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Robin Minney.

"THE WORK OF RUDOLF OTTO AND ITS RELEVANCE TO RELIGIOUS
EDUCATION IN BRITAIN AT THE PRESENT TIME"

Ph.D. thesis, University of Durham, 1993.

ABSTRACT

Rudolf Otto (1869-1937) was brought up in circles of Lutheran piety, and looked for the meeting point of academic theology and religious experience. Deeply influenced by mystics like Eckhart, he sought a solution with the help of the philosopher Kant, the theologian Schleiermacher, and the psychologist William James.

He found the locus of encounter with the numinous within the human heart (Gemüt), thus proposing humanity as the starting point for the study of religion without reducing it to psychology or denying its reality as transcendent.

More recent studies of children's transcendent experiences make it impossible to draw a line between those that are religious and secular ones, a state of affairs implied by the call in the Education Act for 'spiritual development.' A neutral stance is needed for the study of religion in a secular context, e.g. religious education in Britain, yet without denying its validity as religion.

A new understanding of Otto's 'schematisation' discloses the relation between rational and non-rational, as well as that between the numinous in essence and its manifestations. Recent interest in Experiential R.E. makes the application of Otto's approach timely, but schematisation rightly applied also offers a dialogical wholeness to all aspects of R.E.

THE WORK OF RUDOLF OTTO
AND ITS RELEVANCE TO RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
IN BRITAIN AT THE PRESENT TIME

Robin P. Minney

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University of Durham,
Department of Theology

1993



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The material contained in this thesis has not previously been submitted by me for a degree in this or any other university.

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A note on references and abbreviations

Where texts are available in English and in German I have usually given double references, using the editions listed in the Bibliography and abbreviated titles as shown below. The page number appears exactly as in the text, either in Hindu-Arabic or Roman numerals, and these either large or small as in the work referred to. In references to works printed in numbered columns, e.g. Die Christliche Welt, the number refers to the column. To achieve a more accurate reference on the page (or column), I have used the letters a, b and c after the page number, denoting roughly the top third, middle third, or bottom third of the printed page. But on a page of two columns which are not each numbered, the page is divided into quarters, using a and b for the first column, c and d for the second. In the case of Pfeiffer (1857 & 1962) each page has numbered lines, so the reference is to page followed by line numbers.

In quoting excerpts from texts, I have followed the spelling used (unless otherwise stated). Thus texts from Eckhart and from Pfeiffer do not use capital letters to begin substantives as in modern German, and texts from American writers, such as William James and Crouter's translation of Schleiermacher's Reden, have American spellings (e.g. center for centre). The same applies to the "-ize" ending for words which I myself always spell with "-ise".

Abbreviations have been used for Otto's works frequently cited, and for other works which are used in particular sections, as well as for well-known journals. Otherwise books and articles are referred to by author and date and can be found in the Bibliography. In all cases the edition being referred to is noted for ease of reference.

Books by Otto:

- AHG Die Anschauung vom heiligen Geist bei Luther. Ein historisch-dogmatisch Untersuchung, Göttingen, 1898
- ANB Aufsätze das Numinose betreffend, Gotha 1923
- AzE Aufsätze zur Ethik, hrsg. von Jack Stewart Boozer, München, C H Beck, 1981
- DH Das Heilige (1st ed. Breslau 1917). page refs are to the 1987 edition, München. ET=IH.
- DuR Darwinismus und Religion, Göttingen, 1909
- GGA Gottheit und Gottheiten der Arier, Gießen, Alfred Töpelmann, 1932
- GMS Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten, von I.Kant, neu herausgegeben von Rudolf Otto, Gotha, 1930
- GRIC Die Gnadenreligion Indiens und das Christentum, Gotha, 1930, ET=IRG
- IH The Idea of the Holy (1st ed. London, 1923). page refs are to OUP paperback 1958 and reprints. ET of DH by John W. Harvey.
- IRG India's Religion of Grace and Christianity, ET of GRIC by Frank Hugh Foster DD, London, SCM Press 1930
- KFR Kantisch-Fries'sche Religionsphilosophie und ihre Anwendung auf die Theologie, Tübingen, 1909 (also appeared in ZThK 1909) ET=PR
- MEW Mysticism East and West, A Comparative Analysis of the Nature of Mysticism, ET of WöM by Bertha L Bracey and Richenda C Payne, London, Macmillan & Co, 1932
- NaR Naturalism and Religion, London, 1911 and 1913. ET of NRW by J. Arthur Thomson and Margaret R. Thomson.
- NRW Naturalistische und religiöse Weltansicht, Tübingen, 1904, 1929. ET=NaR
- PR The Philosophy of Religion based on Kant and Fries, London, 1931. ET of KFR by E. B. Dicker.
- RE Religious Essays, a supplement to the Idea of the Holy, London, 1931. ET of some essays in Aufsätze das Numinose betreffend by Brian Lunn. Partial overlap with SU.
- Reden Über die Religion. Reden an die Gebildeten unter ihren

- Verächtern. Von Friedrich Schleiermacher, ed. R. Otto, Göttingen, 1899, 1926 (5th ed), 1967 (6th ed.)
- SU Sünde und Urschuld und andere Aufsätze zur Theologie, München, 1932. Essays in this book and in Das Gefühl des Überweltlichen (München, 1932) had previously appeared in ANB, partial ET in RE.
- WöM West-Östliche Mystik. Vergleich und Unterscheidung zur Wesensdeutung, Gotha, 1926, 1929, third edition 1971 revised and edited by Gustav Mensching, München, Beck 1971, ET=MEW
- ZEAG Zur Erneuerung und Ausgestaltung des Gottesdienstes, Gießen, 1925

Other books and periodicals:

- C. C. Colpe (ed.) Die Diskussion um das "Heilige" Darmstadt, 1977
- CW Die Christliche Welt
- IoG Intellekt oder Gemüt? von Joseph Geysler, Freiburg im Breisgau, 1922
- K-S Kant-Studien
- MTS Marburger Theologische Studien
- RET David Hay Religious Experience Today, studying the facts, London, Mowbray, 1990
- SoF James W. Fowler Stages of Faith - The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning, San Francisco, Harper & Row, 1981.
- ThLZ Theologische Literaturzeitung
- VRE The Varieties of Religious Experience, William James, Longmans Green & Co, 1902 and reprints; Collins, Fontana edition 1960 and reprints. Page references are to the Fontana edition.
- ZphF Zeitschrift für philosophische Forschung
- ZThK Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche

Key Stages in Education

Since 1988 the letters KS for Key Stage have been used to indicate age phases in schools.

This works as follows:

Key Stage 1 covers Reception, Year 1 and Year 2

(up to age 7-8)

Key Stage 2 covers Years 3, 4 and 5 (up to age 11+)

Key Stage 3 covers Years 6, 7 and 8 (up to age 14)

Key Stage 4 covers Years 9 and 10 (up to GCSE)

Key Stage 5 covers Years 11-13 of full-time education in
school (ages 16-19)

PREFACE

I first read Otto's Idea of the Holy as a student, and the impression it made remained deep below the surface of my daily consciousness. Some years later, shortly after returning from four years in Africa, I was asked to teach World Religions to student-teachers. It was clear to me that if the course was to be more than a parade of outlandish religious phenomena, if it was to have any real religious meaning, I needed help. So I consulted Professor Harold Turner, then in the Department of Religion at the University of Leicester. He advised me that Otto's book would give a sound basis, and I have been grateful ever since.

The purpose of this thesis is in part to explain why this is so, a need made all the more topical both by the widespread use of world religions in our schools, a growing use of philosophical reasoning, and most especially the spread of experiential methods in R.E. over the last few years in some of our classrooms. These strands, not to mention other traditional approaches still needed and still in use, can reduce R.E. to a jumble of loose threads if they are not held together. It is my belief that Otto's work provides in depth the single integrative factor which is the true basis for the study of religion.

In preparing this thesis I have had a great deal of help from no less than three Supervisors in the Durham Department of Theology. I am grateful to all of them. The first was Professor Richard Roberts, the second Professor Dan Hardy, and the third Professor David Brown. Each has stimulated me to new thoughts, ideas and connections, and most of what is worthwhile in this thesis derives from one or other of them, or perhaps from the combination.

INTRODUCTION

Those who read The Idea of the Holy find it a moving book. It seems to speak to something deep in their experience and gives an intimation of something mysteriously important to which they have given too little attention. But, apart from a gut feeling hard to put into words, what stays in the memory is the wealth of examples from a spread of Eastern and Western religions. Surprisingly few of those impressed by this book go on to other books by Rudolf Otto.

But although affected at a psychological level, few see the intimate connection between these feelings and their rational thought. Yet to demonstrate this connection had been the author's main purpose. Readers accept that they are touched in mind and spirit (Geist), and even the notion of an encounter with the Numinous in the depth of the soul (Seelengrund) finds echoes, but the sections on philosophy they either skim through quickly with little grasp, or skip altogether. In this way they miss the main message.

The almost world-wide acclaim which greeted this book at the end of the Great War proves it met certain needs. Now, almost eighty years later, a new consideration of what Otto is said is needed, and this from an unexpected quarter. The teaching of religion in schools in Britain is moving strongly in favour of Experiential R.E. and stressing pupil-response. If this trend is to result in more than personal and social

education with a psychological slant (and the risks that go with it), a strongly integrated rationale is needed to link it with traditional religions, with reasoning about religious questions, and with ethical aspects of religion. This rationale is itself religious, but in a non-confessional sense, and is the meeting place which underlies almost all Otto's work.

This is the project to be developed in this Thesis. A brief presentation of Otto and an outline of his message is followed by some of the main objections to his theory. These remain classic and can be brought against experiential R.E. also by anyone whose starting point is dogmatic. This is the field of Chapter One. The next two chapters discuss Otto's work more systematically. In Chapter Two his main publications are discussed with a view to establishing a consistency, and especially the consistency between his phenomenology and his philosophical underpinning of it. This covers the whole of his scholarly life. The next chapter, Chapter Three, investigates sources for his thinking by considering six writers known to have influenced him.

Otto tried to establish a distinction between religious and non-religious experience at the level of phenomena. Consideration of transcendent experiences of various kinds in Chapter Four makes a clear distinction doubtful, but at the same time offers a valuable non-confessional framework within which to build R.E. and spiritual development as required in

the 1988 Education Act. How this can be done is the subject of Chapter Five, which argues in particular for a practical application of Otto's theory (or theories) of schematisation. Conclusions follow in Chapter Six.

The whole study is offered both to establish Otto as a consistent and fruitful theologian and phenomenologist of religion, and at the same time to suggest how his thought can guide non-confessional R.E. in this country into the twenty-first century.

CHAPTER ONE:

SETTING THE SCENE1.1 Otto the man

Rudolf Otto was born on the 25th September 1869 in Peine in Hanover, where his father Wilhelm Otto had a fur factory. He was the twelfth of thirteen children. In 1880 the family moved to Hildesheim and his father died soon after. He was brought up in the conservative traditions of Lutheran piety which persisted in Hanover, in spite of the efforts of Albrecht Ritschl, who after the annexation of Hanover by Prussia in 1866, was appointed to help persuade the Hanoverian Lutherans to conform with the Prussian united church.

Of his intellectual development while still at school Otto himself relates:¹

The children argued with enthusiasm and feeling about God's having a Son, about accounts of creation, about Darwinism and cosmogenesis, and I longed for the time when I could study all these problems thoroughly. My childhood's wish had now become a resolve, with the approval of my family: I wanted to study theology.

Even in Peine he had begun to learn Latin and Greek, and he found learning easy. He wrote of himself: "That is why I never became accustomed to strictly methodical work." Unfortunately this remained true to an extent throughout his scholarly life, and it gave fuel to his critics. There is often imprecision in the way he expresses himself, and this

makes it difficult to grasp what he really means. Yet it can also be claimed that the matter he was dealing with required a certain imprecision, and where fluidity of thought is not merely the effect of ignorance or laziness it can give rise to innovative and lateral thinking. This difficulty goes to the centre of his work on the holy.

The young Otto and his fellow pupils argued about evolution, about different kinds of religion, though Catholic and Protestant were the only varieties available for direct observation, and the apparent mismatch between the evidences of science and the traditional teachings of religion. This mismatch also depends on a difference of method: the one deductive, drawn from revelation, and the other inductive, dependent on the many-sided world around. Schleiermacher referred to this when he spoke of "an eternally prolonged play of opposing forces"². But for Schleiermacher, as is shown in Chapter Three, the two 'opposing forces' were to be held together in tension, the one starting from the phenomena of the periphery to work towards the centre, the other beginning with the essence and evaluating and assessing the phenomena in its light.

But it is clearly not satisfactory if two different methods lead to two mutually incompatible bodies of knowledge, and Otto wanted to find a consistent position which would not require either the absoluteness of spirit at the expense of science or the invincibility of materialism at the cost of

feeling, piety and the affections. He wanted to convince himself and others that a thoroughly reasoned world-view was not the antithesis of the feelings he found at the heart of religion. This is a problem not just for religion versus natural science, but a problem within religion itself. One of the key issues, and one which was seized on by some of his critics³, is whether the evidences in religion begin with divine revelation or with human experience. Something of this problem for Otto can be seen even in the title of his doctoral work.

On the 9th July 1898 Otto defended eighteen theses on the subject of the Spirit, the first of which was: "The Ruach Jahweh is neither a clearly defined nor a unitary concept. On the one hand it is represented as divine influence on the inner life of men, especially in prophetic enthusiasm, resulting in religious-moral actions and characteristics, leading in short to spiritual riches. On the other hand it is divine, creative energy, both the principle of life in creatures and divine power and immanence in the world."⁴ And in the same year he published his first book, Die Anschauung vom heiligen Geist bei Luther (AHG). From these it can be seen that the action of the Holy Spirit was for him a starting point. After this followed a series of books and articles which quickly brought him fame as a rising theologian of considerable ability. The enormous breadth of his reading, his knowledge of languages, his youthful studies of music and art, enabled him to write competently on topics

as diverse as theology, psychology, aesthetics, biology, philosophy, ethics and Indian religions. It was inevitable perhaps that he would be criticised as overstretched and inconsistent. Yet there is little doubt that he saw himself as entirely consistent, and his subject, religion in human experience, as something too important to be confined to a single specialist field.

His academic posts included first Privatdozent then extra-to-the-faculty professor at Göttingen till he was appointed full professor at Breslau in 1914. In 1917 he transferred as professor to Marburg where he remained till the end of his life in March 1937. Recurrent illness, in fact malaria, forced him to take early retirement in 1928, a year after he had had the honour of giving the university address on the occasion of the 400th anniversary of Marburg's foundation⁵. Here he continued to receive many visitors, some of them students, some already distinguished scholars, entertaining them in his home or going with them on the walks he so much enjoyed in the open country round about.

Yet his activities were never confined to academic matters. In addition to his travels to England, Greece, USA, North Africa and the Near East, and his two great far-Eastern journeys of 1911-2 and 1927-8, all of which contributed directly and indirectly to his teaching and his writing, he took an active part in social matters. From 1913 he was a member of the Prussian Parliament until its abolition in

1918. Karl Küssner records his concern for a just and sharing social structure⁶. These include proposals for adult education within the Church after the Great War, and other publications testify to his plans for reforming Protestant worship⁷, suggestions that Otto had put into practice in one of the Marburg chapels. He founded the Religious League for Mankind (Religiöser Menschheitsbund)⁸ apparently on the model of the League of Nations in which the sincerely committed of all faiths would unite for world peace. His collection of religious cult objects from all over the world began with his travels, and in the 1920s he established the Religionskundliche Sammlung at Marburg which continues to grow and to attract students of religion.

Insofar as it may be possible to look into his personal motivation, it seems that two different and often opposed strands of religion occupied him. One is academic theology including especially philosophical theology, and the other is the experience of worship. Otto came to the experience of faithful worship through his upbringing in pietistic circles of the Hanoverian Lutheran tradition. In his farewell address on the occasion of his early retirement from Marburg in 1928 he described himself as a "pietistic Lutheran."⁹

Most people who have read Das Heilige (DH) know that "the holy" is for Otto the key term in religion. It is tempting to link this with his experience at Passover in 1911 in a little synagogue in Mogador which he wrote up for Christliche

Welt, and Peter McKenzie has translated as follows:

It is Sabbath, and already in the dark and inconceivably grimy passage of the house we hear the sing-song of prayers and reading of scripture, that nasal half-singing half-speaking which Church and Mosque have taken over from the Synagogue. The sound is pleasant, one can soon distinguish certain modulations and cadences that follow one another at regular intervals, like Leitmotive. The ear tries to grasp individual words but it is scarcely possible and one has almost given up when the attempt when suddenly out of the babel of voices, causing a thrill of fear, there it begins, unified, clear and unmistakable: Kadosh Kadosh Kadosh Elohim Adonai Zebaoth Male'u hashamayim wahaarets kebodo! (Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, the heavens and the earth are full of thy glory).

I have heard the Sanctus Sanctus Sanctus of the cardinals in St Peter's, the Swiat Swiat Swiat in the Cathedral of the Kremlin the Holy Holy Holy of the Patriarch in Jerusalem. In whatever language they resound, these most exalted words that have ever come from human lips always grip one in the depths of the soul, with a mighty shudder exciting and calling into play the mystery of the other world latent therein. And this more than anywhere else here in this modest place, where they resound in the same tongue in which Isaiah first received them and from the lips of the people whose first inheritance they were.¹⁰

But for Otto it had begun much earlier, and he grew to understand the numinous during his period of work on Luther¹¹.

Das Heilige is not only his best-known book, translated into seven languages and still in print in English and German, but it also marks a turning point in German theology. While the open kind of religious phenomenology which this book helped to promote continued to spread in other parts of the world,

especially in English-speaking countries¹², the end of the Great War brought in a tremendous change in Germany¹³. This was as clear in the universities as in other aspects of life, but even to sketch the changes would be outside the scope of the present enterprise. It must be enough to point the fundamental contrast between two books which appeared at almost the same time, Otto's Das Heilige (1917) and Barth's Römerbrief (1919). Both books emphasised the crucial role of experience, but whereas Otto seemed still within liberal Protestantism by making use of the manifestations of religion and of various religions, Barth and his followers shut the door to all that by claiming exclusive value for revelation and revelation alone, and that, only insofar as the individual is challenged by the Christian gospel. All other religion was for Barthians nothing but human invention and of negligible value. This absolute claim caught the theological mood of the 1920s and 1930s.

Those who came to Marburg to meet Otto and hear him speak were from America, Britain, Holland, Sweden, Japan and several other countries. It is true also that while he lived a certain aura surrounded him and was reflected in his Geisterkinder¹⁴, but with the rising German-speaking theologians, Barth, Bultmann, and E. Brunner, the scene had changed. Within his own country even today he is hardly read, and the theological current in the inter-war years was running against him and what he stood for.

Ernst Benz describes Otto as one of the foremost scholars in religious studies (religionsgeschichtliche Forschung) at the beginning of the century, but the collapse of the German nation and empire, and with it the cultural protestantism it had supported, brought in dialectical theology and criticism of those many theologians who had supported the war¹⁵. Otto, now weakened by illness, had little stomach for the struggle, and when Benz came to Marburg as a student in 1935, he found the situation as follows:

Beside the small number of his pupils stood a group of students, who in loud voices and with youthful oversimplification represented Barthianism. They were excited by Bultmann's theology and existentialism, and missed no opportunity to pour ridicule on the thought of Rudolf Otto . . . and to make jokes about the collection of religious artefacts he had founded, calling it a temple of idols. (Benz 1971, 32-3)

Bultmann had been a colleague and friend of Otto at Breslau before 1917, but after first Otto, then Bultmann came to Marburg the friendship cooled.

Barth can speak for himself, and wrote of a recent visit to Marburg as follows in an open letter (Rundbrief) addressed to "Liebe Brüder und Schwestern an allen Orten!"

On Sunday I visited Bultmann, who spoke well and openly about New Testament matters. . . Rudolf Otto, stretched out on a divan like a regular Indian raja giving audience, suffers from malaria, which is a pity, but no doubt a punishment for his secret betrayal of Christianity to oriental no-gooders. (Letter 26th February 1922)¹⁶

1.2 Otto's book "The Idea of the Holy"¹⁷

DH is best known for Otto's depiction of the unseen power as Mysterium tremendum et fascinans. After arguing that religious ideas and concepts belong to the sphere of the rational, Otto asserts that religious experience demonstrates something more. Beyond terms and concepts there is an overplus (IH 5c; DH 5c). This is real but not rational. Otto coins a name for it: it is the Numinous (IH 6c-7a; DH 6c-7a). Because it is beyond description, it cannot be analysed, yet its effect on the human psyche is so unique that the characteristics of this effect can be discussed. The numinous casts its shadow on the psyche (no obvious reference to the parable of Plato's philosophers' cave) and the description that follows is therefore a description of human experience, specifically human religious experience.

Otto begins his description by wanting to go beyond Schleiermacher's "feeling of absolute dependence." (IH 9; DH 9) Otto calls this the "creature feeling." One aspect of this is dread or awe at the overpowering might of the Numinous. The human response is tremor, whereby this aspect is called tremendum. At the same time there is a compulsive attraction, feelings of love and gratitude. Beneath all these responses is a sense of mystery, that the Numinous is in essence unknowable. This is the mysterium and the human response to this aspect Otto calls stupor. From these different moments comes the formula mysterium tremendum et fascinans.

Thus an outline description of the numinous is obtained by examination of the response of the human soul or mind. This method means beginning with the human, but bringing to consciousness something much more absolute and fundamental. The phenomena reveal that which is discovered in experience but in reality is not dependent on human experience. This is an important distinction which is central to any vindication of Otto against those who accuse him of psychologism.

For this analysis the human response is cardinal. At first the data for analysis are the effects of a numinous encounter in spontaneous expression. The obvious fact that under examination the expression ceases to be spontaneous is a well-known area of difficulty which affects all attempts to discuss religious experience or analogous experience in non-religious contexts¹⁸. Putting the response into words is a second-order expression, as too are expressions of the numinous in music or art. In fact there are very numerous examples of such religious phenomena, many of which are worked over, have been ritualised and can hardly be called spontaneous in any degree. But all contribute to an attitude which is found in all religions. It can be said that the music, words and artefacts are at an extended level attempts to reconstruct or relive an encounter with the Holy, although this is not to deny the immediacy and near-spontaneity of some of them. These reconstructions have a further result in that they help prepare for a new or renewed experience. For some people their first religious experience may take place

against such a background.

One of the charges Otto faces, and especially in connection with DH, is that of immersing himself in too many disciplines and being unable therefore to make sense of any of them. But from his own point of view, the dominant theme of his vision is unity. Truth in all fields must be one, and only on the basis of ultimate truth and consistency is it possible to make sense of human experience. This is Otto's starting point and his goal.

Shortly after Otto's death in 1937, his friend and colleague Theodor Siegfried (1938) began an article on him as follows:

Rudolf Otto has left neither a complete philosophy of religion nor a polished dogmatic system. This is typical of the man whose thought constantly moved between two areas, with the result that his interests in the philosophy of religion made an explicitly theological claim, and his theology . . . had a philosophically critical stamp. The borders of different disciplines pale in the face of an elementary and human wrestling for the truth, which in the last resort can only be single.¹⁹

Before he was forty Otto saw that theology could no longer be imposed from above. If religion is real it must relate to the world in which we live, and if human beings are religious and responsive to the promptings of the divine, then the study of religion must begin with the human. The last chapter of Kantisch-Fries'sche Religionsphilosophie (KFR) begins:

Now let us summarise the knowledge we have gained in our discussion of the beginnings of modern theology, as to its spirit, its duty, its relation to science in general, and to philosophy in particular.

1. The old theology was a metaphysic about God, Man, World, and their relations, drawn from reason and revelation. Religion itself would prefer a narration of the deeds of God. Modern theology proposes, as a task that can be performed, something less than the latter, something different from the scope of the former. Modern Theology is a Science of Religion; Christian Theology a Science of the Christian Religion.

2. The Science of Religion is not a description of religions, just as jurisprudence is not a description of existing law or of law in general. . . The science of religion searches for the validity of religion and for religion that is valid. It may not return to supernatural standards (for historico-critical reasons and for reasons in religion itself); its procedure must therefore be identical with that of moral science, jurisprudence, and all sciences of the mind in general. They are all forced to apply themselves to an examination of the rational-intellectual nature of the human spirit, to a criticism of reason and anthropology; they must ascertain with precision what Spirit (Geist) is, and its kinds; what the Mind and Spirit (Geist for both) are capable of as regards activity, experience, expression, expression in various directions; in this way they are to obtain the general conception of science, of ethics, of aesthetics, of religion, of religious experience. (PR 222a-223a: KFR 192b-193b)

In starting the study of religion with an examination of the human mind and spirit (Geist), Otto does not confine religion to human experience. He needs to establish a secure reference point which is acceptable to rational thought in philosophy, and he sets out to follow Kant in researching the limits of human reason and beyond. In DH he announces that

he is to examine human religious experience, but the reference beyond the subjective to the absolute is essential, for this is experience of something, something that is directly apprehended as the grace and power of the divine.

In his first publication, Die Anschauung vom heiligen Geist bei Luther of 1898, the divine power is manifested in the work of the Holy Spirit in the believer, but by the time he wrote DH Otto has broadened this to take in religious experience in all religions and cultures, whether it is perceived as relationship to God or to unseen powers of any sort. The point at issue is that "experience" - in a sense to be examined later in relation to "feeling" and "intuition" - means for Otto direct contact between the human and the reality of the transcendent. This then is the starting point. Divine power is not deduced or inferred at the end of a chain of reasoning. This is central to the argument of DH.

It is widely recognised that DH combines phenomenology and psychology. But Otto set out to demonstrate the reality of divine power in and through the life of the world. This goes beyond psychology to involve philosophical argument in the fields of epistemology (how we know things) and ontology (what really exists). According to some scholars, Otto sought to go beyond the mere description of religious experience and wanted to produce it in his readers²⁰. Poland sees DH as a religious book, almost in the way that devotional books are religious, if that were appropriate to

the Numinous. Different scholars have evaluated his success in widely different ways. In his own estimation, one suspects, his achievement must stand or fall by this, not as a work of psychology but as a demonstration of the divine power active in and through human life.

Otto has frequently been misunderstood. DH focusses attention on the non-rational, the phenomenological and the psychological. Yet he is at pains to stress that the holy is like a woven cloth in which rational and non-rational belong together as warp and weft. Neither can exist in religion without the other. The intimate relation between them is in fact crucial for Otto's thought. It is not satisfactory to accept his own suggestion (in the Author's Preface to the English edition of IH) that KFR deals with the rational, leaving DH to deal with the non-rational. In point of fact KFR depends on non-rational presentiment or Ahnung to bring the rational structure of reality into direct consciousness. Similarly, the many examples of religious phenomena in DH are seen as the occasion for revealing direct contact with the reality which is the holy, and the discussion of the holy as a category apriori is essential. Although DH is centrally about the non-rational, the separation is meant to be heuristic rather than ontological, and the many examples introduced to illustrate non-rational aspects must not be allowed exclusive possession.

The place from which the investigation of both these paths

begins - the philosophical-rational and the psychological-empirical - is the human Geist (mind and spirit). This is only possible because human beings have a capacity for being made aware of the holy. This capacity or ill-defined recognition is not inborn; only the predisposition is inborn and it is the task of religious communication or religious education to stir, awaken, stimulate, and refine this predisposition (Anlage des Gemütes). This Anlage is envisaged as itself quite independent of the stimulus, just as the eye as an organ is quite independent of seeing. It is possible that Otto ontologised too much this predisposition, and this will be discussed later. At base, Otto's position is that this capacity is just there, in everyone: it cannot be deduced by reasoning, only called into play through use in personal experience. In this sense it lies beyond 'pure reason,' although it is also an aspect of human reason in the deepest sense.

To clarify this is to anticipate the fuller discussion in Chapter Two, but it may be helpful here just to set the scene. The Anlage which is open to the numinous plays a central role in Otto's thought. Its reality is bound up with Otto's claim to the priority of feeling in our knowledge of the holy. A number of passages in DH are significant, although they do not conclusively answer any question about what Otto thought the Anlage actually is. The chapter entitled "The Holy as an A Priori Category Part One"²¹ has quite a lot to say, but Otto has not set out to answer our

specific question.

And the only way we can throw any light upon the whole region of sub-human psychical life is by interpreting it once again as a sort of 'predisposition' (Anlage) at a second remove, i.e. a predisposition to form the predispositions or faculties of the actual developed mind, and standing in relation to this as the embryo to the full-grown organism. But we are not completely in the dark as to the meaning of this word 'predisposition'. For in our awakening and growth to spiritual maturity we trace in ourselves by some sort the evolution by which the seed develops into the tree - the very opposite of 'transformation' and 'epigenesis' by successive addition. We call the source of growth a hidden 'predisposition' of the human spirit, which awakens when aroused by divers excitations. That there are 'predispositions' of this sort in individuals no one can deny who has given serious study to the history of religion. They are seen as propensities, 'predestining' the individual to religion . . . (IH 115; DH 140)

DH Kapitel 4²² depends throughout on the analysis of specific feelings and the comparison of natural and numinous feelings. Here we find again Anlage and Anlage des Gemütes, and the metaphor of something which takes a reflection, or a screen which can register the shadow, tempts to a semi-physical conception. (" . . . numinous . . . is reflected in the mind in terms of feeling" IH 12a; ". . . wird es angebbar nur sein durch die besondere Gefühlsreaktion die es im erlebenden Gemüte auslöst." DH 13a)

The existence of the Anlage as revealed by relevant activity, is parallel on the other side to the absolute reality of the unseen, the holy itself, whose being is not inferred but

apprehended directly in human experience. Otto claims that the holy is a priori and the reality without which no human religious experience would be possible. To search out and go some way to clarify what this might mean is within the capacity of all. Once the human capacity is aroused, however, the predisposition becomes a search and an impulsion. (IH 116a, DH 141c)

Travels in Egypt, India and the Far East no doubt stimulated Otto's interest in non-rational expressions of religion, and greatly expanded his awareness of the non-rational as essential to all genuine religion, whether Christian or non-Christian. His interest in Indian religion began therefore well before the publication of DH and the first edition (1917) contained just one illustration, the face of the goddess Durga of Bengal, and one appendix, Otto's own translation of the eleventh chapter of the Bhagavad-Gita.

1.3 Current directions in R.E.

(1) Teaching World Religions

The teaching of a range of major world religions has been a feature of R.E. since the late 1960s. Impetus and direction were given to this by the Lancaster Project under Ninian Smart and Donald Horder²³. Under the heading of phenomenology, the intention was to get pupils to take religion seriously by empathy with religious adherents and by examining and evaluating the evidence, much of which was all around them. But in spite of, or perhaps precisely because

of, the good material provided by the Project, the general mood was that world religions offered a chance for R.E. to prove itself as an empirical field of study. Many teachers failed to see the study of world religions as a religious question. It appeared at first to be in response to social strains with the arrival of large numbers of Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs and afterwards their school-age children. Soon the exotic character of unfamiliar practices gave new scope for exploring sight, sound, smell and taste, and made a change from the sterile methods of Bible learning previously in widespread use. All this was welcomed with enthusiasm by teachers and pupils alike.

But this change of study material, which in many schools was pushed through with enthusiasm akin to a stampede of buffalo, brought with it the seeds of its own corruption. As social education it could be valuable if handled intelligently, but the religious basis was ignored in a flurry of phenomena. Even as multicultural education it could be vapid, representing religious and cultural practices as exotic behaviour indulged in for no obvious reason by strange groups who had little in common with normal British kids. The late inclusion of Christian symbolism, rites and festivals did nothing to allay the feeling that this was a kind of 3-D television tour among society's eccentrics. Attempts to discuss the feelings of religious adherents themselves bordered on voyeurism. Unless there is a clear sense that this is religion and unless the phenomena can be seen as

response to the meeting with the Holy within the human soul and mind, there is no anchorage in reality. The impression that religious practice is just a hobby which appeals to some people as a leisure activity is otherwise confirmed rather than challenged.

In the 1960s it was sometimes claimed that teaching world religions would offer pupils a chance to choose "a faith to live by"²⁴. But in many cases the effect has been the opposite of what was intended. If all religions are optional why indeed choose any of them? An appreciation of Otto's contribution to the study of religion will help to anchor religion in reality and at the centre of human experience.

If R.E. is to consist of more than the assimilation of facts, then there must be acceptance and recognition of pupil-attitude and pupil-response. Religion, like politics, demands a position on a scale of values, and, while R.E. does not demand the same kind of pupil commitment as is shown by many religious people, it must be seen that commitment is central to religion. Modern R.E. in theory at least recognises that pupils who are not given the opportunity to respond are being sold short.

(2) Experiential Methods

Recent work on teaching religion in the UK has shown more interest in personal response and commitment. For example the teacher's guide How do I teach RE?²⁵ advocates three

components of R.E. at all levels. The area called "individual patterns of belief" is added to the two more familiar areas: the explicit which is the faith and tradition of living religions (here called "traditional belief systems"), and themes of "shared human experience" seen as ultimate questions which make up the implicit. "Individual patterns of belief" should be seen in the 1990s as "pupil-response"²⁶ and this is in a sense the engagement required for learning any subject. The book represents these three areas diagrammatically as wheels encompassed with a driving belt or series of belts: whichever wheel starts into motion must turn the others also. Thus the personal element has come to be seen as essential to modern R.E.

Other attempts to express this threefold analysis of religious education appeared in the 1980s, for instance in the Durham Agreed Syllabus²⁷ of 1982 which was arranged into Concepts, Skills and Attitudes. This seems to echo Kant's division of the human understanding (Vernunft) into pure reason (intellect); practical reason (morals); and aesthetics. Schleiermacher made much of this, and Otto's KFR is largely concerned with developing, as he thought, the Kantian system. William James also separates belief, action, and the will to believe, making these out to be three aspects of the human psyche - defined in various terms but referring respectively to intellect, morality and "the enthusiastic temper of espousal."

Since 1988 the Education Act requires schools to foster spiritual development. This is expressed as follows:

the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society²⁸

Even before the renewed commitment to "spiritual development" was called for in the British 1988 Education Act, religious educators have been turning attention to exercises and techniques for doing this. The Nottingham Project of David Hay has successfully tried out classroom exercises in meditation, creative imagination and non-conceptual communication²⁹. This trend also needs underpinning from Otto, whose work has much to contribute to the growth of interest on the affective in R.E, because it can be dangerously vague unless in the educator's mind at least it has been soundly based in theory. Renewed study of Otto can meet this need, especially as the central doctrine of DH is the integration of rational and non-rational as warp and weft, which represents the essential belonging together of concepts, skills and attitudes in R.E.

It should be added that interest in religious experience as a possible approach for education began in 1969 with Sir Alister Hardy and the Religious Experience Research Unit he set up³⁰. Interesting as these accounts of childhood religious and nature mystical experiences were, the essays in analysis never seemed to be based on any theory the scholar could get to grips with.

(3) The Need to make Progress

Just as it seems difficult to fit spontaneous religious experience into a syllabus, for much the same reasons it seems difficult to analyse pupils' response into a kind of scale of progression. Yet any plan for a teaching programme whether over a year or over the whole school career, i.e. from ages five to sixteen, would seem to require development. The teacher needs to know when progress is being made, whether stages need to be reinforced or repeated, and the public too, particularly parents, have a right to know what their children are learning. As this is quite a new feature of experiential R.E. and one which this thesis is intended to promote drawing on the development of certain ideas of Rudolf Otto, discussion is better left to a later chapter,

(4) Using the Phenomena to Communicate

For the last twenty-five years R.E. has drawn on the phenomena of world religions to communicate certain ideas, emotions and forms of understanding. One of the aims of this thesis is to show how the work of Rudolf Otto can contribute to this in a particular way through the application of his schematisation, and for this reason a fuller discussion belongs first in Chapter Two (section 2.6.2) and later in Chapter Five (section 5.4).

The nineteenth century controversy between science and religion, which was strongest in English-speaking countries,

still lingers on in a number of schools. The attitudes to evolutionism and to Darwinism (as opposed to the evidence for and theory of evolution put forward by Darwin and serious researchers) prompted Otto in the first decade of the twentieth century to champion the reality of religion. In his book Naturalistische und religiöse Weltansicht (NRW) and an article "Darwin and Darwinism" which was republished with minor revisions twice more, he stood for the integration of religious values and religious truths with the reality of human life, and against the suggestion that religion and natural science were equally valid but had no meeting points - a theory that usually went on to maintain that scientific knowledge was public knowledge and religion just a private matter. In particular he argued against the relativism of popular Darwinism where truth or reality is defined in terms of usefulness³¹. The kind of loose thinking about modern science which Otto opposed filtered down into the schools over two or three generations. In the 1970s Martin and Pluck (1977) found a naive faith in scientism widespread among the 15-25 year-olds they surveyed. And this has not gone away, although there is evidence that the tide is turning, partly perhaps due to the high quality of some religious programmes on television. Otto's thought, however, has a great deal to offer here.

Otto's basis is the reality of the holy, independent of phenomena and feelings although only discoverable by their means. In the course of religious education, the often

enjoyable exercises in affective R.E. stimulate the feelings and constitute phenomena of a striking order. Meanwhile the study of different religions and practices also provides phenomena of a different sort, and these two approaches are increasingly used in primary schools and at Key Stage 3³². If Otto's position is sound, then there is a basis for drawing both these lines of approach together for serious philosophical study at Key Stages 4 and 5. Otto makes it possible for religious experience to play a part in argument instead of being either disparaged or else crudely thrust in as a deus ex machina to confound the philosophers. Experience clearly contrasts with reasoning at the reflective and analytical level. But Otto's fundamental thesis is that within the depths of human reason the holy is to be disclosed, and this, if true, makes it possible for religious education to be centrally religious. His further thesis, that every human being has a predisposition which can be made aware of the holy, must also be taken seriously. For unless this is accepted, there can be no justification for including R.E. in the Basic Curriculum for every child.

1.4 Criticism of Otto's position

Any system of religious education which is to be derived from Otto is susceptible to some of the criticism which his work, especially Das Heilige, provoked. His outline description of the numinous begins from human experience, but it has been argued that religious education should not begin here, that human experience is altogether too formless unless it is

guided by doctrine or traditional practice. Similar objections can be raised against experiential approaches to religion, which are discussed in more detail in Chapter Five, section 5.3.

In fine, objections to Otto's method can be classified into two. First and fundamental is the objection that knowledge, that is taught conceptual knowledge, must precede experience if such experience is to be recognisable as religious experience. Otto has no answer to this because it is fundamentally opposite to his whole approach and his epistemology. The other group of objections centres on the imprecise and sometimes slippery use of words and phrases in sacred contexts, and here too Otto can certainly be shown to be at fault. Not the least of the ambiguities concerns his use of inverted commas, a feature too frequent in some kinds of religious writing in the present age. It can be hard to make out what he is actually saying.

Two critics in particular raised these two kinds of objections. They are Josef Geysler in Intellekt oder Gemüt? (IoG) and Friedrich K. Feigel in "Das Heilige" kritische Abhandlung über Rudolf Ottos gleichnamiges Buch (Feigel)³³. A discussion of their objections will throw light on aspects of Otto's work and on characteristics of religious education which may be linked to it.

To start with human inner experience means drawing on

psychology. While Otto himself claimed that he used psychology to bring out something deeper and a priori, the question whether DH is to be read as a work of religious psychology first and foremost is one which must be discussed in the context of Otto's philosophical background, accordingly in Chapter Two. But it is convenient in this chapter to include criticism from Feigl which also relates to this problem. But first place is given to Geysler and his objection to starting a study of religion from the experiential.

Joseph Geysler, who was both a philosopher and a psychologist, attacks Otto at the heart of his theory. This is of course Otto's claim to the primacy of feeling. Geysler repeatedly makes it clear that he thinks rational concepts give rise to emotions and not the other way round, and he even asks if it is possible to separate non-rational moments at all (IoG 5, 6, 23).

As Otto sees things, the feelings he describes bring about the original content of the idea of God. In my view the feelings presuppose rather a definite concept of divinity and enlarge it on the feeling side. (IoG 18; C. 315)

Whether the feeling of religious blessedness is in itself specifically unique or not, it has obviously got to be aroused by some sufficient cause. For my part I find sufficient cause on the one hand in deep and thoughtful consideration of the divine characteristics and their relationship to mankind, and on the other in the influence of grace, sacrament and prayer. This does not suit Otto's thesis. He puts things the other way round and makes feelings of blessedness be the origin and cause of the concept of the

loving characteristics of God. (IoG 24, not in C.)

Similar assertions are made for most of the characteristics in Otto's analysis of the numinous.

Geyser accepts that concepts do not alone account for our knowledge of God without remainder:

It is obvious that God in his essence can never be exhaustively grasped by our concepts . . . An adequate knowledge of God would only be possible by means of immediate vision . . . Instead we have got to make use of the conscious powers in order to exalt God indirectly and mediately by their means as well and as far as we can at present manage. The conscious powers we require are in the first instance intellectual or rational, i.e. conceptual thought involving statement and entailment . . . So anyone who knows God's characteristics, thinks them over, and brings them into his inmost soul (zu Gemüte führt), will inevitably be moved towards God in some way through feelings and emotions too. (IoG 10; C. 308-9)

Geyser does not come from the tradition of Protestant piety in which Otto grew up and which shaped the emotional development of Schleiermacher and Fries also. Geyser says he is a Catholic who believes the Church's teaching about grace and the spiritual life, sacraments and prayer. (IoG 24-5; not in C.)

These theories of Otto's have only the names in common with church doctrine, anyway that of the Catholic Church. (IoG 32; C. 322)

This means that Geyser's repeated challenge to Otto to furnish proof for his basic assumptions is by definition

impossible to meet. Geysler simply represents a contrary point of view.

We keep coming back to the same point that the feelings must have a definite cause, and therefore in the last resort Otto has got to demonstrate how and by what means the religious feelings he describes arise. (IoG 29; C. 320)

Otto of course would believe that he has done this. The causal chain cannot go back indefinitely and the numinous is not so much the cause of the feelings as directly perceived within them. But this is not acceptable to critics with Geysler's background and training.

Finally Geysler refuses to accept Otto's claim that human beings possess a special faculty or disposition (Anlage) which is open to the numinous. There is simply no need from Geysler's viewpoint for such an entity to exist at all. (IoG 16; C. 313)

A longer perspective is taken by Friedrich K. Feigl (1929 & 1948) who comments first of all on the enormous popularity of Das Heilige which he attributes to the needs and spirit of the time. Feigl sees DH as speaking to a generation for whom the War, with its destruction, defeat and starvation, represented the Unholy, and which laid an axe to the foundations of rational theology, raising questions of theodicy and challenging the whole of Western culture. He is surely right in this assessment. Faced like Job with such a catastrophe, the human race, Feigl suggests, could only

receive the same kind of answer that Job received, the sheer irrationality of God's power, put moreover with psychological force. "I will lay my hand upon my mouth." (Job 40.4) (Feigel 1-3)

Before wading in with detailed criticism, Feigel remarks:

At first reading you get the feeling that here the author has grasped the living depths of religion in a most pregnant sense, but on second and third reading another feeling replaces the first: the book is totally lacking in scientific foundation and goes from one superficiality to another. (Feigel 6c)

Otto's book is a book to read, not to study. And precisely so because by being so often allowed to gaze from the shimmering surface to the purple depths of "presentiment" and to feel them, the reader is saved the duty and trouble of serious scientific study. (Feigel 7a)

Feigel's basic criticism is to say that Otto has pulled in religious psychology in order to find his religious object, and that the convolutions he has had to employ have the effect of muddling what should have been a psychological study (Feigel 10). The root of his criticism therefore is against Otto's method, Otto's use of empirical evidence to justify or support ontological knowledge. The phrase to which Feigel returns is that Otto has put bios (empirical evidence) above logos (reasoning) (Feigel 4b,8b, and 98a) because his starting point (Ausgangspunkt der Untersuchung) is the psychological-actual (das Psychisch-Tatsächliche) which has nothing to do with the normative (Normgemäßheit und Normwidrigkeit) (Feigel 17b). "This kind of metaphysics is

blatantly hypostatized psychology" (131c).

Feigel's own position is similar to that of Geysler in that he believes religion has an intellectual, not an emotional or ritual origin and basis. For Feigel it is simply obvious (unzweifelhaft 49b) that questions of causality are the most important and that the religion of primaeval man began not with feelings but with his seeking answers to intellectual questions Why? and From what? just as tirelessly as we can see "in every normal healthy child" (Feigel 48c). Furthermore Feigel maintains that ancient man (like children again) divided the world into masculine and feminine before neuter was ever thought of and that therefore both the Numinous (neither masculine nor feminine) and impersonal expressions like "it's spooky here" must be later developments (Feigel 48bc), and so do not represent religion in its earliest phase. To maintain the intellectual essence and origin of religion (along the lines of E B Tylor) Feigel expressly contradicts R R Marett (Feigel 48c), the anthropologist to whom Otto referred and from whom Otto claimed support³⁴.

Feigel rightly finds "Feeling" the crux of Otto's case and the meeting point of his reason with his psychology. He discusses what Otto meant by feeling at length and in several contexts. He points to a confusion between the object felt and the cause of a particular feeling. From Otto he quotes:

A deep joy may fill our minds without any clear realisation upon our part of its source and the object to which it refers, though some such objective reference there must always be. But as attention is directed to it, the obscure object becomes clearly identified in precise conceptual terms.³⁵

The words Grund oder Objekt are seized on ("its source and the object to which it refers"), and the oder (or) as evidence that Otto has simply taken cause and object as obviously the same (Feigel 37b). Feigel maintains that they are often different, and that a cause can be subjective, that is, either not related to an existent object at all, or if it is related to an object then the relationship of causation is the result of inference, an intellectual process, and not direct apprehension as claimed by Otto. Further, Feigel thinks that a feeling of joy is really a mode of feeling, as when we feel joy in looking at a tree or house. Joy is not the content of the feeling, but the feeling itself is joy. "Seeing relates something subjective to the tree as object, and joy is itself totally subjective." (Feigel 38c-39a)

Feigel also criticises Otto for imprecision in his use of terms for sensation (Empfindung), feeling (Gefühl), idea (Vorstellung) (Feigel 37a), and later he says Otto has confused the terms feeling (Gefühl), intuition (Intuition), perception (Erschauung) (Feigel 91c) which he seems to use almost interchangeably. There is some truth in Feigel's assertion that in the first case Otto has taken over James's uncritical use of words, perpetrating the confusion of

James's reality-consciousness (Feigel 37a). In the second case, the fault goes back to Schleiermacher and his use of Anschauung³⁶.

There is some confusion also in the way Otto uses the words "natural" and "non-natural." Feigel devotes a section (pp.13-35) to The Qualitative Difference of the Numinous Feeling from "natural" Feelings. Distancing himself somewhat from Schleiermacher³⁷, Otto states that the feeling of absolute dependence is qualitatively different from all natural feelings. But what, asks Feigel, are "non-natural" feelings supposed to be? (Feigel 14c). Feeling as such belongs to the natural, and especially so when Otto considers the feeling for the numinous to be a general capacity inborn in humankind (Feigel 15ab). Otto does indeed call the feeling for the numinous "a primal element of the soul" (ein seelisches Urelement DH 151a; "a primal element of a psychical nature" IH 124b), which is not to be dismissed as supernatural but considered along with other primal elements of the psyche such as "pleasure or pain, love or hate, all faculties of sense-perception such as susceptibility to light, sound, consciousness of space and time" (IH 124c; DH 151b). Here is ground for Feigel to see a contradiction: how is the feeling for the numinous expressed in Scheu (dread) not natural when Otto is able to give an example of his horse Diana showing the same kind of dread at the sight of a dead horse (Feigel 24c)?³⁸

In claiming the feeling of dread for a basic element of the soul (or psychological nature), Otto would have general support from psychologists, says Feigel, inasmuch as every kind of feeling is different and not to be reduced to others. But Otto claims the capacity for dread as "witness to a completely new function of experience and standard of valuation, only belonging to the spirit of man" (IH 15c; DH 17b). Feigel further says that if this numinous dread is most clearly seen in primal man, then it is absurd to call it a "preliminary step" (Vorstufe) to religion and not religion itself. There are certainly problems here with Otto's terminology.

At the end of his study Feigel takes up another general point, a criticism which can be made against a number of books of popular religion. This is Otto's frequent use of inverted commas, sometimes called "Goosefeet" (Gänsefüßchen) in German. Feigel accuses Otto of using these whenever he wants to borrow a natural word or concept belonging to "normal" life to express something which belongs to the wholly other. Thus the numinous quality of "gooseflesh" has to be expressed with "goosefeet": one might speak of "numinous goosefeet." (Feigel 125b)

Much of Feigel's book is concerned with detailed criticisms of varying quality. Some of these concern the use of words, and it must be freely admitted that Otto was not as careful in his words as a strict philosophical training should have

made him. For instance, it is quite clear from reading DH that the numinous is discovered by means of experiences, not caused, inferred, or invented by them. But Feigel quotes from p.162 of his edition of DH (not the one currently in print), "the numinous feeling actually invents the numinous object" - then adds in brackets "or rather discovers it." (Feigel 40a). These words do not seem to be in current editions of DH so probably Otto himself removed this misunderstanding long before Feigel's second edition of 1948 (from which the Feigel references are taken), and before John Harvey's English translation. It is quite clear, however, that Feigel wants Otto to say "invents" because it supports his contention that Otto has no proof for his idea of the numinous at all.

This section 1.4 should have drawn attention to two of the main problems in Otto's approach which also apply to any programme for religious education using the experiential approach. The basic philosophical criticisms are discussed in greater detail in the section of Chapter Two devoted to Das Heilige.

1. The source for information about his childhood and education is a paper entitled Vita zum 1. Examen which he wrote at Göttingen during the winter semester 1891-2. For further details of his life see R. Boeke "Rudolf Otto, Leben und Werk" in Numen XIV, 1967
2. Reden R. 6-7; Crouter 79-80 and note, in which Crouter adds that this polarity is "widely shared in eighteenth-century literary theory, philosophy and physics."
3. see especially J. Geysler Intellekt oder Gemüt? which is discussed later in this Chapter.
4. All eighteen are printed in an Appendix to Hans-Walter Schütte Religion und Christentum in der Theologie Rudolf Ottos, Berlin 1969, pp.119-121.
5. Philipps Universität Marburg, the first Protestant university in the world, founded in 1527 by a descendant of St Elisabeth of Thüringen. By dissolving the local monasteries he was able to endow the new University (some of the old monastic buildings still stand), and he closed the shrine of the saint and had the bones of his ancestress decently buried in secret.
6. Karl Küssner Verantwortliche Lebensgestaltung, Stuttgart 1941 records conversations with Otto, mostly during his long walks or round the fire in front of a forest hut, which Küssner himself maintained were 90% Otto's own words (personal conversation, June 1987).
7. Zur Erneuerung und Ausgestaltung des Gottesdienstes, Gießen 1925, Eingangspsalmen für alle Sonntage des Kirchenjahres, Gotha 1927, Chorgebete für Kirche, Schule und Hausandacht, Gießen 1928, and several liturgical articles, some directed to specific festival days.
8. Description and aims set out in English in Otto's Religious Essays, Oxford 1931, pp. 150-156; a slightly different version in The Hibbert Journal, July 1931, pp.587-594, and available in Aufsätze zur Ethik as an Appendix pp.230-235. The first mention seems to be 1920 with Otto's article "Religiöser Menschheitsbund neben politischem Völkerbund" in CW Nr.34, 1920, cols.133-135.
9. Wach 1953, 203b, ". . . Rudolf Otto, vom dem Siegfried berichtet, daß er bei seiner Abschiedsvorlesung vor den Studenten Marburgs 1928 sich als einen "pietistischen Lutheraner" bezeichnete."
10. Turner 1974, p.4d, from CW 1911, cols. 708-9.
11. IH 99-100; DH 123

12. Gustav Aulen's Uppsala also deserves mention in the context of this tradition of religious thinking.
13. For initial reactions compare Lempp 1910 with Lempp 1921.
14. Foremost among these were Karl Küssner and Birger Forell.
15. Karl Barth describes it thus: "One day in early August 1914 stands out in my personal memory as a black day. Ninety-three German intellectuals impressed public opinion by their proclamation in support of the war policy of Wilhelm II and his counsellors. Among these intellectuals I discovered to my horror almost all of my theological teachers whom I had greatly venerated. In despair over what this indicated about the signs of the time I suddenly realised I could not any longer follow either their ethics and dogmatics or their understanding of the Bible and history." The Humanity of God, Collins Fontana 1967, 112c-113a.
16. Karl Barth/Eduard Thurneysen Briefwechsel I (IV/1913-1921) und (V/1921-1930), bearbeitet und hg. von Eduard Thurneysen, 1973 and 1974, vol. II, p. 49. I am indebted to Dr. Istvan Karasszon of Raday College, Budapest, for drawing this letter to my attention.
17. Das Heilige, first published in Breslau 1917; English translation by John W Harvey, with a "Foreword by the Author to the First English Edition", published in Oxford 1923, with the title The Idea of the Holy.
18. Chapter Four describes research into transcendent experiences some of which are not obviously religious.
19. Th. Siegfried "Theologie als Religionswissenschaft bei R. Otto" in Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche NF 19, 1938, pp.16-45
20. Lynn Poland "The Idea of the Holy and the History of the Sublime" in The Journal of Religion, vol.72 nr.2, April 1992, 175-197.
21. DH Kapitel 16; IH chapter XIV
22. divided in IH into chapters IV and V.
23. Key texts here include Ninian Smart, The Religious Experience of Mankind, Fontana 1971, N Smart and D Horder, New Movements in Religious Education, SCM, and the whole Lancaster Project.
24. for instance the Crowther Report 15 to 18, HMSO 1959: this quotation is on p.44 of vol.I.
25. Read et al. 1986, pp.8-27

26. The reason for this change is explained in Chapter Five, section 5.1.
27. Growing in Understanding, Durham County Council 1982
28. Education Reform Act 1(2), set out in DES Circular No 3/89 on page 2.
29. see Jones 1986 and Hammond 1990
30. This was set up at Manchester College, Oxford with Hardy and Edward Robinson as its first Directors, and a number of fascinating accounts of childhood religious experiences were published: see Robinson 1977(a), 1977(b), and 1978.
31. Sünde und Urschuld und andere Aufsätze zur Theologie, München, 1932, p. 203; Religious Essays - a supplement to the Idea of the Holy, London, 1931, p. 125
32. Key Stage 3 = ages 11-14: see note on Key Stages in the Preface.
33. see Bibliography for details.
34. DH 16-17n, IH 15n - especially R R Marett's bahnbrechend researches in his The Threshold of Religion 1909; DH 94n, IH 74n.
35. IH 58c, DH 76b - a somewhat fuller section which Feigel had and quotes.
36. This is taken up again in Chapter Three, section 3.3.
37. Although in a footnote to DH 20n - not in IH - Otto adds that there is after all no real disagreement.
38. This appears in IH 119c, but was taken out of later editions of DH, so no longer in the paragraph on DH 146a where it had appeared in earlier editions - page 156 in the edition Feigel used.

CHAPTER TWO:

CONSISTENCY AND DEVELOPMENT THROUGH OTTO'S MAIN PUBLICATIONS2.1 Why Otto seems inconsistent

The purpose of this Chapter is to trace the main characteristics of Otto's thought through his publications. Several critics have accused him of muddle and inconsistency, and these accusations must be taken seriously. In the last resort, if he is shown to have been inconsistent in his main ideas then it can no longer be claimed that he has a method or approach which can be adapted for practical purposes like religious education. The best that could be hoped for would then be to select ideas which seem to show promise on a piecemeal basis. Further, if as some maintain, Otto's psychology is unconnected to his philosophy, or even at variance with it, then his whole project falls to pieces. For this reason it is necessary to go at some depth into his epistemology and in particular his use of the term a priori. This in turn leads to the consideration of the relation of rational to non-rational, and to Otto's own peculiar brand of schematisation. This Chapter will consider most of his books, but the main emphasis, especially in connection with his use of a priori and schematisation, will be on Das Heilige (DH).

The criticisms raised by Geyser and Feigel go to the root of his whole enterprise: that is, Otto's claim that religious experience is a valid starting place, if not the only valid

starting place, for the study of living religion. But this Chapter must begin with the remarks of two more modern critics, both of whom maintain that his philosophy as expounded in Kantisch-Fries'sche Religionsphilosophie (KFR) is at variance with his phenomenology and his empirical psychology as seen in DH. It must be shown that this claim, even if upheld, is not the same as saying that Otto's phenomenology is at variance with his philosophy tout court, because the philosophical position which not only underlies DH, but also has clear expression in DH, can be shown to be compatible with the rest of the book. That which is harder to reconcile is the philosophy of Fries, which is the subject of KFR. If there is a serious inconsistency in Otto's development, it lies in the philosophy of Fries, which he only adopted at the insistence of Leonard Nelson while they were colleagues at Göttingen, and appears to have backed away from subsequently. At any rate the philosophical position evident in DH can be shown not to be dependent on Fries.

It has been strongly argued by a number of scholars that there is a serious break and inconsistency between Otto the philosopher as evidenced in KFR, and Otto the phenomenologist at work in DH. Søren Holm¹ and David Bastow² have both argued this in different ways, and they receive some contemporary support in a 1919 letter written to Otto by the phenomenologist Edmund Husserl:

The metaphysician (theologian) in Dr Otto has, it seems to me, carried away the phenomenologist

Otto on his wings, and I am thinking of the angels who veil their eyes with their wings. But I still think this book will have a lasting place in the history of genuine philosophy of religion and especially phenomenology of religion. . . . You know from our Göttingen years how highly I always esteem you.³

Holm states simply that Otto has tried to make a mixture of two different things or two different periods of professional life.

Otto started as a philosopher of religion with the book "Kantisch-Fries'sche Religionsphilosophie" which was published in 1909. . . . Otto wanted to use Jacob Fr. Fries and de Wette to get out from Kant's position. . . . A leading idea of Fries was the romantic Ahnung, . . . In a corresponding way Otto wanted in "Das Heilige" to find a religious Urdatum which stood behind empirical forms of religion and explicated them. (71bc)

So, continues Holm, while Otto's a priori is philosophical-transcendental in KFR, in DH the "a priori" is empirical-emotional, i.e. an Urdatum or Urphänomen. "An Apriori cannot be empirical, it cannot be found in experience, it is not a psychical datum" (72a). By drawing on Fries and Ahnung, according to Holm, Otto crosses over from the Kantian a priori to experience (77a) and his identification of the numinous is in effect a conclusion from effects to their cause (79c), a conclusion which is anyway insecure at the best of times, because given effects may have a variety of causes which cannot always be discovered. So Holm's own conclusion is to find a serious break between Otto's work in KFR and DH.

The section on Fries in Chapter Three of this thesis shows the influence of Fries in more detail, while the section on Kant suggests that Otto is after all justified in DH in finding a genuine Apriori in the tradition of Kant and so he does not need the support of Fries. Holm is not clear about his criticism of Fries, but in considering the Ahnung theory as psychological-empirical he appears to support the view, contrary to Otto in KFR, that Fries is not a true follower of Kant. But Holm does not go on to find the place of DH in the Kantian tradition, as is discussed later in this Chapter.

Bastow wishes to apply sharper philosophical dissection to Otto's 'Theory of Religion' which he states correctly as intended to show that experience of the numinous can yield positive knowledge. But it is not clear to Bastow how Otto's phenomenological work links to his philosophical position.

This is not as clear as it might be in The Idea of the Holy, though the words of the Foreword are very forceful: 'I feel that no-one ought to concern himself with the Numen ineffabile who has not already devoted assiduous and serious study to the Ratio Aeterna'. But I hope to show that a full understanding of The Idea of the Holy is impossible unless one understands the philosophical system taken over from Fries and expounded in The Philosophy of Religion. (159c)

That is why Bastow goes back to KFR, in order to clarify the link. But the problem with this is that Bastow overlooks two important points, both noticed by Philip Almond in his book Rudolf Otto - An Introduction to his Philosophical Theology⁴. These are, first, Otto's waning interest in Fries when he

began to study living religions as a result of his travels of 1911-12 (Almond 1984, 91c), and second, the importance of linking Otto's phenomenological work in DH with his philosophy in later chapters of the same book. Almond correctly seeks to establish Otto's consistency by examining consistency within DH (88c), as well as his more questionable argument that the philosophy of Fries has set the direction for all Otto's work from 1909⁵.

Bastow is more critical of Fries than either Almond or Holm. He asks, "What are the possible relationships between a comprehensive philosophical system such as Otto took over from Fries, and the work of a phenomenologist of religious experience?" (168a). Bastow does not think that Otto has established this relationship in DH, a view which is rejected by this Thesis. Bastow concludes that Fries lets Otto down in two respects: first that the philosophy of Fries is not such that phenomenological theses about religious experience can be derived from it, and second that it does not even offer a formal similarity to Otto's phenomenology of religious experience. The similarity between Holm's and Bastow's views will be obvious, and the differences need not concern us further.

There is no doubt that Otto's thought underwent change and development. Consideration of his books will show change and unfolding⁶ within a discernible framework. The plan in this Chapter is to produce a kind of map of Otto's development and

to pick certain landmarks. These include his work on Luther (published in 1898), on Schleiermacher (1899), on Darwin and Darwinism (1903, 1904), on Kant and Fries (1909), and the complex work Das Heilige which draws so many strands of his thinking together into itself (1917). After that attention turns to Otto's work on Indian religion, on liturgy, his ethical writings, and his last book Reich Gottes und Menschensohn.

2.2 Otto's First Publication

Otto's Habilitationsschrift was published in 1898 with the title Die Anschauung vom heiligen Geiste bei Luther (AHG)⁷. Otto's interest in the operation of the Spirit must be traced back to this, and indeed to his doctoral theses on Ruach Jahweh which preceded it. Some have thought of his experience in the little synagogue in North Africa as a seminal experience of the holy. This took place during his travels in 1911, and has already been quoted in Chapter One⁸. But Otto himself says,

Indeed, I grew to understand the numinous and its difference from the rational in Luther's De Servo Arbitrio long before I identified it in the qadosh of the Old Testament and in the elements of 'religious awe' in the history of religion in general.

A footnote in DH 123n (not in IH) refers the reader back to the Exkurs in AHG¹⁰, and indeed the language especially in these few pages is close to parts of Das Heilige. Otto himself claims a consistency.

Otto states at the outset of AHG that the concept of the spiritus sanctus in Luther expresses a two-fold interest: how "new life" comes to effect in the religious-moral context of inner-life (Gemüt) and will; and secondly, perhaps the central point, the relationship and influence of supernatural causality on the inner life of man¹¹. The religious-moral content of the inner life is greatly expanded in DH into the relationship between religion and morality through schematisation, and reappears in the ethical writings of his last few years. Otto denies a supernatural causality over and beyond the natural causality of human experience. It is clear that these two themes find special expression in Otto's later books: the soul (Gemüt) and its life are central to Otto's edition of Schleiermacher's Reden, published in 1899, and the theme of causality, natural and supernatural, is the basis of NRW, published in 1904, while both themes are developed together with a greater expanded psychological and empirical treatment in DH, published in 1917. KFR, first published in ZThK in 1909, seems to be the exception in that its theme is not foreshadowed in the thesis AHG, although the denial of dual causation is vigorously treated here also.

The twin themes, the working of the holy Spirit on the inner soul of the faithful and the question of causality, recur throughout AHG. Although there are plenty of quotations from Luther, Otto has to explain on many occasions that Luther regarded himself as a faithful son of the Church, that he used traditional language, and that in any case what he

wanted to say is not always quite clear¹². This is not the place to argue Luther's theology. Much more to the point is Otto's understanding of Luther's theology, however this may have been derived. In the circumstances it would seem reasonable to claim the statements and viewpoint of this publication as Otto's own without trying to prove whether or not they can be justified by the evidence adduced.

The scholastic reasoning derived from Aristotle on natural and supernatural causation is firmly rejected. The medieval model is mechanistic and religion requires none of the "levers and screws of moral training"¹³ to school the will. Similarly unacceptable is the dogmatic terminology which describes the holy Spirit as causa prima and Faith as causa secunda for the new life. Just as there can be no "God of the gaps" so there can be no theory of first and second level causality.

There can be no super-psychology working alongside normal psychology¹⁴, sometimes expressed as empirical psychology. God's activity is empirical¹⁵, working in the inmost soul of mankind and is not any kind of additional or supernatural psychological factor.

In DH Otto stresses the direct and spontaneous interaction between the numinous and the human psyche. At the same time there are ways of awakening the sensus numinis, and in AHG the terms involved in Luther's theology, Spirit, Word, Faith,

Life and others demand some discussion of the means of communication. God communicates person to person, as when two people communicate, says Otto, they use words, gestures, and at a distance they may communicate by letter. The means are not important. The contact is directly von Geist zu Geist¹⁶. Medieval theology seemed to suggest an ever-lengthening chain as revelation was passed from God through Christ to the Apostles and their successors. According to Otto, the converted Christian (der neue Mensch) does not take over from the Church the store of feelings, impulses, cognitions that have been handed down, but the Church transmits the source from which all these feelings etc. arise, the preaching of God's revelation¹⁷. The importance of this for developing a sense of the numinous is taken up in Chapter Five. In AHG there is also a stress on motivation and the will which reappears in the articles on ethics.

Otto's discussion of the means of communication already noted suggests the chapter in DH on means of communicating the sensus numinis: it is not teachable but can be aroused. In AHG also Otto quotes Luther's statement that the gift of the Spirit can only be understood by the pious, while the enemies can never understand how the spirit is given¹⁸. This notion which makes the personal subject alone responsible for final conviction is cardinal in DH.

The objectivity of the Spirit's working is assumed in AHG rather than stressed, but by the time he wrote DH Otto was

well aware that he was open to attack on this ground.

2.3 Otto's edition of Schleiermacher's "Reden"

In 1899 Otto produced a centenary edition of Schleiermacher's Reden¹⁹, a book which not only caused a great stir in 1799, but was heavily influential for protestant theology and more generally throughout the nineteenth century. Although Schleiermacher addressed himself to a readership different from those who were dominant in Otto's time, there can be no doubt that in his struggles to base religion in the depths of the human soul and experience, in fact to make an existential appeal to what we should now call the implicit, Schleiermacher had much to offer Otto for his own time and his own problems.

Otto stresses the feelings side as "feelings, presentiment (Ahnen) and experiencing."²⁰ Religion, beside cognition and action, is the third human sphere which to the questions "What can we know?" and "What ought we to do?" adds, "What do we experience in our soul (Gemüt)?"²¹ Schleiermacher in his Reden, says Otto, discovered 'this third continent of the intellectual world'²², and reference may be made to Otto's later essay on how Schleiermacher discovered the sensus numinis²³. Here is the clear basis that was to become the backbone of das Heilige.

To be able to feel, to contemplate, to sense, we need a Fähigkeit²⁴. This question of Fähigkeit and the Vermögen

psychology, reappears in DH and is expanded into the theory of the Anlage²⁵, a psychological capacity with almost physiological implications which was to give Otto trouble at the hands of his critics, notably Geysler. Here also are to be seen the first hints on education and communicating the numinous, put later: "ohne Gemütsbildung keine Religion."²⁶ A fuller consideration of Schleiermacher's influence on Otto is the subject of section 3.3 in Chapter Three.

2.4 Darwinism, Naturalism and Religion

Darwin and Darwinism were keenly discussed even while Otto was at school. The advance of natural sciences had deeply changed educated thought since Schleiermacher had published his Reden in 1799. In 1904 Otto published Naturalistische und religiöse Weltansicht (NRW)²⁷.

Otto had published an article on Darwinism in 1902²⁸. That this remained a lively topic for him is shown by the reprinting of his NRW in 1923 and 1929, and by his slender book Darwinismus und Religion²⁹ being republished in a slightly altered form in his book of essays Sünde und Urschuld³⁰ under the title "rationale Theologie gegen naturalistischen Irrationalismus." The topic of course is the relation of religion to natural science, and more particularly to positivistic thought forms which were culturally dominant at the turn of the century.

According to F. Delekat writing in 1930³¹ Otto had

considerable success. If one drive in Otto's developing thought was the need to relate religious feeling to philosophical theology, then a second drive arose from the need to establish religious claims to truth. This was not to claim exclusive truth for one particular faith in the way that was exploited by Barth and Bultmann, but the need to establish the fact that all religion is actually concerned with reality and is not just a closed system. There is no doubt that Otto did believe in the superiority of Christianity over other religions, a note which surfaces again in DH, but his case lay in the claim of any religion, of religion as such, to be in touch with reality in a deep and more significant sense than was the case with the natural sciences then taught.

No actually existing form of religion is so entirely made up of "feeling", "subjectivity" or "mood", that it can dispense with all assumptions and convictions regarding the nature and import of the world. In fact, every form, on closer examination, reveals a more or less fixed framework of convictions, theoretical assumptions, and presuppositions in regard to man, the world, and existence: that is to say, a theory, however simple, of the universe.³²

The dominant world view around the turn of the century placed enormous faith in experimental and natural sciences, especially physics, but also in evolutionary theories derived from biology. The result was the assumption that religion was simply a leftover from a more primitive stage of man's development, which would be perfectly acceptable at the private personal level, a source maybe of comfort, but that

it could have no meaningful role at the social level, precisely because religion was of no practical use. The use-value question provides the link with Darwin and Darwinism according to which organs, aptitudes and faculties whether physical or cultural only survive insofar as they contribute not to the individual but to the success of the species as an on-going group.

Finally, we have a 'Darwinian' theory of the understanding, which endeavours to solve by the principles of biological advantage Pilate's question "What is truth?" This theory is embodied in pragmatism and in the notion of the economy of thought. Finally, the very word true is to be understood as practically synonymous with the word useful.³³

Now religion is interested most acutely in this question of the possibility of objective truth.³⁴

For there is this outstanding difference between religion and all "moods" . . . that it lives by the certainty of its ideas, suffers if they be uncertain, and dies if they be shown to be untenable, however charming or consoling, sublime or simple they may be. Its theories of the world are not poems: they are convictions, and these require to be first of all not pleasing but true.³⁵

Darwin and Darwinism represented for Otto two separate problems. Otto thought that Darwin himself was simply a researcher who had no religious or metaphysical presuppositions. Obviously he knew nothing of Darwin's correspondence or diaries in which can be seen his long and difficult struggles with the presuppositions and expectations of his age. What was startlingly new about Darwin's theory,

Otto emphasises, is that it posits the transmutation of species and the growth, through the help of environmental circumstances, of quite new organs and abilities, as 'higher' forms of life evolve from lower. This is not development (evolution, unfolding) in the way an oak grows from an acorn, an acorn containing all the traits of the developed oak within itself from the start. Darwin's theory is brutal addition: totally new factors are added, seemingly by chance. To call it evolution, Otto claims, is a misuse of language.³⁶

Although it is clear that 'addition' was a stumbling block for Otto, his religious reaction was not one of confrontation. Otto stressed instead the religious questions of origin and purpose³⁷. Religion is concerned with a more basic kind of truth than natural sciences, and must go beyond physical and biological questions to see through them and in them something of the mystery and to sense something of the purpose. This is summed up in NRW Chapter III³⁸ as a threefold religious interest: the feeling of mystery, the feeling of contingency, and the sense that there is a purpose to it all. Two supplementary points should be added: one is that Otto is still consistently using the terms feeling and presentiment (Gefühl, Ahnung)³⁹ which are central in the language of the romantics and Schleiermacher, and are also part of the foundational structure of his thought in DH. The other is the relationship of the infinite to the finite. It is quite wrong, says Otto, to picture the infinite as coming into the finite. The infinite is ever to be perceived within

and through the finite.⁴⁰

Religion itself consists in this: believing and experiencing that in time the Eternal, in the finite the Infinite, in the world God is working, revealing Himself, and that in Him lies the reason and the cause of all being.⁴¹

Otto's controversy with Wundt can usefully be seen also within the framework of the religious claim to truth. The second volume of Wilhelm Wundt's magisterial Völkerpsychologie appeared in 1906 with the section entitled "Mythus und Religion." Otto reviewed this in 1910⁴², and went to the heart of Wundt's theory that religion had evolved from primitive beliefs in spirits. In this Wundt's thesis was similar to the British anthropologist E. B. Tylor⁴³. Enough has been said about Otto's standpoint in NRW, and later of course in DH, to make clear that he could not accept any notion that religion could have evolved from something else. That is why he says the numinous is sui generis and basic. The issue is not really about vagueness in Wundt's forms of expression, although Otto made play with this. It is easy now to see that because in Wundt's time modern psychology was thought of in terms of the clinical work with individuals largely practised in his day, he wanted to find means of expression to cover observational and social psychology. Behind Wundt's notions, however, lurks the spectre of reductionism which counts religion as a metaphenomenon, dependent on social norms and patterns, and religion is thus denied any authenticity precisely as religion, that is as having its own direct access to and expression of reality.

The link with Darwin and Darwinism is now clear.

Wundt's paper, with his emphasis on myth-building and group fantasy, would seem to concede to the positivistic world-view of the time that religion is marginal to the real concerns of mankind. Delekat puts the controversy in this context, and at the same time commends Otto's handling of it.⁴⁴

2.5 Otto's "Philosophy of Religion"

Section 2.1 earlier in this Chapter suggested that there could be problems with Otto's reliance on Fries. The purpose of this section is not to discuss these problems so much as to note the main thrust of Otto's book about the philosophy of Fries, Kantisch-Fries'sche Religionsphilosophie und ihre Anwendung auf die Theologie (KFR), published in 1909, with a view to seeing how this book also reflects and develops constant concerns in Otto's thought. Many commentators consider this book cardinal for understanding Otto's thought and development. But a more detailed evaluation of Fries's philosophy and its relevance to Otto must be left until Chapter Three where section 3.4 treats of Fries's influence on Otto, and how far it was effective for Otto's thought.

Schleiermacher expressed eloquently the appeal to feeling. His style was oratorical, and Otto knew that greater precision in analysis was needed. The direction in which to look was, however, already indicated. In his second Rede Schleiermacher draws out a third quality, the natural

counterpart to thought and action, and no less in worth and splendour⁴⁵: this quality is contemplation and feeling.⁴⁶ It takes place within consciousness or on the edge of it, just as Otto had seen it when he wrote AHG as the work of the holy Spirit.

The sources for the philosophy of Fries, apart from his own books, are Leonard Nelson's Progress and Regress in Philosophy⁴⁷ and Otto's KFR which is warmly commended by Nelson at the end of his book. Nelson's interest in Fries was primarily epistemological: if most judgements depend on other judgements, there must ultimately be some which are not dependent but immediate⁴⁸. Otto's interest was additionally to make use of Fries's Ahnung theory which bridged the divide which seemed to keep the Kantian noumenal and phenomenal apart. To find immediate knowledge, Fries used Kant's term deduction (in the sense of leading down) for the process of tracing a judgement back to some item of immediate knowledge. In the same way, Fries thought he could overcome the division between the phenomenal and the noumenal by finding objective certainty in the immediate knowledge which was discovered by deduction. This he claimed to find in a psychological datum which confirmed inherent and original certainty for immediate knowledge. This datum is also called a "Feeling for Truth" or Wahrheitsgefühl, and is an obscure act of the faculty of judgement. Thus, although unclear and non-conceptual, it also belongs to Reason. Otto in explaining this immediate knowledge as "dim and unconscious . . . it is dormant" (PR 58a,

KFR 41a) notes also that William James "made extensive use of the Unconscious, the Subconscious, in his interpretation of religious phenomena."⁴⁹ Thus this "obscure act" takes place in the human subconscious.

The Wahrheitsgefühl remains obscure until it is resolved by being put into the form of a judgement. This is a process which requires abstraction to bring it to consciousness, i.e. from particular to universal. Otto gives as an example the unconscious awareness that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points (PR 58c; KFR 41c), which only becomes conscious when it is put into the form of a universal judgement. Otto also refers, in a section on the laicisation of religion, to the same process when Kant's moral philosophy still retains its basis to be found in the obscure moral feelings of ordinary people. He instances Kant's Foundation for the Metaphysics of Morals (Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten) as a "Transition from the Ordinary Moral Judgements of Reason to the Philosophical" (PR 36ab; KFR 21a).

But if the psychological argument is followed through, the evidence for this immediate knowledge can only come from a psychological datum. We need psychological proof for the existence within ourselves of an immediate knowledge which underlies all metaphysical judgements. The knowledge is immediate and independent of all experience, hence a priori, although only experience can bring it to our consciousness. In this way, Nelson adds, the reform of Kant's philosophy

which Fries took on is a reinstatement of the old theory of Ideas of Socrates and Plato (Nelson 1971, 190a). Otto too speaks of anamnesis, a reference to the calling to mind of truths supposedly known clearly before birth, but since birth buried deep in the subconscious.

The question which is raised by Fries's philosophy centres on the use of psychology to bring out his theory. The Feeling for Truth is brought to light by self-examination in psychological introspection. But if it is in any way itself dependent on psychology, then it is at best a posteriori, and not as claimed by Fries, Nelson and Otto. Otto quoted from Kant himself in support of this claim, which will be put in context in the next section. Yet Ansgar Paus in his Religiöser Erkenntnisgrund remarks, "even Kant stirred suspicion of psychologism by incautious expression especially in the first edition of Critique of Pure Reason"⁵⁰.

With Fries's philosophical stance Otto linked two followers, De Wette and Apelt. In 1910 Otto published a new edition of the Metaphysik by Ernst Friedrich Apelt, and for this reason Paus pays particular attention to Apelt's work in his evaluation of Otto's philosophical base. Paus quotes Apelt on this central problem: "All our knowledge begins with experience, but not all our knowledge derives from experience."⁵¹ (Paus 54b)

Otto's restatement of Fries's thought

Otto's book, commended by Leonard Nelson for its clarity, describes the system of Fries at length. This system can be clearly stated in outline, but the details are less convincing, and Otto was criticised for following Fries.

Baldly stated, Fries posits three different types or modes of knowledge. These are: factual knowledge (Wissen), which is derived from sense-experience; secondly metaphysical knowledge (Glaube) like causality which as Hume showed cannot be demonstrated without presupposing its own validity; and third the feel for truth, the presentiment of certainty which grounds the whole system (Ahnung or in the spelling Fries used Ahndung). It is only by means of Ahnung that rational beings can achieve a level of certainty in ordinary knowledge and experience, because Ahnung provides the link between the spatio-temporal and the changeless-eternal. By means of Ahnung it is possible to know and intuit the eternal within the finite. "Man ahndet das Ewige in dem Endlichen." (Fries passim)⁵²

Otto attributed to Fries two discoveries. The first is that there are metaphysical truths which are derived neither from perception nor from reflection, but are immediate and a priori; secondly, such knowledge is obscure. The obscurity of such knowledge chimed in with Otto's experience of mystery in religious devotion, and it allowed him to claim that such knowledge though obscure is nonetheless immediate, and so

does not need justification. Immediate knowledge cannot be justified in principle because any philosophical reasoning to try and justify it is both a petitio principii and denies its status as immediate knowledge, opening up the prospect for an infinite regress. But how can knowledge be both immediate and obscure?

The answer to this can be found by consulting personal experience. There are truths which even small children know and act on but do not know that they know.

Kant's categories, by means of which alone we can handle sense experience, are examples of knowledge which is both a priori and can only be known after some empirical or psychological process has brought them to notice. But the categories as they are known are limited by time and space. To imagine them as complete requires us to negate these limits, i.e. to negate the negation, and thus reach a reality that transcends the limitations of sense-perception. Otto's chapter on The Speculative Ideas (KFR and PR VI) shows the use of Fries's system. The big leap forward, according to Otto, comes with Fries's development of the Speculative Ideas.

Fries begins this development by stating that Speculative Ideas represent metaphysical objects of which no definite knowledge can ever be obtained. We may speak of completed categories for instance, but our knowledge of them must

always be incomplete and incompletable. Now our experience of ordinary knowledge comes by conceptualisation of perceptions, and that means that incomplete knowledge may be due to either of two possibilities. Either we have a clear concept but lack any perception which can be brought under it, and these cases Fries called Logical Ideas; or else we have perceptions which we are unable to bring under any concept, and these Fries called Aesthetic Ideas.

Otto makes use of both these. In Chapter VI of KFR he uses the Logical Ideas:

We have now found the positive foundation of the "Ideas" of reason, as laid in reason's immediate and fundamental knowledge of the necessary synthetic unity in the essence of things, a knowledge in itself obscure and deeply hidden. The "Ideas" express in clear and distinct terms what is dimly outlined in this immediate knowledge. Fries sets forth very clearly how the Ideas must be presented to the consciousness. They are to express the View of the Universe, which, as opposed to the inadequate view afforded by time and space, expresses the essence of things, not as presented to sensuous perception in space and time, but as conceived by reason pure and simple, i.e. according to the "principle of completeness." (PR 81ab)

Examples include the Idea of Absolute Being and the Idea of Eternity. Eternity may be schematised under cruder notions of the end of the world, the day of judgement, heaven or the twilight of the gods. After this Otto goes on to expound the Aesthetic Ideas, and this is the subject of Chapter VII headed "The Ideas come to Life."

Thus by themselves and for themselves the Ideas are frigid and void, would remain so and never guide to religion, unless they first received that great and individual Content which gives them life, which acts on character and will, from a quite different region. (PR 91c)

In this way Otto goes on to make use of the Aesthetic Ideas, those which are felt in experience, but for which clear concepts are lacking. "Not by faith alone can we in conviction confront the world of Appearance with the true one, the World of Idea;" (PR 92c). We should note in passing that faith is the form of our apprehending the Logical Ideas, the concepts for which we lack perceptions. For Otto goes straight on to make use of the Aesthetic Ideas: "we can become aware of the latter as a reality, and a reality fraught with blessing, by experience. . . This . . . comes about, apart from any precise middle term, in Feeling alone, and indeed in a feeling which cannot be resolved into a conception." (PR 92-93)

Further on in the same chapter Otto draws out the value of the two sorts of incomplete knowledge which are designated by the Logical and the Aesthetic Ideas. It is the Logical Ideas which give the structure of Faith, and Faith is needed to set limits and to provide a framework to "soaring flights of speculation." At the same time religion is more than such metaphysics, which are anyway expressed still in negative terms, as unlike anything we can experience. Otto goes on:

For a positive affirmation on the Infinite, an "intellectual intuition" of the kind that

Fichte's school loved to describe, would be necessary. But no such intuition is granted to us. Our intuitive perception is wholly confined to the sensuous. It follows that a "comprehending" knowledge, a knowledge of the Infinite in positive concepts, is not possible for us. The Infinite for us is still the Incomprehensible. But what the comprehension cannot achieve we may achieve in the Feeling. Feeling, with Knowledge and Faith, gives a third kind of real knowledge, one which combines and unifies both of these - "Ahnem". . . . Obscure sentiments of the beautiful and sublime in all its phases, in the natural and spiritual life, have us in their power: and so we understand without any medium the Eternal in the Temporal, and the Temporal as an appearance of the Eternal. Intelligibly enough, positively, although beyond our powers of expression, the world of Faith here manifests itself in the world of Knowledge by means of "Ahnung". (PR 100-101)

This positive content, which eludes our comprehension and can only be manifested to our conceptual knowledge if the barriers to our knowledge are again lifted, is revealed to us, however, in individual Feelings, capable in themselves of clear differentiation, particular definition, and of being communicated. . . . But in the feeling of devotion we attain by degrees a positive actual knowledge of it, quite solid and stable, if, indeed, utterly incapable of being expressed. (PR 132ab)

By Kant's transcendental method the limits which had been conditioned and required by experience are removed metaphysically, and we can gain knowledge through speculation of the ideas in their pure form. By negating the limits in the case of each of the categories, we get a complete (according to Kant) system of speculative ideas which include Immortality, Freewill and others. These ideas can never be experienced in their pure form on Kant's system because

experience limits them through time and space. An ideal might not, however, be real. Erich Gaede⁵³ says that for Kant the speculative ideas exist only in reason, and are not actually existent objects like for instance the Ideas or Forms of Plato. It is well known that Kant's epistemology divides things into phenomena and noumena, of which only the noumena are really real, but they are beyond our experience and we cannot know anything about them. Fries felt that Kant had already in several places indicated access to secure knowledge of reality, and that this only needed to be pulled together and systematised. Thus Fries, according to Nelson and Otto, is to be seen as a faithful follower of Kant, who clarified certain inconsistencies and rectified certain errors, to forge a complete philosophical system whose key is Ahnung.

Fries drew on Kant's third critique which he saw providing the basis he wanted to earth the ideas of the other two in the certainty he felt, albeit dimly, yet which was not derived from experience, i.e. it was purely a priori. Fries felt that this was a form of direct, unmediated cognition which is both unmistakable and certain. "This doctrine of the infallibility of direct cognition is the heart of the philosophy of Fries," said Weiß (1912, 17). Otto wrote:

The source of Fries' doctrine of "Ahdung" - so far as it is not just the positive experience of the man himself - is the Kantian Criticism of Judgement. In this connection, whoever hears the word with discrimination and compares other utterances of Kant, some quite early ones, is

bound to see that this important theory was already present as a companion of his theory of ideas. (PR 23; KFR 9)

Ahnung is found most clearly in the feeling or aesthetic side because aesthetics is an example of unmediated consciousness. Central to the theory are the three modes of knowing, Wissen, Glauben, and Ahnden, which indicate respectively theoretic, ideal and feeling-conditioned knowledge. Fries's book Wissen, Glaube und Ahndung⁵⁴ expresses this with considerable clarity (Gaede 3): "Wir wissen um das Endliche, wir glauben an das Ewige, wir ahnden des Ewigen im Endlichen." ("We know the finite, we believe the eternal, we feel the eternal in the finite.") Aesthetic ideas reveal value and so give objects their higher significance, and this means that they act as communicators between the finite and the infinite. "The eternal significance of things (of this world) can only in pure feeling be known through Ahnung . . . In the beauty and sublime aspects of nature we become aware of the eternal in the finite" (Im Schönen und Erhabenen der Natur ahnden wir das Ewige im Endlichen.) (Gaede 1935, 15)

Otto saw this system as a philosophical expression of what he had described earlier, as he makes explicit in KFR. This is the testimonium spiritus sancti which places the ultimate validity of religious truth in the heart of the ordinary believer. In this it tends to move against both ecclesiastical ritual and theological authority. Otto sees this line of Reformation thought reaching a peak in the Age

of Enlightenment by making Christianity both reasonable and directly available to ordinary non-intellectual people in its plainness, simplicity and helpfulness. This affects the way people see the relations between natural and supernatural.

"Aufklärung" theology . . . aims at a reconciliation between belief in God and the new understanding of the universe according to the laws of Nature, now that the old semi-supernatural Aristotelian views of nature and the old Ptolemaic views of the universe had disappeared.⁵⁵

The 'proofs' of scholasticism are laid aside, and "the 'layman's' self-help now becomes a declaration of the rights of 'feeling' as opposed to reflection."⁵⁶ The result is that people see "Being in nature and Happening under the laws of Nature are nothing but the working of God, . . . that Nature itself is nothing more than the form of the universal divine operation;"⁵⁷

2.6 "The Idea of the Holy" and the basis of religious knowledge

One chapter in particular in The Idea of the Holy⁵⁸ relates most obviously to education in religion. There are three sections. In the first, Otto notes that there is much in religion which can simply be passed from mind to mind by concepts, words and school instruction. What cannot be taught in this way is the numinous base and background, and the discussion of this occupies the much longer second section of the Chapter. This is central to the present Thesis and it becomes clear that much of DH is in fact about

this too, that is about means of stimulating awareness of the numinous and about means of expression. The third section is called 'Means by which the Numinous is expressed in Art' and provides a number of examples of religious phenomena, many others of which appear in other parts of the book.

In the brief section on "Direct Means" Otto mentions reverent attitude and gesture as in worship, and the use of ideograms and schematisation by which appropriate terms are used to arouse or to indicate numinous experience of which the other must have had some previous awareness. This is of necessity an indirect approach, and these key terms are discussed more closely in the following sections of the Thesis.

But in view of the previous book on the philosophy of religion, it is necessary also to investigate Otto's use of the term A priori. What Otto meant by this term is important because the application of Otto's method to religious education depends on an understanding which does not allow a wedge between the phenomena and knowledge of reality. That is why it is essential to try to clear this up in the next few pages. The a priori concerns the essence and means of knowing. What Otto meant by "schematisation" is important too because it seems to offer a key to understanding religion, both religion in general and particular religions, through and by means of the phenomena of religion. The fact that this is already commonly used as a teaching method does not absolve students from trying to see how phenomena and

understanding are essentially related. It could be said, therefore, that while both topics concern the same problem, the theme of DH and indeed of much of Otto's work, the a priori directs attention in the first place to knowing, while schematisation begins with rational concepts or perceived phenomena as a route to understanding something that is already albeit obscurely known.

2.6.1 The religious 'A priori'

The early part of DH is clearly religious phenomenology as was recognised from its first publication. It leaves a powerful impression on the reader, as was noted by Feigl, and many either read no further or, if they do, forget the later chapters which deal with the religious a priori. Thus the first question is whether these two parts of the book are consistent and really belong together. Linked to this is another question which centres on Otto's credentials as a philosopher of religion, and seeks to determine whether Otto's a priori is recognisably in the Kantian tradition, or whether, as many have maintained, it is really an Urdatum or Urphänomen and Otto is guilty of psychologism on the same pattern as Fries⁵⁹. These are important questions because if Otto cannot be considered a philosopher of religion in this book which is at the heart of his thesis, then, valuable though his phenomenology is for the study of religion, he will be unable to provide the philosophical anchorage which is required. Those who study him may feel with him in the depths of the soul, but unless they can be sure with Otto

that the numinous is in some sense a reality, they are left with a general emotionalism, interesting as a psychological state, but not religious experience that a religious person would recognise. A closer discussion of Kant and the basis of knowledge is to be met in the next Chapter under the sources for Otto's thought. Meanwhile this section will concentrate on how Otto applied that basis of knowledge.

Otto is still accused by some⁶⁰ of changing from philosophy in KFR to phenomenology in DH, although he obviously himself believed that the two books were entirely consistent. But it is necessary to establish consistency between these two aspects of Otto's work within DH itself. Otto speaks of the complex idea of the holy which is constituted essentially out of rational (conceptual) and non-rational (intuited) aspects in all its phases, except perhaps the very crudest and these are sometimes called pre-religious - a phrase which got Otto into trouble with Feigl and other critics. Otto draws on psychology in his description of the sensus numinis, and felt that he had justified this intellectually through his adaptation of the philosophy of Kant and Fries. Instead he has been accused of exchanging the philosophy of transcendental idealism for pragmatism in the style of William James and of Peirce, or else of having abandoned philosophy altogether.

The treatment of the non-rational is developed at length in DH, both by the wealth of examples from religions all over

the world, and in particular by the clever device of the sensus numinis which refers also to the human psyche and thus allows an analysis by reflection as it were of the Numinous itself. It is these two factors which seem to have changed Otto from a philosophical theologian working a priori into a psychologist who works a posteriori and a phenomenologist. The theological interest reasserts itself at the end of the book, although it is not far below the surface throughout, but some readers have either ignored this, or finding it hard to fit with what they think Otto must have meant, have regarded it as an aberration, or a sentimentalism for old time's sake. Otto himself wrote in the 1920s:

The aim which led my research was neither the study of religion (ein religionsgeschichtliches Interesse) nor religious psychology. It was theology and in fact Christian theology.⁶¹

The first difficulty is met in the first chapter where Otto makes it quite clear that the basic category in religion, the holy, consists of both rational and non-rational elements. But the fact that rational elements cannot exhaust what is meant by the holy serves to underline the fact that the non-rational, for which Otto coined the term 'numinous', is more basic and is the essential element of religion before ever the rational ideas came into focus.

Harvey explains in his Translator's Preface to IH⁶² that he has chosen to use non-rational as a translation of irrational on the grounds that 'irrational' both in English and German

sounds as if it is in some way antirational, when what Otto means is something outside the field of rationality altogether. On the face of it, that which is not rational cannot be derived from philosophy, so any philosopher of religion is faced with the dilemma: either a system is to be constructed which is as rational as possible, or space must be allowed for some basic force or entity which is just there and cannot be rationally accounted for. The first route gives us the god of the philosophers which never seems to match up to the experiences of religion, and this means that the system is challenged by evidence a posteriori. Otto chose the other alternative, and in this his basis for religion is in parallel to the epistemology of Nelson and of Fries.

Now the rational and the non-rational elements of the holy stand in a special relationship to each other. The non-rational cannot properly be described: it can only be felt, or else concepts can be applied to it in the way that Otto brings out in his discussion of the 'ideogram' and 'schematisation', which form the subject of section 2.6.2 of the present Thesis. The problem of the relation of the rational to the non-rational is the problem of the relation of philosophy to phenomenology.

Theodor Siegfried takes the subtitle of DH as the guiding thread of Otto's endeavour:

If the general guiding thread is the question of the relationship of the rational and the non-rational, then it is at once clear that this is a formal theme. It does not contain any theological axiom, whether orthodox or liberal. Instead it is a heuristic principle for clarification. Even before we have any idea how fruitful this principle can be shown to be, it reveals itself as a specifically scientific principle, or rather a specific principle for questioning and for research.⁶³

Otto writes repeatedly of the human capacity (Anlage) or capacity of the inmost mind (Anlage des Gemütes) as the locus for the meeting or fusion of rational and non-rational⁶⁴. The numinous cannot be proved, but can be awakened, Otto maintains, in the human consciousness. In this way the numinous can be indicated.

Otto claims that human beings possess this special faculty or disposition (Anlage) which is open to the numinous. The Anlage plays a central role in Otto's thought. A number of passages in DH are significant, although probably not conclusive, for the question of the reality of the Anlage. The chapter entitled "The Holy as an A Priori Category Part One"⁶⁵ has quite a lot to say, but Otto has not set out to answer this ontological question.

And the only way we can throw any light upon the whole region of sub-human psychical life is by interpreting it once again as a sort of 'predisposition' (Anlage) at a second remove, i.e. a predisposition to form the predispositions or faculties of the actual developed mind, and standing in relation to this as the embryo to the full-grown organism. But we are not completely in the dark as to the meaning of this word 'predisposition'. For in our awakening and

growth to spiritual maturity we trace in ourselves by some sort the evolution by which the seed develops into the tree - the very opposite of 'transformation' and 'epigenesis' by successive addition. We call the source of growth a hidden 'predisposition' of the human spirit, which awakens when aroused by divers excitations. That there are 'predispositions' of this sort in individuals no one can deny who has given serious study to the history of religion. They are seen as propensities, 'predestining' the individual to religion . . .⁶⁶

DH Kapitel 4⁶⁷ depends throughout on the analysis of specific feelings and the comparison of natural and numinous feelings. Here we find again Anlage and Anlage des Gemütes, and the implied metaphor of a glass which reflects, or a screen which can register the shadow, tempts to a semi-physical conception.

Consideration of the Anlage des Gemütes emphasises the problem of Otto's use of the term a priori which is held in tension between two extremes. One is strictly epistemological (and derives directly from Kant), the other psychological. Otto wanted to hold these two together by locating the a priori within the human soul (Gemüt) which he interpreted as something more fundamental than reason.

There is no doubt that Otto's language could have been more precise, in spite of his disclaimer (frequent in DH) that his subject eludes conceptual thought and verbal description. In his later writings (Das Gefühl der Verantwortlichkeit, originally published 1931)⁶⁸, he describes the feeling of

responsibility, the consciousness of being oneself under obligation, as a basic, simple Datum (Boozer 150b). Like other primary data (Urdata), what it is cannot be described clearly, although the others can for the most part be clearly seen. Then Otto brings in the simile of an object under a blanket. This is worth quoting.

In this it is as if a blanket lay over it which prevents us forming a concept. We feel it under this blanket to an extent, and we can "discuss" it in that we can apply different concepts to it and can say with certainty, this one applies, that one does not. But it never comes out from under its blanket, and if we think we have caught it and can now pull it out, it escapes us once more. It leaves us in the end with the embarrassment of an ontological "Impasse" and an axiological Antinomy. We have it "in feeling" and can speak of it therefore as a feeling of responsibility. (Boozer 150c)

The unknown here has a considerably empirical character, and seems to place Otto firmly among the phenomenologists, working a posteriori. But this is not fair to him. In fact the situation was never totally clear and reviews of DH take different sides on this issue.

Feigl⁶⁹, as might be expected, is forceful here, but misses the subtlety of the position Otto has taken over from Kant. He baldly maintains that Otto's philosophical language is a sham and an attempt to conceal his psychologism by using Kantian terms. And by following Fries he has actually increased the distance between Kant and himself (Feigl 69bc). What Otto is really writing is psychology, or worse,

psychologism, which is empirically derived psychology dressed up in philosophical terms, and therefore his philosophy of religion is unreal and indefensible. Feigel claims that Kant clarified once and for all the distinction between them: the concept of apriori belongs to the sphere of reason, while the innate belongs to the empirical (Feigel 66a). And now Otto's attempt to explain "the non-rational factor in the idea of the divine and its relation to the rational" (subtitle of IH, DH) is according to Feigel impossible, and the very suggestion a contradiction. How can "the idea of the divine" be non-rational? This is an absurdity (Unding) (Feigel 69b).

But Feigel did not leave the problem there. Although apparently his mind was already made up, he takes some pages to examine the non-rational moments of the Holy in relation to the apriori. Here, with reference to Kap. 16 of DH⁷⁰, he records Otto's claim to go "deeper than pure reason" (DH 139a) to the "ground of the soul" (Seelengrund - DH 138a): it is here that knowledge (Erkenntnis) of the holy is to be found. But again Feigel denies Otto the right to apply "idea" or "knowledge" to the non-rational ideas: "What can be understood anyway by non-rational ideas? Ideas are rational, or they are not ideas." (Feigel 71b). And he sums it up by saying: "The falsity of Otto's claim . . . only needs to be noticed, not proved" (Feigel 71c). His position remains the same, that Otto has gone even further than in his book of 1909 (KFR) and that DH is fundamentally a work of religious psychology, or psychologism in that it dresses its psychology

in philosophical disguise.

Among those who would not accept Otto's a priori as Kantian is Ernst Troeltsch. Troeltsch reviewed the first edition of DH in Kant-Studien for 1919 in which he says that Otto indicates clearly current problems in the philosophy of religion, but handles them in a different way from Windelband, whose book (fortuitously of the same title) had recently appeared. While Windelband follows neo-Kantian theory to seek a basis for the validity of religious ideas, Otto is using the neo-Friesian "anthropological critique" which is essentially a psychological analysis, and from this position tries to answer epistemological and other philosophical questions (Troeltsch 65c). Troeltsch sees this as following up an article of his own "Die Selbständigkeit der Religion" of twenty years earlier⁷¹ in which he too was looking for a historical-psychological basis for religion. The kernel of Otto's work is psychological analysis, and his epistemology boils down to a reliance on underivable psychological givens which can only be handled by understanding and intuitive feeling. So the work under review is psychology of religion with supplements from epistemology and "historical philosophy".⁷²

Troeltsch agrees to Otto's application of the term Apriori to the Numen, to mean that it is underivable, independent, spontaneous. But he stresses that this Apriori is not related to Kant's Apriori (70bc), and adds that Otto needs to

distinguish between what is psychological and what is epistemological (71b). Otto's claims to be following Kant Troeltsch describes as a smash and grab raid when Otto takes Kant's schematisation, a theory which can have no relation to psychology (72). At the end Troeltsch says that Otto's work brings out again the reformation doctrine of the Spirit as Schleiermacher had done, and to this has applied Fries's teaching about the relevant human disposition or Anlage.

K. Bornhausen had already dealt with the question of Otto's use of a priori in his 1910 review of KFR in Zthk⁷³. It is directly relevant to the theme of DH. Although Otto correctly, according to Bornhausen, explains Kant's critique where Kant describes human perception as "obscure knowledge", Otto abandons Kant where he follows Fries's theory for the grounding of the validity of the categories. The focus must be on the term Apriori, through which the categories have their validity. For Kant, knowledge a priori is independent of all experience, and for it he sought transcendental proofs in pure reason. Otto, however, is putting forward an Apriori which is even more basic than the Apriori, i.e. goes beyond the Apriori, and that is impossible because it would be outside reason. Whatever it might be, Otto's use of the term Apriori is not justified. Otto claims that he is using the transcendental method to find and ground "the unity and necessity of all being", that is, going beyond all human reason into areas only accessible to Glauben, Ahnung, and Gefühl (351-2). Otto's method, following Fries, is not

kritisch-transszendental but psychologisch-anthropologisch. Bornhausen describes the use of the word "transcendental" by Otto and Fries as "shimmering like a chameleon." (351b).

Bornhausen suggests some pages later (361-2) that when Otto speaks of "transcendental idealism" as transcending reason, he has confused Transcendental with Transcendent, inasmuch as religion is transcendent. What Kant puts forward is the means to transcend experience, sense-perception, in order to find the possibility of knowledge in the ground of the intellect. Related to this is the question of the possibility of experience, which could be psychological experience, but the question is not about psychology itself. The transcendental question therefore is about the form of knowledge and how it is possible; whereas the question of the content of knowledge is a psychological question. Otto and Fries, concludes Bornhausen, see transcendental idealism as something belonging to the realm of ideas and yielding knowledge of things in themselves, not limited by time and space.

Otto's position received more sympathetic treatment from others who saw more clearly what he was trying to describe and why he had to call on psychological, empirical evidence in order to bring to notice something that was not itself dependent on such data, but only revealed by their means. This is in line with some of the writings of Kant. Siegfried made two contributions to the Marburger theologische Studien

of 1931, one of which is entitled Grundfragen der Theologie bei Rudolf Otto⁷⁴. Two pages of this long article in particular help to clarify Otto's use of the Apriori. What follows is virtually a paraphrase of pp.22-23.

Siegfried speaks of four moments in Otto's Apriori, all of which depend on Kant's definition, but develop it and go far beyond. The first moment is that Otto's Apriori is not formal but object-related (gegenständlich). If one were to see God as the Housekeeper or Maintainer of the world, this is made possible because of an Apriori capacity (Vermögen). Siegfried acknowledges that this has aroused the accusation that Otto has psychologised Kant's Apriori. But the Apriori relates to content, and the content is God as Maintainer and Creator in contrast to anything empirical. This content goes beyond any knowledge derived from experience and cannot be deduced from it. In fact this Apriori brings out the fact that this knowledge of God is independent and contrasted with empirical knowledge or knowledge from experience. This is not a psychologising because the Apriori concerns an object. Even though Otto reaches his famous description by means of an analysis of the human feeling reaction, yet the object itself is not affected or touched. This is the first moment.

The second is that the Apriori describes the living relationship between God and man, both in reality and in potential. This relationship is Apriori because it cannot be derived from other premisses. If the divine is the object

which comes in the form of the religious Apriori, then the religious Apriori also includes the unconditionedness or absoluteness of the divine.

This Apriori emphasises its uniqueness and this leads thirdly to the idea of a religious capacity (Anlage). If we allow the term Apriori to God's freedom and living revelation, it must also describe on the human side the capacity through which revelation is actualised. The fourth moment is the relationship of this capacity to other human capacities, in short the relation of revelation to people in the world, thus involving the concept of mind-soul capacity (Vermögen) which in particular includes the reason.

Siegfried's analysis seems to cover Otto's uses of Apriori, and suggests too the possibility of a multiplicity of Aprioris in the religious sphere. This appears confusing if Apriori is thought of, as sometimes in Otto, as a content, rather than content-related. But as a mode for the non-derivability of knowledge, presumably Apriori is neither single nor multiple, and not related to number at all.

Karl Heim published an article on "Otto's Category of the Holy and the Absolute Claims of Christian Faith" part of which is relevant here⁷⁵. Heim begins from Otto's DH and wants to explore the ways in which two dangers can be avoided: one is to claim Christianity as the supreme and absolute religion to which all others are subordinate, and

the other is to champion a timeless and eventless rational religion to which all actual religions including Christianity are opposed. To ground his basis for religion, Otto needed Kant's Apriori (18c). This Otto finds in the Gemüt (not as Kant in the Vernunft), "and thus brings about what Troeltsch demands, a religious Apriori free from dogmatic and metaphysical rationalisation." (19c).

Another perceptive review is that by Georg Wobbermin⁷⁶, who was a psychologist. After noting that DH is now 383 pages long while the 1917 edition was 192, he goes to the heart of the matter when he says that Otto follows two tendencies (as noted also by Troeltsch). One is a psychological analysis of religion in which Otto follows on and takes further the work of Schleiermacher. The other tendency is to follow Fries and the neofriesian school in trying to find foundation for the Holy as a category Apriori. In fact, Wobbermin continues, Otto wants an Apriori in order to hold these two tendencies together. Wobbermin thinks that Otto's psychological analysis is good, although he has some differences in detail which he discusses in the rest of this review.

R. F. Davidson⁷⁷ suggests that the work of Troeltsch on a priori influenced Otto. In seeking to free religion from aesthetics, Otto found Troeltsch's suggestion of a plurality of aprioris could help him. Thus in DH he completed the move from thinking of the apriori as the presupposition of reason, however engaged, to thinking of apriori as a mode of the

reason's activity, and so different in knowing, in appreciating beauty, in ethical sense and in the response to the numinous.

Kant's philosophy makes a distinction between a priori categories of theoretical understanding on the one hand, and a priori categories of meaning and value on the other. Davidson clarifies this when he commends Troeltsch for distinguishing the a priori of science from that of ethical-religious-aesthetic forms of value judgement, in opposition to the Marburg school of neokantians (before 1914)⁷⁸. Troeltsch did not develop this clearly, but Otto seems to be correct in claiming Kant's authority, and justified when he goes one step further and posits a third category of a priori for religious consciousness which is distinct from the moral and aesthetic. This is because Otto's understanding of a priori in religion is not epistemological but axiological.

If this is correct, it would explain why Otto did not reply to those critics, like Geysler, who demanded to know on what he based his knowledge of God. Otto's a priori is a category of consciousness and not of theoretical knowledge. Davidson writes:

Consequently Otto is able to identify the category of the holy as the religious Apriori and to define its nature with some degree of accuracy and comprehensiveness; while Troeltsch could only insist upon "the existence somewhere in religion of an a priori element" which he was never actually able to identify. (Davidson 168-9)

In 1953 Joachim Wach published a talk⁷⁹ entitled "Rudolf Otto und der Begriff des Heiligen". Wach maintains that in DH Otto has indeed produced an answer, and a new answer, to the question of the religious apriori (205b), a question probably first brought to him by Troeltsch when they were colleagues at Göttingen (205a). This he found, Wach continues, by his examination of the uniqueness of religious experience and by his demonstration of its constitutive categories. Thus Otto has shown that mystery is an objective quality (210b). This became possible because Otto saw that the basic problem of knowledge is not so much "How is knowledge possible?", but rather "How is experience possible?" (209a), a problem which required seeing the foundation work of Kant in a new light. Otto has demonstrated that "only the innermost, the idea of the holy itself, can be the measure for the value of a religion as religion"⁸⁰.

Wach at any rate thinks that Otto has a valid philosophical method which he has used to attack the psychologism of Feuerbach (and by implication Freud too) in ways not unlike the methods of the Austrian school of Husserl and Scheler (207b). At the same time by his deep analysis of religious experience, he has uncovered the basic "sense" of religion (207b-c) which is in its way parallel to the "sense" for morality established by Kant.

2.6.2 How Otto used 'Schematisation'

The term 'schematisation' (Schematisierung) was used by Kant,

and Otto claims to be re-using Kant's term for his own purposes. The context for this is the relationship between the rational and the non-rational, and therefore between the philosophical system and the phenomenology in Otto's thesis. Given Otto's own claim to be following Kant, it is not surprising that commentators have compared Otto's use of the term with that of Kant, and usually found it to be interesting, but not in the last resort the same or even a legitimate piece of appropriation. In analysing Otto's use they have kept closely to the rational schematising the non-rational, or even to the way the moral may be said to schematise the numinous, as this is clearly stated in Otto's writings. But it is not all so clear. A breakthrough comes, however, if the way Schleiermacher used schematisation is taken into account, and this offers a rather different picture, and one which is not only more helpful in understanding Otto, but one which suggests a real connection between religious phenomena and ultimate reality. This last is of central concern for religious education.

Kant's Schematisierung is to be discussed in this section first and comments on Otto's use of the term compared to this. Then attention will be turned to Schleiermacher and the way prepared for a closer application of schematisation in Chapter Five, section 5.5 of this Thesis.

In KFR Otto notes correctly that in Kant's Critique of Pure Reason the Categories are schematised by time and space which

alone make them patient of experience by rational beings. When the limitations are negated, then the speculative ideas are revealed in their pure metaphysical form. Kant's Schema serves to make perceptible the content of the abstract concepts, and at the same time to show up the categorial structure of what is perceived. In Otto's work, however, the Schema which he ascribes to Kant is used to demonstrate something quite different, and not in relation to time and space at all. Instead Otto applies his Schema to the rational and the non-rational. In Kant's system, time and space make the rational perceptible: in Otto's, the rational is supposed by schematisation to make the non-rational susceptible to reasoned analysis. What Otto has done is to use a device which will make something which is unclear susceptible to systematic consideration. In Kant pure causation is made perceptible when schematised by time, and for Otto pure intuited awareness of something real is schematised by the rational and brought within the field of philosophy. There is a sort of parallel. Geysler finds Otto's use of Kant's term "unfortunate" (nicht sehr glücklich, IoG 29).

Otto also uses the term 'ideogram' in ways which suggest a close connection if not identity with schematisation. The process may be called schematisation but the coded term or phrase which carries the schema may be called an ideogram. These two terms must be briefly compared, because with the ideogram, Otto seems to be on surer ground. It is all very

well for Feigel⁸¹ to complain that Otto has failed to establish the objectivity of what the ideogram purports to represent, but this is not the responsibility of the ideogram. Frick⁸² reemphasises Otto's point that no-one can appreciate the numinous in religion who has not had the experience. One must have had the experience in order to make sense of the ideogram. This means that an ideogram has a definite relationship to what it represents. On this point, P. Brunner⁸³, comparing Otto and James, notes that while in James analogies are somewhat arbitrary, for Otto the ideogram must be appropriate. Frick makes clear that this is essential and further that it must be possible to tell whether an ideogram is appropriate or not. Otto is definite on this point:

And that the schematism is a genuine one, and not a mere combination of analogies, may be distinctly seen from the fact that it does not fall to pieces, and cannot be cut out as the development of the consciousness of religious truth proceeds onwards and upwards, but is only recognized with greater definiteness and certainty. (IH 45; DH 61)

Thus the ideogram acts as a stimulus to recalling something of which the hearer is aware. In this, says Frick, it is like good poetry. But this is only the first part of the meaning of Otto's ideogram. What it recalls escapes us conceptually, yet not entirely, and thus it is no fantasy, not arbitrary, but disciplined and controlled. Because it is non-rational, it does not use ordinary logic and epistemology, but it has a kind of logic (Frick uses inverted

commas) of its own.

The chapter on Luther in DH deals in part with the connection between the moral-rational and the non-rational sacred in the complex idea of the holy⁸⁴.

Otto speaks of the ideogram at this place too (IH 107b; DH 132b): wrath, fire and fury are said to be "excellent ideograms" for the non-rational element of awe-fulness, the tremendum. The connection here is closely akin to the connection of schematisation, if not identical in effect, the only difference being that the ideogram is a word or brief phrase which acts either as an expression or else as a trigger for one particular aspect of the non-rational. The ideogram must be seen to be valid on the one hand; on the other it must be seen to be an ideogram and not a description. "If such an ideogram is taken as an adequate concept," writes Otto, "the result is anthropomorphism." (ibid.)

In an earlier passage on how the ideogram represents the relation between rational and non-rational Otto distinguishes deep joy in religious terms from deep joy in other contexts.

A deep joy may fill our minds without any clear realization upon our part of its source and the object to which it refers, though some such objective reference there must always be. But as attention is directed to it the obscure object becomes clearly identified in precise conceptual terms. Such an object cannot, then, be called, in our sense of the word, 'non-rational'. But it

is quite otherwise with religious 'bliss' and its essentially numinous aspect, the fascinans. Not the most concentrated attention can elucidate the object to which this state of mind refers, bringing it out of the impenetrable obscurity of feeling into the domain of the conceptual understanding. It remains purely a felt experience, only to be indicated symbolically by 'ideograms'. That is what we mean by saying it is non-rational. (IH 58c-59a; DH 76bc)

In his use of the ideogram Otto shows a further possibility when he discusses Plato's contribution to the rationalising of religion. Both Plato and Aristotle were invoked by medieval schoolmen, and in Plato's philosophy the deity has become The Idea of the Good, something purely rational and conceptual. But Plato knew this was too narrow in that, to quote Otto,

He (Plato) grasps the object of religion by quite different means than those of conceptual thinking, viz. by the 'ideograms' of myth, by 'enthusiasm' or inspiration, 'eros' or love, 'mania' or the divine frenzy. . . No one has enunciated more definitively than this master-thinker that God transcends all reason, in the sense that He is beyond the powers of our conceiving, not merely beyond the powers of comprehension. (IH 95ab; DH 117ab)

Here it is not a case of the rational schematising the non-rational, but rather that a form of words - in this case a Platonic myth - serves as an ideogram for an inexpressible idea. J P Reeder (v.inf.) is not the only critic who suspects that Otto simply equates the verbal with the conceptual with the rational. Yet the Plato example would be a case where he does not do this. At the start of the book, when Otto is first introducing the rational and the non-

rational, he wrote,

All language, in so far as it consists of words, purports to convey ideas or concepts; - that is what language means; - and the more clearly and unequivocally it does so, the better the language. And hence expositions of religious truth in language inevitably tend to stress the 'rational' attributes of God. (IH 2a; DH 2b)

John P. Reeder discusses Otto's application of schematisation within an article on the relation of the moral to the numinous⁸⁵. He introduces schematisation as Otto did in DH by quoting the context of the psychological theory of the Association of Feelings, and its parallel the Association of Ideas. This theory was a commonplace in pre-Freudian psychology, and is found in Schleiermacher and in William James. It is a not altogether convincing theory that one idea can give way to another according to a pattern without having an essential connection. Otto may well have picked this up from James (VRE 217) when he studied his psychology, but Geysler is not unreasonably critical (IoG 26).

Indeed the theory of Association does not seem at all helpful because Otto is trying to say that there is an a priori link between the schema and the thing schematised which is more than an analogy. Frick's remarks on the ideogram clarified that relationship, and it will help if they can be applied to this too. Reeder accepts that the way ideograms and schematisation work are the same (Reeder 266b), although he earlier thought they might be contrasted (265b), but that was not his considered view.

Otto gives his own summary of how Kant's use of this device is as a "necessary connexion" "according to principles of true inward affinity and cohesion" (IH 45a; nach Prinzipien innerer wesensmäßiger Zusammengehörigkeit DH 61a).

An instance of a connexion of this latter kind - an example, indeed, of an inner a priori principle - is (following the theory of Kant) the connexion of the category of causality with its temporal 'schema', the temporal sequence of two successive events, which by being brought into connexion with the category of causality is known and recognised as a causal relation of the two . . . The fact the two belong together is here a necessity of our reason. On the basis of such a necessity the temporal sequence 'schematises' the category (IH 45b; DH 61ab)

The instance of cause and effect is a particularly important one. David Hume appealed to an extreme form of empiricism to deny the validity of causation, and it is known that Kant wished to counter him by finding in reason arguments to invalidate Hume's extreme scepticism. Schematisation provides such an argument, because the purely rational category of cause and effect which is admittedly not perceptible by purely empirical sensation, is accessible to reason as a pure a priori. Once the necessary connection of this rational concept with temporal succession is brought out, then the succession acts as a schema to the rational category to give us cause and effect. It must of course be emphasised that this connection between succession and category is a necessary one, because any suggestion of chance coincidence would support the scepticism of Hume.

Otto now presents his own version of schematisation in a passage that follows directly the previous citation:

Now the relation of the rational to the non-rational element in the idea of the holy or sacred is just such a one of 'schematization', and the non-rational numinous fact, schematized by the rational concepts we have suggested above, yields us the complex category of 'holy' itself, richly charged and complete in its fullest meaning (IH 45c; ergibt uns die satte und volle Komplex-Kategorie des Heiligen selbst im Vollsinn, DH 61b)

It is a little confusing that Otto uses the word Kategorie to mean something quite different from what in Kant has become a technical term for the twelve purely rational, simple and a priori Categories. The confusion is further compounded when it is seen that in Kant a temporal succession which can be experienced schematises a distinct and rational concept, while for Otto it is the clear, rational concept (e.g. "spirit, reason, purpose, good will, supreme power, unity, selfhood" IH 1ab; DH 1ab) which schematises the non-conceptual, indistinct and non-rational which is the numinous. Many commentators have noted this contrast⁸⁶.

Has Otto just "made a grab" for Kant's term (so Troeltsch) or is there in fact a similarity which could turn out to be valid and instructive? Two points can be made in Otto's favour, although Otto does not himself explicitly make them. The first concerns the range of the factors which provide the schema. Succession in time is not exclusively bound up with causality but can be found in many other contexts. Similarly

Otto's list of rational ideas such as reason, purpose and power have many applications apart from the holy. The necessary link between moral and sacred is an additional a priori factor. The second similarity is connected with these applications in that examples can be found empirically both of succession in time and of cases which exhibit power, purpose and reason. Thus there is a closely parallel connection between what is readily accessible and that which is more obscure: viz. temporal succession with the category of causation in one case, and power and purpose with the numinous in the other. In both cases that which is schematised - for Kant causation and for Otto the numinous - is accessible immediately to human reason as pure a priori, in the one case as a pure and rational concept, in the other as a non-conceptual presentiment.

After a lengthy consideration of Kant's use of schematisation, and several leading authorities on the subject, the reader is left with the feeling that it is at best ambiguous. Reeder also points out that Kant used the same terms for the process and the result of schematising. Perhaps Otto can be forgiven, therefore, for applying his own interpretation. There can be little doubt that Otto is using Kant's term in a different way. It is less clear how far he thought he was changing it.

For both Kant and Otto it is necessary to see and to stress the necessary connection between schema and what is

schematised. Otto says of the rational attributes in religion:

They are 'essential' (and not merely 'accidental') attributes of that subject, but they are also, it is important to notice, synthetic essential attributes. That is to say, we have to predicate them of a subject which they qualify, but which in its deeper essence is not, nor indeed can be, comprehended in them. (IH 2b; DH 2b)

Of the rational concepts which schematise the sacred, Otto gives most attention to the moral, the concepts of good, absolute goodness.

But this 'holy' then represents the gradual shaping and filling in with ethical meaning, or what we shall call the 'schematization', of what was a unique original feeling-response, which can be in itself ethically neutral and claims consideration in its own right. (IH 6b; DH 6bc)

The connection itself is not only essential, but also a priori as Otto explains later on.

. . . not only the rational but also the non-rational elements of the complex category of 'holiness' are a priori elements . . . But the same a priori character belongs, in the third place, to the connexion of the rational and the non-rational elements in religion, their inward and necessary union. (IH 136a; DH 165ab)

Commentators connect Otto's use of Schema and Schematisation with Kant, and rightly so as he himself makes this derivation explicit. But the link is also found in Schleiermacher, and this use of the term appears closer to that of Otto. As Otto edited the Reden early in his scholarly career, the likelihood of influence is strong.

In the third Speech, that on education for religion, Schleiermacher suggests that religion can only be felt and contemplated through intuition of the universe, that is through reflection on natural phenomena in the first instance.

I know that every religion whose schematism was either the heavens or organic nature proceeded from the intuition of the world. Polytheistic Egypt was for a long time the most perfect guardian of this disposition in which - it can at least be surmised - the purest intuition of the original infinite and living being may have wandered in humble toleration close beside the darkest superstition and most absurd mythology. (Cr. 157c-158a: R.168)

The next stage allows art to schematise the sense or awareness of the divine. It appears here that Schleiermacher means that the phenomena of religion, whether natural phenomena or man-made artefacts, are the schematism for religion itself, which must remain at least partly hidden and only accessible to feeling in the sense discussed earlier. This is a little clearer, perhaps, in a passage a few pages earlier:

In our relationship to this world there are certain transitions into the infinite, vistas that are hewn through, before which each person is led so that his sense might find the way to the universe and upon whose sight feelings are stimulated that, to be sure, are not immediately religion, but that are, if I may say so, a schematism of the same. (Cr. 150a; R.153)

Now it seems to be the feelings stirred by the universe which schematise the true feelings of religion, but it is almost certainly a mistake to try to analyse Schleiermacher's use of

schematism so precisely. In a footnote Crouter adds, "Schleiermacher makes free use of the Kantian term "schematism" . . . it is difficult to see how, on Kant's terms, religion could constitute a schema." (Cr.150n) Yet Schleiermacher does not say that religion is a schema for something else, but that the phenomena can be a schema for religion.

This is very different, but has with it two implications. The first is that, as Otto made clear, it is vital if schematisation is to work that there be an essential and not an arbitrary connection between schema and what is schematised. The second is to suggest that it is possible to develop an understanding, and not an entirely rational understanding of religion by consideration of the phenomena of religion. Here consideration includes study, discussion, reflection and any means which help towards clarification. These methods are taken up again in Chapter Five of this Thesis. Thus consideration of Schleiermacher's use of schematism rather than Kant's suggests another and an important possibility for understanding Otto's use of the term.

Otto also shows that schematisation has a part to play in practical terms. The main clue comes at the end of an important chapter in DH on "Analogies and Associated Feelings"⁸⁷. To illustrate the importance of schematisation Otto invokes two lengthy analogies. The first is the erotic,

in which ordinary affections stand for the rational in love which serves to schematise the sex instinct, which is non-rational, or, as Otto hastens to add, below the rational. This is in contrast to the numinous which is above all reason (IH 46-47; DH 61-63). The second analogy is "the state of mind induced in us by a song set to music" (IH 47c; DH 63c). Programme music apart, in a song the words express the rational and the music the non-rational, and both belong together. Programme music, however, presents "a musical 'rationalization' in the bad sense" because it implies that "the inner content of music is not - as in fact it is - something deep and mysterious" (IH 48c; DH 64b). But the basic point is that, as in religion, so in music, the rational serves to schematise the non-rational to make a composite whole. The rational also helps us to consider and reflect on the non-rational, as is suggested in the following words:

We can only succeed in very partial and fragmentary fashion in 'schematizing' the non-rational factor in music by means of familiar incidents of human experience. (IH 49a; DH 64c)

This suggestion is then greatly expanded and clarified in the chapters on Means of Expression of the Numinous (IH IX; DH 11), and The Earliest Manifestations (IH XV; DH 17), and The Cruder Phases (IH XVI; DH 18). Manifestations which also act as triggers relate to the triggers for ecstasy in Laski's book as discussed in Chapter Four, and the sequence of development of numinous consciousness from earliest

manifestations and its cruder phases might also be unpacked in relation to religious education if only Otto were a little more systematic.

2.7 Indian Writings

Otto's Indian writings form a characteristic aspect of his work, and in this they do not represent a new departure. Two things can be noted at the outset which link in with his previous work. One of these is the stress on the numinous as non-rational which is salient for Otto in manifestations of Indian religions, and the other is the note of inwardness in that strain of mysticism which centres on the 'god within.' Otto certainly regarded Indian forms of religion as important manifestations of the holy in both rational and non-rational forms, but he chose to emphasise the non-rational. In two of his books he also compares aspects of Hindu religion with corresponding aspects of Christianity, in both cases pointing out essential contrasts as well as parallels.

Das Heilige⁸⁸ in the first edition had just one illustration. Its strangeness to Western European eyes forces it on the reader's attention: it is the fearsome form of the Bengali goddess Durga, black-faced, with many teeth, and holding a severed head in one of her four hands. Yet in Bengal she is first and foremost the goddess of love, the mother, refuge and security. Apart from illustrating both the tremendum and the fascinans, the picture was no doubt intended to make an impression of stark irrationality.

Otto travelled to India for the first time in the autumn of 1911, and visited Karachi, Lahore, Calcutta and Orissa, before going on to Burma, Japan and China⁸⁹. But he had begun his studies of India's religious Weltanschauung even before this, as is shown by a brief review published in ThLZ during 1911 of ten books related to oriental religions⁹⁰.

From material collected on this and a second visit in 1927-8, as well as a fairly detailed study of Sanskrit texts, Otto gave two lecture series outside Germany. At Oberlin College, Ohio, USA, he gave the Haskell lectures (Winter 1923-4) on Western and Eastern mysticism. These were written up as West-östliche Mystik (1926)⁹¹. In 1926, at the invitation of Birger Forell, who became his travelling companion for the last great journey, Otto gave lectures at Uppsala on Ramanuja and Indian Bhakti religion. These lectures were the basis for Die Gnadenreligion Indiens und das Christentum. (1930)⁹²

In addition he translated several Sanskrit texts into German, some for the first time, and wrote a number of articles. He also translated and published with a short introduction the address given by Rabindranath Tagore at Marburg in the summer of 1930⁹³.

In DH Otto had attempted to discuss in some detail the non-rational in religion. In MEW he was able to develop this. In particular, mysticism appeared to him to represent religious experience par excellence.

Otto writes:

Mysticism enters into religious experience in the measure that religious feeling surpasses its rational content, that is, as I have said elsewhere, to the extent to which its hidden, non-rational, numinous elements predominate and determine the emotional life. (MEW 141a; WöM 164a)

When Otto came to study Sanskrit scriptures, and especially the writings of Sankara (Vedantist of the advaita school, 9th century AD), he was struck by the very close parallels and similarities in idea and in language to the writings of Eckhart in spite of the vast differences in religion, culture, time and space between these two mystics.

After acknowledging that mysticism of any provenance has something generally in common, Otto draws out differences. In the first section of WöM Otto shows that both Eckhart and Sankara were seeking after knowledge rather than emotion, and he quotes a large number of linguistic and conceptual similarities (or even identical expressions, once translated out of Latin or *Mittelhochdeutsch* (mhd) and Sanskrit)⁹⁴. In the last section of the book he deals with differences, and these are important. Otto was in no sense a syncretist, and he was deeply conscious of the differences between religions.

Otto's sense of the essence of a religion was noted by some of his contemporaries⁹⁵. This sense, if it is admitted, has links with one of the two ways of knowing noted in the section on Schleiermacher in Chapter Three, as it is an



example of starting from the essence in contrast to the way that starts from the outside. As J W Hauer, reviewing WÖM in CW 1929, pointed out, Otto has a feel for religion and for particular religions. His sensus numinis is not general or vague, and he is able to find his way to the centre (Zentrum) of Sankara's doctrine as well as that of Eckhart. It is as if he is able to feel out the differences. The similarities are close, striking and real, but they have not been arrived at by the same route. The religious background and history in each case is very different, and Otto explains this closeness in terms of convergence, because for both mystics their doctrines are based on deep religious experience. Experience of the numinous has brought them close, not the logic of their philosophy and theology.

Otto is aware that it is not possible to analyse fully mystical experience and that it is only possible to compare the way it is expressed. Hence the similarity, even identity, in the expressions used. But he does not just record them. One of Otto's greatest contributions to the study of religion is his ability to reflect. It is perhaps this which has marked him out and which illustrates his own closeness to the mystics.

In a strange way the whole religious spirit of India seems to echo the conviction and experience from which Otto had started. The god within, at its extreme the Upanishadic identity of Brahman and Atman, expressed for Otto from an

alien and non-Christian culture the testimonium spiritus sancti internum which he had found in Luther.

This can be illustrated from an Advent music video shown on BBC 2 on the 13th December 1992. Called "The Cry of Mary" it sets the music of Francis Grier to scenes of the Bengali countryside. Grier, who knows India well, makes his theme the God within, movingly expressed by the figure of the mother-to-be who is Mary in the weeks before the birth. Grier remarks that if you ask a group of Indian children where God is, the Christians will point upwards, but the Hindu children will point to their own hearts. This can be seen in the Hindu environment again and again, manifestations of divinity recognised in nature, in good deeds, in holy persons, in offerings and in animals.

The Soul

Otto's descriptive analysis in DH was made possible because he was able to discuss the impression which the numinous leaves on the psyche. The work of God in the soul is hidden.

Quoting from Eckhart:

Now you will ask: How does God work without an image in the depth and essence of the soul? That I cannot know. (MEW 25c; WöM 29-30; Büttner vol.I, p.40).

"The numinous nature of the soul" is mentioned (MEW 143b; WöM 167a). "We maintain that in mysticism there are indeed strong primal impulses working in the human soul" (MEW xvia;

WöM 2ab). The work of God can even be expressed as "the birth (Eingeburt) of God himself in the depths of the soul". (MEW 32 footnote; incorporated into the text of WöM 37-38).

But eternal truth in the soul is not the private possession of any individual (MEW 72c). It is rather an enduring something which realises itself on occasion in the empirical consciousness, and Otto quotes from Augustine:

In ipso primo ictu, quo velut corruscatione perstringeris, cum dicitur "veritas," mane, si potes.

And as Augustine here indicates that the realisation of the significance of the concept "Truth" comes as a flash of lightning, so Eckhart from time to time implies the same with regard to the knowledge that God is one's own being. (MEW 34c; WöM 40a)

This knowledge is "unprovable because self-evident, needing no proof, because itself giving to all proof the ground of possibility." (MEW 72b; WöM 85a). If this statement were in DH it would support the a priori basis of the numinous. It is this element which speaks directly to the reader, or listener in the case of Eckhart's preaching "causing the truths proclaimed to blossom in the very soul of the reader through the creative power of his language." (MEW 36c; WöM 41b). The concentration on salvation rather than knowledge is behind Eckhart's love of life, and it is from this that "he derives his expression 'the budding and blossoming' of God in the ground of the soul." (MEW 177a; WöM 205a)

For him the soul is a counterpart and image of the Godhead

(MEW 205-6; WÖM 239-240). Yet precisely here Otto finds one of the differences between the two masters:

Sankara knows the atman in us, but this atman is not the soul in the Christian and Eckhartian sense: it is not "soul" as identical with "Gemüt," infinitely rich in life and depth, a place of ever fuller experience . . . (MEW 206b; WÖM 240bc)

Sankara's soul-mysticism is not Gemütsmystik⁹⁶ (*ibid.*)

With Eckhart the "soul," das Gemüte, the inner citadel, the spark, is more profound, tender and emotional in experience (gefühlsmäßiger, gemütvoller bestimmt) than the inward atman of Sankara. There is nothing of the Seelenvoll (fullness of spirit) about Sankara's atman. (MEW 78c; WÖM 91c)

It is plain that there can be no mediator between God and the soul. No priest or sacrament is needed, and this thought goes straight back to Otto's reading of Luther in AHG, and is repeated in different ways in KFR and DH.

Popular religion

Popular religion is the religion of devotion, love and grace brought out in music, liturgy, art and scripture, as amply illustrated in DH. Eckhart, himself a mystic master, was also a popular Dominican preacher in the vernacular when he was based in the Rhineland. In Eckhart Otto found a return to the roots of religion which answered to the experience of the later pietist movement in which Otto had been brought up. Eckhart's scholarly background, albeit still clad in the garb of medieval scholasticism, helped Otto to seek a deeply

rational basis (in the sense of reason beyond reason already referred to), rather than the evanescence of emotions.

Otto's book on Bhakti religion has four chapters. The third opens with these words:

There is another thing even more important than this clear and definite course of reasoning regarding God. It is that here we are dealing with a genuine religion and religion of experience. Religion is here no mere fringe of sentiment furnishing a border to the rest of our life, but is conceived as the true meaning of life itself. (IRG 44; GRIC 29)

This underlines the desire of the faithful for salvation and experience of salvation in religions of East and West.

The last chapter of GRIC brings out Otto's methodology. A group of well-intentioned Christians had proposed an inter-faith service in which believers of all the theistic faiths might unite in saying the Lord's Prayer (IRG 65; GRIC 45). Otto protests. However close the outward and even linguistic similarities, to get to grips with a religion one must seek its centre, to get what Otto calls the feel of a religion.

No matter that adherents of various theistic faith traditions subscribe to the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God, the Lord's Prayer remains a Christian prayer, deeply rooted in the prophetic tradition of Jesus and the Hebrew prophets. The phrase "Thy Kingdom come" includes an understanding of judgement which is not at home in Hindu

tradition (66c-70), as Otto understood it. Although Christian mystical theology speaks of the Godhead far removed from the usual attributes of the personal God, this divinity is not unconcerned with the changes and chances of the world (70-72).

Christianity sets a positive value on the world, which at the coming of Christ will be transformed and transfigured into the Kingdom (72). This is in strongest contrast to the extreme monism of Sankara who attributes to the world neither value nor reality, and contrasts also with the doctrine of Ramanuja for whom the world is God's plaything. There is an ethical concern too, and Otto quotes from the First Epistle of John (IV.20) to stress that God is concerned with the Christian's relationship to the neighbour. A further difference is that Christianity is centred on history (85). Another contrast lies at the heart of salvation. The Christian speaks of being redeemed from sin and guilt: the Hindu from bondage to the material world.

These contrasts represent a "changed axis." (87). J. Wach, who had been one of Otto's students, lays emphasis on this expression, "change of axis". The two religions are not totally different, and they cannot be inasmuch as both relate to the holy, and indeed have much in common, but they are centred quite differently, like different wheels on different axles, albeit rotating in the same direction. Hauer stresses Otto's "sense" for the essence of each religion in drawing

attention "auf die eigentümliche Atmosphäre, die Tonfarbe, den Eigengeruch der Erscheinungen."⁹⁷

In MEW also the differences become clear. Otto writes,

But here too, if one knows how to penetrate to the inmost heart, the spirit and therefore the essence of experience is not the same. Christ is not at bottom, the same as Krishna. Just as little is mysticism "the same" in the East and in the West; Christian mysticism is not Indian mysticism, but maintains its distinctive character, clearly explicable by the ground from which it rises. (MEW 165c)

For Eckhart, God is the living and dynamic God. God is not a static being, but a living process (170c) as is shown in the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. God is life and God gives life, and God's joy in life Eckhart compares to the joy of a galloping horse:

It is like a horse turned loose in a lush meadow giving vent to his horse nature by galloping full-tilt about the field: he enjoys it and it is his nature. And just in the same way God's joy and satisfaction in His likes finds vent in his pouring out his entire nature and His being into this likeness. (MEW 172a)

Otto describes Eckhart as the "Gothic man" who strives after God. The allusion is to Gothic architecture whose soaring arches aspire to heaven (184). Yet this is not the path of works, but the way of transcendent prayer and "numinous rapture" (185bc).

Otto sums up:

It must be added that apart from the doctrine of Justification, Eckhart, with his mystical ontology, theology, soul-doctrine and ethics, has in view religious and spiritual facts which stripped of their mystical clothing, prove to be fundamental facts of religious experience. These are recognized by him with a clarity and penetration which is rarely found. This is particularly true of his teaching with regard to the ground of the soul. (MEW 204b; WöM 237-8)

The last chapter of MEW brings in the Christian understanding of agape. And it is true that there is a special tradition of Western Christian mystics for whom the active, involved life seems to arise as an essential consequence of their close spiritual company with God. One may instance Eckhart himself, his busy pastoral responsibilities and his popular preaching⁹⁸. Then there is St Teresa of Avila whose mystical writings are a classic and refer to her ceaseless activity in reforming, administering, and founding new religious houses. Most remarkable of all, perhaps, is St Catherine of Siena, who worked it seems tirelessly in the hospital beside the cathedral, and still made time for mystic prayer.

Hauer concludes his review of WöM: "This book points beyond Das Heilige, or perhaps it would be better to say it develops what was contained in the earlier book. WöM belongs very closely with DH, and if it sometimes conflicts with DH or even with itself, this is only proof that it is no "cleverly-worked book" ("ausgeklügelt Buch") but communicates life with its contradictions - and for that we are grateful to Otto."⁹⁹

2.8 Liturgical proposals and experiments

A number of articles and books illustrate Otto's interest in liturgical reform in the 1920s. Particular mention may be made of Zur Erneuerung und Ausgestaltung des Gottesdienstes¹⁰⁰, and Chorgebete für Schule, Kirche und Hausandacht¹⁰¹. How these were put into practice is described by an American who visited Marburg at the time¹⁰². Otto had his ideas put into practice in a chapel in Marburg (now the University Church). Meland also devotes a chapter to Heiler¹⁰³. The contrast is interesting. Heiler had been a Roman Catholic and became a Lutheran. He saw the Lutheran Church as preserving among Protestants the catholic sacraments, and therefore considered Lutheranism to be the true bridge church for the ecumenical reconciliation of Christians. In another chapel in Marburg, St Michael's chapel, Heiler put his ideas into practice. At the same time Otto was trying out his reforms. Otto's proposals had two roots. One was the Anglican liturgical tradition which had impressed him in England, especially responsorial psalms. The other, more obviously relevant to this thesis, derived from the Quaker practice of silence. Otto had been impressed by this in America.

Otto wrote about this in "Schweigender Dienst" an essay printed in ANB¹⁰⁴. He notes three uses of silence in worship:

Devotional Silence may have a threefold character. There is the numinous silence of

Sacrament, the silence of Waiting, and the silence of Union or Fellowship. (IH 211a)

The third silence is the completion of the waiting and the sacramental silences. (IH 212b)

In Marburg today, the High Church Movement holds its services in the University Church, and the Michaelis chapel is used only occasionally. There remains no successor to Otto's liturgical innovations.

2.9 Writing on Ethics

Otto had been invited to give the 1933 Gifford Lectures in Glasgow¹⁰⁵, but had to ask for postponement because of illness. In the event he was never able to give them. He had already published a number of articles in this field and had given some lecture series in the 1920s, as well as leaving some further notes, so it is possible to have a good idea of the way his work was leading. In DH Otto had distinguished the moral from the numinous, and yet had shown that they belong together by an a priori bond as rational-moral schematises the non-rational-numinous. His work on sin and guilt follows from this.

Otto was engaged on working out his ideas on ethics during his last years, when he also published his last book Reich Gottes und Menschensohn (1934)¹⁰⁶. In this book he follows Weiss and A. Schweitzer in stressing the eschatological significance of Jesus, and, as previously in DH, numinous

aspects of his ministry. Davidson quotes the phrase "the nimbus of the numinous surrounded Jesus."¹⁰⁷

Five articles, whose substance was to have been incorporated into the Gifford Lectures, appeared in journals in Otto's lifetime, but a sixth, with the title intended for the whole series "Autonomie der Werte und Theonomie", was first published in 1940 in a book edited by Otto's friend Theodor Siegfried, together with a note (Nachwort) by Siegfried¹⁰⁸.

This important paper connects related issues which can be traced through Otto's work over nearly forty years. The immediate stimulus was the appearance of Nikolai Hartmann's Ethik. The effect on Otto was not unlike that produced by Wilhelm Wundt in 1910, and Otto studied Hartmann's book closely, even taking it (with very few other books) to the clinic where he spent his last sad weeks after his fall. These six essays, together with an introduction and scholarly notes by Jack Stewart Boozer, appeared in print under the title Aufsätze zur Ethik in 1981¹⁰⁹.

Other papers exist in manuscript or note form among Otto's papers, and H-W Schütte lists the titles of six, but considers them beyond recovery (müssen als verschollen gelten)¹¹⁰. Other writings relevant to ethics have been studied by Reinhard Schinzer. These are in Otto's hand for lectures in dogmatics given in the Summer Semester 1927, together with some earlier notes for lectures given over two

semesters a little earlier, in SS 1924 and WS 1924-5.¹¹¹

Schinzer begins by relating Otto's understanding of worth to DH. The "Kontrastharmonie" between tremendum and fascinans has captivated the attention of too many readers, while the most important moment, according to Schinzer, is the Augustum. The Augustum is the holy as the highest value and the source of all values (Schinzer p.1). Study of these two lecture series has convinced Schinzer that Otto's central concern is neither knowledge nor being, but value.

The first essay in Boozer's collection is "Wert, Würde und Recht", originally published in 1931¹¹², and it makes the usual distinction between pleasure and value, in that pleasure must be subjective "for someone", but value is objective, whether anyone actually values it or not (Boozer 69-70). Otto goes on to ask the question whether "value for me" is not really a secondary consideration, to which the primary is my own value, what am I there for? (Boozer 70a). This links with DH and the quotation from James: "I felt I was if possible the less real of the two." Earlier in the same article, Otto uses a similar idea over the question of Good and Evil: "That people are interested in this question is the least part of the matter. It is not that someone puts the question out of interest: the question presents itself." Man does not need to ask this question. "He does not ask, he feels himself asked: Is that "good" that you have done? Are you not bothered about "good" and "evil"?" (Boozer 58b & c).

The second emphasis deriving also from the Augustum is the nature of God. God is the God who saves. Knowing God is not for the sake of knowledge as such, but for salvation (Schinzer p.3-4). This supports Otto's assertions in WöM written in these same years. Schinzer also finds in these lectures stress on religious experience (Schinzer 5, 27 etc), as well as problems to be discussed in the context of Boozer's collection, notably autonomy and heteronomy (Schinzer 12-13), the aesthetic (19-20), and holiness as more than goodness (p.10ff).

In his introduction Boozer remarks that there is a distance between the posthumous piece, "Autonomie der Werte und Theonomie", and the other five, in that "Autonomie" shows a more obviously christian-ethical standpoint (Boozer 25a). This is because it tackles directly the relationship between God's will and the Good as an independent standard, as the title indicates. But it is not far below the surface in all of them, and it could be said that the problem is touched on in Otto's writing of all dates. In all six pieces Otto's basic position hinges on the Holy as value, even as supreme value (Boozer 223a). Thus religious (christian) ethics includes secular ethics, but also more. Boozer summarises, with particular reference to "Das Gefühl der Verantwortlichkeit" (4. in the series), as follows:

The following conclusions can be drawn about his religious-christian ethics: 1. Guilt and sin are each separate and unique in quality, albeit related to each other. 2. Guilt cannot include

sin, but sin can include guilt. 3. All human beings have feelings of guilt. 4. All human beings have the capacity to feel sin, but feelings of sin are not realised in all cases, and are not in fact felt by all human beings. 5. The fundamental and straightforward nature of the human relationship to what is real and true produces both guilt and sin. 6. A full understanding of sin includes that of guilt with its special quality unimpaired, but sin also includes qualities which go beyond guilt. (Boozer 25c)

This is already familiar from Otto's other writings, as well as the lectures which Schinzer studied. It can also be derived from DH, and in essays which were published as appendices to some editions of DH, then separately as Sünde und Urschulde und andere Aufsätze zur Theologie and Das Gefühl des Überweltlichen (both 1932)¹¹³.

Davidson asserts that Otto has made a fundamental error here in claiming "a rigid separation" between the sacred (Davidson's word for the non-rational aspect of the holy) and the good, "the most serious defect."¹¹⁴ Davidson has exaggerated in claiming "a rigid separation" but it seems that Otto has used imprecision to try and have the relationship both ways: to maintain that morality is separate from the sacred in that the numinous can be found without the good, as in Chapter XI of the Bhagavad Gita¹¹⁵, and also that the moral is contained in the holy, and serves to make the numinous accessible to man by schematisation.

Otto addresses Hartmann's "Antinomies" of which the principal

one is the autonomy of the good in and for itself as against theonomy, the antinomy between the law of morality and God's will. This, says Otto, "has been known since ancient times, has been unsolved since ancient times, and in my opinion is in principle insoluble for human thought . ." (Boozer 219a).

Hartmann stresses the total autonomy of ethical value, absolute and a priori, without which it does not deserve the name. Otto replies:

Let us first consider the following. Our theoreticians of value are excellent phenomenologists and respect what Goethe called a primal phenomenon (Urphänomen). These primal phenomena include also the feeling of the holy (which theoreticians of value must of course consider as a feeling of value), and its reality as at least an actual experience cannot be doubted. We may say further: if with remarkable absence of prejudice in favour of naturalistic judgements our theoreticians of value open themselves with equal seriousness to the testimony often quite gentle and quiet of our often quite obscure feelings of value, which appear what is more according to their own theory in such stark contrasts, even antinomies, and recognise here the foundations of their scientific knowledge, they will have to take seriously such primeval and widespread feelings of value like that of the holy. (from "Autonomie" in Boozer 219c)

Yet Otto is aware that the feeling for the holy is not a legitimate starting point for a bare treatment of ethics (Boozer 220a). But it does raise the subject of the relationship between the holy and the moral, and at the level of basic awareness a priori.

In the third article of Boozer's book, "Das Schuldgefühl und seine Implikationen" (published 1931¹¹⁶), Otto writes at length about feeling: "the word feeling . . . does not mean an emotion, but a kind of knowing, indeed a kind of non-conceptual and preconceptual but totally direct kind of knowing."¹¹⁷ A little earlier in a long footnote Otto goes into still more detail (Boozer 260-261)¹¹⁸.

In another article, "Wertgesetz und Autonomie" the second in Boozer¹¹⁹, Otto speaks of Desiderata as the goals of human efforts, ideals of feeling and heart (die Ideale des Gefühls und des Gemütes), in that we become sensitive to these as ideals before they become demands (Postulata) (Boozer 117a). Otto develops this when he speaks of "making sense" of circumstances. Making sense can be rational, but it can alternatively consist of a non-conceptual understanding, understanding by feeling, as when notes seem to arrange themselves into a tune (Boozer 120a). Thus we can have a presentiment of sense (Sinnerahmen) which goes further than knowing sense (Sinnerkenntnis), in that we feel more sure than we can know (121c).

2.10 Last conversations

Although much of DH is about arousing a sense of the numinous, apart from part of the Chapter on 'Means of Expression of the Numinous' Otto did not give much attention to the need to educate others. But in a book published in 1925¹²⁰ he writes of the church's need to re-educate the

bulk of its members, who are still the industrial working class. Although he does not go into details it is clear that he expects such groups to be allowed to set their own agendas and to be enabled to take part in decision-making. While the central message of Christianity is not in question, Otto calls on the church to open its naive certainties for discussion. He argues that if Christianity is to be relevant to the people, they must themselves decide what really is relevant to their interests and their needs. It is significant that Otto is looking forward to changes at a time when others were looking back with regret to the past, the secure days when German protestantism enjoyed the support of "the pious Hohenzollerns" and the princes.¹²¹

Other writings take further Otto's hopes for a style of education which respects and indeed requires the experiential participation of students. Karl Küssner's conversations with Otto, published as Rudolf Otto Verantwortliche Lebensgestaltung¹²², deserve special mention because the sharing of feelings and experiences among a group is stressed in order to clarify them and by this means to appreciate their significance. The conversations, many of them while walking through the woods and fields round Marburg, or sitting by the camp fire in front of a forest hut, range over a number of social and moral issues. But interesting as they are, they have about them something of the air of last conversations.

This Chapter has given an outline of Otto's thinking and highlighted aspects which are relevant to religious education. But this has not been in an eclectic way, because the main sinews of his thought, the essential bond between the essence of religion and the phenomena, a bond which presupposes the a priori and is indicated by schematisation, are also essential to the task. The next Chapter takes this a stage further, not simply in discussing the sources for Otto's thought, but by suggesting that an understanding of Otto makes some of those who inspired him also available to students of the late twentieth century.

1. S. Holm, 'Apriori und Urphänomen bei Rudolf Otto' in Ernst Benz Rudolf Ottos Bedeutung für die Religionswissenschaft und die Theologie heute, Leiden 1971, pp.70-83.
2. David Bastow 'Otto and Numinous Experience' in Religious Studies, vol.12, pp.159-176, (1976).
3. Letter of 5.3.1919, in the Otto Nachlaß, Marburg, Hs 797:794 - accessible in Schütte (1969) pp.139-142.
4. 1984, The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill and London.
5. Almond takes this further in his article Almond 1983.
6. unfolding, Entwicklung, or development in the sense of unfolding, is a favourite word with Otto.
7. Göttingen 1898, cited as AHG.
8. Also quoted by H. Frick in his introduction to the Marburg Festgruß of 1931 (pp.VI-VII), and again in an article by H. Jungheinrich in Freies Christentum March 1987, pp.24-28.
9. IH 99-100; DH 123
10. AHG 85-89
11. AHG 1-3
12. AHG 16, 17, 29. 38, 41 etc.
13. AHG 30
14. AHG 27, 46.
15. AHG eg 101, 105.
16. AHG 100.
17. AHG 23.
18. AHG 27.
19. Über die Religion: Reden an die Gebildeten unter ihren Verächtern, Göttingen, 1899 (first edition).
20. p. VIII
21. p. IX
22. p. IX
23. (1) CW 1903 cols. 506-512, and (2) SU 1932 pp.123-139

24. p. 173 in the 1899 edition
25. p. 178 in the 1899 edition
26. DH p.6
27. Tübingen, 1904, second edition 1929, cited as NRW; ET = Naturalism and Religion, cited as NaR.
28. Theologische Rundschau 1902 pp.483-496
29. Darwinismus und Religion, Abhandlungen der Fries'schen Schule, NF vol.3, Göttingen 1909
30. SU 1932 pp.190-225
31. CW 1930, cols. 4-11, 113-119
32. NaR p.2; NRW p.2
33. SU S.203; RE p.125
34. SU S.204; RE p.125
35. NaR p.10; NRW S.8
36. SU S.197 (not in RE)
37. RE p.132-3; SU S.211-2; cf.PR p.88-9
38. "Grundsätzliches" (NaR "Fundamental Principles")
39. NRW S.27
40. SU S.213; RE p.133
41. NRW S.288; NaR p.370
42. In Theologische Rundschau XIII, Jg.7, 8. Heft, 1910, pp.251-275 and 293-305, Otto then enlarged it and reprinted it first in Aufsätze das Numinose betreffend (Gotha 1923), and then in Das Gefühl des Überweltlichen (München, 1932), having revised the article in the light of Das Heilige. Part of Wundt's chapter is reprinted in C. 57-75, and Otto's reply (as in GU) C. 257-301.
43. Tylor's Primitive Culture: researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Language, Art and Custom was published in London in 1871 and at once became the standard text on anthropology. A smaller volume entitled Anthropology came out in 1881.
44. CW 1930 cols.6-7
45. Rede 2, Cr.102c; R.52

46. cf. WöM 383

47. English translation by Humphrey Palmer, 2 vols, Oxford, Blackwells 1971.

48. Nelson wants to answer the question: How is the theory of knowledge possible? In his short life Nelson wrote much on this subject and with persuasive clarity. (L. Nelson Die Unmöglichkeit der Erkenntnistheorie (a lecture originally given to a conference in Bologna), Göttingen, 1911.) He claims that epistemology leads to an infinite regress because it demands that every judgement or statement be supported by others. A theory like this must be impossible. We do, however, know things, so while it is impossible to have complete theory of knowledge, the possibility of knowing is simply a fact. "I do not claim that the theory is impossible in order to conclude that knowledge is impossible, but I claim that this sceptical conclusion is simply the result of the theory." "We might as well claim that philology is impossible on the grounds that it is inadmissible to speak about speech." (op.cit. pp. 17, 21, 22.) So, as we are confronted by simple facts, the criterion of truth lies in direct cognition, that is a form of knowledge which is not mediated through other judgements, arguments, statements or acts of cognition. Now to show that this source of knowledge exists, it would be inadmissible to argue from it like a geometrical theorem because that would beg the question. It is not just given to us: we have got to look for it. (op.cit. 24-5, 33.) "In order to present this basis, that is in order to lead metaphysical statements back to their foundation in immediate cognition, we have got to demonstrate this unmediated cognition artificially, that means to make it the object of a psychological investigation." This last remark highlights criticism which was later aimed at Otto.

49. PR 26b, note; KFR 11c, Anmerkung

50. Ansgar Paus, Religiöser Erkenntnisgrund, Leiden 1966. The quotation is on p.31c, note 43.

51. E. F. Apelt Metaphysik, hg. von Rudolf Otto, Halle 1910, IX.

52. The similarity with NRW 288 (NaR 370), quoted above, will be obvious.

53. Erich Gaede Die Religionsphilosophie von J. F. Fries und Albert Görland, Oschersleben (Bode) 1935, p.8c

54. first published 1805, reprinted Jena, 1905.

55. PR 40; KFR 25

56. PR 37; KFR 22

57. PR 41; KFR 25

58. IH "Means of Expression of the Numinous" 60-71; DH "Ausdrucksmittel des Numinosen" 79-91.

59. See also the section on Fries in Chapter Three

60. Bastow and Holm have been discussed in 2.1.

61. SU 136

62. pp. xvii and xviii

63. Marburger Theologische Studien Nr.7, S.2

64. Compare further the sections in Chapter Three on Kant and on Eckhart.

65. DH Kapitel 16; IH chapter XIV

66. IH 115; DH 140

67. This is in IH chapters IV and V.

68. in ZRP 4, 1931, Heft 2, pp.49-57 and 109-136, reprinted in Boozer 1981, pp.143-174.

69. The question of the Apriori is Part Two of Feigel's book (op.cit.), pp. 66-78.

70. In the edition Feigel had Kap. 17

71. in Zthk 1894-5

72. geschichts-philosophischen, which I think would now be called phenomenology.

73. Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche, 20. Jg. 1910, SS.341-405

74. vol 7, pp.1-62.

75. "Ottos Kategorie des Heiligen und der Absolutheitsanspruch des Christusglaubens" in Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche 1920, 14-41.

76. in Theologische Literaturzeitung 1923, Nr.1, cols. 21-23. Wobbermin had translated William James's VRE into German.

77. Robert F Davidson Rudolf Otto's Interpretation of Religion, Princeton University Press 1947, especially pp. 167-8.

78. Davidson 1947, 168

79. Joachim Wach "Rudolf Otto und der Begriff des Heiligen" in Deutsche Beiträge zur geistigen Überlieferung, nr.2 1952, hsg. A. Bergsträsser, pp.200-217, a lecture which had clearly been delivered in 1948.
80. 211c quoted from Otto with approval
81. Feigel 1948, 15-16: C. 382
82. Frick MTS Nr.3, 5-7
83. Brunner 1928, 101
84. IH Ch. XII, esp. pp.100-102, 106-107; DH Kap.14, S.123-126, 131-132.
85. John P Reeder "The Relation of the Moral to the Numinous in Otto's Notion of the Holy" in G Outka and J P Reeder edd. Religion and Morality a collection of essays, New York (Anchor Books) 1973, 255-292
86. see Reeder 1973 and the references given.
87. IH Ch.VII; DH Kap.8, section 3 headed Schematisierung
88. Breslau, 1917. The picture is on page 67.
89. see R. Schinzer, "Entwurf einer Biographie" in E. Benz, Rudolf Ottos Bedeutung für die Religionswissenschaft und die Theologie heute, Leiden, 1971; and P. McKenzie in Harold Turner, Rudolf Otto: The Idea of the Holy: a Guide for Students, Aberdeen 1974. He returned to Germany in July 1912 after travelling West on the Trans-Siberian railway. One of the objectives of the trip had been to purchase religious writings and artefacts, for which the Kahn Foundation had made him a grant of twelve thousand gold marks.
90. ThLZ, 36. Jahrgang Nr.26, 23.Dezember 1911, cols. 801-804. Among the ten books noted, Otto reviews Kipling's novel Kim: "The theologian ought to read this book."
91. West-Östliche Mystik. Vergleich und Unterscheidung zur Wesensdeutung, Gotha, 1926; 2nd ed. with some additional material 1929; 3rd edition revised and edited from notes in Otto's own copy by Gustav Mensching, München, 1971. Page references to WöM are from the third edition. ET by Brenda L. Bracey and Richenda C. Payne, Mysticism East and West, London, Macmillan, 1932. This was printed in the USA and text has American spellings. Page references are given to MEW.
92. Rudolf Otto Die Gnadenreligion Indiens und das Christentum, Gotha 1930, cited as GRIC, but note that this title appears on the titlepage, but on the cover it is called Indiens Gnadenreligion und das Christentum; ET by Frank Hugh

Foster DD, India's Religion of Grace and Christianity, London SCM Press 1930, cited as IRG.

93. Rudolf Otto, Rabindranath Tagore's Bekenntnis, Tübingen, 1931, which contains Tagore's celebrated sunrise experience as a result of which he wrote 'The Waterfall'.

94. Of Otto's main references for Eckhart, Büttner 1912 and Lehmann 1919, are translations into current German from mhd and Latin, while Franz Pfeiffer (Leipzig 1857) reproduces the mhd text (reprinted Scientia Verlag Aalen, 1962). Pfeiffer's work is called Deutsche Mystiker des vierzehnten Jahrhunderts in zwei Bänden: Eckhart is exclusively in volume 2. References are all to vol. 2, as Pf. followed by page and line number. Mensching's edition supplies some of these references, which were not clear in the first two editions.

95. In particular J W Hauer reviewing WöM in CW, 1929, Nr.14, cols. 662-670 and 721-726.

96. Otto thought that Eckhart had coined the word Gemüt for this purpose. This note was, however, removed in the third edition. The Cruden Herkunfts Worterbuch simply ascribes the origin of the word to mittelhochdeutsch of the 14th century without mentioning Eckhart.

97. J W Hauer "West-Östliche Mystik" in CW 1929, Nr. 14, cols.662-670, 721-726 (review of 2nd edition of WöM). The quotation is in column 722b: . . drawing attention "to the peculiar atmosphere, the shade of colour, the special smell of the phenomena."

98. This is stressed by Cyprian Smith 1987 especially in the first chapter, and attention should be drawn to Otto's active life as noted in Chapter One of this thesis.

99. op.cit. col. 726b.

100. Giessen 1925

101. Giessen 1928

102. B E Meland Modern Man's Worship, New York 1934, in which Chapter IV is specifically about Otto.

103. Chapter V, 'Friedrich Heiler and the Lutheran High Church Movement.'

104. and in English in IH Appendix VIII, pp.210-214.

105. Boozer's Einleitung to AzE p.11c.

106. Reich Gottes und Menschensohn - ein religionsgeschichtlicher Versuch, München, C H Beck, 1934, cited as RGMS; ET The Kingdom of God and the Son of Man,

Lutterworth Press 1938, tr. Floyd V. Filson and Bertram Lee-Wolf ("translated from the revised German edition") cited as KGSM. As only one edition appears to exist in German, the "revised German edition" is explained as follows:

For the purposes of the present translation, Dr. Otto specially revised his work Reichgottes und Menschensohn, and, by deleting various passages, altering and adding others, he produced what is really a new edition. (Note to the first English edition).

My copy of RGMS is inscribed "Im Auftrag des Verfassers", was given to Karl Küssner with the note "Mit besten Empfehlungen von Fr. Marg. Ottmer", then given to me with the note "Herrn Robin Minney mit froh. Wünschen, Karl Küssner, 4.6.87. Möckmühl".

107. Davidson op.cit. p.63a, but I have not been able to find these words in KGSM.

108. Freiheit und Notwendigkeit, Tübingen, 1940. Otto's manuscript is to be found in the Siegfried-Nachlaß in the Marburg University Library.

109. Rudolf Otto Aufsätze zur Ethik, hrsg. von Jack Stewart Booser, München (C H Beck) 1981. Otto's niece, Dr. Margarethe Ottmer, told me that Booser understood Otto's thinking in this area.

110. Hans-Walter Schütte, Religion und Christentum in der Theologie Rudolf Ottos, Berlin, 1969, p.92 note 13.

111. The relevant extract from Schinzer's dissertation "Werturteil und Seinsurteil in den nachgelassenen dogmatischen Vorlesungen Rudolf Ottos" is published in the journal Kerygma und Dogma, 16. Jahrgang, Heft 1, Januar/März 1970, SS.1-31.

112. It appeared in Zthk, NF12, 1931, Heft 1, S.1-67.

113. Some of the essays from both these books are translated and appear in Rudolf Otto Religious Essays, translated by B. Lunn, Oxford 1931: they had been published in an earlier collection entitled Aufsätze das Numinose betreffend, Gotha 1923.

114. Davidson 179b.

115. Much of this chapter from the Bhagavad Gita was printed as an Appendix in early editions of DH, appears in IH as Appendix II, pp.186-188, but in later editions of DH Beilage 1 refers the reader to Otto's translation published as Der Sang des Hehr-Erhabenen (1935) S.75-80 (DH 297a).

116. In Zeitschrift für Religionspsychologie (ZRP), 4, 1931, Heft 1, S.1-19.

117. Boozer 131a, to which Boozer notes "Otto's emphasis on feeling as a form of knowing and not of emotion is a basic aspect of his understanding of religion" p.261 note 5. The similarity to Otto's note on Feeling in GMS is notable.

118. Emphatically not emotion, but an older meaning of Feeling which includes both a kind of knowing or an introduction to knowing, and even more primary and direct the access to an object and its reality, serving as a touchstone for all reflective and mediated knowledge. (in ZRP 1931, this note is on pp.2 and 3).

119. originally published in Zthk NF12, 1931, Heft 2, S.85-110.

120. Zur Erneuerung und Ausgestaltung des Gottesdienstes.

121. Compare two articles by R. Lempp in The Harvard Theological Review 1910 and 1921.

122. Luneburg, no date, probably 1940. Küssner knew Otto very well and assured me that the words ascribed to Otto in this book were ninety percent accurate (conversation 4.6.87). This book was reprinted, Stuttgart 1941, and for a third time.

CHAPTER THREE:

SOURCES FOR OTTO'S THOUGHT AND INFLUENCES ON HIM

Two main reasons can be put forward for giving special attention to the thinkers and writers who appear to have been especially influential for Otto's work. By going a little behind his writing it is possible perhaps to see his thought taking shape and at the same time a dimension is added which can enrich the modern reader's appreciation of him. Secondly, Otto's writing then becomes a kind of prism through which these influential people themselves become available, possibly in a new light. By seeking out Otto's sources modern readers are encouraged to meet them for themselves.

The survey of Otto's work in Chapter Two has already introduced the sources, but special treatment in this chapter helps us to understand them better and to appreciate how they have contributed to Otto's thought. It is not possible to arrange them in an order which might approximate to their order of influence: in fact the influence of Eckhart, Kant and Schleiermacher remained strong throughout Otto's career. They are arranged therefore merely in the chronological order in which they lived.

3.1 Meister Eckhart (c.1260-1327)

Eckhart's surviving writings, and in particular the popular sermons in mittel-hoch-deutsch (mhd), stress again and again the immediate action of God in the soul. The soul or ground

of the soul is the innermost and most subjective part of the person. This doctrine is of obvious relevance to Otto and supports his main thesis in DH. A modern understanding of this doctrine is also relevant for religious education, and in particular that aspect of R.E. that seeks to elicit pupils' response and engagement at a personal level. Although Eckhart preached in the first place to Christians, Otto extended the emphasis on immediacy to adherents of other religions, and by implication to anyone with a sense for the numinous or transcendent, even in a non-religious sense. Such people are met in Laski's Ecstasy. It thus applies to anyone whose inborn Anlage or predisposition can be developed to a capacity for religious experience, and therefore to everyone. This must be the assumption behind universal religious education as is required by law in Britain today.

Otto's interest in Eckhart comes into prominence in WöM first published in 1926. This is a relatively late book in Otto's career, but it is known that Otto had read some of Eckhart's work from long before, and certainly before he wrote DH. A few references to Eckhart (as well as other Rhineland mystics Tauler and Suso) occur in earlier editions of DH and so come into the English translation IH. Later editions of DH refer to Eckhart more as well as to what Otto wrote in WöM. As an example, a note on religious humility is referred to R R Marett (IH 20a) but in later editions the same passage is referred instead to Eckhart (DH 23a). This suggests a returning to Eckhart rather than a discovery of the mystic

for the first time in the 1920s. No doubt also the fact that Eckhart had combined mystical writing and preaching with a very active life appealed to Otto, whose own activities as a Member of Parliament, in experiments to reform protestant liturgy, his collection of religious artefacts from all over the world and his Religious League for Mankind are noted elsewhere.

It is true that as a student Otto came strongly under Ritschlian influence and, as noted in the section on Ritschl, Ritschl was opposed to mysticism. On the other hand Otto's own background in Hanoverian pietism may have included folk traditions linked with Eckhart and other mystics influenced by him. If this is so, then Otto would have come under Eckhart's influence before he studied Ritschl and learnt his antipathy to mysticism. Study of Eckhart's sermons does give some support to Ritschl's criticism in the matter of being ahistorical, especially Eckhart's teaching that the birth of God in the soul is outside time, but on the other hand there are also moral aspects to Eckhart which contradict Ritschl's conclusion that mysticism entails no moral action.

Oliver Davies¹ relates that interest in Eckhart revived at the time of the German Romantic movement, that is, from the last two decades of the eighteenth century, when an enthusiasm for mysticism and for the Middle Ages was being fostered. The poetry of Novalis is perhaps the best known example, but there were many others. Consequently Otto could

have come across Eckhart in the course of his work on Schleiermacher (though Schleiermacher does not mention him), if he was not already aware of him from other sources. Before Pfeiffer, however, very little of Eckhart's work had been published.

At the present time it is not possible to say when or how Otto first read Eckhart. Published editions were certainly available to him. Pfeiffer in 1857 made available the original mhd text of the manuscripts he consulted in numerous libraries and monasteries across the German and Austrian empires, as well as Strassburg and Basel. He did not use Latin texts and indeed had no access to Vatican libraries². These texts had been written down by Eckhart's hearers, many of them nuns (so Walshe³), and there are variations in the spelling. Pfeiffer also includes some short anecdotes about Eckhart. Otto could also have seen later publications such as H. Büttner's popular translations into modern German (1903 and many reprints), A. Spamer's critical discussion of the texts and their authenticity (1909), and translations by Spamer (1912) and by Lehmann (1919). It seems, however, not unreasonable to suppose that Otto had read Eckhart through Pfeiffer and the mhd text, which he would surely have used in preference to any modern translation. In WÖM Otto does not give references for his quotations, but some were later supplied for the posthumous third edition by Mensching who refers, not always with certainty, to Pfeiffer, Büttner and Lehmann. Walshe (1987) says that Eckhart scholarship has

over 120 years completely superseded Pfeiffer, and yet he still follows Pfeiffer's order (for reasons explained in his Preface). Walshe notes that Sermon One⁴ is a good introduction to Eckhart's topics and style: "This sermon epitomises some of the most important aspects of the whole of Eckhart's teaching" (Walshe 12b, note 1).

Sermon One contains ideas and expressions that directly relate to DH. And to see them in the context of Eckhart's teaching would go a long way to meeting criticisms expressed when DH was published, in that the emphasis is put on an existential justification rather than a philosophical one. But Otto sought instead to base his argument on Kant's writing rather than on a mystic, although mystics are quoted in support. Foremost among these terms is Seelengrund, a phrase which appears as two words frequently in Eckhart and refers to the essence of the person which is not accessible to rational knowledge. Seelengrund is used by Otto to denote the innermost part of the soul itself, from which the basal knowledge arises a priori, that is from within, though aroused by external stimuli yet in no way dependent on them⁵. Otto relates this to Kant, but Kant does not use the term Seelengrund⁶. Calling this "pure reason" in the profoundest sense, which must be distinguished from both the pure theoretical and pure practical reason of Kant, Otto adds, "Wir nennen sie den Seelengrund." (DH 139a)

Here is an instance of Eckhart's use of the phrase from the

Sermon which opens Pfeiffer's collection:

Und alsô gebirt got der vater sînen sun in wârer einunge götlicher nâtûre. Sehet, in der selben wîse und in keiner andern gebirt got der vater sînen sun in der sêle grunde und in irm wesenne unde vereinet alsô mit ir. Wan wêre dâ iht bilde, sô enwêre dâ niht wâriu einunge, und an der wâren einunge lît alliu ir sêlikeit. (Pfeiffer 1857, S.6, ZZ.10-15)

The coming to birth of God the Son in the ground of the soul does not relate to historical time. It is a very frequent topic in Eckhart's preaching and another example may be quoted from Sermon L, although the 'ground' is not mentioned.

In die sêle kumet der sun unde gebirt sich dar in mit allem dem, daz got geleisten mac: vater, sun, heiliger geist, allez mit einander in einem lûterm wesende. (Pfeiffer 1857, S.166, ZZ.17-19)

This birth is closely linked to two further points which are fundamental to the train of thought in DH. One of these is the knowing which is not intellectual, and the other is the unmediated contact of the numinous with the soul. Quoting St Paul's ecstasy in this connection, Eckhart says:

After he had been caught up into the third heaven where God was made known to him and he beheld all things, when he returned he had forgotten nothing, but it was so deep down in his ground that his intellect could not reach it. (Walshe 9c; Pfeiffer 8.32-6)

Hence it is an "unknown knowing" (Walshe 9a) or "daz unbekant bekentnisse" (Pfeiffer 8.18).

This not-knowing makes her wonder and leads her to eager pursuit, for she perceives clearly that it is, but does not know how or what it is. (Walshe 8c-9a, his italics; Pfeiffer 8.13-15)

This relates directly to non-conceptual knowing in Otto's argument and the doctrine of presentiment or Ahnung which Otto tried to adapt from Fries. There are many similar passages in Eckhart. The question what can be meant by knowledge which relates to something other than the intellect is a well-known problem in studies of mysticism and is discussed as such in Chapter Four.

Otto encountered this kind of thinking and this kind of phraseology in his reading of Eckhart as well as other mystics, some of whom are quoted in DH. It is not possible to say at the present time whether Otto had studied Eckhart early enough and thoroughly enough for this study to give direction to his writing of DH, and whether Eckhart rather than Kant provided the original basis for Otto's claim to a non-rational understanding, an understanding that is deeper than reason because it occurs in the ground of the soul. It can of course be related to Kant's Third Critique, but it need not have originated there. In fact it comes across more strongly from Eckhart, with Kant providing academic respectability.

In Eckhart too can be found the immediacy of God's action in the soul (Walshe 3c; Pfeiffer 4.40-5.3). As Otto shows in AHG, this immediacy is also central for Luther, who is acknowledged to have been influenced by Eckhart. If further the work of God in the soul can be equated with Schleiermacher's feeling of the Universum as something

immediate (in the first instance) and unselfconscious, then we have the encounter with the Numinous which is central for DH. Eckhart tries to explain the essential subjectivity of the soul or self in saying that it can have no image of itself:

But for a man to receive an image in this way, it must of necessity enter from without through the senses. In consequence, there is nothing so unknown to the soul as herself. Accordingly, one master says that the soul can neither create nor obtain an image of herself. Therefore she has no way of knowing herself, for images all enter through the senses, and hence she can have no image of herself. And so she knows all other things, but not herself. Of nothing does she know so little as of herself, for want of mediation. (Walshe 4bc; Pfeiffer 5.18-25)

This seems to be echoed in Schleiermacher, because it reflects religious experience in every age: The intuiter is intuited (Schleiermacher R.55; Cr.104b) and the experiencer feels "if possible the less real of the two." (IH 23a)

But the immediacy of the birth of God, or the unmediated encounter with the numinous, is also an area for reflection. As soon as it is considered it loses its immediacy, but this is the only way it can be discussed, compared and written about. Eckhart knew this as did Otto, but Otto developed conscious reflection and discussion to suggest stages of development. Eckhart too is aware of the need for images and evidences in order to discuss and attempt to indicate an experience which is essentially ineffable, imageless and without concepts.

Ich wil iu in dise rede bewêren mit nâtûrlicher rede (Walshe translates "I shall make use of natural proofs" which seems too strong), daz ir ez selber grîfen mûgent, daz ez alsô ist, swie ich doch der geschrift mêr gloube dan mir selber: aber ez gêt iu mêr înde baz von bewêrter rede. (Pfeiffer 4.17-20) (Walshe has "it is easier and better for you to learn by means of arguments that can be verified" - 2c)

This is no doubt a necessary method which Otto develops by using religious phenomena to disclose the a priori essence of religion in the awareness of the numinous. In particular Otto takes up the notion of schematisation from Kant on the one hand, and from Schleiermacher on the other. This is discussed in the relevant section 2.6.2.

Otto found an integrity in Eckhart which answered his need to make religious experience in the soul the meeting place for the human and the divine mystery, as well as the spring of activity. A modern commentator, who does not mention Otto, brings out some relevant aspects of Eckhart's teaching, emphasising that Eckhart had a profound knowledge of the human heart⁷.

He realized, above all, that the question of God is at the same time a question about Man. I cannot know God unless I know myself. Religion has its origin and its meaning in the human heart. . . The sublime and glorious reality which we call 'God', is to be sought first and foremost in the human heart. If we do not find him there, we shall not find him anywhere else. If we do find him there, we can never lose him again; wherever we turn, we shall see his face. (Smith 1987, 4c)

And again,

He understands very clearly that spiritual life only has meaning when it is related to what goes on inside us. It is no use preaching Christ to people so long as Christ is seen merely as someone external to ourselves, a vague, shadowy figure who spoke a foreign language and died 2000 years ago. We need to know and experience Christ as a living force within us, energizing, healing, making and unmaking, leading us to greater awareness, compassion and wholeness. So Eckhart writes:

"St Augustine says: 'What does it avail me that this birth (the birth of Christ, the Son of God, in eternity) is always happening, if it does not happen in me? That it should happen in me is what matters.' We shall therefore speak of this birth, of how it may take place in us and be consummated in the virtuous soul." (Smith, 1987, 6a)

The basis for development which Eckhart offered Otto is now clear. Eckhart's thought supports the basic principle of DH. This is the immediacy of the divine (or numinous) encounter in the soul at a level beyond that of reason in any intellectual sense. Possibly Otto found this in Eckhart or the pietistic tradition before he studied Kant, especially Kant's Third Critique. But it can be seen that what is experienced at the existential level (mysticism) finds an explanation at the philosophical level, and when writing for a scholarly readership it can be no surprise if Otto sought his main justification among the philosophers, using mystical writers only in second place as support.

3.2 Immanuel Kant (1724-1804)

Kant's writings are cardinal for the development of German and Western philosophy from the beginning of the nineteenth

century, and in the following two centuries many later thinkers either developed, modified or reacted against his thought. It would have been impossible for Otto not to have been influenced by him, and Kant's thought and Kant's terminology can be seen at the heart of Otto's system, in the Gemüt and Seele.

It is clear that Otto was deeply influenced by Kant, and perhaps by the Critique of Judgement⁸ most of all. In the First Part of this Kant discusses aesthetic judgement which he divides into the beautiful and the sublime. While Kant's transcendental method applies to both and was adapted by Otto for his discussion of the holy, it is clear that Kant's treatment of the sublime is particularly close, in that for the sublime, pleasure is irrelevant and aspects of awe, terror and mystery have a place which resurfaces in Otto's discussion of the numinous.

The foundation of Kant's philosophy in general has been held to be his discovery of the synthetic a priori⁹. This means that by the use of reason it is possible to attain new knowledge which is not analytic (i.e. not already contained in the definition of terms), but which at the same time owes nothing essentially to experience. Thus it is a priori in that it is a principle or principles of thought whose existence or reality cannot be established by either evidence or argument, yet which alone makes the relevant area of knowledge possible. This is expounded in Kant's first

critique, the Critique of Pure Reason (1781).

In his third critique, the Critique of Judgement (1789-90), Kant goes further. Because judgement of the beautiful and judgement of the sublime do not depend on concepts, both are to that extent subjective. Yet such judgements are at the same time both universal and necessary, so here Kant claims to establish a subjective synthetic a priori. It is this aspect which forms the basis for Otto's philosophy in DH.

Otto is indebted to Kant in particular for the discovery of the subjective a priori. Once this is clearly understood, a distinction opens out which sets the empirical work of psychology apart from the theoretical work of philosophy, and at the same time shows the link between them. If Kant's influence is seen in this respect, and if Otto's transposition from the aesthetic to the holy is considered legitimate, then much of the criticism of Geysler and of Feigl simply falls away as irrelevant.

It must be recognised that Kant gave a very particular place to religion, against which Schleiermacher reacted (see section 3.3). This is clear in Kant's Religion within the Bounds of Reason Alone (1792-3). For Kant, pure religious faith arises from the moral disposition¹⁰, which means that religion is known by reason and is not dependent on revelation or historical development. By placing religion within the framework of morality Kant has barred access to

God. Indeed Kant applies the word Holy to the good will which is the basis on which the moral law is built, as is expounded in the second critique, the Critique of Practical Reason (1788). The good will alone is absolute good and all others are relative in consequence.

Yet it is in the context of ethics that Kant reveals a basis for morality in natural or untutored sense. Otto describes this in his notes on Kant, which stem from his university teaching on Kant since 1906. These are published in Otto's 1930 edition of Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten (GMS)¹¹. In his Introduction Otto picks out the main ideas of the book, among which is Section 5. "Double Meaning of Feeling" (GMS 27-8).

The categorical imperative is presented as starkly objective. It makes stark demands on me and its validity rests upon no "interest" or "feeling". Both of these Kant understood first and foremost as "sense-conditioned interest" and as empirical feeling of pleasure and pain, or inclination, disinclination, natural sympathy etc. Later he himself distinguishes "a pure interest of reason itself" from simply "sense-conditioned" interest. And from feeling as emotion of pleasure and pain he occasionally distinguishes "feeling" as a preconceptual form of knowledge. Since this has no conceptual clarity, he calls this feeling also "obscure feeling" (and occasionally he calls it "unexplicated concepts"). This "feeling" must be clearly distinguished from feeling in the other sense. It is precisely in this sort of "feeling" that all our moral knowledge is first of all given to us. In his investigation Kant himself presupposes it to be already present. It is for him a special kind of "judgement". And the first section of his book could have had this title: Transition from the common obscure feeling-

knowledge for morals to conceptual and methodically clarified knowledge. His discussions of the will, duty and imperatives are intended here as the first explication of what everyone already knows "in feelings". This "feeling" is not emotion, affect, inclination or interest, but obscure knowledge, admittedly in need of clarification, but still objective.

As if to underline this point, Otto introduces his discussion of Kant's main ideas with a note on the word Sitten (GMS 22). He explains that Kant could as well have used the word Moral in the title in place of Sitten. Sitten means ethics, but it also means habits, customs. Otto says that Kant purposely chose this word because he wanted to show the way in which ethics as a refined philosophical science arises from the popular sense of right and wrong. This common sense existed long before philosophy methodically clarified and systematised it to produce the science of Ethics.

In the Critique of Judgement Kant returns to the basis of morality within common humanity:

. . . the man in the street, when he says that deceit is wrong, bases his judgement on confused, but the philosopher on clear grounds, while both appeal in reality to identical principles of reason. (M.71a; §.15; K.228)

Kant goes on to state that this common sense is first a subjective principle, second is determined by means of feeling only, not concepts, and third has universal validity. Kant expressly distinguishes this common sense from common understanding (which is also sometimes called common sense)

in which judgement is based on concepts. (M.82-83; \$.20; K.238). These three points, especially the universal validity, are vital for establishing a subjective synthetic a priori.

. . . we do not have to take our stand on psychological observations, but we assume a common sense as the necessary condition of the universal communicability of our knowledge . . . (M.84a; \$.21; K.239)

In making judgements of taste, universal validity is claimed, not that everyone will agree, but that everyone ought to agree, that is that the judgement has universal validity. (M.84bc; \$.22; K.239). Kant continues,

This indeterminate norm of a common sense is, as a matter of fact, presupposed by us; as is shown by our presuming to lay down judgements of taste. But does such a common sense in fact exist as a constitutive principle of the possibility of experience . . . ? Is taste, in other words, a natural and original faculty . . . ? (M.85a; \$.22; K.239-240)

If the answer to both these question is Yes, then Kant has provided a basis which Otto can adapt for religion. Otto will maintain, first, that there is a common sense for the numinous, and second, that this is a natural and original faculty for every human being. This Kant does in fact provide in a way which Otto was able to re-use. The method is that of transcendental deduction thereby revealing a basis which is purely a priori.

The first step is to establish universal necessity. Kant

writes:

The obligation to furnish a Deduction, i.e. a guarantee of the legitimacy of judgements of a particular kind, only arises where the judgement lays claim to necessity. This is the case even where it requires subjective universality, i.e. the concurrence of every one, albeit the judgement is not a cognitive judgement, but only one of pleasure or displeasure in a given object, i.e. an assumption of a subjective finality that has a thorough-going validity for every one, and which, since the judgement is one of Taste, is not to be grounded upon any concept of the thing. (M.135a; §.31; K.280)

Otto presents in a similar way the contrast between the religious a priori and the empirical and psychological:

. . . seeking to account for the ideas in question, we are referred away from all sense experience back to an original and underivable capacity of mind implanted in the 'pure reason' independently of all perception. (IH 112b; DH 137b)

Otto quotes the opening words of Kant's first critique, The Critique of Pure Reason, to stress the distinction and the relationship between the a priori and the empirical:

That all our knowledge begins with experience there can be no doubt. For how is it possible that the faculty of cognition should be awakened into exercise otherwise than by means of objects which affect our senses? . . . But, though all our knowledge begins with experience, it by no means follows that all arises out of experience. (quoted in IH 112-113; DH 137c)

Just as Kant knew the universal moral law which was not itself dependent on experience but the knowledge of it was revealed by experience, so Otto claimed the same was the case with human knowledge of the numinous. The numinous does not

depend for its existence or its reality on being perceived or felt, but this is how it is in fact known.

It issues from the deepest foundations of cognitive apprehension that the soul possesses, and, though of course it comes into being in and amid the sensory data and empirical material of the natural world and cannot anticipate or dispense with those, yet it does not arise out of them, but only by their means. They are the incitement, the stimulus and the 'occasion' for the numinous experience to become astir, and, in doing so, to begin - at first with a naive immediacy of reaction - to be interfused and interwoven with the present world of sensuous experience, until, gradually becoming purer, it disengages itself from this and takes its stand in absolute contrast to it. The proof that in the numinous we have to deal with purely a priori cognitive elements is to be reached by introspection and a critical examination of reason such as Kant instituted. (IH 113; DH 138)

From this Otto further explains the position with regard to Kant, by stating (also after Kant) that empirical knowledge (emphasis on knowledge) depends on two factors: that which is derived from sense-impressions, and that which the faculty of cognition supplies from itself when sense-impressions present the need for it¹². That which arises from the faculty of cognition is a priori, and while revealed by sense-impressions, it is in no way dependent on them. This is the central issue here and therefore needs further development.

Otto opens the relevant chapter "The Holy as an A Priori Category, Part I"¹³ by reminding readers that the 'holy' has two components, rational and non-rational. In both of these

(his emphasis) the holy is a pure a priori category. Later in Chapter XVII "The Holy as an A Priori Category, Part II"¹⁴ he restates this by saying that not only are both rational and non-rational aspects of the holy a priori elements, but the connection between them is a third a priori element¹⁵. So in reverting to the earlier passage, it can be seen that the numinous is a purely a priori category encountered in the faculty of cognition when outward, or inward, senses give occasion.

Kant repeats the distinction between sense-impressions and the faculty of cognition in his third critique, The Critique of Judgement, employing now the word "intuition", which comes to the fore again in Schleiermacher (see next section). Kant speaks of intuition a priori and intuition which is empirical, and illustrates the distinction with the example of the Anatomist who first lectures on the human eye, and then provides empirical evidence by dissection. In this passage Kant is drawing a parallel with a priori statements which must be demonstrated. Otto's complex idea of the holy eludes description, but the parallel is illuminating.

While rational (i.e. conceptual) aspects of the holy go back to that which is a priori in pure reason, Otto maintains that the a priori prerequisite for knowledge of the non-rational is deeper than pure reason "at least as this is usually understood," and refers back to the fundus animae, the bottom or ground of the soul (Seelengrund)¹⁶. This must be an

"original and underivable capacity of mind implanted in the 'pure reason' independent of all perception."¹⁷ This is a third type of pure reason, alongside the pure theoretical and the pure practical reason of Kant, "higher or deeper than they" (IH 114a; DH 137a).

"The facts of the numinous consciousness point therefore . . . to a hidden substantive source, from which the religious ideas and feelings are formed, which lies in the mind independently of sense experience" (IH 113c-114a; DH 138c-139a). Otto goes beyond the capacity for awareness, however, to speak of "posited objects and entities, which themselves no longer belong to the perceptual world, but are thought of as supplementing and transcending it" (IH 113c; DH 138c). Here is the suggestion that numinous awareness must presuppose the numinous object, whose presence is, according to Otto, directly apprehended in the experience.

Otto agrees that the task of the psychology of religion is to explain the phenomenon of religion. But just as nature can only be explained in terms of its fundamental forces and their laws when these are presupposed - nothing can be explained without - so with religion, "in the domain of the spirit the corresponding principle from which an explanation is derived is just the spirit itself, the reasonable spirit of man, with its predispositions, capacities, and its own inherent laws. This has to be presupposed: it cannot itself be explained." (IH 114b; DH 139b)

The human predisposition (Anlage) then is purely a priori as Otto sees it, and he is clearly following Kant, yet transposing Kant's argument on aesthetic judgement to his own form of religious judgement. The Anlage is aroused by stimuli (IH 115b; DH 140b) until it turns into a driving impulsion (IH 116b; DH 141b) and, however much clearer it may become, it originates in the obscure a priori foundations of thought itself (IH 116c; DH 142a).

The second chapter on the A Priori¹⁸ reinforces the preceding argument and gives examples. That of Socrates and Adeimantos¹⁹ illustrates well the process by which a statement receives immediate assent because it was already but obscurely known.

Now this is the criterion of all apriori knowledge, namely, that, so soon as an assertion has been clearly expressed and understood, knowledge of its truth comes into the mind with the certitude of first-hand insight. (IH 137b; DH 166b)

In KFR Otto gives a different example, that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line. As soon as it is stated, perhaps for the first time, the listener understands and assents, because this knowledge was obscurely present a priori. This illustrates in the Grundlegung the obscure sense of right and wrong which is common to humanity, long before it is clarified by philosophers. In the context of religion, Otto instances widely different figures of gods and goddesses in different cultures,

All this points to the existence of apriori factors universally and necessarily latent in the human spirit. (IH 140a; DH 169a)

Other examples are given.

In this way Otto has linked himself to the transcendental method of Kant to establish the a priori within the human capacity or receptiveness of mind, which must be presupposed if the empirical is to be perceived as religious, or indeed made meaningful at all. Psychological factors are then complementary to this.

At the end of his notes on Kant's Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten Otto remarks that Kant had discovered the human capacity (Vermögen) for ideas (propositions) of reason which go beyond all experience. It is a pity (says Otto) that Kant did not develop it. But Fries worked it into his doctrine of Ahnung, presentiment, and Schleiermacher presupposes it for his discussion of religion which is described in Section 3.3 following.

3.3 Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834)

In 1899 Otto brought out a centenary edition of Schleiermacher's Speeches on Religion, with introduction, notes and end-comments (Reden)²⁰. He chose the text of the first edition both because it was the centenary and because this text demonstrates the energetic style of the young theologian.

The term a priori which Otto borrowed from Kant was not used by Schleiermacher. Yet something of the idea behind it is the basis of religion in the Reden and it could be said that Otto borrowed the term from Kant, but the meaning of the idea from Schleiermacher.

In common with Romantic expression at the time, Schleiermacher stressed the importance of "feeling". In the first edition of his Reden the word Anschauung, usually translated 'intuition', is frequently coupled with Gefühl, feeling, and in one place Schleiermacher explains the difference between them. In the second and third editions, however, the word Anschauung was used much less and in a different sense, so in places where both words had stood in the first edition now Gefühl does duty for both. In addition to examining these two words in Schleiermacher and their relationship to each other, it is necessary to study the train of thought associated with them. Only then is it possible to consider how far Otto's reliance on direct feeling for his scheme of things, especially in Das Heilige, is likely to have been derived from Schleiermacher.

The basic idea in the Reden is that of the Universum, the All, which is both the goal of human intuition (or contemplation - Anschauung) and the spontaneous power which itself grasps the intuer. "All intuition proceeds from an influence of the intuited on the one who intuits, from an original and independent action of the former, which is then

grasped, apprehended and conceived by the latter according to one's own nature." (Cr.104b; R.55). Because the relation of humanity to this Universum is by feeling, and not by either pure or practical reason, Schleiermacher is simply not starting with the kind of basic questions which believers and non-believers usually argue over, the existence of God, the attributes of God, immortality of the soul, and the rest. The basis of the Reden is far removed from dogmatics, and when Schleiermacher comes to dogmatics in the Glaubenslehre, Christian doctrine is made to stem from a feeling, the feeling of absolute dependence.

This distinction is made clear from the start of the second speech. This speech opens with the question "What is religion?" (R.38; Cr.96a). Its object is the universe and the relationship of humanity to it (R.41; Cr.97c), but, although metaphysics and morals may have the same object, religion is distinct from them both: "metaphysics and morals have . . . invaded religion on many occasions, and much that belongs to religion has concealed itself in metaphysics or morals under an unseemly form." (R.41; Cr.97c-98a) Religion is simply "intuition of the universe." (R.46²¹) Further in the same speech, Schleiermacher rejects belief because this is secondhand and indirect:

What one commonly calls belief, accepting what another person has done, wanting to ponder and empathize with what someone else has thought and felt, is a hard and unworthy service, and instead of being the highest in religion, as one supposes, it is exactly what must be renounced by

those who would penetrate into its sanctuary. To want to have and retain belief in this sense proves that one is incapable of religion; to require this kind of faith from others shows that one does not understand it. (R.120; Cr.134b)

This accords with what the young Schleiermacher wrote to his father in January 1787:

I cannot believe that he who named himself only the Son of Man was the eternal and true God; I cannot believe that his death was a substitutionary atonement, because he never expressly said so himself, and because I cannot believe it was necessary. God, who has evidently created humankind not for perfection but only for the striving after perfection, cannot possibly wish to punish persons eternally because they have not become perfect.²²

Schleiermacher wrote in the first Rede,

Religion helped me when I began to examine the ancestral faith and to purify my heart of the rubble of primitive times. It remained with me when God and immortality disappeared before my doubting eyes. It guided me into an active life. It taught me with my virtues and defects, to keep myself holy in my undivided existence, and only through it have I learned friendship and love. (Cr.84b; R.14)

The identity of religion and feeling for Schleiermacher is the subject of this section.

What Schleiermacher meant by Intuition, Anschauung, is clarified for us by Albert L. Blackwell in his book Schleiermacher's Early Philosophy of Life²³.

Religious consciousness is "immediate" intuition of the universe. That is, it is grounded in our instinctive, pre-rational sense of the ultimate givenness of our existence in the infinite

environment of the universe. . . . this fundamental sense precedes any distinct representation . . . Religion is grounded in immediate experience, not theological abstraction, though the latter may serve to stimulate and refine the former. (Blackwell 195a)

The central place to study this is Schleiermacher's Second Rede, "On the Essence of Religion". But a remark in the First sets the scene:

I do not wish to arouse particular feelings that perhaps belong in its realm (sc. Religion's), nor to justify or dispute particular ideas. I wish to lead you to the innermost depths from which religion first addresses the mind (Gemüt). (R.19-20; Cr.87a)

This is explained a little further in the Second Rede:

Intuition is and always remains something individual (etwas Einzelnes), set apart, the immediate perception, nothing more. To bind it and to incorporate it into a whole is once more the business not of sense but of abstract thought. The same is true of religion; it stops with the immediate experiences of the existence and action of the universe, with the individual intuitions and feelings; each of these is a self-contained work without connection with others or dependence upon them; it knows nothing about derivation and connection, for among all things religion can encounter, that is what its nature most opposes. Not only an individual fact or deed that one could call original or first, but everything in religion is immediate and true for itself. A system of intuitions? Can you imagine anything stranger? (R.58; Cr. 105-106)

Revising the text for the second edition of the Reden (1806), Schleiermacher rewrote more than half of the Second Speech (Cr. 59c). Intuition (Anschauung) is no longer exclusively linked to religion but describes the ability to make theories

and gain insight into science and knowledge of all kinds (Cr.61-2), and thus used in contexts which are not also examples of feeling. The second edition makes a clearer separation between religion as the experience of intuiting the Universum, and religion in the stricter sense of a body of knowledge. In place of intuition the word feeling is used frequently to cover the double experience for which the two words were used in 1799, although the pair are still found together occasionally. The reason for this change suggested by Crouter is that Schleiermacher now wished to relate religion to other forms of human awareness. (Cr.62). "Intuition is now conceived as a level of insight that relates scientific-intellectual to contemplative-religious life in ways that are antithetical to the 1799 text." (Cr. 62b) Also: "In sum, the account of religion in 1806, like that of 1799, stresses its prereflective and precognitive status, though the later version now tries to clarify the theoretical matrix in which this claim is made." (Cr. 63b)

The relation between the Reden and the Glaubenslehre is one of the classic questions of Schleiermacher research. The Reden were substantially altered in 1806, and some further changes made in 1821, the year in which Glaubenslehre first appeared²⁴. Possible reasons for these changes, and in particular for Schleiermacher abandoning the word Anschauung for religious intuition, are discussed by Wilhelm Graf²⁵. Graf rejects theories based on the influences of Schelling's and Fichte's publications, and looks for intrinsic

development. Graf sees the basic problem in religion's dual role, on the one hand based on feeling with a parallel Gemüts-moment to knowledge and action, and on the other as the unifying point of knowledge and action. Graf wonders whether this unity point represents a fourth position which thus unites Feeling, Knowledge and Action (Graf 182). Otto does not make any direct reference to this role of religion. Relevant, however, for later discussion would be a possible link between Otto's ideas of religious development in DH and Schleiermacher's steps or stages of religion, also Otto's emphasis on the holy as the binding force which combines rational and non-rational as a possible development from Schleiermacher.

In an article in Zthk of 1959 Werner Schultz²⁶ develops the understanding of feeling in Schleiermacher by comparing the idea of feeling in the three editions of the Reden and in the Glaubenslehre with his explanation in Dialektik, published in 1822. Feeling is not an emotion but is always accompanied by an affection. If we take this together with the section in the Reden about the influence of the intuited upon the intuer, then feeling is an unmediated consciousness which is in tension between its source (Grund) i.e. the intuited, and the human spirit. This makes it, says Schultz (68-9), neither purely subjective nor purely objective, but a metaphorical image of true Being. Schultz refers to Otto's discussion of mystic union in WöM, which is the tension between human and divine being.

Subjectivity

The section on Kant discussed the possibility of a subjective a priori. In a sense all consciousness is subjective. Blackwell expresses it thus:

Religion is subjective, it is true. What else may be said of any phenomenon of human consciousness? But according to Schleiermacher, religious consciousness is grounded in an immediate existential relation that is of all relations most objective. Our ultimate dependence is insusceptible of question; it is an inescapable relation; it is absolute. It is, in brief, an objective fact. And subjective religious consciousness rests upon this most objective of facts. So while religious consciousness is immediate and in this sense subjective, we may also say that it is mediated by the full content of our cosmic environment and is thus objective. (Blackwell 195-6)

Otto makes clear that for him too the primal experience of religion is first of all unmediated, and secondly that it requires reflection if it is to be considered or discussed. This can only be described as a process which may involve speculative metaphysics, or it may involve mythology, ritual, or other forms of traditional religious expression. Schleiermacher wrote that his admiration for Plato derived in part from Plato's use of myth in contexts, e.g. the end of the Timaeus, where concepts fail. This is discussed at length by Schultz (op.cit.) who begins by contrasting Schleiermacher's idea of religion as "direct intuition of the universe" with "empty mythology". Yet religion needs mythology in order to become clear, provided it is understood that mythology is an aid, not religion itself.

Robert Williams in a 1973 article²⁷ discusses subjectivity in Schleiermacher. He notes the similarity between what Schleiermacher means by feeling and twentieth century phenomenology's concept of the subject-relative life world²⁸.

Williams goes on to write:

Feeling is not ethical subjectivity, cognitive-theoretical subjectivity, or emotional subjectivity. It is subjectivity as such, consciousness itself, the common generic element present in all the more determinate and specific forms. Feeling, or consciousness as such, is the organ of receptivity, or man's openness to and immediate union with being. Consequently, feeling is not merely one aspect of human existence among others, rather feeling (=consciousness) is global human existence as a psychophysical totality in its lived union with and interaction with the World: "What we here call feeling is the immediate presence of the whole undivided being, both spiritual and sensible, the unity of the person with his spiritual and sensible world." (Heinrich Steffens Von der falschen Theologie und dem wahren Glauben, Breslau 1823). Schleiermacher could cite his friend Steffens with approval, for he himself had written: "Every feeling is the immediate co-existence of the individual with the whole." (Die christliche Sitte)

Williams, like many other Schleiermacher scholars, sees the "feeling of absolute dependence" in the Glaubenslehre as the fullest and most developed expression of what Schleiermacher means by feeling. The emphasis on subjectivity recalls words from Eckhart, "There is nothing so unknown to the soul as herself," quoted above in 3.1. Perhaps partly because the idea lacks precision, it clearly confirmed Otto's own experience.

Schultz takes it further. This religious feeling is only genuine when it relates to a reality which is independent of subjectivity (Schultz 79c): the feeling of dependence is a movement which is in tension between the real and the ideal (Schultz 79b). Natural science focusses on the same reality, but with concepts which aim at proof and checking. In religion, on the contrary, reality cannot be proved, only experienced, without system and without concepts. Scientific truth is unemotional, while religious truth binds the objective with what is deeply personal. Objectivity in natural science is either true or false, but in religion objectivity is both true and false in measures which vary at different moments (Schultz 79-81).

Religion as a form of knowledge

Schleiermacher's admiration for the use of myth in Plato should make clear his view that religion is not to be identified with either empirical or metaphysical knowledge. Religion has a practical aspect it is true, but for Schleiermacher it was important to go beyond Kant's view of religion as an aspect, albeit an important aspect, of ethics. For Kant two traditional religious beliefs were necessary, the existence of God, and the immortality of the soul, or at least life after death. Ethics demands justice and God must guarantee that good is rewarded and evil punished, and as this did not infallibly happen in mortal human experience, Kant felt he had proved the validity of these two religious beliefs²⁹. Schleiermacher's view of religion can be seen as

a protest against all this type of thinking.

The distinction of religion as a third type of knowledge, quite distinct from either metaphysics or morals, is emphasised by Otto, and he gives Schleiermacher the credit for this discovery, both in Das Heilige and in an article (which appeared more than once) on "How Schleiermacher Rediscovered the sensus numinis"³⁰. The second Rede provides several references to the tripartite division of knowledge. In a long passage near the start of the speech Schleiermacher contrasts religion with the other two mental activities, metaphysics and morals (R.41-54; Cr.97-104). Three sentences can be taken to represent the drift of the whole passage.

Therefore it is time to take up the subject from the other end and to start with the sharp opposition in which religion is found over against morals and metaphysics. (R.50; Cr.101c)

Religion's essence is neither thinking nor acting, but intuition and feeling. (R.50; Cr.102a)

Religion shows itself to you as the necessary and indispensable third next to those two, as their natural counterpart, not slighter in worth and splendor than what you wish of them. . . Praxis is an art, speculation is a science, religion is the sensibility and taste for the infinite. (R.52-3; Cr.103a)

Even in the first speech there is a hint of what is to come in the phrase: ". . . the poorly stitched together fragments of metaphysics and morals that are called rational Christianity . . ." (R.25; Cr.89c)

The Age of Enlightenment had cast religion (where religion was not disdainfully consigned to the scrap heap of emotional left-overs from a more primitive age) in either one of two roles. Religion could be seen as a system of dogmas or body of beliefs, which in turn might entail certain attitudes and behaviour, some of it ritual behaviour, and it must be confessed that considerable stress on right doctrines from within religious sects and churches had contributed to this view. The other possibility was to think of religion as a system of moral encouragements and constraints, but especially constraints. Both these ways of regarding religion are still widely held. Both are reductionist and have the effect of depriving religion of uniqueness as this was understood by Schleiermacher and by Otto and others. Yet the second at least of these views had received considerable support in the work of Kant.

As Schleiermacher first studied both Kant and Plato³¹ when he was a student at Halle, perhaps we can see also the influence of the philosopher Johann August Eberhard, who was an anti-Kantian professor of philosophy at Halle. Eberhard wrote in the workbook on ethics which he prepared for his students that the analytic (a priori) and the synthetic (a posteriori) methods must proceed hand in hand (Blackwell 53a). Perhaps in reaction to Kant and the many who tried to follow or prove his epistemology, Schleiermacher developed the conviction that human knowledge must in all spheres remain partial. The wise philosopher must simply accept

this, a principle fully in accord with Socrates. This was no doubt one reason why Plato, following the practice of his master, had adopted the dialogue as the vehicle for his thought³².

Otto went back to Kant in claiming certainty for the a priori or group of a prioris in his understanding of religion. Yet he does not claim conceptual knowledge: only to know that the ultimate (the numinous) exists. Perhaps this is not all that different from Schleiermacher's trust in the *Universum*, the All, in his Reden, which also carries with it no conceptual or descriptive information. Yet Otto appeals directly to Kant's transcendental method in discovering the basic a priori principle through empirical means.

Two standpoints and their unity

Kant had subsumed the whole of religion under ethics, thus making religion basically a rational pursuit and not an emotional one. To this Schleiermacher's basing religion on feeling stands in the strongest contrast. It is known that many of Schleiermacher's contemporaries were deeply troubled by the knowledge-faith divide. Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi wrote in 1791, "What possible relation of the two can be thought in human fashion? No philosophy fills this cleft. To pass over, there is required a bridge - or wing."³³ Blackwell comments: "Finding himself stranded between the rationalistic philosophy of the Age of Reason and the orthodox piety of his Christianity, Jacobi tried to pass over

to the realm of eternal certainty on the wings of faith - though he never accomplished this with the security for which he wished" (Blackwell 162c).

Schleiermacher did not share this difficulty only because of his romantic sense of the infinite, and his belief that the human condition was fundamentally imperfect and imperfectible and human knowledge bound to be for ever incomplete. This enabled him to enjoy an enviable sense of wholeness, which contrasts with Jacobi's complaint to his friend Reinhold in a letter (8.Oct.1817) near the end of his life:

You see, dear R., that I am still the same as ever. Always a heathen with the understanding, but with my whole heart (Gemüth) a Christian, I swim between two currents that do not want to unite for me, so that jointly they are treacherous. For as the one perpetually buoys me up, so at the same time the other perpetually pulls me under. (quoted in Blackwell 163c)

Schleiermacher was shown a copy of this letter by a mutual friend, and wrote to Jacobi direct about this:

It is really nothing other than a reciprocity between being buoyed up by the one and pulled under by the other. But, my dear friend! - why should we not be satisfied with that? Oscillation is truly the general form of all finite existence, and it is a matter of immediate consciousness that this fluctuation proceeds from nothing other than the two foci of my one ellipse, and I have in this suspension the whole abundance of my earthly life. . . Understanding and feeling remain for me alongside one another, but they act upon one another and form a galvanic pile. For me the innermost life of the spirit consists in this galvanic operation - in the feeling for understanding, and in the understanding of feeling - in which the two

poles yet remain always removed from one another.
 . . . For you the "two currents" do not want to
 unite. Neither do they for me. But you wish for
 this unity and miss it painfully, while I remain
 satisfied with their separation. (quoted in
 Blackwell 164a)

This relates directly with Schleiermacher's view that the ideal form of philosophical discourse was neither the systematic nor the fragmentary, but the dialogue, and is further evidenced in his admiration for Plato.

It is not known whether Otto had read this correspondence, although he certainly knew the biography of Schleiermacher and the papers of Schleiermacher edited by Dilthey. It is notable that Otto dedicated his edition of the Reden in 1899 to Dilthey as follows:

Wilhelm Dilthey / dem Biographen Schleiermachers
 / in aufrichtigem Dank und Verehrung gewidmet.

But Otto's philosophy of religion, or his understanding of religion, is only dialogical to the extent that there is interaction between the Numinous and the person or people (more usually singular) who experience the numinous. But this is far from dialogue in the Platonic sense. Instead Otto thought he had found a systematic way of understanding the numinous by reusing the Ahndung theory of Fries.

Schleiermacher describes two standpoints:

Every expression, every product of the human spirit can be viewed and apprehended from a dual standpoint. If one considers religion from its center according to its inner essence, it is a

product of human nature, rooted in one of its necessary modes of action or drives, or whatever you wish to call it, for I do not now want to pass judgment on your technical language. If one considers it from its extremities, according to the definite bearing and form it has here and there assumed, it is a product of time and of history. From which aspect have you considered this spiritual phenomenon in order to arrive at those concepts that you pass off as the common content of everything anyone has ever designated by the name of religion? You will hardly say that this is a consideration of the first type . . ." (R.22-3; Cr.88bc)

This links with what Schleiermacher says about the human soul:

Every life is only the result of a continuous appropriation and repulsion; everything has its determinate being only by virtue of the way in which it uniquely combines and retains the two primal forces of nature: the thirsty attraction and the expansion of the active and living self. (R.6; Cr.79-80)

In this Schleiermacher reflects a fundamental polarity which was widely shared in 18th century literary theory, philosophy and physics (Cr. 79n).

His discussion takes up several pages of the first Rede and it is clear that he wants to develop this in the light of the creative tension already mentioned. One drive seeks to draw everything outside into itself, is orientated towards enjoyment and works only mechanically on whatever is at hand. The other overlooks manifestations because it penetrates them (R.6-7; Cr.80). But Schleiermacher affirms that the two drives exist in every soul, in which all combinations and

proportions of the two are possible.

Thus it is possible to know an object from two directions, from its manifestations or phenomena, with the concomitant need to generalise by induction, or alternatively from its centre or essence. Schleiermacher wrote in one of his Notebooks:

a theory can arise in a dual fashion - from the center out or from the boundaries in. In empirical things, the second fashion. (Denkmale p.104 entry 120)³⁴

This is the familiar contrast between a priori and a posteriori, working from an inner knowledge or feel of a thing, or else induction from a number of bits of empirical evidence. In matters of religion, the essence can only be reached at the centre, and the process is therefore from the centre out. This is in a way parallel to Kant's Moral Law which is essentially independent of phenomena, yet in practice is empirically discovered, as Otto also explained in the discussion in DH. But it also gives an edge to this type of knowledge which is therefore deeper than empirical knowledge.

A very interesting light is thrown on this in an article by Terry H. Foreman³⁵. Foreman suggests a link between Schleiermacher's Reden and Hume's Natural History of Religion. He explains that there is a literary genre of the 18th century which sees "natural history" not simply as the

detailed empirical study of nature "from the boundaries in", but rather a genre that looks to nature in its essence as a norm. Many writers used this genre, including Rousseau and much later Karl Marx. On this view all manifestations are poor reflections, even deformations of the essence which can only be considered from the centre. "A natural history of religion" in this sense relates the ways in which human culture has deviated from and corrupted the essential original. This is indeed the burden of Schleiermacher's Third Rede, "Über die Bildung zur Religion."

A special human faculty

To find the centre, however, human nature has a special capacity. This is taken up again in Schleiermacher's Hermeneutik, a series of lectures by Schleiermacher for which we have no unmistakable text. The essential quality for reaching the centre Schleiermacher calls Divination.

Otto picks up the idea and the term Divination³⁶ and uses it in DH with particular regard to types of people, distinguishing those who have a creative or prophetic capacity in relation to the Numinous, as opposed to the generality who have indeed the capacity or Anlage des Gemütes to encounter the numinous, but no more.

Otto does not, however, exploit Schleiermacher's creative tension between proceeding either from the centre out or from the boundaries in. For Otto, the holy consists of both

rational and non-rational woven together, the rational aspects relating to Verständnis, the non-rational to Ahnung (see Section 3.4 following). Schleiermacher had classified the gulf between Verständnismenschen and Sinnesmenschen, types who failed to comprehend each other, and yet who needed each other (Foreman 102a). Otto would seem to have expressed their psychological interdependence in the essential weaving together of rational and non-rational.

At the same time Otto relies on the manifestations of religion to reveal the numinous, a sequence of operations which he said he derived from Kant, in the innermost depths of the soul (Seelengrund)³⁷. From Schleiermacher he seems to have derived the necessity of seeing the infinite through the finite, of finding or sensing the essence through the manifestations, apparently on the basis of an inner, preformed capacity, as noted above. This of course also appears in Fries, and some scholars, notably Almond 1983, assume that Otto got the whole notion from there. But the case for his debt in this matter to Schleiermacher, whom he studied before being introduced to the work of Fries, is better established.

In the Reden at least Schleiermacher avoided any kind of system and appealed to feeling because this was a quality which was instantly understandable for those for whom he wrote. The imprecision here was an advantage both in itself and because it matched the thought world of the Romantics

around 1800. By 1900 this had changed. Not only was Kant closely interpreted by several neoKantian philosophers, but Hegel's systematic philosophy had also attracted followers who formed themselves into schools of left and right. Advances in psychology meant that psychology, even before Freud, was emerging as a science in its own right, often with a clinical empirical basis, and was a long way removed from being a branch of "anthropology" (so Kant and Fries), or of a philosophy in the speculative sense. Otto's work reflects this development in his appeals to human experience, especially obvious in the case histories derived from James and Starbuck, both psychologists in the modern sense. It may be said that Otto represents a bridge between the thought worlds of 1800 and of 1900, but the differences sometimes strain his terminology.

3.4 Jacob Friedrich Fries (1773-1843)

The previous sections have indicated how Otto could have derived his leading ideas from Kant and Schleiermacher. Yet there is no doubt that he was also deeply impressed by the philosophy of Fries, at least during the years he was at Göttingen under the persuasive influence of Nelson. Modern commentators too have stressed the lasting importance of Fries for Otto's work³⁸, and that is why it is necessary to include this section.

It could be maintained that Otto still commended the philosophy of Fries in 1931 when he wrote, in English, some

notes to The Philosophy of Religion, the English translation of his book KFR, including the following:

Theologians will dispute this problem, the a priori and General versus the Contingent and Historical, till the end of things; and it is perhaps a matter of doubt whether a satisfactory final solution of the problem will ever be found. In my opinion, however, a combination of the principles of Fries with those of De Wette and Schleiermacher seems to offer a solution, which, although it does not appear to me as a final oracular statement, has given me a provisional Archimedean, a ground that I can still rest upon.³⁹

Obviously he would not want to abandon Fries just when his book was being made available to a new and numerous public, but the equality apparently afforded to Schleiermacher, who had been unfavourably compared to Fries in 1909, suggests some revision of views.

As it is part of the drift of the current Thesis to suggest that Fries in fact contributes nothing substantial to Otto's thought and its application, and as Section 2.4 has already discussed Otto's handling of Fries in KFR, this section will concentrate on contemporary criticism of Otto's use of Fries to bring out positive and negative aspects. Two who strongly opposed Otto's use of Fries were G. Weiss⁴⁰ and K. Bornhausen⁴¹.

The article by Georg Weiss which appeared in 1911 begins as follows:

De Wette's students, of whom the best known are the Swiss K. Hagenbach, J. Stähelin and D. Schenkel, were more stimulated by his theological-critical thinking than by his Friesish philosophy. And whatever of Fries's philosophy of religion had perhaps struck home with them at first, gradually died away. Even Fries's son-in-law, the theologian Th. Henke, was not his follower in philosophy.

It is clear that the philosopher J. Fr. Fries was not highly thought of in the early years of the century. Yet Weiß goes on to relate that the young Göttingen philosopher Leonard Nelson (1882-1927) had started the new Friesish school and won over first Rudolf Otto and then Wilhelm Bousset. After some no longer illuminating discussion of the philosophy, Weiß concludes:

I cannot go into the details here. But when influential and acute theologians enter into a matter of importance with such warmth and energy, then other theologians have an obligation to take it equally seriously and to bring out the pros and cons from all sides. (Weiss 1911, 732)

Ansgar Paus⁴² is more sympathetic, and shows how Fries and his followers De Wette and Apelt⁴³ followed Kant in at least one point. Paus quotes Apelt on a central problem: "All our knowledge begins with experience, but not all our knowledge derives from experience."⁴⁴ (Paus 54b)

Fries starts, as already noted, with the Faktum in the nature of the knower. This can only be reached by self-observation, a process which is not simply introspection, but a process of reflection which brings to consciousness something which has

already happened at a subconscious level. Thus the original happening is unmediated, while the reflection is mediated in thought and consciousness. Paus outlines what Fries means as follows:

If Kant for his part took the trouble to find a transcendental basis with the help of the principle of the condition for the possibility of experience, others after him worked for a basis for these axioms by means of inner experience, i.e. "psychologically". Fries not only rejected the second path because the apriori character of unmediated knowledge would be destroyed by it; he did not even agree with Kant's attempt to find the basis for unmediated knowledge by transcendental means, because the "synthetic character of metaphysics" would be given away by it. Fries sees the solution to this problem in the claim that there is a third possibility beside these two, to find the basis for axioms having their validity in immediate evidence, in the unmediated knowledge of reason, which being apriori is distinct from any possibility of experienced knowledge. (Paus 43c-44a)

Fries described his method as philosophical anthropology. This too is cause for dissatisfaction because anthropology, which meant taking the human as a starting point, often meant no more than psychology at the time. Even Paus concludes that Fries, while avoiding the crude forms of Psychologism, steers towards a solution which is open to the accusation of psychologism, because he found the basis of knowledge (that is the axioms) in a natural, human origin.

Karl Bornhausen, then at Marburg, reviewed Otto's KFR for Zthk (1910) with a long article simply entitled "Against Neofriesianism in Theology". Leibnitz, Kant and

Schleiermacher raise questions and problems which can be applied to our own time - Bornhausen mentions especially the questions of the last fifty years; whereas Fries, according to Bornhausen, is entirely bound to his own time. It is therefore surprising that Otto, for whom Bornhausen has considerable respect as a theologian, takes the trouble to reiterate Fries with a book of difficult diction and old-fashioned content which even when freshly expressed seems strange (346-7). It would have been better for Otto to enlarge on his own capable thought, as sketched in the Conclusion to this book, or perhaps some of the more stimulating ideas of Fries, rather than this obvious and comprehensive repristination (eine offene und umfassende Repristination, 347).

Paus is less harsh. Instead of stating the situation as "Fries against Kant" (Bornhausen 347c), Paus considers that Fries stays close to Kant, except for missing the central point, the understanding of Transcendental. Fries speaks of "Kant's prejudice," "the prejudice of the transcendental" (Paus 40b), and set about to reform the Critique of Reason. By altering the approach, he sought to find the basis of reason as a Faktum in the knower, and in this he also changed the meaning of the term a priori, using it now to describe a basis or fact of knowing, rather than as the limit beyond which reason could not go. Putting it more strongly, Bornhausen says that in following Fries Otto seeks a basic knowledge which is even more basic than the a priori, i.e.

beyond the a priori, which is impossible (351-2). Kant wanted to transcend experience and crude sense-perception in order to seek the possibility of knowledge in the ground of pure understanding (auf dem Boden des reinen Verstandes, 362c). This relates to the possibility of experience, including psychological experience, but not to psychology itself. Thus the transcendental question (Kant) is the question of the form of knowledge, how it is possible, whereas the psychological question is the content of knowledge (362-4). Fries then went on to claim that we have knowledge of things in reality, in themselves, because he uses transcendental to overstep the intellect through Ahnung.

The system Fries worked out is superficially clear, as are the writings of Nelson. But the details are complex, strange, and unconvincing. Otto's espousal of this system earned him adverse criticism, when it seems that everything he needed was already available in Kant and Schleiermacher. Some commentators, e.g. Almond 1983, see Fries as central for Otto's thought, especially in Das Heilige, but it now seems clear that the whole Fries-Nelson interlude for Otto was a needless distraction. As early as 1910 H. Scholz said as much in a review of KFR⁴⁵:

The final chapter develops a programme of work in the well-established discipline Study of Religion (Religionswissenschaft), which comes close enough to the epoch-making demands of Troeltsch, with the result that one may well ask whether the laborious detour concerning Fries was really necessary, or whether to link directly to Kant

and Schleiermacher would not have been simpler and better justified. (col.531c)

Th. Haering also thought Fries irrelevant to Otto's main project in his review of DH in 1917⁴⁶. It is useless to speculate, however, what might have developed if Otto had worked instead with Husserl at Göttingen instead of Nelson.⁴⁷

3.5 Albrecht Ritschl (1822-1889)

Ritschl's influence may have encouraged Otto to pay more attention to historical developments in religion, specifically German Christianity. Otto came into the tradition of Ritschl before he studied Fries, and the Ritschlian tradition may have helped him to keep a hold on the actual and historical.

In a footnote to p.123 of DH Otto says of his first publication die Anschauung vom heiligen Geist bei Luther: "I wrote this first paper at the time quite under the influence of Ritschlianism, as can be seen from its attitude to mysticism. But the impact of the numinous-nonrational in Luther and in every genuine idea of God were clear to me. Since then over the years I had to produce a different evaluation of mysticism . . ."

On page 3 of AHG Otto lists those whose work has most influenced him up to then. The list begins with Ritschl and A. Harnack, and includes Loofs and Reischle (of Halle), H.

Schultz (of Göttingen) and v. Herrmann, all of whom are listed by Richmond (1978, 28) as prominent members of the 'Ritschlian school'.

Ritschl taught at Göttingen till his death in March 1889, the month before Otto arrived as a theological student for the summer semester 1889. Otto had originally gone to Erlangen, although Göttingen was his local university, because Göttingen was considered too liberal. This reputation may be due to the ascendancy of Ritschl.

During the years Ritschl was a student and then a lecturer at Bonn, the "supernatural approach to Christianity" was fighting on two fronts⁴⁸. One was the philosophy of Hegel and the impersonal Absolute which was above all particulars; and the other was the advancing scientific materialist and naturalist world view. With the sudden collapse of Hegelianism in the 1840s materialist thought rushed into the vacuum, giving added impetus to philosophies which were naturalistic and positivistic⁴⁹. From 1860, after the publication of Darwin's Origin of Species, these philosophies attached the label 'evolutionary' to themselves⁵⁰.

The contemporary stress on mechanical causality in the name of empiricism questioned the nature and freedom of mankind. Kant had shown a way to incorporate empiricism within idealism, and Ritschl followed in this tradition. But where Kant's mode of thought was largely ahistorical, Ritschl

taught the importance of historical development. The question concerns the relation of human consciousness to the material world. For Kant there was the knowledge of freedom typified in ethical choice, but the relation of choice to causality lay beyond the reach of knowledge. Ritschl was less tightly rationalist and was prepared to take the connection on trust. Thus he asserted a clear distinction between "nature" and "spirit", the human from the non-human⁵¹, with the effect that while human beings are part of nature, they are "superior in value" in that they are conscious of having freedom of choice. Consciousness provides the starting point.

Ritschl wrote (in seven weeks) his essay Theology and Metaphysics⁵² as an attack or self-defence against specifically Luthardt and v. Frank (Frank was the Erlangen professor who had most impressed the young Otto), but more generally to represent his own opposition to speculative systems which disvalued or subordinated human experience and consciousness. Such systems included both the dominant "sense-organ prejudice" (Spiegelberg) of mechanical positivism and naturalism on the one hand, and metaphysical systems of which Hegel's, now split into Right and Left, was a powerful example. But equally, the speculative theological structures of medieval scholasticism, of the Roman church and of Lutheranism traditionally understood, constituted non-empirical structures which Ritschl opposed.

Ritschl, like Schleiermacher before and like Otto later, wanted to put experience before system. Ritschl's dogmatics centres on revelation. But unlike Schleiermacher, this is for Ritschl primarily scripture and the tradition of scripture interpretation. Ritschl therefore emphasises the Christian community, and holds that faith is corporate before it is individual. This provides the basis for Ritschl's opposition to piety, as understood in the Lutheran tradition, which he links to "neo-platonism" (i.e. a non-empirical metaphysical system). He opposes pietism on four grounds⁵³: it is ahistorical because it bypasses the Word of God as mediated in the Christian religion; it is amoral because mysticism does not entail any moral action; it is individualistic; and it is otherworldly, that is non-empirical and non-practical. Otto stresses experience, but the phenomena of religion to which he gives prominence put him in the tradition of Religionsgeschichte or actual, historical religion.

On the other hand, in his first publication, AHG, Otto appears to minimise the importance of the Christian tradition and community in saying that the individual Christian has through the preaching of the Word direct and unmediated access to the Spirit, and is not dependent on a chain of tradition. Otto devotes attention to scholastic theories of causality in relation to salvation. His scheme is practical and empirical in that he both denies any kind of extra-psychological causality, and says that the effects of faith

are empirical. Luther, he says, speaks of the spirit and the fruits or effects of the spirit, not of how and why as the mystics and enthusiasts describe it (AHG 38-39). The Spirit on one side and Faith on the other is causa sufficiens. (AHG 40).

If AHG owes something to the influence of Ritschl it is possible to see this as a longer-lasting and more beneficial strand in Otto's thought than the philosophy of Fries. When considered in contrast to Fries, Otto seems more realistic, actual and historical, because his appeal to experience is often though not always in terms of being influenced by or through the rituals, music, art forms etc. of actual religions, in contrast to the metaphysical system-making of Fries.

3.6 William James (1842-1910)⁵⁴

William James' 1901-2 Gifford Lectures were published under the title of The Varieties of Religious Experience⁵⁵ (VRE) in 1902, and in 1907 appeared in German as Die religiöse Erfahrung in ihrer Mannigfaltigkeit⁵⁶, translated by the psychologist Georg Wobbermin. Otto mentions James's book first in KFR, published in 1909, and then quotes several passages from James in DH. Otto freely acknowledges a debt to James, but the nature of this debt needs further study.

James on experience

James defines religion at the beginning of his second lecture

"The Circumscription of the Topic". He acknowledges that his definition is somewhat arbitrary, but for the purpose of these lectures (his own emphasis) he limits his subject to "the feelings, acts, and experiences of individual men in their solitude, so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider the divine." (VRE 50b)

He does not claim scientific precision by this definition, and therefore chooses to examine cases which are the best developed.⁵⁷

Things are more or less divine, states of mind are more or less religious, reactions are more or less total, but the boundaries are always misty, and it is everywhere a question of amount and degree. Nevertheless, at their extreme of development, there can never be any question as to what experiences are religious. (VRE 57a)

His topic of course is not religion but religious experience. He does not define experience. There is no doubt that experience for James is the subject matter of psychology and that is why he is competent to treat of it. It is also likely that in the puritan-pietist New England in which he grew up everyone knew what Christian conversion was and the conversion experience was religious experience in its most significant form. Thirdly, James forestalls epistemological investigation by running down speculative thought, most especially philosophy and theology. It may not have occurred to him that he might need to define experience, yet his straightforward approach appealed at once to Husserl⁵⁸.

In a letter written while he was preparing these lectures James outlined his aims:

First, to defend (against all the prejudices of my class) 'experience' against 'philosophy' as being the real backbone of the world's religious life - I mean prayer, guidance, and all that sort of thing immediately and privately felt as against high and noble general views of our destiny and the world's meaning; and second, to make the hearer or reader believe, what I invincibly do believe, that, although all the special manifestations of religion may have been absurd, (I mean its creeds and theories), yet the life of it as a whole is mankind's most important function. A task well-nigh impossible, I fear, and in which I shall fail, but to attempt it is my religious act.⁵⁹

Philosophy and Feeling

In the lectures he repeatedly makes a contrast between feelings and philosophy, between experience and thought. His subject matter is experience, i.e. feelings, and he rejects all forms of metaphysics in most uncomplimentary terms. James makes this contrast repeatedly, and most especially in Lecture XVIII on Philosophy. Otto on the other hand needed to have both the feelings and the philosophy. For James, philosophy fails the pragmatic test:

The test is a perfectly plain one of fact. Theology based on pure reason must in point of fact convince men universally. If it did not, wherein would its superiority consist? If it only formed sects and schools, even as sentiment and mysticism form them, how would it fulfill its programme of freeing us from personal caprice and waywardness? This perfectly definite practical test of the pretensions of philosophy to found religion on universal reason simplifies my procedure today. I need not discredit philosophy by laborious criticism of its arguments. It will suffice if I show that as a matter of history it

fails to prove its contentions to be "objectively" convincing. In fact, philosophy does so fail. It does not banish differences; it founds schools and sects just as feeling does. (VRE 419ab)

Experience is first order, but according to James philosophy and theology are second order, because without prior experience there is nothing to philosophise or theologise about.

When I call theological formulas secondary products, I mean that in a world where no religious feeling had ever existed, I doubt whether any philosophic theology could ever have been framed. I doubt if dispassionate intellectual contemplation of the universe, apart from inner unhappiness and need for deliverance on the one hand and mystical emotion on the other, would ever have resulted in religious philosophies such as we now possess. (VRE 415a)

Established religions, their doctrines, scriptures and rituals, are secondary products. Otto says much the same. This view of religion enables both men to offer an explanation about the similarities and differences between historic religions. If the experiences, the emotions and feelings are the same, then the reflections on them depend on second order activity mediated by culture, language, and other factors which account for the differences. Otto does not quite say this, but James plainly does.

When we survey the whole field of religion, we find a great variety in the thoughts that have prevailed there; but the feelings on the one hand and the conduct on the other are almost always the same, for Stoic, Christian, and Buddhist saints are practically indistinguishable in their lives. The theories which Religion generates,

being thus variable, are secondary; and if you wish to grasp her essence, you must look to the feelings and the conduct as being the more constant elements. (VRE 481a)

James sees himself throughout these lectures as a psychologist, although he does not approach the behaviourist stance of John B. Watson whose new thrust to the psychology of behaviourism dates from 1913, three years after James's death.

You see now why I have been so individualistic throughout these lectures, and why I have seemed so bent on rehabilitating the element of feeling in religion and subordinating its intellectual part. Individuality is founded in feeling; and the recesses of feeling, the darker, blinder strata of character, are the only places in the world in which we catch real fact in the making, and directly perceive how events happen, and how work is actually done. Compared with this world of living, individualized feelings, the world of generalized objects which the intellect contemplates is without solidity or life. (VRE 478ab)

James does not so much support his position by argument, which might in itself be a concession to philosophy, but rather by commending a particular outlook. He made clear in several of his publications that he regarded attitude and will as the determinants of action for which reasons were found later and dressed up as proofs. Thus in *Varieties* also he is presenting a particular way of looking at the evidence. Nicholas Lash⁶⁰ puts it like this:

James is forever coaxing his reader not so much to accept the conclusions of an argument (for any intellectualist may have this aim in view!), but rather to come to see things in a particular way.

"A man's vision," he once wrote, "is the great fact about him."⁶¹

Lash goes on to cite John J MacDermott, "James's radical empiricism is as much an aesthetic as it is a metaphysics or an epistemology."⁶² This ties in with James's skill and training as an artist.⁶³

James on objectivity

Yet for James feeling relates to some objective reality. James devotes his Lecture III to The Reality of the Unseen, and Otto quotes some lines from it (IH 10-11 footnote; DH 11 in text). Otto expressly rejects the suggestion that this force is somehow inferred from the phenomena as their only possible cause. Instead Otto stresses that this unseen, 'the Numinous', is directly felt through the experience. Although Otto has insisted that the Numinous is beyond concept and impossible to describe, he does manage to produce a systematic and telling analysis by means of a special device involving a double reference. Otto attempts to use the methods of phenomenology to give an outline description of this reality which he calls the numinous by means of describing the feeling of the numinous. This goes far beyond James who does not attempt anything like this. His third lecture is entitled "The Reality of the Unseen," and is drawn on by Otto in DH.

The object of feeling for James has an importance which is

not made clear. Unlike Otto, James maintains that religious feelings, fear, love and so on, are not as feelings different in kind from any other love or fear. What makes them specifically religious is the specific sort of object to which they are directed (VRE 47b). Thus there must be an object as well as a feeling.

Otto had seen James's book before he published KFR in 1909, but he did not refer to it in detail until DH in 1917. But Otto's own personal project was to find the confluence of academic theology with the personal experience of pietism, and he seemed to find an ally in VRE. James's radically empirical approach to religion is obvious, yet towards the end of his series he devotes Lecture XVIII to Philosophy which he expects to be able to point beyond his own work. On James's view philosophy cannot be used to justify religion after the manner of the theologians, but it would be possible to apply reason and intellect to some kind of systematic comparison and analysis of the phenomena.

In all sad sincerity I think we must conclude that the attempt to demonstrate by purely intellectual processes the truth of the deliverances of direct religious experience is absolutely hopeless.

It would be unfair to philosophy, however, to leave her under this negative sentence. Let me close, then, by briefly enumerating what she can do for religion. If she will abandon metaphysics and deduction for criticism and induction, and frankly transform herself from theology into science of religions, she can make herself enormously useful.

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I do not see why a critical Science of Religions of this sort might not eventually command as general a public adhesion as is commanded by physical science. Even the personally non-religious might accept its conclusions on trust, much as blind persons now accept the facts of optics - it might appear as foolish to refuse them.⁶⁴ (VRE 436-7)

Otto's use of William James

All critics and commentators agree that Das Heilige draws at least in part on psychology. On page 11 Otto acknowledges his debt to William James with a direct quotation, and makes other references to VRE in the early, descriptive chapters. Ernst Troeltsch in his review of DH (1919) says that Otto establishes a purely psychological analysis for religious phenomena, and goes on to say that this is required by Otto's application of Fries's 'anthropological critique' to which epistemology and philosophy are merely supplements. A psychological contribution is required by Fries. But what Fries offers is psychology in the service of epistemology, not the collection of psychological data in personal accounts, as in James.

Georg Wobbermin, the translator of James's Gifford Lectures into German, was a psychologist, and it is therefore all the more significant that he describes Otto in his review of Das Heilige (Wobbermin 1923) as "a master of this kind of psychological analysis", but then goes on to say that Otto has ignored developments in psychology in the last ten years, and that this has made his work less clear than it might be.

Ten years cannot be a reference to Fries who wrote a hundred and ten years earlier, but it is of course exactly ten years between the publication of Das Heilige (1917) and the German translation of William James (1907).

Otto studied theology at Erlangen and Göttingen, and there is no evidence that he had any formal training in psychology. Yet the need to reflect on personal experience is suggested by Kant, Schleiermacher, and Fries. Given that psychological understanding is important for reading, and a fortiori for writing Das Heilige, it seems likely that Otto made use of James to develop his psychological ideas, and, equally important, to support them with the authority of an internationally-known psychologist.

Many reviewers of Otto's book remarked on the similarity to James of Otto's psychological approach. A paper by Peter Brunner entitled "The Idea of Religion in William James and Rudolf Otto" appeared in 1928⁶⁵, in which the author compares and contrasts DH and VRE. Brunner does not, however, say much about the use Otto may have made of James, beyond showing the important ways in which Otto either went beyond James or differed significantly from him. Given the different intellectual climates in which the American and the German grew up, differences are to be expected. More surprising are the parallels and similarities. At the same time it must be recognised that James travelled widely in Europe, read and spoke German and French and was familiar

with many ideas which Otto grew up with, so some similarities may be due less to borrowing than derivation from a common source.

Brunner notes the inductive approach to the material which both men take up. This means that both describe cases and examples and this is their greatest similarity. Although both ascribe the highest value to religion and stress the reality of religion's focus, Otto and James differ when it comes to trying to say what religion essentially is and in their handling of the relationship of rational to non-rational. Both, however, stress that the centre of religion is not rational. According to Brunner, James does no more than look for common factors in religious examples, while Otto seeks out its essence, and this difference leads them to different understandings of religion and of the rational. For James, reason simply translates the non-rational feelings into words and concepts, which can never be complete and may be arbitrary. But Otto, borrowing and reshaping Kant's device of schematisation, posits an essential and necessary link between any particular aspect of the non-rational and the concept or phrase used to denote it. Brunner ends with the question whether there is a uniquely religious feeling: according to Otto there is, but James at one point denies this and elsewhere speaks rather imprecisely of the unconscious. Brunner does not, however, discuss Otto's borrowings from James. To do this it is helpful to bring out similarities and differences.

Differences centre on the place of the intellect. Otto already had his own plans before he made use of James's book. He had had a systematic training in philosophy and theology and at Göttingen at least this had been in the Ritschlian mould. Otto's claims to follow Kant and Fries contrast strongly with the anti-intellectualist stance of James. In his discussion of James, Nicholas Lash makes much of this (Lash 1988, 18-19) with several quotations from VRE. Here is a sample of James's anti-intellectualism:

But surely the systematic theologians are the closet naturalists of the deity. . . What is their deduction of metaphysical attributes but a shuffling and matching of pedantic dictionary-adjectives, aloof from morals, aloof from human needs, something that might be worked out from the mere word "God" by one of those logical machines of wood and brass which recent ingenuity has contrived . . . What keeps religion going is something else than abstract definitions and systems of concatenated adjectives, and something different from faculties of theology and their professors. All these things are after effects, secondary accretions upon those phenomena of vital conversations with the unseen divine, of which I have shown you so many instances . . . (VRE 428b-429a)

This signals a very important difference between James and Otto. Although James hoped that a Science of Religion - empirically based and, like optics, inductively built - might follow from his and similar evidences, he was strongly opposed to any application of one branch of science to shape the theoretical framework for another⁶⁶.

James appears to have allowed his pragmatism to affect his

feeling for truth when he asserts that reality, truth is always useful. This is not of course quite the same as saying that utility is the criterion of truth, a position which Otto recognises and explicitly rejects in his essays on Darwinism and in NRW. Evolutionists, Otto says, give the answer to Pilate's question in terms of survival, and this a religious person cannot accept.

Similarities: (1) Both James and Otto use case histories.

Almost at the beginning of his first Lecture, James sets out his starting point and his programme:

. . . I am neither a theologian, nor a scholar learned in the history of religions, nor an anthropologist. Psychology is the only branch of learning in which I am particularly versed. To the psychologist the religious propensities of man must be at least as interesting as any other of the facts pertaining to his mental constitution. It would seem, therefore, that, as a psychologist, the natural thing would be for me to invite you to a descriptive survey of those religious propensities.

If the inquiry be psychological, not religious institutions, but rather religious feelings and religious impulses must be its subject, and I must confine myself to those more developed subjective phenomena recorded in literature produced by articulate and fully self-conscious men, in works of piety and autobiography. (VRE 26)

James's work was based on observation and accounts of introspection, in particular on numerous case histories collected by Starbuck and others. There are hints that he drew also on his own experiences when under severe depression⁶⁷, as a result of which he wrote the essay Is Life

Worth Living?⁶⁸. Because Otto wanted to give examples of the effect of religious phenomena on the human psyche, he would welcome support from an established psychologist.

(2) Both focus on the Individual

Early in his series (Lecture II), James adopts the partition of the religious field into institutional and personal religion (VRE 48, following Sabatier). Of these, he considers ecclesiasticism and all institutional forms to be secondary, and because he wants to study religion in its most intense form, he decides,

Now in these lectures I propose to ignore the institutional branch entirely.

.
In one sense at least the personal religion will prove itself more fundamental than either theology or ecclesiasticism. Churches, when once established, live at second-hand upon tradition; but the founders of every church owed their power originally to the fact of their direct communion with the divine. (VRE49)

It would profit us little to study this second-hand religious life. We must make search rather for the original experiences which were the pattern-setters to all this mass of suggested feeling and imitated conduct. These experiences we can only find in individuals for whom religion exists not as a dull habit, but as an acute fever rather. (VRE 29)

Otto too centres his work on the individual (for which he was criticised in some quarters), and makes the same point about the founders of churches. For instance, on the consciousness of the 'daemon' in primitive religions:

And in their case it is very evident that they do not arise as a collective product of crowd-

imagination, . . . but were the intuitions of persons of innate prophetic powers. . . he alone experiences a numen or divine-daemonic power at first hand. Only where and when it has been revealed through such a one do the forms of worship and a common cult arise. (IH 122; DH 149)

(3) The Primacy of Experience

In using empirical examples Otto was basing his work on the primacy of feelings. This is the first of the two paths Otto outlines in the concluding chapter of KFR, and was the cause of considerable criticism, especially from those with a theological or philosophical background⁶⁹. But in writing of feelings (plural) primacy can be seen as primacy in time, as the feelings lead to the discovery for Otto of the a priori awareness or feeling (singular), and sense of the numinous. This is primary in the logical sense and has no parallel in James.

Both James and Otto draw on phenomena from a variety of religions and make human feelings, emotions, which are the field of psychology, the starting point for their different developments. After stating that the Holy is a complex of rational and non-rational elements, Otto isolates the non-rational, for which he coined the word 'Numinous', and the book develops this theme. After all, as he writes in his Preface to the English translation, he has already discussed the rational aspects of religion pretty thoroughly in previous books. James has not discussed the rational: indeed he rejected "intellectualism" (although he acknowledges

elsewhere its place in religion). He simply states that for a psychologist feelings are primary:

Please observe, however, that I do not yet say that it is better that the subconscious and non-rational should thus hold primacy in the religious realm. I confine myself simply to pointing out that they do so hold it as a matter of fact. (VRE 89)

This fact is the justification for his empirical approach, which he defends again in Lecture XVIII on Philosophy:

In short, you suspect that I am planning to defend feeling at the expense of reason, to rehabilitate the primitive and unreflective, to dissuade you from the hope of any Theology worthy of the name.

To a certain extent I have to admit that you guess rightly. I do believe that feeling is a deeper source of religion, and that philosophic and theological formulas are secondary products, like translations of a text into another tongue. (VRE 414-5)

(4) Human reaction and that which is beyond concepts

Otto uses the phrase 'the sense of the numinous' for which he claims a double reference. On the one hand it refers to the unseen force itself which is beyond concept and indescribable. But on the other it also refers to the state of mind or psyche of persons who undergo a numinous experience. Now this state of mind can be described, and in this way it is possible to find words for the totally non-conceptual and even to put together a descriptive analysis. This way forward is suggested in James when he writes that the reality (of the unseen force) elicits a reaction in the human consciousness (VRE 69). Although James does not take

this any further, it might have struck Otto as a strong psychological lead which he has dubbed the 'feeling-response' (Gefühls-reaktion)⁷⁰ (IH 10; DH 10), and which alone makes his famous analysis possible.

This process serves to underline the fact that the sense of the numinous, the feeling itself, is primary, and the reaction and descriptions of the states of mind are dependent on it. In Chapter III Otto writes, after a preliminary discussion of Schleiermacher's term 'creature-feeling':

All that this new term, 'creature-feeling', can express, is the note of submergence into nothingness before an overpowering, absolute might of some kind; whereas everything turns upon the character of this overpowering might, a character which cannot be expressed verbally, and can only be expressed indirectly through the tone and content of a man's feeling-response to it. And this response must be directly experienced in oneself to be understood. (IH 10; DH 10)

This device enables Otto to go on to analyse the six distinctive moments of the sensus numinis by means of introspection. The description of these moments occupies Chapters III-VI of his book and are summed up in the phrase Mysterium Tremendum et Fascinans. In making this analysis Otto goes well beyond James, who did not take this 'reaction of the human consciousness' any further⁷¹.

(5) The Essence of Religion

According to Brunner, James made no attempt to reach the essence of religion, whereas in Otto's book the ineffabile is

early identified as the unique and essential component which the rest of the book sets about to analyse and discuss. Yet James did in fact have some important things to say about religion which go beyond his assertion that no definition is satisfactory⁷². (VRE46)

James calls his last lecture Conclusions (Lecture XX). In some ways it suggests Otto's starting point, when he says virtually at the end of his series, "The next step is to characterize the feelings." (VRE 481). And this he begins in a sensational way. James contrasts intellectual knowledge with the faith-state in a passage which includes the following:

1. The uneasiness, reduced to its simplest terms, is a sense that there is something wrong about us as we naturally stand.

2. The solution is a sense that we are saved from the wrongness by making proper connection with the higher powers.

The individual becomes conscious that this higher part is coterminous and continuous with the MORE of the same quality which is operative in the universe outside of him That part of the content concerning which the question of truth most pertinently arises is that "MORE of the same quality" with which our own higher self appears in the experience to come into harmonious working relation.

. . . .
Let me propose, then, as an hypothesis, that whatever it may be on its farther side, the "more" with which in religious experience we feel ourselves connected is on its hither side the subconscious continuation of our conscious life.
(VRE 484-7)

Here, in addition to the something wrong which suggests the

sense of unworthiness which in turn is the basis of Otto's section on 'creature-feeling' in Chapter III and the beginning of his analysis, is a clear foreshadowing of what Otto calls the 'overplus'. This is indeed the non-rational or numinous, that which remains when all rational and conceptual aspects of the Holy have been stripped away.

It is true that all this moral significance is contained in the word 'holy', but it includes in addition - as even we cannot but feel - a clear overplus of meaning, and this it is now our task to isolate. Nor is this merely a later or acquired meaning; rather, 'holy', or at least the equivalent words in Latin and Greek, in Semitic and other ancient languages, denoted first and foremost only this overplus. (IH 5; DH 5)

The closer we study the actual texts of the two books, the more connections we find or seem to find. But some of this must be due to the common subject matter, and some to their common cultural heritage. It has already been noted that James travelled in Europe and was well-read in German and in French, and a note of caution should be marked. This can be illustrated in the case of the use both authors make of the words "Solemn" and "Solemnity", James already in Lecture II (VRE 56), and Otto also early in his book when he invites his reader to direct attention to "such states of the soul as that of solemn worship" (IH 8; DH 8). In Otto the idea lies behind much of his discussion of the awe-inspiring aspects, and James devotes a page to a fairly intense consideration of solemnity in religious contexts.

We cannot however claim that Otto drew on this word (and

idea) from his study of James. The source behind them both could be the 37th Thesis of Claus Harms, produced in 1817 for the 300th anniversary of the Reformation.

I know one religious word, half of whose force belongs to the realm of reason, and half does not: "Celebration" (Feier, also means holiday and holy day). Reason understands this word as a day off work etc. But once the word is changed into "Solemnity" (Feierlichkeit), then reason has no part in it. It is too wonderful and too exalted. The same with "Sanctify" and "Blessing". . . . The proper area of such things is the "Mystical". Religion is a part of this area - terra incognita for reason.⁷³

Otto quotes this passage at length in DH p.78, but it was not included in the English translation.

(6) The Value and Uniqueness of the Religious Feeling

Both writers stress the value of the non-rational in religion. But James denies that the actual feelings from a psychological point of view are unique:

There is religious fear, religious love, religious awe, religious joy, and so forth. But religious love is only man's natural emotion of love directed to a religious object; religious fear is only the ordinary fear of commerce, so to speak, the common quaking of the human breast, in so far as the notion of divine retribution may arouse it; religious awe is the same organic thrill which we feel in a forest at twilight, or in a mountain gorge, . . .
As there thus seems to be no one elementary religious emotion, but only a common storehouse of emotions upon which religious objects may draw, . . . (VRE 47)

Yet there is something unique about the experience, provided that we examine it in its intensest form. James draws a

comparison with physiology:

It is a good rule in physiology, when we are studying the meaning of an organ, to ask after its most peculiar and characteristic sort of performance, and to seek its office in that one of its functions which no other organ can possibly execute. Surely the same maxim holds good in our present quest. The essence of religious experiences, the thing by which we finally must judge them, must be that element or quality in them which we can meet nowhere else. And such a quality will be of course most prominent and easy to notice in those religious experiences which are most one-sided, exaggerated, and intense. (VRE 62)

Otto proposes the same course of action, that is to consider religious feelings in isolation from those of other kinds:

Next, in the probing and analysis of such states of the soul as that of solemn worship, it will be well if regard be paid to what is unique in them rather than to what they have in common with other similar states. To be rapt in worship is one thing; to be morally uplifted by the contemplation of a good deed is another. (IH 8; DH 8)

For Otto there can be no question but that the religious experience is unique:

For if there be any single domain of human experience that presents us with something unmistakably specific and unique, peculiar to itself, assuredly it is that of the religious life. (IH 4; DH4)

(7) Rational and Non-rational

Both James and Otto are well aware that they are handling material which is non-conceptual and non-rational. James does not attempt to analyse the psychological case histories themselves, but rather uses them as supporting evidence for

his description of different types of mind or soul. Thus his work remains on the strictly empirical level. He does not address the relationship of rational to non-rational, which is more a problem for philosophy than for psychology. For Otto on the other hand this relationship is fundamental, and he is at pains to emphasise the essential links between rational and non-rational in that key term in religion, summed up in the word 'holy'.

In the Author's Foreword to the English translation Otto wrote;

In this book I have ventured to write of that which may be called 'non-rational' or 'supra-rational' in the depths of the divine nature. I do not therefore want to promote in any way the tendency of our time towards an extravagant and fantastic 'irrationalism', but rather to join issue with it in its morbid form. The 'irrational' is today a favourite theme of all who are too lazy to think or too ready to evade the arduous duty of clarifying their ideas and grounding their convictions on a basis of coherent thought. This book, recognizing the profound import of the non-rational for metaphysic, makes a serious attempt to analyse all the more exactly the feeling which remains where the concept fails, and to introduce a terminology which is not any more loose or indeterminate for having necessarily to make use of symbols.

Before I ventured upon this field of inquiry I spent many years of study upon the rational aspect of that supreme reality we call 'God', and the results of my work are contained in my books, Naturalistische und religiöse Weltansicht (Eng. Tr. 'Naturalism and Religion', London 1907), and Die Kant-Friesische Religions-Philosophie. And I feel that no one ought to concern himself with the 'Numen ineffabile' who has not already devoted assiduous and serious study to the 'Ratio aeterna'.

When writing DH therefore, Otto was already prepared for a discussion which centres on feeling rather than reason, although he is repeatedly insistent that 'the holy' is a complex of both rational and non-rational. In Chapter One page one he states: "And of Christianity at least it is false that 'feeling is all, the name but sound and smoke'."⁷⁴

Like James, Otto approaches the phenomena descriptively and empirically. But James cannot claim to have spent time on the 'Ratio aeterna', and his study stays almost entirely with the non-rational. James states that feeling can and often must be contrasted with conceptual content:

The fact is that the mystical feeling . . . has no specific intellectual content whatever of its own. It is capable of forming matrimonial alliances with material furnished by the most diverse philosophies and theologies, provided only that they can find a place in their framework for its peculiar emotional moods. (VRE 40)

This passage underlines the arbitrary relationship between reason (philosophy) and the non-rational for James. This was not good enough for Otto, whose theory of schematisation depends upon a necessary and a priori connection between the two.

It seems that Otto derived some ideas, some ways of expressing his thoughts, and some encouragement from reading William James. The most important factor would seem to be that in James Otto found an acclaimed psychologist whose work

he could follow and whose words, where appropriate, he could quote. This provided a lively dimension to his handling of the religious phenomena, most of which he already had to hand. There is no evidence that they ever met. But at the same time it should be said that the basic ideas behind Otto's work came from his own background, without any reference to James. Likely sources are the strongly pietistic tradition of his own upbringing in the Hanoverian Lutheran church, and the emphasis on feeling shown by Schleiermacher. It is likely, however, that DH would have been less practical, less supported by case studies if Otto had not read James. What made the deep impression on his readers in many lands, however, were the examples of religious phenomena drawn from a variety of world religions, and the way in which they are used to illustrate and express the Mysterium tremendum et fascinans.

In James Otto was following an empirical psychologist. But at the same time Otto was determined to keep a philosophical anchorage for his work and that is why the link with Kant remained so important for him. James was of course speaking and writing about religious experience and probably never thought of including similar accounts of experiences which were not religious, or not explicitly so for those who underwent them. His New England Presbyterian background made him look for such experience within religious contexts and specifically conversion. Schleiermacher, like James, will dispense with doctrine, or rather this is what he said in the

Reden. But unlike James, Schleiermacher does not confine experience of the Universum to explicitly religious contexts; rather he includes such feelings and intuitions within a much broader definition of religion. This point of view is particularly significant when evidences from the mid-twentieth century are collected, because here it becomes possible for people to speak of experiences as being explicitly non-religious in their terms, and would doubtless resent a Schleiermacher telling them that they are in fact religious.

1. Meister Eckhart: Mystical Theologian, London SPCK, 1991, pp.11-12
2. "als sich die pforten des vaticanischen archivs seit vielen jahren keinem deutschen gelehrten mehr geöffnet haben" (Pfieffer xiv).
3. M O'C Walshe Meister Eckhart Sermons & Treatises (translated and edited by M O'C Walshe), Shaftesbury, Element Books, 3 vols. 1987, reference to vol. I, p. xxi
4. Walshe vol.I, 1-13; Pfeiffer, 3-10
5. DH 138a; IH 113a, cf. 112c; and many other passages in DH
6. See a Kant lexicon e.g. that by Heinrich Ratke, Systematisches Handlexikon zu Kants "Kritik der reinen Vernunft", Hamburg 1929 & 1972.
7. Cyprian Smith OSB, The Way of Paradox, London, Darton Longman Todd. 1987.
8. This was first published in 1789-90, and figures in the Bibliography as Kant 1952. Citations from Meredith's translation are given as follows: M. for the page number in Meredith; § for the section number; and K. for the page in standard Kant editions.
9. see J Kemp The Philosophy of Kant, London, OUP, 1968, p.11b; S Körner, Kant, Harmondsworth, Penguin 1955, and other standard works.
10. Book III, section v.
11. Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten, von I. Kant, neu herausgegeben von Rudolf Otto, Gotha, 1930. Kant's Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten was originally published in 1785.
12. IH p.113a; DH p.138a
13. IH Ch.XIV, pp.112-116; DH Kap 16, pp.137-142
14. IH pp.136-142; DH Kap. 19, pp.165-171
15. IH p.136ab; DH p.165ab
16. IH p.112c; this passage is not in the current German edition of DH at this point, but at p.138a "Es bricht auf aus dem 'Seelengrunde', aus dem tiefsten Erkenntnis-grunde der Seele selber."
17. IH p.112b; "was unabhängig von aller 'Wahrnehmung' in 'reiner Vernunft' im Geiste selber als sein Ursprünglichstes angelegt ist" DH 136b.

18. IH Ch. XVII; DH Kap. 19

19. from Plato's Republic ii. 382E

20. Über die Religion, Reden an die Gebildeten unter ihren Verächtern, von Friedrich Schleiermacher. Zum Hundertjahr-Gedächtnis ihres ersten Erscheinens in ihrer ursprünglichen Gestalt neu herausgegeben und mit Übersichten und Vor- und Nachwort versehen von Lic. Rudolf Otto, Privatdozent an der Universität Göttingen. Mit 2 Bildnissen Schleiermachers. Göttingen, 1899. All quotations from Schleiermacher's Reden are from the first edition (1799), unless otherwise stated. Crouter's translation has been used and page references are given to this by the letters Cr. as well as to Schleiermacher's original pages by the letter R.

21. cf. Blackwell 1982, 123: see note 23

22. Quoted in Blackwell 1982, 7c-8a, see note 23

23. Harvard, Scholars Press 1982 (Harvard Theological Studies XXXIII)

24. Schleiermacher sent a friend a copy of his Reden in 1822 and wrote that it would "show that I have remained the same more than people wish to think." - quoted by Otto in his Foreword to the 1899 edition, p.X.

25. Wilhelm Graf "Ursprüngliches Gefühl, unmittelbar Koinzidenz der Differenten" in Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche 75, 1978, 147-186.

26. Werner Schultz "Schleiermachers Deutung der Religionsgeschichte" in Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche 56, 1959, 55-82.

27. Robert Williams "Schleiermacher and Feuerbach on the Intentionality of Religious Consciousness" in Journal of Religion, LIII, 1973, 424-455.

28. Lebenswelt of Husserl, compare also the French school, esp. Merleau-Ponty.

29. see Kant's Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone

30. English translation in Chapter VIII of Otto's Religious Essays trans. by Brian Lunn, Oxford, 1931, pp.68-77. The essay also appeared in German in 1903 and 1932.

31. Schleiermacher translated Plato's dialogues also at this time.

32. cf. Blackwell 145b, including a quotation from Schleiermacher's Einleitung to Platons Werke.

33. Appended to 1776 novel, quoted by Blackwell 162b.
34. Quoted by Foreman 1978, 103: see next note.
35. Terry H Foreman "Schleiermacher's 'Natural History of Religion': Science and the Interpretation of Culture in the Speeches" in Journal of Religion LVIII, 1978, 91-107.
36. Otto's treatment of "Divination" was the subject of a doctoral thesis by Rudolf Boeke entitled "Divinatie met Name bij Rudolf Otto" presented at the University of Leiden in 1957. While this is an important topic in itself it is only peripheral to the main concerns of the current Thesis and will not be discussed further.
37. see Section 3.2
38. Notably Almond 1983.
39. Anmerkungen Rudolf Ottos zu der englischen Übersetzung der Kantisch-Fries'schen Religionsphilosophie: The Philosophy of Religion, London 1931, note 3, Rudolf-Otto-Archiv, Marburg, accessible in H-W Schütte, Religion und Christentum in der Theologie Rudolf Ottos, Berlin 1969, p.123. These notes were not included in the published translation.
40. Georg Weiß "Die neufriesische Schule in der Philosophie: Rudolf Otto und Wilhelm Bousset" in Die Christliche Welt, 1911, cols 729-732.
41. Karl Bornhausen "Gegen Neofriesianismus in Theologie" in Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche 1910, pp. 341-405.
42. Ansgar Paus Religiöser Erkenntnisgrund, Leiden 1966.
43. In 1910 Otto published a new edition of the Metaphysik by Ernst Friedrich Apelt, and for this reason Paus pays particular attention to Apelt's work in his evaluation of Otto's philosophical base.
44. E. F. Apelt Metaphysik, hg. von Rudolf Otto, Halle 1910, IX.
45. Heinrich Scholz review of KFR in Deutsche Literaturzeitung, 1910, Nr.9, cols. 529-532.
46. Th. Haering review of DH in Theologische Literaturzeitung, 1917 Nr.15, cols. 305-307. "The word 'presentiment' should not produce the hasty reaction 'so it's the school of Fries.' . . The most important content of the book does not depend on this." 305.
47. Otto was at Göttingen 1904-1914, at the same time as Edmund Husserl who was at Göttingen 1901-1916. There is no record of their association during this time, yet there are

many interconnections between Otto's work, especially Das Heilige, and the phenomenological movement. Max Scheler spoke of Otto's work with evident approval several times, and there exists an appreciative letter from Husserl to Otto dated 5.iii.1919 which includes, "Your book on The Holy . . . has impressed me strongly. . . It is a first beginning for a phenomenology of the religious . . ."

William James (see Section 3.6) had links too. In 1882 he visited Carl Stumpf who became a member of the phenomenological circle, and their friendship is evidenced by a long-lasting correspondence. These and other clues need a separate examination of Otto's relationship to the phenomenological movement and its leading personalities.

48. Philip Hefner ed. A Ritschl Three Essays, translated with an Introduction by Philip Hefner, Philadelphia 1972, p.6.

49. James Richmond Ritschl: A Reappraisal, Glasgow 1978, 17-18.

50. Richmond op.cit. p.20.

51. Richmond op.cit. 49-50

52. Translated in Hefner op. cit. 150-217.

53. Richmond op. cit. pp.57-59.

54. The American psychologist William James (1842-1910) had a cosmopolitan upbringing. His father moved the whole family from house to house, not only in New England, but also in England, France and Germany. In his mid-twenties James spent more than a year in Germany from spring 1867 to late summer 1868, at Dresden, Berlin and Bad Teplitz (just in Bohemia, but German speaking). Lewis remarks that he said he was "finding pleasure in the German language." As a youth James had strong artistic interests and abilities and these qualities are consistent with his interest in how things are seen and felt, that is in vision and emotion. (see R W B Lewis, The Jameses London, Andre Deutsch 1991).

55. Page references are to the Fontana edition, London 1960 and reprints, cited as VRE.

56. Die religiöse Erfahrung in ihrer Mannigfaltigkeit, Leipzig, 1907, several reprintings. The book was later retranslated and edited by Eilert Herms, with the title Die Vielfalt religiöser Erfahrung, Olten 1979.

57. For comparison with procedure in physiology see p. 62b.

58. At the age of forty William James visiting Prague introduced himself to Carl Stumpf (1848-1936). This was 30th October 1882. Over three days they spent more than twelve hours together and the friendship continued by correspondence till James' death. Stumpf was fulsome in his praise of James' The Principles of Psychology (published in 1890) as "the best of all psychologies". Stumpf valued it as a descriptive psychology, and he commended James' work to Husserl when they were together at Halle 1886-1889. Both had been students of Brentano. James spoke of the "good and sharpnosed Stumpf" as his "favorite experimental psychologist." (see H Spiegelberg The Phenomenological Movement The Hague, 3rd edition revised and enlarged 1982, pp.62-4 and 101). It is likely that James' Principles had been influenced by his reading of Franz Brentano's Psychologie (first published 1874).

Moritz Geiger (1880-1937) who was one of the original co-editors of Husserl's yearbook, met James at Harvard in 1907. Max Scheler (1874-1928) showed intense interest in some of James' writings. After the appearance of Das Heilige Scheler referred repeatedly to Otto's book as a particularly successful piece of phenomenological description.

59. The Letters of William James ed. Henry James, Boston 1920, I:127, cited Lash 1988, p.26.

60. Nicholas Lash Easter in Ordinary: Reflections on Human Experience and the Knowledge of God, London, SCM Press 1988.

61. Lash 1988, 23b: ref. James A Pluralistic Universe p.14.

62. MacDermott's "Introduction" to Essays in Radical Empiricism xlvii.

63. As a youth James had strong artistic interests and abilities and these qualities are consistent with his interest in how things are seen and felt, that is in vision and emotion. (see R W B Lewis, The Jameses London, Andre Deutsch 1991).

64. The reference to seeing is perhaps significant.

65. Peter Brunner "Der Begriff der Religion bei William James und bei Rudolf Otto" in Theologische Blätter, 1928, cols. 97-104, the text of a lecture given at Giessen 20th July 1927.

66. He opposed scientism (Lash 27b). Examples of scientism prevalent at the time would include Herbert Spencer's application of biological models to sociology (society as a plant), and more germanely the rash application of evolutionism to religion, drawing on the theory of evolution (for which the evidence was biological, evidence which led to several careful revisions of Darwin's theory), and misapplication to produce a matrix for plotting the

development (from simple, primitive forms) of religious practice and belief, for which a prime example is provided by Durham's Professor Jevons (Frank Byron Jevons, An Introduction to the Study of Comparative Religion, New York, 1908, and Comparative Religion, Cambridge 1913).

Otto rejected the application of evolution to religion, and published at least three times on Darwinism. He accepted that religions unfolded from cruder expressions to more developed (esp. IH Chaps XIII, XV, XVI, DH Kaps. 15,17,18), but emphatically denied that religion could develop from anything which was not already religion in some form. This was the basis of his celebrated controversy with W. Wundt. Otto's stance is central to The Holy, and the integrity of religion central to NRW.

67. A particularly bad time in Germany is noted by Lewis, op.cit. p.185.

68. First published in 1895, accessible in The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy, Harvard University Press, 1979, pp.53-4.

69. Geysler's book, Intellekt oder Gemüt? (see Chapter One), provides an prime example of this kind of criticism. (Geysler 1922, cf. Minney 1990a and 1990b)

70. IH p.10 (DH p.10: "Gefühls-reaktion, die sein Erfahren im Gemüte auslöst und die man selber in sich erleben muss").

71. Although James does not try to analyse the sense of the numinous (Otto's phrase), it would be easy to find in the many case studies which James uses the characteristics of 'Mystery', 'Dread' and 'Grace' which are the basis of Otto's description. Yet these all appear in James' discussion too.

(Dread) Not the conception or intellectual perception of evil, but the grisly blood-freezing heart-paralysing sensation of it close upon one, and no other conception of sensation able to live for a moment in its presence. (VRE 168)

(Joy) . . . we have seen reason to think that the most distinctive of them [sc. attitudes characteristically awakened] is the sort of joy which may result in extreme cases from absolute self-surrender. (VRE 89)

(Being overwhelmed) But beyond . . . there is . . . something profounder still, something related to that fundamental mystery of religious experience, the satisfaction found in absolute surrender to the larger power. (VRE 315)

With the first several passages of Otto could be compared,

e.g. the following:

It is a remarkable fact that the physical reaction to which this unique 'dread' of the uncanny gives rise is also unique, and is not found in the case of any 'natural' fear or terror. We say: 'my blood ran icy cold' and 'my flesh crept'.
(IH 16)

With the last, compare:

There you have a self confessed 'feeling of dependence' [Abraham in Gen. 18.27], which is yet at the same time far more than, and something other than, merely a feeling of dependence. Desiring to give it a name of its own, I propose to call it 'creature-consciousness' or creature-feeling. It is the emotion of a creature, submerged and overwhelmed by its own nothingness in contrast to that which is supreme above all creatures.
(IH 9-10; DH 9-10)

The scattered page references in James indicate that Otto's psychological analysis is much more systematic. As well as quoting James in a few instances, Otto also collected much fresh evidence and systematised the moments of religious consciousness in a way which goes well beyond James.

72. James compares the meaning of the word Government in this respect, as eluding comprehensive definition.

73. Quoted also at the end of H. Frick's article 'Religionswissenschaft in neuer Sicht' from Forell, Frick and Heiler Religionswissenschaft in neuer Sicht - Drei Reden über Rudolf Ottos Persönlichkeit und Werk (etc), Marburg 1951 p.12.

74. Quotation from Goethe's Faust, where 'name' stands for conception or thought." (IH 1; DH 1).

CHAPTER FOUR:

IS TRANSCENDENT EXPERIENCE RELIGIOUS?

The message of Schleiermacher's Reden to "the cultured among the despisers" of religion is that, although they have rejected the Church's doctrines, ceremonies and constraints, they are in fact religious¹. The evidence for this is their own consciousness and their enthusiasm for the aesthetic, the creative, the mystical, in short their sensitivity for that which transcends the everyday world of economics, pleasure and political power-seeking. The fact that his book won him almost immediate acclaim (although originally published anonymously) suggests that at that time his thesis was accepted, and people thought that after all perhaps they really were religious. Schleiermacher obviously had in mind a very broad definition of religion. This would not be acceptable to everyone.

But the area of transcendent experience has attracted a lot of attention in recent years, and the question to be investigated is raised by Schleiermacher's Reden: is transcendent experience the same as religious experience? If it is, in what sense, and why are there two terms? Clearly Sir Alister Hardy in founding the Religious Experience Research Unit² thought so and his collection of thousands of accounts of religious experience, many relating to childhood, has been welcomed and drawn on by religious educators and put

to use by them. Yet many of the cases turn out on inspection to be experiences of nature mysticism with no obvious contact to religion in the more narrowly defined sense of religious faith traditions. The same is true of Paffard's collection³, and many others. How are these to be evaluated in relation to James and to Otto? James's examples are almost all, if not all, from an explicitly religious context in that the respondents refer to God, church, Bible, or (in a few cases) recognisable features of other religions. In contrast to this, few of the cases in Paffard, Robinson and Hay do refer to traditional religious forms and expressions. Yet they are accepted by religious educators as an important area for study and as examples of religious experience to discuss, reflect on and possibly replicate in their pupils.

A second consideration is equally important, and this is the assumption which lies behind religious education in Britain today that even in an age of predominantly secular values religion is somehow relevant to all. More than this, the great Education Acts of 1944 and 1988 actually require "spiritual development" as one of the aims of R.E. in schools. A fuller discussion of "spiritual development" belongs in Chapter Five, but before that attention must turn to secular, i.e. not explicitly religious accounts of transcendent experiences and how they have been evaluated. Following this it must be asked whether such experiences provide knowledge of the transcendent, as Otto has claimed. These are the two tasks to be tackled in this Chapter.

Marghanita Laski uses the following descriptive words to introduce her study of ecstasy⁴: "a range of experiences characterised by being joyful, transitory, unexpected, rare, valued, and extraordinary to the point of often seeming as if derived from a praeternatural source" (Laski 1961, 5b). She purposely wants to research secular and religious experiences, and makes distinctions which will be discussed later, but at the same time the similarities between her description of ecstasy and how James decided to characterise mysticism suggest they are talking about the same set of phenomena. James put forward four marks: Ineffability, Noetic quality, Transiency, and Passivity (VRE 367-8).

In fact both Marghanita Laski and Abraham Maslow⁵ blur the distinction between religious and non-religious transcendence, and Maslow makes clear that he does not recognise religious experience as a separate category. Consequently there is a whole area of relevant non-religious experiences which must be compared. Maslow states: "Practically everything that happens in the peak-experiences, naturalistic though they are, could be listed under the headings of religious happenings, or indeed have been in the past considered to be only religious experiences" (Maslow 1964, 59a). This makes their inclusion even more necessary.

The whole area is confused and confusing. While Otto's examples in DH are explicitly religious, the experiences of

children in Otto's 1926 article "Religiöse Kindheits-erfahrungen"⁶ are not, and those quoted by Miehle in his 1928 Die Kindliche Religiosität are mostly only marginally or incidentally linked to religion, although Miehle classifies them according to Otto's DH formula mysterium tremendum et fascinans.

4.1 Researching experience

Yet in much of this discussion the word 'experience' is rarely questioned. In the case of James it was assumed that 'experience' was the subject matter of psychology, which was the field of study for James and his pupil Starbuck. The implication, however, is that people somehow have experience, during which they remain in a passive state. Discussion of more active aspects of experience in the context of religion is to be taken up in sections 4.6 and 4.7. In this section the plan is to look at what researchers may have included under this phrase, and then see what distinctions may be appropriate.

Edwin Starbuck was the first investigator to include a question on religious experience in a questionnaire. He asked about people's experience of religious conversion⁷. Experiencing conversion in the evangelical mode stood for religious experience in the New England of the time. Alister Hardy began his researches by asking a news agency to collect cuttings on specified religious topics in 1925, and this went on till 1946. (Hay RET p.20). When Hardy began research of

his own, he formulated a question: "Have you ever been aware of or influenced by a presence or power, whether you call it God or not, which is different from your everyday self?" (Hay RET 36c) Hay used Hardy's question in some of his own research, and also one from America used by Greeley and McCready: "Have you ever felt as though you were very close to a powerful spiritual force that seemed to lift you out of yourself?" (Hay RET 69c) All the researchers felt they were working in the same tradition as Starbuck and James and that the words "been aware of," "influenced by" and "felt" covered the concept of religious experience.

Laski started with the conviction that such feelings and experiences affected many people she knew who were not members of any religious group, but who would consider them unusual or non-normal, and consequently refuse to discuss them in the belief that such things were either narrowly religious or morbid (Laski 1961, p.2). Therefore she needed to frame a question which would appear religiously neutral: she settled on the question, "Do you know a sensation of transcendent ecstasy?" and she adds in brackets, "If people asked, as they sometimes did, 'What do you mean by transcendent ecstasy?' I replied, 'Take it to mean whatever you think it means.'" (p.9a)

In a later postal questionnaire and after expert advice, Laski phrased the question: "Have you ever known a feeling of unearthly ecstasy?" (526b). Although the survey was much

smaller, responses did not differ significantly from her earlier ones.

Paffard's questions were different in that he offered an example of the kind of thing he was investigating and asked if respondents had ever felt anything similar. The class of 15-year-old girls whose work was shown to Laski (134) were also asked to read a passage (from Richard Church's Over the Bridge, given by Laski on p.417-8), then after normal comprehension type questions in a written examination, were asked, "Write an account of any event which may have had the same kind of significance in your own life." Four triggers were suggested by the teacher, and 46 girls answered this question. Laski discusses their replies.

While conversion experience was the term used by Starbuck because it fitted the Protestant circles in which he grew up, the terms mystic and mysticism seem to relate to a more openly recognised tradition within Catholic and Orthodox communities. James saw the overlap when he said, "One may say truly, I think, that personal religious experience has its root and center in mystical states of consciousness" (VRE 366a). Definitions are, however, far from easy. Richard Swinburne in a more recent discussion says, "The concept of a 'religious experience' has as fuzzy a border as the concept of a religion".⁸ The whole area is somewhat indistinct, and many attempts have been made to classify such experiences on various grounds: for instance some distinguish explicitly

religious experiences from the rest, and some define religious experience in narrowly theological, traditional and orthodox terms. Others have tried to classify the circumstances which may set off such experiences (often called Triggers); but these do not always match the feeling-response, and such feelings may suggest their own classification system. Another possibility is to list the different results claimed for such experiences.

4.2 Classifying mystic and other transcendent experiences

Hick in a paper for the 1976 Calgary conference on mysticism thinks that mysticism is simply religious experience at first hand: "Mystical experience, as our mystics (and others) describe it, does not seem to me to be anything other than firsthand religious experience as such. This is, however, I believe, the core of religion."⁹ Yet Hick goes on to suggest that there are degrees of mysticism when he says: "This would mean that all who are conscious of existing in the presence of the divine are mystics. This would in turn mean . . . that rather than religious people being divided into a small minority of mystics and a large majority of nonmystics, we should equate mysticism with religious experience or religious consciousness as such, but recognising, of course, many degrees of consciousness of the Transcendent, as well as many forms which this consciousness can take."

But Penelhum¹⁰ wants to distinguish mystical experience from other kinds of religious experience. These, he thinks,

appear to be preparatory for the unitive experience which he sees as the culmination of mysticism. Further distinctions can be made. Hardy faced the problem early on and tried to establish a system for distinguishing types of transcendent experience. He somewhat tentatively distinguished mystical experiences from numinous experiences:

On a first examination of the collection, what seemed to be possible was to split the accounts of experience into two types: what might be called 'numinous' experiences, that is, broadly speaking, experiences of the presence of God, and, in contrast, more 'mystical' experiences, where the writer is talking about something like a 'merging' with the rest of reality. In fact this kind of classification fits well with the categories suggested by a number of philosophers of religion. (Hay 1990, 31c)¹¹

Hay relates that another category soon had to be added: "a third category he labelled Z. They included those that came from what is unkindly called 'the lunatic fringe'; some were actually sent from psychiatric hospitals." (Hay 1990, 31c). Laski too relates that she invited letters from listeners after she had been on a BBC Brains Trust in 1958 when a question was put on mysticism: "I received 42 letters, most of them from women and many of them dotty . . ." (Laski 530c)

Laski's very detailed study classifies ecstasies and considers different suggestions. She discusses a distinction between ecstasies and their opposite which are called Desolations, but decides that this distinction hinges partly on whether the experience is pleasant or unpleasant. Words used in description also relate, Down and Dark in contrast to

Up and Light (168-170), though desolations have a way sometimes of turning into ecstasies. Laski recognises that she is entirely dependent on the language used to describe them: ". . . my sole evidence for the feelings people identified with the name transcendent ecstasy lay in the words they used to describe them . . ." (10a) and she listed also what objects or circumstances started them off. These she called triggers and she classified them also, but decided that the best classification related directly to the experiences. But, as already suggested, other factors also play a part in each writer's choice. Laski writes:

I think we must conclude that as these epithets - nature, religious, aesthetic, neo-platonic, etc. - are generally used, what is meant by a religious experience is an experience, no matter how triggered and no matter what its nature, that results in what the giver of the epithet regards as orthodox religious belief; while by nature, aesthetic, neo-platonic, etc. experiences are meant either experiences triggered by nature, art, knowledge, etc. that do not result in accepted religious beliefs, or else experiences, no matter how triggered, that result in beliefs about the value of nature, art, knowledge, etc. I do not think that the use of such epithets provides an illuminating way of distinguishing ecstasies, however helpful they may be when considering mystical experiences that are not ecstasies.

It must then be asked what is the most illuminating nomenclature for distinguishing ecstasies, and I believe that they are best named according to the nature of the experience. It is probable that the nature of the experience is strongly influential on the nature of the overbelief, whether this is expressed in religious terms or not. (173bc)

After trying various possibilities, she decided that

varieties of ecstasy could be arranged in a series of stages, leading up to those she called "better", not in an axiological sense but because they seemed more intense and so more ecstatic. She posits the following "working model" (p.92):

At the least stage at which ecstasies identify experiences as being of a kind, we find feelings that life is joyful, purified, renewed. Ecstasies principally characterised by feelings of this kind I shall call adamic ecstasies. It is to this stage, I believe, that there belong those feelings of kindness and love spoken of by Wordsworth, Fox's desire to benefit mankind.

At a stage regarded as better we find feelings of creativity or of knowledge gained. These I shall call knowledge ecstasies. Often the knowledge is felt to be gained through a contact felt to be made, and these I shall call knowledge-contact ecstasies.

That knowledge may come at a stage less than that in which contact is felt to be made is suggested by the feelings often reported that where knowledge is gained, self is not felt to be lost; but where contact is gained, self is often felt to be lost, and it is generally agreed that ecstasies in which self is lost are better than those in which feelings of self are not lost.

The more complete the knowledge is felt to be and the more incommunicable, the better the ecstasy.

At the stage regarded as the best, ecstasies may involve complete or almost complete loss of sensibility, coupled with a feeling (necessarily afterwards) that any contact made has been complete. Ecstasies with these characteristics I shall call union ecstasies.

Laski calls this classification tentative because it is based on very few comparative statements, but she notes that it corresponds with schemes of many Christian writers on the

subject, "the kinds of experiences that may be progressively expected along the Christian's road to God." (92-3) Maslow who like Laski wrote from a non-religious stance does not use distinctions like this because his purpose is dismissive of religion.

Christian theologians and others who hold a definite position on the value of certain types of religious or mystical experience, are likely to use their viewpoint as the basis for classification. Joseph Maréchal S.J. in writing specifically about Christian mysticism, distinguishes supernatural ecstasy from natural ecstasy on the basis of divine grace and the approved experience of mystics on the basis of Catholic teaching on the subject. He describes this difference as both phenomenological and ontological (Maréchal in Woods 1981, 472-3).

But consideration of mystical experiences must go beyond Christianity, perhaps beyond institutional religion of all sorts. Zaehner wrote Mysticism Sacred and Profane¹² to refute Huxley's Doors of Perception (1954) in which Huxley claimed that his experience under the influence of the drug mescaline was identical with the so-called religious experiences of saints and mystics. In this explicitly polemical book, but at the same time the work of a considerable scholar, Zaehner comes to the "tentative" conclusion that there are three types of mysticism, which he calls panenhenic, monistic, and theistic. The first is

nature mysticism.

Because these experiences are recorded at all times and from all parts of the world, it is fatally easy to assume that because they are, one and all, praeternatural, that is, not explicable in the present state of our knowledge, and because the keynote of all of them is "union", they must necessarily be the same. (199a)

If that were so, it would confirm Huxley's thesis that any artificial means can be used to produce genuine mystical experience.

The other two classes in his scheme, monistic and theistic mysticism, Zaehner assigns to Vedantins and Christians respectively. The last "is the normal type of Christian mystical experience in which the soul feels itself to be united with God by love." (Zaehner 29b). At one point Zaehner slightly modifies his stance, when he says, "Though there is a difference, and a real difference, between the Vedantin and the Christian ways of defining the unitive experience, the difference may well be only one of terminology." (33a) But it seems that Zaehner really thinks theistic mysticism depends on a Christian understanding of God and is therefore only open to Christians, and some few others with similar beliefs. The theory also brings out the role of interpretation, in this case pre-interpretation, as without a prior understanding of Christian doctrines the highest state on Zaehner's scale would be unattainable. Zaehner's three-tiered structure is criticised in detail by Smart¹³ and will not be discussed here further.

The field of study is experience, and to make any sort of classification it is needful to gather accounts of mystical experiences and to study them. Hardy and Hay compare this process to the work of naturalists in the 19th century who collected thousands of specimens for their work of classification and taxonomy. "We are at present like the first collectors of marine plankton, dipping our little nets into the sea from a rowing boat and marvelling at the variety of life brought forth, just as the marine naturalists were doing a hundred years ago." (Hardy quoted in Hay 1990, 32b)

The picture is perhaps even closer in that ecology or the study of living things in their natural habitat became a recognised field of biological study in the twentieth century. Before that the collectors had tables of dead specimens to work on, and the case with religious experiences must be similar. Any large-scale work and almost any comparative work relates not so much to the experiences themselves but to accounts of experiences. This is recognised by Laski and stressed by Peter Moore:

It often seems to be forgotten that the immediate data of the philosophical analysis of mysticism are not the mystical experiences themselves, but the mystics' accounts of these experiences. It follows that the fruitfulness of philosophical analysis primarily depends on the extent to which these accounts render accessible to non-mystical investigation the experiences to which they refer. (Moore 1978, 101c)

In his discussion of the effects of interpretation on such accounts together with all the cultural and language factors

which go into interpretation, Moore also raises the factor of the cultivation of mysticism and in general preparation for religious experiences. This question comes into Otto's treatment of the communication of the numinous, but is now seen to be a much more important factor than Otto realised. Moore also suggests that a first account of a relevant experience can be improved or educated in the light of later experiences or study of similar experiences from other people. This is an essential aspect: "In this case the view that reports of 'natural' mystical experience must somehow be more informative concerning the real nature of mystical experience than reports of 'cultivated' experience are seriously mistaken." (Moore 1978, 112a)

Otto unfortunately does not discuss the questions raised by cultivated accounts of experience or even by cultivated experience, except insofar as experiences may be clarified and refined. But this assumes special importance when education in religious or mystical awareness in preparation for experience is considered. Otto draws a distinction, however, between cool and hot mysticism:

Sankara's mysticism is, however, 'cool', unimpassioned and peacefully silent from any emotion. But this shows that it is mysticism of a particular kind. As 'cool' mysticism it is to be distinguished from 'hot' forms of mysticism, from forms of mysticism with strong emotional characteristics. It is precisely mention of its coolness that points up a quite particular trait in this mysticism. Persian mysticism, sufic mysticism is hot. . . The mysticism of Eckhart is drenched in feeling. The mysticism of John of the Cross is lyrical to its depths. Each is

different in itself. And taken together they all are different again from Sankara's experience. (WöM 176b, tr.RM)

Hardy tried at first to classify religious experiences according to the five senses and extra-sensory perception. So his first category was "visual experience of a sensory or quasi-sensory nature." The second was "auditory" and the third "touch." There were also categories for behavioural changes, and for cognitive and affective elements. (Hay 1990, 40-41) These categories relate to the mode of reception and to results of the experiences. Later Hardy changed to another scheme which tried to classify the experiences by their content, and produced headings such as "patterning", "answered prayer", "presence of God", "sacred presence in nature," and others (Hay 1990 Ch.4, pp.40-51). This is a more sophisticated approach, although it is no less open to expectations and other cultural influences.

W. H. Auden in his Introduction to Protestant Mystics¹⁴ finds four kinds of mystical experience, classified according to content. These are: The Vision of Dame Kind; The Vision of Eros; The Vision of Agape; The Vision of God. (Auden 1981, pp.382-397). The Vision of Dame Kind is in essence nature mysticism: "The objects of this vision may be inorganic - mountains, rivers, seas - or organic - trees, flowers, beasts, but they are all non-human, though human artifacts like buildings may be included." (384b) "The joy felt by the natural mystic may be called innocent." (385b) "Though the

Vision of Dame Kind is not specifically Christian, there is nothing in it incompatible with the Christian belief in a God who created the material universe and all its creatures out of love and found them good." (386b)

Auden's Vision of Eros is being in love with someone. But the subject is often, possibly always self-deceived! "Under its influence so many millions of persons have persuaded themselves that they were "in love" when their experience could be fully and accurately described by the more brutal four-letter words, that one is sometimes tempted to doubt if the experience is ever genuine, even when, or especially when, it seems to have happened to oneself." (388b) "Like the Vision of Dame Kind, the Vision of Eros is a revelation of creaturely glory, but whereas in the former it is the glory of a multiplicity of non-human creatures which is revealed, in the latter it is the glory of a single human being." (388b) "The effect of the vision on the lover's conduct is not confined to his behaviour toward his beloved. Even in his relations to others, conduct which before he fell in love seemed natural and proper, judged by his new standard of what he feels it should be to be worthy of her, now seems base and ignoble." (389b) The effect of religious experience on subsequent conduct will be taken up later.

Of the Vision of Agape, says Auden, the classic Christian example is the vision of Pentecost, but there are examples which are not obviously Christian (392a). The vision involves

a number of persons, not just one in addition to the subject as in the previous vision. Auden ends, "Not the least puzzling thing about it is that most of the experiences which are closest to it in mode, involving plurality, equality and mutuality of human persons, are clear cases of diabolic possession, as when thousands cheer hysterically for the Man-God, or cry bloodthirstily for the crucifixion of the God-Man. Still, without it, there might be no Church." (393b)

The Vision of God is described as the direct encounter of the human soul with God. Auden makes a number of points which have been noticed by others, including the number of mystics who have endured ill-health, and the similarity of such experiences to some psychophysical disturbances. He further links in ascetic practice, preparation and training for this type of mysticism, and wonders whether manic-depressives are people who also have a vocation for the Via Negativa (394-5).

The Vision of Dame Kind corresponds to Laski's Adamic and Time ecstasies (her Chapter IX), and would include just about all the childhood experiences published by the Alister Hardy Research Centre. Laski explains the use of Adam's name because it represents in some of her texts the Christian understanding of the state of Adam in primal innocence before the Fall. Auden's Vision of Eros would fit into Laski's analysis of triggers, as several of her correspondents of both sexes mention love, sex and sexual intercourse as the circumstance for setting off ecstasy. But this is not in any

predictable manner.

Auden's third category is a kind of crowd mania, which would not be recognised by most as ecstasy or religious experience at all. Yet it is a transcendent experience. Nearly all the commentators under consideration follow either the psychology of James or the mystical tradition of Christianity and other world religions in seeing this kind of experience as primarily private and individual. Perhaps a fruitful way to explore the Vision of Agape would be to make a comparative study of mass religious movements, such as evangelical conventions, or the foundation and spread of religious orders. Religious movements by oppressed groups could also provide parallels¹⁵. But Otto did not do this, nor is it yet any part of the thinking of spiritual development in religious education.

There does seem to be a valid distinction to be made between those who are in some way trained or prepared (see section 4.6) and those who are not, albeit this represents a continuum rather than a dichotomy. Again, perhaps there is a distinction to be made between experiences which seem to call on the senses (like Hardy's first attempt) or to resemble such, and others which seem to transcend sensations altogether. Put together, these give us the classes suggested by Deikman (Deikman 1981).

Accounts of mystic experiences can be categorised

as (a) untrained-sensate, (b) trained-sensate, and (c) trained-transcendent. (Deikman, 241a)

He does not include a fourth class which logic seems to demand because Deikman assigns lower states to the sensate group and higher to the transcendent, only to be reached after learning some contemplative techniques. He justifies, however, two classes of sensate by saying, "The untrained-sensate and the trained-sensate states are phenomenologically indistinguishable, with the qualification that the trained mystics report experiences conforming more closely to the specific religious cosmology to which they are accustomed." (242a) The main focus of his article is on deautomatisation or transcending the daily round of touch and see. There are obvious links here with Laski's concept of transcendent ecstasy and in the matter of non-religious spiritual development with the theses of Hill (1989) and Minney (1991), to be discussed in Chapter Five.

There is an esoteric aspect in contemplative practices and techniques which are passed on, practiced and learnt. It is also sometimes asserted that religious experiences are so intimate as to be unique in each case. Yet there is an aspect of privacy in perceptions of all kinds, only that most are public enough to be tested out by other people. Carl A. Keller ends an article¹⁶ on Mystical Literature:

We know perhaps - more or less - what our own personal experience is, but we shall never know the nature of 'mystical experience' in general, particularly if we pass from our own personal

environment to other religions. . . There is only one thing we know for certain: that there were in each of the great traditions men and women who were not satisfied with the ritual aspect of religion but who tried to live totally the meaning of their faith, not only on the level of outward behaviour, but on the level of deep psychological and spiritual experience, on the level of their innermost being. They neither practised nor propagated 'mysticism': 'mysticism' is an abstract concept. It is a word devoid of concrete meaning. . . the term is a reminder that a religion is not only outward performance, but also, for some of its adherents at least, a never-ending quest after its own perfection, the perfection which is inherent in its specific structure, a perfection to be realised on the level of the spiritual, the interior, dimension of man.

This passage raises a question about mystics and non-mystics. James thought that all formal religions had begun with a religious experience to one of the founders or saints, and that this experience had then been routinised or institutionalised to form the religious tradition which the majority followed. Otto followed him, and made a distinction between prophets and the rest. For Maslow this difference is a dispositional or characterlogical distinction between peakers and non-peakers, although he suggests that even non-peakers, redefined as 'weak-peakers', may be encouraged to recognise feelings which can then educate them to become peakers (Maslow 1964, 86). In fact this must be possible, as Otto realised, when he wrote of refining crude experience, and it is one of the aims of education in religion.

4.3 Raw experience and interpreted experience

A fundamental issue underlies all writing about mystical and religious experience. Some, like James, build on the premise that religious experiences have so much in common that they can be said to be at base the same, while the differences, which are not denied, reflect cultural, linguistic, historical and social differences. Others feel that any suggestion of some basic "raw experience" is not just misleading but also unresearchable and therefore meaningless. Therefore they seek to distinguish different sorts of transcendent experiences, although they recognise certain characteristics which are shared. Richard Woods in his Introduction to Understanding Mysticism wrote:

An important and to some extent a perennial issue in comparative mysticism concerns the similarities and differences among mystical experiences and mystical doctrines. Is mystical experience in fact one and the same for all in its essential structure and function, or are there irreducibly plural forms of mystical experience? On one side of this issue stand Smart, Huxley, Fischer, Underhill, Deikman and Wapnick. On the other side are found in no less uneasy alliance Zaehner, Maritain, Maréchal and Knowles. The antagonists in this debate are generally the theologians, who opt for pluralism, as opposed to the philosophers and psychologists. (Woods 1981, 3c)

Belief in a common basis of raw experience can be carried further to belief in a common source for all religions of which the particulars are brought about by different cultural and linguistic circumstances. The essence is the same but it takes its colour from contingent differences. An outstanding

example of this is Ramkrishna Paramahansa who used the picture of a water reservoir or lake which has several ghats: at one Hindus draw water and call it jal, at another Muslims who call it pani, and at a third are Christians who call it water. The substance is one under different names, and everyone is seeking the same substance; only climate, temperament and name create differences¹⁷

Otto did not meet Ramkrishna, but his attitude to the sort of syncretism Ramkrishna and his disciple Vivekananda were advocating is clear from GRIC, discussed in 2.7.

To those who see a common basis may be added James, Maslow, Hardy and Hay, while it will not escape notice that the four pluralists Woods has named are all self-consciously orthodox Roman Catholics.

Otto saw that there is much to be said on both sides, and perhaps he is right. At the same time there is no doubt that in DH he follows James in considering religious experience, that is encounter with the numinous, as one and the same across the differences of culture, space and time. He realised, of course, that this could be oversimplified, and by 1926 expressed it as follows:

There is still the very general view that mysticism, no matter on how many different backgrounds it may crop up, is basically one and the same and as such independent of time and space, of circumstances and chance contingencies.

This view seems to me, however, to misrepresent the facts.¹⁸

The phrase "independent of time and space, of circumstances and chance contingencies" exactly reflects the criticism of Ritschl against all mysticism as such. In WÖM Otto describes how what he calls Western mysticism, that is the tradition of Eckhart rather than Sankara, can actually lead to an active life, and he instances St Teresa of Avila and St Catherine of Siena.

Otto appears to think that the fact that the word 'mysticism' has a recognised field of meaning implies that there is some kind of mystic essence which corresponds to this concept. In WÖM he states that mysticism has one and the same essence which is shown by the common term and concept. And he continues that the same is true for religion: "We call Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Christianity 'religions' and mean that they are to be subsumed under one and the same class 'religion'. But this does not deny, in fact must include the fact that 'religion' is particular in each of these cases, and within one and the same essence there are very different examples to be found." (WÖM p.162ab, tr.RM)

Otto makes a distinction more in tune with modern study when he goes on to distinguish experience of the immanent divinity of mystic union from experience of the transcendent God. For the mystic there is an experience of absolute otherness and

mystery, which obviously matches that which is the subject matter of DH published nine years earlier.

This concept of God with its totally non-rational character, being different from the familiar, personal, modified God of theism in its pure form, is what makes the mystic. It is not in the first place the union which is mysticism, but the quite overpowering life in wonder at this 'wholly other' God. God himself is 'mystical' that is mysterious, and experience of this is hidden and therefore mystical. (WöM 163c, tr.RM)

It may be thought that Otto was himself quite ambivalent in his attitude to different religions. He seems to want to have it both ways: both that there is a basic kind of experience common to all religions, primitive as well as universal, which is the direct encounter with the numinous; and that religions are different descriptively and axiologically, and not just variations in experience and expression due to contingent factors. Otto is not simply and solely a philosopher of religion. It must not be forgotten that for Otto the key category in religion is "the holy" and the existential experience of salvation outweighs any kind of generalised description. Wach quotes Max Scheler in words that could be applied to Otto:

As one window stands out of a row if a face looks out, so one finite object becomes 'special' or 'holy' as it symbolizes Ultimate Reality.¹⁹

Thus the personal aspect is central for him and must not be obscured by the also important framework of truth and its philosophical justification.

Yet the subject matter under study is not experience, but descriptions of experiences at either first or second hand. Moore's comments, already quoted, underline the student's dependence on accounts of experiences, not the experiences themselves. Yet the accounts are accounts of something. The level and degree of interpretation also varies in sophistication and in dependence on outside influences.

Those who believe that the differences between accounts of transcendent experiences stem not so much from the experiences themselves but from the linguistic, cultural and religious stance of the person receiving them (in Laski's parlance "the Ecstatic"), also maintain that such experiences as experiences are essentially the same across the differences of time and space. Or if all are not the same, then there are at least recognisable classes or categories of such experiences which similarly are not dependent on the religious, cultural etc. background of the ecstatic. They would consider that the accounts of such experiences are evidence of two separable things; first an experience which can be assessed in psychological, religious or other terms, and second an overlayer of beliefs or cultural interpretation which is local and culture-bound.

Maslow for instance is quite specific:

. . . it is very likely, indeed almost certain, that these older reports, phrased in terms of supernatural revelation, were, in fact, perfectly natural, human peak-experiences of the kind that

can easily be examined today, which, however, were phrased in terms of whatever conceptual, cultural, and linguistic framework the particular seer had available in his time. . .

Also this kind of study leads us to another very plausible hypothesis: to the extent that all mystical or peak-experiences are the same in their essence and have always been the same, all religions are the same in their essence and always have been the same. . . This is something common, this something which is left over after we peel away all the localisms, all the accidents of particular languages or particular philosophies, all the ethnocentric phrasings, all those elements which are not common, we may call the "core-religious experience" or the "transcendent experience." (Maslow 1964, p.20)

Maslow goes further, and argues that as all religious revelation, illumination and conversion are modelled on natural peak-experiences, it is now possible to study them scientifically and even to replicate them with the use of drugs (Maslow 1964, 26-7). He does not seem to know Zaehner's Mysticism Sacred and Profane which had appeared in 1957.

It could with some plausibility be argued that Maslow is only taking account of Adamic or first level experiences and has not looked at any other stages. In any case, Laski, whom he quotes in support of his hypothesis, is much more cautious. It has already been noted that she classifies ecstasies into three levels of intensity, of which the second subdivides into two, and therefore has a much more scholarly picture than Maslow. But she does indeed want to separate the experience from its interpretation:

This impression, that interpretation followed the ecstatic moment and was not simultaneous with it,

is given by several other people in the groups. 'I continued in this state of inward joy, peace, and astonishment till near dark, without any sensible abatement; and then began to think and examine what I had seen,' wrote Brainerd (R13). Of the experience itself the author of text R6 says only that he felt a 'temporary loss of my own identity, accompanied by an illumination which revealed to me a deeper significance than I had been wont to attach to life.' This is a minimal statement of overbelief - little more than the expression of feelings of loss of self and gain of knowledge. 'It is in this,' he continues, 'that I find my justification for saying that I have enjoyed communication with God.' The justification is made after the experience; it is what he afterwards interpreted his feelings as having implied. (Laski 1961, 60c-61a)²⁰

Ninian Smart brings this distinction out. He suggests that accounts of experiences can carry a very ramified kind of interpretation or interpretation of a less complex kind. In addition, while interpretation in the first instance comes from the ecstatic, the account may pass into the public domain and acquire interpretation by others. Thus Smart posits four classes of descriptions: (a) those interpreted by the subject with few ramifications, (b) those interpreted by others with a low degree of ramification, (c) those interpreted by the subject with a high degree of ramification, and (d) those interpreted by others with a high degree of ramification. These are put shortly as: (a) Low auto-interpretation; (b) Low hetero-interpretation; (c) High auto-interpretation; (d) High hetero-interpretation. (Smart 1981, 84b)

There would seem to be no place on Smart's scheme for raw or uninterpreted experience, although this seems to be what James and Starbuck, and Hardy also, thought predominated in many of their cases. On this view, it would make phenomenological analysis easier if cultural and doctrinal elements could somehow be discounted or peeled off. In fact it is sometimes suggested that interpretations have been added onto an originally pure or raw nucleus of experience. Moore (op.cit. 110c) thinks there may be some nature-mystic cases (for Laski adamic ecstasies) which approach this, and remarks too that those who think there is a clear distinction between experience and interpretation usually try to discount influences from formal religion (doctrinal elements) because they see them as obstructions to an assessment of the experience as experience, rather than essential components which have made it what it is. (Moore 1978, 109c-110a).

Moore started out, as already noted, by seeing that the material for study is accounts of mystical experience, usually mystical writings, and not the experiences themselves. But this seems to assume that a description of such an experience would be at once comprehensible to a non-ecstatic. Otto prefaces his description of the sensus numinis by saying that it can only be understood by someone who has personally had this experience. Yet in most cases writers seem to think that in practice mystical experience is to be laid out for non-mystical examination.

Laski felt it necessary to ignore overbeliefs when classifying what ecstasies felt, and she quotes from the Oxford English Dictionary (1933 supplement) where overbelief is defined as: 'Belief in more than is warranted by the evidence or in what cannot be verified.' (20b). Laski writes:

In making entries under the general heading of what they said they felt, I have tried to elicit the general sense of the statement made, ignoring, for the purposes of analysis, implications of specific beliefs. This is the method of approach that William James thought proper in considering religious experiences, that of 'disregarding the over-beliefs, and confining ourselves to what is common and generic.'

. . . . Here James uses overbelief as I shall principally use it, to name the subjective gloss or interpretation placed by people on their experiences, and although he believed, as he put it, that 'the most interesting and valuable things about a man are usually his over-beliefs', he still thought it proper in trying to discover the nature of religious experience, to disregard the overbeliefs and confine himself to what was common and generic. (Laski 20, VRE 490a)

The attempt to separate interpretation from experience brings to light a difficulty at the level of presupposition. Swinburne writes: "Once the line is drawn . . . the line always leaves the typical objects of religious experience as matters of interpretation rather than as true objects of real experience." (1979, 258c). Steven Katz states unequivocally and in italics, "There are NO pure (i.e. unmediated) experiences." (Katz 1978, 26a) He criticises both Stace, who thought there was a clear distinction between a mystical experience and its interpretation, and also Zaehner, who did

not, for failure to examine the conditions of experience as being the context within which any mystical experience takes place. Taking an example from Judaism, Katz goes through ten factors to illustrate that "these images, beliefs, symbols, and rituals define, in advance, what the experience he wants to have, and which he then does have, will be like." (Katz 1978, 33c). Katz introduces the term "preinterpretive concern" (23c), and takes up a position at the opposite end from, for instance, Stace whom he rebukes: Stace thought of Christian or Hindu beliefs being based upon their experiences, whereas for Katz it must be the other way round, if his Jewish example is regarded as typical, and religious experiences are not possible without some prior conditioning or concern.

Predictably, this is opposed to the view that all historical religions start from one or more ecstatic experiences of the founder or other significant figure, which then get institutionalised or routinised to become an established religious faith and tradition. This is explicit in Maslow, in James, whom Maslow consciously followed, and even in Otto. Yet Woods remarked that it is usually only the psychologists who think all the experiences are the same at the core, and theologians who insist on their being different.

This represents the argument sixty years previously between Otto and Geyser: Geyser, a Roman Catholic, held that religious experience was not possible without prior education

in doctrines and sacraments, because without this no-one would be able to recognise it as religious. This surely rests on a much narrower definition of religion than the one Otto and most of his successors are working with. There is little doubt, however, that Otto held a much less sophisticated view than would now be possible.

4.4 Describing transcendent experiences

The central problem in describing religious experiences relates to the uses and limits of language. To maintain that a description is just a factual account of what actually happened, as might be concluded from James or Starbuck or from accounts in the Alister Hardy collection, is surely too naive. In any case James introduces the word "ineffability" as a characteristic of mystical experience and makes clear that most mystics claim that words are inadequate to express transcendent experience.

As might be expected, Maslow, who says his work "is in direct line with James's Varieties of Religious Experience" (Preface p. xi), thinks that the language used in description does not match the experience, and because it is culture-bound cannot be expected to do so:

These experiences are essentially ineffable (in the sense that even the best verbal phrasings are not quite good enough), which is also to say that they are unstructured (like Rorschach ink-blots).
(1964, 72b)

But this assessment of the language used could not be acceptable to a philosopher. Because interpretation depends largely on language, this area needs much more thorough treatment than the dismissive and obscurantist comparison with ink-blots allows.

Renford Bambrough in his article, "Intuition and the Inexpressible," centres on the problem of language and other forms of expression. His aim seems to be to demystify the area, and on his second page he quotes Wittgenstein "Intuition an unnecessary shuffle."²¹ Bambrough then goes on to discuss knowledge which is never exhaustively described, but any bit of it can be researched and described further. Consequently he feels that the limits of language are conventional and therefore temporary. Support comes from Laski when she relates:

Sometimes people spontaneously proffered additional information later, often several years later . . . This possibility, that we are being told only a part of what might have been said, applies to all descriptions of experiences whether oral or written, but it is obviously more likely when someone is trying, unprepared, to answer a question verbally than when they have, of their own accord, decided to communicate an experience in writing. (11c)

Language always has a context, and this contributes often substantially to the communication of meaning. Bambrough recalls that Otto in DH made use of "arts other than the art of speech through which we can express and communicate thoughts and feelings." (Bambrough 1978, 209b).

Otto would not, however, agree with Bambrough's relativist view of the limits of language. Bambrough adds, "To hold that there may be inarticulate understanding is not to hold that there may be any understanding that could not be articulated." (212b) And the assertion, "We may recognise that some questions are unanswered and some problems are unsolved without concluding that some problems are insoluble and some questions unanswerable." (212b) almost directly contradicts Otto's position throughout DH, and indeed all his writing on the numinous. Otto makes a distinction between a problem and a mystery: a problem unsolved could in principle be solved, whereas a mystery is by its nature beyond human reason and solution in this sense. Bambrough does not use the word here mystery, but it is clear that this is the context of his article.

Further, Bambrough tackles Otto directly on the Inexpressible:

In his chapter on the scope and limits of expression, under the title 'Means of Expression of the Numinous', he is as modest and hesitant about our powers of communication as he is in the subtitle about our powers of understanding. The paradox is that he makes effective use of the powers whose feebleness he labours to expose. (206a)

Bambrough holds that the limits of language are contingent and must not be represented as a priori barriers to expression (206c). Yet Otto is going beyond language, and his references to art, liturgy, and music relate to non-

rational expression of the non-rational, which is communicable only to those who, because they have had the relevant numinous experience, can grasp in some non-verbal way the ideogram or other form of expression.

Laski comes close to this when she writes that "a number of rhetorical devices seems to derive from the existence and nature of ecstatic and response experiences. . . Sometimes they are used as a reference to or an ideograph of such an experience, where the experience itself is not described but the idea of it, with its associated values and implications, is to be conveyed" (Laski, 226a).

Laski takes a genuinely phenomenological line when she writes that the experiences feel ineffable. The following comes from her table entitled "What they said they felt":

The entries here are those where the experience is said to be, of its nature, indescribable; as opposed to those under loss of words/images, where the failure is said to be that of the person and not necessarily because of the nature of the experience. Demonstrably these experiences are not ineffable; few kinds of experiences can have been so fully and so consistently described. But such experiences obviously feel ineffable, and to say that they are ineffable (or indescribable, etc.) is a typical part of their description. (Laski, 31c)

In fact being indescribable may be thought of as a sign that the experience is genuine (in any acceptable sense). Laski comments on a passage from Fox's Journal:

He passes from the stage in which communicable knowledge is gained to one in which, through contact with God, incommunicable knowledge is felt to have been gained. Not only is this stage felt to be better than the one in which communicable knowledge is gained; incommunicable knowledge is itself felt to be better than communicable knowledge. Both beliefs are common among religious mystics. (Laski, 91ab)

The suggestion is that "ineffability" has become a convention, along with other descriptive phrases, and these serve to condition the expectations of the ecstatic. This means also that there is a ready-made vocabulary. Laski adds, "To a substantial extent the people in the religious group knew the vocabulary for such experiences before they knew the experiences; inevitably, when the experiences are known, they tend to be recounted in the vocabulary already accepted as appropriate" (Laski, 14b). Later on she extends this to non-religious people in her Questionnaire group, about a third of whom were writers or creative artists, and very few of whom claimed recognised religious adherence:

Many of the texts in the religious group demonstrate how readily this stock vocabulary may be drawn from, and, as the questionnaire group shows, it is barely possible to describe an ecstatic experience without using it. Mystical religions and philosophies, together with poetry, have so comprehensively provided the vocabulary in which ecstatic experience is felt to be fittingly described that their words and phrases will perforce be used even by people who do not share the beliefs these words and phrases imply. So many inroads have been made on the ineffable that even an atheist may find heaven the appropriate word to describe a feeling of 'not mundane here but happy unified everywhere' and communion with God or union with ultimate reality the appropriate phrase for a feeling of 'not

isolated lonely self but together with something or someone else.' (Laski, 348c-349a)

Language is not only a means of expression. As with other means of expression, language is part of the cultural and religious tradition. The language used by mystics helps to establish the tradition (Moore 1978, 115a). This is true of metaphorical language. Indeed metaphorical language is often more appropriate than what might be called literal, and in its own way more particular to a particular experience or type of experience. Kenneth Wapnick suggests that "precise, objective language" will "inevitably" transform the experience which is more truthfully expressed in metaphor (Wapnick 1981, 322b).

Religious orthodoxy may lay down the limits of language, and it is therefore significant when religious mystics overstep these limits in their descriptive language (Laski, 122-3). The experience seems to burst the bounds of language officially approved. This too seems to be part of the experience.

Much depends, however, on how language in mystical experience is thought to be functioning. James and many others have seen language in these contexts as mainly, if not exclusively, for the purpose of description. The suggestion already made (by Moore) that language helps to establish a tradition may suggest another function. Otto knew that means

of expression could at the same time help to induce or at any rate prepare one for a numinous or mystical experience, but Frederick J. Streng distinguishes descriptive from transformative language (Streng 1978, 150ff). This relates more particularly to the techniques taught and used, and Streng is writing of the need to transform the personality, in the first stage by purification of perceptions, will and thoughts. Seen in this light, much language is specific to a particular religious tradition and helps to establish it. Just as the cumulative mystical experience of many generations shapes the language, so the language guides the tradition. The effect is dialogical and ongoing.

The problems posed by Otto's language are taken up again by Schlamm²² who directly tackles Bambrough. While acknowledging that Otto's expectations of language used in his descriptions of and discussions about the numinous would need critical modification in the light of subsequent discussion in this field, Schlamm takes a more sympathetic view of what Otto was trying to achieve. This was more than purely descriptive or explanatory: "Otto was constantly striving to extend the boundaries of our understanding . . ." (Schlamm 1992, 545a). This entails a creative programme whereby using language to discuss and express religious (numinous) experiences has two further results: it can help us to recall subtle variations in religious experience, and secondly, it helps to create in us a greater sensitivity for future religious experiences (Schlamm, 550-551). The

implications of this for education in religion are obvious.

The mystical or numinous experience is usually itself transformative and leads in many examples to reorganisation of outlook (Woods 1981, 5a) and to deautomatisation (Deikman 1981, 240ff.). The effects of this in social and in biological terms (survival fitness in evolutionary competition) will be taken up in section 4.7.

4.5 Religious experience and knowledge

"For knowledge ecstasies I require that people make claims that can be entered - in terms of my headings, under mystical knowledge or new knowledge." (Laski 1961, 116a). One of these claims is to know by experience what hitherto they had known only by description (116b). This is clearly important for them, and must be taken seriously.

One of those who answered Laski's questionnaire (Q 61) wrote as follows:

When you suddenly discover a faculty working with effortless efficiency which enables you to hold in the forefront of conscious feeling both knowledge of the smallest bacteria in the field, how the blade of grass works, and the universe in the same detail - all you know about nature, the whole thing, you can think about them all simultaneously and not in parts, that knowledge is almost limitless - one's aware objectively of what one's doing but not aware of anything else, not aware of yesterday or tomorrow, just of the moment, doing this now. (479ab)

But describing the content of what is known can be

problematical. "It should be noted that where coherent knowledge is claimed to have been received during ecstasy, there is no evidence of more than a feeling of coherent knowledge unless such knowledge can be coherently communicated later." (Laski 62b) And Laski gives examples from non-religious sources which she refers to with "L" numbers, as well as from religious ones, marked with "R" numbers:

Virginia Woolf believes that during her experience she learns what 'reality' is, but that it is nearly impossible to set it down afterwards (L8). Jacquetta Hawkes believes that during her experience her thoughts had been given an extraordinary clarity and truth which could not be translated into 'everyday terms' (L19). Boehme, again, believed that it was during his experience that he was able to understand 'all things' but that afterwards 'I could very hardly apprehend the same in my external man' (R16). (Laski 61c)

Laski discusses the problem about how one can gain knowledge when the senses are either shut off or completely absorbed, and suggests that the knowledge is gained by insight after the main transcendent ecstasy, often by reflection or else by supplementary illumination. An example is taken from a friend of her correspondent Q 26, who wrote,

When it's greatest, you're entirely unaware, you realise it only when you come back; if you're conscious of the state when you're in it, it's not so terrific. But with the great ones, you don't realise till you come back that you were in heaven. (384c)

Similarly, Laski quotes from St Teresa:

How can the soul see and comprehend that she is in God and God in her, if during this union she is not able either to see or understand? I reply, that she does not see it at the time, but that afterwards she perceives it clearly: not by vision, but by a certitude which remains in the heart which God alone can give. (Laski 60a, and ref. 430a, and taken from The Interior Castle)

Mystics and those who have undergone other types of religious experience claim that it has affected their lives. The obvious ways to approach such claims from outside are to look both at the language used (Section 4.4 supra), and also at any changes in activity and behaviour (Section 4.7 infra). In many cases, whether from nature mysticism in childhood, or from the raptures of practised saints, there are claims to knowledge. These claims often include a certainty in the unity and goodness of the world, or an intimacy with the divine. Can these and other claims be made to stand up in the light of non-mystical examination?

The phenomenology of mystical experience provides one of the keys to understanding. The other is the highly abstract method of metaphysical speculation. Metaphysics implies ontology, but phenomenology does not exclude ontological reality; it merely leaves the question open. Each route leads to the epistemology which suits it. Moore says that analysis of the elements of such experience must at least be attempted, as there is otherwise little hope of reaching valid conclusions concerning either phenomenology or epistemology (Moore 1978, 109b).

The starting point must be the claims made by or on behalf of the mystics themselves.

Clearly no phenomenological stone should be left unturned when it comes to assessing the epistemological and ontological status of mystical experience. But the starting point . . . should be a careful analysis of the various claims made by or on behalf of mystics concerning their experiences. (Moore 1978, 122-3)

Writing as a psychologist, Maslow makes a suggestion which philosophers do not appear to have taken up. This is that a change in the focus of attention can lead to "new" knowledge, in the sense that the subject had not noticed it before. "The widening and enriching of consciousness through new perceptual experiences, many of which leave a lasting effect, is a little like improving the perceiver himself." (Maslow, 1964, 76-7) Further:

In peak-experiences, several kinds of attention-change can lead to new knowledge. For one, love, fascination, absorption can frequently mean "looking intently, with care. . . . This new "knowledge" can be a change in attitude, valuing reality in a different way, seeing things from a new perspective, from a different centering point. (Maslow, 77c-78a)

Maslow introduces a second aspect of the same point:

Another kind of cognitive process which can occur in peak-experiences is the freshening of experience and the breaking up of rubricization. Familiarization dulls cognition, especially in anxious people, and it is then possible to walk through all sorts of miraculous happenings without experiencing them as such. In peaks, the miraculous "suchness" of things can break through into consciousness. . . . It is a kind of perspicuity which contrasts with what can only be called "normal blindness." (Maslow, 78bc)

Some of the examples given of supposedly new knowledge seem nonsensical. To some extent this is linked with difficulty in finding the right words, but to some extent the knowledge itself is obscure. Laski writes, "the most usual post-ecstatic feeling is that something new is known but it is not known what." (1961, 346c). This may seem impossible to make sense of, but at the level of phenomenology it must be taken as seriously as all similar claims to knowledge and intimacy in religious mystical writing.

Moore insists that his procedures imply that no mystical experience can be self-authenticating in the sense normally understood by this term. This contradicts the commonsense view adopted by Hay, Hardy, and before them James, that they are. Hay says that self-authenticating means two things:

First, religious or mystical experiences have authority. Their immediacy and power is itself a guarantor of their truth. . . The other way that these experiences are self-authenticating is that they seem to bring to the person who has them an awareness of his or her true self, underlying the self-deluding subterfuges that so often appear to be necessary for survival in a threatening world. (Hay 1990, 33c)

On the power of experiences, Swinburne says: "Note that some experiences are very much more forceful than others . . . some experiences are very clear and unavoidable and leave a very strong impression." (Swinburne, 265a) Swinburne does not, however, say they are self-authenticating. Indeed he could not do this as his whole approach is that of a philosopher working a posteriori from inferences to a

possible or probable inference of their cause²³.

Otto follows James and quotes from him on "the Reality of the Unseen." Katz criticises James and those who follow him on two different grounds. The first concerns the use of the term ineffable and with it any reference to difficulties in describing the experience. This, says Katz, gives no basis for claiming that all the ineffables are the same. His second criticism is aimed at cases where two or more witnesses do in fact use the same words such as blessedness, peace, happiness, nothingness, God. Katz claims that mystics from different traditions must be using these words to refer to different states of mind, or to different objects of experience, whether real or imagined.

Yet this is surely to misrepresent James and with him Otto. The claim to the reality of the unseen is not a description of the numinous but an awareness of "something there." Laski in the chapter on Contact (Chapter XI) divides the contacts into three kinds: "contact with a transcendental 'someone' or 'something'; contact with an object or objects; and contact with an immaterial all." (Laski, 126b). Laski's material came from three groups of people, those who answered her questionnaire (Q), excerpts from literature (L), and explicitly religious or mystical writers (R). "Both union and contact less than union are . . . claimed by people in all three groups, by Christians and by non-Christians, by people of religious faith and by people of none." (126b)

On the felt reality of the unseen Laski quotes 'a clergyman' from James's VRE, a passage also quoted by Otto in DH:

. . . The perfect stillness of the night was thrilled by a more solemn silence. The darkness held a presence that was all the more felt because it was not seen. I could not any more have doubted that He was there than that I was. Indeed, I felt myself to be, if possible, the less real of the two. (Laski 426a, VRE 81b)

Another which Laski quotes from James includes the words:

My soul was so captivated and delighted with the excellency of God that I was even swallowed up in Him; at least to that degree I had no thought about my own salvation, and scarce reflected that there was such a creature as myself. (Laski, 433a, VRE 216c)

Laski also quotes from Joseph Salmon, a Ranter:

I appeared to myself as one confounded into the abyss of eternitie, nonentitized into the being of beings, my soul spilt and emptied into the fountaine and ocean of divine fulness, expired into the aspires of pure life. In brief, the Lord so much appeared, that I was little or nothing seen, but walked at an orderly distance from myself, treading and tripping over the pleasant mountains of the heavenly land, where I walked with the Lord and was not. (Laski 436a)²⁴

What is described, by Otto in the case of the numinous and by James in his chapters on Mysticism, is the state of mind both during and as a result of such experience. Otto makes it clear that he is not able to describe or analyse the Numinous, but only the state of mind of one overshadowed by a numinous encounter.

In non-mystical terms, alteration in behaviour and attitude

(section 4.7) would seem to be the best argument in favour of the position that something significant had really happened.

4.6 Communicating and preparing for religious experience

It has long been known that certain personalities have a psychic disposition which makes religious experience of any kind more likely. Maréchal, writing from within an expressly Roman Catholic position, speaks of supernatural grace being received by an aptitude which is a connecting link or stepping stone (Maréchal in Woods 1981, 470b). He goes on to the rôle of training in preparation for the gift of divine grace;

It may be asked indeed, since the essential of ecstasy depends upon God's free initiative, what role the psychological unification brought about by asceticism still has in it. This role, we think we may affirm without boldness, is very important. . . . The whole man must be "prepared" for the divine communications by his natural dispositions or by the training of ascesis. (in Woods 1981, 473bc)

Maritain, who distinguishes natural mysticism from supernatural, thinks that training applies to both: but his natural mysticism is not nature mysticism, but mysticism outside his own (Catholic) tradition:

To the extent that supernatural mysticism requires human preparation, involves structures and disciplines, one should find therein structures analogically similar to those of natural mysticism - yet transposed toward a specifically different finality, and hence specifically different themselves. (Maritain in Woods 1981, 492c)

Katz goes further, but he is writing of all mystical experience, when he writes of the predisposition of the subject mediating the experience:

. . . there is no evidence that there is any 'given' which can be disclosed without the imposition of the mediating conditions of the knower. All 'givens' are also the product of the processes of 'choosing', 'shaping', and 'receiving'. (Katz 1978, 59a)

It is an aspect of Katz's general position that all experience is shaped by the predisposition of the mind. Often this is active.

I will merely suggest that, if one looks closely at the language of mystics, as well as at mystical devotion, practices, and literature, one will find that much of it is 'intentional' in the sense suggested by Husserl and Brentano. (Katz 1978, 63a)

It has long been thought that mystics, ecstasies, peakers are a different sort of people from the rest of mankind. Some scholars want to divide people into classes of receptive or non-receptive, prophets or administrators, peakers or non-peakers. There is room for modification, as Maslow regrades non-peakers as weak peakers who could be educated.

Maslow asserts that peak experience is totally private and personal, and can be shared with other peakers only by their recalling their own (Maslow, 27c). He goes further on the next page and suggests, like a good American, that each peaker can have his own religion, in the sense that peakers stand for religious innovators, while non-peakers are the

plodders and religious organisers or routinisers. Yet later, Maslow suggests that non-peakers are in reality weak-peakers to whom spiritual values can be taught (56-7, cf. 86). This, while little more than a suggestion, seems to enlist him among those who think religious education for all could be possible and worthwhile.

Much that has been said about language is obviously applicable here, in that received language and other forms too play a big part in making people at least aware that such experience is possible for them.

4.7 The results of transcendent experience

On the physical side there are two aspects to consider as the results of transcendental experience. One is biological, in that such experience contributes to the survival fitness of the race and of those members best fitted to propagate the human species. This is an argument taken up by Hardy (1975) and elsewhere. The other aspect relates to the mental and physical health of the individual and is also taken up by Hardy and by Hay.

Maslow mentions therapeutic effects (Maslow, 66b). Laski among beneficial results mentions "improved mental organization, whether this takes the form of replacing uneasiness and dissatisfaction with ease and satisfaction, or of inspiring to moral action or of enabling the expression of a new mental creation." (Laski, 371a) Looking for a link

between ecstasy and inspiration, Laski writes:

The gains of ecstatic experience are various but all, I believe, are compatible with this hypothesis. At its simplest the ecstatic may feel that he has gained generalised mental or emotional benefits. Or he may feel that he has gained a new focus of value, as in revelation ecstasies. Or he may believe that knowledge, whether religious or otherwise, has been gained or confirmed, and the expression of that knowledge may take the form of artistic or scientific creation. Or the ecstatic experience may, to borrow an admirable phrase used by Kirk of the power of contemplation, 'inspire to action and . . . renew ideals.' (280bc)

She has more to say about the stimulus to action:

In the west, then, it is generally accepted that the right and proper function of ecstatic experience is to lead to improvement - improvement for the individual as he achieves finer organisation, sees more truth, develops his intellect and creative capacity; and improvement for the group as a result of the contribution the improved individual is able to make, whether in the form of service or in the form of communicating new ideas that may lead to more successful mastery of the environment or which may act as triggers to lead to improvement in others. (316a)

Motivation to action is an effect which has received little attention till recently, although it is one of the main conclusions of Otto's study WöM, Mysticism East and West. Comparing Eckhart with Sankara, Otto distinguished two kinds of mysticism, that which tends inwards and to inactivity, and that which being theistic leads back to an active life. This is the Western tradition, according to Otto, and he gives other examples as St Teresa of Avila and St Catherine of Siena.

Laski outlines a talk given on the BBC (31 January 1955) in which Morris Carstairs describes a situation he found in a village in North India in regard to the use of stimulants. It appears that the Rajputs drank wine while the Brahmins used bhang or hashish, at the same time condemning the use of alcohol. Carstairs remarks that transcendental experience for Brahmins tends to "the sense of detachment from oneself, of loss of all impulse towards action, and a widespread indifference to other persons, as to all worldly ties." But the Rajputs represented an active warrior tradition, "a life of action and self-assertion," and Carstairs further notes that Western civilisation, itself seeing activity as a virtue, seems to have condoned and even encouraged the free use of alcohol, while making drugs either illegal or only available under strict control. (Laski 1961, p.259ab).

It is possible to show a scale of progression for spiritual development, beginning with wonderment at natural beauty, and then wonder induced by great music or art, going on to experiences of a more active or participatory kind, admiration of great deeds or the noblest human qualities; spirituality can also be stirred into activity when appropriate feelings are aroused by natural or man-made disasters, even by shock at violent acts and human wickedness. The notion of a progression, and the possibility of educating for it belong to Chapter Five.

This Chapter has been spent on the consideration of

experiences which are religious and non-religious, in the stricter sense of the word. Laski calls them "transcendent experiences," thereby including together people who see themselves within a religious tradition as well as those who do not. These may even call themselves agnostic or atheist. This surely is the situation in our schools, where R.E. is to be given to children, some of whom belong to a recognisable religious tradition and faith community, with indeed varying degrees of commitment, and some who do not. It is remarkable how very few parents exercise their right to withdraw their children from R.E. or from school worship. In fact there is a strong consensus in favour of compulsory R.E. in schools as at present.²⁵

1. See the First Speech, R.37, Cr.95, also R.19-20, Cr. 87ab.
2. RERU, founded in 1969 at Manchester College, Oxford, and the name later changed to The Alister Hardy Foundation.
3. Paffard 1973, whose respondents were either in their last years at school or first at university, while many of the RERU experiences refer to much younger children.
4. Marghanita Laski Ecstasy - A Study of some Secular and Religious Experiences, London, Cresset Press, 1961
5. Abraham Maslow Religions, Values, and Peak-Experiences, Harvard University Press, 1964
6. This appeared in the first issue of Religionspsychologie 1926 (published in Vienna)
7. David Hay Religious Experience Today, studying the facts, London, Mowbray, 1990, (cited as RET), p.3c, and Starbuck 1899 The Psychology of Religion: more details are given in the 2nd edition of Hay's Exploring Inner Space, 1987, ch.8, pp.103-107.
8. The Existence of God, Oxford, at the University Press, 1979, p. 246c.
9. in Woods 1981, p.422-3
10. He was giving a paper at the 1976 conference, printed in Woods 1981, 438c.
11. cf. also Hay 1987, 89b
12. R C Zaehner Mysticism Sacred and Profane, Oxford, 1957, (extracts in Woods 1981, 56-77).
13. Ninian Smart "Interpretation and Mystical Experience" in Woods 1981, 78-91
14. W H Auden "Four Kinds of Mystical Experience" (originally Introduction to Anne Fremantle ed. The Protestant Mystics) in Woods 1981, 379-399
15. e.g. V. Lanternari Religions of the Oppressed and N. Cohen Millenarianism
16. in Katz 1978, 96-7
17. See Eric J. Sharpe Faith meets Faith, London 1977, p.64a
18. WöM 1971, 3rd ed. 161-162, an unaltered reprint of an article which appeared in the Jahrbuch für Religionspsychologie 1926, tr.RM)

19. Wach 1958, 45-46, and cf. note 113 on p. 164b.
20. R13 in the text refers to her collection of religious writers, quotation 13.
21. Bambrough 1978, 201c, quotation from Philosophical Investigations, I.213
22. Leon Schlamm "Numinous Experience and Religious Language" in Religious Studies, 28.4, December 1992, 533-551.
23. Several passages in the book stress this, e.g. "I shall not discuss a priori arguments" (9c), "So then we shall consider the worth of various a posteriori arguments" (12c); ". . . arguments to an explanation of the phenomena described in the premisses in terms of the action of an agent who intentionally brought about those phenomena" (19c).
24. The reference is to Enoch in Genesis 5.24
25. This was reaffirmed in a headline and front-page article in The Independent of 6 September 1993, following a survey.

CHAPTER FIVE:

THE EXPERIENTIAL APPROACH IN R.E.5.1 New directions in religious education

In a recent review article (October 1993) Peter Vardy¹ describes and comments on developments in religious education in schools. He says that changes in the last fifteen years have made school R.E. almost unrecognisable. He lists five developments. Of these the newest and potentially the most innovative is the introduction of Affective R.E. It is precisely in this area that the work of Rudolf Otto is relevant, has already been influential², and offers at this time the possibility of further development. Otto's work not only makes it possible to enrich affective R.E., but also and perhaps more important, shows how this approach is integrated with other approaches to R.E. and to religion. After a brief discussion of four other changes in school R.E, Vardy concentrates his attention on the affective as something new and significant, and accordingly he devotes the bulk of his article to describing and evaluating it and pointing out its shortcomings if used in isolation.

The Affective approach concentrates on the subjective or 'feeling' side of R.E. and is pupil-centred. It might be described as taking the spiritual side of human development seriously in the classroom. (Vardy 324c-325a)

The significance of pupil-centred R.E. and of spiritual development are taken up in later sections of this Chapter. Vardy notes that Affective R.E. can appeal to "people from all walks of life, from all religious and non-religious

groupings and from all age groups." (*ibid.*) He notes also that this approach was pioneered in the state sector, i.e. not in church schools, although church schools and parish educational work can make use of the approach and its techniques.

Affective R.E. is also known as pupil-centred R.E. and experiential R.E. The approach seems to have developed around the time of Sir Alister Hardy's founding his Research Centre in 1969, at that time called the Religious Experience Research Unit (RERU). Shortly after that similar but more classroom-oriented work was begun by David Hay who got together a team at Nottingham University to research techniques and exercises that could be used in schools. He offered in-service training to teachers who were prepared to test the techniques under his guidance. A group of teachers from Durham County went to do this in Nottingham in 1987 on the initiative of the County R.E. Adviser (Maureen Potter), and a book was subsequently published which drew on their work³. Consequently the approach may not seem so novel in the Durham area as it is in many other parts of the country. Classroom results in terms of pupil engagement, interest and creative response, have been dramatic, as a number of Durham teachers can testify.

But there are some drawbacks too. One of these is a danger of concentrating on inwardness as an end in itself, and another is that any connection with explicit religion may

disappear and the whole approach turn into personal development, or personal and social education (PSE), which is a recognised aspect of education not especially linked to R.E. Both these are noted by Brenda Watson (1993)⁴. More worrying still is the risk of psychological damage to individuals unless the whole is handled by an experienced and sensitive teacher. The work at Nottingham was organised in part with the aim of preventing this⁵. Thus experiential or affective R.E., while outwardly simple in its aim of involving teachers and learners together, in fact raises a number of different questions. These form the substance of this Chapter, along with the outworking suggested by a study of Otto.

Experiential R.E. should always be linked with other methods. A good way to represent this is the three wheel diagram which features at length in the 1986 Westhill project for R.E.⁶ The three wheels represent three approaches, all of which should be used and if possible combined to provide an integrated and holistic education in the area described by religious education.

The Westhill authors label their three wheels: Traditional Belief Systems (TBS); Shared Human Experience (SHE); and Individual Patterns of Belief (IPB). The first, TBS, covers what was in the past often considered to be the whole of R.E, that is teaching about specific religions, especially Christianity (in a Christian social milieu), doctrines,

scriptures, beliefs, festivals and so on, much of which is usually taught by well-tried methods of communication, factual teaching, reading, video, study and discussion.

The second wheel, SHE, stands for deep human experiences and problems which are endemic to all human life, whatever the religion, social structure or outlook. These include questions of birth and death, love and hate, courage, suffering and fortitude. All are questions to which traditional religions may offer some solutions, but these are at best partial and usually at a psychological level, e.g. rituals for the dead and for mourners. So there is an obvious link with the first wheel (TBS) which is not applicable for everyone in all cases. SHE must also include the ultimate questions of good and evil, fate, justice and the problem of pain. Even very young children can raise such questions as, "Why did my daddy have to die?"⁷ The value of learning to reason about these problems is being recognised, as Vardy notes: "More recently the philosophy of religion has begun to be an important part of religious education in a number of schools - particularly at 'A' level" (323c). This is also a suitable area for non-examination R.E. at Key Stage Five (ages 16+), but can be taken with younger children as occasion arises.

The third wheel, IPB, was envisaged as the response of individuals to questions raised in SHE and to the patterns and models offered in TBS. At the time the Westhill team

were at work the idea was still pervasive that pupils be encouraged to work out for themselves "a faith to live by" which is a stated aim of R.E. in earlier papers and reports⁸. But it certainly includes what has later come to be recognised as pupil-centred and experiential R.E. The Westhill team state here:

Education - and, more specifically R.E. - is not primarily concerned with children as recipients of information, suitably packaged and delivered to them, or as units to be trained or indoctrinated in cultural norms. (24c)

It is inevitable that children (and teachers) will bring into the classroom their own personal beliefs and sense of identity (however embryonic they may be) and their own attitudes and experiences. These are the materials of the subject which are closest to the children themselves and of most relevance to them. (24b)

This area stands for the personal response or engagement of all who participate in R.E., teachers as well as pupils, and sometimes others who are drawn either into the classroom or into discussions outside the classroom.

Seven years later when Vardy wrote, it seems fair to see this area as having developed into Experiential or Affective R.E. with almost total overlap. The four other directions in which Vardy sees modern R.E. is developing are as follows. His first is a more academic and detached handling of Old and New Testaments, allowing pupils to see Bible stories from a new and distinctive perspective. This probably applies more in classes geared to GCSE or 'A' level. His second is the

handling of world religions, which he acknowledges is more advanced in state schools and Church of England schools than in Catholic schools, and it appears that he is more at home in the Catholic school system. Both these obviously fit into Westhill's TBS (traditional belief systems), as does quite a lot more of a descriptive and factual nature which is not so new but still relevant. His third direction is the discussion of important social and ethical issues like abortion and euthanasia, and it is clear that such topics raise fundamental questions like those Westhill put into SHE (shared human experience). Vardy's fourth direction (mentioned already) also belongs here and involves a more philosophical and logical approach to fundamental questions which religions either pose or attempt to answer.

Just as a superficial reading of DH has led some to the impression that Otto is mainly or solely interested in the psychological and non-rational, so too some teachers today think of experiential R.E. as one-sided, because they fail to see it in relation to other approaches. This overall integration must be stressed. But in order to consider experiential methods it is easier to consider them first in isolation. To some extent it may be helpful in practice to focus on experiential R.E., provided integration with the whole is not forgotten. Otto's work will prove of particular help here.

5.2 The human and the spiritual

The Education Act of 1944 was the first to make the teaching of religion compulsory in state schools. Before 1944, from 1870, schools could choose whether or not to teach religion, but if they did choose to, then they were obliged to observe the Cowper-Temple clause which laid down that such religious instruction must not be distinctive of any particular church or denomination. This clause is still in force throughout the state system⁹. The 1988 Education Act which brought in the National Curriculum reaffirmed the 1944 position with regard to religious education, making it obligatory as part of the Basic Curriculum which is seen as embracing the National Curriculum. The same provisions are made to permit parents to withdraw their children from R.E. and from school worship. Very few in fact do this.

This is not the place to argue for the current situation or to seek to justify the inclusion of R.E. in the curriculum legally established. At least religion is no longer (as between 1944 and 1988) the only subject schools were obliged to teach as now the whole National Curriculum is also legally enforceable. It must suffice simply to state that this is the situation with religious education in Britain.

Given that R.E. is required in all state schools, two assumptions of importance are bound up with this. The first is that all children are deemed to be capable of taking R.E., and if the aim is not to make them religious, they must be

able to learn about and empathise with actual religions and religious questions. This capacity is what Otto called the Anlage des Gemütes and it is as fundamental to his writing as it must be to the general British belief that R.E. is desirable and practicable for all.

The second point is equally important and closely connected to the first. The basis of R.E. in the state system, that is in non-religious schools in a (supposedly) secular state, must be human education. R.E. must appeal to human qualities and not specifically religious ones in the explicit sense, and spiritual development as required in the 1988 Education Act must also be seen in these terms. Thus the foundation of R.E. is educational in the first instance and religious in the broader and more general sense which underlies Schleiermacher's approach and through his work that of Otto.

Otto noted as early as 1909 that it was necessary to replace the old theology ("a metaphysic about God, Man and the World") by a Science of Religion which, like "all sciences of the mind in general," must apply itself to an examination of the human spirit (Geist), (PR 222; KFR 192-3). When religious education is approached in the first instance as education, the focus for consideration must be the human. This is because education is about developing the mind and spirit (Geist) of the pupils, and because the mind and spirit of the educators provide the principal means for planning the process and putting it into action. If in addition it is

accepted that education is a right for all human beings, not just for a favoured, perhaps religiously favoured few, then education must build on what all have in common, and that is their humanness.

To accept an educational justification for R.E. in state schools is to accept Wilfred Cantwell Smith's concept of religion as human response (Smith 1978). For Smith, all religion is a human construct and contrasts in this with the neo-orthodox and Barthian emphasis on revelation from God as constituting the only foundation for a Christian. The case for school R.E. as the Christian upbringing of the nation's children might have been argued, in fact as late as the 1960s was argued, but the immigration of numbers of adherents of non-Christian religions and the presence of their children in some of our classrooms, has emphasised that the role of R.E. in the state school is not to make converts, nor even to nurture children into the faith of their forbears¹⁰. Christian parents accept, as do their Hindu, Sikh and Muslim neighbours, that it is the privilege and duty of the family together with parish, mosque or temple community to develop children's commitment to the faith tradition as a living issue. Looking back, it is easy to see this had anyway been impossible under the Cowper-Temple clause because R.E. (RK or RI) which was not distinctive of any confession or denomination could not link pupils into a church. This was only possible in a church school where the Cowper-Temple clause did not apply.

Religion in a non-confessional way must then be recognisable, and can in fact be found in almost all human societies, primitive as well as advanced. David Hay opens his book Exploring Inner Space with an "ordinary man" watching the ships of Cortes approach the Mexican coast in 1519. The ancestors of the Aztecs and the Spaniards had had no contact since the old stone age, yet the visitors were able at once to recognise religious rituals, altars, temples, priests and the standard manifestations of religion, in spite of historical, religious and cultural differences. As well as practices, the phenomena of religion include attitudes and responses which can be called religious. These too can be recognised across cultural and language chasms. This fact of recognition is important, although it does not make it easy to offer a definition of religion¹¹, but at any rate the features of religion relate to an aspect or Anlage of what it means to be human.

This would lend substance to what is required by the Education Reform Act of 1988 when it calls for "the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society."¹² The Act obviously regards the spiritual as common to all human beings which state education can and should develop. But when it comes to definite identification, the spiritual seems equally as protean as the religious. These are two different but overlapping fields, as can be shown by a Venn diagram involving ideas connected with 'religious' and ideas

connected with 'spiritual'¹³. Some people have argued that the proper function of R.E. in school is to help personal and social education (PSE) and to stay clear of religion as such altogether. But the area designated by the spiritual is far wider than this and reaches to the depths of traditional religions.

The spiritual denotes an aspect of life and thought which is meaningful for agnostics and atheists as well as for members of traditional religions. This important fact is supported by the findings of Laski, for instance, as discussed in Chapter Four. It is clear that the term 'spiritual' must include qualities like imagination, wonder, aspiration to higher ideals, and even those human presentiments described by Peter Berger as 'signals of transcendence' (Berger 1972).

Professor Brian V. Hill¹⁴ wants to label this aspect of the spiritual as the "distinctively human". He refers to an earlier publication of his in which he had argued for four distinctive 'marks of the spirit' on which educational energies should be focussed. These were endurance, transcendence, creativity and dialogue. In the 1989 article he chose to make transcendence the lynch-pin, as the other qualities anyway seem to relate to it. It is relevant to note that Laski used 'transcendent' to provide a neutral setting for her enquiry. Obviously a lot depends on how this often-used term is unpacked. Hill does not give transcendence the ecstatic quality that Laski found, but the

qualities he mentions do transcend what is ordinary and uninspired. Perhaps this allows scope for Maslow's weak peaks to be developed.

Hill discusses very briefly a number of qualities which include "a distinctive capacity to rise above the feelings and rhythms of animal life"; self-awareness; capacity for abstract reasoning; ability to transcend time; ability to rise above the current stream of emotions and to fix attention on one or two which may become long-term motivation; imagination; freedom; a sense of moral obligation; and a kind of dissatisfaction with the human situation. Other things are mentioned, but it is clear that this last quality prepares for a critical stance over against the normal run of events. It may also be relevant to remark (Hill does not mention this) that dissatisfaction is at the root of all religions of salvation, that is the realisation that human beings long for an ideal state which has not yet been attained.

In calling spirituality "distinctively human", Hill's idea is to see it as a human quality, or set of qualities, free and separate from religion in the traditional sense, even though there must be overlaps. In taking transcendence as the focus of his investigation, Hill adds that this notion does not require any particular theological explanation, nor any specific psychological theory of self-concept. In calling it "distinctively human", he wants to make it a form of

humanism, and thus be able to anchor the transcendent and through it the spiritual firmly within the domain of education rather than in the disputable area of religion.

That it is possible to teach spirituality in a context of theological neutrality is further emphasised when the current Professor of Theology at Bristol writes of "an education towards spirituality without indoctrination or nurture into a specific religion", which she further calls "training in sensitivity for spiritual awareness."¹⁵

The basic ideas then would include (1) transcending the everyday, going beyond "normal" concerns and assumptions, whether bodily, emotional or economic; (2) being able to take up a new and different viewpoint, which can in turn lead on to empathy; (both these points are mentioned by Hill); (3) the combination of (1) and (2) frees¹⁶ the mind and the imagination and thus has the effect of countering indoctrination, or bringing about de-indoctrination¹⁷; and (4) the capacity or the opportunity for wonder and stillness. Point (4) in some respects refers back to (1), but may also lead to a critical standpoint.

The benefits of a widely defined spirituality have been recently argued by Carl Garner in a collection of exploratory essays on teaching spirituality (Garner n.d.). Garner argues for the need to meet the needs and aspirations of the human spirit which may in fact be expressed through non-religious

social ideals and aims. Among these he instances (at that time) Marxism and we could add patriotism, famine relief, artistic ideals, and a wide range of examples, not the less sincerely felt for being imprecisely defined.

Hill's article on Spiritual Development stresses the need to transcend everyday experiences, and makes two further points: one that as human beings we are conscious of transcending the everyday, and the second, that we need to reflect on this if such capacity for and awareness of transcendence is to be developed.

Spiritual development calls for experiential methods and it is possible to make use of wonderment at natural beauty, as well as wonder induced by great music or art, going on perhaps to experiences of a more active or participatory kind, admiration of great deeds or the noblest human qualities; spirituality can also be stirred into activity when appropriate feelings are aroused by natural or man-made disasters, even by shock at violent acts and human wickedness.¹⁸

Thus the responses to such stimuli go well beyond the spiritual exercises now being used in classrooms. Running, dancing, splashing water, all mentioned by Br. Ramon SSF¹⁹, accord with modern educational trends. But social concern and compassion, particularly when aroused by violence, hatred and human need, can also, when skilfully handled and

reflected on, be points of growth in spiritual awareness and understanding. An example might be provided by Ethiopian famine and the response of Band-Aid. Kenneth Leech takes this further in an article (Leech), and raises social and political questions some of which could be material for development through the school assembly or in other areas of the curriculum. There would seem to be a link here with the Western traditions of mysticism coupled with social activity, as noted by Otto in *WöM* and Laski towards the end of her book²⁰. There are good educational reasons for developing this aspect after reflection and in addition to the quietist exercises which are part of Affective R.E.²¹ For education in spirituality, it is essential to develop the ability to reflect. Without this, sensitivity can remain at a retroactive and superficial level.

5.3 The process curriculum - pupil-centred R.E.

Interest in experiential R.E. certainly grew from consideration of pupils' response and attitude. In the 1980s R.E. was considered under the three headings of Concepts, Skills and Attitudes, as in the Durham Agreed Syllabus of 1982, but the distinction, while helpful, cannot be rigidly sustained. "Awe and Wonder" is listed as the first concept, yet obviously spills over into attitude and substantially so. Those who drew up the syllabus account for this by saying that some concepts are really a "fundamental idea" (Durham 1982, 7). On this basis Awe and Wonder can be experienced, prepared for, reflected on, expressed and developed.

Increased sensitivity to wonder is a capacity which is the proper ground of R.E. Awe and wonder need not, of course, be explicitly religious. In modern educational parlance it is more usual to describe this as spiritual development, leaving the field open to spiritual experience which comes within recognised religious traditions, as well as spiritual experience, like Laski's ecstasies, which does not.

Awe and wonder denote just one aspect of a wider field, much of which is below the level of conscious thought. It is clear that experiences in this general area have large coincidence with Otto's experiences of the numinous, even though it does not seem at present possible to define religious experience in distinction from aesthetic and sublime experiences as Otto tried to do, but without convincing his readers.

Attention has also been given to developing the imagination. This too is an aspect of spiritual development which can only be carried through by experiential methods. Numerous articles on this theme have appeared over the last ten years in the British Journal of Religious Education, and certain names have become particularly associated with this approach²². To link this with R.E. in schools is to stress responsive and creative aspects of religion, in contrast to, but not necessarily in opposition to, the historical, doctrinal and imitative aspects.

A recent book of exercises for R.E. (Hammond 1990) puts early emphasis on "Seeing through another's eyes" and begins its second chapter with these words:

Religious education must perform two tasks if it is to face the question of the religious believer's intention squarely. First, it must honestly present religion for what it claims to be - the response of human beings to what they experience as the sacred. Secondly, religious educators must help pupils to open their personal awareness to those aspects of ordinary human experience which religious people take particularly seriously. . . Both tasks . . . still leave open questions of the ultimate truth of religion. They are therefore educational rather than indoctrinatory in intention. (p.11)

The use of such techniques in school can be criticised on the grounds that it is unfair to put children through exercises specifically designed for religious groups of volunteers, e.g. Zen novices, under the umbrella of non-confessional R.E. But in fact these techniques are shared by many in different religions and the recent works of those who have explored Hindu meditation exercises for use by Christians²³ somewhat modify this criticism. Additionally it is fair to say that as techniques they can be claimed by educationists without any particular religious framework or preconceptions. As such they are human endeavours and may fairly be adapted within a philosophy of humanist education.

The consideration of practical teaching demands consideration of curriculum styles. A good deal has been written about curriculum theory in the last twenty years, and particular

advocates of the process curriculum include Blenkin's Early Childhood Education and Blenkin and Kelly's The Primary Curriculum²⁴. Out of this special problems may arise in the case of religious education²⁵. The process or dialogue curriculum for R.E. has been discussed in a remarkable book by two Christian, specifically Roman Catholic, educationists, O'Leary and Sallnow²⁶.

Blenkin and Kelly make it clear that they are advocating a model which they call education as process in opposition to two other models which are designated content-based and objectives-led. Further, they stress that in focussing attention on the process, they are not simply advocating a teaching method which might in point of fact be used with either of the rival models, but they are putting forward at length a different model altogether.

(1) The content-based curriculum

Perhaps the plain man's notion of what mainly goes on in schools is a form of the content-based curriculum. It is based on learning facts, on getting through a syllabus or study plan which consists of lists of things to be learnt. They may be arranged in a logical order, so pupils must cover the first part before they can go on to the second, and so on through the whole syllabus, and the topics may be graded for difficulty. The content may be very important, like learning lists of words and grammar for a foreign language, or chemical formulae. But whatever it is, the teacher can tell

how much has been learned by asking or testing the pupils to see if they can give back the content of the lessons clearly and accurately.

The final proof of this style of curriculum is revealed in the end of session examinations. Those who have learnt well can answer the questions correctly and score the highest marks. The examination does not ask whether the information thus retold is either useful or interesting to the students.

(2) The objectives-led curriculum

It looks like a good idea for the teacher starting to plan a term's teaching, if there is a list of objectives which can be worked out. These can also serve as a guide for the teacher. This kind of curriculum style is not inconsistent with the curriculum based on content and is often found in conjunction with it. But it is different. This curriculum style places attention on abilities or skills, and it is tested by what the pupils have learnt to do. It can be called a curriculum of "how", as contrasted with the curriculum of "what".

(3) The process curriculum

The process model is in contrast both to the content model which puts emphasis on the starting point, the ground which has to be covered, on the one hand, and to the objectives model which directs attention to the result which is to be achieved. Instead, the process model considers that what

goes on in pupil learning is valuable in itself.

It is clear that this model of education puts the focus on the pupil in the classroom, and not on the subject to be taught, the syllabus, nor on the finished product, the successful examinee or school leaver. Obviously all education is supposed to be for the benefit of pupils, but the process model puts the emphasis on the business of learning rather than teaching, that is, the relationship with each pupil and between pupils while in the classroom.

The process curriculum involves the teacher and the pupils together in the classroom when it is in operation. Because pupils and teacher participate, this curriculum model is spoken of as a dialogue, in the course of which the conduct and content of the lesson (or series of lessons) is negotiated between all the participants. Doing this does not of course diminish the teacher's responsibility or remove the need for careful planning, but it does lead to affirmation of the worth of pupils, collectively as well as individually, because they are able to own their education and its processes in ways which are not much in evidence in many schools. It is not only children's experience and experiences which the teacher using this model tries to draw on, build up, enhance, or in some cases to contrive and shape, but also their ideas, abilities and interests which are given as far as possible active scope in the curriculum and in the lesson.

Religion in the process curriculum

At first sight it looks as if religious education cannot be handled in this way, and this for two reasons. The first is the nature of religion itself. Religion is centred on tradition handed on from each generation, including rituals, doctrines and writings, especially holy scripture, and these form a content which, so it is claimed, learners must simply assimilate and take over without alteration. On this view religious knowledge is given by God, it is revelation, and the teacher's task is to hand it on.

Very often the teaching for each stage of learning is laid out in the form of a syllabus to be covered, and problems are anticipated and explained, regardless of whether a particular group of pupils need this explanation, or are indeed ready for it. The traditional teacher of religion, whether Christian or the teacher of almost any other established religion, regards it as duty to hand on a body of beliefs and practices. The elder generation must teach the younger, exactly as they themselves have received this teaching and with as little change as possible. There is a clear parallel with the ever-lengthening chain of transmission which Otto opposed in AHG (p.100).

The second objection derives from practical education rather than from the nature of the subject itself. In England the law requires that religion, often facts about several religions, be taught, and teachers are therefore under an

obligation to show that they are doing this. The process curriculum is very often an integrated curriculum because pupils too have an important say in what is to be considered relevant, i.e. in the content of the lessons, and this may make religion as a subject area less easy to identify. Many primary schools have in the past included religion under more general groups of subjects in the integrated day or integrated approach.

In England, as the 1988 Education Act is enforced, teachers, especially primary teachers, may find they need to identify R.E. in order to show that it has really been covered. The most obvious way to do this is to put the subject on the timetable and to teach it as a subject, i.e. using some form of the content-based curriculum. This is because most people would see this as a simple, concrete and practical way to meet the demands for anyone outside the school classroom.

Modern education, however, expects pupils to be guided to find things out for themselves. The word "indoctrination" is used to describe teaching (in any field) which is narrow and dogmatic and which does not allow questioning or alternative points of view. Even today there are teachers of religion for whom indoctrination is considered a good word, and who welcome the possibility of dogmatic instruction in which pupils have as little opportunity as possible for raising doubts and difficulties. This seems to many to be an essential aspect of traditional religious teaching. In

strongest contrast is the process model of the curriculum and the methods associated with it.

Yet even within the context of the Church school and Christian education the challenge and the opportunity offered by process-based education has been taken up. In their remarkable book O'Leary and Sallnow tackle this difficulty head-on. Although they have got Mgr. Kevin Nicholls to write them a Preface, the authors are explicitly opposed to his approach in the matters of authority and revelation. For their discussion of revelation they refer frequently to Gabriel Moran. They have obviously had personal experience of the three curriculum models.

Their section headed "Curriculum Models and the Incarnational Approach" (pp.96-98) describes the three models outlined above with reference to the practice of R.E.

1. The 'objectives-model', sometimes referred to as the 'means-end model', . . . is based on the achievement of predetermined goals and foreseeable results. . .
2. The 'content-model' . . . The emphasis is on 'content' as a quantifiable and assessable objective. . . Content is selected for its intrinsic worth rather than for its contribution to the achievement of an objective. The keynote of this approach to the curriculum is the emphasis on what 'goes in', and how it is treated, rather than on what 'comes out.'
3. The 'process-model' . . . emphasises the principles of procedure in sharing and gaining knowledge and wisdom, rather than predetermined goals. . . The goals centre around the process of learning rather than the end-product of the activity.

O'Leary and Sallnow then go on to their Dialectical Model, which they introduce as 'an enlargement of model 3 above.'

The Incarnation of Christ has established once and for all that the totality of human experience is deeply significant in terms of man's salvation. The function of explicitly religious content therefore, is to illuminate and bring to a level of awareness in the child the full value and meaning of all his experiences. (p.77)

It becomes clear that they want to use liturgy etc. in education as a means of pointing up the significance of the ordinary human experiences of the children. This is a dialectic between three levels, as the following quotation shows:

The design offered here suggests that the relationship of the curriculum components is structured in a threefold dialectic. The curriculum takes its starting-point with the real experience of the child, and its end-point is the living Christian significance of that same experience in terms of the child's own understanding in terms of his humanity and its immense possibilities for love, growth and ever deeper meaning. Between these two components - the child's life experience and its ultimate meaning - lies the essential mediating area which includes Scripture, doctrine, liturgy, and all forms of communicating media constituted in the various disciplines of literature, history, dance, drama, music, visual arts and so forth. (p.86)

And again more briefly:

The illuminating quality of these mediations - particularly Scripture, doctrine and liturgy - specifically points up the potential and meaning of experience. They are the means by which the pupil develops experiential insight and understanding in his process of becoming more and more deeply and intensely human and Christlike. (p.89)

This opens the way for the conscious use of schematisation which is discussed in the next section 5.4.

The value of their book is that it is a sustained argument for seeing the heart of religious education in the process-model, as opposed to the traditional idea of an authoritative body of revealed content passed on from teacher to pupil in the shadow of the Church. O'Leary and Sallnow are arguing from a position within the Church, specifically the Roman Catholic Church, but the content-model can be found in almost all religious education where specifically religious matters are being dealt with. For instance in the matter of world religions, it is reasonable to assume that most pupils know next to nothing about Hinduism or Islam, unless they happen to belong to one of these faith communities, and many pupils are outsiders to Christianity too. This suggests that the material must be presented to them in an explicit manner with the emphasis on the content of what is to be learnt²⁷. At the same time it is clear that religions differ in their character and emphasis. While Hinduism might be very tolerant of an approach through human experience, the dominant emphasis on revelation in quite explicit terms which is the foundation of Islam is much less sympathetic to an approach from the side of human experience. Christianity has traditionally been seen as a religion of revelation in a similar way, and in the present discussion the nature of revelation becomes cardinal. Hence the stress on incarnation in O'Leary and Sallnow.

By starting out from a particular understanding of creation, and more particularly by means of their discussion of the incarnation, O'Leary and Sallnow are able to see revelation in terms of human experience, including the experience of children. It is not clear whether this might apply to Islam or other world religions, and there is not space to examine this question here. Theologically the discussion of revelation is the heart of their book, and it goes further than the writings of most Christian adult educators who advocate face-to-face discussion groups.

Education in the gospel

Jesus did not leave a syllabus and he did not write any text book. In fact he criticised the didactic methods of the scribes and Pharisees who in their teaching relied heavily on the tradition which they had received and on their own authoritative interpretation of the past. In strongest contrast to this, we have the model or example of Jesus emptying himself in order to take on humanity, to become a human being - a baby, a child, an adolescent, an adult, going through all the stages of development we have come to associate with different levels of formal education. The gospels do not tell anything about his schooling and it would be quite unreasonable for any Christian teacher to commend the methods of teaching used in Jewish schools at the time when Jesus was himself a pupil. Such methods would today be called indoctrination. In fact the only thing which is definitely known about his educational development is seen

from the side of the learner and not the syllabus: this is the picture of Jesus at the age of twelve asking and answering questions with the learned rabbis in the Temple. He engaged in dialogue, and this is an aspect of the process curriculum.

5.4 Schematisation applied to R.E.

The phenomena of religion make religion accessible to us, whether we are students, tourists, worshippers or pilgrims. It is not unknown for even a casual tourist to be gripped by something in a religious building or service of solemn worship. This may be only a passing emotion, soon to evaporate, or it may lead her or him to a deeper insight into the religion so manifested and turn to an incentive for further study, perhaps to personal commitment.

While it is outside the remit of R.E. in state schools to lead pupils to personal commitment, the possibility of a real insight into religion is a proper aim for those who plan and teach R.E. Schematisation, as already explained in Chapter Two, section 2.6.2, can be used for this experience in that certain phenomena activate an a priori capacity to sense the numinous, not in general terms, but a "feel" for the numinous in a particular aspect and under particular forms. Thus Otto's use of a picture of the Bengali goddess Durga in the first edition of DH was intended to give an insight into the non-rational within Hindu worship, both the tremendum and the fascinans. It is not, of course, a question of cause and

effect, but the empathetic reader who already has experience of the tremendum and the fascinans may recognise the numinous in these aspects as part at least of the character of the religion of Bengal and get a grasp of Hindu worship. This is a situation of disclosure.

Schematisation works in several ways but it goes almost without saying that there can never be the kind of guarantee of success that might be expected from a reasoned and logical argument. It is more like music or poetry in the ways it can work. The kind of schematisation just outlined corresponds more closely to the ideas suggested in Schleiermacher's Reden where "vistas are hewn through, before which each person is led so that his sense might find the way to the universe"²⁸, or rather the "Universum" which stands for the divine. Schleiermacher is talking of natural phenomena which act as triggers for religious experience, much like the many cases collected by Sir Alister Hardy's Foundation. Schleiermacher continues this passage, "and upon whose sight feelings are stimulated that, to be sure, are not immediately religion, but that are, if I may say so, a schematism of the same."²⁹ Schleiermacher also includes artistic works which can act as stimuli. What is central is the relationship between the schema and the thing schematised, and this is where Otto goes beyond Schleiermacher to anchor the process in an a priori relationship which is both immediate and necessary. The fact of its a priori immediacy is in no way reduced if it is only discovered after reflection and discussion with others to

bring out the relevant features of the phenomena, as might be needed by Westerners looking at Durga's image. Discussion serves to bring to light the a priori link between the manifestation and the numinous that is itself independent of the process.

Obviously images of Durga, like all religious artifacts, are man-made. In this respect the essential and a priori connection is seen as an expression of numinous experience, not perhaps a spontaneous expression because making an image takes thought, prayer, skill and a lot of time. The art of painting icons for Greek and Russian Orthodox Christians well illustrates this and rightly puts emphasis on reflection (prayer, study, meditation) as well as on skill and training in traditional techniques. And the result is "a vista hewn through" which becomes or at least makes possible "transitions into the infinite."

Otto probably chose Durga's image to lay emphasis on the non-rational. But, as DH stresses throughout, rational and non-rational belong together and in developed forms of religion completely interpenetrate. Here is a different working of schematisation which is quite explicit in Otto, where rational discussion leads to insight. The ethical demands of religion can disclose the power of the numinous behind and within them. Ethics, therefore, cannot stand over against God, nor is there a need to explain ethics away in separation from the numinous. At all but the most primitive levels of

religion, moral precepts either follow from faith commitment (Christianity, Judaism) or are presupposed by it (Buddhism). Thus the experience of ethics linked to a particular religion schematises an aspect of that religion, and perhaps of religion in general. This kind of schematisation, to which Otto gives more explicit attention in *DH*, now looks like one form of schematisation within the more general, whereby phenomena as experienced schematise the numinous. This is implicit throughout *DH* and it would have been clearer if Otto had acknowledged his debt to Schleiermacher more explicitly. On the other hand it was a common if fairly vague notion among the Romantics, so perhaps Otto received it in general terms and only sharpened it up in his own way.

Thus there are three ways in which schematisation applies in the practice of R.E. In the first, the phenomena of religion must be chosen carefully in order to lead to religious insight, as far as it may be possible to plan for this. It is not enough to present religious art, rituals and music as if that were all there is to it. The beyond, the "overplus of meaning" (*DH* & *IH* 5c) must be reckoned with and if possible disclosed.

The second use of schematisation applies to means of expressing the numinous. This requires study, discussion and examples of what the artist is about in painting an icon, composing or playing music which expresses some aspect of the numinous, the motivation, will and driving force within such

people. By extension this could apply also to acts of courage and self-sacrifice, but this is to go beyond schematisation as here understood, and may be an extension of its use. Here also Otto's own models of schematisation in terms of the erotic on the one hand and music on the other are helpful and offer suggestions for doing this.

The third use of schematisation concerns the rational and the non-rational. It includes the ethical but goes beyond to include consideration of all rational and conceptual aspects of religion. Seen under the figure of schematisation, reasoned consideration of the problem of pain, for example, should be expected to disclose some essential aspect of the numinous, something about the will and character of the divine. Arguments for the existence of God, for instance, are often explored at Key Stage 5 (age 16+), and Swinburne has produced a shortened version of his well-known 1979 book which can be used for this³⁰. But arguments using induction should at some time make it possible for people to see or feel or be grasped by the numinous which is pure a priori. If this never happens, we are left with the god of the philosophers whose place in the R.E. lesson, however instructive, should play no more than an auxiliary role.

That the rational aspects of religion are essential Otto frequently makes plain, for example:

This permeation of the rational with the non-rational is to lead, then, to the deepening of

our rational conception of God; it must not be the means of blurring or diminishing it. For if . . . the disregard of the numinous elements tends to impoverish religion, it is no less true that 'holiness', 'sanctity', as Christianity intends the words, cannot dispense with the rational, and especially the clear ethical elements of meaning which Protestantism more particularly emphasizes in the idea of God. (IH 109a)

The action of schematisation in the R.E. lesson may be spontaneous. This is obviously the hope of those who have devised the exercises gradually becoming more popular in Affective R.E, insofar as they have had schematisation in mind at all. But more often it needs to be brought out by discussion, reflection and creative expression. This is at the heart of the R.E. lesson. Here the integration of Experiential R.E. with the other two wheels (to use the Westhill model) becomes clear. The phenomena of religion belong to "TBS" (traditional belief systems): the problem of pain to "SHE" (shared human experience). In schematisation at least as much as anywhere else in Otto the essential wholeness of religion and of the study of religion becomes plain. It cannot be said to be a one-sided or unbalanced approach.

Schematisation firmly links the experiential to the factual in religion as well as to human experience. These come together most obviously in those religious rituals which are specific to turning points in human life, birth, death, marriage and so on, and in religious stories and scriptures. Some of these scriptures are chosen to be read out at the

appropriate religious ceremonies.

A later book by Otto, Gottheit und Gottheiten der Arier (GGA)³¹, gives more suggestions about the development of the non-rational. Otto draws on Indian religion in the context of the development of the human race, but this has relevance also for the development of religious awareness in the individual. In fact Otto himself relates this process to education on more than one occasion, as in a passage already referred to where an example given by Socrates suddenly awakens understanding in Adeimantos, and he says that he had known it all along but did not know that he knew it (IH 137b; DH 166b). The parallel with a priori knowledge is clear. Otto links this process too to religious education:

An important function of religious communication (Religionskunde) is to search out occasions when the numinous feeling breaks through and arises, and then to guide the reader by like feelings and empathy to understand for himself how they achieve their effect. This communication will want to be more than stringing together old phrases and stories of miracles. (GGA 15c)

A little earlier (GGA 14c-15a) in a similar passage Otto writes of triggering (erregenden) situations and objects and gives some examples. This process is already in action in religious education and exemplifies the style of 'schematisation' which uses examples from explicit religion, even while they are themselves not fully rational and conceptual. But it cannot be all and R.E. needs a clearer sense of purpose.

The numinous basis and background cannot be handed down, cannot be taught, and must be induced, excited, aroused. How this may be done is richly suggested and illustrated in many chapters of DH and other writings, through "reverent attitude and gesture, in tone of voice and demeanour, expressing its momentousness, and in the solemn devotional assembly of a congregation at prayer." (DH 79b; IH 60b) Yet even these means are only effective insofar as they indicate "an object."

Or they are simply ideograms for the unique content of feeling, ideograms to understand which a man must already have had the experience himself. For the best means are actual 'holy' situations or their representation in description. If a man does not feel what the numinous is, when he reads the sixth chapter of Isaiah, then no 'preaching, singing, telling,' in Luther's phrase, can avail him. Little of it can usually be noticed in theory or dogma, or even in exhortation, unless it is actually heard. Indeed no element in religion needs so much as this the viva vox, transmission by living fellowship and the inspiration of personal contact. (IH 60c-61a; DH 79c-80a)

5.5 Is there progression in religious development?

Consideration of schematisation and its application in practice involves refining crude ideas or presentiments to make them more distinct. They are further developed as the rational is brought in to schematise the non-rational. Inevitably this suggests development, or Entwicklung which is a favourite theme in Otto. Development in terms of pupils' progress too must be in the minds of religious educators, particularly when they have Attainment Targets and Key Stages

to work through as required for National Curriculum subjects since 1988.³²

Otto in several places³³ suggests a development which, if two conditions can be met, could provide a model for religious education. These conditions are first that there is a pattern of progression, and second that the development can be measured against the development or growth in understanding of the learners. Parallels with Piaget, Goldman and Fowler's Stages of Faith³⁴ suggest themselves, but the points of contact remain controversial. They do, however, repay consideration. It is important to note that Otto is addressing quite different questions from those of developmental psychology, so we may not expect to find direct help with the problems Piaget posed.

In fact Piaget's theory is inimical to Otto. This is because Piaget starts from the adult mind, and only considers children to have developed as they leave behind the stages of egocentricity and animism and approach the rational habits (as Piaget understands 'rational') of the educated Western adult. Thus from Otto's point of view Piaget falls into the error described in the second paragraph of DH (IH 1-2; DH 2), and would confine all sensitivity to the numinous to a crude and childish level, to be left behind with maturity. Schleiermacher's Third Rede pours scorn on the analytic and rational approach to education which was advocated then as it is today. Piaget's theory, enormously influential, has been

criticised and modified very substantially in recent years³⁵.

Goldman (1984) started from Piaget and looked for evidence to establish progressive stages in religious development along the same lines. Goldman's adult mind which was to be the measure of all childish deficiencies was his own and shows the understanding of the 1960s Protestant liberal! Thus it too is fundamentally rationalist, although there is a place for wonder - e.g. the story of the burning bush (Goldman 1984) - which presupposes the numinous. But Goldman's approach to religion is based on understanding and so is quite different from Otto's which is founded on experience. Any parallels between Goldman and Otto's chapter on the interpenetration of rational and non-rational (IH XIII) are therefore superficial. Goldman's notion of pre-religious and sub-religious phases as discussed in Readiness for Religion has perhaps a link with Otto's vestibule for religion (Vorhof), but with the basic difference that Otto approaches the problem from social-anthropology (Religionsgeschichtliche school) and Goldman from developmental psychology in an individual³⁶. Even Goldman recognises that "the key may lie more in the realm of emotion than intellect" (1965 43c), but adds in characteristically Piagetian mode "in the first decade of development."

Piaget and Goldman are addressing a question to which Otto appears to give less than two pages (IH 60-61).

- in religion there is very much that can be taught - that is handed down in concepts and passed on in school instruction. (IH 60b; DH 79b)

Otto outlines a plan for development in two directions in a chapter in DH which is entitled "The Two Processes of Development" (DH Ch.XIII). Both are needed in religious communication and it is important in today's climate of religious education to see these as separate, although in practice links will emerge.

The first process is the development of awareness of the numinous, a refining of the Ahnung or sensus numinis whereby the dread of demonic power is elevated to fear of the gods and to fear of God in the recognisably religious sense (IH 109c-110b). This process is concerned with the non-rational aspect, although descriptions and comparisons in words, as well as non-conceptual forms of expression (art, music) are used in the process.

The other process of development consists in the use of reason whereby the basic experience of numinous awareness is developed through the unfolding of moral-rational and rational aspects (IH 110c).

Language is important here, but not only for reasoned discussion. Evidence noted in Chapter Four makes clear that religions and all traditions of mysticism make use of technical language, some of it highly symbolic, with which to

denote this area of experience, and not to describe it only, but also to indicate what the subject may expect or to induce appropriate experience. Symbolic language and symbolism of all kinds are a fruitful area for learning and for showing development in the learners. Clearly development may be expected to take place, but the question is whether there are identifiable stages of development, similar to those put forward by Fowler in his SoF. There are indeed hints of this in Otto, not detailed plans. But even these hints are relevant for any kind of progression.

In Chapter XVI (DH Kapitel 18) Otto says that,

The numinous only unfolds its full content by slow degrees, as one by one the series of requisite stimuli or incitements becomes operative. But where any whole is as yet incompletely presented its earlier and partial constituent moments or elements, aroused in isolation, have naturally something bizarre, unintelligible, and even grotesque about them. (IH 132b; DH 160b)

This self-revealing by parts is likened by Otto to seeing parts of a whale in the water and different people attempting to classify it by its arched back, or its tail, or its spouting head, like the Buddhist story of the blind men and the elephant. Otto's assumptions (as already mentioned) are socio-anthropological, but he is at the same time aware of psychological development relating to the feeling of the numinous.

Like all other psychical elements, it emerges in due course in the developing life of human mind and spirit and is thenceforward simply present.

Of course it can only emerge if and when certain conditions are fulfilled, conditions involving a proper development of the bodily organs and the other powers of mental and emotional life in general, a due growth in suggestibility and spontaneity and responsiveness to external impressions and internal experiences. But such conditions are no more than conditions; they are not its causes or constituent elements. (IH 124b; DH 151a)

Otto has more to say about the provision of stimuli. These involve helping to bring what is implicit to explicit expression, that is developing the inner content of an experience or feeling, most commonly by putting it into words. As an illustration Otto gives Jacob at Bethel (Genesis 28.17). The first step of expression is, "How dreadful is this place!" This is the closest we can get to the original feeling. But a further expression follows: "This is none other than the house of Elohim." (IH 126c; DH 153b). In fact there are four steps to consider here: there is the primal numinous awe, there is secondly its expression in words or gestures, there is also the idea of a numen or presence, and fourthly a named power or nomen. Only this last makes worship possible as worship is understood in religion. Artistic, musical and ritual expressions are also possible, and Jacob set up the stone and anointed it. He gave the place a name and vowed a vow (28.18-22). An apprehension or presentiment (Ahnung) has found expression and this seems to be due to Jacob's having reflected on it and decided to respond in word and deed, with implications for the long-term future.

It would be good if Otto's ideas had been worked into a system, but this has not yet been done. August Miehle, who applied Otto's basic theme to the experiences of children, simply classifies accounts of childhood experiences under the headings of mysterium, tremendum, and fascinans. Comparison may be made with Fowler's Stages of Faith, although Fowler's ideas in religion are a long way from Otto's, but there is some correspondence in the matter of progressing from a lower stage of Fowler's to a higher.

The Jacob illustration is instructive and for Jacob its four steps must occur in this order. But this is just one particular pattern. For another person it may be the fourth step, the solemn worship, which provides the trigger, and for that person the process of clarification might involve taking Jacob's steps in reverse order.

Fowler's pattern is psychological, that is in terms of development of religious understanding in the individual, whereas the Jacob example centres on the development of religion and religious practice. Both are of concern to the religious educator.

Fowler identifies seven stages in religious development, numbered 0 to 6. He believes that his sequence of stages makes both ontological and ontogenetic sense, i.e. it corresponds to the development of the human race as well as to that of the individual. He is intentionally dealing with

both knowing and value (SoF 99b-101b), but as integrated modes and not reduced "to some mixture of the two." This reads encouragingly like Otto. Further, in seeing progression as spiralling rather than linear (SoF 100a), Fowler avoids Piaget's assumption that earlier, less-developed stages are left behind.

The question at issue for educationists is what are the expressions and the stimuli which help this development. For Otto these are expressions which either by their novelty or by their ritual familiarity prompt reflection, leading in turn to new expression of a more developed or clarified form. But while he does write in Chapter XV (Kap. 17) of phases or stages, the first eight relate to pre-religion (IH 124a) and some are alternative rather than consecutive: the other two, 9 and 10, give us the stimuli and developing expression which we have already discussed. Fowler, who sees his stages as invariably consecutive, links them (but not rigidly) with Levinson's Eras and Erikson's Psychological Stages, and sees a life crisis or other factor which disturbs previous equilibrium as the necessary stimulus for growth or development of faith (SoF 100c-101a). Thus neither Fowler nor Otto provides an answer to the questions religious educators want to put, and for teachers Fowler even less so as half his steps are linked to adult life.

There are, nonetheless, several things which might lead to a developmental programme. "Transition to Stage 1 begins with

the convergence of thought and language, opening up the use of symbols in speech and ritual play" (SoF 121c). Stage 1 "is marked by a relative fluidity of thought patterns," and transition to the next stage, Stage 2, begins with "the child's growing concern to know how things are and to clarify for him- or herself the bases of distinctions between what is real and what only seems to be." (SoF 133 and 134) The strength of this stage, according to Fowler, is the use of stories, beliefs and observances to symbolise identity and belonging to a community. Stories help too to make sense of experience. The crisis comes with a clash or contradiction in stories or of stories with experience which should lead to reflection on meanings, and this is the stimulus or life crisis which develops in Stage 3 (SoF 149, 150). Fowler links it with "the emergence of interpersonal perspective taking," and growing social awareness and relationships. Against this it must be noted that Fowler has not considered those who grow up in a monocultural society, such as strict Islam.

Fowler represents Stage 3, dubbed Synthetic-Conventional Faith, as a relatively comfortable stage in which many church-, temple- or mosque-goers may remain for the rest of their lives. A breakdown in authority patterns, or sudden contradictions and changes in valued personnel, officers or practices can lead either to nihilistic despair, or alternatively to "critical reflection on how one's beliefs and values have formed and changed" (SoF 173c). Fowler links

this to "leaving home" emotionally or physically, but many of today's school pupils are at the threshold of this transition and perhaps should be encouraged to cross it. This will lead to a questioning and critical outlook, a "defundamentalising" which, by encouraging a more reflective outlook, will build up more self-confidence, competence, and new communities in religion, politics and other directions. Once more the role of reflection, so clear in Otto, is decisive.

Stage 4, dubbed Individuative-Reflective Faith, Fowler represents as the most outgoing of them all. It includes taking responsibility for one's own commitments, lifestyle, beliefs and attitudes (SoF 182a). The life-crisis which leads to Stage 5, says Fowler, may grow from images and energies of a deeper past, including from childhood, which break into the neat patterns of faith. "Life is more complex than Stage 4's logic of clear distinctions and abstract concepts" (SoF 183). By recognising depths from the unknown - Fowler does not mention the numinous here - the way is open for a "second naïveté (Ricoeur)." But this stage is "unusual before mid-life" (SoF 197-8). It has its tensions which Fowler thinks can only be eased by the Universalising Faith of Stage 6 (the last of the seven stages).

If Fowler is right, then a number of triggers or stimuli are suggested which might help people to move on to the next level. But if Fowler is also right in stating first that the stages invariably occur in this order without any suggestion

that some might be rushed through, and second that they are linked to growth through adult life, then religious educators need to be careful. The two factors which seem to be recurrent are first the breaking-in of the disturbing, the non-rational and the unknown, and second the need for reflection, which presumably benefits from discussion and mutual help in reflection and self-expression.

At this point there is a link between developmental stages in R.E. and the discussion of spiritual development in Section 5.2 of this Thesis. A clash of values or experiences in Fowler corresponds to the sight of human suffering or of human wickedness which leads to an upsurge of spiritual energy. Earlier, the progression from wonder at nature, to artifacts and then to human virtues also suggests a system, but there is no reason why this particular order should be followed in the spiritual growth of any one person. Nor, as with Piaget and to a lesser extent Fowler, are earlier stages left behind. Consequently it does not seem feasible at present to suggest steps for a scheme or programme in R.E. The constant factor, however, which belongs to the transitions at every step is the provision of time and material for reflection, and the will or the stimulus to engage.

In summary it can be said that there are developmental stages, more or less loosely linked to physical and intellectual growth. Progress can be helped by suitable

stimuli and by help, often in groups such as classes or house groups, in expressing one's feelings and thoughts, in creative activity and in words, thus clarifying, sharing and refining them. These can act as triggers between persons, as well as the traditional religious forms. These certainly help people to move to a new level, although, given the variety of human personalities and the complexity of human associations, it would seem rash to suggest stages of invariant progression but there may be some statistically supported norms, sufficient to be built up into an outline.

1. Peter Vardy "Theological Trends, Religious Education - the Present and the Future" in The Way - Review of Contemporary Christian Spirituality, vol.33 No.4, October 1993, pp.323-330
2. Maureen Potter took Otto's Idea of the Holy and Schleiermacher's Addresses as the starting point for a dissertation on experiential R.E. in schools which led to her M.A. degree at Durham in 1982. Out of this came Awe and Wonder in the Classroom, by Robin Minney and Maureen Potter, published by Durham University School of Education, 1984.
3. John Hammond and others, New Methods in R E Teaching - An Experiential Approach, Oliver & Boyd 1990
4. Brenda Watson The Effective Teaching of Religious Education, Longman, London & New York, 1993, chapter 6, especially pp.74-5.
5. Even so, one of those who had been central to the work refused to be associated with the resultant book on the grounds that children's privacy could be invaded and violated by some of the exercises if handled badly.
6. Garth Read, John Rudge, Roger B. Howarth, How Do I Teach R E? the Westhill project R E 5-16, Mary Glasgow Publications, 1986, pages 8-27.
7. Bossmann 1984, Wann wird der Teufel in Ketten gelegt?, a research project in which school pupils aged eight to nineteen were invited to put questions to God. The question, "Why did my first Daddy have to die?" is on p.31.
8. "The aim of religious education should be to explore the place and significance of religion in human life and so to make a distinctive contribution to each pupil's search for a faith by which to live." Durham Report The Fourth R, London SPCK 1970, p.103; "The teenagers with whom we are concerned need, perhaps above all else, to find a faith to live by." Crowther Report 15 to 18, HMSO 1959, vol.I, p.44.
9. In fact the advent of World Religions teaching brought an easing in terms of Christianity too in that it is now general practice to study rituals and festivals which may belong to specific Christian groups.
10. There is still a strong lobby among Government supporters in favour of making R.E. once again a tool of Christian nurture and even compulsion. This shows through in the latest DfE draft document of October 1993.
11. Some definitions can be found in Roger Schmidt Exploring Religion, Belmont California 1988, Chapter 1.
12. See DES Circular 3/89, p.4.

13. see Minney 1991

14. Brian V. Hill "'Spiritual Development' in the Education Reform Act" in British Journal of Educational Studies, vol. XXXVII.2, 1989, 169-182

15. King 1985, 138

16. Some would invoke the educational thought of Plato here. Relevant too is the picture put forward by Patanjali (variously reckoned between 200 BC and 500 AD) of a farmer who must clear the irrigation channels before the life-giving water can flow. The farmer (teacher) does not supply the water: he (she) merely clears the channels to allow a natural process.

17. This word is used in Hammond 1990, Ch. 3.

18. These possibilities are described in a contribution by Br. Ramon SSF to Robson n.d. pp.70-78. Speaking from his own experience, Ramon makes three points which are specially relevant here. First he stresses the immediacy of all such experiences. All authorities agree on this. Second, the stimulus is not by any means always natural beauty or mystery, but works of art or music and other man-made things can also provide the occasion. Ramon's third point is that stimulus to spirituality is often provided also by hateful things, through human sensitivity to violence, hunger, cruelty and so on.

19. Brother Ramon "Human Experience of God" in Robson n.d., 70-78

20. Laski 1961, p.259

21. As in Hammond 1990

22. notably Brenda Lealman, Jack Priestley, Edward Robinson, and Derek Webster.

23. Notable are Anthony de Mello SJ, Henri le Saux OSB and Dom Bede Griffiths.

24. see especially the second and revised edition Blenkin & Kelly 1987.

25. An article linking these methods to Otto is Robin Minney, "Rudolf Otto and Pupil-Centred Religious Education" in Curriculum, vol.10, nr.3, Winter 1989, pp.152-159.

26. D J O'Leary and T Sallnow Love and Meaning in Religious Education - An Incarnational Approach to Teaching Christianity, Oxford University Press, 1982

27. For an implicit approach to the teaching of World Religions see Robin Minney "Beginning with Ourselves" in British Journal of Religious Education, Spring 1985.
28. In the third Rede, R.153; Cr.150a
29. Otto would want to rephrase this to say that through schematism they are religion and immediately so, although perhaps in a rather crude form.
30. Richard Swinburne Evidence for God, Oxford, A R Mowbray & Co. 1986
31. Gottheit und Gottheiten der Arier, Gießen, Alfred Töpelmann, 1932, was never translated into English.
32. R.E. as outside the National Curriculum (but part of the Basic Curriculum) has a locally agreed syllabus and does not have ATs from central government. Some local syllabuses have, however, suggested these and the latest move to present model R.E. syllabuses on a national basis in 1994 may change the position with regard to stages of progress.
33. A chapter entitled Means of Expression of the Numinous (IH IX; DH 11), and later ones entitled The Two Processes of Development (IH XIII; DH 15), Its Earliest Manifestations (IH XV; DH 17), and The 'Cruder' Phases (IH XVI; DH 18).
34. James W. Fowler Stages of Faith - The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning, San Francisco, Harper & Row, 1981. Cited as SoF.
35. Margaret Donaldson Children's Minds, Chapter 2.
36. "By the very nature of the young child, he is crude, immature and naïve in his religious beliefs" (Goldman 1965, 40c).

CHAPTER SIX:

CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions to be drawn fall into two groups: those about the thought of Otto, and those arising from the application of Otto's thought to the practice of R.E. To a great extent this study reaffirms what is already well known, but three aspects of his work come into a new prominence. These are as follows:

(1) Otto was not always careful in his use of terms and this brought him into trouble with some of his critics. He was himself aware that because study came easily to him he was not always self-disciplined in the precise way that philosophers approve. On the other hand, what he had to say was of the greatest importance and tended to elude precise language, so that in picking up minor inconsistencies critics like Feigl appear to strain after a gnat and miss a camel.

(2) The detour to Fries was needless, and adds nothing to Otto's thought while again giving leverage for his critics. Scholz was the first to point this out, as early as 1910¹. Because Otto knew that he lacked rigorous precision in his expression and no doubt also in his thought, the tidy-looking system of Fries and his followers, Apelt and De Wette, was alluring. But it convinced few, even at the publication of KFR, and has misled many who study Otto ever since.

There is no break between Otto's phenomenology and his philosophy in DH, but whether or not there is a serious inconsistency between his phenomenology in DH and his philosophy in KFR depends on how one interprets his treatment of the system of Fries. He sought to adapt what Fries had to say about immediate and a priori knowledge of the aesthetic to a priori awareness of the numinous. Fries was not writing about religion and it is doubtful, from Otto's own ambivalent attitude to the link between the holy and the sublime, whether such a transfer can be made. Otto's philosophical underpinning, however, derives much more easily and securely from Kant and Schleiermacher.

(3) Most important of all and quite new is the discovery that Otto's use of the term schematisation has been misinterpreted when confined to narrow Kantian limits. It should be seen as an active relationship between the accessible, whether rational or empirical, and the basic non-rational power of which we can at first be no more than dimly aware. Acknowledging that Otto himself referred his use of schematisation to Kant, it is necessary to appreciate that his use is in fact quite different and derives in important ways from Schleiermacher and the use he made of this term. Schematisation has practical application. His use of schematisation and of the ideogram is implicit in almost everything he wrote, in fact wherever he treats of the relationships between the rational and the non-rational or between the numinous and the phenomena that

disclose the numinous. So this is quite fundamental.

The conclusions for R.E. derive directly from this. The discovery that schematisation opens the way to disclose if not the essence of religion then at least the "feel" of the essence of a particular religion comes at the present time when those engaged in R.E. in Britain are trying out experiential and pupil-centred methods. This discovery is not fortuitous.

Otto's personal commitment as a Christian theologian comes through, from the testimonium spiritus sancti internum in AHG, to his writing on ethics, the sense of the numinous informing all his work. At the same time he did not claim an absolute monopoly for Christianity, but for reasons explicitly based on the interweaving of rational and non-rational, but implicitly perhaps on his own pietistic upbringing, he maintained the superiority of Christianity.

Otto presupposes a human disposition, or predisposition in the Anlage des Gemütes, the capacity to become aware of the numinous. This is the meeting place where one finds a feel for the essence of religion, and it acts as a guarantee enabling one to distinguish a true manifestation from a false one. Conversely, the manifestations of religion can act as triggers to stimulate understanding and disclose the capacity in the mind and spirit (Geist) which apprehends the religious or numinous, purely a priori in the depth of

the soul (the Seelengrund). So there is a reciprocal relationship.

It is precisely at this point that Otto's own "feel" for religion, not only for religion in general but for the centre of particular religions, comes into play, as his one-time pupil Joachim Wach aptly observed². Otto would wish and expect that everyone who is at all religiously educated should be able to develop this "feel" or sense for the essence of religion. Such a sense is entirely consistent with Kant's notion of a pre-philosophical sense of right and wrong which so far from being misleading is actually developed by philosophical argument and made precise.

How to develop this sense is made easier by a better understanding of schematisation. As already noted, the term must be freed from its strict Kantian bonds, and the pattern suggested by Schleiermacher will be found much more illuminating. It supports the interplay of religious phenomena with essential feeling in exactly the way a reading of Otto requires. This interrelation suggests a programme for R.E., in that the essence of religion is discovered through appropriate phenomena. Yet this method does not presuppose or demand adherence to any particular faith, as Otto himself recognised. R.E. teachers should come to see this as an essential part of their teaching and plan accordingly.

As has been explained in Chapter Five, there are three possibilities here. In the first, the phenomena of religion may be the stimuli for participants to discover the essence of religion (or of a particular religion) for themselves, rather as aspects of the image of Durga evoke feelings for the tremendum and the fascinans. Discussion or other developmental work clarifies this and helps to make people more sensitive to religion in its essence and its manifestations. Of course there can be no guarantee that this will happen, and the thoughtful teacher must try various approaches, depending on the ability and experiences of the pupils. To some extent this is the case in all subjects.

The second use is directly related to the first but starts from the opposite end because it centres on working out or devising ways of expressing the numinous, or of studying ways this is traditionally done, like the painting of icons. In both uses what is essential is the hidden a priori link between schema and the thing schematised.

The third use of schematisation directly concerns the application of the rational to bring out the non-rational. Thus ethics in a religious context ought to make one aware of the numinous, and reasoned discussion of the problem of pain should make it possible for the numinous to be felt, albeit in ways less dramatic than the experience of Job.

Schematisation, however, does not apply in every aspect of R.E. Even in the teaching of World Religions there is much which does not really relate to Otto's work at all. One may start a project by making use of religious artifacts, like the collection in the Religionskundliche Sammlung at Marburg. To this must be added the phenomena of living religions which are on hand in the environing communities through festival, music, dress, dance and so on. These excite interest and encourage people to consider the study of religion as a worthwhile activity. The teacher should not forget, however, that these can and at some stage should provide genuine religious insights, but may be brought in at first merely to arouse interest.

Otto's work really assumes importance when the learners start to engage as participants. It means that learners must expect to empathise with and gain insight into religious experience (taking 'religious' in the broad sense of transcendent or spiritual within the meaning of the 1988 Education Act). Such experience in a secular or not explicitly religious context opens the way also to empathy with explicitly religious experience, and indeed a reading of Laski and Maslow would suggest that it is not always easy to tell the difference³.

Empathy is helped by using certain techniques to engage the attention and the affective side. This is the contribution of the exercises in stillness, listening to music, silence

and meditation which are becoming more widespread in the 1990s with the increasing interest in Affective R.E. And this spread of interest reaches well beyond schools and beyond traditional religious bodies. Exercises in a group should be followed by reflection and discussion. The readiness to reflect is attested in Otto's personal life and in his seminars, writings and personal contacts. With this pattern of practice progress can be seen in a number of ways. Reflection and discussion must lead to clarification, clarification both of concepts and of the experiences themselves. The immediate reaction leads to a more considered response which in turn helps to formulate and provide a comparative assessment of the experiences and responses of other people, some of which may be of a clearly liturgical or symbolic kind.

Such a method of study leads to an understanding of the phenomena themselves and additionally of the way they may act as triggers to further experience. Although most people have claimed that a transcendent experience is in the last resort a spontaneous one, it is obviously possible to prepare oneself or put oneself in the way of such a spontaneous encounter, and much religious liturgy, music and art has this very effect.

Arising from reflection and shared discussion participants should become aware, through the phenomena, of a transcendent reality which is "bigger than all of us."

Here we get close to the heart of Otto's work. While for some the numen becomes a nomen and religious people tend to call the transcendent reality "God," it is clear from Otto's DH that it is not necessary and often not helpful to do so. Care must be taken when dealing with a religious factor of such magnitude within a secular context. At this point it is possible to get a grasp, however indistinctly, thanks to the a priori basis of numinous intuition, of a "something" which is made known through the phenomena of experience. By applying the principle of schematisation it is possible with Otto to characterise aspects of this experiential reality.

Steps beyond this must be the prerogative of the churches or explicitly religious bodies. There is a kind of threshold which religious education in the context of the state ought not to cross, although to indicate what lies beyond is perfectly legitimate. Indeed it is scarcely possible to study traditional religions without doing so. But it cannot be the business of the state school to try to push pupils over the border. On the other hand religious communities need to discover what is going on in religious education, campaign if it is inadequate while scrupulously observing the distinction between educating and proselytising, and then build consciously on the work which has been done in the state sector. Obviously any Christian family or community (and the same applies to other religions) who care about the upbringing of their

young will ensure that appropriate Christian (etc.) foundations are laid within the home environment. This is their duty and their privilege and should in no case be expected of the state education service.

Otto knew well that there were other aspects to communicating religion. There is much that can be studied, demonstrated, put into words and concepts, and taught like any other area of study⁴. In DH, however, he wanted to focus attention on an aspect of religion which has been neglected in R.E. both in church catechism and in school. This is the area of personal response, which is only since the mid-1980s beginning to receive proper recognition in British R.E.

In our earlier discussion of R.E. use was made of the "three wheel" pattern of the Westhill project⁵. On this basis the contribution of Otto's approach and Otto's use of resources must be seen principally but not only within the area of personal response. For Otto's work also includes the other two areas, both the vast field of traditional religions in its various dimensions⁶, and the third area, the field of shared human experience. In fact the application of schematisation to the practice of R.E. shows how they interrelate.

Otto's development of schematisation shows how to apply the phenomena of religions, and use them to reveal the numinous

at the meeting place in the human soul. It is only by applying schematisation that it is possible to relate the phenomena to the essence of religion. Otto certainly wrote with conviction and with energy. Perhaps in the end Poland⁷ is right to assert that in writing *DH* his purpose was not so much to analyse a religious phenomenon as to bring it about in the reader.

1. Heinrich Scholz "Philosophie. Referate." (review of KFR) in Deutsche Literaturzeitung 1910, cols. 529-532
2. So also J W Hauer, see Hauer 1929, col.722
3. This is perhaps a good instance where research into religious experience over the last eighty years has moved on and is now somewhat closer to Schleiermacher's understanding than to that of Otto who wanted to draw a line between religious and non-religious. His problems over the presumed divide between religious and aesthetic show that even he was not entirely successful. Today the chances for total success in this distinction are even smaller.
4. This is explicit in DH 79, IH 60.
5. Garth Read, John Rudge, Roger B. Howarth, How Do I Teach R E? the Westhill project R. E. 5-16, Mary Glasgow Publications, 1986
6. Smart analysed six dimensions for study in his The Religious Experience of Mankind, pp. 15-25
7. Lynn Poland "The Idea of the Holy and the History of the Sublime" in The Journal of Religion, vol. 72, No. 2, April 1992, pp.175-197. This assertion is on page 175.

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