and consistent with a broadly

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[223] Ibid., p. 163.
[224] Ibid., p. 164.
[225] Ibid., p. 164.
[226] Ibid., p. 165.
[227] Ibid., p. 167.
[228] Ibid., p. 167.

Thomist philosophical anthropology' is a matter upon which widespread agreement can be expected.[229] William F. Losito notes that a problem may arise, however, in regard to some of the assumptions these authors have made, assumptions which he describes as having 'serious implications for the field, or boundaries, of a distinctly Catholic educational philosophy'.[230] Thus, it is by no means clear to all what it is about 'the present context' that makes it particularly 'reasonable' to interpret 'Catholic' as 'Thomist', and thereby to reduce Catholic philosophy to Thomist philosophy.[231] Of course it is legitimate to hope that various Thomistic texts would remain as an invaluable part of the canon for philosophical enquiry in the Catholic tradition. But 'it is premature', as Losito sees it, 'to identify *a priori* a Catholic educational philosophy with the Thomistic framework. It may be the case that in the future we discover Catholic philosophies (plural) of education'.[232] It may be the case at this moment that the Thomist framework is only one of several that would be appropriate in the search for a distinctively Catholic philosophy of education. This possibility was not investigated by Carr and his colleagues.

Equally pertinent to the perception of Catholic philosophy of education being conflated with Aquinas's educational theory might be Alisdair MacIntyre's critique of 'Thomist philosophy of education' as little more than a 'fabricated collage' of a variety of passages on topics relevant to education extracted from Aquinas's writings' (such as his theses on learning and teaching, for example), and 'amounting to a gross mis-representation of its value as philosophy of education', since, in effect, Aquinas 'had no philosophy of education as such'.[233] MacIntyre's argument is that the works from which the materials for such a collage would have been extracted originally belonged to a number of philosophical disciplines, such as ethics, politics, metaphysics and theology, and 'it is from arguments whose concepts and premises belong to these disciplines that Aquinas derived his educational conclusions'.[234] But to abstract those conclusions for the purpose of producing a collage of Aquinas's 'philosophy of education', MacIntyre

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[229] Ibid., p. 172.
[230] William F. Losito, "Reclaiming Inquiry in the Catholic Philosophy of Education", pp. 59-68 (62). In Thomas C. Hunt, Thomas E. Oldenski and Theodore J. Wallace (eds), *Catholic School Leadership: An Invitation to Lead*, London: Falmer Press, 2000.
[231] Ibid., p. 62.
[232] Ibid., p. 62.
[233] Alasdair MacIntyre, "Aquinas's Critique of Education: Against his Own Age, Against Ours", pp. 93-107 (94). In Amelie Oksenberg-Rorty (ed.), *Philosophers on Education: New Historical Perspectives*, London: Routledge, 1998.
[234] Ibid., p. 94.

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alleges, not only 'deprives them of justification, but removes them from the argumentative context which makes them intelligible'.[235]

In any case, MacIntyre argues, Aquinas's Thomism, in education as elsewhere, has to exclude itself from a contemporary culture that presents itself as 'tolerantly hospitable to many standpoints', but finds no room for a 'background of shared moral beliefs'.[236] Where for Aquinas the goal of education is 'an achievement of a comprehensive and completed understanding', in much contemporary society education offers no more than a medley of skills and knowledge designed to enable the individual to pursue his or her preferences, whatever they may be.[237] Where for Aquinas 'the individual is to be measured by his or her success or failure in directing himself or herself toward *the* human good', the dominant culture of many western societies today assumes that there is no such thing as the human good, but that each individual must choose among a variety of different and rival conceptions of the good, and education is all about preparing individuals for making such choices.[238] MacIntyre questions the suitability of Aquinas's supposed philosophy of education to successfully become 'an integrative and unifying experience' in the context of what he sees as the fragmentation and bankruptcy of modern education.[239]

In the absence of a quite precise and widely accepted definition of 'Catholic philosophy of education', other than one based principally on Thomist principles, there is little to justify the presumption that Thomism and Thomism alone captures the essential features of the 'distinctly Catholic philosophy of education' that is to be sought as an alternative to analytical philosophy.[240] If such an alternative is to be sought (rather than, for instance, exercising the option to incorporate a different perspective), might it not be just as 'reasonable' (to invoke Carr's phrase) to look to existential, phenomenological, or process philosophical orientations, or perhaps philosophical perspectives such as the critical one embedded in, or emanating from liberation theology, for the kind of clear distinguishing characteristics that should feature in a Catholic philosophy of education? None of this is meant to dismiss or disparage Maritain's Thomism in which Carr and his

[235] Ibid., p. 94.
[236] Ibid., p. 107.
[237] Ibid., p. 107.
[238] Ibid., p. 107.
[239] Alasdair MacIntyre, "The End of Education: The Fragmentation of the American University", *Commonweal*, October 20, 2006.
[240] William F. Losito, "Reclaiming Inquiry in the Catholic Philosophy of Education", p. 62.

fellow contributors have found much that is reasonable and valuable. It can hardly be disputed that Thomist philosophy in the past provided Catholic educational thought with a powerful lodestone for the establishment and practice of Catholic schooling world-wide. Today, however, it is highly debatable as to whether Maritain's Thomism is as characteristic of Catholic thought, and it is by no means proven that it should necessarily be the face of a distinctive Catholic perspective on education.

The following chapters of this thesis will seek, firstly, in the work of Bernard Lonergan, for a different, less conceptualist kind of Thomism than Maritain's, and then in Terence H. McLaughlin's work for an analytical and phronetic perspective, both fine exemplars of approaches to philosophy of education which, at least in conjunction with other perspectives, would seem to have the capacity to offer something perhaps equally as valuable as Maritain's 'undiluted' Thomism in the search for a distinctive Catholic philosophy of education for today. The curious thing about the Carr study is that these authors did not use the occasion of their work on Maritain's text to suggest how his philosophy of education might be developed in conjunction with the work of scholars such as Lonergan, already in the public domain, or their own studies, or even that of Paulo Freire, and thereby contribute to a distinctive Catholic philosophy of education for our times. Carr and his fellow contributors seem to have been content to identify fruitful ideas to be found in the writings of Aquinas and to have been satisfied with a contemporary explication of them in an educational context on the basis of a study of virtually a single Maritain text

**Salient features of a Catholic philosophy of education**

As Carr and his fellow contributors put it, the first task before Maritain in his Yale lectures was 'to identify specific goals for education and methods for their achievement' that might enable one 'to avoid the spiritual and evaluative vacuum which is opened by pragmatism'.[241] Given that one of the aims of this chapter is to assess the contribution that Maritain's thinking makes to a contemporary re-articulation of the Catholic tradition of educational philosophy, Carr and his colleagues are correct to argue that something more remains to be accomplished beyond the mere re-iteration of the orthodox perspective in the tradition of Catholic educational thought on aims. What is needed, these scholars adjudge, is that we recover from Maritain's educational lectures

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[241] "Return to the Crossroads", p. 168.

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whatever might be judged 'distinctively Catholic' about his educational philosophy, and anything that might 'assist us to pinpoint the salient features of a Catholic educational philosophy as such'.[242] This is the thought that pre-occupied them as they turned to an analysis of Maritain's final lecture, where they claim he has addressed a set of pressing contemporary issues in a way which 'more directly brings out the distinctively Catholic character of his educational views'.[243]

One could arguably contend that much of *Education at the Crossroads* does not, in fact, directly address the question of the distinctive nature of *Catholic* education but is, rather, a treatise on Maritain's theory of '*liberal* education'. Maritain, and the Catholic tradition of educational thought he represents would, of course, regard as an integral dimension of Catholic education, the goal of 'education directed at wisdom, aiming to develop in people the capacity to think correctly and to enjoy truth and beauty, and so attain to freedom', described by Donald and Idella Gallagher as quintessentially 'liberal education' according to the mind of Maritain.[244] It might well be conceded, too, that *Education at the Crossroads* has, at least, 'drawn the outlines of a Christian philosophy of education for our time'.[245] Whether we can find in this text the kind of Catholic philosophy of education envisaged by Terence H. McLaughlin as, 'a coherent modern statement with which to confront questions of the distinctiveness' of Catholic education, is a matter to which this dissertation returns in chapter four below.[246]

A question that arises, then, is whether what might be deemed its 'distinctively Catholic character', and what might be regarded as constitutive of the 'salient features of a Catholic educational philosophy as such', is necessarily available from this set of lectures.[247] In the absence of a precise statement of what constitutes the distinctive character of Catholic educational philosophy as such, it is difficult to answer this question. It will be recalled that throughout his Yale lecture series Maritain displayed a marked reluctance to identify with, or speak exclusively from a Catholic standpoint, for whatever reason, and I have already speculated on what some of these reasons might have been. It is, in any case, very debatable as to whether a distinctively Catholic

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[242] Ibid., p. 172.
[243] Ibid., p. 172.
[244] Donald and Idella Gallagher, *EM (1962)*, p. 10.
[245] Ibid., p. 10.
[246] Terence McLaughlin, Joseph O'Keefe, and Bernadette O'Keeffe (ed.s), *The Contemporary Catholic School: Context, Identity and Diversity*, London: RoutledgeFalmer, 1996, p. 139.
[247] "Return to the Crossroads", pp. 172-173.

educational philosophy can be discovered here, in its entirety, without reference, on the one hand, to certain of Maritain's major positions on moral, social and political philosophy (necessarily absent in large measure from the specific context) or, indeed, on the other hand, without reference to some of his other discussions relating to Catholic educational philosophy from elsewhere in his writings on education.

Carr and his fellow contributors do indeed seem to be aware of the need to identify with and, contrary to MacIntyre's view above, make use of some of the larger and more encompassing Maritain themes originating from his general philosophical corpus, if the distinctively Catholic character of his educational views is to be appreciated. Thus, they identify two main issues that are unquestionably relevant here. Firstly, there is the concern as to 'how one ought rightly to conceive the relationship of the individual to society'; and, secondly, there is the problem of the 'nature and purpose of moral education and development' that inevitably arises in connection with the individual in society.[248] Carr and his colleagues focus on these two goals that Maritain addresses in his final lecture, namely, the problems of, on the one hand, 'political authority and healthy social functioning', and on the other, the 'moral formation of the individual with regard to human flourishing in general'.[249] Carr and his colleagues are of the opinion that Maritain's views on the question of political and social functioning can be understood only in terms of his resort to the Thomist idea of the 'common good', an idea, they note, which is 'very much at odds with the essentially reductive perspectives of both liberalism and communitarianism'.[250] Thus, Maritain's view of education, based on the notion of the common good, contrasts with both liberal individualist and non-liberal collectivist accounts. Maritain's conception of moral development and his views on moral education, like his view of the common good, is that 'it needs to be grounded in conditions and considerations of human flourishing which run considerably deeper than ideas of rational self-interest or social contract'.[251] His views on the origins of our moral responses in 'larger transcendent goals of the kind characteristic of religious morality', are similarly 'considerably at odds with those which have been canvassed in much recent philosophy of education'.[252]

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[248] "Return to the Crossroads", p. 172.
[249] Ibid., p. 172.
[250] Ibid., p. 174.
[251] Ibid., p. 175.
[252] Ibid., p. 173.

It should be noted, by way of conclusion to this section, that Maritain in his final lecture actually begins with a prior consideration of a more fundamental task that 'confronts education today', notably, the 'importance of liberal education with regard to a new humanism', or as he puts it in slogan-like form, 'an integral education for an integral humanism'.[253] Maritain sees the special tasks of 'moral teaching' and educating for the 'needs of the political community' as the second objective of his lecture, and one would expect that his thoughts on these matters would draw heavily on, and point to the underpinning importance of the integral humanism theme that serves as his introduction here.[254] It seems, therefore, that some discussion of Maritain's integral humanism, for instance, should have preceded any consideration of precisely how the two-fold task of moral education and the educative demands of the political community become definitive of what is distinctive about Catholic philosophy of education.

I stated at the beginning of this discussion that I wished to evaluate the case that might be made for regarding *Education at the Crossroads* as sufficient for providing a distinctive Catholic philosophy of education. It is clear from what has been said above that it is possible to have reservations about the validity of the claims made by Carr and his fellow contributors on the basis of this particular piece of Maritain's work. Maritain himself nowhere in the course of this Yale lecture series claims to be articulating a specific *Catholic*, or indeed, Thomist philosophy of education, even though much of what he says might correctly be judged to be *de facto* of this nature. In his final lecture, Maritain appears to suggest that his over-riding purpose is to discuss 'the importance of liberal education with regard to a new humanism we all hope for'.[255] Maritain calls for 'an integral education for an integral humanism' that would make possible and characterise 'a personalist and communal civilization, grounded on human rights, and satisfying the social aspirations and needs of man'.[256] Likewise, he sees in a 'humanistic education', adapted to the requirements of the common good, a bulwark against one of the deficiencies of education in even democratic countries, namely, 'the danger of an education which would aim, not at making man truly human, but making him merely into an organ of a technocratic society'.[257]

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[253] *EC (1943)*, pp. 88-89.
[254] *EC (1943)*, p. 88.
[255] *EC (1943)*, pp 88-89.
[256] *EC (1943)*, p. 89.
[257] *EC (1943)*, p. 113.

## Maritain's NSSE Essay, "Thomist Views on Education" (1955)

A consideration which serves to justify my hesitation in this matter is the fact that there was already in existence at the time of their writing another piece of work by Maritain which might have better made the case for his work to be regarded as the paradigmatic Catholic philosophy of Catholic education, but to which Carr and his fellow contributors made no reference, preferring to rest their case on the earlier publication. I refer, specifically, to Maritain's address to the National Society for the Study of Education (NSSE), entitled, "Thomist Views on Education", where Maritain responded diligently to the NSSE Committee's request for an analysis of education as interpreted in the Thomist tradition.[258]

In his NSSE address, "Thomist Views on Education", Maritain (in common with the other speakers involved) was given six themes upon which he was asked to speak. These were: Basic orientation, or philosophical principles; aims, values and curriculum; the educative process, or methods; school and society; school and the individual, and religious and moral education. The Committee invited the guest philosophers to discuss these themes primarily *qua philosopher*. It was the hope of the NSSE Committee that, in the field of *general* philosophy there might be not only 'more varieties of opinion than in the more limited field of education', but that there might also be a number of prominent philosophers 'whose views on education, if once worked out from their author's philosophical premises, may very well provide fresh insights into educational problems'.[259] Given that these philosophers might not have been familiar with the problems of education at secondary and elementary levels, 'in order to make their philosophical analysis and conclusions as available as possible' on these lower rungs of the educational ladder, an educational collaborator was appointed for each contributor to the Yearbook.[260] Maritain, the Thomist philosopher, was, like the other participants, offered the choice of an educational consultant to assist him in his task. The person he chose was Professor William F. Cunningham, Notre Dame University, who had himself, *qua philosopher of education,* written a well-known text that provided what he called

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[258] Jacques Maritain, "Thomist Views on Education", pp. 57-90. In: Nelson B. Henry (ed), *Modern Philosophies and Education,* The Fifty-Fourth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955. Hereafter cited as: "Thomist Views on Education"

[259] "Thomist Views on Education", Part I, Introduction, p. 1.

[260] Ibid., p. 2.

'an introduction to Christian philosophy of education'.[261]

There is much in this NSSE address of Maritain's, "Thomist Views on Education", which merits consideration in any exercise aiming to provide an outline that would identify characteristic features of a 'distinctively Catholic philosophy of education', such as that attempted by Carr and his fellow contributors. It will be noted that two issues, considered by Carr and his fellow contributors to be 'salient features of a Catholic educational philosophy as such', namely, the relationship of the individual to society, and the nature and purpose of moral education and development, are addressed here.[262] It is somewhat surprising, therefore, that these scholars interpreted their brief so narrowly as to rule out any reference whatsoever to Maritain's NSSE address. Maritain, whom Gallagher and Gallagher have credited with 'drawing the outlines of a Christian philosophy of education for our time', did so, not on the basis of a single publication, *Education at the Crossroads*, excellently helpful and central as that little book happens to be, but throughout a whole series of articles and addresses from 1930 through to 1958.[263]

It can hardly be the case that Carr and his fellow contributors judged that Maritain added no new perspective to his thinking on education post *Education at the Crossroads*. Even accepting that this book might in their judgment have contained in reality the whole essence of his entire educational philosophy, and that his subsequent writing simply reflected its findings, Maritain's later reflection might justifiably have been assessed to see whether any new insight might be present.[264] Only a comparative textual study of Maritain's other works with *Education at the Crossroads* such as is impossible to provide here, would seem to prove whether Maritain's thought did in fact develop. Here, it is possible to suggest only a few aspects of Maritain's thinking in his NSSE (1955) lecture that might be conceived to be novel in some respect and might thus have contributed something to the re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education that was overlooked by Carr's study.

There are at least certain emphases in Maritain's NSSE (1955) address that are worth

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[261] See, William F. Cunningham, *The Pivotal Problems of Education: An Introduction to the Christian Philosophy of Education*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1940.

[262] See, "Thomist Views on Education", pp. 70-77, 83-85.

[263] *EM (1962)*, p. 10.

[264] Maritain does cite *EC (1943)* on a number of occasions in his NSSE (1955) lecture; eg., *EC (1943)*, pp. 7-8, 12-13, 42, 44-45, 60-62, 64-65, 73-74, 75.

noting, not because they are necessarily radically different from his earlier discourse, but because they concretise and give new impetus to his thinking, especially in the context of the practice of education as distinct from its more remote theoretical philosophizing and under-pinning. One might draw attention, for instance, to the following matters.

Firstly, it might be argued, that, in his "Thomist Views on Education" address, Maritain outlines a Christian philosophy of education for our times more succinctly than he has done so previously. Maritain's statement that in educational matters, 'what is of chief importance is the direction of the process, and the implied hierarchy of values', helps immediately to focus one's attention on the 'basic orientation' required of every philosophy of education.[265] Maritain points out that underlying all questions concerning the basic orientation of education is 'the philosophy of knowledge' to which the educator, consciously or unconsciously subscribes.[266] This is, he indicates, the reason why Thomism regards empiricist and instrumentalist theories of knowledge as, 'of a nature inevitably to warp, in the long run, the educational endeavour', since in their sense-based knowledge they largely 'ignore the nature of the rational and spiritual powers of the mind and disregard their proper needs and aspirations'.[267] For the Thomist philosopher of education, Maritain asserts,

> education is fully human education only when it is liberal education, preparing the youth to exercise his power to think in a genuinely free and liberating manner, that is to say, when it equips him for truth and makes him capable of judging according to the worth of evidence, of enjoying truth and beauty for their own sake, and of advancing toward wisdom.[268]

Secondly, throughout his NSSE (1955) address, Maritain maintains stoutly a clear distinction between 'the basic philosophical issues on which theories of education depend' and the 'questions of a more practical nature which bear on concrete application and the technique of education'.[269] In later chapters of this thesis, when scholars such as Lonergan and McLaughlin are the subject of the study, it will be possible to return to a consideration of the validity of this characteristic approach of Maritain in distinguishing between 'philosophical principles' on the one hand, and, on the other, 'practical application'. In this address, the approach serves him well in

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[265] "Thomist Views on Education", p. 57.
[266] Ibid., p. 57.
[267] Ibid., p. 59.
[268] Ibid., p. 60.
[269] Ibid., p. 57.

enabling him to criticise the philosophical bases of opposing theories of education while at the same time acknowledging their more positive role and influence insofar as the practical techniques and arrangements of education are concerned. Thus, for example, Maritain is convinced that Thomist philosophy, which insists that 'man is body as well as spirit', and that 'nothing comes into the intellect if not through the senses', 'heartily approves' of the general emphasis put by progressive education on the essential part to be played in the process by the senses and by the natural interests of the child.[270]

Thirdly, Maritain in his NSSE paper attaches much importance to the notion of 'a hierarchy of values' in the philosophy and practice of education. He is adamant that 'there is no unity or integration without a stable hierarchy of values', and that every ordering of value is 'appendent to faith in truth'.[271] Education, dealing as it does with man's formation, must 'be aware of the genuine hierarchy of intellectual values and be guided by such awareness', as it seeks to prepare and preserve in the young person 'the natural germs of what is best in the life of the mind', and attempts 'to equip them with the beginnings of those disciplines of knowledge which matter most to man'.[272]

Fourthly, concerning the 'educational process', Maritain diagnoses 'a twofold crucial problem' arising when the 'educational task' has to be performed 'in a changing world of knowledge and a changing world of culture and social conditions'.[273] He insists that, in the contemporary world where social change abounds, 'teachers have neither to make the school into a stronghold of the established order nor to make it into a weapon to change society'.[274] In fact, there would be no dilemma here at all if it was clear that 'the primary aim and function of education are not defined in relation to society and social work but are in reality defined in relation to intelligence'.[275] Teachers, he adds, must be 'concerned, above all, with helping minds to become articulate, free, and autonomous', for the general purpose of education is teaching how to think. As concerns the changing world of knowledge, Maritain locates the solution to this dilemma in the integrative task of education. All new gains and discoveries should be used, not to reject or destroy what has been acquired in the past, but to augment it.[276] This is challenging task, Maritain

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[270] "Thomist Views on Education", p. 60.
[271] Ibid., p. 65.
[272] Ibid., p. 66.
[273] Ibid., p. 69.
[274] Ibid., p. 69.
[275] Ibid., p. 69.
[276] Ibid., p. 70.

admits, and it presupposes that 'teachers are in possession of what they have to communicate', namely, 'wisdom and integrated knowledge'.[277]

Lastly, one might instance how Maritain, believing strongly that education has 'to foster in the pupils the principles of the democratic charter', including the 'pluralist principle', put forward in more explicit terms than had been the case in *Education at the Crossroads* a basic principle for living together in a pluralist democratic society.[278] In his later text, that is, his NSSE address of 1955, Maritain spells out his belief that 'a society of free men implies agreement between minds and wills on the bases of life in common'.[279] Hence, there are a certain number of 'tenets' (for example, about the dignity of the human person, human rights, human equality, freedom, justice and law) 'on which democracy presupposes common consent' and which, Maritain says, constitute what may be called 'the democratic charter'.[280] These basic tenets and this charter of freedom are 'strictly practical in character', and 'without a general, firm, and reasoned-out conviction concerning them, democracy cannot survive'.[281] Maritain immediately adds that matters are different when one attends, not to the practical necessity, but to 'the theoretical justifications – the conceptions of the world and of life, the philosophical or religious creeds – which found, or claim to found, the practical tenets of the democratic charter'.[282] Maritain is adamant that 'a genuine democracy cannot impose on its citizens or demand from them, as a condition for their belonging to the city, any philosophic or any religious creed'.[283]

Concerning a related matter, moral education, religion and the school, in pluralist societies, Maritain invokes 'a sound application of the pluralist principle' as the appropriate way of surmounting the many difficulties that arise in relation to this sphere of education.[284] Maritain believes that 'formation in moral life and virtues is an essential part, indeed, the most important part of the primary aim of education in the broad sense of the word'.[285] Although school and college education is 'not equipped to secure it in a full and complete manner', it is nevertheless 'bound to contribute positively and

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[277] Ibid., p. 70.
[278] Ibid., pp. 70, 72, 84-85, 87, 92.
[279] Ibid., p. 72.
[280] Ibid., p. 72.
[281] Ibid., p. 72.
[282] Ibid., p. 72.
[283] Ibid., p. 72.
[284] Ibid., p. 84.
[285] Ibid., p. 83.

efficaciously to the moral formation of youth'.[286] Maritain, establishes on the level of philosophical principle, that there exists for the school and college 'an obligation, not only to enlighten students on moral matters, but also to allow them to receive full religious education'.[287] In the practical situation of the modern state, however, Maritain recognises that 'no privileged treatment, contrary to the principle of the equality of all before the law, can be given by the state to the citizens of any given creed, their activities, or their institutions'.[288]

# IV

## Assessing Maritain's Contribution to the Provision of an Interrogatory Framework for the Study of *CCE* Discourse

There is little doubt that Maritain represents key features of the Thomist-Aristotelian tradition of educational thought in *Education at the Crossroads* and gives a fresh and distinctive expression to its metaphysical, epistemological and axiological bases. Although seemingly appropriate and suitable as this achievement may have been to his times – and, in truth, one has to recognise that this little work of Maritain's was highly influential throughout the Catholic educational world for a good thirty years – one would have to be concerned about the relevance of some of its contents and methodology in the context of what Catholic philosophy of education must attempt to provide for Catholic educators and others today. What I have reflected upon as I address the question of whether *Education at the Crossroads* has adequately expressed the distinctiveness of the Catholic tradition of educational thought, is the further question of whether that text contains within it the seeds of a contemporary philosophy of education that has the capacity to adapt to new conditions and radical change in both Church and society. My reservations arise, in part at least, from the fact that Maritain never actually intended this particular work to be a treatise on Catholic educational philosophy as such. And, secondly, I am convinced that a group of British Catholic philosophers of education who, in 1995, had the opportunity to develop Maritain's original work along suitable lines for today's world, failed to avail of this unique occasion. The essay of Carr and his fellow contributors represents an opportunity lost for the re-articulation of

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[286] Ibid., p. 83.
[287] Ibid., p. 83.
[288] Ibid., p. 84.

a distinctive Catholic philosophy of education.

In the concluding this chapter, and as part of the overall aim of this thesis, I briefly query whether, and in what ways, Maritain's perennialist philosophy of education might still be called upon to provide a more explicit philosophic basis and framework of analysis for the recently published discourse of the CCE. This is a topic to which I shall return in chapter four of this thesis below. But a number of pertinent questions already suggest themselves at this point and may perhaps be listed here in conclusion to this chapter on the work of Maritain in relation to the re-articulation of a Catholic philosophy of education.

In the first place, one might ask whether Maritain's 'undiluted Thomism' is too problematical for any role in the re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education today, and specifically, whether it has much to offer to a dialogue with the CCE discourse from which, at first sight at any rate, extensive use of explicit Thomist perspective appears to be lacking. At this point, and by way of conclusion, I merely ask whether one has to face up to the fact that there are 'troublesome' elements (for many moderns) of Thomism in Maritain's work that are likely to remain problematical because, as so eloquently and forcefully argued by, for instance, Bernard Lonergan, they derive from a 'classicist worldview', and do not represent sufficiently the 'historical-mindedness' of even later Thomism. In reflecting on this question here one needs to identify what might be intended by the term 'an un-diluted Thomism', and seek to justify the reasons why a Thomism such as Maritain's is likely to be more of a hindrance than a help to the re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education today.

In our post-modern world, one aspect of Maritain's work especially, namely his critical realist epistemology, needs to be considered in terms of its relevance and value in the re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education. Where scepticism and relativism is rife, Catholic philosophy of education has to contend with 'constructivism', a theory of education which grew out of psychological theories of learning and instruction, but which also has distinct philosophical content and implications for a Thomist theory of knowledge. Maritain did not tend to see concepts, interpretation and theory after the manner of Dewey, for example, as socially constructed means for understanding human experience. Neither did he see personality as largely socially constructed. One will search in vain for any reference to Piaget's psychological and pedagogical

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constructivism in *Education at the Crossroads*. Maritain's theory of knowledge and its learning often appears as a simply absorptive, assimilative, purely intellectual process. The role of psychological mechanisms and social factors is scarcely studied by Maritain, or at least, these factors are not given much priority. Intellectual activity dominates in Maritain's understanding of the construction and reception of knowledge. It is possible that Maritain's critical realist theory of knowledge is more open to a constructivist interpretation when one reflects more deeply on what happens in the Thomist theory of knowledge after the simple ideas that come from sense experience become the conceptual understanding in the mind. This topic is obviously extensive and deserving of more in-depth analysis than is possible within the present confines.

A second question, focusing on the more positive achievements of Maritain's thought, might inquire whether, for instance, Maritain's Thomist philosophy of the person and his integral Christian humanist perspective have something to offer Catholic philosophy of education today. If some, at least, of Maritain's more formally metaphysical, epistemological and axiological stances, as distinctive elements of the Thomist meta-theory that he so thoroughly committed himself to, are likely to prove problematical today, in one respect or another, it becomes necessary to reflect on whether certain broader themes, equally saturated with Thomistic thought, often developed in the course of his wide-ranging dialogue with the modern world, might not prove more attractive to the task of giving new expression to Catholic educational thought. Several of these aspects of Maritain's Thomist philosophy might be considered apt for analysis with respect to the possible contribution they might make to contemporary Catholic philosophy of education. His metaphysics and philosophy of the person, and his notion of integral Christian humanism, as suggested, might be identified as valuable sources for enhancing the philosophical basis of the recent CCE discourse. It would seem that the educational discourse of the CCE already reflects in no small measure both these emphases of Maritain's work, though in a distinctively informal philosophical register.

In chapters three and four below the educational thought and philosophic practice of Bernard Lonergan and Terence H. McLaughlin, respectively, will be investigated in an exercise of comparison and contrast with elements of Maritain's philosophy of education identified above. The characteristic way in which they too might contribute to the re-articulation of a distinctive Catholic philosophy of education will be identified. Then, in chapter five, a suitable means, designated there as an 'interrogatory

framework', will be sought that might enable Maritain's perennialist discourse, together with the discourses of Lonergan and McLaughlin, to engage in conversation with the CCE pastoral-theological discourse, concerning the re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education. Distinct traces of Maritain's integral Christian humanism and of his Thomist-based personalist ontology can in fact already be detected in the CCE discourse. The question is whether it is possible or desirable to accentuate these features, and by what kind of dialogue of discourses might this result be achieved.

**Chapter Three: A View of the Nature and Role of Catholic Philosophy of Education from the Perspective of Bernard Lonergan (1904-1984)**

The Canadian Jesuit philosopher-theologian, Bernard J.F. Lonergan, like Jacques Maritain, sought inspiration in the philosophy and theology of Aquinas, but unlike Maritain his interest was less in the conceptual scheme and contents of Aquinas, and much more in the intellectual process and cognitional theory which he identified as basic to, and characteristic of Aquinas's scholarly approach. Although it is not my purpose here either to engage in a critical investigation of Lonergan's massive study of human understanding, or to compare his reading of Aquinas directly with that of Maritain, nevertheless, this chapter will reflect the fairly stark contrast between two versions of Thomism to be found in the work of these scholars, which have characterised Catholic theology in the latter half of the twentieth century. On the one hand there is the conceptualism of Maritain of which ample evidence has been provided in the previous chapter, while on the other hand there is the dynamic intellectualism of Lonergan that will become evident throughout the present chapter. There is not, of course, by any means universal agreement about the Thomist credentials of Lonergan, but for the purposes of this chapter that debate is not directly relevant. What will be of concern here is the much more restricted issue of how Lonergan's reading of Aquinas enabled him to develop a cognitional theory by means of which he outlined a sketch of Catholic philosophy of education quite different from that of Maritain.

Lonergan's 'real discovery' in Aquinas, Frederick E. Crowe observes, was of 'the way Aquinas worked and questioned and thought and understood and thought again and judged and wrote'.[1] It was not so much points of objective theology or philosophy, Crowe reckons, but 'factors that are more subjective and methodological', and for that reason 'more fundamental', that influenced Lonergan in his reading of Aquinas.[2] Thomist cognitional theory was the subject that caught Lonergan's attention most vividly, and a critical aspect of Aquinas's thinking and methodology that he sought to employ in the elaboration of his own thought and practice. Having discovered Aquinas late in his studies, and 'browsed rather indifferently in him', before coming to 'suspect he was not as bad as he was painted', and then while spending many years teaching scholastic theology, Lonergan became more seriously engaged in a process, or exercise, of 'reaching up to the mind of Aquinas'.[3]

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[1] Frederick E. Crowe, *Lonergan*, London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1992, p. 47.
[2] Ibid., p. 47.
[3] Ibid., pp. 47-48.

Throughout his life-time Lonergan strove to retain his basic Thomist belief and yet 'live at the level of his time', always committed to 'making Catholic thought respectable in a world that by and large scorned it'.[4] He appreciated the fact that, 'besides being a theologian and a philosopher', St. Thomas was 'a man of his time meeting the challenges of his time'.[5] He judged that Aquinas had contributed massively to the medieval cultural synthesis at a time of 'feverish intellectual ferment', and saw many parallels in our own times when we are 'somewhat belatedly coming to grips with the implications of modern sciences and philosophies' and bringing our theology and Christian living 'up to date'.[6] For Lonergan, Aquinas was engaged in an *aggiornamento* of Christian philosophical and theological thinking, taking account of 'what was going forward in his day', namely, 'discovering, working out, thinking through a new mould for the Catholic mind', a mould in which it could remain fully Catholic and yet 'be at home with all the good things that might be drawn from [a new] cultural heritage'.[7] Lonergan set himself a precisely similar goal for modern times.

Lonergan's all-encompassing aim in a lifetime of dedicated scholarship has been described by Patrick D. Brown as an attempt 'to transpose' the richness and the depth of the tradition of Catholic thought into 'a more contemporary and adequately theoretic context' while preserving its basic elements in 'a new effort of analysis and synthesis'.[8] Lonergan's widely used notion of 'transposition' implied a three-fold movement of analysis and synthesis of a tradition.[9] Firstly, 'transposition' signifies a 'transition from classicism to historical-mindedness'.[10] It involves a critique of the presence and influence of 'classicism' within a tradition and an estimation of what needs to be done to move from a 'classic' mind-set to 'historical-mindedness'. Secondly, 'transposition' seeks to identify and underline the dearth or scarcity of 'technical information', or 'scientific knowledge', in a tradition with a view to enlarging its 'technical and

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[4] Ibid., p. 53.
[5] Bernard Lonergan, "The Future of Thomism", pp. 43-54 (44). In: *A Second Collection*, ed. William F.J. Ryan and Bernard J. Tyrrell, London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1974.
[6] *Lonergan*, p. 53.
[7] "The Future of Thomism", p. 44.
[8] Patrick D. Brown, "*Aiming Excessively High and Far*: The Early Lonergan and the Challenge of Theory in Catholic Social Thought", *Theological Studies*, Vol. 72, 2011, pp. 620-644 (620, 622-623). Hereafter cited as: *Aiming Excessively High and Far*.
[9] Ibid., pp. 640-643.
[10] Bernard Lonergan, "The Transition from a Classicist World-View to Historical-Mindedness", pp. 1-9. In: William F. J. Ryan and Bernard J. Tyrrell (ed.s), *A Second Collection*, London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1974.

scientific horizon'.[11] The development and integration of an adequate theory base, in philosophy of education as elsewhere, calls for 'reformulation and new interpretation within a vastly enlarged theoretical horizon'.[12] Thirdly, 'transposition' demands for its success a commitment to 'operate at the level of history' in pursuit of 'a restatement of an earlier position in a new and broader historical context'.[13] 'Transposition', for Lonergan, represents an effort 'to shift and lift' the tradition of Catholic thought forward into 'a more adequate theoretic context by developing the virtualities of the tradition' while remaining true to the tradition.[14]

This imperative to transpose tradition provided the intellectual dynamism that drove Lonergan in his life-long quest for a critical, empirical and historically based theoretical framework for the 'reconstruction' of Catholic thought. His massive effort of scholarship is readily visible in his proposed solution to the problem of integrating critical philosophy, the empirical human sciences, and historical scholarship in his major works, *Insight* and *Method in Theology* as it is, indeed, in his critique of the continuing effects of 'classicism' in so many areas of Catholic thought, including the field of Catholic philosophy of education, the subject of this dissertation.[15]

The overall aim of this chapter of the dissertation is to examine how Lonergan's effort to transpose the tradition of Catholic educational thought may have contributed to the creation of 'a new mould for the Catholic mind' in Catholic philosophy of education, and provided 'an empirical and critical theoretical framework' for its 'reconstruction'.[16] Soon after the publication of *Insight*, Lonergan briefly investigated the field of Catholic education and philosophy of education in what was for him an unusual departure from his primary fields of philosophical and theological reflection. Limiting himself to educational issues that he regarded as priorities in Catholic education, Lonergan sought to address what he considered to be 'the fundamental problem' in Catholic philosophy of education, namely, 'the horizon of the educationalist and the horizon of the

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[11] *Aiming Excessively High and Far*, p. 631.

[12] Ibid., p. 631.

[13] Bernard Lonergan, "Horizons and Transpositions", pp. 409-432 (410). In: *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, Vol. 17, pp. 409-432 (410).

[14] Patrick D. Brown, *Aiming Excessively High and Far*, p. 633.

[15] See, Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, London: Longman, Green & Co Ltd, 1958; *Method in Theology*, London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1972. Hereafter cited as *Insight* and *Method* respectively.

[16] Bernard Lonergan, "The Future of Thomism", *A Second Collection*, pp. 43-47.

teacher'.[17] The manner in which he would approach the study of Catholic philosophy of education would be by 'cognitional analysis', that is, in terms of the elements and operations of the knowing subject's consciousness, first outlined in *Insight*, his major work on the nature of human understanding.[18]

Whatever way one wants to put it - 'creating a new mould for the Catholic mind', or, bringing about change in 'the horizon of the educationalist'- Lonergan's goal for the re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education seems clear-cut, at least in general terms. 'I wish to tackle the problem of the philosophy of education', Lonergan announces, to 'bring our philosophic thinking into contact with the [contemporary] problems of education'.[19] It is a goal that must be examined in the context of both his commitment to the transposition of Catholic thought in general, and of his conviction that only a methodology based on cognitional analysis will prove equal to the task.

This chapter works towards a more precise understanding of Lonergan's broad goal in an educational context mainly by an examination of an early work of his, first recorded as the 'Cincinnati Lectures on Education' in 1959, and now available as *Topics in Education*. Lonergan sets out here a kind of elementary framework for an understanding of the elements he considers essential to the elaboration of a philosophy of education, and also underlines the challenge involved in transposing traditional Catholic thought on education to the context of contemporary education and the 'new kind of learning' that for him characterizes it.[20] The question to be answered in this chapter centres on the nature and basis of Catholic philosophy of education and how Lonergan's thought might help to give it new expression for our times. It is hoped that some degree of enlightenment can be found by retracing Lonergan's own steps in *Topics*, where, in an unusually low key, with even subdued emphasis on cognitional theory, we can nonetheless observe Lonergan's transcendental method and its under-pinning intentionality analysis in action.

This chapter is divided into four sections as follows. In the first section, the focus is on the introductory lecture in *Topics* in which Lonergan raises what he terms 'the problem

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[17] Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *Topics in Education*, Robert Doran and Frederick E. Crowe (ed.s), Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, Vol. 10, Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1993, p. 106. Hereafter cited as: *Topics*. Or abbreviated as: *TIE (1993)*.
[18] *Insight*, pp. xviii, xxii, xxvi, xxix, 272-74, 282-84, 304, 399-401, and *passim* in this book.
[19] *Topics*, p. 23.
[20] Ibid., pp. 22-24.

of a philosophy *of* education'.[21] Some key issues are identified here that relate to the reasons why Lonergan regarded the traditional Catholic philosophy of education as 'problematical'. His analysis of the controversy between 'traditionalist' and 'modernist' philosophies of education is summarised and, in particular, his relation to Dewey's philosophy of education is noted.

In the second section, Lonergan's conception of 'the human good', elaborated by him in *Topics* in the context of identifying the aims of Catholic education, is analysed. Lonergan understands educational reality and its good in the light of his account of the human good in general. Of special interest here is the way Lonergan uses the notion of 'the human good' as a means of reflecting on the 'development' of the human subject. As will be noted in chapter five below, 'development', in terms of the integral 'formation' of the human person, is an architectonic aim of the CCE discourse on Catholic education. The notion of 'development' is thus an important point of contact between Lonergan's philosophical work and that discourse.

In the third section, Lonergan's notion of 'development' is specifically related to his understanding of the person as 'a psychological subject', and development, as 'change of horizon', notably in relation to the 'intellectual pattern of experience', is examined. The relevance of this perspective for an articulation of a Catholic philosophy of education is assessed. Lonergan's notion of education as the subject constructing his or her own world, proposed by him as an important corollary for education, is commented upon.

In the fourth section, some of the major insights Lonergan has shed upon Catholic philosophy of education in this series of lectures are summarised, and, by way of conclusion, the 'new bases' he has provided for the re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education are recapitulated.

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[21] *Topics*, pp. 3-24. The emphasis on *of* is deliberate. Lonergan apparently wants to develop a philosophy of education arising out of an awareness of what the knowing subject is doing as educator rather than dwell on a philosophy *about* education, that is, the traditional application from without of Scholastic philosophical principles to educational practice after the manner of Maritain.

# I

## Bernard Lonergan and Catholic Philosophy of Education

An important source, though not the only one, for Lonergan's thinking, with relevance for the articulation of a Catholic philosophy of education, is his early work, the 'Cincinnati lectures' of 1959, or, as it will be referred to here, *Topics in Education*.[22] Lonergan appears to have been somewhat reluctant to write specifically, or at length, about education and its philosophy and was happy to allow others to develop his thought on these issues on the basis of both his monumental early work, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*,[23] and his later impressive work, *Method in Theology*.[24] His Cincinnati lecture series is important because of its clear focus on Catholic education and on matters related to Catholic philosophy of education. Nevertheless, it should be noted that *Topics* does not amount to a fully developed philosophy of education as we might understand the term today, nor was it so intended. Neither is it in any sense restricted to a narrow Catholic perspective.

Although Lonergan discusses various matters that arise in philosophy of education, and provides some analysis of these matters in terms of his rigorous philosophical study of human knowing introduced in *Insight*, his declared intention in this series of lectures is to be 'a philosopher speaking to educators, much as a biologist would speak to a medical doctor, or a mathematician to a physicist'.[25] Presumably the theoretician in each case would share knowledge, principles and methodology with the corresponding practitioner in supporting and guiding the latter's activity and goals. Lonergan's intention, therefore, seems to have been not the presentation of a fully articulated philosophy of education so much as the provision of an account of certain 'bases for a philosophy of education', that is, a kind of introduction to a philosophy of education the outlines of which he would hope to provide in the course of his lectures.[26] That said, however, the 'topics' discussed here reflect important insights and positions that relate

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[22] As already indicated, this series of lectures has been transcribed and edited and is available in the series Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, *Topics in Education (1993)*. Hereafter cited as: *Topics*.

[23] The edition referred to throughout this chapter is the revised students' edition, first published, 1958. Hereafter cited as: *Insight*.

[24] Hereafter cited as: *Method*.

[25] *Topics*, Editors' Preface, p. xii.

[26] Ibid., p. xii.

to Lonergan's general philosophy though now used in the analysis of the nature and practice of education and as such are fully intelligible only in terms of his distinctive intentionality analysis.

## The 'Problem of a Philosophy *of* Education'

Lonergan's introductory lecture in *Topics* is entitled, 'The Problem of a Philosophy of Education'.[27] Lonergan does not immediately specify what the nature of the 'problem' is, or detail its contours, but from the contents of the lecture one can surmise that his concern centres on three related questions. Thus, he wonders how one is to understand the nature of such a discipline today, what the role of philosophy of education might be in the context of contemporary education, and, lastly, what conditions need to be fulfilled to give proper articulation to the characteristic features of a Catholic philosophy of education at the present time. The focus throughout the first section of this chapter is on Lonergan's call for 'a positive' philosophy of education, the viability of which transcends equally its traditional origins and the then current debate concerning the nature and purpose of education.

This first lecture in *Topics* commences with a general assessment of the nature and purpose of the philosophy of education.[28] Lonergan argues that the discovery and articulation of 'a positive function' for philosophy of education is a critical matter that 'calls for originality and creativity'.[29] In his judgment, traditionalist responses to modern philosophies of education are 'inadequate', and the formulation of a truly satisfactory alternative will demand that 'we face complicated technical issues that take seriously the context of contemporary learning'.[30] A 'merely negative conception' of philosophy of education, amounting perhaps to no more than 'a pulling up of the weeds and correcting wrong ideas', is an inadequate response.[31] Lonergan was no doubt familiar with standard treatises on educational philosophy widely in use among Catholic educators, which concentrated largely on critiquing and rejecting all contemporary philosophy that might be used in support of educational theory and practice, leaving the way clear for the traditional Thomist-Aristotelian metaphysical, epistemological and axiological principles that alone were deemed acceptable and normative as the

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[27] *Topics*, pp. 3-25.
[28] See ibid., pp. 3-15.
[29] Ibid., p. 3.
[30] Ibid., p. 3.
[31] Ibid., pp. 3-4.

'perennial philosophy'. Such a response, Lonergan suggests, is 'inadequate'. His reasons for this position become abundantly clear throughout the course of these lectures.

## Lonergan and the 'Traditionalist-Modernist' Controversy

Lonergan first turns his attention to the then current debate between 'traditionalists' and 'modernists' concerning the nature and practice of education, a debate that seemed to have intensified with the widespread adoption of John Dewey's philosophy of education. To what extent Lonergan agreed with the casting of Dewey as the principal cause of this controversy is briefly commented on below. Lonergan's aim is to analyse the root causes of the controversy and to assess its relevance to his task of formulating a 'positive' philosophy of Catholic education. Given the close correlation between education and philosophy, a matter upon which both Dewey and Lonergan most certainly agreed, 'traditionalists' and 'modernists' were bound to disagree about the nature of education, and the value and effectiveness of any philosophy of education. Lonergan seeks to get behind the dichotomies that divide the dissenting schools of thought, to understand their purposes and to discern their governing philosophical positions.

Lonergan sets down the main lines of opposition between 'traditionalists' and 'modernists', or 'progressives', under three headings.[32] First, while both affirm the value of 'liberal education' and strive to achieve it, they mean by it totally different things. Lonergan believes that modernists hold that all questions of value, and therefore all questions about the aims and ends of education, are 'to be settled by the methods of empirical science'.[33] To make this claim, however, is, he believes, to exclude entirely what traditionalists understand by liberal education.[34] Secondly, both traditionalists and modernists advocate a reform and simplification of an overloaded and congested curriculum, but their ways of going about this task are opposed. They see different groups of subjects as the true 'medium of education' and they go about the reform of the curriculum on the basis of 'entirely different criteria'.[35] Modernists tend to solve

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[32] Lonergan acknowledges his debt to Mortimer Adler & Milton Mayer for this account. See, Mortimer Adler & Milton Mayer, *The Revolution in Education*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958, pp. 152-156.

[33] *Topics*, p. 6.

[34] Ibid., p. 6.

[35] Ibid., p. 7.

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issues by having recourse to 'techniques of gathering and sifting information', whereas the traditionalists appeal to 'principles'.[36] Thirdly, while both traditionalists and modernists acknowledge the relevance of the past to the present, there is no agreement about the manner in which the wisdom of the past is to be recovered and positioned in the present. According to Lonergan's interpretation, the modernist or progressive movement in education values only 'that wisdom which has been formulated as a scientific hypothesis and verified', while the traditionalists cannot accept the view that 'all ideas are to be put into the form of scientific hypotheses' and judged by the 'degree of empirical verification obtainable by strictly empirical methods'.[37]

Lonergan, therefore, diagnoses as the root cause of this dissension between the traditionalist and the modern camps in education, the existence of diametrically opposed philosophies. Behind this 'thorough-going opposition' in educational stance, there is 'an opposition in philosophy', he suggests.[38] In his opinion, the 'critical difference' between the traditionalists and the modernists is that 'the modernists have a philosophy made specifically for educational purposes', while the traditionalists, taken as a total group, have not.[39] This is a situation where it is imperative that 'a positive alternative' to the traditionalist response must be attempted, Lonergan concludes.[40]

The so-called traditionalist position in education and in philosophy of education is further represented by Lonergan in the following summary terms.[41] For the traditionalist, things exist prior to changing, and change does not eliminate all previous properties, some at least of which are permanent. There exists a variety of methodologies, these differ widely and are proper to science, to philosophy, or to metaphysics as the case may be. Finally, there are truths that are certain, accessible to a pre-scientific, pre-industrial, and pre-democratic age, but equally accessible to any age.[42] Although Lonergan does not name, or refer to Maritain, in this brief description of the traditionalist position in philosophy of education, the account given appears quite close to what one might expect from the metaphysical and epistemological principles endorsed by Maritain.

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[36] *Topics*, p. 7.
[37] Ibid., p. 7.
[38] Ibid., p. 7.
[39] Ibid., p. 7.
[40] Ibid., p. 7.
[41] Ibid., p. 9.
[42] Ibid., p. 9.

What is perhaps surprising about all this is that Lonergan, although he must apparently reject many of the philosophical principles underlying progressive education as represented by its proponents, is by no means convinced of the validity of the traditionalist position thus represented. On the contrary, he detects certain 'weaknesses' in the traditionalist position which not only render it liable to attack but in fact amount to no more than a 'negative expression' of a philosophy of education.[43] Lonergan writes:

> An educational philosophy that appeals to the immutable elements in things, to their eternal properties, to the truths that hold in any age, and simply urges that empirical methods are not the only methods, really is defending a negative position. It is not offering a vision, an understanding, a principle of integration and judgment. [It lacks] the great power offered on the modernist side by their close correlation between fundamental philosophic notions and educational theory.[44]

In brief, Lonergan appears to be saying that Catholic, traditionalist philosophy of education is unable to engage with the realities of contemporary education, since it fails to offer 'vision, understanding, and a principle of integration and judgment', and is particularly vulnerable because it 'lacks a close correlation between fundamental notions and educational theory', thus seeming merely to be 'grounding an abstract education for abstract human beings'.[45]

Appearing ready to reject a modernist, or progressive philosophy of education, and regarding the traditional approach as sadly lacking in key respects, Lonergan poses the challenge of finding a new way of philosophizing about education that suffers from the handicaps of neither the traditional nor progressive approaches. It will not do to 'ascribe a merely negative value to the philosophy of education', he declares. One should rather attempt to grasp the idea of a philosophy of education as 'something positive', and as 'providing the vision missing in the traditionalist response'.[46] The fashioning of a positive philosophy of education capable of meeting the needs of the day, that will be neither traditionalist nor modernist in the sense he has explained these terms, is the task that Lonergan envisages. It will first and foremost have to be cognisant of contemporary challenges in the fields of both education and philosophy.

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[43] *Topics*, p. 9.
[44] Ibid., p. 9.
[45] Ibid., p. 9.
[46] Ibid., pp. 9-10.

## Lonergan, Dewey, and the Philosophy of Education

Lonergan, not unsurprisingly perhaps, began his presentation of the traditionalist-
modernist debate by choosing to draw attention to the philosophy of education
associated with the work of John Dewey, which he acknowledges has had an 'enormous
influence' world-wide.[47] In accordance with his own counsel about the inadequacy of a
'negative philosophy of education', Lonergan, although he is critical of the underlying
pragmatism of Dewey's position, nevertheless, does not exhort his audience to reject
Dewey and return to traditional education and its supporting philosophy, not even to a
rejuvenated version of traditionalism.[48] Lonergan might have been expected to be more
critical of Dewey, and such a negative reaction would certainly have been widespread
among his audience in 1959, at the dawn of an era of revolutionary change in education.
A closer reading of Lonergan's text, however, reveals a certain sympathy on his part
toward Dewey's educational ideas, at least in terms of his own underlying philosophical
insight into the nature of human enquiry. Though their accounts differ in many respects
they are not in principle irreconcilable, and there is every reason to believe that
Lonergan was more aware of Dewey's genius and more appreciative of his work than is
apparent in this lecture.

Lonergan acknowledges that Dewey's philosophy of education is essentially 'a
philosophy of education that connects ideas on education with fundamental ideas on
philosophy' and it is here, he believes, rather than on perceived practical results claimed
for Dewey's methods, that one's criticism of Dewey should rightly fall.[49] William M.
Shea observes that subsequent studies have shown that a feature common to both
Dewey and Lonergan was their highlighting of education, not as 'a passive acceptance
of tradition but as a critical appropriation of it', and both provided interpretations of the
movement 'from classicism to method' and its significance for education.[50]

Lonergan interprets Dewey's conception of human knowledge as 'a transition from a
problematic situation to an improved situation', a transition that involves two
components, namely, 'reflection and action', each of which is vitally necessary[51].

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[47] *Topics*, p. 4.
[48] Ibid., pp. 7-9.
[49] Ibid., p. 4.
[50] See William M. Shea, "From Classicism to Method: John Dewey and Bernard Lonergan", *American Journal of Education*, Vol. 99, No. 3 (May, 1991), pp. 298-319 (298).
[51] *Topics*, p. 4.

'Action without reflection is blind', 'reflection without action is meaningless', and 'knowing by itself is nothing', are sentiments of Dewey with which Lonergan fully concurred.[52] Philosophy for Dewey, Lonergan says, 'is reflection on the human situation at an ultimate level'[53]. It is fundamental thinking about the human situation. Education for Dewey, as Lonergan understands him, is 'the great means for transforming the human situation'.[54] Consequently, philosophy and education are interdependent. Philosophy is the 'reflective component', and education is the 'active component' at the ultimate level of reflection and action in human life. Philosophy is the 'guide and inspiration' of education, and education is 'the verification, the pragmatic justification, of a philosophy'.[55] The two notions of philosophy and education are linked in the closest possible manner in Dewey's thought, Lonergan observes.[56]

Although Lonergan does not cite the oft-quoted phrase from Dewey's *Democracy and Education* to the effect that 'the most penetrating definition of philosophy' which can be given is that it is 'the theory of education in its most general phases', one has the impression that it may not have been far from his mind as he reflected on Dewey's linking of philosophy and education in the context of his own efforts to reconstruct a positive philosophy of education for contemporary Catholic and other religious believers that would achieve the same result.[57] Both Lonergan and Dewey are well aware that philosophy has deep historical and theoretical connections with education.

Lonergan, one feels, would also endorse Dewey's view that philosophy of education 'is not an external application of ready-made ideas to a system of practice having a radically different origin and purpose'.[58] As adverted to in the preceding chapter, here we have an issue that very clearly distances Lonergan's philosophy of education from that of Maritain. Lonergan would appear to be in general agreement with Dewey's view of philosophy that, in as much as it is 'an explicit *formulation of the problems of the formation of right mental and moral habitudes*', it becomes but 'the theory of education

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[52] *Topics*, p. 4.
[53] Ibid., p. 4.
[54] Ibid., p. 5.
[55] Ibid., pp. 4-5.
[56] Ibid., p. 5.
[57] See John Dewey, *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education*, New York: Collier Macmillan, 1966, pp. 328-331.
[58] Ibid., pp. 328-331.

in its most general phases' and 'the reconstruction of philosophy, of education, and of social ideals and methods thus go hand in hand'.[59]

Lonergan scholars claim, correctly in my view, that, as far as philosophy of education is concerned, Lonergan and Dewey 'share several basic philosophical tendencies'. The claim, if proven, would mean that Lonergan, in his Cinncinati lectures, is by no means desirous of discarding Dewey's work in the field of philosophy of education, even though it is highly probable that the more traditional minded and conservative audience he was addressing might have wished him to be so.[60] It might therefore be thought a little surprising, even if understandable, that Lonergan did not choose to make explicit in this opening lecture those aspects of Dewey's philosophy of education which echoed elements of his own methodology. It is certainly a fact, well-documented by later scholars, that substantial common ground existed between their logics of enquiry and to be aware of this is something that is likely to prevent our misunderstanding of Lonergan's true attitude to Dewey and his philosophy of education.

Thus, Antonia Galdos claims that Lonergan and Dewey 'share the philosophical project of articulating the structure of cognition', and, in so doing, 'critically expose traditional misconceptions regarding the nature of human knowing'.[61] For each of these thinkers, cognition is defined by 'functionally interrelated operations' that collectively constitute human knowing. In Lonergan's cognitional theory, human knowing is not some single operation but a dynamic structure of the operations of experience, understanding, and judgment. None of these stages is solely constitutive of knowledge, nor can any stage be reduced to any other, and the objectivity of human knowing is not some single property but a combination of distinct properties that reside severally in distinct operations. Lonergan's critical realism argues that the essence of the objectivity of human knowing does not stand revealed in the act of taking a look, or seeing, or in any other single cognitional operation.[62]

Galdos summarizes Dewey's understanding of human inquiry as also a process

[59] Ibid., pp. 328-331.
[60] Antonia Galdos, "When Pragmatism and Instrumentalism Collide: Lonergan's Resolution of the Peirce/Dewey Debate on Theory and Practice in Science", in *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies*, Vol. 18, 2000, pp. 123-144 (124-5). Hereafter cited as: "Pragmatism and Instrumentalism".
[61] Ibid., p. 124.
[62] Bernard Lonergan, "Cognitional Structure", pp. 15-33 (29). In: Philip McShane, *Introducing the Thought of Bernard Lonergan*, London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1973. Hereafter cited as: "Cognitional Structure".

consisting of four stages: the pre-problematic stage, the empirical stage, the speculative stage, and the point of judgment. She concludes that in many respects, this structural account of cognition corresponds to Lonergan's stages of presentation of evidence, of understanding, and of judgment.[63] Like Dewey, Lonergan notes that enquiry begins at the level of experience, with a puzzle or problem that, guided by a notion or a 'hunch', leads first to an explicit formulation of the problem and definition of its related concepts and ultimately to the enquirer grasping an 'insight' or understanding of the situation. Galdos believes that Dewey, too, like Lonergan, rejected simplistic misconceptions about cognition and objectivity.

In comparing their two accounts, Galdos makes it clear how both Lonergan and Dewey emphasize the dynamic character of human enquiry. There are, of course, important differences between Dewey's instrumentalism and Lonergan's cognitional theory, as Galdos also observes.[64] She correctly judges that while they offer 'seemingly parallel accounts of the stages of inquiry', their entire philosophical trajectory is 'ultimately defined by differences in their conception of the origin of enquiry'.[65] Lonergan argues that human enquiry is driven by 'a detached, disinterested, unrestricted, pure desire to know'.[66] The desire to know orders human cognition over and beyond the demands of environmental stimuli, as Lonergan makes clear:

> [The desire to know] pulls man out of the solid routine of perception and conation, instinct and habit, doing and enjoying. It holds him with the fascination of problems. It engages him in the quest of solution. It makes him aloof to what is not established. It compels assent to the unconditioned.[67]

As Galdos interprets him, Lonergan's desire to know is distinctive from other human desires, by reason of its 'capacity to order human cognition beyond instinctive biological adaptation', and its 'movement of human beings beyond experiential immediacy towards the critical affirmation of the actual'.[68]

From this brief comparison of Dewey and Lonergan we can better appreciate what was probably Lonergan's true attitude to Dewey's philosophy of education, even if, on this

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[63] Antonia Galdos, "Pragmatism and Instrumentalism", p. 125.
[64] See, ibid., p. 136.
[65] Ibid., p. 136.
[66] See Bernard Lonergan, *Insight*, pp. xi, xiv, 4, 9, 74, 220-22, 348-50, 380-1, 528, 550, 596, 599-600, 623-24, 636-39, 642, 682, 701-2, 738.
[67] Ibid., p. 348.
[68] "Pragmatism and Instrumentalism", p. 138.

occasion, it was not explicitly so admitted. There is, as Galdos puts it, a common
ground between the logic of inquiry which Dewey is determined will have practical or
instrumental effect and Lonergan's logic of enquiry that asserts that truth can be
pursued for its own sake and discovered by authentic investigation of reality.[69] This
kind of 'compromise' features in Lonergan's philosophy, whose critical realism
includes an account of concrete judgment strikingly similar to that of John Dewey, but
whose account of the normative structure of cognition, emanating from the individual's
radical desire to know, also incorporates emphasis on the ontological aspect of truth,
whereby all knowing is true by its relation to being and truth is a relation of knowing to
being.[70] Notwithstanding their real differences, these more recently acknowledged
similarities in the fundamental thinking of Dewey and Lonergan have important
consequences for our appreciation of the importance of Lonergan's cognitional theory
discourse in the re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education.

**Toward a Catholic Philosophy of Education**

Lonergan's wish for 'a positive philosophy of education', which would offer educators
'a vision, an understanding, and a principle of integration and judgment', has been
noted. Such a philosophy of education would be distinguished, in Lonergan's view, by a
close correlation between fundamental philosophic notions and educational theory of
the kind he believed Dewey and the modernists were able to offer. Lonergan declares
that none of three lines of philosophical enquiry that he has analysed 'fits, even
proximately, what is wanted for a Catholic philosophy of education at the present
time'.[71]

Obviously, Lonergan asserts, there is little of value in a philosophy of education in the
sense of 'secularist philosophy', where philosophy ignores, or seeks to replace religion
entirely.[72] Lonergan acknowledges that in fact, in much of today's education, 'ultimate
criteria' do not have a religious source or origin, but spring rather from 'philosophy in
the sense of human reason and human freedom as the ultimates'.[73] In the Catholic
tradition, however, philosophy of education has never admitted that human reason and
human freedom are absolutes in this sense, or sufficient on their own; rather, reason

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[69] Antonia Galdos, "Pragmatism and Intellectualism", Ibid., p. 123.
[70] *Insight*, p. 552.
[71] *Topics*, p. 19.
[72] Ibid., p. 18.
[73] Ibid., p. 18.

enlightened by Christian faith and will strengthened by grace provide the criteria whereby truth may be known and wisdom sought after. In any case, a secular philosophy is unsatisfactory since, *de facto*, Catholic philosophy of education is a discipline that has come to exist by the very evident reality of Catholic education and a Catholic school sector, which has arisen out of basic Catholic beliefs about God, human existence, and the mediational role of the Church in relation to the promulgation of the Christian Gospel.

Also to be rejected by the Catholic tradition, Lonergan argues, is the philosophy he describes as 'exclusively Cartesian', in the sense of a discipline that may recognise a certain theoretical superiority and freedom of religion and theology, but 'proceeds simply on its own independent criteria and in accord with its own independent methods'.[74] The Catholic faith tradition seeks to integrate religious faith and learning in a total way of life and the idea of a compartmentalized philosophy that does not facilitate such integration is irrelevant. Likewise to be rejected, Lonergan concludes, is any kind of 'medieval symbiosis of philosophy and theology', for such a view 'does not provide proximate criteria for an examination of the new learning'.[75] Philosophy, as it was thought out in the medieval period, is 'not connected intimately enough with the new learning'.[76]

Lonergan has already briefly indicated what the phrase 'new learning' connotes and later in this lecture series he will take considerable trouble in setting down what he intends by the term and spelling out its implications for contemporary philosophy of education.[77] Briefly, the 'new learning' with which Lonergan is concerned is not merely 'an addition' of new to old subjects, but their 'transformation'.[78] In the contemporary era, Lonergan believes, there has been not only 'an emergence of new thinking' in areas such as natural science, but equally in the human sciences such as psychology, history, language and literature. The challenges inherent in this development of knowledge and learning have been further compounded by the phenomenon of 'specialization', a phenomenon Lonergan fears, very easily results in a notion of education as 'a conveyor

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[74] *Topics*, p. 18.
[75] Ibid., p. 19.
[76] Ibid., p. 19.
[77] See *Topics*, chapters 5, 6, 9, and 10.
[78] *Topics*, p. 16.

belt supplying students with a great many isolated pieces of information'.[79] Here, for the moment, it suffices to note with Lonergan that 'the new learning' is what has come into being since the medieval scheme of learning was worked out and subsequently abandoned. As he puts it, the philosophy that used to be an integral part of the 'medieval symbiosis' does not offer 'a direct synthesis for the unassimilated mass of the new learning'.[80]

## Issues of Central Concern for the Re-articulation of Catholic Philosophy of Education

In the final section of his introductory lecture in *Topics* Lonergan reflects directly on the nature of the correlation he perceives between philosophy and education and on the kind of Catholic philosophy that is required for contemporary purposes. What is needed, urgently, according to Lonergan is a distinctly *Catholic philosophy of education*. Two passing remarks might be pertinent here before what is implied in Lonergan's understanding of the specificity of Catholic philosophy *of* education is analysed.

Firstly, there is no evidence here that Lonergan intended to develop a very narrowly focused approach to philosophy of education for the Catholic sector solely. His remarks, on the one hand, merely reflect the fact that his audience consists mainly of practitioners in the field of education within the Catholic tradition. On the other hand, it is clear that his thoughts on the subject, especially if interpreted in the light of his magisterial document, *Insight*, lend themselves to the creation of a wider ranging philosophy of education than might at first be anticipated.

Secondly, one should not imagine that Lonergan is developing his educational thinking in a vacuum as it were. Attention has already been drawn to his awareness of modernist re-thinking in the field, and, in particular, his acquaintance with the work of Dewey. In the absence of evidence, it is impossible to say to what extent Lonergan was familiar with writers in the field of Catholic philosophy of education, such as Jacques Maritain and William J.McGucken, but it is highly probable that he was *au courant* with their views, without at all approving of what he must have regarded as their essentially

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[79] Ibid., pp. 16-17.
[80] Ibid., p. 19.

'classicist' positions.[81]

Lonergan has now arrived at what he judges the core of the problem of elucidating a Catholic philosophy of education for our times. The theoretical problem of a Catholic philosophy of education that must be 'addressed with skill and rigour', is, Lonergan asserts, that as traditionally conceived by Catholics, 'philosophy is not a *philosophy of.* . [It] is not a subject of other subjects, but philosophy simply'.[82] He sees 'a host of problems' connected with the necessary shift in conception to a *philosophy of* . ., and some of them are 'very technical', he believes. Yet, he is confident that 'such a shift in conception can be effected on a basis strictly in harmony with the tradition', and he sets himself the task of 'attempting to offer some indication as to how this can be done'.[83] Catholic philosophy of education, if its proponents can execute that 'shift in conception' needed to see philosophy as '*philosophy of*', can be transposed into a new context by a new effort of analysis and synthesis that still preserves its basic elements and character.

Lonergan, while not attempting a comprehensive solution for the range of problems associated with the needed 'shift in conception' concerning the nature of philosophical activity, selects a number of issues for discussion that he considers particularly pressing for, and in need of, a response from the Catholic tradition and from Catholic philosophy of education. Two such issues or concerns might be identified and discussed briefly here. In the first place, the contemporary Catholic philosopher of education must be prepared to abandon the traditionalist Scholastic approach to the discipline; and, secondly, Catholic philosophy of education must entertain a new and more authentic way of knowing reality, and adopt a new stance to the nature and process of human knowing, in whatever field, philosophical or elsewhere.

**Philosophy *of* X**

To begin with, then, Lonergan comments on the difficulty for those who have been formed on 'medieval philosophy' as traditionally interpreted, in distinguishing between

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[81] Just as Maritain was a contributor to the Fifty-Fourth Yearbook of the NSSE, so too William J. McGucken contributed an article, "The Philosophy of Catholic Education", to the Forty-First Yearbook. See, William J. McGucken, "The Philosophy of Catholic Education", in Nelson B. Henry (ed), *Philosophies of Education: The Forty-First Yearbook of the NSSE*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1942.
[82] *Topics*, p. 19.
[83] Ibid., pp. 23-24.

'philosophy *simpliciter* and philosophy *of*. . .'.[84] He reminds his audience of the current vogue in philosophical circles of talk about 'a philosophy of mathematics', 'a philosophy of science', 'a philosophy of nature', 'a philosophy of history', 'a philosophy of education' and so on. This mode of speech, Lonergan continues, is 'strange to anyone brought up on scholastic fare', where philosophy is a subject by itself, not a subject of some other subject: 'It is not a philosophy *of* everything else'.[85] He invites his audience to dwell on the question of how one acquires the notion of 'a philosophy of X' and what kind of philosophy that is.[86]

Lonergan would probably have been aware of the widespread debate in North American education concerning the nature of 'philosophy *of* education', and the many different relationships between philosophy and education seemingly intended by this term.[87] It was precisely this debate that occasioned the publication of the Fifty-Fourth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, *Modern Philosophy of Education*, a few years before his Cincinnati series of lectures on the subject.[88] It will be recalled from chapter two above that Jacques Maritain contributed an article, "Thomist Views on Education", to this volume in which he attempted to identify the basic philosophical issues on which that theory of education depended. Lonergan does not mention Maritain at all in his discussion of these matters in *Topics*. What his silence about Maritain's views on philosophy of education and its task, as Lonergan saw it, of developing a philosophical perspective for Catholic education, might imply, one can but speculate.

From today's vantage point we might regard this whole question as rather out-dated and somewhat irrelevant. Obviously, at the end of the 1950s, this was not so, at least not for Lonergan's present audience whose principal philosophical formation had been in the tradition of the scholastic Thomism of the manuals. We are accustomed to the usage , 'philosophy of X', and generally understand it to mean 'philosophizing about X', that is, as an activity that applies philosophical understanding to the illumination of issues in X, whether that be religion, science, history, or education, or any of several other areas of learning and discourse. Since people, however, disagree about the nature of philosophy (and are equally likely to have divergent views about the nature of X), this

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[84] Ibid., p. 19.
[85] Ibid., p. 19.
[86] *Topics*, p. 19.
[87] See, *Harvard Educational Review*, 1956, Vol. 26, No. 2, for "Symposium on Philosophy of Education".
[88] Nelson B. Henry (ed), *Modern Philosophies of Education: The Fifty-Fourth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955.

definition is of limited value only. Given that many contemporary philosophers have been influenced by the conception that the function of philosophy is essentially critical or analytical, in each instance of 'philosophy of X', the philosopher is likely to be concerned with an examination of the arguments and a clarification of the concepts which are used within the discipline that is the object of his philosophizing. From this point of view, the philosophy of education stands in the same relationship to education, as the philosophy of religion to religion, or the philosophy of history to history.

Today, there is wide agreement that all human studies, including education, need a philosophical critique and grounding. Such a 'philosophy of' will regularly be comprised of analyses of certain concepts or tenets central to the host discipline. A thorough examination of the meaning and justification of central claims of the discipline will be present *de rigeur*. The 'philosophy of' any human activity or discipline will acknowledge the fundamental ontology of that activity or discipline and respect its characteristic methodology. From an ontological perspective, the philosophical operation will be concerned with the reality posited by the under-lying discipline, that is, with what it perceives as reality and whether this is consistent with logic and/or common sense belief. The methodical perspective will look at questions to do with how the discipline generates knowledge and how it provides distinctive explanations for the phenomena it observes. Thus, metaphysical and epistemological concerns are always an integral part of the philosophizing envisaged in the activity of the 'philosophy of X'.[89]

## Lonergan and the Priority of Cognitional Theory

Lonergan's attempt to elucidate what he understands by the term 'philosophy *of*' was 'a matter of major concern to him' and 'a category recurrent in his thinking' at this time, we are told by the editors of this volume of his lectures on education.[90] Lonergan's second concern, then, that the Catholic philosopher of education should come to understand human knowing in a new way, both introduces us to the dominant feature of his philosophy, namely, his cognitional theory, and testifies to his first efforts to wean Catholic educators from a conceptualist approach to educational philosophy to one

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[89] It is not possible in the present context to extend this discussion of what the term 'philosophy of. . .' means. Analysis of entries in standard dictionaries of philosophy may be found helpful. See, for example, *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*, ed. Ted Honderich, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.
[90] *Topics*, p. 20, footnote 60.

based on intentionality analysis and transcendental method.[91]

Lonergan's preference for an account of philosophy of education that would employ his theory of cognitional process and his methodology of intentionality analysis, rather than simply revert to type by merely repeating a classicist account of Catholic philosophy of education that was highly 'conceptualist in tone', largely incapable of 'rising to the level of the times', and failing to adjust to the 'vastly changed cultural and intellectual timbre of the day', has been noted by Crowe, and is also abundantly clear from a reading of *Topics*.[92] Furthermore, one should recall Lonergan's view from elsewhere that, now that a classicist culture is being put aside, there exists a type of philosophy that is in many ways very relevant to the current crisis in Catholic thought.[93] That crisis is about a 'shift in horizon', and, according to Lonergan, a philosophy that is to have relevance in any field suffering from a crisis resulting in 'a shift of horizon' must be one that 'centres on three questions' of a cognitional, epistemological and metaphysical nature: 'What am I doing when I am knowing? Why is doing that knowing? What do I know when I do it?'[94]

When answers to these questions have been ascertained, Lonergan suggests, there is available a method that enables us to become clear about the nature of any activity of knowing upon which we are engaged and one that serves to guide the process towards a result. Answering a specific question, 'What are we doing when we do X?', is integral to a methodology that is by no means limited to a single discipline. Thus, Daniel Vokey, reflecting upon the nature and role of the discipline of philosophy of education, legitimately poses the question, 'What are we doing when we are doing philosophy of education?'[95] Vokey's question is an adaptation of Lonergan's approach to cognitional process which begins from that radical question, 'What are we doing when we are knowing?' This philosophical approach, Lonergan suggests, makes possible basic analysis and much needed critique in the field of Catholic education.

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[91] For these matters, see the extensive treatment in Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study in Human Understanding* (1957); and, *Method in Theology* (1974)

[92] Frederick Crowe, *Lonergan*, p. 58. Crowe records a phrase Lonergan borrowed from Ortega y Gasset in the 1930s: 'One has to strive to mount to the level of one's time'.

[93] Bernard Lonergan, "Philosophy and Theology", pp. 193-208. In: *A Second Collection*, William F.J. Ryan and Bernard J. Tyrrell (ed.s), London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1974.

[94] Ibid., p. 207

[95] Daniel Vokey, "What Are We Doing when We Are Doing Philosophy of Education?", *Paideusis*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (2006), pp. 45-55 (45).

Lonergan's cognitional process, briefly recalled, is an understanding of human knowing that advances from experience through enquiry and reflection to judgment and decision. Lonergan is rarely concerned with the existence of knowledge as such but rather with its nature and with how the knowing subject appropriates the very activity of knowing. Lonergan's emphasis is not with what is known but with the structure of the knowing, not with the 'abstract properties of cognitional process' but with a 'personal appropriation of one's own dynamic and recurrently operative structure of cognitional activity'.[96] Lonergan's structure of cognition is a multi-level process: a level of experience where sense data and data of consciousness are presented; a level of intelligence which consists in acts of inquiry, understanding, and formulation, and a level of reflection which complements the level of intelligence. In this process, the formulations of understanding yield concepts, definitions, objects of thought, suppositions, and considerations. Every answer to a question for intelligence raises a further question for reflection. It is within this third level that there is involved the personal commitment that makes one responsible for one's judgments.[97]

Lonergan, in his efforts to sketch the outlines of a Catholic philosophy of education on the basis of his cognitional theory, firstly, encourages his audience 'to attend not merely to concepts', but to go beyond the position where one thinks only of 'universals being applied to particulars'.[98] Introducing his intentionality analysis almost as an aside, Lonergan invites his audience 'to think of understanding, of insight, as the ground of conception'.[99] If one thinks in this way, Lonergan assures his listeners, one will see 'a quite different relation between intelligence and sensible data'.[100] Lonergan goes on to explain that intelligence, understanding, insight, as the ground of conception, has 'a quite different relationship with the particular and the concrete from the relationship found in the abstract concepts of the universal and the particular'.[101] This first introduction of his audience to his cognitional process, with its pattern of the intentional operations of enquiry, understanding, and judgment, has important ramifications for the development of the Catholic philosophy of education Lonergan will eventually propose.

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[96] *Insight*, p. xxiii.
[97] *Insight*, pp. 272-273. It might be noted in passing that the later Lonergan, as author of *Method*, formally introduces a fourth level of cognitional process, namely, the level of deliberation and decision.
[98] *Topics*, p. 20.
[99] Ibid., p. 20.
[100] Ibid., p. 20.
[101] Ibid., p. 20.

## Implications of Cognitional Theory for Catholic Philosophy of Education

By emphasizing the pivotal role of insight in human knowing, Lonergan displays a clear break with classicist metaphysics which emphasized deduction of certainties from abstract principles. Lonergan's metaphysics is based on what he terms the 'invariant structures of human knowing', not on any code of verbal propositions called first principles.[102] It is only by close attention to the 'data of consciousness', he asserts, that one can discover 'insights', acts of understanding with the 'triple role of responding to inquiry, grasping intelligible form in sensible representations, and grounding the formation of concepts'.[103] For Lonergan, what comes first is insight into the concrete, not deduction from abstract 'first principles'. Insight, as Lonergan understands it, does not strictly come from a deductive process or, at least, does not come about only as a result of a deductivist process. Lonergan doubts, in a way that Maritain did not, that one can develop a Catholic philosophy of education today on the basis of pre-existent and immutable first principles. Lonergan's vision of insight, claims Matthew C. Ogilvie, excludes the classicist notion that human knowledge is attained with certainty by deducing truths from self-evident axioms.[104] Philosophy in the past has not been 'thought out' in terms of concrete situations and concrete realities, Lonergan laments, but has relied on a perennial philosophy that was never envisaged as being 'essentially an open philosophy'.[105]

Lonergan's second stage in the cognitional process proposes 'a period of elaboration' in which one attempts to 'express one's insight', and it is here that concept formation through a process of abstraction occurs, he believes.[106] Lonergan therefore notes two important properties of concepts. First, they are constituted by the 'act of supposing, defining, considering, thinking, formulating', though they may or may not be more than that.[107] Secondly, concepts do not occur randomly; they emerge in that multiple activity of thinking, supposing, considering, defining, and formulating, which occurs only in conjunction with an act of insight.[108] Lonergan thus maintains, Ogilvie points out, that

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[102] Bernard Lonergan, "Theories of Inquiry", *A Second Collection*, pp. 33-42 (39).
[103] Bernard Lonergan, "The Subject", *A Second Collection*, pp. 69-86 (74).
[104] Matthew C. Ogilvie, *Faith Seeking Understanding*, Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2001, p. 77.
[105] *Topics*, p. 22.
[106] Ibid., pp. 22-23.
[107] *Insight*, p. 8.
[108] Ibid., p. 8.

insight is prior to concept and that the concept only arises in conjunction with the insight, and as the insight's expression.[109] Concept formation expresses in a kind of general way what is essential to experiencing insight. But Lonergan insists that, in the exercise of intelligence, a conceptual definition remains an expression of an insight, and not the other way round.

That insight is prior to concepts, and concepts are dependent on insight, is critically important for the re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education, Lonergan argues. The conceptualist educator, he claims, thinks with the assumption that concepts are prior to insights. For Lonergan, there is a major problem in traditional Catholic philosophical thinking about education, as elsewhere, in this kind of position that he calls 'conceptualism'.[110] Lonergan attributes several basic defects to conceptualism, which impinge greatly on the human subject in his pursuit of knowing. Firstly, conceptualism 'condemns the subject to an anti-historical immobilism', which, since it disregards insights, cannot account for the development of concepts.[111] Secondly, conceptualism involves 'an excessive abstractness'.[112] Conceptualism ignores human understanding and so it overlooks the concrete mode of understanding that grasps intelligibility in the sensible itself. It is confined to a world of abstract universals, and its only link with the concrete is the relation of universal to particular.[113]

The levels of experience and of understanding in Lonergan's cognitional process are complemented by a third level of knowing. The final increment in the process of knowing, the act of judgment, also has considerable import for how philosophy of education and its philosophising activity should be conceived. This notion of judgment, it should be noted, differs from the old notion that judging is a matter of comparing concepts and discovering that one entails another. The understanding we have gained by intelligence is regarded as a mere possibility until the evidence for its reality has been evaluated. At the rational level of human consciousness, we reflect upon an object, marshal evidence and pass judgment on its truth or falsity.[114] In judgment, the knowing person takes an object of thought and transforms it from a mere idea to an object of affirmation. It is on this third level that there emerge notions of 'truth and falsity', of

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[109] Matthew C. Ogilvie, *Faith Seeking Understanding*, p. 82.
[110] Bernard Lonergan, "Theories of Inquiry", *A Second Collection*, pp. 33-42 (39).
[111] Bernard Lonergan, "The Subject", *A Second Collection*, pp. 69-86 (74).
[112] Ibid., p. 74.
[113] Ibid., pp. 74-75.
[114] *Method*, p. 9.

'certitude and probability', and it is within this third level that there is involved 'the personal commitment that makes one responsible for one's judgments'.[115]

Lonergan observes that judgment, which is, like the act of understanding, an active, not a passive operation, relies on a special kind of insight.[116] This account of judgment as an active operation recalls Newman's notion of the 'illative sense'.[117] The 'illative sense' which leads to certitude 'is not a passive impression made upon the mind from without', but 'an active recognition of propositions as true', such that it is the duty of each individual himself to exercise 'at the bidding of reason'. Lonergan calls this active operation of judgment 'reflective understanding'.[118] Lonergan acknowledges Newman as the source of his notion of 'reflective understanding', and admits that his account, although in different terms, is roughly equivalent to Newman's illative sense.[119] Lonergan acknowledges that Newman's notion was a key influence in his understanding of reflective judgment as a natural part of human cognitional operations.

When the work of Terence H. McLaughlin is presented for consideration below, in chapter four of this dissertation, it will become apparent that there is much in common between Lonergan's notion of 'reflective understanding' in which judgment and deliberation is grounded, and McLaughlin's espousal and use of 'pedagogic *phronēsis*', insofar as both scholars express in their own ways the centrality of insight in human life and action. There we shall see how the educational practitioner, whose judgment and decision making arises out of 'pedagogic *phronēsis*', could be said to be successfully deploying the cognitive operations of Lonergan's common sense intelligence, though perhaps with a more focused perspective on the good of the whole community rather than on the good of an individual.

## An 'Existential' and 'Historical' Catholic Philosophy of Education.

If Lonergan's transposition and reconstruction of the tradition of Catholic philosophy of education demanded as a first priority the abandonment of conceptualism and commitment to cognitional theory, another imperative for him lay in the importance of

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[115] *Insight*, p. 273. Lonergan refers to Aquinas regarding judgment and concern for truth. See, Aquinas, ST Ia, Q. 16, a. 1 c.

[116] *Insight*, p. 279.

[117] John Henry Newman, *An Essay in Aid of a Grammar of Assent*, Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co. Inc, Image Books edn., 1955, ch. IX, pp. 270-299.

[118] See, Bernard Lonergan, *Insight*, ch. X, pp. 279-316.

[119] Bernard Lonergan, "Insight Revisited", *A Second Collection*, pp. 263-278. 'Newman's illative sense became my reflective act of understanding', p. 263.

meeting the challenge that he sees in the 'non-historical nature of medieval thought'.[120] This lack of historical perspective has adversely influenced the development of Catholic thought and left it incapable of truly recognising the historicity of the human subject today, Lonergan maintains.[121] Lonergan's base position is clear. One cannot ground a concrete historical apprehension of man on abstract foundations.[122] Longeran ponders over the question of how it is possible to incorporate into Catholic philosophy of education a notion such as the 'present time', and is convinced that this could not be achieved 'if philosophy deals simply with timeless truths'.[123]

In particular, Lonergan asks, against the background of 'the traditional Catholic conception of philosophy', how it is possible to have a genuine Catholic philosophy of education that 'does not consider man *as he is* in the world'.[124] The 'core problem' of education, as it appears to Lonergan, is 'the problem of education *today*', the problem of educating not the medievals, or the people of the Renaissance, but the people of today.[125] Essentially, the challenge is the problem of the 'development of the individual up to the level of the times', that is, the level of human development reached by Western culture and civilization.[126]

Scholastic thought, Lonergan argues, was 'concerned with eternal, timeless truths' rather than with 'genesis, development, and history', but this constitutes a major difficulty if we try to bring *today*, or *the present time*, into the ambit of such unchanging philosophical categories.[127] Lonergan asks how we are to account for 'the notion of the developing individual' within the confines of a philosophy of education that appears unable to accommodate the idea of historical development. Medieval thought was not historical thought.[128] Lonergan arrives at a starkly frank answer to his own question: If you conceive philosophy simply as a matter of eternal, timeless truths, then such a philosophy can have no answer in relation to the notion of the development of the individual, or the development of society. Such a philosophy cannot be 'timely'; it is

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[120] *Topics*, p. 20.
[121] Ibid., p. 20.
[122] Bernard Lonergan, "The Transition from a Classicist World-View to Historical-Mindedness", *A Second Collection*, pp. 1-9 (6).
[123] *Topics*, pp. 20-21.
[124] Ibid., p. 21.
[125] Ibid., p. 20.
[126] Ibid., p. 20.
[127] Ibid., p. 20.
[128] Ibid., p. 20.

'timeless', or so it claims.[129]

The traditional Catholic conception of philosophy is 'not existential', Lonergan alleges. It has not been concerned, he says, with 'the individual coming to grips with the meaning *for him* of true propositions'.[130] Its concern has been 'to pick out and label which propositions are true *per se*'.[131] To show how propositions come to have a meaning for us in our living, to show what is true for us as we exist in this world at the present time, Lonergan maintains, is not a question 'proper to Catholic philosophy as it has been *traditionally* conceived'.[132] That belongs rather to theology, he believes.[133] So the question remains unanswered as to how you can have a Catholic philosophy of education, if you do not consider man as he is in this world today. [134]

For Lonergan, medieval philosophy is unable to address the important existential question of achieving meaning in the here and now, in the context of one's immediate lived existence, and so a Catholic philosophy of education would seem to have few prospects in adopting that mode of philosophizing as far as being relevant to Catholic educators is concerned. On the other hand, a Catholic philosophy of education would seem ill-advised to ignore or reject a whole tradition of Catholic thinking that sought to positively relate faith and reason in the search for truth consonant with Christian revelation. Historical existence brings greater understanding and is the necessary context for discovering the meaning of truth for the contemporary believer.

Ultimately, it would appear that Lonergan's vision for Catholic philosophy of education is a synthesis of the older wisdom of traditional philosophy, in the measure that it truly reflects 'the mind of St Thomas' (*vetera*), and the insights of a more contemporary philosophy seeking 'to rise to the level of the times' (*nova*), that he makes available in his own philosophical thinking and particularly in his cognitional process and its accompanying intentionality analysis.[135] The on-going interplay in human history of

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[129] Ibid., p. 21.
[130] Ibid., p. 21.
[131] Ibid., p. 21.
[132] Ibid., p. 21.
[133] Ibid., p. 21.
[134] *Topics*, p. 21.
[135] See, Leo XIII, *Aeterni Patris* (1879), whose clarion call, 'vetera novis augere et perficere', 'to enlarge and perfect the old by means of the new', Lonergan interpreted, not as a 'back to Thomism call' *simpliciter*, but as an invitation to unite the historical and the transcendental, an invitation that he took to heart and used to express the nature of his own task (*Insight*, p. 743).

tradition and innovation is at the core of Lonergan's thinking.[136]

In many respects, Lonergan's demand for a far more sophisticated type of philosophy than the medieval world could furnish, upon which to ground a Catholic philosophy of education, is but a reflection of a constant theme throughout his writings, namely, the need for Catholic thinking to make that transition from 'classicism to historical-mindedness' to which allusion has already been made. Lonergan writes in *Insight* that it is commonly recognised that Aquinas took over the Aristotelian synthesis of philosophy and science to construct the larger Christian view that includes theology.[137] He adds that it is perhaps less commonly appreciated that the development of the empirical human sciences 'has created a fundamentally new problem'.[138] The new problem is that these sciences 'consider man in his concrete performance', and that performance is a manifestation not only of human nature but also of human sin, not only of nature and sin but also of a *de facto* need of divine grace, not only of a need of grace but also of its reception and of its acceptance or rejection.[139] Lonergan concludes that it follows from this fact that 'an empirical human science cannot analyse successfully the elements in its object without an appeal to theology', and, inversely, theology, not only by right but also in fact, and theologians, have to take 'a professional interest' in the human sciences and allow them to 'make a positive contribution to their methodology'.[140]

This, therefore, is the mind-set and intention with which Lonergan approached the present task in *Topics* of outlining the elements of a Catholic philosophy of education. He reminds his listeners of the problems that such an undertaking is bound to encounter in the modern world. What is needed for a Catholic philosophy of education, he concludes, is a philosophy that 'remains true to itself and yet develops', that 'preserves its identity and yet takes over the mastery of different successive ages', a '*philosophia perennis*', of which medieval philosophy was but 'a moment'.[141] Such a perennial philosophy would essentially be 'an open philosophy', a philosophy that 'can take cognizance of individual and historical developments', and account for developments that are 'concrete' and 'existential in the general sense of that term (not in the sense of

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[136] See, Bernard Lonergan, "Aquinas Today: Tradition and Innovation", pp. 35-54. In: *A Third Collection*, Frederick E. Crowe (ed.), London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1985.
[137] *Insight*, p. 743.
[138] Ibid., p. 743.
[139] *Insight*, p. 743.
[140] Ibid., p. 743.
[141] *Topics*, p. 22.

particular existentialist schools).[142] Only such a philosophy of education can be 'historical', 'Catholic', and a 'philosophy of. . .' as required by our circumstances. It must not be a philosophy of education 'confined simply to timeless truths and conclusions drawn from universals to particulars'.[143]

Lonergan believes that such a philosophic tool, which acknowledges the need to deal with human reality in the context of historical existence, can be constructed. One might legitimately interpret him to further believe that such a tool should be available to Catholic educators to develop a philosophy of education that would engage in dialogue with other discourses concerning the aims and goals of education. What we can in practice take from Lonergan's vision for the purpose of engaging in conversation with the CCE discourse pertaining to the development of the human person and the integration of faith and knowledge are matters to which we shall return in chapter five of this dissertation below.

Lonergan concludes his opening lecture by reminding his audience that one may encounter in his book *Insight* 'thinking that heads in the same direction' as that which he has illustrated in *Topics*.[144] That distinct and helpful pointers concerning how to tackle the problem of the philosophy of education are to be found in this source is undoubtedly true. It is not, nonetheless, the case that all the possibilities for the development of a Catholic philosophy of education inspired by *Insight* have been articulated in the current series of lectures, *Topics*. Lonergan regards what he wishes to achieve here as 'fundamentally an expression of traditional thinking', and an attempt to retain all that is best in medieval philosophy, especially as understood and practised by Aquinas, while at the same time incorporating the historical, developmental and existential dimensions of human existence as revealed today by the human sciences.[145]

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[142] Ibid., p. 22.
[143] Ibid., p. 22.
[144] *Topics*, p. 23.
[145] Ibid., p. 23.

## The Human Good and the Aims of Catholic Philosophy of Education

Lonergan's extensive analysis of 'the good' in *Topics* might at first appear to be an abandonment, or a leaving to one side, of the outline of Catholic philosophy of education, and the discussion of the conditions required for its proper articulation, that he had begun to engage with in his opening lecture. The topic of the 'human good', however, is integral to his conception of the philosophy of Catholic education. What Lonergan is in fact doing, is simply presupposing for the moment that at least 'an indication of the locus and type of solution to the problems' of Catholic philosophy of education has now been identified.[146] He is well aware, however, that only a general vision for Catholic philosophy of education has in fact been sketched so far, and we are justified in expecting him to fill out the details of that sketch.

Nevertheless, one would have been mistaken to have assumed Lonergan would follow explicitly in the direction more traditionally adopted by Catholic textbooks of the period on the subject. These conventionally began from discussions of underlying philosophies in education, and focused on critiquing their divergent statements on the nature and destiny of the human person, and hence on the aims and processes of education, as well as on theories of learning, the curriculum, and consequent pedagogical considerations. Instead of approaching the nature of education as, say, the process of liberating the human intelligence and the strengthening of the will, after the manner of Maritain, for example, and then inquiring into how education is directed to promoting that development, Lonergan opts instead to progress his reflection from a quite different vantage point, namely, the notion of 'the good'.[147]

Lonergan devotes three lectures in this Cincinnati series (1959) on education to the topics of 'the good' and 'the human good'.[148] The fact that he dedicates so much of his time to what one might at first glance regard as perhaps a remote rather than a proximate theme, or at least a theme often left inexplicitly developed, in the context of the presentation of a philosophy of education, indicates the importance the notion of the

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[146] *Topics*, p. 24.
[147] Ibid., p. 24.
[148] See *Topics*, chapters 2, 3, and 4.

good had for him in his philosophy. In *Topics* Lonergan focuses on the notion of the 'human good' as a critical starting point for an elucidation of an important facet of philosophy of education, namely, a discussion of the overall aim or purpose of education. His goal, he states, is 'to provide a basis for discussions of the end, the aim, the goal of education', that is, to answer the question why people are educated.[149]

If we prescind for the moment from the curious fact that Lonergan nowhere throughout his whole discussion on 'the good' mentions the once ubiquitous term, the 'common good', his treatment of the ends for which education is undertaken would appear to be totally consonant with the Catholic tradition of educational thought in general. Christian education, according to the classic account of Pius XI, viewed *sub specie aeternitatis*, aims at 'securing the Supreme Good (that is, God) for the souls of those who are being educated, and the maximum of well-being here below for human society', and this it seeks to achieve, 'by cooperating with God in the perfecting of individuals and of society'.[150] Lonergan, in a sense, appears to have selected for his purpose a wholly traditional concept, the 'good', but in the course of his analysis it will become apparent that he attempts to render what he considers a more adequate theoretical and contemporary account of the good in Catholic education.

Lonegan's alternative strategy and approach to Catholic philosophy of education is to begin from the notion of 'the human good', by attempting to 'grasp in philosophic fashion' what constitutes the human good in the concrete, and to understand what its relevance for education might be.[151] His treatment of various aspects of the good, including the notion of the good and the 'invariant structure' of the human good, the 'diversity and integration' of the human good, and the human good and 'development', is comprehensive.[152] The scope of this thesis permits extended comment only upon Lonergan's discussion of 'the human good' and how he relates it to the notion of 'development'.

**Education and 'the Good'**

Before attempting to analyse Lonergan's treatment of 'the human good and development', it might be appropriate to reflect a little on the reasonableness of his

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[149] *Topics*, p. 26.
[150] Pius XI, *DIM (1929)*, No. 8.
[151] *Topics*, p. 24.
[152] Ibid., pp. 26-48, 49-78, 79-106.

choice of 'the good' as a key consideration in the articulation of a Catholic philosophy of education. Education as a human activity is almost invariably, even axiomatically, assumed to be a good for human beings, and the ultimate goal of education is frequently stated in terms of human flourishing, howsoever defined. Yet, despite the many ways in which the notion of education might be considered to be a contested concept, and the resultant good of education might likewise be considered debatable, Lonergan does not directly address the deceptively simple question concerning whether education is indeed a good thing and in what precisely it is to be thought that the good of education consists.

Lonergan indicates, as mentioned above, that he wishes to speak of 'the good' in the present context so as 'to be able to provide a basis for discussion of the end, the aim, the goal of education'.[153] Lonergan reasons that if one asks the question, Why are people educated?, the answer inevitably and necessarily must be in terms of some 'good' to be obtained as a direct result of that process.[154] Hence, in essence, discussion of the aim or goal of education revolves around the issue of what is meant by 'the good' and why, in fact, education is to be regarded as a good.

John Wilson analyses carefully the assumption that 'education is a good thing', a desirable matter, and challenges the belief of philosophers of education that there is, either 'some tight logical connection between education and desirability', perhaps to be found in the meaning of the term 'education', or that there is some looser connection between various concepts or conceptions of education and desirability.[155] Wilson finds fault with both these positions and, while stressing that he does not wish to discredit the importance of various utilitarian objectives and goods in education that make it both desirable and necessary in society, he concludes that we need to conceive education as a 'moral enterprise', where 'moral' is understood in a sufficiently wide sense.[156] Wilson argues that, if education is to be seen as a good thing in itself, and if educators are to be regarded as more than just 'social functionaries' who deliver the particular skills and items of knowledge considered necessary or useful at particular times, then education must be considered as itself 'essentially a moral practice'.[157] Wilson cites support for this view in the work of, amongst others, Richard Pring, and urges 'a fuller and deeper

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[153] Ibid., p. 26.
[154] Ibid., p. 26.
[155] John Wilson, "Is Education a Good Thing?", *British Journal of Educational Studies*, Vol. 50, No. 3 (Sept., 2002), pp. 327-338.
[156] Ibid., p. 338.
[157] Ibid., p. 338.

explanation and defence' of this approach.[158]

One might regard Lonergan's reflections on the good in the context of *Topics* as contributing something of importance to this discussion. Education was certainly understood by Lonergan as a 'moral' undertaking, in the sense that education is seen to be oriented fundamentally toward the human good that is the development of the subject. Although he does not develop his thoughts on the subject extensively in this context, Lonergan raises the specific question as to whether education 'should be moral', and suggests an answer in the affirmative on the basis of the 'whole-functioning of the person', which does not permit a sharp distinction between the intellectual and moral dimensions, but implies that the 'moral element is always present in education, at least implicitly'.[159] Furthermore, in what looks remarkably similar to Maritain's way of thinking, Lonergan stresses that 'effecting the process of moral development is an important indirect effect of the education of intelligence'.[160]

Lonergan conceives human growth and development as a process of self-transcendence, through a multiple-stage 'conversion' (intellectual, moral and religious), and the ultimate attaining to authentic humanity. It might be noted here, too, that the CCE discourse, discussion of which will largely be the focus of chapter five of this work, regards education as a good that promotes the integral formation or development of the human person. With Lonergan, the CCE discourse subscribes to the view that the good of education is intimately related to what it means to be human, and it is this in the end that makes education a moral practice, insofar as it may enable young people to explore seriously what it means to be human and deliberately engage them in activities intended to promote the growth of that humanity.

**The Notion, Invariant Structure and Dynamism of the Human Good**

Lonergan, for whom 'the good' was a centrally important theme in both his philosophical and theological writing, first engaged in a discussion of 'the good' in *Insight*, in the context of outlining a theory of ethics.[161] In many respects, Lonergan's theory of 'the human good' in *Topics* might be regarded as an intermediate treatment of

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[158] Ibid., p. 338. See, Richard A. Pring, "Education as a Moral Practice", *Journal of Moral Education*, Vol. 10, No. 2, 2001.
[159] *Topics*, pp.105-106.
[160] Ibid., p. 97.
[161] See *Insight*, ch. XVII, pp. 595-607.

the theme when considered in the light of his earlier comments in *Insight* and his much more fully developed discussion in *Methods in Theology*.[162] What is common to all his accounts of 'the good', however, is the notion of 'the invariant structure of the good'.

## Levels of the Good

Lonergan distinguishes 'three levels' in the good, and in the human good, the specific matter of interest here, although strangely this latter term is never used by him in *Insight*. On an elementary level, 'the good' is the 'object of desire', such that, when it is attained, is 'experienced as something pleasant, enjoyable, satisfying'.[163] Many of the individual goods and services of education would probably be regarded by Lonergan as simply (or at least in the first place) 'objects of desire'. For Lonergan, though, among people's many desires, there is one desire that is 'unique', that is, 'the detached, disinterested, pure, unrestricted desire to know'.[164] The satisfaction of this desire orients and intends the human being for a life that is far beyond anything attainable by the cumulative fulfilment of the various and more mundane single objects of desire.

Through this radical desire, too, and the knowledge it generates, there comes to light a second meaning, or level, of the good, according to Lonergan. Besides the good that is simply an object of desire, there is 'the good of order', examples of which might be institutions, such as the family, the school, or the state.[165] The 'good of order' is not the object of any single desire, for it stands to single desires 'as system to systematized', or as 'universal condition to particulars that are conditioned'.[166] The 'good of order', as Christopher Friel interprets Lonergan, 'systematizes' the various single desires; it is 'the condition for the meeting of particular desires'; and it provides a scheme that enables the 'recurrence of satisfactions'.[167]

Lonergan's description of the 'good of order' is in many respects reminiscent of the traditional notion of the 'common good', a term significantly perhaps that he never uses throughout the course of these lectures. Thus, the 'good of order', first introduced by

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[162] For an interesting discussion of the evolution of Lonergan's views on the 'human good', see, Christopher Friel, "The Evolution of Lonergan's Structure of the Human Good", in *The Heythrop Journal*, Vol. LIV, 2013, pp. 756-766.
[163] *Insight*, p. 596.
[164] Ibid., p. 596. The term 'pure desire to know' ('pdk') is ubiquitous in *Insight*. Cf. pp. 4, 9, 74, 220-2, 348-350, 380-1, 528, 550, 599-600, 625-4, 636-9, 642, 682, 701-2, 738.
[165] *Insight*, p. 596.
[166] Ibid., p. 596.
[167] Christopher Friel, "Lonergan's Development of the Structure of the Good", p. 761.

Lonergan in the context of discussion on 'civil community', is considered to be 'the intelligible pattern of relationships that conditions the fulfilment of each man's desires by his contributions to the fulfilment of the desires of others'.[168] For Lonergan the traditional concept of the 'common good' might well have represented a reality that, like so many others in Catholic philosophical and theological thinking, needed to be transposed into a more contemporary and meaningful context. His failure to endorse the use of the term the 'common good' is due presumably to his unhappiness with a terminology and a set of understandings that he regarded as belonging to a classical way of thinking, as distinct from his own 'new notion of the good necessitated for him by a shift in thinking to a more historically minded approach.[169]

A third aspect of the good is described by Lonergan as 'value'.[170] 'Value' is the good as the possible object of rational choice. It is in rational, moral self-consciousness that the good of value comes to light. Just as the objects of desire give rise to the good of order grasped by intelligence, so also, Lonergan reasons, the good of order with its concrete contents becomes a possible object of rational choice and so a value.[171] Value is a type of good that emerges on 'the level of reflection and judgment, of deliberation and choice'.[172] Empirically, the good is the object of desire; the good of order at the intellectual level is a higher synthesis; practical deliberation and critique reveals the good as value. This is a distinguishing feature of Lonergan's thought on the theme of the human good.

**Specificity of the Human Good**

In *Topics* Lonergan speaks of the 'human good' rather than the generic term 'the good' which he used exclusively throughout his account in *Insight*.[173] His rationale for focusing on 'the human good' is obvious, since it is necessary in the context of education for Lonergan to establish the specific nature of the 'human good', in the light of which he understands educational reality and its good. The human good (just like 'the good' generically) is to be understood in terms of its 'invariant structure', that is, in terms of certain features of the good that are to be found in any society or culture, at any

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[168] *Insight*, p. 213.
[169] See, Paul Hoyt-O'Connor, "The Human Good and Lonergan's Macroeconomic Dynamics", *Logos: A Journal of Catholic Thought and Culture,* Vol. 12, No. 2 (Spring, 2009), pp. 94-124.
[170] *Insight*, p. 597.
[171] *Insight*, p. 601.
[172] Ibid., pp. 322-24, 330-332, 549, 613-15.
[173] *Topics*, pp. 32-33.

place and time.[174]

In *Topics*, however, Lonergan's focus is more on the 'dynamic' and 'concrete' aspects of the human good rather than its invariant structure. The 'distinctive feature' of the human good, Lonergan asserts, is that it is a reality that 'emerges out of human apprehension and choice'.[175] The good is 'human' only insofar as it is realized through human apprehension and choice.[176] The human good is 'a history, a concrete, cumulative process resulting from developing human apprehension and human choices that may be good or evil'.[177] This reference to apprehension and choice, through which the human good is realised, is intended to correspond closely to the distinctive operations of consciousness that Lonergan envisages in cognitional structure. Lonergan, in fact, sees a kind of 'isomorphism' between the levels of consciousness that he identifies - the experiential, the intellectual, and the rational or reflective - and the structural levels of the good[178]. Human apprehension is a matter of understanding and judgment, and choice is a matter of deliberation and decision. These activities of knowing and choosing reveal, so Lonergan argues, the invariant process that human beings engage in as they seek to achieve the good. Lonergan's description of the human good as 'a history', a 'cumulative process', where there is both growth in apprehension and distortion and aberration in choice, discounts the notion of the human good as any kind of innate or fixed system, a legal system or a moral system, or an abstraction, or a mere ideal.[179]

Having asserted that this dynamic developing process is what constitutes the human good, Lonergan turns to a further discussion of the 'question of value', value being for him what is most specific about the human good. 'Value' arises, firstly, Lonergan maintains, because people 'ask questions about the existing human good of order'.[180] 'Value' is an aspect of the good which 'emerges on the level of reflection and judgment, of deliberation and choice', according to Lonergan.[181] He endeavours to elaborate further the meaning of 'value' by distinguishing three kinds, or levels, of value: the

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[174] Ibid., p. 27.
[175] Ibid., p. 32.
[176] Ibid., p. 32.
[177] Ibid., p. 33.
[178] See *Insight*, pp. 431-432, and *Method*, p. 21, for Lonergan's notion of the 'isomorphism' of operations of the cognitional process with the structure of the universe.
[179] Ibid., p. 33.
[180] Ibid., pp. 36-37.
[181] *Insight*, p. 597.

'aesthetic', the 'ethical', and the religious'.[182]

'Ethical value', as described by Lonergan, resides in 'the conscious emergence of the subject as autonomous, responsible, free'.[183] The development of the human person who gradually becomes aware of freedom and of its meaning and responsibilities is an ethical value of supreme importance in the field of education. Lonergan is here making the point that in his understanding of the value component of the human good, ethical value is what underscores the essential quality of human freedom in the realization of the good.[184] The 'excellence of man, the proper good of man', is precisely doing what is right because he is free. His freedom is to 'realize the good'.[185] With 'ethical value', Lonergan reiterates, there emerges 'the autonomy of spirit', where the subject 'takes his stand upon the truth, upon what is right, upon what is good'.[186]

Lonergan explains, however, that if one stopped short at 'ethical value', one is left with 'a secularist philosophy of education', and one is ignoring the fact that there is also 'religious value'.[187] 'Religious value' appears, Lonergan argues, when one goes a step further, when the autonomous subject stands before God, with his neighbour, in the world of history. A person is open to religion when he or she realizes within himself or herself 'that internal order, the metaphorical justice of justification, that inner hierarchy in which reason is subordinate to God, and sense to reason'.[188] Religious value is, therefore, a concern with one's existence as a transcendent being and is to be understood in relation to the triple conversion of the human subject - intellectual, moral and religious - to self-transcendence. In Lonergan's view, it would be inconceivable to imagine Catholic education without reference to religious value.

The later Lonergan, as the author of *Method in Theology*, similarly included a chapter in this book, entitled 'the human good'.[189] Here, too, Lonergan declares his aim is 'to assemble the various components that enter into the human good'.[190] Amongst the elements that he identifies as comprising the human good are 'skills, feelings, values,

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[182] *Topics*, pp. 37-38.
[183] Ibid., p. 37.
[184] Ibid., p. 38.
[185] Ibid., p. 38.
[186] Ibid., p. 38.
[187] *Topics*, p. 38.
[188] Ibid., p. 38. Lonergan appears to have in mind here the Thomist account of justification. See ST Ia IIae, Q. 113, a. 1.
[189] Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, chapter 2, pp. 27-56.
[190] Ibid., p. 27.

and beliefs', all of which are required for the acquisition of the good and the promotion of progress in the face of the ever present threat of decline.[191] This later outline of the structure of the human good is in many ways an advancement upon that which he offers in either *Insight*, or in *Topics*.[192]

In terms of its usefulness in the specific context of examining the aims of Catholic education, Lonergan's later treatment of the human good supplies for what many have perceived as a deficiency, or at least an under-emphasis, on the affective and emotional dimensions of human-ness in the highly intellectual presentation of the good in *Insight*. It is a feature of the Catholic tradition of educational thought, still prominent in the CCE discourse today, that education must aim to exercise an 'holistic influence'. The CCE discourse perpetuates the conviction of Pius XI that Christian education must include 'the whole aggregate of human life, physical and spiritual, intellectual and moral, individual, domestic, and social', and the belief of Leo XIII that 'every subject taught in school must be permeated with Christian piety'.[193] Descriptions of Catholic education in the CCE literature, such as the 'total formation' and 'complete education', of the human person express the same commitment to, and engender the same imperative for, holistic education to ensure that no dimension of human reality is absent from the underlying conception of the human good.[194]

One might summarise Lonergan's account of the structure and dynamism of the human good in the following terms. In his framing of the broad outline of the structure of the human good, Lonergan is seeking to orient educational thinking in terms of human self-transcendence as the ultimate goal of education as of life. His description of the human good includes a broad sweep of human existence and reflects in many ways the dynamism of human consciousness that enables the human subject to recognise and seek for the good of self transcendence. Lonergan proposes that the structure of the human good, understood as the particular good, the good of order, and the good of terminal value, reflects, or parallels, the structure of cognitional activity as three distinct but interrelated operations, or levels, of experience, understanding and judgment, within human consciousness. Reciprocally, the differentiated and interrelated structure and operations of human consciousness reflect the basic structure he discovers in the human

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[191] Ibid., pp.27-54.
[192] Ibid., pp. 47-51.
[193] Pius XI, *DIM (1929)*, No.s 80, 95.
[194] *CS (1977)*, No.s 15, 19.

good.[195] Lonergan's intentionality analysis integral to his transcendental method thus becomes a useful means of critiquing one's progress towards the good of self-transcendence.

It might prove a worthwhile exercise to analyse the CCE vision of the Catholic school as an 'educational / educative / educating community' in terms of these components of the good of order and the terminal values which arise out of that order. It should be possible to select elements of this kind of generalized discussion of aspects of the human good proferred by Lonergan that would allow one to analyse (Catholic) education as a human good. Clearly, education, in a formal sense at any rate, requires an appropriate sort of institutional framework, a good of order that regularly produces the particular goods desired by society, where both the institutional and the individual goods have been judged to be worth-while, suitable for purpose, and endorsed by society. The regular production of the desired educational goods implies and stipulates a process that might appropriately be designated 'dynamic'. That dynamic is supplied by the on-going efforts of human persons to acquire and develop the necessary knowledge, skills, feelings, beliefs, and values which are acted upon in an agreed and cooperative way to produce the desired particular goods of education. It is easy to see, however, that the successful working out of this dynamic is critically dependent on the beliefs and values of society.

## III

### The Development of the Person and the Human Good

The end-point of Lonergan's discussion of the 'human good' is the focus on what he terms 'the human good as subjective development', that is, on the 'developing subject' as a primary exemplification of the human good.[196] Lonergan's purpose in these lectures on 'the good', it will be recalled, has been to 'form some notion of ends' in education.[197] He wishes in particular to provide an account of the quintessential aim of Catholic education in terms of the human person as 'a developing subject'.[198] His philosophy of education as 'development' reflects a long tradition of educational

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[195] *Topics*, p. 41.
[196] *Topics*, pp. 24, 79-106 (79).
[197] Ibid., p. 54.
[198] *Topics*, pp. 79-106.

thought in which the holistic development of the human person is a critical aim and goal.[199] Lonergan, on the basis of his reflections on the human good in general, and specifically the human good as it relates to the developing subject, asserts that he is attempting to arrive at both 'a determination of what the aims of education might be, or should be', and 'a criticism of what in fact they are'.[200]

In this section, then, the way Lonergan conceives the human person as a 'developing subject' is first noted. Secondly, his understanding of the notion of human development is briefly summarised. Thirdly his perspective on the process of the development in terms of the intellectual pattern of experience is analysed, and its central importance for education as 'formation', or 'development', is discussed.

## The Person as Psychological Subject

Lonergan notes that there is currently a great deal of emphasis in 'contemporary philosophy' on the 'subject'.[201] His view on the person as 'psychological or developing subject' must be understood in the light of this 'turn to the subject'. For Catholic philosophy of education to be in a position to consider the person as 'a developing subject', and not as an 'object' of any kind, Lonergan argues that it must undergo a three-fold 'transition'. Firstly, there must be a transition 'from essence to ideal'; secondly, a transition 'from substance to subject', and thirdly, a transition 'from faculty psychology to consciousness'.[202] It is only in consequence of such a radical change in mentality, dictated by the demands of historical consciousness, that a framework can be constructed within which the notion of the developing subject can be properly understood.

In his portrayal of the person as 'subject', Lonergan places much emphasis on the notions of 'consciousness' and 'levels of consciousness'.[203] By 'consciousness', he means the 'awareness immanent in cognitional acts' and, depending on the type of act, it may be classified by the metaphor 'levels of consciousness', as 'empirical',

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[199] The recent CCE discourse, as mentioned above, also belongs integrally to this tradition.
[200] *Topics*, p. 54.
[201] Bernard Lonergan, "The Subject", *A Second Collection*, pp. 69-86 (69). It should perhaps be borne in mind that Lonergan makes this comment in the early 1970s and other emphases, for example, 'critical theory', may be deemed more characteristic of philosophy in our age.
[202] *Topics*, pp. 79-81; 81-82, and 82-85.
[203] *Insight*, pp. 322-324.

'intelligent', or 'rational' consciousness .[204] For Lonergan, a person is 'a psychological or developing subject' because of his or her performance of conscious operations on different levels of awareness, namely, the levels of empirical awareness, of intelligence, of rational consciousness, and on the level of decision making.[205] These levels of consciousness are not to be conceived as discrete entities but as constituting a 'whole structure' of interrelated aspects or operations that is dynamic, self-constituting and capable of reaching out to an object. The conscious operations of the subject take place not only in the world of immediate experience, the 'world of immediacy', they also thrust the subject into another world, 'a world mediated by meaning and motivated by values'.[206]

These conscious operations of the subject also relate him or her to other persons, and this gives rise to 'intersubjectivity'. The human person emerges from within an 'inter-subjective matrix' which is constitutive of all 'social' and 'cultural' living.[207] Such intersubjectivity, which Lonergan sees as the 'formal constitutent' of community, becomes the carrier of shared meaning and value. 'Community', it might be noted, is not just 'an aggregate of individuals within a frontier', since meaning, its formal constituent, demands a common field of experience, where subjects share a common or at least complementary way of understanding, and when they make common judgments and have common aims.[208]

The study of the human subject in historical existence is the study of oneself in as much as one is conscious. It attends to operations that are characteristic of and have their centre and source in the self. Cognitional and volitional activity not only deals with 'objects', but also 'reveals the subject and his activity'.[209] The subject is a substance that is present to itself, that is conscious. Here one is not dealing with logical essence and substance, Lonergan says, but with the subject and what he or she has to be, or to become.[210] It is the unfolding of human consciousness, and especially the break-through

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[204] Ibid., pp. 320-322.
[205] *Method*, pp. 7-9.
[206] Ibid., pp. 28, 30-31, 35, 76-77, 89, 92-93, 95-96, 112, 221, 238-9, 262-4, 303
[207] Bernard Lonergan, "Belief: Today's Issue", *A Second Collection*, pp. 87-100 (91).
[208] *Method*, pp. 356-7; and, Bernard Lonergan, "Dialectic of Authority", *A Third Collection*, pp. 5-12.
[209] *Topics*, p. 81.
[210] Ibid., p. 83.

to intellectual consciousness, that makes humans 'human', Lonergan adds.[211]

Lonergan's account of the developing subject rests firmly on a description of the human subject with respect to the differentiated and interrelated operations of consciousness already mentioned. Human consciousness is seen as operating on different levels, the empirical, the intellectual, the rational, and the level of self-consciousness.[212] It is important to remember that, for Lonergan, 'we are subjects, as it were, by degrees'.[213] The distinct and related levels of consciousness he regards as an instance of 'sublation', of a lower being retained, preserved, yet transcended and completed by a higher.[214]

> Human intelligence goes beyond human sensitivity, yet it cannot get along without sensitivity. Human judgment goes beyond sensitivity and intelligence yet cannot function except in conjunction with them. Human action finally, must in similar fashion both presuppose and complete human sensitivity, intelligence, and judgment.[215]

## The Recovery of the Subject

Lonergan argues that it has become necessary to recover a true sense of the subject, an absolute requirement if one is to use the person as the starting point for philosophical and/or theological reflection on education. He believes that 'neglect of the subject' characterised much Catholic thinking in the past.[216] That playing-down of the importance of the subject, Lonergan attributes to a number of factors including an over-emphasis on the 'objectivity of truth', and a 'metaphysical account of the human soul' that, focusing on its potencies, habits, and acts, through which the essence of the soul is known, invited understanding of its actions in the same objective manner.[217] The study of the subject that Lonergan calls for is, he stresses, 'quite different' because it is the 'study of oneself inasmuch as one is conscious', and it prescinds from the classical objective ways of looking at the soul, for example, the soul, in 'its essence, its potencies, its habits, its faculties', for 'none of these is given in consciousness'.[218] The subject whom Lonergan urges us to study attends to operations of knowing and doing, refers them to 'their centre and source which is the self', and is able to discern different

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[211] Bernard Lonergan, "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness", *A Third Collection*, pp. 169-183 (170).
[212] *Topics*, p. 81.
[213] Bernard Lonergan, "The Subject", *A Second Collection*, p. 80.
[214] Ibid., p. 80.
[215] Ibid., p. 80.
[216] Ibid., pp. 69-86.
[217] Ibid., pp. 70-73.
[218] Ibid., p. 73.

levels of consciousness, to which appropriate attention must be given in the interests of development.[219]

The 'self', for Lonergan, means 'a concrete and intelligible *unity-identity-whole*'.[220] The self is characterised by 'acts of sensing, perceiving, imagining, inquiring, understanding, formulating, reflecting, and judging'.[221] It is worth noting that while Lonergan's sense of the self contrasts, on the one hand, with Aristotle's notion of the individual, constituted by matter and form, and seeking its fulfilment in the realisation of innate potentialities, it is not, on the other hand to be identified with the predominant modern notion of the self as a socially constructed agent. The self is the subject who is aware of himself or herself operating consciously and intentionally at different levels, whose consciousness and awareness expands in new dimensions in the ascent from mere experiencing, to understanding, to judgment, and decision.

Lonergan's notion of the subject, who is neither 'truncated', 'immanentist', nor 'alienated' appears to be an attempt to mediate between metaphysical models of the self that no longer enjoy wide acceptance, and a plethora of contemporary models that tend to reduce self either to 'a mind' or 'a body'.[222] Notions of the self today are largely socially constructed (often based on ethnic, social and racial identity) and education has to be re-aligned and designed to promote these new identities. In the face of this, as Aidan Seery has observed, education is tempted to retreat from the traditional task of self formation and to confine itself to a largely instrumental role and declining to dwell upon or question the goals to which prevailing educational methodologies seem to be directed.[223]

As Lonergan worked out the implications of operating at different levels of consciousness his intentionality analysis led him to make a clean break with 'faculty psychology'.[224] A transition 'from faculty psychology to the flow of consciousness', Lonergan declared, must necessarily be executed before one turns to the central

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[219] Ibid., p. 73.
[220] *Insight*, p. 319.
[221] Ibid., p.319.
[222] Bernard Lonergan, "The Subject", *A Second Collection*, pp. 73-75, 75-79, 85-86. Lonergan applies these descriptors to the various ways in which the subject is misunderstood through insufficient attention being paid to consciousness.
[223] Aidan Seery, "Education, the formation of self and the world of Web 2.0", *London Review of Education*, Vol. 8, No. 1, pp. 63-73.
[224] *Method*, pp. 340-343.

question of human development and the growth of the human subject as understood from the point of view of historical consciousness.[225] Lonergan gradually ceased to speak of intellect and will, and referred instead to the second, third, and fourth levels of conscious intending, that is, to the subject's intelligent grasp, critical reflection, and evaluation and commitment. His reason, Lonergan says, is that 'intellect and will are not given directly to consciousness', and he thus prefers to speak of 'the conscious, intending subject' rather than of the 'soul'.[226] There is nothing wrong with faculty psychology as such, Lonergan admits, but 'it is not enough for our present purposes', because 'it does not take us near enough to the concrete', the only context in which one can in reality speak of development.[227]

Education, including the Catholic tradition of educational thought, as recently highlighted in the CCE discourse, has long been considered as having some part to play in the formation, or promotion, or 'construction' of the self and in the development of self identity. Lonergan writes that the task of education is 'constructing a world of meaning and value' and 'finding something to do in the world', or, as one might say, discovering a 'vocation' in the world.[228] Speaking of what he refers to as 'active methods in education', Lonergan declares that the 'element of fundamental truth' in these methods is the perception that 'education helps the subject *to construct his own world*' by means of 'a broadening of horizons'.[229]

Since Lonergan believes that education helps subjects to construct their own world by a process he denotes as 'a broadening of horizons', it is imperative that one should appreciate what he understands by this notion, and how he envisages the process might be achieved to secure the 'development' of the human subject and thereby to promote the human good as a whole.[230] Briefly, 'horizon' is a notion upon which rests Lonergan's idea of development within 'the intellectual pattern of experience' generally.[231] Horizon envisages 'a whole mentality, a whole climate of thought and opinion, a whole mode of approach, and procedure, and judgment'.[232] All human

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[225] *Topics*, pp. 82-84.
[226] Bernard Lonergan, *A Second Collection*, p. x.
[227] *Topics*, p. 83.
[228] *Topics*, pp. 133-135.
[229] *Topics*, p.104. The emphasis is Lonergan's own.
[230] *Topics*, p. 104.
[231] *Method*, pp. 29, 286.
[232] Bernard Lonergan, "Theology in its New Context", *A Second Collection*, pp. 55-68 (56)

knowledge, Lonergan states, occurs within a horizon, a context, a total view, an all-encompassing framework, a *Weltanschaaung*, and apart from that context, it loses sense, significance, and meaning.[233] Lonergan considers that 'broadening of horizon' is brought about by an appeal to 'fundamental potentialities' of the subject, such as the capacity for self-transcendence, and the authentic or genuine realization of human personality through self-transcendence, which occurs through and within the various modes of experiencing, understanding, judging , and deciding.[234]

Lonergan's views on education's role in the formation of the subject might seem to be vulnerable on the one hand to the charge that he simply continues, as has been the case in the past, to promote a formation that is a moulding of the self within a pre-existing ideological framework. The educational processes of empirical observation, rational thought and reasoned judgment that he advocates appear to operate within more or less traditional bodies of knowledge. On the other hand, Lonergan's insistence that learners be encouraged to construct their own world and their own reality could conceivably be interpreted by others as a commitment to 'constructivism'.

Two considerations are in order, perhaps, both to understand Lonergan's intention correctly, and to defend him from being over-hastily dismissed either as having nothing particularly innovative to offer in respect of the over-arching aims of Catholic education, or rejected on the alterative grounds of having an overly constructivist view of learning that would threaten the foundational purpose of the Catholic school. Firstly, one needs to be aware that, in Lonergan's view, the philosophical thinking required to articulate the process of the development of the human subject is simply not available in the absence of a radical 'transition' in Catholic thinking about education and it is primarily with respect to this that much of his thought has been concerned. Secondly, with regard to the charge of being overly 'constructive', sometimes levelled at him, it is possible to offer a defence of Lonergan, to the effect that it is his respect for the authentic subject's development, and in recognition of the pattern of the recurrent and related operations of experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding, which comprise human knowing, and enable the subject progressively to construct his or her world, that he is convinced of the need to place the developing subject at the heart of his

[233] Bernard Lonergan, "The Future of Christianity", *A Second Collection*, pp. 149-164 (162).
[234] Bernard Lonergan, "The Response of the Jesuit as Priest and Apostle in the Modern World", *A Second Collection*, pp. 165-187 (169-170).

theory of learning.

## Development, the Intellectual Pattern of Experience, and Education

For Lonergan, 'development' is a general principle fundamental to the meaning of human existence and as such is clearly relevant to philosophical reflection on the meaning and purpose of education understood as the process of the development or formation of human subjects. Lonergan's interest in *Topics* is focused on the intellectual pattern of experience and 'cognitive' development, so his presentation of the notion of 'development' here is less general than in the much wider framework of *Insight*. There, Lonergan wished to construct a comprehensive theory of development that would have universal application and account for every aspect of human existence.[235] His objective was 'to offer a single integrated view' of development, and his account would 'take its stand upon the structure of human knowing'.[236] In *Topics*, however, Lonergan is primarily interested in the emergence and growth of the intellectual level of consciousness, where we 'inquire, come to understand, express what we have understood, work out the presuppositions and implications of our expression'.[237]

Education is inextricably caught up with processes that occur on all levels of human development. Lonergan clearly identifies the numerous features that comprise the process of development but is adamant that what makes humans 'human' is the advent of intellectual consciousness.[238] While there are organic, physical and psychological aspects to human growth and development, in the field of education and philosophy of education, the emergence and growth of insight becomes centrally important. Lonergan's fundamental concern centres on the issue of personal growth and development insofar as that pertains to the process of knowing and the differentiation and transformation of one's consciousness that occurs as a result of the various operations of cognitional structure.

Obviously, all the patterns of experience (aesthetic, biological, dramatic, intellectual) are pertinent to the study of education and the articulation of a philosophy of education.[239] Nevertheless, Lonergan appears to privilege intellectual inquiry and the

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[235] *Inight*, p. 434; *Method*, p. 138.
[236] *Insight*, p. 479.
[237] *Method*, p. 9.
[238] *Insight*, p. 470.
[239] Ibid., pp. 181-189, 251, 268, 385.

intellectual pattern of experience in education.[240] This being the case, however, it is as well to note in passing that education has a more holistic brief than intellectual development, a fact of which Lonergan was aware, but which has not prevented criticism of his work as being overly intellectualist because of his apparent omission from consideration of the affective dimension of consciousness.[241] Lonergan's primary concern is to point out how cognitive development is intimately connected with the occurrence of insight.[242]

The 'principal illustration' of the notion of development is 'human intelligence', Lonergan constantly affirms.[243] Intellectual development, he insists, 'rests upon the dominance of a detached and disinterested desire to know'.[244] When this desire to know is adverted to and allowed to arise, insights are produced that accumulate and coalesce in diverse ways, within the varied patterns of human experience. Such insight and understanding may, of course, be subject to 'bias' of different kinds, and this is where, for Lonergan, judgment, whether about fact or value, becomes a crucial activity.[245] This 'pure desire', according to Lonergan, invites the subject 'to become intelligent and reasonable', not only in his knowing but also in his living. It encourages him 'to guide his actions by referring them as an intelligent being to the intelligible context of some universal order that is or is still to be'.[246]

In the context of his lectures on education and philosophy of education, Lonergan justifiably devotes greater attention to the intellectual pattern of experience.[247] All patterns of experience potentially undergo development, but it is in reference to the intellectual pattern of experience that Lonergan specifically addresses the question of human development in *Topics*. Lonergan sources his account of the intellectual pattern of experience from the general framework already provided in *Insight*.[248] The intellectual pattern of experience, Lonergan believes, echoes the wonder that Aristotle

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[240] Ibid., pp. 185-186.
[241] The problem is addressed by Lonergan in *Method*, where he puts considerable stress on feelings and emotions and clearly identifies this dimension as part of empirical consciousness. See, *Method*, pp. 9, 30. He also discusses feelings and emotional states as a component of the human good, with particular reference to their relationship to intentionality, values and symbols. See, *Method*, pp. 31, 37-38.
[242] *Insight*, p. 458.
[243] Ibid., p. 458.
[244] Ibid., p. 493.
[245] Lonergan provides an extensive treatment of the meaning and effects of 'bias'. See *Insight*, pp. 191-203, 218-222, 222-225, 225-242.
[246] Ibid., p. 473.
[247] *Topics*, pp. 86-88.
[248] Ibid., pp. 186-9, 251, 268, 385.

spoke of as the beginning of all science and philosophy.[249] In this pattern of experience, 'consciousness is dominated by wonder, by the pure desire to know, by intellectual detachment and impartiality'.[250] The intellectual pattern of experience is concerned with knowledge, understanding, and truth. Lonergan, importantly however, qualifies the 'purely intellectual pattern' as 'intermittent' even in the most intellectual persons. It is 'not the whole of life', but it is 'an important, because guiding and directing, part'.[251] Moreover, he adds, not only is it 'intermittent', if one attains it at all, but 'attainment of it and acceptance of that are not universal'.[252]

Self-knowledge makes a person's living become 'authentic' and through authentic living subjects develop, Lonergan submits. Personal development involves constant fidelity to the transcendental precepts of sustained attentiveness, a constant effort to be intelligent, a striving after reasonableness, and perseverance in making responsible decisions. Development of this kind makes possible an on-going self-transcendence, which, in turn, calls for intellectual, moral and religious conversion.

Intellectual conversion, which enables one to distinguish between the real and the imaginary, depends on the subject's ability to answer three basic questions: 'What am I doing when I am knowing?' (cognitional theory question), 'Why is doing that knowing?' (epistemological question), 'What do I know when I do it?' (metaphysical question).[253] Moral conversion, demanding a constant scrutiny of one's response to the good of value, serves to orientate the subject to what is good and to the valuable. Religious conversion, arising out of religious experience, is intensely intersubjective in character, and demands a response from the subject on the level of, not just understanding and deliberation, but of deed and action. As Lonergan expresses it, the New Testament is not just 'a religious document that calls for religious living', but also 'a personal invitation that demands an appropriate response of a personal commitment' to the person of Jesus Christ as God Incarnate.[254]

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[249] Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, I, 2, 982b 12-18 – 983a 12-18.
[250] *Topics*, p. 87.
[251] Ibid., p. 89.
[252] Ibid., p. 89.
[253] Bernard Lonergan, "The Origins of Christian Realism", *A Second Collection*, pp. 239-261 (241).
[254] Bernard Lonergan, "Christology Today: Methodical Reflections", *A Third Collection*, pp. 74-99 (84).

# IV

## *Topics in Education:* An Exemplar of Lonerganian 'Transposition'.

In *Topics in Education* Lonergan provides us with a concrete exemplification of what is involved in the transposition of Catholic philosophy of education, that is, in the effort 'to shift and lift' the tradition of Catholic educational thought into a more adequate theoretical and contemporary context by developing the potentiality of the tradition while remaining true to its essence. The notion of 'transposition' employed here is one suggested by an early attempt by Lonergan to delineate what might be involved in the modernisation of Catholic social thought, and its use can be satisfactorily justified in the light of the evidence contained in *Topics*. Brown has analysed Lonergan's approach to the transposition of Catholic social thought and his account, *mutatis mutandis*, proves to be a remarkably good template for the kind of transposition Lonergan envisages for Catholic philosophy of education. [255]

It is entirely legitimate, I would argue, to adopt a range of thematic concepts and a process of argument identified by Lonergan as being required for transposition of Catholic social thought, and to use these themes and that process as instruments for an analysis of what might be implicated in the transposition of Catholic educational thought as indicated in *Topics*. There is no internal contradiction involved here because of the basic underlying similarity and relatedness of Catholic social and educational thought and, indeed, the historical evolution of both bodies of Catholic thought display significant parallels and a degree of overlap. By adapting and using for the present purpose the categories identified by Brown in his study of Lonergan's efforts to transpose Catholic social thought, much light may be shone on the phenomenon of transposition in *Topics*.

On three fronts Lonergan, in the course of these lectures on education, highlights the fundamental transitions in thinking and approach that he considers absolutely necessary for the successful transposition of Catholic educational thought. Such a transposition requires effectively that Catholic educational thought be restated in a wider and deeper philosophical, technical, and historical context. In each instance, Lonergan insists that

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[255] Patrick D. Brown, *Aiming Excessively High and Far*, pp. 620-644 (627-628, 633, 641).

the way forward lies in the employment of his intentionality analysis that holds equally for reflection on education and philosophy of education, as for all dimensions of human knowing.[256]

## Transposition in Philosophical Context

Firstly, from a philosophical point of view, Lonergan explains that educators must become aware of how the very idea of learning and understanding has changed from that which flourished in a classical age. The shift in emphasis to the human subject has been accompanied by the opening up of new vistas of intellectual inquiry and the development of new methodologies of study. The 'new learning' - in mathematics, science, philosophy, art and history - which he depicts in successive lectures, embodies an introduction to a vastly expanded panorama of human knowledge and a new mode of understanding that calls for deep reflection.[257]

In his lecture on 'the theory of philosophic differences', Lonergan notes that in his experience educators by and large tend to be 'sceptical' about the philosophy of education, because 'there are so many and they all differ'.[258] Yet, he claims, one of the great 'utilities' of a philosophy of education is that it will provide 'ultimate criteria for judging the truth and estimating the value' of the enormous volume of material that is written for educators.[259] Lonergan does not relate his position to any of the well-known approaches to philosophy of education of the day, whether it be a pragmatic, idealist, or realist perspective, but is rather more concerned to trace the causes of the differences between competing philosophies which, for him, basically concern different views of self-understanding, of the nature of reality, and of the nature of knowledge. Lonergan infers that it is only in terms of his cognitional theory and epistemology that 'an effective means of understanding and evaluating different approaches to basic questions of human life and existence' is forth-coming.[260]

Lonergan's primary philosophical concern, 'to transpose the statements of philosophers and metaphysicians to their origins in cognitional activity', is as evident in *Topics* as it

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[256] *Topics*, p. 131.
[257] Ibid., pp. 127-131.
[258] Ibid., pp. 158-192.
[259] *Topics*, pp. 158-159.
[260] Ibid., pp. 176-192.

is in his whole body of philosophical thought.[261] A notion that demands transposition as a matter of priority, Lonergan maintains, is the metaphysics of development and of the human person, for there is, he notes, a radically new method of answering the old question, What is man? [262] Today many new and diverse kinds of knowledge and understanding of human nature are available from the natural and human sciences, and from different philosophies, to provide an answer to that question. What is urgently required, however, is a synthesis and higher integration of the whole process and finality of human development. Lonergan cautions, though, that not every philosophy is capable of adopting a 'position' on the nature of human existence that is in harmony with that which arises out of his analysis in terms of the basic levels of cognitive operations (experiential, intellectual, rational and reflective). Indeed, some rather end up in a 'counter-position' that involves 'a blind spot or limited horizon', where the limitation occurs at either the intellectual or experiential level.[263]

A genuine function of philosophy of education, Lonergan concludes, is to bring the 'horizon of the educationalist' out of and beyond the kind of 'private world' he considers, with or without justification, many educators to be living in, and to accompany them into the 'universe of being'.[264] Lonergan believes that, with regard to the philosophy of education, a 'fundamental problem' is the horizon of the educationalist and the teacher, since these horizons are 'insufficiently enlarged'.[265] Educators need to become aware that, consequent upon the 'new learning' in mathematics and science, a remarkable shift in understanding the nature of knowledge has occurred and this has fundamental implications for the philosophy of education. The shift to the human subject has opened up new vistas of intellectual inquiry. A shift in focus from the objects of knowledge to the operations of the knowing subject is noteworthy, and with this, the idea of learning has been completely transformed from that assumed in Scholastic theory.[266]

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[261] *Insight*, p. xii.
[262] Ibid., pp. 469-479.
[263] *Topics*, p. 179. See, *Insight*, pp. 387-390, 484-489, 495-500, 557-558, for Lonergan's notions of 'position' and 'counter-position'.
[264] *Topics*, p. 106.
[265] *Topics*, p. 106.
[266] See *Topics*, "Mathematics and the New Learning", pp. 108-132; "Science and the New Learning", pp. 132-157.

## Transposition and the Technical Context

Secondly, contemporary Catholic educators must attend to the apparent 'dearth of technical information and knowledge' that frequently characterises Catholic educational discourse. It was Lonergan's view, Brown notes, that in common with other areas of Catholic dialogue with the contemporary world, Catholic education's deficit of a technical dimension must be considered its 'greatest weakness'.[267] Lonergan illustrates the point and attempts to make good the deficiency by his frequent reference to the work of Jean Piaget.[268] Lonergan is adamant that there needs to be 'a vast enlargement of the theoretical horizon' of Catholic educational philosophy.[269] This enlargement will need to be accompanied by a similar effort to fully integrate the natural and human sciences into a transformed educational theory. Both an empirical and theoretical framework is essential for the reconstruction of Catholic philosophy of education.[270]

Lonergan on more than one occasion draws attention to the relative weakness of the theoretical component in Catholic educational thought. By his estimate, Catholic educational thought is not yet up to the level of the times to the extent that it lacks adequate technical knowledge of educational theory, and of social and political theory.[271] It is also not yet up to the level of the times to the extent that it lacks some way of 'collaborating in the on-going generation, refinement, evaluation, and diffusion' of such theories throughout the field of education.[272] Here, however, there may be a real problem for philosophy of education since, as it attempts to integrate the human sciences, it can hardly be expected to be reduced to playing the classic 'handmaiden' role that philosophy once played to theology. For Lonergan, philosophy will best assist Catholic educational thought if it 'takes the form of an empirical and critical philosophy' in continuity with the tradition, yet also on the level of the times.[273]

Furthermore, developments in the natural and human sciences, as well as in historical studies, have produced a 'new and distinct problem of integration', Lonergan reckons, as witness the range of contemporary studies available for an understanding of human

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[267] Patrick D. Brown, *Aiming Excessively High and Far*, p. 628.
[268] See, for instance, *Topics*, pp. 37-38, 99-100, 119-121, 168-170, 193-207.
[269] *Aiming Excessively High and Far*, pp. 631-632.
[270] Ibid., pp. 638, 640.
[271] *Aiming Excessively High and Far*, p. 628.
[272] Ibid., p. 628.
[273] *Aiming Excessively High and Far*, p. 641.

beings for instance.[274] It is no longer the human being as the 'pure nature' of Scholastic definition, but the concrete human being as 'concretely developing and declining in historical process' that is investigated by the scholars today.[275] Lonergan, nevertheless, reminds us that in principle the problem of integration, despite the scale and sheer difficulty of the contemporary task, is 'not wholly without precedent', as Aquinas's use of Aristotelian philosophy as 'an integrating instrument' should remind one.[276]

Lonergan appears to be exemplifying one way in which the relative weakness of the theoretical component in Catholic philosophy might be addressed by his widespread reference to the work of Jean Piaget. In his lecture on "Piaget and the Idea of General Education" Lonergan devotes the bulk of his time to a discussion of cognitive development in the child according to Piagetian theory and seeks to spell out the relevance of this theoretical component for Catholic philosophy of education. [277] Piaget's work is in the first place, for Lonergan, further evidence of the subjective turn in understanding in the human learning process. Lonergan also considered aspects of Piaget's notion of development useful in explaining what he called 'active method' in education, in understanding the origin and development of moral ideas in children, and in an analysis of how reality is perceived as the infant comes to encounter the world of objects and makes the transition from the world of immediacy to the world mediated by meaning.[278]

**Transposition and Historical Context**

Thirdly, 'thinking on the level of history' is a key feature of what Lonergan understands by 'transposition' and it is what he is attempting to introduce into his development of a Catholic philosophy of education. That single phrase, 'to mount to the level of one's time', writes Frederick Crowe, is one that perhaps better than any other sums up the driving force of Lonergan's whole career.[279] As an innovative theorist, Lonergan regarded as the 'sin of backwardness' the actions of those cultures, authorities, and

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[274] Ibid., p. 641.
[275] Ibid., p. 641.
[276] Ibid., p. 641.
[277] *Topics*, pp. 193- 207 (193-203).
[278] Ibid., pp. 104-105, 99-100, 168-170. For the significance of the transition to a 'world mediated by meaning', see *Method in Theology*, pp. 28, 30-31, 35, 76-77, 89, 92-93, 95-96, 112, 221, 238-39, 262-64, 303.
[279] Frederick E. Crowe, *Lonergan*, p. 58.

individuals that 'fail to live on the level of their times'.[280] Throughout *Topics* Lonergan describes in many different ways how Catholic education and its philosophy must attempt to climb into modernity. To the extent that Catholic philosophy of education lacked sophistication and influence in contemporary times, its predicament most likely derived from a failure to 'operate on the level of our day'.[281]

Reflection on history is 'one of the richest, profoundest, most significant things there is', not only in the sphere of education, but throughout human life, Lonergan believes.[282] Lonergan develops a complex dialectical theory of history in *Insight*, but one that is too detailed to enter upon here. In historical process, Lonergan contends, man becomes for man 'the executor of the emergent probability of human affairs'.[283] Lonergan alleges that how history is conceived is 'a problem', and he argues that the solution to the problem is to realise that the three basic operations of consciousness lead to three different modes of organizing history and three different types of under-pinning philosophy, notably, the empiricist, the idealist, and the realist.[284] These different philosophical positions give rise to different kinds of history.

Lonergan argues that a scientific approach to history will incorporate the two-fold 'scissors-like action' that characterises all science. One movement occurs 'from below upward' (the 'lower blade'), that is, from the historical data upward through the possibility of understanding to judgment and knowledge, while the other occurs, in the reverse direction 'from above downward' (the 'upper blade'), that is, from judgment or knowledge to an understanding of the data of experience.[285] For Lonergan, data alone 'lack significance'; while principles and key ideas alone 'lack reality'.[286] It is by the coming together of these two movements that all science, including the science of history, is developed. The structure of human consciousness is such that the search for understanding and insight in history (as elsewhere) operates by an interplay of data and theory, of experience and ideas and allows intelligibility to be grasped and given articulation. History is ultimately a matter of insight, that is, insight as it unfolds on the level of understanding and of judgment.

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[280] Bernard Lonergan, "Dialectic of Authority", *A Third Collection*, pp. 5-12 (8).
[281] *Method*, p. 367.
[282] *Topics*, p. 233.
[283] *Insight*, p. 227.
[284] *Topics*, p. 238. See also, *Insight*, pp. 312-13, 522-23, 577-87.
[285] Ibid., pp. 251, 255-256.
[286] *Topics*, p. 251.

If Lonergan's remark, that all his work has been 'introducing history into Catholic theology', is true, it is unlikely that he could have desisted from a similar activity in the case of Catholic philosophy of education.[287] We must expect to see in the philosophy of education that Lonergan aspires to, as in every phase of authentic human development, and every moment of human history, an emphasis on the operations of human consciousness striving toward insight, constructing understanding and achieving knowledge, as a result of two contrasting vector forces, acting from below and from above.[288] Frederick Crowe has offered a theoretical foundation for education based upon these two complementary vectors of learning that reflect Lonergan's interiority analysis and provide a theoretical foundation for education.[289]

# V

## Summary: Lonergan's 'New Bases' for a Catholic Philosophy of Education

Lonergan's declared aim in *Topics* was that of articulating and establishing new 'bases for a philosophy of education'.[290] I conclude this chapter by attempting to evaluate his achievement in this regard insofar as it concerns the overall task of giving new expression to Catholic philosophy of education. Two general conclusions in relation to Lonergan's philosophy of education have become clear. Firstly, while the scope of Lonergan's educational vision becomes evident in *Topics*, many of its details remain to be filled out from elsewhere, particularly perhaps from his major works *Insight* and *Method in Theology*. Lonergan, even at the conclusion of his lecture series, does not claim to have provided here a fully adumbrated Catholic philosophy of education. Secondly, it becomes possible to envision, at least in general terms, how, in the field of the philosophy of education, Lonergan's overall design of 'transposing' Catholic thought into 'a more contemporary and adequately theoretic context' might be achieved for Catholic education, through some 'new effort of analysis and synthesis while

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[287] Frederick E. Crowe, "All My Work Has Been Introducing History Into Catholic Thought",pp. 78-110. In: *Developing the Lonergan Legacy: Historical, Theoretical, and Existential Themes*, Michael Vertin (ed), Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004.
[288] See Bernard Lonergan, "Healing and Creating in History", *A Third Collection*", pp. 100-112.
[289] Frederick E. Crowe, *Old Things and New: A Strategy for Education*, Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1985.
[290] *Topics*, p. xii.

preserving its basic elements'.[291]

What Lonergan intended ultimately was that the Catholic philosopher of education, the 'educationalist', and the teacher, should 'broaden their horizons' and find a new foundation for their discipline in 'interiority' and in the turn to the subject.[292] The 'genuine function' of a philosophy of education, we noted Lonergan remarking above, is 'to bring the horizon of educators to the point where they are not living in some private world' of teachers, but 'in the universe of being'.[293] His enterprise in articulating a Catholic philosophy of education on this basis would be a clear-cut example of thatmost urgent dynamic to which he devoted his life's work, namely, the 'transition from a classicist world-view to historical mindedness'.[294]

Lonergan's articulation of the 'new bases' for a Catholic philosophy of education would not appeal to deductions from logically derived first principles, notes Frank P. Braio.[295] Rather, he would invite us to rely on 'a constructive kind of intelligence', capable of following the gradual assembly of all the elements into an enriched and deepened view of concrete educational activity [on all levels]'.[296] Lonergan wished to show how the new philosophical foundations he proposed for philosophy of education, 'ranging over and dynamically relating to the moving viewpoints' of several widespread fields of study, are 'methodologically accessible through reflection'.[297]

The question to ask now is whether, in *Topics*, Lonergan has indeed bequeathed us a substantial account of Catholic philosophy of education. An answer to that question must first of all acknowledge that, because of the necessarily limited scope of the present thesis, selections of Lonergan's lectures have had to be made and the focus of this study has not been in any case on a comprehensive assessment of this early educational work of Lonergan. It is hoped that the material selected is both fair and representative of the author's views and permits an accurate estimation to be made of his contribution to the re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education.

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[291] Patrick D. Brown, *Aiming Excessively High and Far*, p. 622
[292] *Topics*, p. 106. Lonergan describes the 'educationalist', somewhat disparagingly, I think, as 'the person or group that has the power and the money, that runs the bureaucracy, that makes the decisions'.
[293] Ibid., p. 106.
[294] Bernard Lonergan, "The Transition from a Classicist World-View to Historical-Mindedness", *A Second Collection*, pp. 1-10.
[295] Frank P. Braio, "Towards the Re-Horizoning of Subjects: Re-Structuring Classical-Modern Educational Perspectives", *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies*, Vol. 13, 1995, pp. 99-109 (101).
[296] *Topics in Education*, p. xii.
[297] Ibid., p. 101.

Lonergan has astutely and trenchantly identified several respects in which Catholic philosophy of education is in need of re-articulation and, in particular, has argued how, in the context of contemporary educational need, its philosophical foundations need strengthening. Thus, he correctly insists that, a medieval foundational viewpoint, insofar as it still exercises any influence at all in the field of Catholic educational practice, is an inadequate basis for a vibrant contemporary educational philosophy. As traditionally interpreted, a Thomist- Aristotelian philosophy of education which is unprepared to introduce changes to its foundational emphases, cannot incorporate or complete the 'turn to the subject'. This, in Lonergan's view, is critically important for modernity. Neither can such an un-reformulated philosophy successfully integrate contemporary understanding of learning across a range of disciplines or enthusiastically embrace a methodology that reflects real movement from 'classicism to method'.

Lonergan faced the philosophical problem of how the relationship between theory and practice is to be redrawn. For Lonergan, the aim of philosophy is self-knowledge and self-appropriation. As William Shea interprets Lonergan, if the relation between theory and practice is to be comprehended, 'one must understand what one does when one theorizes *and* when one acts', and that sort of knowledge, in Lonergan's view, can only be attained through 'a critical mediation and appropriation of one's own cognitional, evaluative, and decisional processes or operations'.[298] If we accept a premise of Lonergan's 'generalized empirical method', then, as one analyses the data of sense, so one can analyse the data of consciousness.[299] To uncover what one does when one knows, values, and acts and to take responsibility for it is the effective reconciliation of theory and practice. To reconcile theory and practice in reality, Lonergan would claim that intellectual, moral and religious conversion is required.[300]

For Lonergan, education itself is an instance of 'praxis', the norms of which are the transcendental imperatives of attentiveness, intelligence, reasonableness, and responsibility.[301] Philosophy of education has as a primary task the educating of educators in transcendental method and the use of intentionality analysis. Its aim must be to work out the educational implications of transcendental method. Lonergan intends philosophy of education to be a 'critical' praxis in two senses. It is critical insofar as it

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[298] William M. Shea, "From Classicism to Method: John Dewey and Bernard Lonergan", pp. 302-303.
[299] *Insight*, pp. 72, 243-44.
[300] Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Theology and Praxis", *A Third Collection*, pp. 184-201.
[301] Ibid., pp. 11-12, 20, 53.

heightens the possibility of self-criticism as it aims at self-understanding and self-appropriation, and at the intellectual and moral development of authentic subjects. Education is also 'critical', in the original sense of judgment, of culture and tradition. Lonergan understands education as a reflective review of tradition. Education is not a passive acceptance of tradition but a critical appropriation of it.[302]

Lonergan, as Shea interprets him, engaged in a contest with 'a Catholic educational system with philosophy and theology at its apex', that was 'devoted to neo-scholastic formalism and conceptualism', to Aristotelian and Thomist 'logical analysis as its methodological ideal', and to an understanding of 'truth as supra-empirical, static, and unchanging'.[303] In this context, Lonergan is to be credited with attempting to promote the move from 'classicism' to 'method' in Catholic philosophy of education by providing an interpretation of what this transition involves in terms of basic philosophical perceptions and highlighting its significance for our understanding of the practice of education.

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[302] William M. Shea, "From Classicism to Method", pp. 314-315.
[303] Ibid., pp. 314-315.

**Chapter Four: Toward a Re-Articulation of the Catholic Tradition of Educational Thought from the Perspective of Terence H. McLaughlin (1949-2006)**

Terence H. McLaughlin is the third of the scholars to whom this dissertation turns for guidance in the matter of the re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education for our times. Unlike Maritain, a selection of whose work has been examined in chapter two above, McLaughlin does not offer for our consideration any substantive body of metaphysical doctrine in the Thomist-Aristotelian tradition of Catholic educational thought. To the extent that this tradition is represented in McLaughlin's work, it is left largely unarticulated and in the background. Neither does McLaughlin adopt as key elements in his philosophical analysis of Catholic education the cognitional theory and transcendental method of Lonergan, discussed in chapter three of this dissertation. McLaughlin has been chosen as a significant scholar to be studied in the present context, because it is judged that his analytical approach provides a powerful means of appraising and clarifying key concepts and claims of the inherited perennial discourse that would be subject to assessment in any re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education. Likewise, in relation to Lonergan's subject-centred, cognitional discourse, McLaughlin's espousal and subtle use of *phrónēsis* bears a close relationship to elements of Lonergan's conception of the nature and structure of insight. McLaughlin, finally, is considered in relation to the discourse of the Congregation for Catholic Education (CCE) on the Catholic school and Catholic education, as a discerning and reliable guide in the conversation, or dialogue, between discourses that this dissertation wishes might be commenced, or encouraged, as one strand in the overall task of the re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education.

In this chapter, therefore, an attempt is made to summarise and evaluate selected aspects of McLaughlin's work that might be considered directly relevant to the task of the re-articulation of a Catholic philosophy of education. In particular, it is intended to focus on McLaughlin's analytical methodology and on what shall be termed his 'phronetic paradigm', two aspects of his work that can rightly be regarded as distinctive features of his philosophy of education. Several facets of both the content and methodology of McLaughlin's work are of interest in relation to the re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education, but reflection here is in the main limited to his analytical study of terms and concepts regarded as central to an understanding of the theory of Catholic education, and to his promotion of *phronēsis*, or 'practical wisdom', in the exercise of judgment and deliberation in the context of its practice.

Many specific areas of the content of McLaughlin's work, perhaps especially the bulk

of his reflections in relation to the 'common school', are of a generally important nature and deserving of detailed study in their own right but are not centrally relevant to the more limited objectives of this dissertation. Gerald Grace has identified three major themes in McLaughlin's study of 'faith schooling', among them his 'analysis of the distinctiveness of Catholic education' as a particular form of faith schooling.[1] This theme of the distinctiveness of Catholic education is the one considered most relevant in the present context, although the other themes identified by Grace, namely, a discourse on parental rights and the religious upbringing of children, and a defence of faith schools as a legitimate feature of liberal, pluralistic and democratic societies, remain as important to Catholic educators today as ever.[2]

What is of more direct interest in the present context is McLaughlin's understanding of the nature of the philosophy of education as such, and his employment of analytical methodology and phronetic thinking in relation to a selected range of issues, including aspects of Catholic education and schooling that constitute its 'distinctiveness'. His attempts to clarify the meanings of the terms used to describe the nature and specificity of Catholic education and to map out the logic of the concepts which these terms embrace is noteworthy. Undoubtedly also of special relevance in the context of this thesis is his 'phronetic paradigm', an understanding of which might in some way provide an enhanced theoretical foundation for the more visionary, narrative account of Catholic philosophy of education recently provided by the CCE.

A study of McLaughlin's work, however limited, may help to reveal his capacity to marry his critical reflection with his thoughtful pedagogical tact in his study of education. This is of particular importance in working out what might have been his more developed response to the re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education, had he lived long enough to undertake such a task. Together, his critical analysis and practical reflection provide a very measured response to the CCE body of literature which he considered to be 'a rich source of Catholic educational principles' needing, however, 'interpretation and elaboration', if 'an adequate account' is to be provided.[3]

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[1] Gerald Grace, "Terence McLaughlin: Contributions to the study and practice of faith schooling and of Catholic education". In Graham Haydon (ed), *Faith in Education: A Tribute to Terence McLaughlin*, pp. 1-8 (1), London: Institute of Education, University of London, 2009.
[2] Ibid., p. 1.
[3] Terence H. McLaughlin, "The Distinctiveness of Catholic Education", in: Terence McLaughlin, Joseph O'Keefe, & Bernadette O'Keeffe (ed.s), *The Contemporary Catholic School: Context, Identity and*

The present chapter, therefore, will be concerned mainly with outlining McLaughlin's version of analytical philosophy of education and offering a faithful account of the 'phronetic disposition' which is so distinctive of his insightful study of educational theory and practice.

In the first section, McLaughlin's analytical approach to the philosophy of education is summarised and an indication is given of how he so practised the art that he was able to avoid, or over-come, much of the criticism of analytical philosophy that had come to be directed at it. McLaughlin's analytical philosophy of education, it will be argued, holds out significant promise for the re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education in relation to the clarification and justification of central elements, concepts and claims, of the tradition.

In section two, McLaughlin's understanding and employment of the Aristotelian notion of *phrónēsis*, and specifically, the notion of *pedagogic phrónēsis*, a term he made his own, and which is a key element for understanding what he envisages as the nature of philosophy of education in relation to practice, is introduced. Necessarily limited for the most part to a recent collection of his essays, his exposition of the concept and methodology he describes regularly in quite different contexts as 'pedagogic *phronēsis*', is explored.[4] From a study of selected instances of his usage of the term throughout this collection of essays it is hoped to gain some sort of basic appreciation of McLaughlin's 'phronetic thinking' and 'phronetic paradigm', or 'approach', to the role of philosophy of education in relation to theory, practice, and policy in education.

In section three, an attempt is made to collate from a number of sources what can be established of McLaughlin's substantive Catholic philosophy of education. An effort to identify what McLaughlin appears to have considered as some of the central elements of a Catholic philosophy of education is required, as is a response to his call for the development of 'a distinctively Catholic version' of the notion of 'pedagogic *phronēsis*'.[5] It is suggested that McLaughlin's Catholic 'phronetic paradigm', or

*Diversity*, London and New York: RoutledgeFalmer, 1996, pp. 136-154 (137-138). Hereafter cited as: *The Contemporary Catholic School*.

[4] David Carr, Mark Halstead, & Richard Pring (eds.), *Liberalism, Education and Schooling: Essays by T.H. McLaughlin*, Exeter, UK: Imprint Academic, 2008. Hereafter cited as: *Liberalism, Education and Schooling*.

[5] Terence H. McLaughlin, "Distinctiveness and the Catholic School: Balanced Judgement and the Temptations of Commonality", pp. 65-87 (86). In: James C. Conroy (ed.), *Catholic Education: Inside Out, Outside In*, Dublin: Veritas, 1999.

'practical wisdom' approach, may be important for two reasons, namely, for the re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education in a postmodern and pluralist context and, more specifically, in terms of bridging the gap between much contemporary philosophizing in education and the visionary, narrative account of Catholic education latterly provided by the CCE, where principles of Catholic philosophy may be embedded in non-philosophical texts designed for purposes other than philosophical reflection.

# I

## T. H. McLaughlin, Analytical Philosopher of Education

David Carr and his co-editors declared that T.H. McLaughlin was 'one of the most widely regarded and influential philosophers of education of his generation', a judgment from which even those minimally acquainted with his writing would surely not demur.[6] A scholar of the 'highest intellectual integrity', whose 'awareness and commitment to clarity and truth' motivated him to seek clarification of 'some of the deepest and most vexed conceptual issues of contemporary professional educational practice', is the fitting tribute they pay to McLaughlin.[7] His work contains evidence of 'a lifelong professional commitment to the ideal of common schooling', as well as an insightful treatment of faith based schooling, these writers conclude, and reflects his struggle to reconcile what he, as a devout religious believer, regarded as 'educationally valuable in both forms of schooling'.[8]

McLaughlin, Gerald Grace tells us, was 'shaped and formed academically' by the culture of philosophy of education established at the University of London's Institute of Education by Richard Peters, Paul Hirst, John and Patricia White, and others.[9] McLaughlin shared with these scholars and others known to him through his avid reading 'a commitment to a view of education in which democratic values, personal autonomy and critical openness held centre stage'.[10] The philosophical approach in

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[6] *Liberalism, Education and Schooling*, p. 1.
[7] Ibid., p. 2.
[8] Ibid., p. 2.
[9] http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/ceppa/obituaries/mclaughlin.html. Accessed, 28/08/2013.
[10] Mark Halstead, "Obituary, Professor Terence H. McLaughlin", *Journal of Moral Education*, Vol. 35, No. 3, Sept., 2006, pp. 433-435.

question is characterised by Grace as being concerned with a conception of education, which focused on matters such as the 'autonomy of the individual', the 'development of democratic citizens' and the 'significance of critical reason in education'.[11] Broadly speaking, this was the analytic approach to philosophy of education that would have a decisive influence on McLaughlin's thinking and writing.

Another influence on McLaughlin's life and work, apparently fitting in comfortable tension with his liberal, democratic principles, was his Catholicism. Mark Halstead judges that, in a sense, McLaughlin's 'life's mission was to search for a way of bringing these two into harmony'.[12] Grace thinks that McLaughlin, as a result of the Catholic culture in which he lived, had 'a personal project of making connections between faith and reason'.[13] His personal faith was undoubtedly a matter of importance to McLaughlin and Catholic social and moral principles shaped his personality and world-view from childhood. As already mentioned, McLaughlin had an interest in Catholic schooling, an interest that was primarily philosophical but not entirely so. He was therefore concerned to explore a range of issues arising in the context of British society (and elsewhere), such as the charge that Catholics schools are divisive or indoctrinatory. McLaughlin participated actively in the debate about whether parents have the right to bring up their children in their own faith, and whether children's growth towards eventual autonomy is helped or hindered by a religious up-bringing.[14] He rejected the view that 'a secular form of liberal education is the only defensible educational experience in modern society'.[15]

## McLaughlin's Account of Analytical Philosophy of Education (APE)

One might more accurately refer to McLaughlin's accounts (plural) of APE since it is a topic the principal features and evolving nature of which he was frequently at pains to bring his audiences and readers correctly to understand and appreciate. Four such accounts are available in his published papers between 2000 and 2004. These are: (1) "Diversity, Identity and Education: Some Principles and Dilemmas";[16] (2) "Philosophy

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[11] http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/ceppa/obituaries/mclaughlin.html
[12] Mark Halstead, "Obituary, Professor Terence H. McLaughlin", p. 434.
[13] http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/ceppa/obituaries/mclaughlin.html
[14] ibid.
[15] http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/ceppa/obituaries/mclaughlin.html
[16] Terence H. Mc Laughlin, "Diversidade e identidade", in: Adalberto Dias de Carvallo et al. (ed.s), Actas de la Conferencia Internacional de Filosofia da Educacao, pp. 123-140, Porto, 2000. See footnote 20 below for the English Version.

and Educational Policy: Possibilities, Tensions and Tasks";[17] (3) "Education, Philosophy and the Comparative Perspective";[18] (4) "John Wilson on Moral Education".[19] Emphasis varies slightly from paper to paper as one would expect depending on the audience being addressed and the precise nature of the topic under discussion. Together, however, these essays give a comprehensive account of McLaughlin's understanding of analytical philosophy of education, as well as providing us with exemplary specimens of the method in action. It is not my intention to convey the contents of these accounts in full, but rather to make a judicious selection of the main features of APE as McLaughlin articulated it and to record the powerful manner in which he employed APE to address matters of educational substance and importance.

## Three features of APE

In a paper delivered to an international conference on the philosophy of education in Lisbon, in 2000, Mc Laughlin, faced with a range of different philosophical traditions, the existence of which he was already well aware, thoroughly understood and welcomed as partners in dialogue, while witnessing the different styles of argument and methods of approach to the major conference theme, availed of the opportunity carefully and succinctly to outline his own style of argument and method of approach, typical of a philosopher of education working from the perspective of analytical philosophy.[20] According to McLaughlin, three general features characterise analytical philosophy's approach. These are: (1) APE's concern with questions of meaning and justification; (2) its insistence on beginning to philosophise from the particularity of the situation or question, and (3), a distinctive style and/or methodology.

## Concern with Questions of 'Meaning' and 'Justification'

Firstly, philosophers of education working within the analytic tradition are inclined, McLaughlin avers, to react to 'high-level' statements and claims by 'asking what the statement *means*' and then, by engaging in argumentation, to 'determine the extent to

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[17] Terence H. McLaughlin, "Philosophy and Educational Policy: Possibilities, Tensions and Tasks", *Liberalism, Education and Schooling*, pp. 14-34.

[18] Terence H. McLaughlin, "Education, Philosophy and the Comparative Perspective", *Liberalism, Education and Schooling*, pp. 35-47.

[19] Terence H. McLaughlin and J. Mark Halstead, "John Wilson on Moral Education", in: *Journal of Moral Education*, Vol. 29, No. 3, 2000, pp. 247-268.

[20] Terence H. McLaughlin, "Diversity, Identity and Education: Some Principles and Dilemmas", Conference Paper, pp. 123-140, Porto, 2000. Hereafter cited as: "Diversity, Identity and Education".

which the statement is *justified*.[21] A concern with 'questions of meaning and justification' are, therefore, central to the analytic approach to philosophy. McLaughlin characterises the analytical approach to philosophy of education as being 'suspicious of unduly general statements and claims' and in search of 'more fine-grained and detailed argument and debate'.[22] The analytic approach to philosophy of education, in McLaughlin's opinion, tends to begin its work, not from 'general statements or theories', but from 'specific questions and problems'. It constantly seeks 'fine-grained and detailed argument and debate' so that attention to questions of meaning and justification might 'act as an antidote to undue generality'.[23]

What McLaughlin claims here regarding APE's argumentation and debate not being generally 'couched at very high levels of generality', and being 'suspicious of unduly general statements and claims', is highly reminiscent of the view of his erstwhile master, R.S. Peters, who declared that 'it was not the function of professional philosophers to provide high-level directives for education or for life'.[24] Whether or not McLaughlin also shared fully the view that contemporary philosophers of education should more properly 'cast themselves in the role of under-labourers in the garden of knowledge', I suspect that he was always aware of the 'modest role' philosophical reflection is able to play in the complexity of educational practice and policy making.[25] To 'lay bare those high-level, aristocratic pronouncements', long taken for granted as the 'proper role' of philosophy of education, by subjecting them to the 'analytic guillotine', is how Peters expressed the task of APE.[26] McLaughlin would certainly accept Peters' assertion that 'the disciplined demarcation of concepts, the patient explication of the grounds of knowledge and of the presuppositions of different forms of discourse' had rightly become the 'stock-in-trade' of the analytic philosopher.[27]

Israel Scheffler, another analytical philosopher who had a marked influence on McLaughlin's thinking, offered an analysis of three different kinds of what he termed 'educational locutions', namely, educational 'slogans' (such as, 'teaching children, not

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[21] Terence H. McLaughlin, "Diversity, Identity and Education", p. 124.
[22] Ibid., p. 124.
[23] Ibid., p. 124.
[24] Richard S. Peters, *Ethics and Education*, London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1966, p. 15.
[25] "Philosophy and Educational Policy", *Liberalism, Education and Schooling*, p. 18. Here McLaughlin gives two reasons why he considers that the contribution philosophy can make is 'modest'.
[26] *Ethics and Education*, p. 15.
[27] Ibid., p. 15.

subjects'), educational 'metaphors' (such as, 'education as growth and development'), and educational 'definitions' (such as, descriptions of key educational terms, like 'curriculum', 'ethos', and so forth), the aim of which was to produce the kind of clarity that would allow a serious logical appraisal of these types of educational speech.[28] Thus, distinguishing between literal slogans that are common in educational discourse and their significance in actual practice is important if the meaning intended by the slogan is to be properly appraised. A similar situation would prevail for educational metaphors and definitions, to all of which Scheffler brought insights from the philosophy of language then current in his attempt to analyse educational concepts and practice.

McLaughlin's identification of a range of issues, concepts and claims, and his elaboration and clarification of the meaning of these concepts and the justification of these claims, follows a broadly similar pattern to that of Scheffler's work. The results can be seen throughout McLaughlin's work, though one might wish to single out such classic essays as, "Education of the Whole Child?"[29], "Beyond the Reflective Teacher"[30], and "The Educative Importance of Ethos"[31], because of their relevance in the present context. These three essays show the care with which McLaughlin approached his work in the precise and clear interpretation of the key terms 'wholeness', 'reflection', and 'ethos', respectively. Two other essays, of particular importance with respect to Catholic education, may also be mentioned in this connection, although detailed discussion of their contents and significance is best left until section three of this chapter. The essays in question are: "Distinctiveness and the Catholic School: Balanced Judgment and Temptations of Commonality"[32], and "The Distinctiveness of Catholic Education".[33]

This latter essay, on the distinctiveness of the Catholic school, is an excellent example

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[28] See Israel Scheffler, *The Language of Education*, Springfield: Charles C. Thomas, 1960.
[29] Terence H. McLaughlin, "Education of the Whole Child?", *Liberalism, Education and Schooling*, pp. 48-59.
[30] Terence H. McLaughlin, "Beyond the Reflective Teacher", *Liberalism, Education and Schooling*, pp. 60-78.
[31] Terence H, McLaughlin, "The Educative Importance of Ethos", *British Journal of Educational Studies*, Vol. 53, No. 3 (Sept., 2005), pp. 306-325.
[32] Terence H. McLaughlin, "Distinctiveness and the Catholic School: Balance Judgment and the Temptations of Commonality",pp. 65-87. In: James C. Conroy (ed.), *Catholic Education: Inside-Out, Outside-In*, Dublin: Veritas, 1999; and, *Liberalism, Education and Schooling*, pp. 199-218.
[33] Terence H. McLaughlin, "The Distinctiveness of Catholic Education", pp. 136-154. In: *The Contemporary Catholic School: Context, Identity and Diversity*, Terence McLaughlin, Joseph O'Keefe SJ & Bernadette O'Keeffe, Abington, Oxon: RoutledgeFalmer, 1996.

of this first feature of the analytical approach to philosophy of education, that is, the focus on clarification, as outlined above. Here McLaughlin argues that the sort of 'clarity' which is needed in relation to the distinctiveness of Catholic education needs to 'go beyond the *edu-babble*', that 'imprecise and platitudinous rhetoric, offering educators a spurious clarity in the form of slogans'.[34] More especially, McLaughlin asserts, 'sustained attention to questions of the meaning and justification' of central concepts and claims are needed, together with an attempt to 'delineate an overall substantial framework of Catholic educational thought'.[35] McLaughlin identifies several issues that he considers worth studying from the perspective of a Catholic philosophy of education committed to this forensic-like analysis of key concepts and terms, among them 'the aims of education, the personal autonomy of the individual, moral education and education in religion'.[36]

A cursory comparison of the contemporary analytic philosopher's approach with that of Maritain, for instance, might lead us to suspect that Maritain would be a likely figure to be included by R. S. Peters among those who 'took it for granted that the philosophy of education consisted in the formulation of high-level directives which would guide educational practice'.[37] As has been pointed out, however, in discussing Maritain's critique of the aims and processes of education, Maritain's approach of 'distinguishing in order to unite' (*distinguer pour unir*) also involved an exercise of 'analysis', not of common language usage as such, but an examination of concepts and themes for the purpose of eventually integrating them in 'synthesis'.[38] Maritain believed that he was following in the footsteps of Aquinas for whom the making of distinctions was an integral part of his methodology and analytical style of argumentation. Maritain's commitment, too, was rooted in his desire, directed toward truth and wisdom for its own sake, to clarify the meaning and to justify the truth of his statements about both God and man. Maritain could no doubt direct us to the logic of analogy so widely used by Aquinas to instance the centrality of clarification and justification in his thinking.

Lonergan, too, as has been noted, called for an all-out effort of analysis and synthesis in order to transpose Catholic philosophy of education into a new and more adequately

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[34] T.H. McLaughlin, "The Distinctiveness of Catholic Education", p. 138.
[35] Ibid., p. 139.
[36] Ibid., p. 139.
[37] R.S. Peters, *Ethics and Education*, London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1996, p. 15.
[38] See, Jacques Maritain, *The Degrees of Knowledge*, London: Geoffrey Bles / The Centenary Press, 1937.

theoretic context.[39] Activities of clarifying and justifying in Lonergan's case arise out of, and belong within his understanding of cognitional structure, that dynamic on-going process of questioning and answering, focusing on understanding, developing reflective judgment, and responsible decision-making, that constitutes human knowing. This triad of questions, for intelligence, for reflection, and for responsibility, as has already been noted, is an integral part of the structure of intentional activity. Human knowing for Lonergan is not a threefold compound of unrelated operations but a single, simple act in the field of consciousness, where three events come together and are constitutive of our knowing. These events are, firstly, the given-ness of the data, the objective of our research; secondly, a cumulative series of insights into the data, which respond to questions for intelligence and yield a hypothesis; thirdly, a probable judgment on the adequacy of the insights.[40] Synthesis for Lonergan is profoundly a matter of reflective judgment, just as analysis is the acquisition of intelligent insight and understanding into the data of consciousness. There is a sense in which these operations comprise one unified whole integral to the process of all human knowing.

While there are distinct echoes in McLaughlin's work of Maritain's strategy of 'distinguishing in order to unite', and of Lonergan's 'analysis and synthesis for the purpose of transposition', McLaughlin's analytical discourse allied with his phronetic approach (discussed below), provides the Catholic philosopher of education with a uniquely powerful instrument for the clarification and justification of the concepts and principles of Catholic education in contemporary society.

**On Not 'Beginning from the General'**

A second feature of analytical philosophy of education that McLaughlin underlines arises out of his observation of how frequently there is a marked tendency for arguments and debates in the field of education to begin from discussions of the work of classical, authoritative philosophers (Aristotle, Plato, Aquinas, Kant, Hegel, etc.) and traditions of thought. Only subsequently does much philosophy of education begin to address 'more directly educational questions', and this is achieved often through 'a kind of *application* of the insights of such thinkers to these questions'.[41] For McLaughlin, the analytical tradition of philosophy of education 'tends to approach things the other way

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[39] Bernard Lonergan, "The Future of Thomism", *A Second Collection*, pp. 49-52.
[40] Bernard Lonergan, "A Post-Hegelian Philosophy of Religion", *A Third Collection*, pp. 204-211.
[41] "Diversity, Identity and Education", p. 124.

around', that is to say, one begins with 'the directly educational questions' and 'seeks their appropriate *illumination* from the resources of broader philosophical argument'.[42]

McLaughlin reports how APE has 'an aversion to grand-scale accounts of the nature of reality', which perhaps underlies its reluctance to begin to philosophise from classic theories of education that claim to have a generalized validity.[43] McLaughlin agrees with Peters in acknowledging the reasons why it should be 'thought incumbent upon the philosopher to produce high-level directives', since the questions addressed frequently have 'a high-level or second-order character'.[44] APE, nevertheless, expresses its dislike for, or at least its disinclination, to conceive philosophy of education in terms of a theory, or a tradition, which understands philosophy as offering 'an account on the grand scale' of the nature of reality, the place of human beings within it, and the implications of all this for 'how people should comport themselves in the world and towards one another'.[45]

McLaughlin records Peters' dissent from a conception of philosophy, and philosophy of education, as an activity 'offering high level directives'. He might equally well have referred us to Scheffler, whose philosophy of education has been compared to that of Peters, and who exercised a profound influence on McLaughlin's own thinking, especially in regard to the role of reason in education. In what was one of the first accounts of analytical philosophy of education, Scheffler offered a conception of philosophy of education as 'the rigorous, logical analysis of key concepts related to the practice of education'.[46] For Scheffler, as for Peters, philosophy of education consists, not in 'narrative recounting of grand theory', but in 'logical analysis', understood as 'careful attention to and sophistication concerning the language, and the inter-penetration of language and inquiry', which attempts 'to follow the modern example of the sciences in empirical spirit, in rigour, in attention to detail, in respect for alternatives, and in objectivity of method'.[47]

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[42] Ibid., p. 124.
[43] T. H. McLaughlin, "Education, Philosophy and the Comparative Perspective", *Liberalism, Education and Schooling*, pp. 35-47 (36).
[44] Ibid., p. 36.
[45] "Education, Philosophy and the Comparative Perspective, p. 36. McLaughlin here cites D.E. Cooper, *World Philosophies. An Historical introduction*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2003a, p. 2.
[46] Israel Scheffler, "Towards an Analytical Philosophy of Education", *Harvard Educational Review*, Vol. 24, 1954, pp. 223-230.
[47] Ibid., p. 223.

Two problems would seem to ensue for the Catholic educator from this analytic perspective on and understanding of philosophy of education. Firstly, it raises the question of how valid Maritain's approach of 'applying Thomistic general principles to concrete situations' might be considered to be, and how such application makes his approach 'philosophical'. More fundamentally, it causes one to wonder how in the analytical perspective it is possible to have a Catholic philosophy of education at all, if it cannot draw upon its tradition of educational thought, which is in essence a tradition of 'high level directives or principles', to articulate the relationship between theory and practice. The first of these questions can be commented upon briefly at this point; the second problem, now, of course, aggravated by postmodernism's 'incredulity towards meta- narrative', its opposition to any kind of foundationalism, essentialism, or realism, and its rejection of all transcendental arguments, standpoints and principles, must of necessity await discussion until later in this chapter as well as in chapter five below.[48]

The contrasting strategy of 'analysis' and 'application' adverted to by McLaughlin is perhaps nowhere better illustrated than in the case of the traditional method of approach and style of argument represented in Maritain's work that was discussed in chapter two above. It will be recalled how Maritain begins from an elevated understanding and theory of the nature of the human person that is derived from the Thomist-Aristotelian tradition, and seeks to employ this conceptual tool to distinguish between true and false understandings of the aims of education. Maritain's Thomistic anthropology is first appealed to, including Aquinas's account of the powers of the human soul, of intellect, will, and free will, and statements about aims and processes of education are measured against this yardstick.

Maritain's essay, "Thomist Views on Education", in addition to *EC (1943)*, commented upon at length above, illustrates very clearly his methodology of identifying and invoking philosophical principles and addressing practical situations to which these pre-existent, and pre-formulated Thomist principles can be 'applied'.[49] Maritain describes it as 'advisable' to draw a clear 'distinction' between 'basic philosophical issues on which theories of education depend', and the questions of a more practical nature which bear

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[48] See, Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984.

[49] Jacques Maritain, "Thomist Views on Education", pp. 57-62. In: *Modern Philosophies and Education*, The Fifty-fourth Yearbook of the NSSE, 1955, Nelson B. Henry (ed). Hereafter cited as: "Thomist Views on Education".

on 'concrete application and the technique of education'.[50] His view of philosophy of education seems to envisage the two disciplines, philosophy and education, as separate activities, where it is the prerogative of the former to inform the latter. Maritain perceives three sets of principles, metaphysical, epistemological, and axiological principles, which underlie all questions concerning 'the basic orientation of education'.[51] His view of philosophy of education would seem to be diametrically opposed to that of Dewey, for whom the discipline is 'not an external application of ready-made ideas to a system of practice having a radically different origin or purpose'.[52]

Maritain's double movement, of 'analysis' and 'application', is operated on the basis of being able to call upon an established body of principles and concepts that he considers to be valid for all times and places. He refers to the 'basic philosophical issues on which theories of education depend', which in his case is the Thomist system of educational thought and what he considers to be its educational implications.[53] Situations and problems may be in need of clarification, but there is no need for justification at the level of principle, for principle, in his opinion, being derived from more ultimate considerations, is unchanging and universally valid and can be applied directly to each situation. A method of approach that first seeks clarification of the meaning of terms and principles through linguistic analysis, and justification of the relevance or truth claims of a statement or principle, before being applied to a certain state of affairs, is not the approach that appealed to Maritain and Catholic philosophy of education generally before the 1960s. Maritain was insistent on what he regarded as the logical connections or implications for educational theory and practice of Thomist metaphysical, epistemological and axiological principles and did not question the validity of their application to concrete situations.

From our perspective today, Maritain might be considered to have failed to explain what it might mean for a philosophical position to have logical implications, or necessary consequences, for the theory and practice of education. In this matter his philosophy of education was perhaps no different from that of other major schools or systems of philosophy such as realism, idealism, pragmatism, and so on, in that he

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[50] Ibid., p. 57.
[51] Ibid., pp. 57-67.
[52] John Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, p. 386.
[53] Bernard Lonergan, "Thomist Views on Education", p. 57.

assumed that one's philosophic position should make a fundamental difference in considering educational matters. J.J. Chamblis points out that, in taking a philosophical position as foundational to his philosophy of education, Maritain, in common with other philosophers who contributed to the *Fifty-Fourth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education* (1955), appears to ignore Dewey's admonition that philosophy of education is not an application of philosophical theory to educational practice.[54]

Randall Curren argues that developing and applying a set of beliefs about human existence and education might be a 'sufficient condition' for regarding work in education as 'philosophical', but it would not be a 'necessary condition' today, given developments in educational research and analysis that do not appear to rely on some general philosophical position but have, nevertheless, opened the way to different ways of conceiving the philosophy of education.[55] The discussion, raised by Curren, of what it means for philosophy of education to be the kind of study of education that should be regarded as 'philosophical', although it cannot be pursued here, is interesting and relevant in the context of categorising the CCE discourse on Catholic schooling and education. Here it is necessary to have some clarity about the degree to which this discourse may, or may not, be termed philosophical before arriving at a conclusion about the extent to which the philosophical basis of that discourse is in need of enhancement.

Likewise, the theory-practice relationship in education, and specifically the rejection of the traditional bifurcation of theory and practice and the construal of practice as mere application of theory, which arises out of a consideration of Maritain's philosophy of education from an analytic perspective is a matter in need of further discussion and attention is given to this matter in section three of this chapter. McLaughlin's essay, "Beyond the Reflective Teacher", is useful in providing a better conceptualisation of the relationship between rational action and theoretical knowledge as a result of more developed and sophisticated reflective thinking.[56]

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[54] J. L. Chambliss, "Philosophy of Education Today", *Educational Theory*, Vol. 59, No. 2, 2009, pp. 233-251 (249).

[55] Randall Curren (ed), *Philosophy of Education: An Anthology*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007, pp. 1-4.

[56] See, Terence H. McLaughlin, "Beyond the Reflective Teacher", *Liberalism, Education and Schooling*, pp. 60-78.

## An Issue of 'Style' and/or 'Method'

A third feature of the analytic approach to philosophy of education, according to McLaughlin, is that the preoccupation of this approach with questions of meaning and justification already mentioned leads to an emphasis upon 'a form of argumentation' which emphasises *inter alia*

> (i) the clarification and analysis of concepts, premises and assumptions, (ii) the consideration of counter examples, (iii) the detection and elimination of defects of reasoning of various kinds, (iv) the drawing of important distinctions, (v) a concern to identify and address directly philosophical considerations rather than those of other kinds, (vi) a particular spirit of criticism and (vii) the structured development of an argument leading to the establishment of clear conclusions which aim to be (in some sense) true, interesting and important.[57]

It scarcely needs remarking that this kind of analysis is completely absent from the recent, officially endorsed CCE documentation in its entirety. This should neither surprise us, given the special nature, origins and purposes of this body of literature (about which much more will be said in chapter five below), and nor does it automatically devalue them. The CCE discourse is not an academic, scholarly undertaking in a narrow sense but a largely pastoral theological exhortation, a calling to mind of statements of general principle and intended purposes, very much akin to the literature that embodies Catholic social teaching. Here, there is presentation of central concepts and leading philosophico-theological principles, and statements of Catholic position, but positions are not generally arrived at by argument, nor is there a prolonged critique of contrary positions. There is little or no acknowledgment of specialist writers or sources upon which the editors of the documents have most likely drawn, other than perhaps citation from traditional authoritative Church sources and previous ecclesiastical authorities and publications on aspects of Catholic education and schooling.

Given the nature and purpose of the CCE discourse, however, it does not follow that its non-analytical character deprives it of all value since it is clearly the case that human communication is by no means limited to an analytical mode, nor is it to be totally identified with that particular phase or operation of knowing. Lonergan, in his analysis of the emergence of 'stages of meaning', has criticised the kind of linguistic analysis that reduces the function of philosophy to 'working out a hermeneutics for the

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[57] "Diversity, Identity and Education", p. 125.

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clarification of the local variety of everyday language', or regards it as 'a somewhat technical form of common sense', insisting that philosophy finds its proper data in 'intentional consciousness' and its primary function in 'promoting the self-appropriation that cuts to the root of philosophic differences and incomprehensions'.[58] There is no question of McLaughlin's analytical thinking coming under Lonergan's stricture, however, for he clearly accepts Lonergan's differentiation of consciousness into different realms of meaning, including, for example, the realms of common sense with its meanings expressed in everyday or ordinary language, and the realm of theory where language is technical and refers to the subject and his operations in a purely objective way.[59]

## The Evolution of APE and a Response to its Critics

McLaughlin has always been perfectly open and honest about possible or real shortcomings and limitations of the analytic tradition of philosophy of education and is fully aware of the critiques that have been made of this approach. He is particularly sensitive to the difficulties that might be occasioned by this approach in situations where it is important to engage in dialogue with philosophers of education from other traditions and where it is necessary to converse with educators and teachers non-versed in the arts and skills of pure philosophical reflection. In two further accounts of the salient features of analytical philosophy of education McLaughlin is keen to point out to the evolutionary path the method has traversed over the years, and how it has sought to meet its critics and continue to claim an essential role in philosophy of education.

McLaughlin has carefully traced the trajectory of APE in a way that makes abundantly clear the high value he places upon this methodology and the reasons for his preferring it to other conceptions of philosophizing. In "Philosophy and Educational Policy: Possibilities, Tensions and Tasks", McLaughlin describes how it is possible to distinguish 'an earlier and a later phase' in the analytic tradition, the earlier phase being characterized by 'certain preoccupations and methodological commitments' which later became 'less prominent' within the perspective of the broader focus of the subsequent phase.[60] In the early period, the analytic approach was applied to the 'clarification of

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[58] Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, pp. 94-95.
[59] Bernard Lonergan, *Method*, pp. 254-257.
[60] Terence H. McLaughlin, "Philosophy and Educational Policy: Possibilities, Tensions and Tasks", *Liberalism, Education and Schooling*, pp. 21-22.

concepts distinctive to education' and the 'delineation of philosophically interesting connections between them'.[61] It included 'a critique of currently influential educational theories in terms of the 'philosophically problematic concepts and claims' they contained.[62] It considered the application of philosophical analyses to 'educationally relevant concepts' and, more generally, it specified the conditions for 'the application of the resources of epistemology, philosophical psychology, ethics and social philosophy' to educational concerns.[63]

McLaughlin indicates how, in retrospect, this earlier period of the analytic tradition in philosophy of education came to be seen as 'rather narrow in the character and focus of its concerns and methodology'.[64] By restricting itself to 'the clarification of concepts', the 'exploration of the grounds of knowledge', the 'elucidation of presuppositions' and the 'development of criteria for justification', its critics emphasized the 'second-order' character of much of its philosophical activity and the lack of the development of 'substantive argument' as they understood it.[65] The extensive range of criticism of this earlier phase of APE included charges that it was 'inattentive to the history of ideas', seeing ideas and values as apparently 'independent of social and cultural context', and that it aspired to 'a spurious value-neutrality' and was 'uncritical about its own assumptions and values'.[66] APE in the first phase also came to be regarded as wrong in 'reading too much into a mere analysis of concepts' and in its implication that ordinary language use provides 'an unassailable court of appeal in determining meaning'.[67]

McLaughlin does not consider in any detail whether these lines of criticism were justified, either in whole or in part. As always in the course of the development of ideas, there were instances of overstatement and even misunderstanding and McLaughlin draws attention to the charge that the approach claimed to be value-neutral as one such misunderstanding.[68] Nevertheless, dissatisfaction and frustration among both its practitioners and critics about the role of APE, and in particular its 'inability to make any real impact upon the determination and improvement of educational practice and

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[61] "Philosophy and Educational Policy, p. 22.
[62] Ibid., p. 22.
[63] Ibid., p. 22.
[64] Ibid., p. 22.
[65] Ibid., p. 22.
[66] Ibid., p. 22.
[67] Ibid., p. 22.
[68] Ibid., p. 23.

policy', necessitated a development of both key elements and the methodology of analytical philosophy of education and this in time gave rise to a second, or later phase, of the enterprise.[69] Even the founding fathers of the movement (like R.S. Peters) McLaughlin reports, came to recognise the 'limitations' of the earlier period and to draw attention to its 'shortcomings', such as, for example, 'the failure of much analysis to attend to the social and historical background' and to be explicit about 'the view of human nature which analysis presupposes'.[70]

McLaughlin carefully outlines the key features and enhanced nature of the 'later phase' of the analytical approach to the philosophy of education, seeking to show that, while 'retaining a commitment to a broadly analytic approach', APE in its later phase is characterized by 'a broadening of approaches, concerns and sensitivities', and 'a movement towards the more normative and practical concerns of applied philosophy'.[71] The particular elements that McLaughlin chooses to identify as part of this development include a willingness 'to move beyond second-order clarificatory concerns' and to 'develop substantive arguments in favour of particular positions'; a willingness 'to engage with directly practical matters'; a concern with 'thicker and more substantive concepts' such as those relating to well-being and virtue; a 'concern to articulate the nature of the person, of human flourishing, and of the place of reason in human life'; and a greater 'attention to the cultural and political frameworks within which concepts and practices are located'.[72]

**Amenability of APE to Catholic Educational Practice**

McLaughlin makes clear the respects in which the later phase of the analytical tradition is 'more amenable' to application to educational concerns than its earlier counter-part. He notes especially how it 'frees the philosopher to make a less technical and a more flexible', as well as a 'more substantive and tangibly constructive', contribution to educational debate and practice.[73] This is a matter of crucial importance in philosophizing about education in the Catholic tradition. This tradition, despite the disinclination of the analytic tradition generally to understand philosophy as offering any grand scale narrative of any kind, would appear to be obliged to, as D.E. Cooper

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[69] "Philosophy and Educational Policy", p. 24.
[70] Ibid., p. 24.
[71] Ibid., p. 24.
[72] Ibid., p. 24.
[73] Ibid., pp. 24-25.

puts it, give an account of the nature of reality, and of the place of human beings within it, as they seek meaning and fulfilment in life, and of the implications in this of how people should comport themselves in the world and towards one another.[74] McLaughlin emphasises that the analytical approach is in fact concerned with educational questions which have 'a clear philosophical dimension or resonance', questions, of course, that 'may not be wholly or exclusively philosophical' but do, however, have 'clear philosophical dimensions and implications'.[75]

In his own case, McLaughlin regularly analysed deep and extensive questions of great complexity, of both theoretical and practical concern, such as, for example, the kind of schools a liberal democratic society should favour, and whether this might include schools that based their educative influence on the religious faith of the family. While established, classical philosophers may well have a contribution to make to 'an illumination of these dimensions and implications', the analytical approach to philosophy of education, McLaughlin explains, tends to seek this illumination from 'a prior direct consideration of the questions themselves' before resorting to the knowledge and wisdom of the tradition.[76]

McLaughlin is keen to rebut the charge that philosophers of education in the analytic tradition are 'interested only in language'. He stresses that what is at stake in reality is 'our understandings, beliefs and values' and the clear 'significance they have for human life generally'.[77] McLaughlin never subscribed to the view that analytical philosophy of education works towards some kind of 'neutrality' understood in this sense, where personal beliefs and values are expected to be left out of consideration by the philosopher. McLaughlin is quick to meet the criticism sometimes levelled at APE to the effect that the 'directly educational questions' selected for study by this approach are 'likely to be unduly low-level or practical in nature'.[78]

McLaughlin most likely would have agreed with Paddy Walsh that the ultimate purpose of linguistic analysis is 'to discover embedded patterns in our thought and enquiry

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[74] D. E. Cooper, *World Philosophies: An Historical Introduction*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2003a, p. 2.
[75] "Diversity, Identity and Education", p. 124.
[76] Ibid., p. 124.
[77] Ibid., p. 125.
[78] Ibid., p. 124.

regarding matters like education'.[79] The analytic tradition does not attempt to 'reduce philosophy of education to smaller questions', McLaughlin affirms, holding that this impression arises from a failure to appreciate that what is at issue is 'a question of an appropriate starting point'.[80] A starting-point, however, is by definition a place from which one leaves and both the ultimate destination and the means of getting there have also to be considered.

McLaughlin would also, no doubt, have been aware of the accusation that analytical philosophy made claims upon 'exclusivity', noting with David Carr, 'something of an educational philosophical tendency of late', to associate traditional analytical epistemology with 'outright suppression of alternative voices'.[81] Carr disputes the justice of this particular accusation, as McLaughlin almost certainly would also, but both might agree that in another sense, at least in its early days, 'analytical philosophy has been methodologically exclusive of, if not exactly hostile to other traditions of philosophy'.[82] While convinced that analytical philosophy should not be lightly dismissed, and provided its goals and strategies are clearly understood, McLaughlin would probably have had little trouble in laying aside any suspicion of exclusivity, and admitting that different strategies of analysis from that which he himself practised are available and can, with different emphasis and sense of priority, be legitimately employed in the study of education.

**The Tasks of APE and their Relevance for Catholic Philosophy of Education**

McLaughlin's final description of analytical philosophy of education, which is substantially the same as the earlier accounts given above, helpfully selects for our attention 'four inter-related and over-lapping tasks' to which the discipline commits itself.[83] These tasks offer a convenient framework for the use of analytical philosophy in the field of Catholic philosophy of education. They are first listed here with brief comment, and are then illustrated in relation to aspects of McLaughlin's work considered to be important for the re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education. It will become apparent that the conduct or deployment of these tasks after the manner

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[79] Paddy Walsh, *Education and Meaning: Philosophy in Practice*, London: Cassell, 1993, p. 11.
[80] David Carr, "Contribution to Symposium on Philosophy of Education", *Diversity, Identity and Education*, pp. 181-190. ler.letras.up.pt/uploads/ficheiros/6201.
[81] Ibid., p. 183.
[82] Ibid., p. 183.
[83] T. H. McLaughlin, "Education, Philosophy and the Comparative Perspective", *Liberalism, Education and Schooling*, pp. 37-38.

envisaged by McLaughlin can supply a much-needed analytical dimension to Catholic educational thinking.

Firstly, then, philosophy of education in the analytic tradition, according to McLaughlin, typically engages in 'analysing an educationally significant term or concept, showing its multiple uses and meanings, for the purpose of clarification'.[84] Clarity of meaning, he admits, may not be a sufficient virtue in educational discourse, but it is a necessary one. McLaughlin emphasizes that analysis is not to be seen as merely the 'uncovering of an essential or correct meaning' of a term or concept in some 'putatively value-free way'.[85] Furthermore, it is the 'connective nature' of this kind of analysis, which involves an investigation of how any one concept is often associated with a web of other concepts to which it is logically related, that is of first importance here.[86] Terms and concepts in Catholic education apt for clarification in this way abound in the CCE literature and include the notions of 'integral formation', 'holistic influence', 'synthesis of faith and culture', 'permeation of Gospel values', 'distinctive ethos', 'educative community', to select but a few of the more dominant terms of that discourse.

Secondly, analytical philosophy of education, McLaughlin explains, deploys the clarity achieved in this first phase of its activity to 'critically evaluate' educationally significant terms or concepts, so as to 'identify hidden assumptions, internal contradictions or ambiguities in the usage of the terms', and to 'disclose potential or actual partisan or controversial effects' which a term may have acquired in professional and/or popular discourse.[87] McLaughlin emphasizes that the notion of 'critical evaluation' here indicates that the analytical philosopher is interested not only in clarity but also in 'justification'. It is not enough to clarify the meaning of an educational term or concept; there still remains the task of showing how this term or concept has educational significance, the relevance and value of which can be assessed on the basis of rational argument. The Catholic philosopher of education committed to an analytic perspective must be able, for instance, to explain the reasons why the Catholic school, or Catholic education, claims to be 'distinctive' and to justify this claim in reasoned discussion, say, in regard to the aims of Catholic education.

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[84] Ibid., p. 37.
[85] Ibid., p. 37.
[86] Ibid., p. 37.
[87] Ibid., p. 37.

Thirdly, McLaughlin sees this philosophical, critical evaluation, not simply, or at all, as an academic exercise, but as 'a true analytic evaluation' of education, or educationally significant practices, policies, aims, purposes, functions, theories, doctrines, and 'visions'.[88] Such philosophical reflection in education is notoriously broad in range and depth and will ideally be conducted in a close relationship with other disciplines of enquiry and be open to the experience and insights of those engaged in the practice of education. According to McLaughlin, much educational thinking, policy and practice is not only 'apt for philosophical attention' in the sense just outlined above but actually 'requires it'.[89]

Fourthly, analytical philosophy of education develops 'positive arguments and proposals' concerning the matters in regard to which it seeks clarification and justification, including the philosophical articulation and justification of fundamental educational aims, values and processes.[90] McLaughlin maintains that it is here that the move away from a preoccupation with 'second-order' concerns to more substantive issues in recent times can be most clearly seen.[91] It might also be noted that this emphasis on 'positive arguments and proposals' as an outcome of analysis is intended to counter the criticism sometimes raised in relation to APE, namely, that its effects are overly destructive and forestall progress in the development of argument and the implementation of practice.

In summary, then, McLaughlin believes that the analytical tradition in philosophy of education is 'unified not by shared doctrines' but by a 'range of characteristic methods', or rather by a 'common methodology', the salient features of which can be identified and which have already been outlined above. Whilst philosophy needs to 'adopt a properly modest approach to the contribution it can make' to educational practice, he tells us, educational policy makers must acknowledge the extent to which the content of their work, and the context in which it is undertaken, is 'saturated with assumptions, concepts, beliefs, values and commitments' which, if not of themselves of a philosophical kind, are 'apt for philosophical attention'.[92]

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[88] "Education, Philosophy and the Comparative Perspective", p. 38.
[89] Ibid., p. 39.
[90] Ibid., p. 38.
[91] Ibid., p. 38.
[92] Ibid., p. 37.

## McLaughlin's Analysis of the 'Distinctiveness' of Catholic Education

Although McLaughlin's use of an analytical approach in the study of selected aspects of Catholic education and schooling needs to be examined in much greater detail , it is possible to indicate here in summary form how an analytical perspective such as his might provide a much-needed extra dimension to the re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education. Before concluding this section, therefore, I want to identify very briefly how and where I think McLaughlin's critical analysis might be pertinent for the clarification and justification of educationally significant terms and concepts in the context of a re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education.

Apart from the potential value of his analytical methodology in general as outlined above, McLaughlin has in the course of his work on Catholic education and schooling identified the 'need for the distinctiveness of Catholic education to be clarified', since without such clarity Catholic education will 'lack direction and focus'.[93] McLaughlin argues that a 'shared clarity of educational vision' in Catholic schools is 'particularly needed' and that such clarity should be 'a central element in the complex exercise of judgment and discernment' which must underpin their educational mission in the contemporary world, and not simply a matter of educational effectiveness.[94] Of prime importance in this context is how McLaughlin understands the 'sort of clarity' needed to treat the theme of the 'distinctiveness of the Catholic school', and the distinctive nature of Catholic education that underpins it.[95] He has been at pains to analyse the notion of 'distinctiveness', to scrutinise the validity of the claims made for and on behalf of Catholic schools, and to specify the kind of clarity and justification required.

Negatively, McLaughlin contends that 'imprecise and platitudinous rhetoric', which offers educators a kind of 'spurious clarity', often in the form of 'slogans' mined in a totally 'eclectic way' from educational documents of the Church, and amounting to no more than 'edu-babble', is 'no substitute for sustained thought'.[96] Positively, what is required for the analysis of matters relating to the distinctiveness of Catholic education is 'sustained attention to questions of the meaning and justification of central concepts and claims', together with 'an attempt to delineate an overall substantial framework of

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[93] "The Distinctiveness of Catholic Education", pp. 136-154 (137).
[94] Ibid., p. 137.
[95] Ibid., p. 138.
[96] Ibid., p. 138.

Catholic educational thought'.[97] In effect what is necessary, and what a sympathetic analysis might contribute to, is no less than 'a distinctively Catholic systematic account of the nature and role of education', which would logically lead to a 'Catholic philosophy of education'.[98]

McLaughlin stresses something that is central to the analytic tradition, that is, 'an exploration of the conceptual schemes embedded in our everyday language' by means of 'a form of analysis which is *connective*', in the sense that 'it examines the philosophically interesting connections and relationships between concepts'.[99] McLaughlin understands very clearly the importance of this 'connectivity' between concepts in the study of Catholic education, as well also as the embedded-ness of Catholic educational concepts in the wider belief, tradition and practice of the Church. Two features of the analysis McLaughlin offers are this focus on the interrelatedness of concepts and terms in Catholic philosophy of education, and the attention to be given to the imperative of interpreting Catholic educational principles in appropriate context so that assumptions do not remain hidden and possible ambiguity may be prevented.

McLaughlin selects three specific features that emerge as distinctive for Catholic education from a survey of recent and official Church documents on education and the Catholic school and subjects them to a characteristically rigorous analysis. These features he lists as: Catholic education's 'embodiment of a view about the meaning of human persons and of human life,' its 'aspiration to holistic influence,' and a commitment to 'religious and moral formation'.[100] McLaughlin indicates that a Catholic philosophical perspective on education should be expected to offer a coherent understanding of these three elements; it must be capable of explaining the significance of each and appreciating their mutual interrelationship, and it is imperative that it be able to justify their inclusion in its educational programme.[101]

There are several other related features in the educational corpus of the CCE, in addition to the three McLaughlin has mentioned here, that should similarly seek to satisfy the same demand for clarification, coherence and justification. An assessment of whether the CCE discourse as a whole possesses the necessary philosophical foundations for this

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[97] Ibid., p. 139.
[98] Ibid., p. 139.
[99] "Diversity, Identity and Education", p. 125.
[100] "The Distinctiveness of Catholic Education", pp. 139-145.
[101] Ibid., pp. 148-151.

goal to be achieved must be deferred until an analysis of the principal constituent elements of that discourse is undertaken in chapter five below.

The task of articulating a Catholic perspective on education has a number of complexities and difficulties inherent in it that arise directly out of the context of its origins and nature, McLaughlin believes.[102] Central features relating to the Catholic tradition of faith and life which are of 'particular educational significance' are critically important.[103] These include Catholicism's 'emphasis upon sustained critical reason', its influence by, and attempts to 'respond to modernity', the role which conscience plays within the tradition, and contemporary struggles to extend the 'notion of a Catholic identity' to include groups, practices and beliefs previously seen as marginalised'.[104] McLaughlin correctly observes that while a distinctive Catholic perspective on education 'cannot be read directly and straightforwardly off from the central features of the Catholic tradition of faith and life,' nevertheless, neither can Catholic education be properly understood in the abstract, 'independent of its actualisation in a particular societal context'.[105]

McLaughlin more than once acknowledges that the 'relatively undeveloped state' of a contemporary 'systematic Catholic philosophy of education' is one factor which 'inhibits the fuller articulation' of the characteristic elements that might be considered to comprise its perspective on education.[106] His own sterling attempts to bring an analytical philosophical perspective to bear upon an assessment of the distinctiveness and aims of Catholic education should be judged to make good some of this deficit. In the following section it is hoped to indicate how McLaughlin's 'phronetic disposition', as exhibited in what he terms 'pedagogic *phronēsis*', has the potential to provide a further resource in developing a coherent contemporary Catholic philosophy of education that might be an important resource for the illumination not only of Catholic education, but of education as such.

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[102] Terence H. McLaughlin, "A Catholic Perspective on Education", *Journal of Education and Christian Belief,* Vol. 6, No. 2, 2002, pp. 121-134.
[103] Ibid., p. 127.
[104] "A Catholic Perspective on Education", p. 128.
[105] Ibid., p. 128.
[106] "The Distinctiveness of Catholic Education", p.139.

## T.H. McLaughlin's 'Phronetic Paradigm' and Catholic Philosophy of Education

It is necessary at this point to reflect on the regular and heart-felt invitations and pleas, recommendations and even injunctions, that McLaughlin makes to his audiences and readers, to embrace a 'phronetic disposition', and become engaged in insightful reflection, in respect of important educational issues, problems and dilemmas, for the resolution of which there does not appear to be available ready to hand scientific or technical knowledge. Certainly, it is a feature of much educational practice that was of interest to McLaughlin where, as Joseph Dunne notes, we are presented with 'a problematic situation', to which there is 'no discrete problem with clear-cut criteria for its solution', but rather 'a difficulty or predicament' that calls for discernment and judgment.[107] Faced with such problematic situations, described by Dunne as 'points of intersection for several lines of consideration and priority', where attempts to unravel any one of the strands in the tightly interwoven and complex web, may only introduce greater tangles in the others, McLaughlin, the dedicated analyst, might have been expected to deliberate most carefully, before arriving at a decision that has to be made, in a given set of circumstances.[108] This is the familiar context in which McLaughlin invited educators and others to embrace the Aristotelian virtue of *phronēsis* and, more specifically, to become engaged in an exercise of 'pedagogic *phronēsis*'.

The characteristic approach to educational thinking and philosophy that can be considered to arise from the practice of the virtue of *phronēsis,* which generates 'phronetic insight', discernment, and discrimination, and is conducive to wise and balanced judgment, decision-making and action in educational situations, may be conveniently designated as a 'phronetic paradigm'. It is imperative that some of the key or distinguishing features of McLaughlin's 'phronetic paradigm' be examined if one would do justice to his contribution to Catholic philosophy of education. McLaughlin was obviously familiar with the renewed interest in Aristotle's conception of 'practical wisdom', or 'practical rationality,' that came to be seriously entertained in philosophy

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[107] Joseph Dunne, "An Intricate Fabric: Understanding the rationality of practice", in *Pedagogy, Culture and Society*, Vol. 13, No. 3, 2005, pp. 367-389 (381-382).
[108] Ibid., p. 381.

of education in the decades following the 1980s.[109] Indeed, both in respect of its origins, and attempts at its definition for our times, he would have been acutely aware also of contemporary attempts to recover various features of the notion of *phronēsis* that appeared to hold out promise for the renewal of philosophy of education. More than this, McLaughlin seems to have cultivated a deep appreciation for Aristotelian *phronēsis*, as he understood it, and to have set a high store upon 'pedagogic *phronēsis*' as a way of philosophizing in the most complex situations of education and schooling, and about the most intricate and delicate of educational issues.

To arrive at some understanding of what the notion, *phronēsis*, entailed for McLaughlin, an attempt is made in this section, firstly, to identify the key elements of the Aristotelian notion that he succeeded in appropriating and putting to use in the most creative of ways in his 'phronetic paradigm', or 'phronetic approach', to philosophy of education and, secondly, to examine briefly some of the many situations and contexts in which he had recourse to the paradigm, usually by way of what he referred to as 'pedagogic *phronēsis*'.

Although he nowhere uses the term, it seems to have been McLaughlin's declared intention throughout his focus on educational praxis to establish, or construct, a 'paradigm of phronetic thinking, or judgment', the deployment of which he considered an essential feature of the philosophy and practice of education. It is as well, therefore, to begin with a brief discussion of what the term 'phronetic paradigm' might have connoted for McLaughlin.

## McLaughlin's 'Phronetic Paradigm'

One should perhaps make clear first of all, the sense in which 'paradigm' is being used in reference to the 'phronetic paradigm' or framework for the study of challenging issues in educational praxis that I attribute to McLaughlin. As it is ordinarily understood, the term 'paradigm' is a typical example, pattern, or model of reality that involves a shared set of assumptions relating to how we perceive the world. A paradigm is a set of ideas, a philosophical or theoretical framework or model of how we understand society or nature works. It is a theory or group of ideas about how, in consequence, something should be done, made, or thought about. A paradigm is a

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[109] See, Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, London: Sheed & Ward, 1979; Richard J. Bernstein, *Beyond Objectivism and Relativism*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvannia Press, 1983.

framework of concepts, results, and procedures within which work in a given field continues to be done until such time as the whole framework is questioned and the phenomenon of 'paradigm shift' occurs.[110]

Although the term 'paradigm' is possibly over-used, it is useful for my purposes in the present context. In attributing to McLaughlin a 'phronetic paradigm' for educational praxis, characterised by a distinctive 'phronetic disposition', the intention is to emphasise the 'constellation of beliefs, values, and techniques' that he has recovered from the Aristotelian ethical tradition and which is constitutive of his deliberative approach.[111] Use of the term 'paradigm' is designed also to focus on the 'concrete puzzle-solution' approach that he uses so creatively in the absence of 'explicit rules', or a body of scientific and/or technical knowledge, to bring resolution to the inevitable dilemmas of educational practice. In general, use of the term 'phronetic paradigm' draws attention to the priority to be attached to the particular, to definite situations where practical decision making is called for, rather than to the production or creation of supposed, universally valid, generalised knowledge.

## McLaughlin and Aristotle's *Φρόνησις, phrónēsis*

McLaughlin's model for the study of educational dilemmas and predicaments suggests a characteristic Aristotelian inspiration, and indeed bears all the hallmarks of Aristotelian *phrónēsis*. A proper appreciation of McLaughlin's 'phronetic paradigm' demands a degree of familiarity with the Aristotelian notion of *phrónēsis*. Aristotle describes *phrónēsis* in the *Nicomachean Ethics* as 'a true state, reasoned and capable of action with regard to things that are good or bad for man'.[112] Alternatively, *phrónēsis* is, 'a true and reasoned state or capacity to act with regard to the things that are good or bad for man'.[113] A third and more recent translator renders this passage as, 'a state grasping the truth, involving reason, concerned with action about things that are good or bad for a

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[110] See, Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1970. For the 'multiple definitions of paradigm' offered by Kuhn, see Margaret Masterman, "The Nature of Paradigm", pp. 59-90. In: Imre Lakatos & Alan Musgrave, eds., *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970.

[111] Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, p. 175.

[112] Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. J.A.K. Thomson, London: Penguin Books, 1953, *NE* VI, 5, 1140b5. This translation is the one primarily used in this section, though reference may be made to other versions.

[113] Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. D. Ross, New York: Oxford University Press, 1984, 1140b5.

human being'.[114] These descriptions are basic and sparse and various attempts have been made to pin-point the meaning of the multi-faceted term, *phronēsis*. Different translations have offered the following potted meanings of the term, among others: 'practical reasoning', 'practical wisdom', moral discernment', 'moral insight', and 'prudence'.

Each of these renditions points to different and important facets of the term *phronēsis*. Jana Noel notes a degree of confusion in the translations and commentaries on Aristotle's notion of *phronēsis*, and uncertainty as to whether it should be regarded primarily as a form or knowledge, a form of reasoning or understanding, a form of disposition, or a personal quality.[115] The focus varies, from attention to 'rationality', to the nature of 'perception and insight', and, indeed, to the 'moral and ethical character' of the person who possesses *phronēsis*, that is, the *phronimos*. Whatever the concept offered in translation, it follows that a different set of assumptions, both contextual and ethical, will be implied and from these assumptions different approaches to the application of *phronēsis* in educational practice will arise.[116]

Despite the lack of clarity and consistency in the translation of *phrónēsis*, several scholars, including McLaughlin, have seen some promise in the notion, as an interpretive key, and as a useful concept, to undergird practical judgment in educational practice and planning. Different conceptions of *phronēsis*, as noted, give rise to different approaches to the deployment of the notion in the study of education and schooling. McLaughlin's praxis approach is recognisably 'phronetic' in several respects. His interests match the classic subject matter of *phronēsis*: he reflects on 'variable' matters ('what may be done in different ways or not done at all', *NE* VI, 1140a24-b12), matters that cannot be encapsulated in universal rules or procedures; his knowledge in each particular circumstance cannot be equated with or reduced to knowledge that is merely general or technical; and his purpose is directly related to values pertinent to the good that is the well-being of the community.

Bent Flyvbjerg has pointed out that, whereas *epistēmē* (scientific knowledge) is to be found in the contemporary vocabulary of 'epistemology' and 'epistemic', and *technē*

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[114] Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. T. Irwin, Indianapolis: Hackett, 1999, 1140b5.
[115] Jana Noel, "On the Varieties of *Phronēsis*", *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, Vol. 31, No. 3, 1999, pp. 273-289 (273). See also, Carrie Birmingham, "Phronesis: A Model for Pedagogical Reflection", *Journal of Teacher Education*, Vol. 55, No. 4, pp. 313-324.
[116] "On the Varieties of Phronēsis", p. 273.

(craft or art related knowledge) in 'technology' and 'technical', there is no modern word that similarly incorporates the Aristotelian intellectual virtue of *phronēsis* (practical wisdom).[117] This is regarded by some as 'indicative of the degree to which scientific and instrumental rationality dominate modern thinking and language'.[118] For lack of such a satisfactory modern word, Flyvbjerg has suggested that the term 'phronetic' might be used to denote an activity that emphasizes *phronesis*.[119] *Epistēmē* focuses on theoretical knowledge and *technē* denotes technical know-how, but 'phronēsis', emphasizing practical knowledge and ethical value in action, is the intellectual activity that is fundamental to and crucially important for 'praxis'.

McLaughlin's 'phronetic disposition' clearly arises out of an acute awareness that 'scientific knowledge' (*epistēmē*) alone and / or 'technical knowledge' (*technē*) alone are either non-existent in many concrete situations, or are insufficiently sensitive to the issues involved in specific cases. For McLaughlin as for Aristotle, *phronēsis* and *technē* are distinct categories, and although both involve skill and judgment, one type of intellectual virtue cannot be reduced to the other. *Phronēsis* is not just a higher form of 'technical rationality' and is not primarily concerned with producing anything. *Phronēsis* is primarily about value judgment in specific contexts. Similarly, *phronēsis* cannot be conflated with *epistēmē*, or the commitment to create a systematic corpus of generalised knowledge. The aim or goal of theory or 'theoretical science' is simply the knowledge to be gained. In the context of education, as in many other contexts, where *phronēsis* is the more appropriate kind of knowing, the end is not knowledge per se, but what we can do with it, that is, pursue the knowledge for the sake of action ('praxis').

Flyvbjerg maintains that insofar as *phronēsis* operates via a practical rationality based on judgment and experience, it can become scientific in an epistemic sense only through the development of a theory of judgment and experience.[120] A 'phronetic'- based approach to 'praxis' arises out of the lived experience of developing, from the available resources of the individual and his/her community, a practical wisdom to address specific situations and does not have as its aim a search for universal rules, or an all-encompassing doctrine, or some meta-theory, to handle the issues. W. Bowman argues

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[117] Bent Flyvbjerg, "Phronetic Planning Research:Theoretical and Methodical Reflections", *Planning Theory and Practice*, Vol. 5, No. 3, Sept., 2004, pp. 283-306 (285).
[118] Ibid., pp.285-286.
[119] Ibid., p. 285.
[120] Ibid., p. 288.

that 'praxis' is rightly understood as 'practical human engagement embedded within a tradition of communally shared understandings and values', and as 'a mode of action through which participants constitute themselves both as a community and as individual members of that community'.[121] *Phronēsis*, as the ethical discernment by which agents gauge what course of action is right, is the form of knowledge that is fundamental to, and most appropriate for praxis, where the particular and the situationally dependent are emphasized over the universal and over rules, and the concrete and the practical are emphasized over the theoretical.[122]

It is not Aristotle's position, nor was McLaughlin much interested in developing 'grand theory' in education, neither one of his own making, nor of any inherited from his tradition and culture. Daniel T. Devereux notes that Aristotle's concept of 'practical wisdom' regards 'action' as both the goal and subject matter of *phronēsis*; and since action is concerned with particulars, *phronēsis* must be primarily about particulars rather than universals.[123] McLaughlin's employment of a phronetic paradigm always relates to the particularity of situations. *Phronēsis* is of capital importance for those who take inspiration from Aristotle's vision because it is the intellectual virtue that regulates the ethical employment of both *epistēmē* and *technē* in all our undertakings. This is a point of view McLaughlin seems to have fully shared and importantly, by way of his phronetic disposition and paradigm, put to good use in the ethical checks and balances he was diligent in observing in all his educational deliberation.

McLaughlin's 'phronetic paradigm' might best be seen as, not a replacement for, but as complementing, a number of alternative paradigms. The 'interpretative paradigm', which focuses on describing how things come to be, and how actors interpret the world, is one such paradigm that is perhaps most widespread in the humanities and social sciences today and bears certain resemblances to the phronetic approach. A second is the 'positivist paradigm', with its focus on *epistēmē*, or the formulation of scientific knowledge. The phronetic paradigm, which I seek to link closely to McLaughlin's work, in order to emphasize his reflective thinking and practical wisdom, could provide an alternative model of engaging critically with the praxis of teaching and learning.

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[121] W. Bowman, "Discernment, respons/ability, and the goods of philosophical practice", *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education*, Vol. 1, No. 1, April 2002, pp. 1-36 (7).
[122] Bent Flyvbjerg, "Phronetic Planning Research", p. 289.
[123] Daniel T. Devereux, "Particular and Universal in Aristotle's Conception of Practical Knowledge", *The Review of Metaphysics*, Vol. 39, No. 3 (Mar., 1986), pp. 483-504 (483).

**McLaughlin's Conception of 'Pedagogic *Phronēsis*': The Significance of Pedagogical Judgment.**

McLaughlin's deployment of 'pedagogic *phronēsis*', in several different situations and contexts, is described in the posthumous collection of essays referred to above, *Liberalism, Education and Schooling*, ranging over the years 1992-2005.[124] In this collection alone, McLaughlin has employed the concept of 'pedagogic *phronēsis*' on more than twenty occasions[125]. There would be little to be gained, I think, by undertaking an exegesis of each and every one of these texts. It is likely to be more beneficial to focus on a smaller number of texts, both for their particular relevance, and because clustered together they illustrate substantially the same or related meanings of pedagogic *phronēsis*. What I want principally to illustrate is how, over a range of distinctive educational issues, each characterised by its own 'burdens and dilemmas', to use another favourite phrase of his, McLaughlin, always conscious of the need for 'balanced judgment' in often contested or controversial matters and contexts, exemplifies a characteristic and distinctive 'phronetic approach, or paradigm', which illustrates 'phronetic' thinking at the heart of educational discourse and practice.

Although it is by no means exhaustive, the background to McLaughlin's 'phronetic paradigm' outlined above, out of which is born his 'pedagogic *phronēsis*', must suffice as a framework for a study of a few samples of his work. It is hoped that a deeper appreciation of this centrally important McLaughlin commitment to 'practical wisdom or judgment' will arise out of a consideration of some of the essays in which he employs the notion and which serve to delineate something of the nature and scope of 'pedagogic *phronēsis*'. Two essays in the collection, *Liberalism, Education and Schooling*, which represent the bulk of the references there to 'pedagogic *phronēsis*', may be briefly considered.

**(1) "Beyond the Reflective Teacher".[126]**

In this essay, dating from 1999, McLaughlin, in the context of a critical analysis of the nature of the activity of 'reflection', draws attention to the requirement for the teacher to be able to 'make rational practical judgments about what to do in particular

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[124] David Carr, Mark Halstead, & Richard Pring (eds.), *Liberalism, Education and Schooling, Essays by T.H. McLaughlin*, 2008
[125] See *Liberalism, Education and Schooling*, pp. 34, 43, 76-77, 100, 109-119, 207-209, 223, 252.
[126] "Beyond the Reflective Teacher", *Liberalism, Education and Schooling*, pp. 60-78.

circumstances', to have the skills to 'carry out what is decided', and the 'dispositions to actually do what is judged appropriate'.[127] He points out that practical judgments requiring reflection, 'in some sense, and to some extent', are inescapable in teaching. In order to appreciate the sense in which 'reflection' is correctly understood in the complex activity of teaching, McLaughlin suggests it might be useful 'to distinguish two continua along which conceptions of reflection are located'.[128] McLaughlin's first continuum refers to the *nature* of reflection; the second continuum, dealing with various matters on which teachers are invited to, or expected to, reflect on, refers to the *scope* and *objects* of reflection. For present purposes, it is McLaughlin's first continuum that is most immediately relevant.

At one end of the continuum representing the nature of reflection, McLaughlin places 'views of reflection which stress the explicit and the systematic' and, at the other end, 'views which lay emphasis upon the implicit and the intuitive'.[129] The 'explicit / systematic' and the 'implicit/intuitive' distinctions are taken to refer to the nature of the reasoning involved in each case and the degree of reason's closeness to, or distance from, the action envisaged or undertaken. McLaughlin argues that at the 'explicit and systematic end' of this particular continuum there is a view of reflection which involves 'technical reason'.[130] Here, 'technical reason' refers directly to Aristotle's notion of τεχνή, *technē*, an activity of 'making' or 'production' (ποίησις, *poiēsis*), 'aimed at a pre-specifiable and durable outcome', that is, at a product, or state of affairs, which constitutes the purpose or 'telos' of the activity.[131]

'Technical rationality', with its clear understanding of the 'why, how, and with what', something is to be made, or produced, or brought about, although it may be able to provide a rational account of a process, and give one complete mastery over an activity, as a form of reflection to govern the practice of teaching, it has, in McLaughlin's opinion, severe limitations.[132] McLaughlin cites Dunne to the effect that the application of scientific theory and technique in an instrumental way to solve the problems of

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[127] Ibid., p. 63.
[128] Ibid., p. 64.
[129] Ibid., p. 64.
[130] Ibid., p. 64.
[131] Ibid., pp. 64-65.
[132] Ibid., p. 65.

practice is 'widely acknowledged to have its deficiencies'. [133] At the heart of the problem, as McLaughlin and Dunne see it, is 'the inappropriateness of conceiving teaching as a *technē*'.[134] Educational ends, McLaughlin rightly notes, 'are neither clear, fixed, unitary, nor evaluatively straight-forward'and are 'not achieved primarily through technical means/end processes which can be mastered through scientific or technical knowledge and skill'.[135] Even if the notion of 'technical reason' is not called upon explicitly, McLaughlin concludes that other attempts to reflect on the application of theory to the demands and realities of practice risk being inadequate, because they rely on 'an account of reflection that arises from a faulty conceptualization of the relationship between rational action and theoretical knowledge'.[136]

At the implicit and intuitive end of the spectrum representing the nature of reflection in education, McLaughlin, alluding to the work of Donald Schön, identifies as the most appropriate form of reflection the latter's notion of the 'analysis of the core of artistry' inherent in professional practice.[137] Schön, like McLaughlin, rejects the adequacy of 'technical rationality' as an account of professional knowledge, since professional decision making involves not merely the solving of given, and fully specified, problems, but often involves 'a process of wrestling with messy, indeterminate solutions'.[138] McLaughlin understands Schön's notion of 'analysis of the core of artistry' as 'an exercise of intelligence', and 'a kind of knowing', revealed in arts such as 'problem framing, implementation and improvisation', that, along with our everyday 'competences of recognition, judgment and skill', is largely 'tacit' in character.[139] What is involved, McLaughlin concludes, is 'knowledge-in-action', knowledge 'contained in, and revealed by, intelligent action itself'.[140] McLaughlin notes Schön's distinction between 'reflection-on-action' (which is retrospective in character) and 'reflection-in-action' (where reflection can make a difference to what we are doing at this moment). He further notes how 'reflection-in-action', or 'reflection in practice', as Schön describes it in his account of professional competence, has 'a crucial function of

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[133] Ibid., p. 9. McLaughlin cites Joseph Dunne, *Back to the Rough Ground*, Notre Dame, IND: University of Notre Dame Press, 1993, p. 9.
[134] Ibid., p. 65.
[135] Ibid., p. 65.
[136] Ibid., p. 65.
[137] "Beyond the Reflective Teacher", p. 66. McLaughlin cites Donald Schön, *Educating the Reflective Practitioner*, San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1967, p. 22.
[138] Ibid., p. 66. McLaughlin cites Schön, ibid., p. 4.
[139] Ibid, p. 67.
[140] Ibid., p. 67.

questioning the assumptional structure of our knowing.[141]

McLaughlin sees in Schön's notion of 'knowledge-in-action' a certain similarity to another Aristotelian kind of knowledge, namely, πραξις, *praxis*, which is to be contrasted with *technē*. McLaughlin describes 'praxis' as

> a form of knowing that involves the engagement of persons in activity with others, in a non-instrumental way, and that is not intended to realise goods external to the persons involved but rather excellences characteristic of a worth-while form of life.[142]

McLaughlin uses his reading of Dunne 'to bring into focus' further important elements of our understanding of *praxis* that previous authors may not have commented upon to a sufficient degree. Thus, McLaughlin invites readers to understand *praxis* as (i) an activity that 'both involves one with other people and is at the same time a realisation of one's self'; (ii) a 'more intimate kind of engagement than *poiēsis* that brings one's emotions more into play and forms and reveals one's character' to a greater degree; (iii) an experience that 'brings one into situations that are more heterogeneous and contingent than any over which we might be able to exercise unfettered control'; and, (iv) most importantly, *praxis* 'requires a kind of knowledge that is more personal and experiential, more supple and less formulable', than, for instance, the knowledge conferred by *technē*.[143] In short, McLaughlin identifies this very special kind of knowledge required by 'praxis' with Aristotle's φρόνησις, *phrónēsis*, or 'practical wisdom'.[144]

McLaughlin, while acknowledging *phronēsis* as playing a major 'ordering agency' role in our lives generally, sees 'the sort of reflective thinking that is appropriate for teachers' as a reality that is 'harmonious with, and arising out of *phronēsis*.[145] In particular, McLaughlin is attracted to this notion because, unlike other views of reflection he has examined, the sort of knowledge characteristic of *phronēsis* draws attention to 'the qualities of character and personhood that arise in the Aristotelian perspective'.[146] Furthermore, the Aristotelian phronetic account of reflection is, in McLaughlin's view 'associated with a complex and well-articulated account of the nature of the theory/practice relationship' that is in many respects preferable to the

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[141] Ibid., p. 67.
[142] Ibid., p. 67.
[143] Ibid., pp. 67-68.
[144] Ibid., p. 68.
[145] Ibid., p. 68.
[146] Ibid., p. 68.

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'technical rationality' and rationalist approaches that support rather crude accounts of how theory is to be translated into, or applied to practice.[147]

## (2) "Distinctiveness of the Catholic School: Balanced Judgement and the Temptations of Commonality".[148]

This essay, also dating from 1999, clearly has important ramifications for the task of giving new and systematic expression to Catholic philosophy of education and as such it belongs more appropriately to the following section of this chapter. It is nonetheless worth commenting upon here where the object is to instantiate McLaughlin's deployment of 'pedagogic *phronēsis*' as a valuable methodology of reflecting and deliberating on issues of complexity and sensitiveness in education. The immediate context of this essay is the matter of the responsiveness of Catholic schools to calls that they be 'open to the educational demands of a liberal democratic society', in terms both of the common good in general and the needs of members of other religious faiths in particular, while at the same time maintaining a sense of their own 'distinctiveness'.[149]

McLaughlin considers that one of the critical questions that is posed to Catholic schools today, and perhaps 'the most fundamental and the most difficult' one, concerns the vision of 'distinctiveness' contained in the CCE discourse. Thus, *CSTTM (1997)*, states that the Catholic school has 'an ecclesial identity and role', which is not 'a mere adjunct, but is a proper and specific attribute', a 'distinctive characteristic which penetrates and informs its educational activity', but a 'fundamental part of its very identity and the focus of its mission'.[150] Mc Laughlin highlights a number of complexities that arise out of claims by the Catholic school to a distinctive educational responsibility and character rooted in the very distinctiveness of Catholic education itself.

The 'complexities' arise, according to McLaughlin, in relation to two claims, namely: (a) the claim that 'the Catholic school exists in order to transmit the Catholic tradition of faith and life and to educate within it', and (b) the claim that Catholic schools on the one hand and common schools on the other are, and should be, 'based on a somewhat

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[147] Ibid., p. 68.
[148] Terence H. McLaughlin, "Distinctiveness of the Catholic School: Balanced Judgement and the Temptations of Commonality", *Liberalism, Education and Schooling*, pp. 199-218.
[149] "Distinctiveness and the Catholic School", pp. 199-200.
[150] *CSTTM (1997)*, No.s 10-11.

different conception of education and have a somewhat different educational responsibility and character'.[151] It is in relation to the many practical questions for teachers and school leaders that arise out of these claims to distinctiveness that McLaughlin has recourse to 'pedagogic *phronēsis*' in this instance. He reminds his readers that every school is 'engaged in a practical enterprise of great complexity', which calls for many forms of 'practical knowledge and understanding, judgment and wisdom, skill, disposition and commitment' on the part of those who teach and those who lead the school.[152]

The 'professional qualities and capacities' demanded of teachers and educational leaders in Catholic schools, precisely because of the claims to distinctiveness, are 'wide-ranging', and include not only an understanding of issues at the level of general principle, but also 'an ability to judge what is demanded in practical terms as an expression of the demands of distinctiveness in particular contexts'.[153] Furthermore, there is required the 'skill to put such judgments into practice', the 'disposition to be concerned about matters of distinctiveness and the commitment to pursue these matters'.[154] The complexity of some of the practical judgments involved in these matters, McLaughlin notes, 'scarcely requires emphasis'.[155]

McLaughlin concludes his argument for the need for 'pedagogic *phronēsis*' by noting that 'a crude application of theory to practice' by teachers and educational leaders is not the answer to the difficulties encountered here. It has long been realised, he writes, that 'the proper role of theory in relation to educational practice sees theory as initially developed in practice', as part of the 'professional common sense' of teachers and educational leaders, much of which is 'unreflective and tacit in character'.[156] McLaughlin does not deny that there is a role for theory that 'gradually sophisticates this understanding in an appropriate way' and he regrets (as already noted) how the lack of an articulated contemporary Catholic philosophy of education has deprived the Catholic community of an important resource in this regard.[157]

McLaughlin considers briefly the suggestion that the concept of, and discourse centred

[151] "Distinctiveness and the Catholic School", p. 201.
[152] Ibid., p. 204.
[153] Ibid., p. 205.
[154] Ibid., p. 205.
[155] Ibid., p. 205.
[156] Ibid., p. 206.
[157] Ibid., pp. 206-207.

on 'the reflective teacher', might be the way to cope with the challenges involved in practice for those who seek to uphold the distinctiveness of the Catholic school.[158] Despite the insights that are embodied in the concept of 'the reflective teacher', McLaughlin feels, as already noted, that the concept 'lacks clarity and is apt for use as a vague slogan' and, without 'sustained attention to the meaning and implications of the concept of reflection', must be rejected.[159] McLaughlin proposes that the professional qualities and capacities that are required to meet the challenge of upholding a distinctiveness claim for the Catholic school are 'better conceptualised in terms of a form of pedagogic practical wisdom, or *phronēsis*, in the Aristotelian sense'.[160] In particular, he singles out the description of *phronēsis* offered by Wilfrid Carr as a promising way forward.[161]

One might conclude this section by noting that McLaughlin judges that *phronēsis* is 'an attractive concept', not merely with respect to a number of the difficulties that occur concerning the 'nature of reflection', but, in the form of 'pedagogic *phronēsis*', it provides a more potent means of understanding and providing 'balanced judgment' in relation to the various implications arising out of claims to 'distinctiveness' on the part of the Catholic school.[162] Although it is certain that McLaughlin saw benefits in this notion of *phronēsis* and in a phronetic approach generally in a much wider context than just in his study of 'reflection', the 'reflective teacher', and the 'distinctiveness of the Catholic school', the scope of this dissertation does not permit a fuller investigation of the several other areas of educational thought and practice to which McLaughlin brought this novel approach.

As a brief summary of the 'attractive' benefits McLaughlin saw in *phronēsis* in respect of these specific topics, it is worth recording the following. Firstly, with respect to the question of the 'reflective teacher', *phronēsis* 'offers the prospect of a unified concept of reflection', with practical judgement 'playing a role in deciding the nature and extent

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[158] Ibid., p. 207.
[159] Ibid., p. 207.
[160] Ibid., p. 207.
[161] McLaughlin cites this particular description of *phronēsis*, attributed to Wilfrid Carr, at two points in *Liberalism, Education and Schooling*. [Phronēsis] is 'a comprehensive moral capacity which combines practical knowledge of the good with sound judgment about what, in a particular situation, would constitute an appropriate expression of this'. See p. 77, and p. 207.
[162] The theme is asserted in both the essays, "Beyond the Reflective Teacher", and "Distinctiveness of the Catholic School", respectively.

of the forms of reflection necessary for particular purposes'[163]. Secondly, it offers a context for the resolution of the questions of the adequacy of reflective judgment. Practical judgment is seen at the heart of the matter, rather than the justification of principles of whatever kind.[164] Finally, *phronēsis* underlines a concern to embrace a range of wider human qualities than reflection considered equally desirable in the teacher.

With regard to the 'distinctiveness of the Catholic school', 'pedagogic *phronēsis*' understands the need for the exercise of 'balanced discernment and judgment' in relation to issues of great complexity, as well as the need to be 'alert to distorted perception and reaction' that might arise out of an insufficiently nuanced understanding and appreciation of the Catholic tradition of faith and life.[165] McLaughlin considers that several of the demands of distinctiveness seem apt for satisfaction by *phronesis*. These include the need for the exercise of 'complex contextualised judgment' and the demand for reflection on the appropriate kind and manner of influence upon their pupils of teachers and others in the life and work of the Catholic school.[166]

The complex model of judgment that McLaughlin appropriated from Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* might readily be the subject of a more comprehensive treatment than is possible here. What McLaughlin's wisdom and judgment, together with his often innovative and percipient analysis, situated within a particular understanding and interpretation of Aristotelian *phronēsis* and practical rationality, has to offer the re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education is investigated in the following section.

## III

## McLaughlin's Phronetic Paradigm and Catholic Philosophy of Education.

McLaughlin appears to have approached the study of Catholic education, not in the traditional fashion of establishing a foundational stance based on metaphysical, epistemological and axiological principles, such as, for example, Maritain's understanding of Thomism had dictated to him. Neither does his Catholic philosophy of

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[163] "Beyond the Reflective Teacher", p. 77.
[164] Ibid., p. 77.
[165] "Distinctiveness and the Catholic School", p. 211.
[166] Ibid., p. 208.

education begin from cognitional theory and a study of human understanding after the manner of Lonergan. There are indeed similarities between McLaughlin's exposition of Aristotelian *phronēsis* and aspects of Lonergan's study of human understanding, perhaps especially his conception of 'common sense' insight.[167] McLaughlin's philosophy of education develops primarily from his appropriation of the Aristotelian notion of *phronēsis*, and in conjunction with a commitment to analysis, proceeds in phronetic terms to subject theoretical and technical knowledge to a role of being one element in a 'critical *praxis*'.[168]

One should not assume that it is McLaughlin's commitment to analytical philosophy of education that disillusions or prevents him from starting from some substantial Thomist position. He saw Aquinas as a resource for the elaboration of a Catholic philosophy of education, as indeed he similarly recognised the philosophical writings of Newman, Maritain and Lonergan as sources that could be called upon for illumination.[169] If McLaughlin had shared any 'aversion' to, or wished to 'discount philosophy of education as a grand scale narrative of the nature of reality and of human beings', a position he might have endorsed as an analytical philosopher, though this is not necessarily the case, this would surely handicap his efforts to contribute to the Catholic tradition of educational thought. Here, a set of foundational principles has traditionally been regarded as a requirement for the discipline and centrally significant for its articulation. In the previous chapter, we have seen how thoroughly Lonergan critiqued this 'classicist' position. Fortunately, although it is by no means to the forefront of his thought, McLaughlin does not appear to have found it necessary to reject outright the over-arching Thomist-Aristotelian philosophical foundations of Catholic education. Nevertheless, on the basis of his admittedly limited published comment on Catholic education, McLaughlin's position vis-à-vis Thomism is at best ambiguous.

McLaughlin's attitude to Catholic philosophy of education does not, in fact, hinge on his relation to Thomism, however that should be assessed. He was always fully prepared to participate in philosophical study of the nature and distinctiveness of the Catholic school and Catholic education. Indeed, he was one of a number of high-profile philosophers of education, who, as Catholics, saw the urgent need for the the

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[167] See Bernard Lonergan, *Insight*, pp. 173-206, 207-244. The relationship between 'common sense insight' and *phronēsis* is beyond the remit and scope of this dissertation.
[168] "Beyond the Reflective Teacher", pp 67-68.
[169] "The Distinctiveness of Catholic Education", p. 139.

'elucidation of a distinctively Catholic systematic account of the nature and role of education'.[170] Like many of the other professional philosophers with whom he contributed to the promotion of a Catholic perspective on education, his point of departure, if not the full-blown Thomism of Maritain or even the transposed Thomism of Lonergan, would seem to have been a genuine sense of commitment to Catholic beliefs, values, and way of life, especially as interpreted in the light of the great renewal movement of Vatican II. It was not, apparently, the defence of traditional foundational principles but the need to promote the virtue of *phronēsis* that McLaughlin considered to be such a crucially important matter in the context of reflection on Catholic education, so much so that he accorded it a primacy and, indeed, called for serious consideration to be given to the formulation of a specifically 'Catholic pedagogic *phronēsis*'.[171]

Here, in an endeavour to offer a fair assessment of McLaughlin's contribution to the elucidation of a Catholic philosophy of education, one can perhaps place to one side the possible difficulty just raised, namely, about the relationship of his philosophy of education to the substantive Catholic tradition. That the relationship is much less clear-cut or emphatic than that of Maritain, for example, is not *per se* a major problem and may merely indicate a difference of emphasis and focus in McLaughlin's vision of the renewal of Catholic philosophy of education. McLaughlin's phronetic disposition and espousal of a phronetic paradigm for the analysis of educational practice and policy-making would seem, not only to prove his eligibility to comment upon Catholic education, but serve to single him out as an extremely important figure in the context of the re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education and that for reasons of a general nature that are detailed below.

## Extending McLaughlin's Notion of Pedagogic *Phronēsis*

McLaughlin sadly never had the opportunity to set out a systematic and detailed articulation of 'pedagogic *phronēsis*', or to characterise its various components, in a manner similar to what he achieved for his version of analytical philosophy of education. Although such an extension and elaboration of his phronetic paradigm must amount to a fairly major project, it is possibly acceptable to attempt at least to sketch

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[170] Ibid., pp. 139, 151.
[171] "Distinctiveness and the Catholic School", p. 217.

briefly what one thinks might be involved in such an undertaking, both to understand why McLaughlin accorded such a primacy to *phronēsis* and to appreciate why his phronetic paradigm has a crucial importance for the re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education.

One might begin the task of extending and articulating McLaughlin's notion of 'pedagogic *phronēsis*', starting from an analysis of a definition of the concept and thence proceeding to comment upon the various elements of the definition until a more comprehensive picture of the reality becomes apparent. The completion of these steps, however, would still leave the need for the development of 'a pattern of discourse' that had *phronēsis* as its central and characteristic feature. Such discourse would have to be built up from the relatively few but nevertheless highly fecund, allusions to *phronēsis* and 'pedagogic phronēsis', which occur regularly in McLaughlin's later writings.

McLaughlin appears to have had a certain preference for Wilfrid Carr's definition of *phronēsis*, which he cites in a number of his essays.[172] Carr describes *phronēsis* as,

> a comprehensive moral capacity which combines practical knowledge of the good with sound judgment about what, in a particular situation, would constitute an appropriate expression of this good.[173]

McLaughlin highlights the fact that this description of *phronēsis* makes clear how 'practical knowledge of the good' is related to 'intelligent and personally engaged sensitivity' to situations, individuals and a tradition of belief and life, and that it achieves this by 'making inherently supple and non-formulable practical judgments about what constitutes an appropriate expression of the good in a given circumstance'.[174] McLaughlin indicates that a fuller articulation of *phronēsis* on the basis of this description is in order, but I choose rather to make use of an alternative description of the notion (but with the same intention in mind) that I believe to be equally helpful in such a task.

Charles W. Allen has offered a description of *phronēsis*, which may serve to highlight some of the characteristics McLaughlin ascribed to pedagogic *phronēsis*, and might help to identify key moments in this uniquely powerful approach to the study of

[172] See, *Liberalism, Education and Schooling*, pages 77 and 207.
[173] Wilfrid Carr, *For Education. Towards Critical Educational Inquiry*, Buckingham, UK: Open University Press, 1995, p. 71.
[174] "The Distinctiveness of the Catholic School", pp. 207-208.

education.[175] McLaughlin was convinced of the need to concede a certain primacy to *phronēsis* in his commentary on Catholic education and, perhaps, very much for the same reasons as those proposed by Allen, whose reflection was prompted by what he terms the 'frustrating tendencies' of our times regarding 'two conceptions of rationality', namely, 'objectivism' and 'relativism', that have tended to dominate contemporary thought.[176] For Allen, *phronēsis* is not simply 'one legitimate way of making sense' – it is the 'most fundamental and inclusive way', from which 'all other ways of making sense derive whatever merits they may legitimately claim'.[177] This view of the critical importance of *phronēsis* was also shared by McLaughlin and it was the reason for his seeming preference for a 'phronetic approach' to Catholic education.

Allen's definition of *phronēsis* is helpful for an understanding of the meaning of the term itself and useful as a basis for expanding McLaughlin's notion of pedagogic *phronēsis*. Allen describes *phronēsis* as

> the historically implicated, communally nurtured ability to make good sense of relatively singular contexts in ways appropriate to their relative singularity.[178]

Allen's definition reflects closely Aristotle's description of φρόνησις, *phronēsis*, as 'a state of grasping the truth, involving reason, concerned with action about things that are good or bad for a human being', even allowing for the several different perspectives among scholars as to Aristotle's precise meaning.[179] Allen's definition is rather helpful in seeking to respond to McLaughlin's suggestion already mentioned, that 'sustained attention' be given to 'the exploration of a distinctively Catholic form of pedagogic *phronēsis*'.

Firstly, it will be noticed that *phronēsis*, according to Allen's definition, is employed in 'making good sense'.[180] *Phronēsis* is engaged primarily in understanding and making judgments. 'Sense' here is probably best understood in terms of both meaning and truth. *Phronēsis* is certainly about making knowledge available, leading to understanding, but

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[175] See, Charles W. Allen, "The Primacy of *Phronesis*: A Proposal for Avoiding Frustrating Tendencies in Our Conceptions of Rationality", *The Journal of Religion*, Vol. 69 No. 3 (Jul., 1989), pp. 359-374. Hereafter: "The Primacy of *Phronesis*".

[176] "The Primacy of *Phronesis*", p. 359.

[177] Ibid., p. 369.

[178] Ibid., p. 363.

[179] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, London: Penguin Books, trans. J.A.K. Thomson, 2004 (revsd. Edn.), Book VI, chapter v, 1140b20. Hereafter: *NE* Book VI Ch v 1140b20.

[180] Ibid., pp. 363-364.

not knowledge of some theoretically detached or value neutral kind, which is as it were, 'parachuted' into a situation. Allen's 'phronetic sense-making' is an approach to practical situations where we encounter meanings that are not easily understood but require considerable effort to interpret. The process of 'making good sense' is always on the basis of 'practical engagement', and recognises that 'our own participation and value judgments play an essential role in the kind of knowledge *phronēsis* yields'.[181]

McLaughlin's phronetic paradigm, in the context of Catholic education, begins from reflection on the very practical matter of Catholic schools, their claims to be distinctive and how they justify their claims to 'distinctiveness'.[182] His in-depth exploration of a number of authoritative statements relating to the claims to distinctiveness of the Catholic school is anchored in the practice of schooling as he experiences it and it is out of that practice that he is able to alert us to 'complexities' of the kind which must be deliberated upon before judgment is made.[183]

McLaughlin is clearly in possession of the knowledge base (including the traditional Aristotelian-Thomist principles and the discourse of the CCE) upon which these claims to distinctiveness are made, but his characteristic approach to 'sense-making' begins, not with the invocation of a body principles and their accompanying world-view, but with an analysis of the 'complexities' of the concrete situation before him. His judgment about the 'good' is not arrived at by the importation of a body of knowledge extrinsic to the situation, but on the basis of the meaning and truth he divines within this context of the practice with which he engages.

A second element of Allen's description of *phronēsis* is the claim that '*phronēsis* is communally nurtured'.[184] The value judgments which are an essential feature of *phronēsis* arise from particular communities and represent for these communities important features about their overall vision and understanding of human existence. The community of its origin is thus an important resource for phronetic judgment and provides, as well as a fount of traditional wisdom, a means of being accountable and exercising a role of self-criticism in relation to deliberation upon practice. Aristotle draws attention to the fact that our values inescapably arise from the communities that

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[181] Charles W. Allen, "The Primacy of *Phronesis*", p. 363.
[182] "Distinctiveness and the Catholic School", *Liberalism, Education and Schooling*, pp. 199-218.
[183] *Ibid.*, p. 201.
[184] Charles W. Allen, "The Primacy of *Phronesis*", p. 364.

have formed us.[185]

McLaughlin's phronetic analysis of aspects of Catholic education is conducted against the background of a Catholic 'tradition of thought', understood in the sense of Alasdair MacIntyre's notion of a 'tradition of thought'.[186] When McLaughlin arrives at the judgment that Catholic education is 'distinctive', in virtue of its 'embodiment of a particular view about the meaning of human persons and of human life, its aspiration to engage in a certain kind of holistic influence, and its concern with the formation of its students in its own religious and moral tradition', it is on the basis of three features that he has found to be a consistent aspiration of the Catholic educational community and a constant feature in the Catholic tradition of thought.[187] However, McLaughlin's concern is not just to record this fact, but to assert that each of the elements of Catholic education which have been identified 'require interpretation and judgment'.[188] These 'matters of judgment', he concludes, 'require the determination of the proper balance to be struck between different emphases or aspects of the Catholic tradition'.[189]

A third element in Allen's definition of *phronēsis* is the idea that '*phronēsis* is historically implicated', by which he means, firstly, that 'it is bounded by unacknowledged conditions and unintended consequences', and, secondly, that 'it can be distorted by various forms of self-deception'.[190] The exercise of making sense and arriving at balanced judgment is never accompanied by a guaranteed outcome in the sense of being entirely free from the risk of error and distortion. The ethical-moral character of the *phronimos* and the continuous cultivation of *phronēsis* within the community, are essential requirements if the risk of distortion in identifying the good and the risk of self-deception in acting to secure it is to be lessened.

McLaughlin realises that the 'historical implicatedness' of *phronēsis* calls for due attention to be given to various situations within the Catholic tradition where the dimensions of practical wisdom and judgment need to be emphasized. McLaughlin was critically aware of how 'ambiguities and questions' might arise in relation to questions concerning the distinctiveness of Catholic education and the Catholic school simply

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[185] See, Aristotle, *NE*,1, 2; I, 4; X, 9.
[186] Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, Notre Dame, IND: University of Notre Dame Press, 3rd edn., 2007, pp. 146, 221-223.
[187] "The Distinctiveness of Catholic Education", p. 145.
[188] Ibid., p. 149.
[189] Ibid., p. 149.
[190] Charles W. Allen, "The Primacy of *Phronesis*", pp. 364-365.

because 'the Catholic tradition of faith and life' (a feature contributing to distinctiveness) might itself be susceptible to 'different interpretation' from one historical period to another.[191] The beliefs that articulate Catholic education in practice, while necessarily displaying a continuity of some kind, may give rise to different emphases in different epochs reflecting the 'phenomenon of dispute and disagreement within the Church'.[192] The interpretative task which is required in relation to several substantive matters of theory and practice in historically situated Catholic educational communities requires balanced judgment of a high order.

A fourth element of Allen's description of *phronēsis* emphasizes how this specific type of 'sense-making' is 'always provoked by relatively singular contexts'.[193] Allen defines 'singular contexts' as contexts 'whose intelligibility depends on noting not only how they are to be related to other contexts but also how they are to be distinguished from every other context and, finally, how these two aspects are to be inter-related'.[194] Allen believes that Aristotle has this inter-relationship in mind when he speaks of 'universals and particulars' in *Nicomachean Ethics*.[195] 'Scientific knowledge', *epistēmē*, it will be recalled, is said to consist in 'forming judgments about things that are universal and necessary, demonstrable truths that depend on first principles'.[196] One should note that *phronēsis* is not concerned with 'universals' and 'particulars' as they are understood in formal logic, where 'universals' are completely invariant and 'particulars' function only as instances of 'universals'.[197]

McLaughlin's analytical approach to philosophy of education, with its 'aversion' to the kind of philosophy that would offer an account on a grand scale of the nature of reality and the place of human beings within it, as already mentioned above, may have pre-disposed him to seeking knowledge and understanding in 'relatively singular contexts'. As an analytical philosopher, his field of operation was pre-eminently the 'relatively singular context', where his focus dwelt on analysing significant terms and concepts arising in a given situation, critically evaluating educationally significant practices,

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[191] "Distinctiveness and the Catholic School", p. 201.
[192] Terence McLaughlin et al., *The Contemporary Catholic School*, p. 149.
[193] "The Primacy of *Phronesis*", p. 365.
[194] Ibid., p. 366.
[195] Aristotle, *NE* VI, 7, 1141b15-16: 'Phronēsis is not concerned with universals only; it must also take cognizance of particulars'. See also, *NE* VI, 8, 11
[196] Ibid., 1140b31-1141a2.
[197] Charles W. Allen, "The Primacy of *Phronesis*", p. 366.

policies, aims, purposes, functions, theories, and so forth.[198]

McLaughlin is, of course, a prime example of an analytical philosopher who moved away from a pre-occupation with 'second order' issues to more substantive concerns. Still, his analytical bent of mind makes him suspicious of unduly general statements and claims, and causes him to prefer working from, not general statements or theories, but from specific questions and problems, arising in particular situations and demanding a practical response, corresponding closely with a willingness to seek meaning in the concrete particular that is born of his phronetic commitment. McLaughlin, with his sophisticated understanding of the nature of the relationship between theory and practice, rarely if ever resorts to, or expects the simple application of universal principles to result in 'balanced discernment and judgment' in any concrete situation.

'Phronetic sense-making in relatively singular contexts', one might say, is a hallmark of McLaughlin's study of Catholic education and schooling. Thus, for instance, he has chosen to write about a very specific topic, the 'distinctiveness' of the Catholic school, and offered an analysis of the complexities involved in the claim to distinctiveness, as well as highlighting the underlying different conception of education involved in this claim.[199] McLaughlin does not explore this question of distinctiveness in the kind of abstract and theoretical way that would involve reference to philosophical first principles, as Maritain might have done. In his focus on particularity, McLaughlin reminds us that 'a school is not a seminary', concerned with the explanation of 'abstract or theoretical ideas in a detached and disinterested way'.[200] *Au contraire*, a school is engaged in 'a practical exercise of great complexity' which calls for many 'forms of practical knowledge and understanding, for judgment and wisdom, skill, disposition and commitment' on the part of teachers and educational leaders.[201]

A final element of Allen's definition of *phronēsis* stresses that 'the ways in which *phronēsis* makes sense are appropriate to its subject matter'.[202] Contextuality is as ever directly relevant to the interpretation we give to, or find within a given text or situation. Aristotle, early on in *Nicomachean Ethics*, states that one mark of a well-educated person is 'to look for precision in each class of things just so far as the nature of the

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[198] "Education, Philosophy and the Comparative Perspective", pp. 36-37.
[199] "Distinctiveness and the Catholic School", pp. 199-217.
[200] Ibid., p. 204.
[201] Ibid., p. 204.
[202] Ibid., p. 366.

subject admits'.[203] The same degree of precision is not to be expected in all discussions, Aristotle adds. In human action, much difference and variety exists. In discussing topics and arguing from evidence, we must often be satisfied with a broad outline of the truth.[204] Where practical engagement, or 'praxis', is concerned, there is too much 'variety and fluctuation' for it to be judged by the standards of precision used in scientific or mathematical proof. Because of its practical engagement with 'relatively singular contexts', phronetic thinking has to be in important respects 'flexible rather than rigid', Allen concludes.[205]

Allen's suggestion of the term 'elastic' is a good descriptor of what phronetic sense-making is able to achieve, where in many practical situations we may have to be content 'to indicate the truth roughly and in outline'.[206] Any sort of 'elastic' sense-making resists attempts to classify everything into one rigid, hierarchically ordered system. At the same time, however, one has to be careful, if one would avoid the charge of 'relativism', to preserve some kind of continuity of meaning across situations and avoid the creation of isolated, unrelated realms of meaning. 'Elastic' sense-making needs to be construed in phronetic terms, insofar as any sense-making involves an interplay of meanings and norms, and must be open to communal accountability.[207]

McLaughlin appreciated the need for a sense of discernment in practical situations where particularity seemed to be in conflict with the demands of universality. His concern is reflected in his comments about the proper relationship between 'theory' and 'practice'. This relationship rules out any kind of crude application of 'theory' to practice. [208] McLaughlin believes that a more adequate view of this relationship sees 'theory' as initially developed in practice. Much practice is 'unreflective and tacit in character' and more 'explicit and systematic theory' has a role in gradually 'sophisticating this understanding in an appropriate way', thereby contributing to the development of a body of educational practices 'informed and justified by defensible practical theory'.[209] On this view, abstract or theoretical analyses would still have an indispensable value and role and 'theory', as the guardian of the universal, would be

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[203] Aristotle, *NE* I, 3, 1094b25.
[204] Ibid.
[205] Charles W. Allen, "The Primacy of *Phronesis*", p. 366.
[206] Aristotle, *NE* I, 3, 1094b21.
[207] Ibid., pp. 368.
[208] "Distinctiveness and the Catholic School", p. 206.
[209] Ibid., p. 206.

able to make known its demands in the context of the particular.

## IV

## Constructing a 'Phronetic Discourse' for the Re-Articulation of Catholic Philosophy of Education

The availability of a full-blown 'phronetic discourse' would be an undoubted boon to the Catholic educator and to the Catholic philosopher of education seeking its re-articulation. The term 'discourse' often means no more than the activity and forms of communication that contribute to particular institutionalised ways of thinking. It is more appropriate to understand 'discourse', in the first instance, as a distinctive kind of inquiry that allows us to engage in and to articulate and support our world-view, our theories about reality, or enable us to discover the nature and structure of a discipline or theory. Walsh defines 'discourse' as 'a sustained and disciplined form of inquiry, discussion and exposition that is logically unique in some significant way'.[210] As individuals and communities, we need discourse-based frameworks, not just to conduct inquiry, but for the purpose of facilitating communication and sustaining rational living.

A discourse community that accorded a priority to *phronēsis* would not only have a customary set of defining characteristics, including common goals, mechanisms of inter-communication, bodies of texts or practices, and so on. A phronetic discourse community would be characterised by ways of thought, habits of mind, and methods of communication significantly distinct to enable the achievement of its principal and defining goal or rationale. A discourse-based theory of *phronēsis* would have implications not only for classroom pedagogy but for the articulation of one's understanding of education as such.

This is the kind of backdrop against which the Catholic philosopher of education who would seek to construct a 'phronetic *discourse*', as distinct from the adoption of a 'phronetic *approach*' for Catholic education, would have to develop his or her thoughts. He or she would be faced with difficult questions: Can such a discourse pattern be constructed? What would be some of its characteristic features? Of what benefit to the re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education might such discourse be? Whether

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[210] Paddy Walsh, *Education and Meaning*, pp. 52-53.

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McLaughlin ever envisaged the formal construction of a 'phronetic discourse' is not known. Certainly, to date, there does not appear to be any scholar currently engaged upon such a project, either because of its impossibility, irrelevance to the practice of Catholic education, or the difficulty of reconciling the concept to the thinking and *mores* of postmodernity.

McLaughlin's conclusion that Aristotelian *phronēsis* is a matter 'worthy of sustained attention' does not cause him to close his eyes to some of the difficulties that the notion of a phronetic approach and its widespread employment as a way of thinking in Catholic educational practice must of necessity expect to meet in practice. A central difficulty noted by McLaughlin seems to be that *phrónēsis* 'demands established and relatively stable communities of practice', where there is 'a stable and rooted sense of the sort of person a teacher should be and the sort of practice education is'.[211] Susan Pendlebury argues that the notion of 'pedagogic *phronēsis*' demands flourishing and relatively stable 'communities of practice'.[212] Whether the Catholic tradition of faith and life in many Catholic schools is sufficiently 'established' in the required sense is obviously a matter for debate.

Another difficulty noted by McLaughlin is that, given the 'differences of view about education which are characteristic of modernity and post-modernity', there has to be a question as to whether *phrónēsis* possesses 'a sufficiently robust and sceptical form of reflection to do justice to the genuine demands of fundamental query and criticism', or 'the resources to defend itself against sceptical and relativist accusations that it is itself only one conception competing against others'.[213] McLaughlin acknowledges the inevitability of tension between the demands of 'rooted-ness' and openness to 'criticism', which is perhaps more accentuated in the context of a distinctive 'community of commitment' than in a 'common school'.[214]

Notwithstanding these and other difficulties associated with a phronetic approach to educational thinking, McLaughlin accorded a certain primacy to *phronēsis* throughout his philosophy of education, and this disposition is clearly discernible not least in his study of the Catholic school and Catholic education. McLaughlin would have been very

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[211] "Beyond the Reflective Teacher", p. 77

[212] Susan Pendlebury, "Practical reasoning and situational appreciation in teaching", *Educational Theory*, Vol. 40, 1990, pp. 171-179.

[213] "Beyond the Reflective Teacher", pp. 77-78.

[214] Ibid., p. 78.

much aware of the limitations and difficulties associated with the practice of 'pedagogic *phronēsis*', in Catholic education and elsewhere. The very suggestion that a Catholic form of 'pedagogic *phronēsis*' might be explored, McLaughlin himself advises us, 'may encounter a number of objections and difficulties'.[215] A clear challenge for a re-articulated Catholic philosophy of education would be the resolution of these problems and the installation at its core of *phronēsis* as a model, not only for pedagogical reflection, but for philosophical discernment and the exercise of practical reason throughout the field of Catholic education.

It would seem, fortunately, that although objections to *phronēsis* and difficulties with reconciling the notion to the thinking and *mores* of postmodernity are inevitable, they are not insuperable. A robust notion of *phronēsis* is perhaps not so much a hostage to fashion as one might at first be persuaded to believe. This ancient Aristotelian notion, as Hans-Georg Gadamer, for one, attempts to show, is capable of addressing and raising vital issues in our own times.[216] Much depends upon the definition of *phronēsis* and the primacy one wishes to accord it in understanding rationality.

# V

## Summary

The context of time and place, and the timbre of theological and philosophical reasoning characteristic of the age, matter greatly to the philosophy of education elucidated by scholars, as the cases of Maritain, Lonergan, and McLaughlin amply illustrate. Their very different contexts alter radically their perspectives on so many facets of their philosophizing about education. The extent to which philosophy of education engages in mutual and reciprocal dialogue with other disciplines has also varied. But the Catholic understanding of the relationship between faith and reason persists, always growing and developing, and being, ultimately, a truly significant factor for what one thinks about the nature and purpose of Catholic philosophy of education.[217]

In Chapter Two, above, we saw how Maritain was driven by what seemed to him an almost heaven-sent injunction: 'Woe to me if I do not Thomisticize!' He understood the

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[215] *Liberalism, Education and Schooling*, pp. 77, 208.
[216] Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, London: Continuum, 1975 (3rd rvsd edn).
[217] See, John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, 1998, for the continuing importance of the faith-reason dialogue in Catholic life.

primary task of Catholic philosophy of education (as, indeed, he envisaged the task imperative upon him in the many other areas – aesthetic, political, religious, social – of his life's work) to lie in the analysis of education's ends and processes in the light of his reading of the work of Aquinas, and the application of fundamental Thomistic principles to the problems and challenges of Catholic education in the face of positivism and de-Christianization, the twin threats to the religious condition of his contemporaries, as it seemed to him. Aristotelian-Thomistic principles, the fruit of human reason illuminated by the light of Christian faith, not the tenets of these philosophies, constituted for Maritain the true and appropriate rationality for the Christian philosopher. In essence, this is Maritain's gift to the re-articulation of a Catholic philosophy of education.

In chapter three, the imperative that drove Lonergan was noted, namely, the need for Catholic thought to be transposed into a more contemporary and adequately theoretic context in a new effort of analysis and synthesis while preserving its basic elements. Lonergan, also indebted to Aquinas, brought his cognitional theory and transcendental method, both arising out of his massive study of human understanding, to the task of 'lifting and shifting' Catholic thought on to 'the level of the times'. There is in Lonergan, Langdon Gilkey has noted perceptively, more of the 'intent' than the 'content' of Aquinas, more of the 'eros' of Thomas than the conceptual principles and structures that Scholasticism handed on to later generations.[218] Lonergan, then, would offer the project of re-articulating a Catholic philosophy of education, not the structural elements (Aristotelianism and a version of Augustinian theology in the main) of the medieval Thomist system, but the *eros*, or 'intent' of St. Thomas, that is to say, 'the desire to interpret the Christian tradition through the use of a coherent and systematic unity of thought', based on the fruits of human knowing, in philosophy, and in the natural and human sciences.[219]

McLaughlin's imperative, finally, might well have been Aristotle's 'deliberating well about the good in concrete and contingent circumstances', the *phronēsis* at the centre of the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Equally as significant as the analytical disposition and body of skills that he employed unceasingly in the clarification and justification of concepts and

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[218] Langdon Gilkey, "Response to Lonergan", *The Journal of Religion*, 1978,Vol. 51, Supplement, pp. S18-S23.
[219] Ibid., p. S18.

principles in the context of philosophy of education, McLaughlin's appropriation of Aristotelian *phronēsis* rates highly as a significant gift to the re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education. McLaughlin was keenly aware of the search for a non-foundationalist rationality across many disciplines. Committed sincerely to the foundational principles of Catholic Christianity, McLaughlin's was a quite sophisticated and nuanced 'foundationalism', which in tandem with the 'phronetic trajectory' he attempted to map out for philosophy of education, enabled him to negotiate confidently the challenges for Catholic philosophy of education in the face of moderate postmodernism and life in a liberal democratic society.

It is opportune, now, to consider what kind of response the recently published authoritative, ecclesiastically sanctioned, discourse on the Catholic school and Catholic education, promulgated by the Congregation for Catholic Education, might be prepared to make to the work of the three contemporary philosophers we have been considering. This is the essence of the task to be attempted in chapter five following. In assessing the possibilities available to Catholic philosophy of education from these sources, this dissertation argues that any kind of dialogue between the philosophically explicit discourses above and the theological-pastoral discourse of the CCE, is likely to bear fruit only if it is promoted within an interrogatory framework, which truly reflects both the philosophical wisdom represented in the chapters above and focuses on features of the ecclesial discourse where there is significant potential for response and action.

**Chapter Five: A Philosophic Basis for the Literature on Education and Schooling of the Congregation for Catholic Education**

A major aim of this thesis has been to investigate aspects of the educational thought of three contemporary philosophers - Maritain, Lonergan, and McLaughlin - within the context of a project of re-articulating a Catholic philosophy of education. Earlier chapters sought to identify elements and recover dimensions of the educational theory of these philosophers that might be considered pertinent to the task of giving new expression to Catholic philosophy of education for today. At the same time, recognising the fact that there is now also in existence in the Catholic community a number of other less philosophically accented studies of Catholic education, including an initiative officially endorsed by the Holy See's Congregation for Catholic Education (CCE), this thesis envisaged a subsidiary aim of seeking to bring into dialogue, for the purpose of their mutual interrogation, the more patently philosophical discourse of the named philosophers and the more or less theological and pastoral perspective of the CCE discourse. It is to this aim that this concluding chapter is largely devoted.

The chapter is structured in two parts along the following lines. In Part one, there is, firstly, a brief resumé of the peculiar origin and purpose, character and genre, of the CCE discourse on the Catholic school, which is well enough known not to require detailed textual presentation in this context. Secondly, an outline is furnished of the particular framework of discourse analysis to be employed in attempting to correlate the quite different scholarly and Congregational reflections on the aims and practice of Catholic education. And to conclude this first part of the chapter, the nature of the challenge involved in facilitating the conversation between these discourses concerning three major aims of Catholic education is noted, and the hoped-for outcome of the dialogue is indicated.

In Part two of the chapter, there are set down three component strands of the CCE discourse on the Catholic school and Catholic education where it is considered that the more characteristically philosophical discourses of Maritain, Lonergan, and McLaughlin might be particularly pertinent to the task of buttressing the CCE discourse. It is suggested that the explicitly philosophical perspectives might provide the largely non-theoretical CCE discourse with a philosophic basis and framework for analysis, thereby complementing and strengthening it. Thus, Maritain's personalism and related Christian humanist perspective is proposed as an appropriate basis for a theoretical foundation for

the key CCE aim of the 'integral formation of the human person'.[1] Next, Lonergan's cognitional structure and interiority analysis, from which he derives his conviction that the human spirit driven by the desire to know is capable of 'sublating' all knowledge into a synthesis illumined by Christian faith, is put forward as being worth investigating in the context of another characteristic aim of the CCE discourse, namely, the 'integration of faith and culture'.[2] Finally, McLaughlin's 'phronetic discourse', that is, discourse arising out of, and contoured specifically by 'pedagogic *phronēsis*', is considered pertinent to the development of a more pronounced philosophical perspective regarding a third major aim of the CCE discourse, the construction of an 'educational / educative / educating community'.[3]

The chapter concludes that the kind of cross-fertilization that might result from bringing together these very different types of discourse, that is, the overtly philosophical and the more pastoral-theological discourse of the CCE, and the mutual interrogation arising out of their encounter, are matters that are worthwhile investigating in the context of the re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education and, indeed, invite further research in the area. An interrogatory framework that would facilitate the dialogue of discourses might be constructed following further investigation of the theoretical and practical issues involved here. It should be possible to formulate a set of imperatives which would provide a basis for a reading of the major themes of the CCE discourse in conjunction with the related philosophical principles that ground these themes. A series of questions with robust philosophical intent might be devised both to draw out what is problematical in the foundations of the major strands in the CCE discourse and to suggest ways of informing would-be students of this discourse as to how their philosophical reflection might be enhanced.

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[1] *GE (1965)*, No. **8**; *CS (1977)*, No. **8**.
[2] *GE (1965)*, No. **8**; *CS (1977)*, No. 37.
[3] *GE (1965)*, No. **8**; *CS (1977)*, No. 32.

# I

## Features of the CCE Corpus and its Availability for Philosophical Analysis

Over the past forty years, the Holy See's Congregation for Catholic Education (CCE) has addressed a number of key documents on the Catholic school to Conferences of Catholic Bishops worldwide inviting them, and through them all who work in the field of education at primary and secondary levels, to reflect on the meaning and goals of Christian education in the context of a rapidly growing secular and pluralist environment. Integral to this discourse is a largely tacit or un-spoken philosophy of education, characteristically personalist in nature, melded tightly with theological and pastoral perspectives familiar to those who work in the field. From the point of view of a re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education, this body of discourse while welcome is not without its problematic, as I shall note below. It is my contention, however, that at least selected aspects of this discourse can be entertained with profit to both the largely theological focus of the ecclesiastical discourse and to the philosophical perspective on education that is the subject of this thesis. Such mutual benefit can be derived from a creative dialogue, and a mutually interrogative stance, between selected themes of the CCE discourse and some of the major philosophical orientations in the work of the scholars studied here.

The vision and 'philosophy' of the Catholic school represented in the CCE discourse and its substantive theory of Catholic education are in reality drawn from interdisciplinary sources that include informal and general 'philosophical' stances, and a more explicit Christian, denominational theology. For that reason John Elias has suggested that the term 'philosophy of education' may need to be replaced by a term such as 'Catholic educational theory', to reflect the inter-disciplinary nature of the enterprise.[4] Whether the inter-disciplinary model is sufficient to reveal the structure and coherence one might demand from Catholic philosophy of education is, of course, another matter. How to describe the reality of Catholic education from the perspective of its foundational framework is not a matter of semantics, in truth. A thorough analysis of such an umbrella term as 'Catholic educational theory' is called for, and what

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[4] John L. Elias, "Whatever Happened to Catholic Philosophy of Education?" *Religious Education,* Vol. 94, No. 1 (Winter, 1999), p. 105.

'philosophising about education' means in this context may need to be investigated more thoroughly than is possible in the present thesis.

The limited purpose in this concluding chapter is simply to ascertain to what extent selected themes of the CCE discourse are amenable to philosophical analysis understood in the broadest of terms, and to suggest various ways in which the philosophical perspectives of the scholars studied in earlier chapters may enhance that analysis. Due to its very specific nature and purpose, the CCE discourse appears to be deficient in terms of explicit philosophical basis and theoretical framework that might provide a comprehensive interpretive key for an understanding of Catholic philosophy of education. It does not seem to furnish us with much explicit philosophical criteria for an evaluation of the dominant themes and concepts of the discourse. Given the peculiar features of this discourse and the circumstances of its origin, a variety of hermeneutical foci might need to be considered appropriate for a comprehensive reading of the CCE discourse. A philosophy of education focus is but one of the approaches that may be employed in the study of this discourse and, within the limits that it is possible to do so, at least in the context of this study, is a valid approach.

## A Variety of Hermeneutical Foci for the Analysis of CCE Discourse

It is vitally important to note the distinctive character and method of presentation employed in the CCE discourse on the Catholic school and Catholic education. The documentation, as often is the case in Catholic thought, seeks for a continuity in the tradition and is written in the style of frequent reference to earlier authoritative statements relating to education and schooling. There is, by contrast, little by way of reference to contemporary educational discourse since the documentation is not designed primarily as a work of scholarship but rather as a source of vision and inspiration for the benefit of Catholic educators world-wide. The discourse is intentionally designed to permit a reading, and to encourage an appropriation of its message and content, in a pre-theoretical manner. Authentic belief relating to, and cast in a language with which the Catholic educational community is familiar, precedes complex philosophical or theological articulation of positions based on that faith. Because the content is not presented as a fully articulated theology or philosophy of education, a more direct access by diverse social and cultural audiences to the core message is hoped for. The need for CCE discourse continuously to justify its statements,

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and to critique other philosophical positions, discourse, or vocabulary, which might distract from, or interfere with, or undermine engagement with its dominant faith stance, is thus eliminated.

This distinctive character of the CCE discourse on Catholic schooling and education means that it can be engaged with via a number of distinctive hermeneutical foci. Three different interpretative paradigms can be envisaged as appropriate hermeneutical instruments for the investigation of this corpus. These might be conveniently designated as: (1) A Catholic Social Teaching approach and methodology; (2) a Philosophy of Education framework or perspective, and (3) a Pastoral Theological paradigm or model. For a comprehensive reading of the CCE literature that is beyond the scope of the present thesis, it would probably be unnecessary to decide between these various perspectives and a harmonious combination of approaches might be the ideal way to engage with this discourse. It seems to me, however, that the most obvious hermeneutical focus that one might select in the present context, namely, the philosophy of education perspective, is the least well developed in the CCE literature and, at least as far as explicit content, as distinct from general principles, is concerned, leaves much to be desired.

**Characterisation of Dominant Features of the CCE Educational Corpus**

It is important to bear in mind, I think, that the CCE corpus, relating to various aspects of the 'Catholic school' and offering an account of Christian education very largely from the perspective of a Catholic understanding and practice of schooling, addresses first of all, and quite intentionally, the *Catholic school* in terms of its identity and distinctiveness, and not the nature of *Catholic education simpliciter*. The distinction is neither vacuous nor is the argument that follows from it specious, just as the distinction between 'schooling' and 'education' in general is not illogical or pointless. We know the thinking of the CCE about Catholic education only through an interpretative exercise carried out on the basis of and in relation to its views about the nature and purpose of Catholic schools. In the context of seeking a re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education to which the CCE discourse might contribute it is entirely legitimate to draw attention to this fact. To comment upon the selected educational principles judged to be present in the CCE discourse in terms of the wider perspectives available among contemporary scholars who have written about Catholic philosophy of

education demands that the discourse be properly contextualised.

## Theoretical Articulation in the CCE Documents

An important point that needs to be noted here relates to the distinctive method of teaching embodied in many of the Church's social documents, as well as in the *Catechism of The Catholic Church* [5], and in the education documents of the Congregation for Catholic Education. Here, elements of Catholic truth are presented, not as an overt and fully articulated theology, or moral philosophy, or indeed, educational philosophy, but simply as 'Truth', to be accepted and lived in the real life situations of believers. From an analysis of the content of the documents scholars can, of course, attempt to work back through to the complex and varied philosophies and theologies that have inevitably been used to articulate, explain and defend the faith. But the key to the documents is that the teaching itself can be appropriated in a pre-theoretical way. The documents seem designed intentionally to permit a reading and an appropriation of the teaching in such a pre-theoretical way. Obviously, one doesn't have to be a theologian or a philosopher to believe; in any case, authentic belief for Catholics always in some way precedes the more complex philosophical and theological articulations of that belief.[6]

This kind of procedure has its attractions because it reasserts the primacy of the lived experience of ordinary religious and moral life over the forms of clever rationalization that are provided on a regular basis by contemporary scholars of whatever variety. But ordinary religious and moral experience cannot always withstand the solvent of criticism, not because it lacks a grounding in truth, but rather because of the way religious and moral practices are complex wholes that involve a shared perception of a life lived in common, which cannot be appreciated by adopting some external philosophical or theological critical standpoint.[7] This comment is not designed to devalue the significance of CCE documents or the method of teaching and handing on the faith which they illustrate. One can readily acknowledge the value of a pre-theoretical articulation of Catholic beliefs and moral, social and educational principles

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[5] *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1994, London: Geoffrey Chapman.

[6] I am indebted to Dr. Paul J. Kelly, formerly of Department of Political Theory and Government, University of Wales, Swansea, for this insight into an understanding of Catholic social teaching. His unpublished paper titled, *The Family as an Institution and a Metaphor in Catholic Social Teaching*, delivered to the Newman Society in Swansea, circa 1994, has been most helpful in regard to the discussion here.

[7] Paul J. Kelly, ibid., page 2.

in this specific context. Because the content is not presented as an articulated theology or philosophy, a more direct access to the central truth, to the key message, is rendered possible, and a greater engagement with the wider world of social, political, moral and educational theorising is enabled. The need continuously to reject differences of philosophical method, discourse or vocabulary, which might undermine engagement with the faith stance is thus eliminated.

This is not to suggest, either, that the Church, in her educational or other teaching documents, sees no need for philosophy and other disciplines in the articulation of Christian truth. For long periods of its history, Catholic tradition regarded philosophy as an *ancilla* ('handmaiden') of theology. Though no longer a matter of subservience of the one discipline to the other, the kind of special relationship between faith and reason which is a characteristic of the Catholic theological tradition, has been acknowledged by, among others, Langdon Gilkey[8]. Gilkey records how, throughout Catholic history, there has been 'a drive toward rationality', that is to say, an insistence that the divine mystery be insofar as possible 'penetrated, defended, and explicated by the most acute rational reflection'.[9]

Having said all this, it has to be admitted that a Catholic philosophy of education that wishes to engage in dialogue in a contemporary, secularist environment, that wants to meet the challenges of historical consciousness in Lonergan's phrase, must be prepared to utilise and coordinate the best resources of Catholic faith, of reason and philosophy, of the findings of the human sciences that relate to teaching and learning, as well as the wisdom of its own tradition, in the effort to understand, explain and transform human persons and human life in community.

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[8] Langdon Gilkey, *Catholicism Confronts Modernity: A Protestant View*, New York: Seabury Press, 1975.
[9] Ibid., pp. 20-22.

# II

## The CCE Corpus of Educational Thought as 'Discourse'

To decide to what extent the CCE corpus might be subjected to proper philosophical analysis with a view to its enhancement, and especially to facilitate its dialogue with contemporary society, I intend, firstly, to reflect briefly on the sense in which it is possible to characterise the CCE output as 'discourse' and the implications this has for our understanding of it. In this connection, I draw on the work of Paddy Walsh in relation to discourse analysis and the reflective teacher.[10]

Walsh has argued for a view of educational theory as a reality 'emergent in practice and forming a single complex with practice'.[11] Education, he claims, is a typical area in which the theory is to be 'sought in the practice and the ideals of the practice, to a significant extent'.[12] A good deal of 'theoretical reflection' on education, Walsh believes, needs to be 'located within the practice of education itself'.[13] One can make a reasonable case for the claim that a Catholic philosophy, or theory, of education is better sought in the practice of Catholic education and in the ideals of that practice, rather than in the invocation of abstract principles *ab extra* after the manner of, say, Maritain. This is the position adopted in this dissertation and the perspective within which the re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education is envisioned.

The question then arises as to the extent to which the theoretical reflection contained in the CCE corpus does in fact provide an adequate source, in conjunction with the practice of Catholic education, from which a vibrant Catholic philosophy of education might emerge. A theory that is 'adequate to educational practice', Walsh argues, is required to be 'seriously *philosophical*', that is to say, 'notably broad and notably coherent', as well as 'practical'.[14] Walsh articulates such a theory, that is, his 'emergent theory' paradigm, by means of the notion of 'discourse'.[15] A 'discourse', he proposes, is

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[10] Paddy Walsh, "Discourses of the reflective educator", *Journal of the Philosophy of Education*, Vol. 26, No. 2, 1992, pp. 139-52.
[11] Paddy Walsh, *Education and Meaning: Philosophy in Practice*, London: Cassell, 1993, p. 52. Hereafter cited as: *Education and Meaning*.
[12] Ibid., p. 47.
[13] Ibid., pp. 46-47.
[14] Ibid., p. 52.
[15] Ibid., p. 52.

'a sustained and disciplined form of enquiry, discussion and exposition that is logically unique in some significant way'.[16] Walsh uses this notion as he attempts to distinguish and relate the 'different voices in the theory that is emergent in good practice'.[17] He further proposes the thesis that educational theory is 'a cluster of four discourses relating to educational practice, namely, 'utopian', 'deliberative', 'evaluative' and 'scientific' discourses.[18] Each of these discourses, he suggests, 'stands in a unique relationship to practice', but the stance of each 'presupposes and supports that of the other three'.[19] These four discourses, in many ways inter-dependent and each integral to the theory of education, are able, he asserts, to offer 'profoundly complementary perspectives on educational practice'.[20]

It is possible, I think, to use Walsh's fourfold discourse in an attempt to articulate and evaluate the kind of theory that might emerge from the practice of Catholic education that is guided and supported by the CCE discourse. It will be my contention that Walsh's 'utopian discourse' largely predominates in the practice of Catholic education insofar as the CCE corpus influences it, and that the relative neglect of the other forms of discourse in Walsh's cluster inevitably means that the theory of Catholic education which emerges is weakened in important respects.[21] If this is really the case, one needs to appeal to the scholars studied in the earlier chapters of this thesis to remediate the situation and to contribute to the emergence of a more robust Catholic philosophy of education for our times. Walsh refers repeatedly to the inter-relationships that he perceives among the various forms of discourse and he notes how discussion and writing about the philosophy that arises from practice is able 'to switch easily and coherently from one discourse to another'.[22] It is part of my concern for the adequacy of a theoretical base and framework of analysis in Catholic philosophy of education based on the CCE literature that these documents as a whole do not make explicit the existence of different discourses much less develop the relationship between them.

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[16] Ibid., pp. 52-53.
[17] Ibid., p. 52.
[18] Ibid., p. 53.
[19] Ibid., p. 53.
[20] *Education and Meaning*, p. 53.
[21] It is important to note that the phrase 'utopian discourse' as used by Walsh does not imply any of the usual pejorative connotations associated with this adjective.
[22] Ibid., p. 58.

## 'Utopian Discourse' in the CCE Corpus

'Utopian discourse' is described by Walsh as that 'form of discourse in which ideal visions and abstract principles are formulated and argued over'.[23] It has two defining characteristics. Firstly, it is 'directly committed to the flourishing of education as an aspect of a wider human flourishing'.[24] Secondly, its focus is not just any good, but 'the ideal' good.[25] Although other areas of human activity also have their 'ideal scenarios', in Walsh's view, education's 'integral aspiration to a view of life as a whole' implies that its utopian discourse is particularly 'broad and complete in its scope'.[26] Education's utopian discourse, Walsh explains, embraces discussions of 'educational values in relation to general life values, analyses of cultural capital, and theories of many aspects of human development'.[27] It is committed to seeking some sort of coherence across these various discussions and theories, as it looks to a set of visions of human development that will resonate with each other and relate to the educational values under discussion.

It is clearly the case that discourse relating to 'the pursuit of an ideal', and ultimately to the ideal of human flourishing as understood in the Catholic tradition of educational thought, is a central feature of the CCE documentation on the Catholic school, as indeed it is of earlier sources from which that discourse draws its inspiration.[28] Catholic education has a number of defining characteristics that, to the outside observer at any rate, must in some measure be seen to, 'eschew the question of attainability', and to entertain no more than 'ideal scenarios'.[29] Thus, Catholic education ideally is 'inspired by a supernatural vision' that focuses on the transcendent dimension of human destiny; it is committed to the 'integral formation of the human person'; it is 'imbued with a worldview' that is desirous of permeating the whole curriculum; it is 'animated by a sense of Christian communion and community', and is 'sustained by an authentic witness to Gospel values' in an educational community that is committed to the

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[23] Ibid., p. 45.
[24] Ibid., p. 53.
[25] Ibid., p. 53
[26] Ibid., p. 53.
[27] Ibid., p. 53.
[28] See Pius XI, *DIM (1929)*, No.s 6-8 on the notion of Christian 'perfection' and how Catholic education seeks to empower children and young people in the pursuit of perfection. John Passmore has written an excellent account of Christian perfection, in John Passmore, *The Perfectibility of Man*, Indianapolis Liberty Fund, 2000 (3rd edn.)
[29] *Education and Meaning*, p. 53.

evangelising mission of the Church.[30] The nature of the ideal that Catholic education proposes for its schools seems to oblige it to embark on a quest for the kind of completeness and coherence of which Walsh speaks in connection with utopian discourse.[31]

It would be wrong, Walsh reminds us, to suppose that 'utopian discourse is always full-blown and visionary', or, 'dogmatic and a-temporal', even when it tends to conjure up 'committed, completed and forever powerful portraits of education'.[32] To engage in utopian discourse at all is, for some, a totally impractical project. This is not a view that could be entertained in Catholic philosophy of education. It is important, however, that one remembers that utopian discourse is just one of a cluster of discourses constituting educational theory. While utopian discourse plays a critical role in identifying aims and values in education, it is only in conjunction with other modes of discourse, such as for example, 'deliberative discourse', that these aims can in practice be achieved.

## The 'Vision-Guided Nature' of the CCE Discourse

Closely related to Walsh's idea of 'utopian discourse' is a conception of education that has been described by the notion of 'vision'. Vision is commonly understood as a distinctive apprehension of reality of a special kind. Here, the concern is with 'vision' embodied within a community of practice and focused on the self-understanding of, and conception of the aims and purposes of that practice. 'Vision-guided' institutions are portrayed by Daniel Pekarsky as institutions 'organised around conceptions of what they are most fundamentally about, conceptions that give meaning and direction to the activities of the participants and to the enterprise as a whole'.[33] This concept of 'vision' has often been used to prescribe a strategy for an organization or a business. In this usage vision might be described as a 'mission statement' that gives expression to aims and objectives to be pursued, and is designed to provide motivation and focus for the achievement of the institution's goals and values. This kind of perspective on vision is often associated with external outcomes, with the movement from theory to practice, and from practice to measurable outcomes.

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[30] Most Rev. J. Michael Miller, CSB, "Five Essential Marks of Catholic Schools", pp. 17-63. In: *The Holy See's Teaching on Catholic Schools*, Atlanta: Sophia Institute Press, 2006.
[31] *Education and Meaning*, p. 53.
[32] Ibid., p. 54.
[33] Daniel Pekarsky, "Vision and Education: Arguments, Counter-Arguments, Rejoinders", *American Journal of Education*, Vol. 113, May 2007, pp. 423-450 (426). Hereafter cited as: "Vision and Education"

In the present context, however, the emphasis is rather on a process internal to the practice. Used in the context of understanding Catholic education one would expect a vision to express some conception of what education should be fundamentally *about* and to prescribe, implicitly at least, a coherent set of principles that would give shape and direction to the process.[34] Schools and educators, in addition to being judged on external effectiveness, have sometimes been charged by, for example, authors like Neil Postman amongst others, with having an insufficiently clear and compelling sense of purpose, of having guiding ideals that are vague, give little direction and are thus unable to generate much commitment.[35] 'Vision-guided' education aims in part to address this issue. It seeks to explain clearly the conception of what a school is most fundamentally about, and attempts to identify the processes internal to the school community that enable it to achieve its aims. This dimension is very much to the fore in the CCE discourse on the Catholic school and Catholic education.[36]

'Vision', in this sense, is best described as 'existential vision', as Pekarsky terms it, and as it is intended to be understood here.[37] An 'existential vision', Pekarsky suggests, is 'a conception of the kind of person and community that one hopes to cultivate through the educational process'.[38] An 'existential vision' is an answer to the question about the *raison d'être* of the educational process and what the school is fundamentally about. It expresses the need for some kind of 'guiding conception of the person and of the community' that education is designed to cultivate. The cultivation of the individual along various, organically interrelated dimensions - intellectual, affective, moral, cognitive, and others – is seen to be intimately connected with the process of realizing community, and both aims are fostered equally by the school. A conception of the kind of person we hope will emerge from the educational process, Pekarsky writes, 'is intimately connected with a conception of the kind of community that he or she will share in'.[39] Similarly, the attempt to foster a thriving community of a certain kind 'necessitates the cultivation of individuals whose qualities of hearts and minds are

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[34] Daniel Pekarsky, "The place of vision in Jewish education", *Journal of Jewish Education*, Vol. 63, Winter/Spring, 1997, pp. 31-40 (31). See also, Seymour Fox, Israel Scheffler & Daniel Marom (Eds.), *Visions of Jewish Education*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
[35] See, Neil Postman, *The End of Education: Redefining the Value of the School* , New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995; A.G. Powell, E. Farrar, & D.K. Cohen, *The Shopping Mall High School*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1985.
[36] See, for example, *CS(1977)*, No.s 25-27, 33-37, 53-56, 73.
[37] "Vision and Education", p. 426.
[38] Ibid., p. 426.
[39] Ibid., p. 426

congenial to its requirements'.[40]

An 'existential vision' should be at the centre of our conception of education and its purposes, Pekarsky claims, and this is a view that the CCE educational discourse would certainly share. An 'existential vision' seeks to identify what a particular existence (in Pekarsky's case, a Jewish existence, in ours, a Catholic one), in its social and / or individual dimension, would look like if fully realized.[41] Such existential visions, Pekarsky claims, are to be found not only implicitly in the social life of communities but more explicitly in the inherited writings and traditions of the community. An existential vision, Pekarsky importantly adds, can be 'more or less filled-in', that is, it might consist of 'a thick, ordered constellation of attitudes, skills, understandings, and dispositions'; or it might be limited to 'a particular attitude or way of approaching the world and the skills and understandings that make this possible'.[42] It is not to be assumed, however, Pekarsky notes, that an existential vision is always necessarily coextensive with an entire way of life of a community.[43]

It is precisely at this point, perhaps, that the educational vision of the CCE discourse seeks to differ from that of others. The CCE vision, in keeping with the tradition of Catholic educational thinking regarding the aims of the Catholic school, seeks a very close relationship between the school and the Catholic community, its beliefs, values, and way of life. Indeed, the Catholic school, as the most important locus for human and Christian formation, is also envisioned in terms of its 'ecclesial identity' and regarded as 'a genuine instrument' of the Church's mission.[44] The CCE's 'vision' is not just about a set of 'inspiring ideas' as such, but is a 'vision-for-education', that is, a programme of ideals that are, as Pekarsky puts it, 'embodied in a credible conception of how they might be interpreted and meaningfully implemented' in a given set of circumstances, in this case, in the life and work of the Catholic school.[45]

McLaughlin, analysing the distinctiveness of the Catholic school in contra-distinction to the common school, appreciates the closeness of fit between vision and way of life

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[40] Ibid., p. 426.
[41] "The Place of Vision in Jewish Education", p. 32.
[42] "The Place of Vision in Jewish Education", p. 32.
[43] Ibid., p. 32.
[44] *CSTTM (1997)*, No.s 11-12.
[45] Daniel Pekarsky, "Catching the Wave: Next Steps in Advancing the Vision-in-Practice Agenda", *Journal of Jewish Education*, Vol. 74, 2008, pp. 16-28 (19).

intended by the Church's educational discourse. In this connection he raises the question of the 'temptations of commonality' that face the Catholic school, tempted as it may be to compromise on its substantial or comprehensive vision, perhaps by putting aside its 'thick or substantial views of the human good'.[46] Elsewhere, McLaughlin underscores the same priority of desired close fit between ideal and practice, of co-extensiveness of vision and way of life of the Catholic community, when he speaks of the wider mandate for the exercise of educational influence based on an overall philosophy of life that faith schools enjoy.[47] The co-extensiveness of vision and Catholic way of life implies that the Catholic school is not to ignore, much less to forget, the fact of its religiously tethered education and spirituality.[48] The 'vision-in-action' of the Catholic school makes it alert to 'the demands of substantiality', which means that its work must 'satisfy conditions which go beyond the procedural or the minimalistic'. No combination of under-interpreted principles can meet the demands of substantiality without an overall vision of life as a whole.[49]

There can be little doubt that central features of Catholic education and schooling as represented in the CCE literature, mainly those concerned with the aims and goals of education, the holistic influence of a religious perspective, and the quality of the ethos of the Catholic school, all appear to qualify it as aspirational discourse and pre-eminently 'vision-guided education'. To claim that the Catholic school sets out 'to be a school for the human person and of the human person', to forefront the 'promotion of the human person' as the goal of the Catholic school in this way, is to adopt an 'existential vision' *par excellence*.[50] For this purpose the Catholic school must be characterised by a 'vision-in-action' so as to be 'a place of integral formation of the human person through a clear educational endeavour of which Christ is the foundation'.[51] The manner and extent to which this 'vision-guided' approach should, and can, contribute to the articulation of a Catholic philosophy of education needs to be

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[46] T. H. McLaughlin, "Distinctiveness of the Catholic School", *Liberalism, Education and Schooling*, pp. 214-217. For the notion of 'thick 'substantial views of the human good, see McLaughlin, "Education of the Whole Child?", *Liberalism, Education and Schooling*, pp. 52, 54-55.
[47] T. H. McLaughlin, "Philosophy, Values and Schooling", *Liberalism, Education and Schooling*, pp. 234-238.
[48] T. H. McLaughlin, "Education, Spirituality and the Common School", *Liberalism, Education and Schooling*, pp. 239-245.
[49] T. H. McLaughlin, "Sex Education, Moral Controversy and the Common School", *Liberalism, Education and Schooling*, pp. 267, 269, 279.
[50] *CSTTM (1997)*, No. 9.
[51] Ibid., No.s 9-10.

assessed. Such an assessment is all the more important in view of some of the criticisms that can and have been made in regard to this way of visualizing the meaning, aims and basic purposes of education.

# III

## CCE 'Vision-Guided' Educational Discourse: A Challenge for Catholic Philosophy of Education

To the extent that the CCE discourse is adequately categorised as 'vision-guided' and 'aspirational', it is subject to the range of criticism usually directed at this genre of discourse. The CCE discourse, however, is well-constructed and has probably been composed with a view to communicating its positive reflection on the nature, purpose, and distinctiveness of Catholic education in the full knowledge that, in a postmodern world, many of its central claims would be subject to challenge on philosophical or other grounds. CCE discourse is not, therefore, entirely without some element of defence and justification of its position, at least in relation to the major strands comprising the discourse. The question which is addressed throughout this dissertation relates to the sufficiency of this defence. Once it is accepted that Catholic philosophy of education is in need of re-articulation and that the CCE discourse has a part to play in this enterprise, the philosophical basis of the latter discourse becomes a relevant matter.

The point at issue here is not primarily the extent to which it becomes possible to realise in practice the aims and aspirations that utopian vision gives rise to. It is obviously difficult to say in relation to the CCE vision for Catholic education, for example, whether apparent failure to engage with the vision and to achieve its desired outcomes is due to the reluctance of the critical stakeholders 'to really embrace the vision in a serious way', or whether the practices identified by the educational community as 'the appropriate vehicles for actualising the vision' are in fact appropriate and can be 'meaningfully adopted'.[52] What is of prior concern is the nature of the CCE discourse itself, the quality of the theoretical articulation in its constituent documents, and its seeming over-reliance on utopian and aspirational vision, not only to motivate, but to convince readers of the value of its major positions in relation to Catholic education.

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[52] Daniel Pekarsky, "Vision and Education", p. 430.

A range of criticism of vision-guided education, as indicated below, needs to be discussed together with the inferred defence of the CCE that may be regarded as being implicit in, and recoverable from, a study of the texts. The implications of a deficit of supporting discourse of types other than the utopian kind, and the consequences of other problematic features of the CCE discourse, should also be considered. When this two-fold task has been completed, it should be possible to assess the nature of the challenge for a re-articulated Catholic philosophy of education to incorporate the CCE discourse in its project. Whatever the nature of this challenge, it would seem reasonable that Catholic philosophy of education should be able to turn to the work of scholars such as Maritain, Lonergan and McLaughlin, both to understand the nature of the task and to garner support from that rich variety of philosophical discourse.

## Criticism of Vision-Guided Education with Reference to the CCE Discourse

The whole idea of vision-guided education is subject to criticism on a number of grounds. For some there are concerns that vision-guided education goes hand in hand with what they regard as religious fundamentalism, involving allegiance to a particular conception of the good, or based on 'thick' or substantial views of the human good, to borrow McLaughlin's phrase.[53] The CCE discourse is obviously primarily intended for those who share a view on the meaning of life and subscribe to a common set of architectonic principles. In itself, this should not rule out vision-guided education, since as McLaughlin points out the appropriate response in the face of difference is tolerance and 'principled forbearance of influence'.[54] Earlier in this dissertation, too, Maritain's endorsement of a basic principle for living in a pluralist society was noted.[55] In effect, vision-guided education does not *per se* seek to impose upon people, or demand from them, as a condition for their 'belonging to the city', any philosophic or any religious creed.[56] *RDECS (1988)*, in the context of the religious freedom and personal conscience of individual students and families, establishes the principle that 'to proclaim or to offer is not to impose'.[57]

For critics of vision-guided education of the kind offered by the CCE discourse the charge that this type of education, and the institutions that provide it, are indoctrinatory,

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[53] See, for example, *Liberalism, Education and Schooling*, pp. 52, 54-55, 127-130.
[54] T. H. McLaughlin, *Liberalism, Education and Schooling*, pp. 54-56, 59, 86, 229.
[55] Jacques Maritain, "Thomist Views on Education", pp. 72, 84-85, 87.
[56] Ibid., p. 72.
[57] RDECS (1988), No. 6.

is never far away. The whole idea of formation, or transformation, of persons into a certain kind of human being, dictated by a religious or philosophical conviction, sits uncomfortably with many in a liberal democratic society. The issues involved here are clearly beyond the remit of this dissertation. Nevertheless, since indoctrination depends largely on the intentions of educators, on the content of what they offer, and on the appropriateness of the means chosen to achieve the aims or goals of education, it is possible to mount a robust defence of the CCE vision-guided project that would rule out the legitimacy of many accusations of indoctrination. Thus, it is not the intention of the CCE discourse to diminish human persons, or deny their freedom, but rather to promote their integral human development. While CCE discourse refrains largely from dictating the curriculum of Catholic schools, it insists on respect for all bodies of true knowledge, including religious knowledge, and directs that 'individual school subjects must be taught according to their own particular methods', and not be 'regarded as mere adjuncts to faith or as useful means of teaching apologetics'.[58]

A key element of the CCE vision-guided education is the integration of culture, faith and life, and although it provides little detail on how that aim might be achieved, there is every reason to believe that educational means that are antithetical in spirit to the ends being sought will be ruled out. Vision-guided education does not rule out the active role of learners, for example, in their own education. Guiding visions that emphasise the ideal of autonomy would perforce give rise to educational practices that incorporate autonomy-respecting practices.[59] It has already been suggested above that the cognitional theory of Bernard Lonergan might be capable of assisting the CCE discourse with this integrative aim, and more attention will be devoted to this suggestion below.

Hostility to vision-guided approaches to education often grow out of a rejection of educational aims *per se*. The identification and prioritisation of aims is regarded by some critical scholars as an abuse of power and as a concealed method of disguising sources of power and influence. Though he does not identify with it, such a view has been described by Nicholas Burbules, who writes that the postmodern distrust of meta-narratives has questioned the *foundationalism* of attempting to provide an over-arching

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[58] *CS (1977)*, No.s 38-39.
[59] "Vision and Education", pp. 435-435.

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or universal account of what education should be seeking to achieve.[60] Any general account of the aims of education is regarded by these critics as 'totalizing and normalizing', 'imposing on teachers and learners constraints upon their freedom to define, negotiate, and establish their own educational purposes'.[61] This stance, of course, challenges the entire notion of universal truth and intrinsic value, in relation to which the CCE discourse justifies the aims and purposes of Catholic education.

It is not the purpose of the CCE discourse to claim exclusive authority for its perspectives on education, or to marginalise other perspectives that might have valuable insights into the educational aims that are regarded as important. In any case it is difficult to understand how one can seriously deny the needs experienced by all peoples and cultures to share and transmit their beliefs and values and to guide the development of the young. There may well be a case to answer too by those who espouse this postmodernist outlook that they are deceiving themselves if they think that they are championing a particular set of objectives that avoids assumptions about beliefs and values. The CCE discourse is adamant, and correctly so, that 'either implicit or explicit reference to a *Weltanschaaung* is unavoidable in education'.[62] There is 'a tendency to forget that education always presupposes and involves a definite concept of man and life'.[63] In particular, 'each type of education is influenced by a particular concept of what it means to be a human person'.[64]

The question of 'ownership' of the vision is yet another problem for some educators. There are several difficulties *á propos* 'owning' the vision in vision-guided education. For some, the vision proposed is assumed to be the vision of individuals or communities who wish to impose their beliefs and values on those served by the institution subscribing to the vision. In any case, there is likely to be a spectrum of response to the vision from the very enthusiastic to the lukewarm and the apathetic, or maybe even hostility. It may well be the case that the vision does not respond to the needs of individuals and families that patronise the school. The institution's priorities may be perceived to be different or elitist. What parents often want for their children may

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[60] Nicholas Burbules, "Ways of Thinking about Educational Quality", *Educational Researcher*, Vol. 33, No. 6, 2004, pp. 4-10.
[61] Ibid., pp. 4-10.
[62] *CS (1977)*, No. 29.
[63] *CSTTM (1997)*, No. 10.
[64] *LCS (1982)*, No. 18.

represent a mis-match in terms of what the Catholic school has to offer. Some may feel that the Catholic school's priorities subordinate present needs to some future destiny. Educators, following Dewey, may argue that education, in the interests of children's happiness and fulfilment, should not identify some far-off human good at which to aim but should design education that will engage learners today. The emphasis must be on making the most of the present but without total neglect for 'ends-in-view'.

These are but some of the criticisms that are regularly made of all vision-guided education and clearly a Catholic education that relied mainly on utopian discourse would neither be immune from, nor best placed, to cope with this kind of critique. Nonetheless, on the assumption that it is possible to give a rational account for one's espousal of a particular guiding existential vision, and possible to anchor that account in a more comprehensive view of reality, one has to query whether there exists in the CCE discourse a sufficiently robust philosophical argument pertinent to the rational justification and concrete realisation of the vision. It is the argument of this thesis that a deficit of explicit theory in the CCE discourse constitutes a major challenge to the re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education.

**Theory Deficit in CCE Discourse**

A symptom of the over-reliance of CCE literature on utopian discourse and a vision-guided approach to education is the absence of an explicit theoretical perspective. The problem for theoretical discourse relating to the practice of Catholic education, to the limited extent that it is espoused at all in the CCE documentation, is that much of the theory base may be present in an implicit or tacit mode only, and its availability is restricted in important respects to educators familiar with the Catholic tradition. Indeed, a cursory reading might easily lead one to conclude that the CCE discourse has eschewed altogether the inclusion and use of theoretical perspectives that are common elsewhere in education-related documents.

One might illustrate the problem involved here by reference to a dominant theme in the CCE discourse, namely, the 'integral formation of the human person', one of the over-arching aims of Catholic education.[65] While there is an over-thematization of the

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[65] Reference to the theme of 'the integral formation of the human person' as the aim of Catholic education is widespread in the CCE discourse and in earlier documentation from which it draws its inspiration. See: *DIM (1929)*, No.s 7, 8; *GE (1965)*, No.s 1, 3, 8; *CS (1977)*, No.s 8, 12, 14, 15, 29, 35, 45; *LCS (1982)*,

formative theme in CCE writing, there is, either as a direct consequence of this, or indirectly because of the absence of a strongly academic discourse throughout the corpus, an under-theorization of fundamental aspects of the formative education tradition that one might reasonably expect Catholic philosophy of education to theorise about. No comprehensive and critical philosophical examination of the meaning and significance of the key terms in this often cited educational aim, the 'integral formation of the human person', is apparently available in the CCE literature, nor generally in the extensively published official comments on Catholic education that have followed in its wake.[66] What seems to occur in the Catholic educational community in the absence of theoretical discourse is that the meaning of the terms in statements like 'the integral formation of the human person' is taken as self-evident, or as being generally so explicit as not to warrant detailed and in-depth analysis. Where such analysis has been undertaken, a substantial and coherent account of 'formation' in a distinctively philosophical register has not always been provided. In consequence, the intelligent practice of Catholic education and its promising fruits is conceivably put at grave risk.

Catholic educational discourse expresses ideals regarding what it believes are realizable goods (integral human formation, synthesis of faith and culture, the construction of an educative community). These broad goals determine a general orientation for Catholic education and allow the Catholic educational community to deliberate on how in general the Catholic educator may progress from an actual situation to the ideal desired. But there appears to be singularly lacking from the CCE discourse any discussion of the theory that, according to Walsh, must necessarily 'under-pin the sustained methodological actions and processes' that comprise the educational initiatives to be undertaken in pursuit of these goals.[67]

## A Challenge for Catholic Philosophy of Education

It would hardly be disputed that educators are entitled to examine and reflect on the under-lying theoretical basis of programmes or enterprises they are invited, or expected, to make use of and participate in. In fact, one would anticipate that the authors, or originators, of any such programme or enterprise would make very explicit the

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No.s 3, 15, 16, 18, 28; *RDECS (1988)*, No.s 1, 4, 56, 63, 98, 99; *CSTTM (1997)*, No.s 4, 9, 10; *CPMS (2002)*, No.s 18, 31, 33, 34, 35, 38; *ETCS (2007)*, No.s 1, 2, 13, 14.
[66] That no such philosophical scrutiny should be expected in this context, given the nature and intended purposes of the CCE literature, is a valid point of view. I do not share the view.
[67] *Education and Meaning*, p. 59

underlying rationale for what was being proposed and spell out the theoretical considerations upon which the proposal is founded. The CCE literature, however, does not make sufficiently explicit its under-lying theoretical basis for the integral human formation of persons, or for the synthesis of faith, life and culture, both proposed as goals for and intended to be realized (in part, at least) in, and through, the educational / educative / educating experience of the Catholic school as community.

What appears to be the case in reality is that the grounding of its proposals for integral human development and the integration of faith and culture rests upon an implicit theory and a philosophical line of argumentation presumably imported, perhaps somewhat uncritically, from an earlier phase of the Catholic tradition of educational thought. This criticism does not arise from a purely negative attitude toward a whole body of important educational literature originating 'from the heart of the Church', and intended by Church leaders to contribute to an on-going dialogue about the meaning and purpose of education in a pluralistic world. [68] The real reason for expressing a concern here is that any perceived or real weakness in this central matter of integral human development, or the synthesis of faith and culture, is a crucially important consideration that Catholic philosophy of education cannot ignore but ought to address sympathetically, but also critically and with some urgency.

Without being able to engage fully in an analysis of the internal evidence of the CCE documentation itself, it is appropriate, and perhaps necessary, to reflect however briefly, on the question of theory and one's approach to theory in the context of an education intended to promote the integral development (formation) of the human person and the synthesis of faith, life and culture. It probably goes without saying that theory is vitally necessary if Catholic education is to understand and articulate its philosophy, to be in a position to justify its commonly accepted implicit assumptions, and be willing to show how fundamental features of its vision are congruent with that philosophy and able legitimately to support practice. One should worry about the identity and credibility of Catholic education, and its defence against attacks from outside sources, if Catholic philosophy of education fails to engage in intentional and explicit theorizing in matters so central to its educational programme as integral human development (formation) and the synthesis of faith and culture.

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[68] This phrase is from the title of the Apostolic Constitution of John Paul II, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, 1990.

## The Problems of Over-Thematisation

The problems with over-thematisation need to be underlined, at least in passing. Focusing attention on a topic such as 'integral human formation', or the 'synthesis of faith and culture', or the 'construction of an educative community', by selecting the particular topic as a key theme in discourse, by discussing it extensively, by associating it with other related themes and topics, by building it into a larger framework of discourse, is a 'philosophical' approach in a sense, that seeks understanding and appreciation of the central themes in a programme. It may not, however, be sufficient if one's intention is to propose a theory that can serve to articulate and critique a practice, such as for example, the educational distinctiveness and efficacy of the Catholic school. 'Theory' (Greek, θεωρıά, *theoria*) implies the kind of self-critical, speculative thought, that can construct an hypothesis, or form a conjecture, and rigorously submit that hypothesis to scrutiny and testing in the process of seeking to explicate or elaborate upon the meaning of a phenomenon or an event or series of events. The mere narration of a theme may prove inadequate to the elaboration of a complex and multi-faceted reality such as integral human growth and development.

Other problems that might be connected with the over-thematisation of 'formation', 'integration', or 'synthesis', or 'educative community', and so on, in the CCE literature include the following. Firstly, discourse with others outside one's tradition is not necessarily made any easier simply by highlighting one's own position relating to a topic or theme, though clearly frank and honest exchange is a necessary starting-point. But to achieve a level of agreement about meaning, or to agree a common strategy in relation to a common challenge, in the presence of a dominant conceptual model or framework, is no simple matter. Secondly, over-emphasis on a central theme can sometimes lead to a deformation or caricature of one's own position and improper emphasis can lead to misunderstanding. Allied to this danger, there is always the risk that limited perspective means that other viewpoints and areas of investigation are being neglected or prematurely excluded. Thirdly, focusing solely on one's own chosen topic, or selected methodology for its study, may be symptomatic of a lack of critique of one's own position, or even a reflection of one's own confusion and limited understanding of an issue. Finally, genuine problems are inevitably occasioned by a dominant theme that cannot be debated adequately because of, either inadequacy with respect to the development of a theoretical framework, or a perceived threat considered to belong

integrally and ineradicably to the key notion or theme in question. Thus, for example, one can imagine that the theme of 'formation' might be regarded by some as being incapable of adequately accounting for other basic notions such as 'development', 'growth', 'maturation', etc. And 'formation' would certainly hold for others a threat to the freedom and autonomy of the person, such that his/her very humanity might be considered at risk in the absence of education targeting these goals as a priority.

In addition to a surfeit of thematisation about, for example, the 'formation of the human person', or the 'synthesis of faith and culture', the absence, or down-playing of critical reflection, as suggested, must obviously be seen as a contributory cause to the 'under-theorising' of discourse on these important matters in the CCE documentation. By 'under-theorising' I mean the absence, by and large, of any sustained attempt at providing an adequate definition, or paradigm, or model of what, for example, the 'integral development of the human person', or the 'synthesis of faith and culture', might connote, and the consequent failure to articulate an explicit theoretical foundation for these key notions so that they might be better understood and be available to Catholic educators and others as a useful focus for their work.

CCE discourse did have available in the Thomist-Aristotelian educational tradition a theory, or rather a 'meta-theory', the well-known 'hylomorphic theory', which it might have chosen to re-articulate and promote thinking about integral human development for our times, but wisely declined to do so. By 'meta-theory' (Greek, *meta, beyond, or transcending*) is meant here theory that defines the context in which theoretical concepts are constructed, somewhat akin to the way the architect's plans define how a building is to be constructed. The function of 'meta-theory' is to provide a source of concepts out of which theories and methodologies can grow, and to give guidelines that may provide consistency and avoid conceptual confusion. Willis F. Overton has defined 'meta-theory' more concisely as, 'a set of rules, principles, or a narrative that both describes and prescribes what is acceptable and unacceptable as theory', that is, it is the means of conceptual exploration in a scientific domain.[69] When a meta-theory's key ideas are tightly inter-related and form a coherent set of concepts, the set is often referred to as a 'model' or 'paradigm'. The coherency of a paradigm and its breadth of application in

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[69] See, Willis F. Overton, "Developmental Psychology: Philosophy, Concepts, Methodology", p. 21. In, R. M. Lerner (ed.), *Theoretical Models of Human Development*, Vol. 1, *Handbook of Child Psychology*, New York: Wiley, 2006 (6th edn.).

turn contribute to the elucidation of a 'worldview' (*Weltanschaaung*) which would additionally contain specific sets of ontological and epistemological principles.

One good reason why the CCE discourse was wise not to have engaged explicitly with 'meta-theory', of a Scholastic or any other kind, is because there appears to be little enthusiasm today for 'meta-theory'. A major theme in the work of Jean-François Lyotard is the total opposition to any attempt to establish wide-ranging, coherent, definitive theories and interpretations which ideally can provide an answer to all our questions.[70] According to theorists such as Lyotard, we live, not in 'modernity', but in 'post-modernity', and our existence is characterized by the rejection of 'grand narratives', including all the major systems of religious, political, or cultural ideas which have been used to under-pin social and political institutions, practices, and intellectual styles. Furthermore, Lyotard's belief in the 'incommensurability of various forms of discourse' means that a consensus that can serve as an objective basis for conceptions of truth or justice is not even ideally attainable.[71]

Under-developed, or at least, not emphatic enough, about its philosophical basis, though clearly belonging to the Thomist-Aristotelian tradition (legacy) and informed by its major principles of reality (metaphysics), knowledge (epistemology) and value (axiology), Catholic philosophy of education as depicted in the CCE discourse, needs the kind of input from, among others, the three scholars whose work was examined earlier in this thesis, if it is to provide philosophical conviction in respect of the declared over-arching aims of that authoritative discourse, not least in the context of postmodernity. One must not, of course, give the impression that no philosophical reflection, other than a watered-down Thomism perhaps, has been employed in the construction and elaboration of the CCE discourse. Internal evidence in the form of analysis of the vocabulary and thematic expression of the documents comprising this discourse would suggest the strong influence of personalism (broadly defined) at work in the composition of this discourse. The philosophical personalism of John Paul II, probably acquired from his reading of Max Scheler, is clearly evident, not least in the frequent citation by the authors of key statements that reflect the pope's personalist

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[70] See, Jean-François Lyotard, *The Post-Modern Condition*, 1979.
[71] See, Thomas Mautner (ed.), *The Penguin Dictionary of Philosophy*, London: Penguin Books, 2005 (2nd edn.)

position.[72] Granted, however, that there is some level of philosophical foundation in the CCE discourse, the question would still remain about its adequacy.

## CCE Discourse and an Appeal to Contemporary Philosophers

The explicit theoretical articulation and interpretation of CCE discourse may leave much to be desired, but this is a situation which can be rectified to some extent by the employment of selected aspects of the work of scholars like those studied in chapters two, three and four of this dissertation. This in summary is the argument proposed in this second part of the final chapter of this thesis.

Having suggested that the CCE discourse suffers from an un-acceptable level of under-theorisation, my argument draws on, respectively, (1) Maritain's perennial and prescriptive/normative discourse to provide a more deliberative basis to the largely utopian, visionary discourse of the CCE corpus relating to the 'integral formation of the human person' (Section IV below); (2) Lonergan's intentionality analysis and cognitive theory which, together with his understanding of 'culture', would seem to mirror a model of integration that could support the CCE injunction to Catholic education to promote a 'synthesis of faith, life and culture' (Section V), and (3) McLaughlin's 'phronetic discourse', to ensure discernment, balanced judgmment and appropriate decision-making in matters relating to the construction of 'a Catholic educational / educative / educating community' (Section VI).[73]

McLaughlin above all envisages a perspective on a Catholic philosophy of education that can perhaps steer us through the difficulties that have just been narrated. His phronetic approach would attempt to provide 'a distinctively Catholic systematic account of the nature and role of education', one that 'draws not only upon the philosophical resources' of notable Catholic thinkers, ancient and modern, but which also 'addresses directly matters of current educational concern'.[74] And it would be a Catholic philosophy that would 'stand alongside other philosophical approaches' and seek to 'illuminate the nature not merely of Catholic education, but of education as such'.[75] Such a philosophy of education would amount to a reflection on Catholic

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[72] It is beyond the remit of this dissertation to pursue this interesting line of thought but it is obviously something that is worth studying in greater depth.
[73] *GE (1965)*, No. 8.
[74] "The Distinctiveness of Catholic Education", p. 139
[75] Ibid., p. 139.

educational thought that also took seriously Lonergan's injunction (first expressed by him in relation to the development of Catholic social thought) that the richness and depth of Catholic thinking be 'transposed into a more contemporary and adequately theoretical context', by undergoing 'a new effort of analysis and synthesis'[76]. Any 'new effort of analysis and synthesis' would at the same time be obliged, in the interests of the continuity of the tradition, to preserve the 'basic elements' of the tradition as represented by Maritain, for example, and would have to construct theoretical and methodical structures consonant with up-to-date scientific and technical knowledge, in order to become a genuine response to historical process and to demonstrate the extent to which it was capable of operating 'at the level of the times'.[77]

## IV

## Maritain and the CCE Aim of Integral Formation of the Human Person

Jacques Maritain's work allows the Catholic philosopher of education to adopt a 'hermeneutic of continuity' vis-à-vis the Catholic tradition of educational thinking, as he or she attempts to renew the tradition for our times. Maritain's influence is already clearly visible in key features of the CCE literature and perhaps nowhere more so than in the declared aim of this corpus to seek, through the integral Christian humanism of the community that is the Catholic school, the 'integral formation of the human person'.[78] Maritain provides the CCE educational discourse with a normative, or prescriptive, element that many, in the interest of continuity in the tradition, consider essential to the nature of Catholic philosophy of education. He unhesitatingly offers a vigorous, philosophically defended conception of what the aims and activities of education ought to be, as we have already seen in chapter two above. The setting free of the individual to enable him or her to become a human person, enlightened in intellect and strengthened in will, is a priority in Maritain's educational philosophy.

Maritain's prescriptions for education derive from his Thomist 'utopian' vision and the set of metaphysical, epistemological and axiological principles he identified there and rigorously applied to the field of education. Maritain, as Ellis A. Joseph expresses it,

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[76] See: Patrick D. Brown, *Aiming Excessively High and Far*: The Early Lonergan and the Challenge of Theory in Catholic Social Thought", in *Theological Studies*, Vol. 72, No. 3, 2011, pp. 620-644 (622).
[77] Ibid., pp. 643-644.
[78] *EC (1943)*, p. 88.

'dares to philosophize about education during a time of flux, crisis, and ambivalence';
he dares 'to use the imperative when recommending a practical course of action', and he
dares, *qua* philosopher, 'to descend to the level of practical educational considerations
at a time when such a descent is perhaps most discouraging'.[79] We have at our
command, Maritain wrote, 'a vast and continually augmenting treasure of instructions'
from which it is possible to draw 'guidance of the highest value', and a philosophy
'thoroughly adapted to the needs of modern civilization'.[80]

Maritain, as we have seen, takes it for granted that a set of philosophical premises can
generate a comprehensive and consistent educational programme and that, not just for
the Catholic school, but for all true education as he understood it. In one of his most
extensive articles on the subject, "Thomist Views on Education", Maritain makes a clear
distinction between 'principles' and 'practice' and systematically devotes as much
attention to the 'application of principles' to educational practice as he does to the
'stating of the principles'.[81] In common with many other contemporary '-isms', such as
pragmatism and its support for 'progressive education', sometimes in dialogue with
these philosophies, and acknowledging their achievements when these are not coloured
by 'prejudice or ideological intemperance', yet always firmly based on an all-or-nothing
commitment to Thomism, Maritain offers a quite explicit account of how education
ought to proceed, what it is for, and whose interests it ought to serve.

## Maritain, the CCE Discourse and 'Formation'

The 'integral formation of the human person' is, as mentioned, a theme of the CCE
discourse where aspects of Maritain's Thomist philosophy appear to have been
influential. Maritain's conception of the person, allied to his notion of Christian
humanism, might potentially have been able to strengthen the CCE discourse in respects
called for in this dissertation, had his ideas been acknowledged explicitly or somehow
reflected more distinctly in the CCE narrative. With regard to this particular CCE
theme, what is arguably the most problematic element is its widespread use, without

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[79] Ellis A. Joseph, "The Philosophy of Catholic Education", pp. 27-63 (45). In, Thomas C. Hunt, Ellis A. Joseph and Ronald J. Nuzzi (ed.s), *Handbook of Research on Catholic Education*, Westport, CONN: Greenwood Press, 2001.
[80] Jacques Maritain, "Catholic thought and its mission", *Thought*, Vol. IV, 1930 (b), p. 538.
[81] Jacques Maritain, "Thomist Views on Education", pp. 57-90. In: Nelson Henry (ed.), *Modern Philosophies and Education: The Fifty-fourth yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955.

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explicit definition or description, of the term 'formation' throughout the corpus.[82]

Firstly, it should be noted that it is 'formation', and not 'development', that is the preferred term used in the CCE discourse in reference to the theme of the integral growth and development of the human person. By contrast, the word 'development' is employed relatively little on its own, and when used it is almost always in a subsidiary role, and within the context of the meaning of the more comprehensive and all-embracing term, 'formation'. This is an important point to note because it means that 'development' in this instance has to be read within the context of, or against the background of a term with a long and unique history of antecedent meaning.

Secondly, although at first sight there might seem to be very little to be concerned about in the choice of the ideal of 'formation of the human person' as a goal for education in the Catholic school, the matter is not in reality that straight-forward. Traditionally this is a vision to which Catholic educators have subscribed and though some, even among those committed to Catholic education, may question the feasibility of actually, or fully, achieving such a high ideal in schooling in contemporary society, they are unlikely to share the kind of deep reservations about a range of issues to which others, who object to faith schools in any form, are likely to entertain. Catholic educators and leaders would presumably, however, have to be quite comfortable in admitting that discourse about 'formation' necessarily entails, to use the terminology of Geertz and others, such as McLaughlin, a 'thick description' of the character of Catholic education.[83] Arguments for and against faith schools involve a range of complex and overlapping issues, including philosophical issues, that are beyond the scope of this thesis to discuss. But as far as 'formation' is concerned we are as well to admit from the beginning that discourse about education in terms of 'formation' necessarily constitutes 'thick description', and that, as such, it is likely to be problematical in one sense or another for some educators today.

Thirdly, there is no easy or facile way of escaping the inevitable consequences of such a

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[82] See *GE (1965)*, No.s 1, 2, 3, 5, 8; *CS (1977)*, No.s 8, 12, 14, 15, 19, 26, 29,, 30, 31, 32, 35, 36, 45; *LCS (1982)*, No.s 3, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 28; *RDECS (1988)*, No.s 1, 4, 48, 50, 51, 56, 63, 98, 99; *CSTTM (1997)*, No.s 4, 9, 10; *CPMS (2002)*, No.s 18, 19, 31, 33, 34, 35, 38; *ETCS (2007)*, No.s 1, 2, 8, 12, 13, 14.
[83] Clifford Geertz "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture", *The Interpretation of Cultures*, New York: Basic Books, 1973, pp. 3-32. Geertz acknowledges his indebtedness to Gilbert Ryle for the concept, 'thick description' (pp. 6-7). McLaughlin, in *Liberalism, Education and Schooling* uses the epithet frequently in relation to theories of the good; see, for example, pp. 52, 54, 55, 149, 263.

position. What we are faced with in such discourse, is, if I may borrow Geertz's words from another context, 'a multiplicity of conceptual structures, many of them super-imposed upon or knotted into one another, which are at once strange, irregular, and inexplicit, and which one must contrive somehow first to grasp and then to render'.[84] The matter at issue here is whether Catholic philosophers of education like Maritain have brought any degree of clarity into this area, that is, whether, in fact, they have effectively articulated and evaluated the underlying 'conceptual structures' related to a theme such as the integral formation of the human person. To 'grasp and then to render [meaningful]' is by no means straight-forward in the case of analysis of the term 'formation'. A real problem with a comprehensive doctrine such as 'formation', entailing as it does 'a particular, overall, thick or substantive vision of the good life as a whole', to quote McLaughlin in another context,[85] is the set of assumptions the concept must bear in its train.

Clearly, much depends upon what is to be understood by the term 'formation' and the specific context in which it is used, and for this reason the historical antecedents of its origin, meaning and usage are also of some significance. While it would be interesting to speculate on how the contemporary CCE discourse on Catholic education, in its attempt to thematise the concept of 'formation' (rather casually), may have simply recapitulated and repeated earlier discourse of this Congregation related to a quite different project and a different context, namely, the formation of candidates for the priesthood in seminaries, the matter must be left aside in the present context. Suffice it to remark that there are quite clear parallels between the CCE discourse on the 'integral formation of the human person' and the 'Four Pillars' model of priestly formation, involving 'the human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral formation of persons', proposed in the *Instruction on Fundamental Norms for Priestly Formation*, also published by the CCE, in 1970.[86]

It may not be entirely a matter of coincidence that a document on the formation and education of candidates for the priesthood was in fact promulgated by the CCE, the same Congregation that has authored the series of educational documents that are the

[84] Clifford Geertz, "Thick Description", p. 10.
[85] Terence H. McLaughlin, "Education, Spirituality, and the Common School", *Liberalism, Education and Schooling*, p. 241.
[86] See Vatican II *Decree on Priestly Formation* (1965); *Instruction on Fundamental Norms for Priestly Formation*, CCE, 1970; John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Pastores dabo vobis*, 1992; USCCB, *The Programme of Priestly Formation*, 2006.

subject of consideration in this chapter. Whether there is a common thread of thought about 'integral formation of persons' that runs through all the publications of this body, despite the substantial differences surrounding the intended audience and readership, is a matter that would be worth further study. That the suitability of the 'Four Pillars' model of formation proposed for the formation of clergy should be assumed, if that in fact was what was envisaged, as also suitable for the task of the Catholic school in the formation of children and young people, is certainly a matter meriting further critique.

The difficulties of this situation are compounded by the absence from the CCE literature on the Catholic school of any kind of inquiry relating to the nature of the under-lying theory, or model, or paradigm upon which the integral formation of the human person might be based. It may well be that the CCE corpus of educational literature adopts the strategy that it is often more useful to eschew formal definition of a term, and instead adopt a working description that would delineate certain features of the term and simply seek to account for its major constitutive elements. Because of its pronounced pastoral, exhortatory and generally 'unscientific' (in a narrow sense) nature, CCE discourse would then offer us only a summary description of 'integral human formation'. Whether it has, in fact, done even this is, indeed, a moot point.

In general, in what concerns 'definition', I agree with Geertz that although 'it is notorious that definitions establish nothing', in themselves they do, if they are carefully enough constructed, 'provide a useful orientation of thought', such that an extended un-packing of them can be 'an effective way of developing and controlling a novel line of inquiry'.[87] What is critically important about the CCE description and usage of the term 'integral human formation' is whether, to use Geertz's words, it does in fact provide 'a useful orientation of thought' and whether, when 'un-packed', it does suggest 'an effective way of developing a line of enquiry'. I would argue that it can only do so with the aid of Maritain's discourse that explicitly focuses upon 'an education that deals with the formation of man and the inner liberation of the human person'.[88]

**Maritain's Theoretical Support for Formative Education in the Catholic Tradition**

Integral human formation, by means of the synthesis of faith, culture, and life is a normative dimension and requirement of Catholic philosophy of education in the CCE

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[87] Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, p. 90.
[88] *EC (1943)*, p. 91.

discourse.[89] These are elements regarded as belonging to the nature, or essence, of the discipline, which are a *sine qua non* for the Catholic philosopher of education, today as in the past. Maritain's work provides a theoretical basis that is highly consistent with the Thomist-Aristotelian tradition of educational thinking from whence these requirements of Catholic education originate. Two aspects of Maritain's thinking on 'the education of man' may be singled out for brief commentary, namely, his 'personalistic ontology', and his 'integral Christian humanism'.[90]

### (1) Maritain's 'Personalistic Ontology'

Just as usage of the term 'formation' in the CCE discourse is not without its problems, so, too, the notion of 'person' assumed by this discourse can be the occasion of disagreement and debate. The CCE discourse represents in one sense a development, at least in emphasis, from the traditional notion of the person familiar to Catholic philosophy of education from its Thomist legacy. The CCE discourse evidences the influence of twentieth century re-focusing in Catholic theology on understanding the nature of humanity, where the constructs of Thomistic philosophy appear to have been sidelined to be replaced by a more biblically based understanding of the human person and a 'personalist' philosophy, which understands the human person from a phenomenological perspective, not just in terms of 'rationality', but equally importantly in terms of 'relationality' and the search for authentic human fulfilment.

One distinctive feature in Maritain's account of metaphysics, William Sweet believes, is the emphasis he places on 'the act of existing'.[91] This emphasis lends an important 'existentialist' dimension to his philosophy, and that is significant in relation to his educational thinking. Sweet has described Maritain's emphasis on the value of the human person as a form of 'personalism', which he regarded as a *via media* between individualism and socialism.[92] In *The Person and the Common Good*, Maritain describes 'personality' as 'the subsistence of the spiritual communicated to the human composite'.[93] Maritain's theory of subsistence provides a metaphysical account of the personhood of the human subject. He appears to fully concur with the definition of the 'person' as 'an individual substance of a rational nature' (*rationalis naturae individua*

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[89] See, for example, *LCS (1982)*, No.s 18, 20; *CPMS (2002)*, No. 60.
[90] *EC (1943)*, p. 102.
[91] William Sweet, "Jacques Maritain", p. 7.
[92] Ibid., p. 17.
[93] Jacques Maritain, *The Person and the Common Good*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1947, p. 27.

*substantia*) proposed by Boethius in the early part of the sixth century and subsequently adopted by Aquinas. This definition obviously implies that every human being is a person since every human being is (to employ Boethius's philosophical language) an individual substance of a rational nature. But the definition betokens a more static notion of the person than contemporary philosophy or psychology would subscribe to.

A key notion in Maritain's discussion of the person is that of 'human freedom'.[94] For Maritain, the 'end' of humanity is to be free, not in the sense of licence or pure rational autonomy, but in terms of the realisation of the human person in accord with his or her nature.[95] It is fair to say that Maritain considered that in a great deal of modern philosophy more emphasis is laid on freedom than on self-consciousness as the chief characteristic of the human person. As Frederick Copleston puts it, in much modern philosophy of the person (as, for example, in the case of Emmanuel Mounier), human freedom is regarded as the efficient cause of personality, or at least as its necessary condition, for personality is looked upon as something to be created and maintained. [96]

Maritain believes that by the effort of his intelligence and will each person can enhance his personal worth, become more of a person, grow in humanity, and orient himself toward his ultimate goal of full humanisation.[97] This belief is clearly reflected in the CCE discourse on Catholic education. Yet, there would appear to be at the heart of this educational vision an inevitable tension between a conceptualisation of 'formation' with Scholastic antecedents, and a more holistic and evolutionary notion of the human 'person' being assisted toward the goal of 'full humanisation'. To what extent the CCE discourse, appreciating this tension, has used it in a creative fashion to elaborate a model of human formation, is a matter requiring much further debate.

## (2) Maritain and 'Integral Christian Humanism'

Maritain considered education some seventy years ago to be standing 'at the crossroads', faced with the choice between freeing itself from the background of 'an instrumentalist and pragmatist philosophy', and becoming engaged upon 'a profoundly

[94] William Sweet, "Jacques Maritain", p. 17.
[95] Ibid., p. 17.
[96] Frederick C. Copleston, "The Human Person in Contemporary Philosophy", *Philosophy*, Vol. 25, No. 92 (Jan., 1950), pp. 3-19 (4).
[97] See Paul VI, *Populorum Progressio*, 1976, No. 15.

personalist and humanist educational venture'.[98] In Maritain's view it was imperative that the institution of the school should take on board the important task of providing 'a liberal education with regard to a new humanism'.[99] For Maritain, 'liberal education' as he understood it, was not only 'grounded on the essential value of man', but also upon its value in 'meeting some specific needs of the immediate future', such as satisfying 'the thirst for a new humanism', 'rediscovering the integrity of man' and 'overcoming the threats of slavery and dehumanization' which, in his opinion, contemporary civilization faced.[100]

The 'integral humanism' which Maritain posits as the salvation of mankind demands an 'integral education', he tells us: 'To correspond to this integral humanism, there should be an integral education'.[101] For Maritain, 'education has its own essence and its own aims'.[102] This 'essence' and these 'essential aims' deal with 'the formation of man and the inner liberation of the human person'.[103] True education, 'liberal education', must provide the common man with the 'means for his personal fulfilment'; it must seek to slake the 'thirst for knowledge' and the 'thirst for social liberation' of all, and this is 'one of the reasons why liberal education should be extended to all'.[104] The real aim of education is 'to make man', and it should essentially aim at 'liberating the human person'.[105] Maritain is well aware of the many dangers that threaten, and of the deficiencies that characterize the education of even democratic countries, and chief among these he lists the danger of an education which would aim, 'not at making man truly human', but making him merely into 'an organ of a technocratic society'.[106]

The source of much that threatens and makes contemporary education deficient, according to Maritain, lies ultimately in the fact that, for many people in a progressively 'secularised' Western society, which has experienced the loss of its Judaeo-Christian heritage, both civilisation and education suffer from a cleavage between ideals for living and acting and the reasons that justify these ideals.[107] It has become difficult, if not

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[98] *EC (1943)*, p. 118.
[99] *EC (1943)*, p. 88.
[100] Ibid., p. 88.
[101] Ibid., p. 88.
[102] Ibid., p. 91.
[103] Ibid., p. 91.
[104] Ibid., p. 90.
[105] Ibid., p. 100.
[106] Ibid., p. 113.
[107] Ibid., p. 117.

impossible, Maritain feels, to show the world 'how human action may be reconciled with and permeated by an ideal which is more real than reality'.[108] Very largely responsible for this development, in Maritain's view, is the triumph of what he describes in several places as 'anthropocentric humanism'.[109]

Maritain sets out in several places a full account of 'humanism' and, in his promotion of the idea of 'theo-centric', or 'integral humanism', and specifically, 'Christian humanism', develops an understanding of it that is diametrically opposed to anthropocentric humanism.[110] Being well aware that the term 'humanism' is susceptible to multiple definition, and lends itself to many different interpretations, Maritain offers this description of what the term means to him. Humanism, he maintains

> tends essentially to render man more truly human and to manifest his original greatness by enabling him to partake of everything in nature and in history capable of enriching him. It requires both that man develop the latent tendencies that he possesses, his creative powers, and the life of reason; and that he work to transform into instruments of his liberty the forces of the physical universe.[111]

Maritain's Christian personalist and humanist discourse is apt for interpretation in terms of its possible contribution to the re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education today. There can be little doubt about the impact Maritain has had upon the CCE corpus where clear echoes of the kind of personalism he espoused are to be found, still evident even where it is now over-laid by a more contemporary personalist doctrine. His Thomist ontological commitment has made it possible for the authors of the CCE discourse to ensure that Catholic education continues in the long tradition of formative education that included liberal *Bildung*. A teleological view of human nature and of the purpose of human living demands, in Maritain's thinking, the highest and most harmonious development of the whole and complete person.

Maritain's liberal education focuses on the formation of human beings in the first place and seeks to ensure for the person the freedom to become truly human. Educators are enjoined not simply to transmit unrelated pieces of knowledge, nor merely train their students in moral living, or the acquirement of technical skills and competences. Their priority should rather be to develop the mind and will so that people can become

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[108] Ibid., p. 117.
[109] See, Jacques Maritain, *The Twilight of Civilization*, London: Sheed & Ward, 1946.
[110] See, Jacques Maritain, *Man and the State*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951; *The Range of Reason*, London: Geoffrey Bles, 1953; *Integral Humanism*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1968.
[111] Jacques Maritain, "The Twilight of Civilization", London: Sheed & Ward, 1946, p. 3.

persons. They should aim to develop a person's capacity for autonomy and must be committed to forms of education that do not undermine true, human and Christian autonomy. Each of these priorities and tasks are amply reflected in the CCE discourse, if not explicitly, certainly in an implicit vision sufficient to guide the practice of Catholic education.[112]

Maritain's Christian humanism provides a basis for the development of the social, cultural and political dimensions of human living. It addresses the formation of the social aspect of human existence which complements the individual and personal dimension of the human condition. Here, Maritain's commitment to a natural law tradition, that claims common and universal principles are rooted in human nature and can be known by all, may make his prescriptions for a new kind of society less acceptable today when there is little or no agreement about the nature of the good for human beings. Maritain seems, though, to have anticipated the objections that would be made to his new civilization founded on Christian humanism, on the basis of cultural and religious pluralism, stating that humanity could agree upon certain basic tenets of 'a practical democratic faith', such as 'truth and intelligence, human dignity, freedom, brotherly love, and the absolute value of the moral good', even though people may have different or conflicting metaphysical or religious outlooks.[113]

Finally, while one might be tempted to conclude that Maritain's vision of a new civilization based on Christian humanist values reflects in many respects what Lonergan called a 'classicist world-view', because it is ultimately a refusal to think and decide in 'historically-minded' terms, there is undoubtedly sufficient truth in Maritain's perennial discourse, sympathetically interpreted, still to merit the attention of Catholic philosophy of education today. Maritain desired, and argued for, 'an integral education' that would correspond to his 'integral (Christian) humanism'. If we interpret 'correspond' along the lines of the everyday usage of the term, then Maritain may be understood to be demanding some kind of constructive correlation, or interrelation, between his programme of Christian humanism and the existence and working out of the aims of the Catholic school.

For such a 'correspondence' to develop in practice, Ellis A. Joseph specifies four goals

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[112] See, for example, CS (1977), No. 41; RDECS (1988), No. 49; ETCS (2007), No. 24;
[113] Jacques Maritain, The Range of Reason, London: Geoffrey Bles, 1953, pp. 165-71, 180-84.

that 'integral' Catholic education will have to work towards. These are: the removal of the rift between the 'social claim' and the 'individual claim' which is thought to blight much Catholic education; the development of a deep respect for human rights and human obligations; the reconciliation of the vertical movement of the person toward eternal life and the horizontal movement of persons in the fulfilment of their proper temporal ends, and the ending of the cleavage between work or useful activity and 'the blossoming of the spiritual life and disinterested joy in knowledge, truth and beauty'.[114]

These imperatives upon 'integral Christian education' pose a twofold challenge for the Catholic school. An essentially humanistic education has to be offered to all while simultaneously this essentially formative experience must be adapted to the real life requirements of everyday living. For Maritain, it is the creation and maintenance of an integral Christian humanism at the heart of its enterprise that enables the Catholic school, 'at the risk of warping its truly educational work', to accept 'for the sake of the general welfare', the extraneous burdens superadded to the normal task of education.[115]. Christian educators, Maritain tells us, have a twofold duty: They have both 'to maintain the essentials of humanistic education' and 'to adapt them to the present requirements of the common good'.[116] Maritain's vision of the school as a community engaged upon an essentially educative task, namely, the integral formation of the human person, and an institution committed to the accomplishment of the common good, remains the template for Catholic education today.

This is Maritain's legacy to Catholic education and the Catholic school, namely, the allocation of what he terms 'the normal task of education' together with the 'imposition of its superadded burdens' arising out of, and for the sake of the common good. The Vatican II *Declaration on Christian Education* reflects very well this Maritainian composite task of the Catholic school:

> A true education aims at the formation of the human person in the pursuit of his ultimate end and of the good of the societies of which, as a man, he is a member, and in whose obligations, as an adult, he will share.[117]

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[114] Ellis A. Joseph, "The Philosophy of Catholic Education", p. 50. In, Thomas C. Hunt, Ellis A. Joseph and Ronald J. Nuzzi (ed.s), *Handbook of Research on Catholic Education*, 2001. The sentiment is attributed to Maritain.
[115] *EC (1943)*, p. 91.
[116] Ibid., p. 91.
[117] *GE (1965)*, No. 1.

# V

## Lonergan's Cognitive Theory and the Integration / Synthesis of Faith and Culture

Brendan Carmody has suggested how Bernard Lonergan's notion of self-transcendence might be able to contribute to the development of a framework for a new approach to Catholic philosophy of education.[118] Lonergan's cognitional theory and transcendental method both suggest a line of inquiry that Catholic philosophy of education might profitably follow in its attempts to reflect on what might be involved in seeking to bolster and complement the CCE discourse in relation to the two-fold 'integration' it envisages when it speaks of 'a synthesis of culture and faith, and a synthesis of faith and life' as a primary task of the Catholic school.[119] This task of integrating culture and faith is rated a key task of the Catholic school, second only to that of the 'human formation' of children and young people, by the Vatican II *Declaration on Christian Education*, which states that the 'proper function' of the school is 'to order the whole of human culture to the news of salvation so that the knowledge the students gradually acquire of the world, life and man is illumined by faith'.[120]

As we have seen in relation to other important tasks assigned to the Catholic school by the CCE discourse, none of its documents anywhere indicates in any extensive or explicit way the meaning intended by key terms in the task, nor do they suggest a methodology that might be pertinent to the accomplishment of the task, nor comment upon how one might evaluate the success or otherwise of initiatives undertaken in furtherance of the task. This, even while making allowance for the peculiar genre of the CCE discourse and its aspirational intentions, must be regarded as a weakness in the discourse, at least as far as the purpose of re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education is concerned. Nevertheless, that deficiency is something that can be put right to some extent when the philosophers whose work was examined in the previous chapters are invited to engage in interrogation and dialogue with the CCE discourse. In the present instance, I turn to aspects of the work of Lonergan to examine how some of

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[118] Brendan Carmody SJ, "Towards a contemporary Catholic philosophy of education", *International Studies in Catholic Education*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (Oct., 2011), pp. 106-119.

[119] *CS (1977)*, No. 37.

[120] *GE (1965)*, No. 8.

his work might be used to reinforce the official, authoritative discourse of the CCE, notably its prescriptions relating to the synthesis of faith and culture, for the purpose of giving new expression to Catholic educational thought for today.

To begin with, what the CCE discourse says about this task of synthesis or integration is briefly indicated and the problematic nature of its accomplishment in practice is noted. Then, Lonergan's cognitional theory, with its accurate analysis of human understanding is put forward as a fundamental, guiding principle for the integration of knowledge. It is suggested that, in conjunction with his understanding of 'culture', Lonergan's transcendental method contains a sound philosophical basis upon which to develop the kind of integration of faith and culture required by the CCE discourse. Lonergan's transcendental method can provide a kind of framework and trajectory for the Catholic philosopher of education to enable him or her to focus on 'what we are doing when we do philosophy of education', and how that philosophizing might be performed in some authentic fashion.[121]

### The Integration of Faith and Culture in CCE Discourse

The CCE corpus discusses the 'integration', or 'synthesis, of faith and culture' on several occasions and it is undoubtedly a feature of the Catholic tradition that it is considered important to propose to Catholic educators for their attention.[122] The underlying impetus and motivation for this integrative goal of Catholic education is evident in the encyclical, *Fides et Ratio*, and its belief that 'faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth'.[123] God himself 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, 'people may come to fullness of truth about themselves'.[124] *CSTTM (1997)* insists that 'one of the most significant elements' of the Catholic school's educational project is 'the synthesis between culture and faith', a critically important aim, 'since knowledge set in the context of faith becomes wisdom

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[121] See, Daniel Vokey, "What Are We Doing When We Are Doing Philosophy of Education?', *Paideusis*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (2006), pp. 45-55. Vokey's question is an adaptation of Lonergan's approach to cognitional theory and epistemology, which begins with the question, 'What are we doing when we are knowing?' (*Insight*, 1958).

[122] See, *DIM (1929)*, No.s 80, 87, 95, 98; *CS (1977)*, No.s 37-48; *LCS (1982)*, No.s 20-21, 29-31; *RDECS (1988)*, No.s 34, 49, 51-65; *CSTTM (1997)*, Nos. 4, 14, 16-17; *CPMS (2002)*, No.s 5, 6, 38, 39, 50, 53, 54, 60, 61, 68; *ETCS (2007)*, No.s 3, 24.

[123] John Paul II, Encyclical Letter, *Fides et Ratio, Faith and Reason*, Introduction, 1998.

[124] Ibid., Introduction.

and life vision'.[125] That document explains that 'the endeavour to interweave reason and faith' makes for 'unity, articulation and coordination' and 'brings forth within what is learnt in school a Christian vision of the world, of life, of culture and of history'.[126]

The problem with this lofty vision of integrative education in the Catholic school is not the vision as such, nor its foundations in traditional Catholic educational thinking, but rather the lack of clear-cut definition of terms in the CCE discourse and the absence of even an outline methodology to be adopted in the pursuit of the desired goal. John Henry Newman, Christopher Dawson, and Jacques Maritain have all discussed the historical perspective and the theological and epistemological bases on how faith becomes 'integrated' with culture and how that 'synthesis' of faith and culture is both justified and regarded as a definitive dimension of Christian education. [127] Of itself, of course, an historical perspective on the question is hardly sufficient. A range of essentially epistemological issues needs to be examined both in relation to the terms 'integration' and 'synthesis', and also in relation to the notions of 'faith' and 'knowledge'. A more extensive study of this matter would need to ensure that epistemological reflection and critical theological insight are brought to bear upon the relation of 'faith' to 'truth' and 'knowledge'.

In keeping with the more modest remit of this thesis, comment is confined to an examination of the usage and meaning of the terms 'integration' and 'synthesis' in the CCE discourse on Catholic education and schooling and to a discussion of those aspects of the work of Lonergan that may be helpful in dealing with the very real difficulties which arise here in pursuit of the vision of a 'synthesis of faith, culture, and life'.[128] To begin with, it should not be too readily assumed, as it sometimes appears to be, that the notion of 'integration' or 'synthesis' of faith and culture, deemed to be entirely characteristic of the goals of Catholic education, is self-evident and incurs no risk of mis-understanding or mis-statement.[129] On the contrary, the concept is in every respect

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[125] *CSTTM (1997)*, No.14.

[126] *Ibid.*, No. 14.

[127] John Henry Newman, *The Idea of a University*, ([1858], 1959; Christopher Dawson, *Religion and Culture* (1948), *Religion and the Rise of Western Culture* (1958), *The Historic Reality of Christian Culture* (1965); Jacques Maritain, *Religion and Culture* (1931), *True Humanism* (1938), *The Twilight of Civilization* (1943), *Degrees of Knowledge* (1959).

[128] *CS (1977)*, No.s 37-43.

[129] It should be noted that there is a tendency throughout the CCE discourse to use the terms 'integration' and 'synthesis' indiscriminately and inter-changeably.

in need of interpretation and explanation if ambiguity and uncertainty are to be avoided. Yet, to clarify the meaning of either integration or culture is by no means straight-forward. Similarly, several questions suggest themselves about the methodology envisaged in the CCE discourse for 'developing a relationship between human culture and the message of salvation', from which it is hoped students will gradually acquire 'knowledge of the world, of life, and of the human person illuminated by faith'.[130]

To the kind of questions that suggest themselves, however, no clear or fully articulated answer appears evident in the CCE discourse. Thus, for example, one wonders whether what is intended is some form of 'curriculum integration', or interdisciplinary, or multidisciplinary, or trans-disciplinary enquiry. There are occasional references in the Congregational documents to 'interdisciplinary work', one, for instance, to the effect that 'interdisciplinary work has been introduced into Catholic schools with positive results' because, it is said, there are 'questions and topics that are not easily treated within the limitations of a single subject area'.[131] Thus, it is advised that 'religious themes should be included' [in interdisciplinary enquiry] when 'they arise naturally in dealing with topics such as the human person, the family, society or history'.[132] Even in this instance, the role of religious education as an integrating discipline is not discussed at length, the document in question maintaining that 'the primary mission' of [religion teachers] must be 'the systematic presentation of religion'.[133] Nevertheless, the document adds, they can also be 'invited, within the limits of what is concretely possible, to assist in clarifying religious questions that come up in other classes'.[134] The same CCE document, *RDECS (1988)*, cites an address of John Paul II in which he speaks of the 'need for religious instruction to be integrated into the objectives and criteria that characterize a modern school'.[135] Religious instruction, the pope said, should 'seek appropriate interdisciplinary links with other course material so that there is a co-ordination between human learning and religious awareness' such that, like other subjects, it too promotes culture.[136]

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[130] *GE (1965)*, No. 8; *RDECS (1988)*, No. 51.
[131] RDECS (1988), No.s 64-65.
[132] Ibid., No. 64
[133] Ibid., No. 65
[134] Ibid., No. 65
[135] Address of Pope John Paul II to the Priest of the Diocese of Rome, 1981. In, *Insegnamenti*, IV / 1, p. 629.
[136] Ibid.

It must remain a moot point as to whether this limited indication of what might be intended by 'integration, or 'synthesis', of faith and culture throughout the CCE discourse is sufficient for the construction of an appropriate methodology. Such limited commentary concerning what is a notoriously difficult issue, theoretically and pedagogically, in the field of curriculum studies, does not remove the need for more extensive reflection on the nature, purpose and methodology of the 'integration' or 'synthesis' of faith and culture as envisaged in the CCE discourse. It is likely, indeed necessary, that the CCE discourse needs to be complemented and provided with a greater degree of theorisation. This is a challenging task not just because of the countless ways in which the concept of 'integration' is used in educational discourse and, indeed, in other areas of human life.

## Meaning of 'Integration' in an Educational Context

In a sense, it is not at all surprising that the concept of 'integration' should occasion a challenge to those who wish to write about it in the context of Catholic education. The word has been used extensively in a variety of situations both within and beyond the sphere of education. Thus, 'integration' is frequently encountered in contexts where there is question of merging, or fusing, or unifying, or otherwise bringing together into a new relationship various elements and systems with the intention of achieving a greater degree of coherence. In social or cultural situations or environments 'integration' is encountered as the term of choice for the policy of seeking greater inclusion or recognition for different ethnic, racial, cultural, or religious communities, to form a reality that is somehow, as a result, more whole or complete. In the educational realm that primarily concerns us here, 'integration' is often employed to describe a process of correlating or encompassing in a unified whole a variety of realities of both a curricular or whole school nature, in pursuit of goals such as equality of opportunity, fairness, quality of learning through interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary studies.

The complexity of the situation is obvious. This multi-contextual usage might indicate to some people that the term is too diffuse to prove of much value in many situations. On the other hand, such wide applicability might prove a strength since the versatility of the concept must owe something to its potential for providing a description and explanation of the reality of such diverse situations. It is in this more positive vein that further elucidation of the meaning and usage of the term 'integration' might be

considered worthwhile in the present context. Nevertheless, the essential point is that when we analyse the use of the concept 'integration' in the CCE discourse, we cannot be sure of which of the many meanings of the term - fusion or merging, inclusion or incorporation, correlation, harmonization, or simply association or joining - is intended.

It is scarcely the case that all these terms can be taken to share a common meaning and so can be used indiscriminately. It is more likely true that each term postulates a different kind of relationship resulting from the activity in question, and that the manner of correlating, the identity and status of the elements that are brought together, differ subtly in each case. It is not at all clear whether any of these modes of integration is best suited to the particular form of 'integration' of faith and culture envisaged in the CCE discourse. Neither is it clear under what conditions any of these forms of 'integration' might be apt for the tasks of 'illuminating culture by faith', or 'bringing faith and culture into harmony', or 'initiating appropriate dialogue between culture and faith', or 'bringing forth within what is learnt in school subjects a Christian vision', or 'interpreting and giving order to human culture in the light of faith', as required by this discourse.[137]

## A Paradigm of Integrative Factors between Faith and Culture

A number of key questions need to be asked in relation to 'integration' in general, and specifically in relation to the kind of 'integration' that might most adequately represent the integration of faith and culture envisaged in the CCE discourse. Firstly, one might ask whether a set of 'integrative factors' can be identified which facilitates the phenomenon of 'integration' in question and by what means. One would like to know what factors might contribute to the integration of faith and culture, if these could be identified. Secondly, it would be useful to investigate the nature of the interaction or correlation that occurs when integration takes place successfully. A form of integration of particular relevance in the present context might be what has sometimes been referred to as 'dialogical' integration. Here, an important consideration is how the correlating elements interact and interrogate each other. Finally, and specifically in relation to the integration of knowledge originating from different domains, one would like to be able to specify under what conditions such integration can take place.

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[137] *GE (1965)*, No. 8; *CS (1977)*, No 37; *LCS (1982)*, No. 29; *RDECS (1988)*, No.s 51-52; *CSTTM (1997)*, No. 14 ; *CPMS (2002)*, No.s 38, 54.

The task of re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education would do well to attempt to construct a suitable paradigm that would have as its primary aim the provision of a framework that would enable one to understand the epistemological basis of the integration of faith and culture and, in addition, make available for Catholic educators a pathway and a methodical structure designed to promote integration in practice. What is required, in effect, is an understanding of human knowing that can, it might be argued, accommodate the major difficulties associated with the definition of both of these terms, 'integration' and 'culture', and allow, also a methodology to be at least outlined for the accomplishment of this critical goal of Catholic education. It is suggested that Lonergan's cognitional theory might well be helpful in this regard and his thought can be briefly explored for the purpose of elucidating an integrative theory of Catholic education.

## Lonergan and an Integrative Theory of Catholic Education

Richard Liddy maintains that the 'explanatory understanding of the dynamics of human understanding' in Lonergan's *Insight* can provide 'a way of knowing how the various areas of knowledge are related'.[138] The human spirit's basic 'method' of knowing is the basis for the integration of all areas of knowing, Liddy believes.[139] Lonergan traces the dynamic method of human knowing unfolding through the basic levels of experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding. In scientific learning these basic levels unfold through the processes of experimentation, hypothesis formation, and verification; in historical scholarship they are manifested through processes of research, interpretation, and historical judgment.[140] Lonergan's educational project is fundamentally grounded in, and methodologically sustained by, a philosophy of human consciousness which, arguably, is what constitutes the roots of all learning.[141]

In the introduction to *Insight* Lonergan welcomes his readers to accompany him on a journey of examination of human consciousness and an analysis of the various intentional operations within consciousness (what philosophers today call 'intentionality analysis') so as to discover first-hand how their minds come to understand and how one

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[138] Richard M. Liddy, "Bernard Lonergan on a Catholic Liberal Arts Education", *Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice*, Vol. 3, No. 4 (June, 2000), pp. 521-532 (523).
[139] Ibid., p. 523.
[140] Ibid., p. 523.
[141] Jeffrey M. Centeno, "Education as Learning-to-Be: Reflections on Bernard Lonergan's Transcendental Philosophy of Education". Downloaded from http://panl.multiply.com/journal/item/3. 19.12.2011

might obtain awareness into the meaning and experience of insight.

> Thoroughly understand what it is to understand, and not only will you understand the broad lines of all there is to be understood but also you will possess a fixed base, an invariant pattern, opening upon all further developments of understanding.[142]

Lonergan insistently invites his readers to verify within their own consciousness that this analysis, the basic method of the human spirit's activity of knowing, consisting of experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding, is correct.[143] This is the structure of our human consciousness and it is involved in every aspect of our knowing and doing. If it is correct, then, according to Liddy, this is 'the basis for the integration of all areas of knowing'.[144] An accurate account of human interiority as it manifests itself in the various methods employed by the human spirit, he believes, is the basis for 'a philosophical vision strong enough to integrate the various scientific and scholarly methods'.[145]

The accurate analysis of human understanding as it takes place in the practice of the sciences and scholarly disciplines, as well as in ordinary living, is, in this interpretation, 'the principle for the integration of the various disciplines'.[146] Such knowledge of the basic structure of human consciousness allows a person of faith, Liddy proposes, 'to sublate all the other areas of human knowing into a faith vision'.[147] Such a 'sublation', concludes Liddy's reading of Lonergan, 'acknowledges the proper autonomy of all these other areas, but it also sets them within the higher viewpoint of faith'.[148] Thus, Lonergan's notion of 'sublation' is critical for his understanding of how the integration of faith and culture might be conceived. [149] Lonergan sees Christian faith as itself a principle of sublation in its effects upon the whole of human living. Intellectual, moral, and religious conversion (or transformation) brings about a development of the assimilative power of heightened consciousness. The human subject is thereby enabled to orientate and relate all understanding and learning to new reference frames, the frames of intelligibility, truth, value, goodness, and eventually, God.[150]

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[142] *Insight*, pp. xxviii and 748.
[143] See, Bernard Lonergan, "The Self-Affirmation of the Knower", *Insight*, ch. XI, pp. 319-417.
[144] "Bernard Lonergan on a Catholic Liberal Arts Education", p. 523.
[145] Ibid., p. 523.
[146] Ibid., p. 525.
[147] Ibid., p. 525.
[148] Ibid., p. 525.
[149] *Method in Theology*, p. 240.
[150] "Bernard Lonergan on a Catholic Liberal Arts education", p. 530.

Denis Klein has approached Lonergan's understanding of the 'integration of faith and culture' from the point of view of his understanding of 'culture'.[151] Lonergan, according to Klein, sees culture as originating within the dynamic intentional structure of human consciousness. The dynamic operational structure of conscious human intentionality functions as 'the source and wellspring of human meaning and value'.[152] Such meanings and values supply the very 'stuff' that constitutes culture. The function of culture is to 'discover, express, validate, criticize, correct, develop, and improve meaning and value'.[153] Lonergan's explanatory approach to culture in terms of its origin within the human subject would seem to mirror a model of integration in human intentionality analysis. The elements of a theory of integration correlate with, are defined in terms of, and can be isomorphically traced back to some element within the dynamic and invariant structure of conscious human intentionality.[154]

**Lonergan and 'Active Method': 'Constructing one's world'.**

Closely related to his understanding of 'integration', indeed, a more comprehensive perspective within which integration might be situated, is Lonergan's conception of how the human subject 'constructs his own world'.[155] Lonergan believes that education is fundamentally a matter of helping subjects to construct their own world, even their own reality, by attaining to personal development through expanding their horizons.[156] This is the 'element of fundamental truth' that, he says, is to be found in 'active methods' in education, namely, the conviction that 'learning helps subjects to *construct their own world*'.[157] Lonergan's remarks about subjects 'constructing their own world' have to be read in the context of his over-arching position relating to cognition and human development. It will be recalled how Lonergan understood that what makes humans *human* is the breakthrough to intellectual consciousness and the possibility of the emergence of insight. 'Fundamental potentialities in the subject' lie at the root of human development and this process Lonergan interprets in terms of the invariant three-fold self-assembling cognitional structure, with its levels of cognitional activity

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[151] Denis Klein, "Concepts of Culture: Lonergan and the Anthropologists", *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 1, March, 1991, pp. 23-43.
[152] Ibid., p. 38.
[153] *Method in Theology*, p. 32.
[154] Denis Klein, "Concepts of Culture", p. 39.
[155] *Topics*, pp. 104 -105.
[156] Ibid., p. 104.
[157] Ibid., p. 104-105.

(experience, understanding, judging or reflecting, deciding) and its own sets of operations.[158]

'Active method', as understood by Lonergan, takes account of the fact that knowing is not a single activity, but a dynamic, cumulative process consisting of these distinct but functionally related components. Insight, that 'supervening act of understanding' is not, for Lonergan, a mere mental activity, but a real constituent factor in human knowledge. Insight's function in cognitional activity is so central that 'to grasp it in its conditions, its workings, and its results', is to confer a basic yet startling 'unity' on the whole field of human inquiry and human opinion.[159]

Lest Lonergan be considered to entertain an extreme 'constructivist' view of learning in his claim that 'education helps the subject construct his own world', perhaps one should attempt to clarify what it is likely his true position might be. 'Contructivism' has been considered by Catherine Twomey Fosnot to be based on an epistemology that regards knowledge as 'temporary, developmental, non-objective, internally constructed, and socially and culturally mediated'.[160] It is a psychological theory that construes learning as an interpretive, recursive, non-linear building process by active learners interacting with their physical and social world. As a psychological theory of learning it describes how structures, language, activity, and meaning-making come about, rather than one that simply characterises the structures and stages of thought.[161]

It is undoubtedly true that some aspects of constructivism as it is so described accurately reflect features of the theory of learning envisaged by Lonergan in his term 'active method'. Nevertheless, even allowing for the fact that he might be in agreement, for example, about the nature of knowledge and meaning as 'developmental', 'internally constructed', and 'socially and culturally mediated', for Lonergan, constructivism as a theory will stand or fall by the degree of its fit to the principles and processes of his cognitional theory. In any case, it is unlikely that Lonergan would support any widespread and uncritical acceptance of constructivism as it is commonly understood today.

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[158] It should be noted that the later Lonergan, writing in *Method in Theology*, for instance, speaks in terms of four levels of cognitional activity. The additional level, deliberation and decision, though it is mentioned, is not yet given prominence in *Topics in Education*.

[159] *Insight*, p. ix.

[160] Catherine Twomey Fosnot (ed), *Constructivism: Theory, Perspectives, and Practice*, New York: Teachers College Press, 1996, pp. ix, 3.

[161] Ibid., see especially chapter 2, "Constructivism: A Psychological Theory of Learning".

Keith Roscoe suggests that Lonergan's theory of cognition can inform the current debate by suggesting ways in which the views of constructivists and realists can be appreciated and the gap between them bridged.[162] Roscoe argues that Lonergan's theory of cognition, which sees human knowing not as a single operation but as a dynamic integral whole of the operations of experiencing, understanding, judging and deciding, overcomes the 'false dichotomy' between, on the one hand, the teacher's presentation of an already established body of knowledge and, on the other, the personal meaning-making or developing of insights and construction of concepts.[163] Lonergan's cognitional theory would imply, Roscoe maintains, that these are simply different parts of the same process of knowing.[164]

Lonergan's focus on integration is a plea to promote a sense of the underlying unity of knowledge, something that in his opinion is an urgent requirement for the genuine advancement of knowledge, for the authentic development of human life and for world harmony.[165] The intellectual pattern of consciousness, it will be recalled, was critically important for Lonergan in his understanding of human development. It is interesting to note the special importance that the CCE discourse also affords to the 'intellectual work done by students'.[166] The light of Christian faith, a CCE document affirms, 'enkindles a love for the truth that will not be satisfied with superficiality in knowledge and judgment'.[167] Faith 'awakens a critical sense', 'impels the mind to learn with careful order', and to 'work with a sense of responsibility'.[168] The CCE discourse may not offer a theory for the integration of faith and culture, but it is explicit about what the task involves for the Catholic school, that is, helping young people 'to become aware of the relationship between faith and culture' and committing itself to 'interpreting and giving order to human culture in the light of Christian faith'.[169]

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[162] Keith Roscoe, "Lonergan's Theory of Cognition, Constructivism and Science Education", *Science & Education*, Vol. 13, 2004, pp. 541-551.
[163] Ibid., p. 550.
[164] Ibid., p. 550.
[165] Something like this vision of a 'higher integration' appears to be behind Lonergan's notion of 'Cosmopolis'. See *Insight*, pp. 238-242, 633, 690.
[166] *RDECS (1988)*, No. 49. See, also, *CS (1977)*, No.s 38-41.
[167] *RDECS (1988)*, No. 49.
[168] Ibid., No. 49.
[169] Ibid., No.s 51-52.

# VI

## McLaughlin's 'Phronetic Discourse' at the Service of the Catholic School as 'Educational / Educative / Educating Community'

Many of the tasks assigned to the Catholic school by the CCE discourse, concerning the nature, aims and procedures of what it variously describes as 'an educational / educative / educating community', can occasion the kind of debate that arises in relation to some of the most contested issues of philosophy of education and of educational practice in the context of contemporary liberal democratic societies. Not a few of the issues, problems and dilemmas that arise out of the attempts to construct, maintain and promote the functioning of the Catholic school as a distinctive 'educational / educative / educating community', demand 'deep and un-parochial reflection' and the exercise of practical wisdom and judgment, to ensure that a reasoned and authentic educational experience becomes a defining characteristic of Catholic education.[170]

Several features of the tasks assigned to schools by the CCE discourse make imperative in the theory and practice of Catholic education the availability of, the wide-spread recourse to, and the skilful employment of the kind of 'phronetic discourse' that arises out of McLaughlin's pedagogic *phronēsis,* which was examined in chapter four above. *CSTTM (1997)* alludes also to the 'capacity for prudent innovation' which should be a feature of the Catholic school, especially in the context of the new challenges faced by education such as 'a crisis of values', 'extreme pluralism', 'multi-culturalism', and a growing 'marginalisation of the Christian faith as a reference point and a source of light for an interpretation of existence'.[171]

Kevin Williams considers that in this concept of 'pedagogic *phronēsis*' McLaughlin has provided 'a very fertile conceptual tool' for the philosophical analysis and satisfactory resolution of many problems and dilemmas that occur in the practice of Catholic education.[172] Williams has further suggested, as McLaughlin himself recognised, that, in the Catholic school context, 'there is more work to be done on the character of the

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[170] Paddy Walsh, *Education and Meaning,* p. 49.

[171] *CSTTM (1997),* No.s 3, 1.

[172] Kevin Williams, "The common school and the Catholic school: a response to the work of T.H. McLaughlin", *International Studies in Catholic Education,* Vol. 2, No. 1, March 2010, pp. 19-36 (32).

kind of pedagogic *phronēsis* appropriate to the Church's educational institutions'.[173] It is highly desirable that there be available to Catholic philosophy of education a method of educational thinking that is directly oriented to practice and attuned to its attendant problems and difficulties.

In assessing McLaughlin's possible contribution to a re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education, the manner in which his concept and practice of 'pedagogic *phronēsis*' might complement and be incorporated into a reading of the CCE discourse on the Catholic school as 'educational community' is worth examining. McLaughlin's uniquely powerful paradigm of 'pedagogic *phronēsis*', together with his accomplished analytical skills, offer much to a Catholic philosophy of education that would seek to engage in dialogue with, and interrogate the officially promulgated educational discourse of the CCE, with a view to utilising the potential of the latter for enhancing insight and vision in the practice of education in the Catholic school.

A priority in this section, therefore, is to identify selected elements or features of the CCE discourse on the Catholic school as 'educational / educative/ educating community' that would seem to demand, and very profitably benefit from, the use of McLaughlin's analytical skills and the exercise of 'pedagogic *phronēsis*'. Such features include substantive tasks allocated to the Catholic school relating to its aims and procedures, where appropriate reflection and discernment by practitioners would appear to be a necessary pre-condition for a genuine educational / educative / educating environment to be created. Furthermore, it would be useful if one could identify and collate a repertoire of approaches and procedures frequently used by McLaughlin in the course of his exercise of 'pedagogic *phronēsis*', with a view to constructing some form of 'phronetic discourse' that might be used to engage in dialogue with various other discourses in the context of Catholic philosophy of education.

### 'Community' in CCE Discourse

It should be noted immediately that any attempt to study extensively how *community* is conceptualised in Catholic educational discourse, or to judge the relevance of its educational, social, and moral dimensions for Catholic education within the context of a pluralistic society, must pose an initial and significant problem, not just of scale, but of

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[173] Ibid., p. 34.

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having to decide upon the optimal approach to be adopted for the accomplishment of the task. A study that began from a comprehensive analysis of the notion of 'community' and progressed to identify specific educational dimensions and functions of community would seem to be neither necessary nor feasible in the present context. The limited objectives of this thesis preclude extensive treatment of 'community' as such, and suggest rather that attention might more profitably be directed to, not the sociological or multiple other features of the study of community, but to the metaphorical description of the Catholic school as 'community', symbolising an educational reality possessing in different degrees a specific Catholic identity and sense of purpose.[174]

The CCE discourse is insistent, firstly, that 'everything the Catholic educator does in a school takes place within the structure of an educational community'.[175] It is its community dimension that makes the school 'an instrument of integral formation of the human person', and provides opportunities 'to initiate appropriate dialogue between culture and faith'.[176] Although it is not 'an exhaustive description' of the Catholic school, 'the concept of the scholarly institution as an educational community is one of the most enriching developments for the contemporary school'.[177] Secondly, the communitarian dimension of the Catholic school constitutes its educational potential and influence, but this conception of school as 'community' is derived ultimately from, and elucidated in CCE discourse, principally in terms of a Christian theological anthropology, rather than as a sociological construct of any kind.[178] Documents of the CCE corpus, such as *CPCS (2002)*, stress the theological notion of *communio* and invite Catholic schools to promote a 'spirituality of communion', which would be capable of being developed into 'an educational principle in the various environments in which the human person is formed'.[179]

A priority in the present context is to reflect on what the CCE discourse understands as

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[174] The many works of George A. Hillery, Jr and, more recently, Kenneth A. Strike and Frank G. Fitzpatrick, listed in the bibliography, are a valuable resource for understanding the Catholic school as 'community'. For a discussion of the sense in which the Catholic school community might be seen as a reality to be realized or constructed, see, Anthony P. Cohen, *The Symbolic Construction of Community*, London: Tavistock Publications, 1985.
[175] *LCS (1982)*, No. 22.
[176] Ibid., No.s 22, 29
[177] Ibid., No. 22.
[178] *LCS (1982)*, No. 22; *RDECS (1988)*, No, 31.
[179] *CPMS (1982)*, No. 15.

an *educational community*, to appreciate the conditions under which it may be said to be *educative*, and to consider why, according to the educational documentation under study here, an educating *community* is deemed an appropriate metaphor for the Catholic school.[180] On the basis of this partial study it is hoped to arrive at an appreciation of how McLaughlin's 'phronetic approach' might provide an appropriate methodology for educators to become aware of what is involved in, and to work towards the realization of, the ideal of the Catholic school as an *educational / educative /educating community*, which claims to provide a unique and alternative Christian educational experience.

### Substantive CCE Tasks of the Catholic School and the Need for 'Pedagogic *Phronēsis*'

More frequently perhaps than any other term throughout its corpus, the CCE literature employs, very often equivalently, the three terms, *educational community, educative community* and *educating community*, to denote the Catholic school.[181] A summary analysis of these multiple references serves to identify some of the more substantive tasks that the CCE discourse commits to the Catholic school in its capacity as an educational / educative / educating community. A simple listing of these tasks will clearly reveal the inevitability of the demand for Catholic educators to be able to make 'balanced judgments' and arrive at decisions of a very fundamental nature relating to the challenging 'burdens and dilemmas' arising out of expectations to be met and initiatives to be undertaken regarding the performance of these tasks, within specific schools, often differing widely in social, cultural and religious background, upon which the potential of the school as an education / educative / educating community may rightly be thought to depend.[182] Among the 'burdens and dilemmas' arising in the Catholic school community and requiring acutely tactful judgment and response are, the following.

Firstly, let us consider the statement of the CCE that the Catholic school is tasked with,

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[180] The CCE discourse appears to use the epithets 'educational', 'educative', and 'educating' indiscriminately in relation to the Catholic school as community. This may reflect no more than the customary variants to be expected in translating material from the original source.

[181] See: *CS (1977)*, No.s 54, 70, 73, 85; *LCS (1982)*, No.s 22, 24, 34, 38, 39, 41, 42, 43, 56; *RDECS (1988)*, No.s 6, 24, 25, 31, 32, 38, 39, 42, 67, 108; *CSTTM (1997)*, No.s 4, 6, 9, 10, 14,16, 18; *CPMS (2002)*, No.s 18, 20, 21, 25, 42, 43, 46, 47, 49, 50, 54, 60, 65, 67, 72, 73; *ETCS (2007)*, No.s 5, 12, 13, 15, 16, 20, 34, 39, 40, 42, 43, 44, 46, 47, 48, 53.

[182] I borrow the phrase 'burdens and dilemmas' from T.H. McLaughlin, "The Burdens and Dilemmas of Common Schooling", David Carr et al., ed.s, *Liberalism and Schooling*, 2008, pp. 137-174 (137).

and expected to aspire to become, 'a place of integral education of the human person through a clear educational project of which Christ is the foundation'.[183] With its educational project 'inspired by the Gospel', the Catholic school 'focuses on the human person in his or her integral, transcendent, historical identity'.[184] Christian belief that 'all human values find their fulfilment and unity in Christ', dictates that the 'promotion of the human person', and the 'development of the whole man', become the 'goal of the Catholic school', and explains the 'centrality of the human person in its educational project'.[185] This awareness, too, 'strengthens the school's educational endeavour and renders it fit to form strong personalities'.[186]

This statement of intent must be related to the real-world environment of many Catholic schools, which are confronted with children and young people who in an increasing number of instances are 'not only indifferent and non-practising, but also totally lacking in religious or moral formation', who display 'a profound apathy where ethical and religious formation is concerned', and require no more of their Catholic school than 'a certificate of studies or, at most, quality instruction and training for employment'.[187] While the CCE discourse is to be commended for this awareness, the stark contrast of educational intent and educational reality clearly indicates the necessity for Catholic educators, in all aspects of school life, to engage in reflective practice and to develop the art of sensitive understanding and tactful judgment in furtherance of the integral education of children and young people.

A second example of where discernment and good judgment becomes imperative in the Catholic school that strives to be a genuine educational / educative / educating community, relates to its commitment and actions to generate a sense of inclusiveness throughout the community. Again, based upon its Christian conviction that 'the Spirit is at work in every person', the CCE discourse insists that 'the Catholic school offers itself to all, non-Christians included, with all its distinctive aims and means'.[188] The Catholic school, inspired by the Vatican II *Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions*, wishes thereby to become able 'to acknowledge, preserve, and promote the spiritual and moral qualities, the social and cultural values, which

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[183] *CSTTM (1997)*, No. 4; *CS (1977)*, No.s 8,15, 34.
[184] *CSTTM (1997)*, No. 10.
[185] *CSTTM (1887)*, No. 9; *CS (1977)*, No. 35.
[186] *CSTTM (1997)*, No. 9.
[187] *CSTTM (1997)*, No. 6.
[188] CS (1977), No. 85; *CSTTM (1997)*, No. 16.

characterize different civilizations'.[189] The CCE publication, *LCS (1982)*, acknowledges that 'at times there are students in Catholic schools who do not profess the Catholic faith, or perhaps are without any religious faith at all'.[190]

The sensitive Catholic educator, conscious of the incompatibility of free commitment to Christian faith and any kind of indoctrination, is reminded of, and does well to note, the imperative that 'faith does not admit of violence; it is a free response of the human person to God as he reveals himself'.[191] A later CCE document reiterates the point: 'Schools, even Catholic schools, do not demand adherence to the faith. An encounter with God is always a personal event'.[192] Here is another typical example of where the kind of phronetic thinking that characterizes the work of McLaughlin is vitally necessary. Catholic educators, seeking to construct an educational / educative / educating community, must be able to decide wisely how they are 'to teach doctrine in conformity with their own religious convictions and in accord with the religious identity of the school', while at the same time 'having the greatest respect for those students who are not Catholics', being 'open at all times to authentic dialogue', and able to show 'a warm and sincere appreciation for anyone who is honestly seeking God according to his or her own conscience'.[193]

A final instance of how a task demanded of the Catholic school by the CCE discourse calls for the exercise of 'pedagogic *phronēsis*', especially when the authoritative discourse remains silent about how the goal is to be achieved in practice, may be illustrated by the declared goals of the Catholic educational / educative / educating community to 'help young people to grasp their own identity', 'to reveal to them the authentic needs and desires that inhabit everyone's hearts', 'to foster authentic relationships among young people'.[194] Advocating what it calls a 'spirituality of communion', the CCE document, *CPMS (2002)*, calls for renewed emphasis on 'the priority of the person and of relationships' in all educational communities.[195] Such a 'spirituality of communion' should become 'the educational principle' of every

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[189] *CS (1977)*, No. 85; *Nostra Aetate*, 1965, No. 2.
[190] *LCS (1982)*, No. 42; *RDECS (1988)*, No. 6.
[191] *LCS (1982)*, No. 42.
[192] *CPMS (2002)*, No. 51.
[193] *LCS (1982)*, No.s 42, 55; Vatican II *Declaration on Religious Freedom*, 1965, No. 3.
[194] *CPMS (2002)*, No. 18
[195] *CPMS (2002)*, No.s 6, 15

environment in which the human person is formed.[196] Educating young people 'in communion and for communion' in the Catholic school is, declares another CCE document, *ETCS (2007)*, 'a serious commitment that must not be taken lightly'.[197]

Effectively, this task is interpreted to mean that Catholic educators must 'make the entire educational sphere a place of communion open to external reality and not closed in on itself', such that students are enabled to 'grow authentically as persons' with a degree of openness to the whole of reality.[198] In terms of providing an anthropological foundation for the formative education of schools, these documents define the human person, not just in terms of his or her 'rationality' (that is, one's intelligent and free nature), but equally importantly by his or her 'relational nature' (that is, one's relationship with other persons).[199] The commitment to promote the relational dimension of the person and the care taken in establishing authentic educational relationships with young people are aspects of education that should be facilitated in the Catholic educational community.[200] Learning is facilitated when educational interaction takes place at a level that fully recognizes the equality and dignity of every person.[201] Freedom is recognised as an essential dimension of growth to personhood and 'education to freedom' is regarded as 'humanising action' because it aims at the full development of personality.[202]

With regard to this third task of the Catholic school noted here, namely, helping young people to achieve their own sense of identity and encouraging them to engage in meaningful relationships, it is clearly possible for a whole range of matters to arise where sophisticated judgment and decision are called for if the educational virtue of the school is to be realised. It is possible that young people or their parents may feel that they are being indoctrinated, that their freedom of choice is being unduly curtailed, and they may dissent from what is being proposed for them, and may challenge the authority structure of the school. The absence of 'pedagogic phronēsis' in this case can be very damaging to both individual pupils and the ethos of the school. The Catholic school's whole project of formative education, no matter how idealistic and merit-worthy, may

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[196] *CPMS (2002)*, No. 15.
[197] *ETCS* (2007), No. 20.
[198] *ETCS (2007)*, No. 43.
[199] *CPMS (2002)*, No. 35.
[200] *CPMS (2002)*, No. 43.
[201] *CPMS (2002)*, No. 45.
[202] *CPMS (2002)*, No. 52.

be challenged on the grounds that it involves unnecessary interference in the future flourishing of children and young people.

McLaughlin notably engaged in debate on the right of parents to bring their children up within a specific religious tradition, which might or might not involve them in being educated in a Catholic school.[203] The question at issue in this debate is whether such religious upbringing violates the child's right to an open future. A similar type of question also surfaces in the context of the effects of being educated in a Catholic school, and whether such education violates a central liberal value of personal autonomy. McLaughlin's grappling with this situation by proposing two stages to religious upbringing, a first stage where children are given an 'initial faith', then a later stage of enhancement and critical reflection on the original set of beliefs and values, an approach he termed 'autonomy via faith', might well be found useful in the context of the sharing of religious faith and values with which CCE discourse tasks the Catholic school.[204] It is yet another example of his phronetic discourse from which Catholic schools might derive the benefit of enlightenment.

## Complementing the CCE discourse: McLaughlin and the Construction of a Phronetic Paradigm

That opportunity exists for the deployment of 'pedagogic *phronēsis*' in relation to the realisation of the aims of the CCE discourse concerning the Catholic school as educational community has been clearly sign-posted. It should be possible to identify a repertoire of dispositions, judgments, and skills employed by McLaughlin in his analysis of the problems and dilemmas encountered in the context of both the common school and the Catholic school, which would provide us with an enlightening and rich vocabulary and range of skills, for the construction of a phronetic paradigm as a characteristic feature within a re-articulated Catholic philosophy of education. One way in which this task might be approached would be through an analysis of McLaughlin's pedagogic *phronēsis* as reported in several of his better known essays. The hope would be that ultimately McLaughlin's understanding and practice of 'pedagogic *phronēsis*' might enable a more substantive and coherent account of what is termed his 'phronetic

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[203] T.H. McLaughlin, "Parental rights and the religious upbringing of children", *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, Vol. 18, 1994, pp. 75-83.
[204] T.H. McLaughlin, "Peter Gardner on religious upbringing and the liberal ideal of religious autonomy", *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, Vol. 14, 1990, pp. 107-25.

approach' to be constructed, which would redound to the benefit of Catholic philosophy of education by way of complementing the CCE discourse.

In chapter four above, McLaughlin's use of his phronetic paradigm to analyse the claimed 'distinctiveness' of Catholic education was examined, and features of his 'pedagogical *phronēsis*' as exemplified there were noted. An essay of McLaughlin's, "The Educative Importance of Ethos", published in 2005, and directly related to an important dimension of the Catholic school as 'community', might similarly be briefly referred to here for the same purposes. McLaughlin's engagement of 'pedagogic *phronēsis*' is very evident throughout this essay, and in many ways this work can offer a template for the construction of a 'phronetic paradigm'.

McLaughlin, in the essay in question, explores what he terms the 'educational importance' of ethos and argues that, despite a wide acknowledgment of its importance in the context of education and schooling, the notion needs to be 'brought into clearer focus' and its role as 'a form of educative influence' merits further exploration.[205] What has often been lacking in the study of ethos and its related notions, such as 'culture', 'climate', etc., McLaughlin feels, is 'the need for a more detailed and precise focus upon the notion of ethos itself and its educative importance'.[206] He offers 'a broadly philosophical exploration' of the notion of ethos in the context of teaching and schooling and admits that it is 'a notoriously difficult concept to analyse' for a number of reasons.[207]

McLaughlin's account, as one would expect, is a fine display of his analytical skills as he attempts with great effect 'to tie down a notion of ethos' that, he notes, 'contains no suggestion that the term has a single correct meaning to which appeal can be made'.[208] His concern is to attempt 'to embrace, in a full a way as possible, a range of meanings of the term which can yield a persuasive definition' with practical uses and benefits in its application to educational influence.[209] McLaughlin next turns to consider how, in the context of classrooms and schools, ethos comes up for assessment 'in terms of the extent to which it embodies and facilitates educative influence'.[210] It is here, I think, that

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[205] T.H. McLaughlin, "The Educative Importance of Ethos", pp. 306-325 (306)
[206] Ibid., p. 307.
[207] Ibid., p. 308.
[208] Ibid., p. 308.
[209] Ibid., p. 311.
[210] Ibid., p. 312.

one might focus more closely on McLaughlin's exercise of 'pedagogic *phronēsis*', as distinct from his analytical skill.

McLaughlin observes that the kinds of educational influence that teachers and schools seek to exert upon students relate to many 'kinds of achievements', and the 'forms of educational influence' through which this range of achievements are promoted by teachers and schools are similarly varied.[211] According to McLaughlin, philosophy of education has 'two major concerns' with respect to these kinds of achievements and forms of influence. Firstly, it underlines the 'value laden nature' of these achievements and forms of influence, and 'the need for justification of their pursuit'. Secondly, it calls for 'a proper understanding of the character of the achievements and modes of influence', and is interested in the logical and other kinds of relationship between them.[212]

McLaughlin notes that both the kinds of educational achievements that are related to ethos and the modes of influence which an ethos exerts 'are consistent with broadly Aristotelian accounts of these matters'.[213] In these accounts, the forms of educational achievement that are seen as 'particularly apt for development via an ethos' are 'qualities of character and virtue, dispositions, sensitivities of perception and qualities of judgment, most notably practical wisdom, or *phronēsis*'.[214] The particular kind of educative influence exerted by an ethos, McLaughlin argues, can best be seen in terms of 'the provision of a context in which a range of forms of educative influence and learning can flourish'.[215] Examples of such educative influence and learning would include, McLaughlin judges, 'imitation, habituation, training in feeling, attention and perception, induction into patterns of action and habit, forms of guidance and experience, and exemplification'.[216] With Aristotle, McLaughlin asserts, human development requires 'initiation into a culture in which qualities of personhood and character are recognised and practised'.[217]

The primary purpose of examining McLaughlin's essay on the educative importance of ethos, it must be stressed, is not to become acquainted with his substantive view on this

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[211] "The Educative Importance of Ethos", p. 316.
[212] Ibid., p. 316.
[213] Ibid., p. 318.
[214] Ibid., p. 318.
[215] Ibid., p. 319.
[216] Ibid., p. 319.
[217] Ibid., p. 319.

matter, important though that is. Despite the fact, also, that the essay contains valuable insights as to how one might interpret the term 'educative' in relation to the Catholic school as a whole, this, too, is not the reason for its study here. The real objective in the study of this essay is to identify within it McLaughlin's powerful display of phronetic reasoning. McLaughlin judges that 'much greater reflection is needed' on the kinds of educational achievement with which ethos is concerned, and the specific aspects of the educational aims and values of the classroom and school with which it is particularly related and the modes via which its influence is exerted.[218]

Clearly, McLaughlin's conclusion that, such reflection should lead to the realisation of the educational importance of ethos and its scope, is incontestable.[219] In general, what is needed, therefore, is an appropriate form of reflection that would facilitate discourse, not just related to the educative influence of ethos, but in relation to several other aspects of Catholic educational practice and theory, but which must not merely be 'a form of theorising, but part of a process of the improvement of practice via forms of pedagogic wisdom'.[220] That such a form of reflection and guidance relating to practice is not well articulated in the CCE discourse relating to the Catholic school as an educational / educative / educating community must be a matter of regret for Catholic educators.

McLaughlin's 'appropriate and sustained engagement' with pedagogical matters is amply illustrated as a central feature of 'pedagogic *phronēsis*'. He emphasises that the nature of the judgment involved in *phronēsis* 'requires practical knowledge of the good, together with intelligent and personally engaged sensitivity to situations and individuals', in making judgments about what constitutes an appropriate expression of the good in a given circumstance'.[221] Practical judgment of this kind is, in McLaughlin's judgment, 'inherently supple, non-formulable and non-codifiable'. His illustration of the meaning of the concept and practice of *phronēsis*, as evidenced in this essay, could become the basis for the construction of a form of discourse that would complement the largely aspirational discourse of the CCE .

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[218] Ibid., p. 319.
[219] Ibid., p. 319.
[220] Ibid., p. 322.
[221] Ibid., p. 318.

## Conclusion

There can be little doubt that Maritain, Lonergan, and McLaughlin each have distinctive and positive contributions to make toward enhancing the nature and quality of the educational discourse offered in the CCE literature. Their work is to be called upon, not because of some un-argued assumption that 'philosophy is better', but in recognition of specific ways in which each has the potential to construct with the CCE discourse an interrogative framework, within which the different perspectives of the diverse discourses might be brought into creative relationship, for the benefit ultimately of the re-articulation of a Catholic philosophy of education. In mutual dialogue with the CCE discourse these philosophers can provide a philosophical reinforcement of the foundations of Catholic philosophy of education that the CCE discourse alone is not equipped to carry into effect.

Catholic philosophy of education in the future will need to be able to provide a theoretical articulation of its own nature and relevance to the practice of Catholic education. It is highly unlikely that a mere vision-guided approach to Catholic education, on its own, will be adequate or sufficient to cope with the challenges of life in a postmodern and increasingly secular world. Both robust philosophical perspective and aspirational vision need to become dialogue partners in providing Catholic philosophy of education with an understanding of its nature and function in the context of the practice of Catholic education.

**Chapter Six: Summary and Conclusions; Personal Reflections**

This dissertation is based on a conviction that Catholic philosophy of education today should be seeking greater clarity in terms of its own self-understanding and ought to be pursuing the restoration of a more explicit philosophical foundation, as it attempts to identify an opportunity and a means of articulating its traditional aims and purposes within new and contemporary contexts. An opportunity has presented itself in recent decades, from a source that is perhaps being neglected, for the Catholic educational community to contribute toward these goals. This opportunity comes from what is, at first sight, a decidedly un-philosophical source, in the form of the publication by the Holy See's Congregation for Catholic Education (CCE) of a fairly extensive body of literature on the Catholic school and Catholic education. The opportunity which this event presents is not, indeed, clear cut and straight-forward but requires philosophical discernment and a willingness to reconsider the nature and tradition of Catholic educational thought from a number of different perspectives.

The notion of 'transposition', as conceived by Lonergan, is an appropriate means of giving new and systematic expression to the tradition of Catholic educational thought. It will be recalled that Lonergan conceived the task of 'transposition' essentially as that of positioning the received tradition within a more contemporary and adequately theoretic context by means of a renewed effort of analysis and synthesis. The implications and requirements of such a 'transposition' of the tradition might be analysed, it is argued, by means of a process of bringing the recent CCE discourse into dialogue with the varied and different educational discourse of three important Catholic philosophers, namely, Maritain, Lonergan, and McLaughlin, whose central insights have been summarised in chapters two, three, and four above. To enable the discourses of the philosophers and that of the CCE to mutually interrogate one another, characteristic themes and principles within the educational works of the former, that invite a more philosophically oriented response from the latter, have been identified.

The value and relevance of the CCE discourse for contemporary thinking about Catholic philosophy of education, already appreciated by philosophers such as McLaughlin, Williams, and others, and acknowledged in various ways in the text above, has recently been confirmed by the two most recent publications of the CCE. Thus, *Educating to Intercultural Dialogue in Catholic Schools* published in 2013, and *Educating Today and Tomorrow: A Renewing Passion* published in 2014, not only reflect many themes that are integral to the tradition of Catholic educational thought, but introduce a note of

contemporary salience for Catholic philosophy of education not only in regard to the specific matters they address but also in the more or less novel manner of how these matters are addressed.[1] These documents bear a note of realism about them that strongly contrasts with some of the earlier CCE publications of this century that were rightly considered to be theologically elitist and generally overly idealist in failing to come to terms with what is the reality for the majority of Catholic schools in most contemporary environments.

Thus, the invitation in *EID (2013)* to Catholic schools to foster 'intercultural dialogue' by being educating communities that, while having their own 'specific nature and purposes', are committed to 'following the pathways that lead to encountering others', and are 'open to the universality of knowledge', constitutes not only a challenge to the practice of Catholic education but suggests that our understanding of its fundamental reality should accentuate a focus on openness and inclusivity.[2] Likewise, the advice in *ETT (2014)* that Catholic educators be aware that it is not just the 'acquisition of information or knowledge', but 'personal transformation', that is the desired goal of education seems timely. The accompanying invitation, in the words of Pope Francis, to regard educating as not just 'a profession', but as 'an attitude to others and a way of being', seem to imply that Catholic education should be seeking with renewed effort to recover, even in the face of the multiple challenges of contemporary societies, an emphasis on education and its philosophy as 'a way of life'.[3]

Notwithstanding the justly positive appreciation of the visionary and pastoral strengths of the CCE discourse, however, it has been seen as appropriate and necessary, in the context of this dissertation, to draw attention to perceived weaknesses in the discourse as a whole, most notably in respect of its lack of explicit philosophical basis and the kind of framework it can offer to Catholic schools and others to analyse aims, pedagogical processes, ethos, and curriculum in a contemporary context. The CCE documents undoubtedly presume a certain universal Catholic philosophical-theological

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[1] Congregation for Catholic Education, *Educating to Intercultural Dialogue in Catholic Schools: Living in Harmony for a Civilization of Love*, Vatican City, 2013; *Educating Today and Tomorrow: A Renewing Passion*, Vatican City, 2014. Hereafter, these documents are referred to respectively as: *EID (2013) and ETT (2014)*.
[2] *EID (2013)*, No. 86.
[3] *ETT (2014)*, Section III (e); Conclusion.

position that, with Williams and others, one could broadly characterise as 'Thomist'.[4] But questions and concerns remain, both about the degree to which such a unifying Catholic philosophy is in practice shared by Catholic schools on any kind of widespread basis, and about the extent of the influence an overtly and traditionalist Thomist Catholic philosophy of education is able to exert in the so-called 'public square'. These questions have been explored in this dissertation, but not exhaustively so, since the focus has been rather on the non-explicit nature of the reference to any kind of philosophy, even its own personalist stance, as a feature of the CCE discourse.

The question as to whether there is, or is not, substantial agreement about a paradigmatic philosophy of Catholic education that is fully implemented in practice in any given context is conceivably one that can be resolved by empirical investigation. The further concern about the capacity of Catholic philosophy of education to invoke a set of principles that would exercise influence in public debate is a matter upon which considerably more discussion should ensue. Despite the heartfelt conviction of Maritain and his efforts to re-tailor Thomism to contemporary needs, grave doubt remains about the degree and kind of 'illumination' of the nature and practice of education his work can offer today to society at large.[5] That is not to say, however, that Maritain's philosophy of education is irrelevant, for if his thought can survive the range of criticism to which it has been subjected, there are elements within it that might serve as a useful corrective to some claims of contemporary philosophy of education.

An attempt was made to assess Maritain's contribution to Catholic philosophy of education in chapter two above, and while it is evident that several themes and principles from his philosophical reflection are echoed in the CCE discourse, they are present therein without pronounced or distinctive philosophical expression. Themes considered as intrinsic to the aims and purposes of Catholic education, such as the integral formation of the human person, the unity of knowledge, the liberation of the mind and the strengthening of the will, and the social nature of human existence, are an intrinsic part of the Catholic tradition of educational thinking, though by no means limited to that tradition which does not, in fact, lay exclusive claim to such liberal humanistic education. We would look to the CCE discourse in vain, however, as indeed

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[4] See, Kevin Williams, "Aquinas and Thomism", pp. 50-54. In Phillips, D. C. (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Educational Theory and Philosophy*, Los Angeles, London: SAGE Publications, 2014.
[5] See, Jacques Maritain, *Integral Humanism: Temporal and Spiritual Problems of a New Christendom*, Notre Dame, IN: University of Motre Dame Press, 1973.

to Maritain, to discover how we might bring such educational themes and principles into conversation with more instrumental views of the purpose of education that arguably predominate today. In the chapter on Maritain it was noted how his ideal of 'applying Thomist principles' to problems is problematic for much philosophy of education today.

It has been a contention in this dissertation that the lack of an explicit philosophical dimension in the CCE discourse has handicapped and diminished the potential of Catholic philosophy of education in a number of ways. Mario O. D'Souza has accurately summarised what the absence of a much needed philosophical lens, through which the CCE discourse can be read and discerned, means in terms of Catholic educational practice.[6] While Thomism once provided a unifying philosophical system of analysis in Catholic philosophy of education, since Vatican II (1962-1965), this system has been questioned by many scholars and silently but decisively rejected by the majority of practitioners. There are many reasons why Thomism's unifying philosophical system has been openly questioned and largely rejected, not just in relation to Catholic philosophy of education, but in the context of the wider arena of Catholic intellectual life, though discussion of these is not the object of this thesis. The acceptance of pluralism and the diversity of philosophic viewpoint today have no doubt compounded the problem so that postmodernism, deconstructionism and cultural theory make it difficult, in the opinion of some scholars at least, to pursue any kind of unifying theme or over-arching viewpoint.[7]

D'Souza raises several concerns that arise out of this situation and these precisely have been among the factors that prompted this investigation of whether, and by what means, a more robust philosophical foundation might be provided for the under-stated Catholic philosophy of education that is implicit in the CCE discourse. Firstly, the CCE publishes documents on Catholic schooling and education that appear at base to presuppose that a largely Thomistic methodology and framework is still widely subscribed to, and able to provide a scaffolding for all Catholic intellectual discourse.[8]

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[6] Mario O. D'Souza, "Some Reflections on Contemporary Canadian Catholic Education", *Interchange*, Vol. 34, No. 4, 2003, pp. 363-381.

[7] Ibid., pp. 374-377.

[8] See *GE (1965)*, No. 10. The *Declaration on Education* is one of the few Vatican II documents that cites Aquinas by name. Aquinas is recommended as a model of openness and an exemplar of a scholar that promoted 'a deeper realization of the harmony that exists between faith and learning'. The CCE literature

If this presupposition cannot be justified, however, it is likely that those who reject that body of principles will be neither interested nor prepared to consider Catholic philosophy of education, insofar as it is embodied in the CCE discourse, in their search for principles that guide and bring unity to their practice. On the other hand, those who continue still to believe in its relevance will perhaps regret the fact that traditional Thomist educational thinking does not appear more prominently in the CCE discourse.

It is not, incidentally, an aim of this thesis either to justify or to reject the application of Thomist principles in Catholic educational discourse. These principles, couched in explicit Thomist conception and language, appear today to matter less to some Catholic educators than to others. One readily acknowledges, of course, that Thomism in Catholic education has its defenders, among them Williams, and that their case is a strong one.[9] My concern is with the extent to which all philosophical principles appear to be played down in the CCE literature. A more pronounced philosophical nuancing of basic principles in the CCE discourse might have been of benefit to those who wish to retrieve a positive core from the Catholic tradition of educational thought, but who would be prepared to do so only by a more critical reading of the tradition, and one that is no longer so dependent on the now largely dismantled Thomist grand theory.

The precise reason why a philosophical perspective seems not to be emphasised in the CCE discourse may be to some extent capable of a straight-forward explanation. The authors of these documents will be aware of the fact that, in the words of Pope John Paul II, 'the Church has no philosophy of her own', nor does she 'canonise one particular philosophy in preference to others'.[10] Given that the CCE documents are destined for the Church's schools and educators world-wide, existing as they do in very different cultures, with markedly different propensities for philosophical reflection, there may have been an explicit wish to remove undue emphasis upon a particular philosophical theory of education. This concern, I suggest, has translated itself into a situation where all explicit philosophising is more or less absent from the CCE discourse. But if that discourse has instead opted for, say, a theological approach to education, if this was an option that was deliberately availed of, while it might appear to solve one problem, it actually creates another, for theology, too, as M. J. Priester

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is essentially concerned with promulgating the principles laid down in *GE (1965)* and may be assumed to share this positive appreciation of Aquinas and his approach to a synthesis of faith and culture .
[9] See Kevin Williams, "Aquinas and Thomism", pp. 50-54.
[10] John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio, On the Relationship between Faith and Reason*, 1998, No. 49.

explains, 'makes use of the thought and methods of philosophical inquiry', both to perform its own tasks, and to assist in the 'meaningful communication' of its findings.[11]

The Catholic tradition of educational thought, in common with the whole intellectual enterprise of that community, arises at the most fundamental level in the belief that, as J. L. Garcia puts it, following St. Augustine of course, God has 'placed in the human heart a desire to know the truth', in a word, 'to know himself'. To respond to that natural urge is to undertake 'philosophical reflection', Garcia believes.[12] The Papal Exhortation, *On the Relationship between Faith and Reason*, stresses that without philosophy's contribution, it would in fact be 'impossible to discuss theological issues', though it does not limit the value of philosophy to its instrumental importance in this kind of context.[13] As 'one of the noblest of human tasks', quite apart from its instrumental value, John Paul II appreciated the value of philosophy in a way reminiscent of Aristotle and Aquinas who deemed rationality as a distinguishing mark of humanity.[14] For this reason it is somewhat disappointing that the CCE discourse appears to have omitted or at least undervalued a philosophical perspective.

It is possible, of course, to argue that the CCE discourse really does in fact contain much in the way of philosophy and that my concern in pursuing some way of explicitly undergirding its text with explicit philosophical statement is mistaken, and arises out of a failure to recognise its characteristic philosophical insights, precisely because they have been expressed in non-technical language, from which overtly metaphysical, epistemological and axiological terminology has carefully been omitted. One might thus instance in support of this argument the presence in the CCE discourse of such soundly philosophical themes as its Christian anthropology, its personalism, its emphasis on relationality and the inter-personal, its positive appreciation of the value of human knowledge, and its understanding of the task of Christian education as that of the formation of the human person and the synthesis of faith and culture.

Much more work than it has been possible to undertake here needs to be done in this connection, perhaps with a view to understanding the degree to which philosophies such

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[11] M. J. Priester, "Philosophical Foundations for Christian Education", in M. J. Taylor (ed), *An Introduction to Christian Education*, Nashville: Abingdon, 1966, pp. 60-70.
[12] J.L.A. Garcia, "Death of the Handmaiden: Contemporary Philosophy in *Faith and Reason*", *Logos: A Journal of Catholic Faith and Culture*, Vol. 2, No. 3 (Summer, 1999), pp. 11-19 (12).
[13] See, *Fides et Ratio*, Introduction, No.s 61, 66.
[14] *Fides et Ratio*, No. 3.

as existentialism and phenomenology are deployed in the articulation of the CCE discourse. Modern philosophy, *Fides et Ratio* asserts, has the great merit of 'focusing attention upon man in his concrete historical existence'.[15] Such philosophy, rather than starting from an abstract ontology, metaphysics, epistemology, and so on, undertakes first to understand the human person and may call upon these other studies as it seeks to understand the person's humanity, nature and destiny. I have acknowledged this point of view to the extent that at various stages throughout this dissertation I have expressed a preference for Lonergan's approach to a Catholic philosophy of education, which emphasises the existential and historical dimensions of the educational task, rather than opting for the perennialist discourse of Maritain.

Whatever way we choose to categorise the philosophical character of the CCE discourse, the fact remains that the educational task is 'a decidedly philosophical one'.[16] It is precisely in this context that I considered Maritain's work, and that of Lonergan, as perhaps worthy of being studied again to see how, and why, philosophy should be at the heart of Catholic educational reflection. Maritain was convinced that education is not 'an autonomous science', but one that is dependent upon philosophy.[17] Every theory of education, Maritain argues, is based on 'a conception of life' and, consequently, is 'associated necessarily with a system of philosophy'.[18] According to Haldane, the Catholic educator would do well to recall G.K. Chesterton's observation that every education 'teaches a philosophy', and it does so, 'if not by dogma then by suggestion, by implication, and by atmosphere'.[19] *CSTTM (1997)* explicitly acknowledges the CCE's own appreciation of the centrality of the philosophical perspective in education when it notes that 'there is a tendency to forget that education always presupposes and involves a definite concept of man and life'.[20]

A key problem, therefore, is whether the philosophical position in the CCE discourse is sufficiently explicit to enable Catholic educators to foreground the moral and philosophical remit of education. This claim needs serious defence. Many who hold

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[15] *Fides et Ratio*, No. 5.
[16] Mario O. D'Souza, "The Christian Philosophy of Education and Christian Religious Education, *Journal of Educational Thought*, Vol.34, No. 1, pp. 11-28 (12).
[17] Jacques Maritain, *The Education of Man*, Donald and Isabella Gallagher (ed.s), 1962, pp. 39-40.
[18] Ibid., p. 39.
[19] John Haldane, "Chesterton's Philosophy of Education", *Philosophy*, Vol. 65, No. 251 (Jan., 1980), pp. 65-80 (65).
[20] *CSTTM (1997)*, No, 10.

secular principles consider education to be a philosophical and moral enterprise and to argue that case is itself a deeply philosophical and moral task. We have to ask, with Maritain in mind, in what way the CCE discourse is capable of assisting with the traditional task of 'enlightening the intellect' and through this, leading to a corresponding and equally important 'strengthening of the will', to ask, indeed, whether that discourse can demonstrate that this *still remains a valid goal for education*.[21] And again, with Maritain in mind, we can perhaps hope that elements of his thought, such as his personalistic ontology, might be capable of providing philosophical grounding for CCE's aim of promoting the integral formation of the human person.

Throughout this dissertation I have subscribed to a view that is essentially Maritain's, that a coherent and unified Catholic philosophy of education is needed in order to justify the traditional aims and priorities of Catholic education. What has been of concern is whether the CCE discourse makes sufficiently explicit the foundational philosophical basis of such a philosophy, thereby, on the one hand, communicating the distinctiveness of Catholic education and, on the other, enabling it to engage vigorously in educational dialogue in postmodernist, and increasingly secular societies. A further illustration of this concern can be seen in relation to another professed aim of the CCE discourse, namely, that Catholic education should bring about a synthesis of faith and culture, and of faith and life. The synthesis, or integration, of faith and culture requires, or has traditionally been thought in Catholic philosophy of education to so require, an epistemology by means of which knowledge can be filtered, analysed, inter-connected, rated hierarchically, and built up around some centre of unity.

D'Souza has suggested that the absence of a unifying Catholic philosophy of education leads to difficulties both with regard to the task of synthesising faith and culture and indeed of determining the very purposes of the curriculum in the Catholic school.[22] His analysis is consistent with the argument of this dissertation. In connection with the matter of integration, it has been suggested that the cognitional theory and intentionality analysis of Lonergan may be capable of enabling the CCE discourse to specify how this traditionally important goal of the integration of faith and culture is to be approached. Traditionally, philosophy has been seen as the unifying discipline for knowledge and learning and Newman, followed diligently by Maritain, proposed theology as cohesive

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[21] Mario O. D'Souza, "Reflections on Canadian Catholic Education", p. 375.
[22] Ibid., pp. 376-377.

force for the unification of all knowledge. A Catholic philosophy of education that would neglect the element of philosophical analysis in relation to the integration of faith and culture must necessarily lead, not to integration, but to a certain imbalance in the dialogue between faith and learning.

Furthermore, if it is true as Robert A. Davis suggests, that the traditional 'theocentric' curriculum of the Catholic school was designed to 'dialogue with both the wisdom of the past and the present', so that it could 'maintain the truths of the Christian gospel without becoming isolationist or introspective', then Catholic philosophy of education needs to ask again today about the purpose of the curriculum and the knowledge components that comprise it. Such reflection on the nature and unity of the curriculum of the Catholic school has to be promoted at a time when it is difficult if not impossible (or, to some, desirable) to ensure a 'theocentric' curriculum and to guarantee the inclusion within it of subjects considered to be somehow intrinsically capable of enlightening the mind and strengthening the will.[23] The purpose of the curriculum today, just as much in Catholic schools as in others, is considered by some to be dominated by issues of instrumentality, and the social preconceptions of society's and of the nation's needs and wants, and may scarcely touch upon criteria for inclusion by reason of the very nature of mind and intellect.[24]

In the past, Davis argues, Catholic theology nurtured a curriculum that was 'Catholic in the fullest sense', that is, 'committed to the Thomistic axiom that all knowledge is one', and 'wedded to the belief that the human subject is formed by God's grace in sacramental encounter and faithful response to the Christian gospel'.[25] The evident fragmentation of this vision of the Catholic curriculum, which Davis traces in exquisite detail, was interpreted by Maritain as the abandonment of what he called 'integral Christian humanism'. We have seen in this dissertation how the goal of recovering and restoring an integral Christian humanism dominated much of Maritain's writing and was central to his reflection on the aims and processes of Catholic education. One problem with Maritain's integral humanism in a world dominated by diversity and pluralism is to safeguard the basic concept and to elucidate its real meaning, while making it clear that Maritain did not in fact wish to impose a Christian culture upon

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[23] Robert A. Davis, "Can there be a Catholic Curriculum?", pp. 207-229 (211). In, James C. Conroy (ed), *Catholic Education: Inside Out, Outside In.*
[24] Marion O. D'Souza, "Reflections on Canadian Catholic Education", p. 377.
[25] Robert A. Davis, "Can there be a Catholic Curriculum?", p. 211.

everyone, nor to return to some remote and putatively idyllic Christian past.

The remit of this dissertation has not allowed one to discuss fully the Catholic school's scope for what Davis refers to as 'enculturation', that is, the cultivation of a positive disposition toward cultural forms of specific cultural and ethnic groups.[26] This may well be a topic that is worthy of future study, especially in the light of the CCE's declared commitment that Catholic schools help synthesize faith and culture and faith and life, and the prominence given in its most recent publications to the goals of 'intercultural dialogue', 'respect for diversity', and 'inclusiveness'.[27] *Fides et* Ratio, too, affirmed the value of humanity's various cultures as different and valuable efforts to plumb the mystery of our existence and to guide people to more human lives.[28] Promoting the dignity and well-being of the human person is undoubtedly central to the Catholic educational project and this of course means respecting 'difference'. But Davis is correct in suggesting that enculturation and the synthesis of faith and culture implies a much deeper process of reflection on the content of what is taught and the framework of knowledge and understanding in which that content inheres.[29] The complex way in which issues of value penetrate all systems of knowledge in whatever way they are enculturated has not been studied at any depth in this thesis.

Chapter five of this dissertation drew attention to the potential of Lonergan's cognitional theory and transcendental method in connection with the Catholic school's declared aim to effect a double synthesis / integration of faith and culture, and faith and life. The matter deserves fuller investigation. From a Lonerganian perspective the whole of education might be seen as a process of promoting the movement of the human spirit from the realm of 'common sense' to that of 'theory', from the realm of theory to that of 'interiority', and from the realm of interiority to the realm of 'self-transcendence'. This trajectory of ascent to meaning and self-appropriation begins with the sense of wonder in conscious experience, which in turn leads to intelligent inquiry and the start of a process of self-discovery during which all our knowing is taken up and integrated in the context of a dynamic process of authentic development comprising intellectual, moral and religious dimensions.

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[26] "Can there be a Catholic Curriculum?", p. 224.
[27] See, for instance, *ETT (2014)*, Sect. II, No.s 5, 6.
[28] *Fides et Ratio*, No.s 70ff, 96.
[29] "Can there be a Catholic Curriculum?" p. 224.

Lonergan was sure that the process whereby we discover how our mind works, the understanding it produces, the verification process by which we test the accuracy of our judgments, and the validity of our decisions, constituted knowledge of much practical worth. Insight, he writes, is the source not only of theoretical knowledge but also of all its practical applications and, indeed, of all intelligent activity.[30] It has not been possible in this dissertation to explore exhaustively the practical value of Lonergan's intentionality analysis in the re-articulation of a Catholic philosophy of education. I hope I have been able at least to indicate, on the basis of a limited analysis of his *Topics in Education*, the usefulness for Catholic philosophy of education of Lonergan's conception of human development in the intellectual pattern of experience. It is here that insight vital for education and learning is formulated, resulting from a movement out of a familiar world of immediacy into a new world mediated by meaning by means of a four stage set of functional and interrelated operations (sensible, intellectual, rational, responsible operations).

This dissertation, in addition to Maritain's perennialist discourse and Lonergan's intentionality discourse, also drew on the work of T.H. McLaughlin, who would not have claimed to be a theologian, nor would he have intended to offer Catholic philosophy a body of novel concepts and principles. McLaughlin's philosophy of education is characterised by two features, analysis and *phronēsis*, that make him an ideal carrier or 'transposer' (in the Lonergan sense) of the perennialist discourse of Maritain, and a sympathetic advocate of Lonergan's cognitional discourse and its underlying intentionality analysis.

The purpose of re-articulating a Catholic philosophy of education in a more contemporary and adequately theoretic context might be achievable, in part at least, through the provision of an interrogatory framework whereby the discourses of Maritain and Lonergan, on the one hand, and that of the CCE discourse on the other, would be enabled to address questions to one another concerning issues such as a person-centred education, the synthesis of faith and culture, and the nature and characterising features of an authentically functioning Catholic educative community . The establishment and proper functioning of such a framework would demand advanced skills of philosophical analysis and discernment in those who sought to guide the conversation, and the

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[30] *Insight*, p. xiii.

giftedness of McLaughlin in both these areas strongly suggests an important role for his work in the re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education.

Notwithstanding McLaughlin's appreciation of the importance of technical and prudential factors in philosophy of education in the context of a democratic liberal society, he would not have appeared to wish to reduce Catholic educational thought to practical experience and the common sense born of it, or to mere expertise in the field of philosophy of education. He appreciated thoroughly the need for theological and philosophical reflection in order to make sound analyses and arguments in this field. Several aspects of McLaughlin's analytical philosophy were instanced in this dissertation in relation to specific or closely related subjects, of interest to Catholic educators and philosophers of education. Most notably, his contribution to analysing the nature of the 'distinctiveness of the Catholic school' was assessed, as also were matters very pertinent to Catholic philosophy of education, such as the 'educative importance of ethos', and the questions of what is intended by the term 'reflective teacher', and in what senses Catholic educators can speak meaningfully and coherently of the 'education of the whole child'.

An all too brief exploration of McLaughlin's phronetic approach or paradigm has been sketched out in this dissertation. It should be possible, on the basis of a more extensive study of McLaughlin's work than has been achieved here, to identify within his thought a range of insights and a series of practically oriented principles which, taken together, might constitute a uniquely powerful pattern of discourse for the Catholic philosopher of education. In discussing McLaughlin's practice of *phronēsis* in chapter five above, Walsh's definition of 'discourse', as 'a sustained and disciplined form of inquiry, discussion, and exposition that is logically unique in some significant way', was found useful.[31] McLaughlin's process of inquiry having as its goal, not only the understanding of a given situation, action, or problem, but the achievement through a process of deep reflection and discussion of a state of discernment and a preparedness to decide and to act in that situation in an appropriate fashion, is a typically sustained and disciplined inquiry. McLaughlin has developed the capacity to define appropriately the problem to be solved and has the wisdom to recognise within its contours the elements of its resolution.

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[31] Paddy Walsh, *Education and Meaning*, pp. 52-53.

An aspect of McLaughlin's work that could be further developed would be to compare and contrast his 'pedagogic *phronēsis*' with Lonergan's *'common sense'*, and to investigate what elements of the combined insights of these scholars might be harvested for the renewal of Catholic philosophy of education. Lonergan's 'common sense insight', when its various limitations, drawbacks, and biases have been accounted for, would appear to be what the *phronimos* is seeking to do in the process of acquiring ethical insight.[32] Lonergan's 'common sense' is not to be confused with any kind of naive realism, or even considered as equivalent to the doctrine of 'intuition' as proposed by Thomists such as Maritain, whereby it is possible to have an immediate grasp of self-evident principles. 'Common sense' is, rather, a kind of intelligence directed at concrete living rather the mere abstraction of sense data, or the product of theoretical explanation, and it is a kind of intelligence to be found across human history and culture in all times and places. It is a 'realm of meaning' within differentiated consciousness, and it is 'the mode of all concrete understanding and judgment'.[33] What this means for Lonergan is that 'common sense' provides, not generalized knowledge, but a usefulness of a general kind. 'Common sense' does not provide us with wisdom in the sense of a general principle that applies to every situation, but offers specific pieces of relevant and useful advice almost after the manner of the proverb. It would be worthwhile to pursue within the context of McLaughlin's pedagogic *phronēsis* how Catholic education might seek to cultivate the 'self-correcting process of learning' that Lonergan considers is born of 'common sense'.[34]

The analysis and discussion throughout this dissertation assumes that Catholic educators have a right to draw on the CCE discourse for assistance with reflection upon the many complex matters relating to the nature of Catholic education and the practice of Catholic schooling in a postmodern world. Catholic education's aims and purposes, its ethos, and its curriculum, all require proper analysis and discernment in what has to do with decision-making and the whole conduct of the Catholic school in a contemporary milieu. It remains open to question whether the CCE discourse as it stands is capable of furnishing even the dedicated Catholic teacher with the practical assistance needed in the contemporary Catholic school. It is for this reason that I have identified key roles for Lonergan's cognitive theory and McLaughlin's analytic and phronetic approaches in

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[32] *Insight*, pp. 173-206, 207-244.
[33] *Topics in Education*, p. 73.
[34] *Insight, pp. 174-175.*

this context, both to clarify the nature and the aims of Catholic philosophy of education, and to create a kind of intermediate discourse that might guide the Catholic educator in the way of right judgment and effective decision-making.

To its credit, the CCE discourse focuses centrally on the aims of Catholic education that have traditionally characterised it, namely, the integral formation of the human person, the synthesis of faith and culture, and the provision of an experience in communal living and learning. The CCE discourse accords a definite priority to the nurture of the person's God-given faculties of intellect and will, but it also recognises the important social, political, ethical, and moral dimensions of education. More is required of the CCE discourse, however, than a vision-guided presentation of Catholic principles of education, helpful as that may be in inspiring and motivating those who work in Catholic schools.

All this gives rise to a valid question as to how foundational principles in Catholic educational thought should be articulated and made available to the Catholic community. Catholic educational thinking, like, for instance, Catholic social thought and the rest of what one might describe as 'applied Catholic thought', has its roots both in revelation and reason. Anyone interested in making Catholic philosophy of education better known and understood must be committed to becoming thoroughly familiar with both the theological and philosophical aspects of this body of thought.[35] Throughout this dissertation, I have chosen, without wishing to press too far the distinction between philosophy of education and theology of education, to place an emphasis on broadly philosophical principles, or what might more precisely be described as philosophical-theological principles, in my discussion of the perceived deficiencies in the CCE discourse on Catholic education and schooling. With a view to suggesting how an amelioration in the situation might be achieved, an appeal was made to two quite different Thomist thinkers, Maritain and Lonergan, with the intention of selecting from their educationally oriented work a set of fundamental philosophico-theological principles deemed to be of use in buttressing the philosophical foundations of the CCE discourse.

It should be remarked that the problem of distinguishing between philosophical

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[35] See, Joseph W. Koterski, SJ, "The Use of Philosophical Principles in Catholic Social Thought: The Case of *Gaudium et Spes*", *Journal of Catholic Legal Studies*, Vol. 45, 2006, pp. 277-292. Koterski argues this case for Catholic social teaching.

principle and theological perspective does not disappear when reflecting upon the work of these scholars, both of whom can lay claim to the appellation of philosopher and theologian. In some respects at least, it is somewhat artificial to attempt to make any kind of strict distinction between the philosophical and theological dimensions of the educational principles of these scholars. No attempt has been made in the course of this dissertation to argue the case for the priority of either theological perspective or philosophical understanding in relation to Catholic philosophy of education. For the Catholic educational community, there is a sense of false opposition here, if the case of either philosophy or theology is pushed to the extreme. A false opposition of faith and reason is always something to be guarded against, as John Paul II states in his remark that 'faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth'.[36] As Langdon Gilkey observes, a drive toward rationality characterises Roman Catholic understanding of the Christian mystery whence it is incumbent upon a theory of Catholic education to seek to integrate both philosophical principle and theological conviction into its deliberations.[37] Nevertheless, it is probably the case that this too is an area that merits further investigation.

This dissertation has been completed in the light of McLaughlin's view (supported by Carr, D'Souza, Haldane, Pring, Williams and many others) that Catholic philosophy of education is *not* to be identified with 'philosophy of Catholic education', which it is understood amounts to a more total and all-embracing 'theory of Catholic education'.[38] Catholic philosophy of education, 'derived from the philosophical resources of notable Catholic thinkers', but 'addressing directly matters of current educational concern', is a distinctively Catholic study that can 'sit alongside' accounts derived from other sources (for example, idealism, realism, Marxism, and so on), as it seeks to 'illuminate the nature and role of education as such', thereby providing both the Catholic educational community and philosophy of education at large with an important resource.[39] Study of the 'theory of Catholic education' would amount to a far more comprehensive and integrated type of discussion than it has been possible to present here. It would be crucial to identify the precise role Catholic philosophy of education might play in such an over-arching theory, and to indicate what particular benefit might be expected to be

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[36] *Fides et Ratio*, Introduction.
[37] Langdon Gilkey, *Catholicism Confronts Modernity: A Protestant View*, New York: Seabury Press, 1975, pp. 17-18, 20-22.
[38] "The Distinctiveness of Catholic Education", p. 139.
[39] Ibid., p. 139.

gained from its inclusion, as well also as considering how philosophy and the many other contributing studies to the elaboration of such a theory might be integrated.

In this dissertation I have been attempting to do here no more than Frederick Crowe tells us was Lonergan's own recommended formula for doctoral students writing a dissertation, namely, that they should address 'a quite manageably small question to a thinker of stature'. [40] The 'thinker of stature' will 'stretch' the student's mind; a question that is 'manageably small' can introduce the candidate to the scholar's work. Thus, insight may be gained into the question without it being necessary to rehearse the whole of the massive and often complex corpus of thought of the scholar in question. I have turned to three Catholic scholars of stature to ask them how they might conceive the task of the re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education for our times, and by what means might they consider this goal is best approached. At best I have hoped for a set of philosophical principles to emerge from their work that might be capable of engaging in dialogue with the Catholic tradition of educational thought.

McLaughlin's wish for a well-articulated Catholic philosophy of education awaits fulfilment. A study such as my own would be greatly honoured if it were judged to be making some minor contribution to an understanding of what is involved in the achievement of a re-articulation of Catholic philosophy of education. In its focus on philosophical concerns, it is an acknowledgment of the need to be able to clarify and justify the kind of educational policies that might be derived from the visionary CCE discourse, such as the integral formation of the human person and the positive appreciation of pluralism and diversity of culture, but based on principles that do not necessarily require a specific religious faith. The challenge that faces Catholic philosophers of education is similar to that described by Joseph Koterski in relation to the use of philosophical principles in Catholic social thought. [41] They must seek to transpose traditional Catholic educational thought into a body of principle, which might be recognised as true by all people of good will on the basis of our common humanity, even if our deepest reason for holding these principles is religious in character. It is surely a worthwhile undertaking, but one which is far from complete.

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[40] *Lonergan*, p. 47.
[41] Joseph W. Koterski, "The Use of Philosophical Principles in Catholic Social Thought", p. 280.

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