

# METHOD

*Journal of Lonergan Studies*

## SYMPOSIUM

LONERGAN'S

**"PHILOSOPHY AND THE  
RELIGIOUS PHENOMENON"**

VOLUME 12

NUMBER 2

FALL 1994

*METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* aims, first, at furthering interpretive, historical, and critical study of the philosophical, theological, economic, and methodological writings of Bernard Lonergan. Secondly, it aims at promoting original research into the methodological foundations of the sciences and disciplines.

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# METHOD

## *Journal of Lonergan Studies*

Volume 12

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Fall 1994

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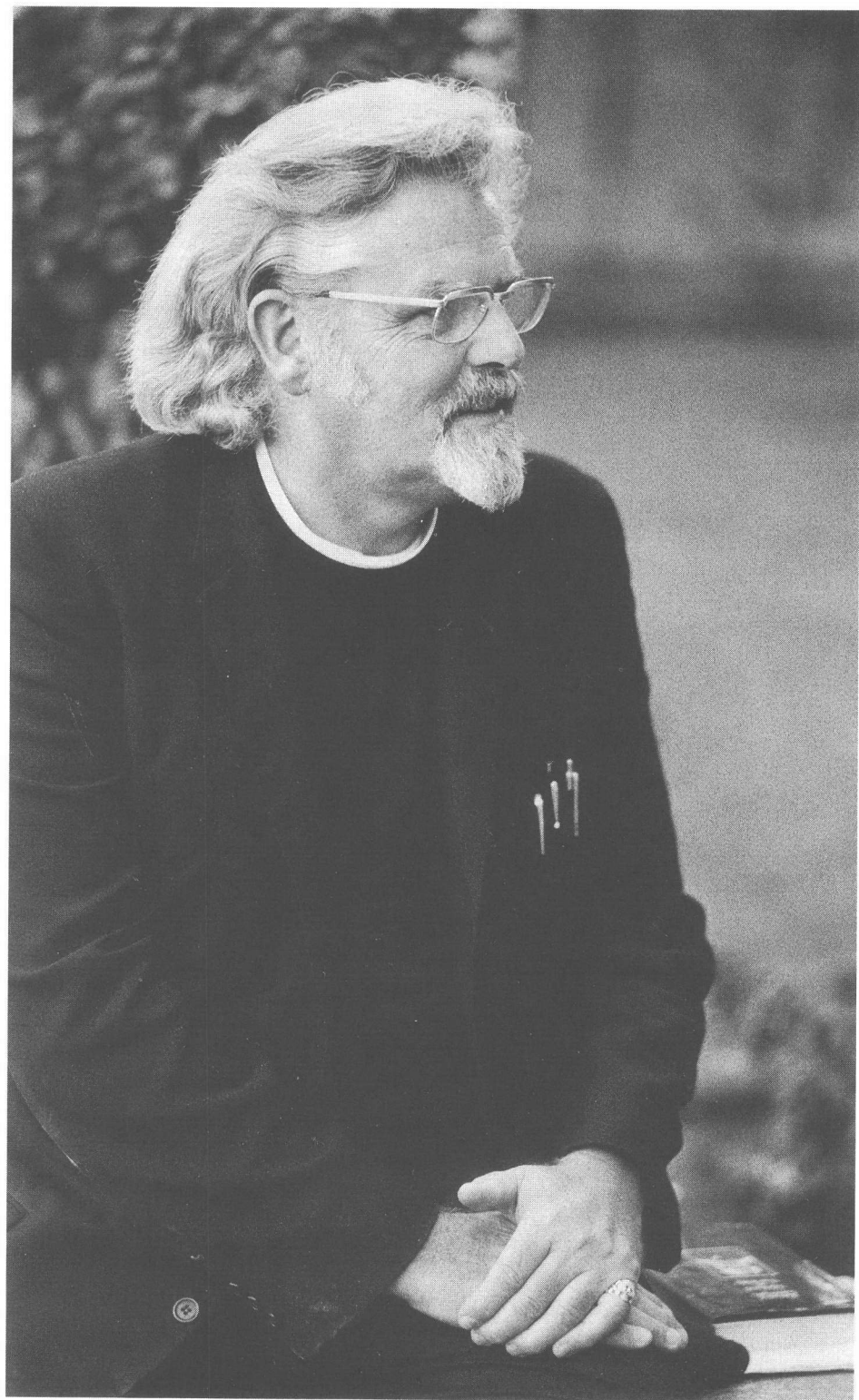
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# I N M E M O R I A M

## TIMOTHY P. FALLON, S.J.

September 23, 1922 — August 9, 1994

**H**OW can one give a fitting eulogy for a person whose life was the life of the spirit, whose transforming moment was the experience of nothingness and partaking of divine being, whose struggle each morning, known to only a few, against undermining psychic pressures was a daily incarnation of self-transcendence, whose personal vocation was to heighten his own and others' attention to the normative pattern of consciousness?

Timothy Fallon, born in San Francisco of Irish immigrants in 1922, was reared in the Jesuit tradition at St. Ignatius College Preparatory. He entered the Society of Jesus on August 14, 1940, and studied at Sacred Heart Novitiate in Los Gatos, at St. Michael's Seminary, and Gonzaga University where he received his B.A. and M.A. degrees. After teaching for two years at Santa Clara University, he entered Alma College where he earned a licentiate in sacred theology in 1954. The year before, on June 12, 1953, he was ordained a priest at St. Mary's Cathedral in San Francisco.

In virtue of his arresting presence, his considerable rhetorical ability, and his indomitable personal energy, Tim Fallon seemed destined for missionary activity until, under the influence of Lonergan's writings, he underwent an intellectual conversion. Henceforth his zeal, experienced by conference participants in Florida, Boston, and Santa Clara and by countless students, would promote the diffusion of a cosmopolis of authentic subjects. In the mid-1960s he earned a doctorate in philosophy at the Pontifical Institute for Medieval Studies at the University of Toronto and returned to Santa Clara University. For the next thirty years at Santa Clara he taught courses in philosophy, including epistemology, metaphysics, and existentialism, and was an unfailingly generous nurturer, counselor, and friend to his students. In the late 1960s and early 1970s he served as chair of the department of philosophy. He co-directed the International Lonergan Conference in 1984, and established and directed the Santa Clara Lonergan Center. In

1985 he founded the West Coast Methods Institute and for ten years hosted its annual explorations of the relevance of Lonergan's thought to the pursuit of personal authenticity.

And yet Tim Fallon was also an earthy man who lived life massively. He could dominate a conversation with his charm, his jokes, and his Irish tenor. He enjoyed the satisfaction of good food and drink, the pleasures of company, the experiences of the arts, and the cultivation of orchids in the very cemetery grounds where he now lies. His room would often be cluttered with catalogues of the latest computer equipment. He would spend an incredible amount of time behind the wheel, even in later years with a painful arthritic condition, to drive to a scenic spot, to run errands for friends, or to visit the sick and elderly. His learning was complemented by a childlike simplicity and hope, frequently revealed in his humor. He was truly the one and only edition of himself, who never left behind his beloved Irish roots.

More indicative of Tim Fallon's life than any tangible legacy of research manuscripts, papers, tape-recordings, and conference transcriptions is the human legacy he has left behind of those whose personal development has been profoundly shaped by his Socratic method, his Irish humor and satire, and his burning love of truth. He will be fondly remembered and greatly missed by all who knew him — by former students and colleagues whose response to the philosophical calling was sparked and ever rekindled by his presence, and by many more whose spirits were touched with *agape* by the priest, philosopher, and teacher whom Bernard Lonergan dubbed "Father Love."

*May the road rise up to meet you,  
may the wind be always at your back,  
may the sun shine warm upon your face,  
and the rains fall soft upon your fields,  
and until we meet again,  
may God hold you in the palm of His hand.*

THOMAS MCPARTLAND  
Whitney Young College  
Kentucky State University

# CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

The editors of *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* are pleased to announce that the Fall, 1995 issue will be a symposium on the topic

## TOPOGRAPHY AND ECONOMY OF CONSCIOUSNESS

and to invite submission of articles for that issue.

Lonergan is not the only thinker to have offered an account of the structures of human consciousness, and critical examination of similarities and differences between his position and others can be expected to promote clarity. This is especially so in the light of recent discussion about the meaning and number of 'levels of consciousness' and of 'sublations' in Lonergan's thinking.

Articles focusing on or developing Lonergan's own views — on such notions as consciousness and intentionality; operators, operations, and integrators; content and act; differentiations of consciousness; and worlds, realms, and stages of meaning — as well as articles engaging other thinkers in dialogue with Lonergan will be considered for publication in the forthcoming issue of *METHOD* devoted to this important area of inquiry.

The deadline for submitting articles for the symposium issue is *March 15, 1995*. Printouts should be double-spaced throughout (including footnotes), and should conform to the stylistic conventions used in this journal. *Three* copies should be submitted, and may be sent to *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* at either of these addresses:

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## LONERGAN'S "PHILOSOPHY AND THE RELIGIOUS PHENOMENON"

### EDITOR'S PREFACE

**A**T HIS DEATH in 1984 Bernard Lonergan left behind a considerable number of papers (letters, contracts, drafts of lectures, and so on), most of them in carefully numbered files. There was, as well, a catalogue of these files, but this had not been kept up-to-date; it stops with File 713, though the files themselves go on to 938, and there are several that are not numbered at all.

The file now in question is numbered 725 (so it is not listed in Lonergan's catalogue), and bears the title, "Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon." It contains seven loose sheets with scribbled outlines and bibliographical data, twelve typed pages entitled "Foundational Methodology of Religious Studies" (with running head FMRS), and twenty-seven pages with the title given the file itself (with running head PRP). FMRS starts from the same question as PRP, "How, from the viewpoint of the lecturer, does philosophy view the religious phenomenon in terms of the viability or validity of that phenomenon?" and is clearly an early draft discarded in favor of PRP, the paper we publish here.

The curiosity is that PRP itself seems, in a sense, to have been discarded. Its content shows it was written as a contribution to a symposium and in response to a request, but there is no symposium, so far as we know, where it was delivered, nor have we found any correspondence inviting a response to the question as quoted. The paper seems to have been written and set aside, to be discovered only fifteen years later.

Is there any clue to its purpose and history? There are a few facts which can be taken as clues to make a specific case, though they hardly prove that case, and so we end with an educated guess.

The first fact regards dates. At one point in the essay Lonergan says that "twenty years ago" Duméry's philosophy of religion was put on the *Index*, but then he typed in the interlinear space "not quite." This care in an afterthought for precision — "not quite twenty years" — dates the writing of the essay in early 1978 or late 1977, for Duméry's work was put on the *Index* on June 4, 1958.<sup>1</sup> The symposium in question would then be dated most likely some time in 1978.

What symposia might qualify as candidates? There was one at Boston University in March 1978 on "Myth, Symbol, and Reality," and one at York University, Toronto, in November 1978 on "Hermeneutics and Structuralism: Merging Horizons"; but neither topic corresponds to that of PRP, nor can PRP be considered in any way as a draft for either one of the papers Lonergan gave at those conferences.

There is a third conference that is a more likely candidate: one on "Contemporary Religious Consciousness" held at Carleton University, Ottawa, in October 1978. It was organized by Professors Joseph Ramisch (still at Carleton) and Peter Slater (until recently at Trinity College, Toronto), with Professor Ramisch contact person for Lonergan, and Professor Slater contact person for Wilfred Cantwell Smith, the other principal speaker at the conference.<sup>2</sup> Professor Ramisch had attended the Lonergan Workshop at Boston College in June 1977, and asked for Lonergan's participation at the planned Carleton University conference. Together they went over a number of possible themes (thus, Professor Ramisch in conversation with me in February 1993), and by February 1, 1978 (date of letter from Ramisch to Lonergan, File 735 in the Archives), had settled on the paper Lonergan had already given at Vienna in 1975: "Prolegomena to the Study of the Emerging Religious Consciousness of Our Time."

My conjecture, then, is that the question Lonergan quotes is one of the themes of the June conversation as he remembered it; that he began some time after June 1977 to draft a special paper for the Carleton conference, first in its FMRS form, then in its PRP form; that he was

dissatisfied with the result; and that in consequence he fell back on a repetition of the Vienna paper of 1975. The negative basis of this position is the fact that we have no other conference to which the paper might be attached. The two main facts on the positive side are that the topic fits very well with the theme proposed for the Carleton University conference, and that the dating fits equally well. Positive too is the fact that the relevant files are in close proximity to one another in Lonergan's papers: 725 for the PRP paper, and 735 for the file on the Carleton conference.

Of course, all this amounts to no more than what Thomas Aquinas would call an *argumentum convenientiae* – it fits the case, but does not prove it – except that Thomas was seeking understanding of a truth already given in an article of faith, and I am trying to discover a truth that is far from being given. It was disappointing that neither Professor Ramisch nor Professor Slater remembered the question Lonergan starts with, but that would be explained if, in the course of a free-wheeling conversation in June 1977, Professor Ramisch suggested some such question, which he had forgotten fifteen years later but which Lonergan, writing soon after, remembered and put in quotation marks.

In any case the essay stands on its own, without need of any context except that of its date. The latter, however, is important, not only because it puts the essay toward the end of Lonergan's career, and records advances in several points of his thinking, but also because it is part of a series of essays and lectures in the area of religious studies that occupied him in his final years.<sup>3</sup>

Little editing was required, and what there is follows as closely as possible the pattern set in the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan (in volume 14 of which this paper should appear). There was a minor problem with endnotes; Lonergan refers to his own and other works without superscript numbers in the text (an indication perhaps that he left the essay in an unfinished state), but twice gathered together some of these references with bibliographic data; I give these as footnotes, filling out the data (with further remarks in square brackets), and add superscript numbers at what seem the likely places in the text. My own editorial notes are indexed by superscript letters in the text, and are not so much references to his sources as comments on his use of them. Simple

typos are corrected without notice, but less obvious corrections are put in square brackets. Sections are divided by a line of asterisks, the way Lonergan divided them.

— F. E. Crowe

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 51 (1959) 432.

<sup>2</sup> I am grateful to Professors Ramisch and Slater for their responses to my request for information; unfortunately, little information remains after fifteen years.

<sup>3</sup> Several chapters in *A Third Collection* (New York/Mahwah: Paulist, 1985 — the papers were written between 1974 and 1982) illustrate this concern.



## PHILOSOPHY AND THE RELIGIOUS PHENOMENON

*Bernard J. F. Lonergan*

THE QUESTION SUGGESTED for this symposium read: "How, from the viewpoint of the lecturer, does philosophy view the religious phenomenon in terms of the viability or validity of that phenomenon?"

A first topic is philosophy and, indeed, not any philosophy but philosophy from the viewpoint of the lecturer. To this topic a certain clarification may perhaps be contributed if I contrast the scholastic or neoscholastic views on which I was brought up with my present position.

On a scholastic view, then, philosophy was concerned with ultimate, naturally known truths about the universe. It was concerned with the universe: in other words, its material object was unrestricted. It was concerned with truths: it did not aim at setting up a theory in the perpetual hope of later arriving at a still better theory, as do the natural and human sciences; it aimed at determining for all time just what was so. It was concerned with naturally known truths: for it acknowledged the existence of supernaturally known truths, but left that domain to theology. Finally, it was concerned with ultimate, naturally known truths, and thereby it distinguished itself from the sciences concerned with proximate truths about the various parts and levels of the universe.

Clearly on scholastic soil a philosophy of religion could not flourish. Either it confined itself to naturally known truths, and then it overlooked the one true religion, which is supernatural. Or else it vainly attempted to include the supernatural within its purview, and then its inevitably inadequate viewpoint led to a misrepresentation and distortion of the one true religion. So it was that not quite twenty years ago Henry Duméry's

scholastically trained judges placed his account of a critical philosophy of religion on the *Index librorum prohibitorum*.<sup>a\*</sup>

However, since the Second Vatican Council the *Index* has been dropped and the prestige of scholasticism has practically vanished. At this point accordingly there become operative the terms of reference, 'philosophy, from the viewpoint of the lecturer.' On these terms, if I understand them correctly, I am to be my little self.

From my viewpoint, then, a contemporary philosophy is under the constraint of an empirical principle. This principle means that there always is required some empirical element in any judgment of fact or of possibility or of probability. In the natural sciences the empirical element is the relevant data of sense. In the human sciences the empirical element is the relevant data of sense and of consciousness. In a foundational logic, a foundational mathematics, a foundational methodology, the relevant data are the immanent and operative norms of human cognitional process, a process that is both conscious and intentional, and as conscious provides the data of its own proper and improper proceeding.

For a fuller account of the nature and implications of this empirical principle, I must refer to my little book, *Insight*.<sup>1</sup> My present concern is a philosophic approach that is open to the inclusion of a philosophy of religion.

To this end I note that a foundational methodology involves three successive sections. First, there is a cognitional theory, answering the question, what are you doing when you are knowing? Secondly, there is an epistemology, answering the question, on what grounds is doing that really knowing? Thirdly, there is a metaphysics, answering the question, what do you know when you do it?

A series of observations is now in order.

First, foundational methodology on this showing covers all that is basic in philosophy. One may or may not choose to include other issues

\*[Superscript letters refer to editorial notes, which appear at the end of the essay. Superscript numerals refer to Lonergan's bibliographical citations, which appear as footnotes, with editorial additions in square brackets.]

<sup>1</sup> *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, 5th ed., Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, vol. 3 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992); original edition, London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1957.

within philosophy, but one cannot treat them in any sound and thorough fashion without settling — or presupposing as settled — the issues of cognitional theory, epistemology, and metaphysics.

Secondly, from the viewpoint of foundational methodology metaphysics is not the first science. It is not the *Grund- und Gesamtwissenschaft*. Though I have the honor of having my name associated with that of Fr. Emerich Coreth and of being included with him when transcendental Thomists are mentioned,<sup>b</sup> still on the matter of the priority of metaphysics we have disagreed, we have disagreed publicly,<sup>c</sup> and we still do disagree. I am quite willing to grant that in a philosophy primarily concerned with objects metaphysics must be the first science, for it is the objects of metaphysics that are both most basic and most universal. But in a philosophy that primarily is concerned not with objects but with operations, metaphysics cannot be the first science. What now is both most basic and most universal are the operations, and these are studied in cognitional theory. Secondly, comes the validity of the operations, and such is the concern of epistemology. Only in the third place does there arise the question of objects which is the concern of a metaphysics.

Thirdly, this shift from the priority of a metaphysics of objects to the priority of a theory of cognitional operations has an interesting implication for a philosophy of religion. For the distinction between naturally known objects and supernaturally known objects can now both retain all of its validity and, at the same time, lose the rather absolute priority it enjoyed in scholastic thought. For its priority in scholastic thought presupposed the priority of metaphysics, and on our present showing the priority of metaphysics no longer exists. Metaphysics finds its proper place not on the primary, not even on the secondary, but only on a tertiary level.

Fourthly, the shift we have been discussing is a shift from logic to method. Logic regards particular systems in their clarity, their coherence, and their rigor. Method regards movement, movement from nonsystem into systematic thinking, and from the systematic thinking of a given place and time to the better systematic thinking of a later time whether at the same or at another place.

Here a comparison with Hegel may not be out of place. Hegel rightly felt that logic was too static to deal with a universe in movement. But the solution to that problem, we feel, does not consist in the invention of a logic of movement. Rather we would leave logic to its traditional tasks, which are essential to working out the coherence of any system and thereby bringing to light its shortcomings. But we would confine the relevance of logic to single stages in the process of developing thought, and we would assign to method the guidance of thought from each less satisfactory stage to each successive more satisfactory stage. In brief, the relevance of logic is at the instant, when things are still. The guide of philosophy and science over time is method.

We may cut short the argument here to offer the conclusions to this first section of our paper. Such conclusions are three.

First, since philosophy has been identified with foundational methodology, there no longer holds the peremptory scholastic argument against a sound philosophy of religion.

Secondly, as philosophy is foundational methodology, so philosophy of religion is the foundational methodology of religious studies.

Thirdly, a foundational methodology of religious studies will be able to pronounce on the viability or validity of this or that method of religious studies. But such a foundational methodology would go beyond its competence if it ventured to pronounce on the nonmethodological aspects of religious studies.

Therewith we arrive at a first conclusion on the topic before us. A philosophy of religion has much to say on the method of religious studies. The religious studies themselves, however, are not mere deductions from the method but applications of the method; and the attentiveness, intelligence, and reasonableness with which the applications are carried out are the responsibility, not of the methodologist, but of the student of religion. Accordingly, philosophy as foundational methodology can pronounce, not immediately and specifically, but only remotely and generically on the validity or viability of the results of religious studies.

\* \* \*

Let us now attempt to carry the argument a step further.

The priority of metaphysics in the Aristotelian tradition led to a faculty psychology. For other sciences were subordinate to the first science; from it they derived their basic terms and theorems; and so Aristotelian psychology had to be a metaphysical psychology in terms of potencies, forms, and acts.

But once the priority of metaphysics is rejected, there also is rejected its implication of a faculty psychology. When philosophy is conceived as a foundational methodology, and when cognitional theory is its basic step, the empirical principle demands that cognitional theory take its stand on the data of cognitional consciousness. But cognitional consciousness is of operations and of the normative tendencies linking operations together. Cognitional theory, accordingly, will consist of terms and relations, where the terms name operations, and the relations name normative tendencies. In this fashion faculty psychology gives way to an intentionality analysis.<sup>d</sup>

This shift is of considerable importance. As long as psychology is basically a discussion of faculties or potencies, there arise questions regarding the relative priority or importance of the sensitive, the conative, the intellectual, and the volitional components of human living and acting. Moreover, since clear-cut solutions to these questions do not exist, there result unending complaints about the one-sidedness of the other fellow's stand.

In contrast, intentionality analysis transposes these issues into a new form that automatically settles questions of precedence and importance. For now there are compared, not potencies, but levels of operation. The levels are sharply distinguished by operators that promote the conscious and intentional subject from a lower to a higher level. The operators are manifested by questions. So from a first level to a second the promotion is effected by questions for intelligence; such questions are: what? why? how? what for? how often? They arise with respect to data, and they lead to insights and thence to the expression of insights in concepts, definitions, hypotheses, theories, systems. From a second to a third level the promotion is effected by questions for reflection; such questions ask: is that so? are you certain? From a third level to a fourth the promotion is effected by questions for deliberation; they ask whether a proposed course of action is

truly or only apparently good, whether it is really worthwhile or not; and such fourth-level questions lead to the operations of evaluating, deciding, acting.

Now the relation between successive levels may be named sublation, not in the proper Hegelian sense of *Aufhebung*, but in a related sense I have found in Karl Rahner's *Hearers of the Word*.<sup>e</sup> One reaches this related sense by distinguishing between sublated and sublating operations, and by defining the sublating operations as going beyond the sublated, introducing a radically new principle, respecting the integrity of the sublated, and bestowing upon them a higher significance and a wider relevance.

So questions for intelligence go beyond the data of sense and/or the data of consciousness. They head for insights that contrast radically with the mere givenness of data. They not merely respect the integrity of data but make possible ever more comprehensive and more exact apprehensions of data. Finally, they promote data from the status of conscious occurrences in a subject to the beginnings of an apprehension of a universe.

Similarly, questions for reflection go beyond the concepts, definitions, hypotheses, theories, systems thought out by intelligence. They direct conscious intentionality beyond mere understanding towards truth and reality. They lead to operations that effect the transition from objects of thought to real objects, and thereby they bestow an essentially new significance and importance on experience and understanding.

In like manner questions for deliberation sublate the previous three levels. They are concerned with the good. They end the one-sidedness of purely cognitional endeavor 'to restore the integration of sense and conation, thought and feeling. They not merely ask about a distinction between satisfaction and value but also assume the existential viewpoint that asks me whether I am ready, whether I am determined, to sacrifice satisfactions for the sake of values. Having put the question of moral authenticity, they reward acceptance with a good conscience and they sanction rejection with an uneasy conscience. Finally, they push the requirement of authenticity to the sticking point: good decisions must be complemented by good conduct and good actions; and failure in this respect is just the inner essence of hypocrisy.

Now from the viewpoint of intentionality analysis and sublation the old questions of sensism, intellectualism, sentimentalism, voluntarism merely vanish. Experience, understanding, judgment, and decision all are essential to human living. But while all are essential, while none can be dropped or even slighted, still the successive levels are related inasmuch as the later presuppose the earlier and complement them and inasmuch as the earlier are ordained to the later and need them to attain their human significance.

Such an introduction of hierarchy naturally calls for a series of notes and corollaries.

First, while we have spoken of successive levels, of earlier and later, of lower and higher, such terms are merely initial signposts. The real meaning is neither spatial nor chronological. The real meaning is in terms of sublating and sublated operations, and the meaning of sublation is the meaning already defined and illustrated.

Secondly, the hierarchy that intentionality analysis brings to light justifies traditional complaints about the one-sidedness of intellectualism, of an exclusive emphasis on the cognitional elements in man's makeup. While it is true that observation, understanding, and factual judgment are immediately under the guidance of the subject's attentiveness, his intelligence, his reasonableness, while it is true that this guidance excludes interferences from feelings and wishes, still this guidance is not the activity of some putative faculty named speculative intellect or pure reason. It is the guidance of the norms immanent and operative on the first three levels of conscious and intentional operations, and it is a guidance that attains its proper stature when formulated in a method and implemented by a decision to dedicate some part of one's life to scientific, scholarly, or philosophic pursuits.

However, while acknowledging the one-sidedness of an exclusive intellectualism and the incompleteness of an intellectualism that is not subordinated to deliberately chosen method, one must not accept the common complaint that intellectualist products are abstractions. They are not. The so-called 'abstract' is usually the incompletely determined apprehension of the concrete, and all human apprehension is incompletely determined. Indeed, intellectualist apprehension is more complete than

the apprehensions of undifferentiated consciousness, and it is just the ignorance of undifferentiated consciousness that complains about the abstractness of the intellectual.

Thirdly, the hierarchy of sublated and sublating operations reveals the significance of the existential. For the level of deliberation, decision, action has two aspects. Insofar as it affects other persons and objects, it is practical. But insofar as it is the locus where the subject decides for or against his own authenticity, it is existential.

Note that the two aspects, the practical and the existential, are not separable. However practical any decision is, it reveals and confirms and intensifies the authenticity or unauthenticity of the practical subject. Inversely, however existential any decision is, it attains substance and moment in the measure that it transforms one's conduct and pursuits.

Note again that the man of common sense, without any aspiration to science or scholarship or philosophy, is spontaneously existential and practical for the simple reason that he has no notion and much less any attainment of the scientific, the scholarly, or the philosophic differentiations of human consciousness. But at the same time note that while undifferentiated consciousness does not need to be told to prefer orthopraxis to orthodoxy, it is prone to underestimate orthodoxy, while a just balance is to be had only by consciousness that is differentiated multiply, that has a proper appreciation of orthodoxy, and that learns to rank orthopraxis higher still.

Fourthly, a foundational methodology can function as a philosophy of religion only by moving beyond the levels of experience, understanding, and judgment and including the higher significance and relevance of deliberation, evaluation, decision, and action. For every religion is involved in value judgments, and value judgments pertain to the fourth level of intentional consciousness. Specifically, Catholic theologians consider the act of religious belief to proceed from judgments of credibility and credentia; in plainer English, the object of belief not only can but also should be believed; and to judge that it should be believed is a value judgment.

To be noted here is that this extension of foundational methodology to include the subject as existential and practical, while it runs counter to



older philosophies that thought in terms of speculative intellect or pure reason, merely follows out the implications of what already has been noted. For the austere detachment of purely cognitive or intellectual operations is itself the product of a free choice and implemented by the acceptance of a method. And the higher integration of an orthopraxis, that justly appreciates an orthodoxy, is a complement to which experience, understanding, and factual judgment are ordained and which they need.

In this connection it is only proper to note that the view we are propounding draws support from Talcott Parsons' account of the development of the sociology of religion away from an initial hostility and towards a recognition of the high role of religion within an action system.<sup>2</sup> For the early hostility was against a view of religion as essentially cognitive and the later friendliness views religion as predominantly noncognitive.

A final note to this section will be a simple contrast with the Hegelian program which was to sublate religion by philosophy. It was a sublation strongly resisted especially by Catholic theologians on the obvious ground that it rejected the subordination of the natural to the supernatural and so the subordination of philosophy to religion and theology. If however we fully agree with our Catholic predecessors in rejecting the Hegelian program, we cannot do so precisely on the grounds that they offer. For the distinction between natural and supernatural resides within a metaphysical context, and for us a metaphysical context is not primary or even secondary but only tertiary. But this does not imply that our opposition to the Hegelian sublation of religion is only tertiary. For our opposition rests on our own primary context of intentionality analysis, in which one finds such cognitive or putatively cognitive operations as a Hegelian dialectic

<sup>2</sup> Talcott Parsons, "The Theoretical Development of the Sociology of Religion," *Essays in Sociological Theory Pure and Applied*, revised edition in paperback (New York: The Free Press, 1964) 197-210. [Lonergan's papers, File 446, contain four pages of excerpts from this chapter, with the marginal note "1949 edition pp. 52-66."] See also his [Parsons's] "The Dimensions of Cultural Variation," in Parsons et al., *Theories of Society: Foundations of Modern Sociological Theory*, one-volume ed. of 1961 original (New York: The Free Press, 1965) 964-971. Also the initial and final essays in Robert N. Bellah, *Beyond Belief: Essays on Religion in a Post-Traditional World* (New York: Harper and Row, 1970). [File 446 contains photocopies of chs 1, 2, and 15 of Bellah's book.]

subordinated to the operations of the existential and practical subject. In a word, Kierkegaard had a point.

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Our intentionality analysis distinguished the four levels of experience, understanding, factual judgment, and existential decision. We must now advert to the fact that this structure may prove open at both ends. The intellectual operator that promotes our operations from the level of experience to the level of understanding may well be preceded by a symbolic operator<sup>3</sup> that coordinates neural potentialities and needs with higher goals through its control over the emergence of images and affects. Again, beyond the moral operator that promotes us from judgments of fact to judgments of value with their retinue of decisions and actions, there is a further realm of interpersonal relations and total commitment in which human beings tend to find the immanent goal of their being and with it their fullest joy and deepest peace.

So from an intentionality analysis distinguishing four levels one moves to an analysis that distinguishes six levels. Moreover, the two added levels are particularly relevant to religious studies. The symbolic operator that shapes the development of sensibility and, in its ultimate achievement, guides the Jungian process of individuation, would seem highly relevant to an investigation of religious symbols. And the soul of religion has been seen to lie in a total commitment that embraces the universe and frequently does so in adoration of a personal God.<sup>4</sup>

From a specifically Christian viewpoint, I have characterized the total commitment of religious living as 'being in love in an unrestricted

<sup>3</sup> For the notion of symbolic operator I am indebted to conversations with Robert M. Doran, SJ. See his "Paul Ricoeur: Toward the Restoration of Meaning," *Anglican Theological Review* 55 (October 1973) 443-58. On the individuation process, Gerhard Adler, *The Living Symbol, A Case Study in the Process of Individuation* (New York: Pantheon, 1961. Bollingen Series, 63).

<sup>4</sup> On the nature of religion, see Joseph P. Whelan, *The Spirituality of Friedrich von Hügel* (New York: Newman, 1971) 131-33. [Lonergan's reference: "pp. 131 ff." He was relying, perhaps, on excerpts he had taken from pp. 131-133 (the same File 446 in his papers referred to in note 2 above); for a wider basis, see Whelan's extensive index under 'religion,' 'religious experience,' 'religious sense.'] Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1972; New York: Seabury, 1973 [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990]), ch. 4.

manner'; I have associated it with St. Paul's statement that "God's love has flooded our inmost heart through the Holy Spirit he has given us" (Romans 5:5); and I have noted that the Christian case of the subject being in love with God is complemented by God's manifestation of his love for us in the death and resurrection of Christ Jesus.

But attention to Christian religion does not exclude attention to other religions. Indeed the transition to the others may be effected in two manners. The first has specifically Christian premises. It appeals to the rule: "By their fruits you shall know them" (Matthew 7:16). It notes the scriptural text that favors the affirmation of God's will to save all men (1 Timothy 2:4). It notes that those God wills to save will be given the charity described in the thirteenth chapter of the first letter to the Corinthians, even though as yet they have no explicit knowledge of Christ the mediator.

The second manner of proceeding towards a universalist view of religion may begin with Raymond Panikkar's conception of a fundamental theology that takes its stand on the lived religion or mystical faith that is prior to any formulation and perhaps beyond formulation.<sup>5</sup> Again, it may take its rise from empirical studies of religious phenomena that come to discern a convergence of religions.<sup>6</sup> Finally, it may seek to bring these two standpoints together into a single integrated view.

In concluding this section I would recall that we have been conceiving the philosophy of religion as foundational methodology, that in a first section we attempted to surmount the incapacity of a scholastic philosophy to be the philosophy of what it considered the true religion; in a second section we extended the range of foundational methodology to include value judgments; and in this third section we have introduced two further extensions. First, we mentioned the possibility of a symbolic operator that, through image and affect, headed psychic process to its own

<sup>5</sup> Raymond Panikkar, "Metatheology or Diacritical Theology as Fundamental Theology," *Concilium* 46 (1969; J. B. Metz, ed., *The Development of Fundamental Theology*) 43-55, at 54.

<sup>6</sup> William Cenkner, "The Convergence of Religions," *Cross Currents* 22 (Winter 1972 through Winter 1973) 429-437. Robley Edward Whitson, *The Coming Convergence of World Religions* (New York: Newman, 1971). [There is extensive sidelining in Lonergan's personal copy of Whitson's book — Archives, Lonergan Research Institute, Toronto.]

and to higher ends; and an exploration of this area we felt highly relevant to an account of religious symbolism. Secondly, we adverted to a topmost level of interpersonal relations and total commitments, a level that can be specifically religious, a level that in one of its actuations is easily verified in New Testament doctrine, that conforms to the view of all scholastic schools that without charity even the infused virtues are unformed, that provides a basis for explicating the universalism of Christianity and relating it positively to other religions. As a final note to this section one may add that, what in a philosophic context I have named being in love in an unrestricted manner, in a theological context could be paralleled with Fr. Rahner's supernatural existential.<sup>f</sup>

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Up to now we have been working our way out of a traditional scholastic context — in which a sound philosophy of religion is a contradiction in terms — and into a contemporary context in which philosophy, by becoming foundational methodology, regains both its universal significance and its universal function.

As already remarked, basic foundational methodology consists of three parts: cognitional theory, epistemology, and metaphysics. Moreover, as argued in *Insight*, from this viewpoint metaphysics is, not knowledge of all being, but the integral heuristic structure within which one operates methodically towards knowledge of all being.

Such an integral heuristic structure has both a ground and a consequent. Its ground is the self-appropriation of the experiencing, intelligent, reasonable, free, responsible, and loving subject. Its consequent is the application of this ground to the guidance of methodical inquiry in a fashion analogous to the application of mathematics in the inquiry of modern physics.

My present purpose is limited. I cannot offer a full exploration of the heuristic structure of religious studies. I can only indicate two items in such a heuristic structure: one of them I shall be content to mention, for I have treated it sufficiently elsewhere. The other I shall sketch to some extent: I have treated it elsewhere as well, but here I shall attempt a different and perhaps more accessible approach.

The first element, then, in a heuristic structure for religious studies arises from the distinction between authentic and unauthentic. The distinction is relevant both to the object of religious studies and to the subject. It is relevant to the object for the followers of a given religion may represent it authentically or unauthentically to provide contradictory evidence on the nature of the religion under investigation. It is relevant to the subjects carrying out religious studies for they may be humanly or religiously authentic or unauthentic and so offer contradictory interpretations of the same data.

This problem is not new. But it has been evaded either by abstracting from the values exhibited by the religion, or by attending to these values but refraining from any judgment that either approves or disapproves of them.

While these devices satisfy the requirements of empirical science, it is not impossible to doubt that they meet the exigences of a science of religions. Simply to ignore the values exhibited by a religion seems to ignore a principal element in the religion. It seems as unacceptable as a scholastic philosophy of religion that considers any religion except insofar as it resembles what the scholastics held to be the one true religion. On the other hand, to exhibit the values presented by a religion while abstaining from any value judgment of one's own is a hazardous procedure; it is like undertaking a value-free theory of values, and that resembles a theory of knowledge that prescind from the knower. Such procedures are precritical.

However, if empirical science bogs down in the empirical facts that followers of a religion follow differently and that interpreters of religion interpret differently, it remains that a philosophy of religion can resolve the issue. Paul Ricoeur has advocated the combination of a hermeneutic of suspicion with a hermeneutic of recovery, so that unauthentic religion can be repudiated and authentic religion maintained. I myself in *Insight* and again in *Method in Theology* have proposed a dialectic in which investigators are urged both to expand what they consider authentic in the followers of a religion they are studying and, as well, to reverse what they consider unauthentic. The result will be a projective test in which interpreters reveal their own notions of authenticity and unauthenticity

both to others and to themselves. In the short run both the more authentic will discover what they have in common, and so too will the less authentic. In the long run the authentic should be able to reveal the strength of their position by the penetration of their investigations, by the growing number in the scientific community attracted to their assumptions and procedures, and eventually, by the reduction of the opposition to the hard-line dogmatists that defend an inadequate method no matter what its deficiencies.

In brief, for the long run I am relying on the course that Thomas Kuhn has found to prevail in physics, namely, that mistaken ideas that once were dominant are not so much refuted as abandoned.<sup>g</sup> They vanish when they prove incapable of gaining competent disciples.

\* \* \*

There is a second contribution that, I believe, a philosophy of religion can make to religious studies. For the most part I have referred to it as differentiations of consciousness, but I now find that an equivalent point can be made and parallel results obtained in a less abstruse approach.

The issue in hand is the need of some account and ordering of the various contexts in which, first, religious living occurs and, secondly, investigations of religious living are undertaken. Such an ordered account is again a dialectic, not indeed in the meaning of dialectic in the previous section which turns on the opposition of authenticity and unauthenticity, but rather a dialectic in the style of Collingwood as interpreted by Louis Mink.<sup>h</sup>

In such a dialectic there are the terms whose meaning shifts in the course of time and, further, there are the terms that denote the factors bringing about such shifts in meaning.

The terms whose meaning shifts are social contexts and cultural contexts. Social contexts are the already understood and accepted modes of human cooperation grouped under such headings as family and mores, community and education, state and law, economics and technology. Cultural contexts are the areas of interest in which social frameworks find explanation, justification, a goal: such areas are art, religion, science, philosophy, history.<sup>i</sup>

Now the further one turns to the past, the shorter become the lists of social headings and cultural areas, while the realities to which they refer become simpler in structure and more comprehensive in scope. So, for example, the more ancient the religion, the less sharply will its role be distinguished from other roles, and the more notable will be the position it occupies in the sociocultural matrix.

It remains that earlier forms may be found in later periods, so that mere chronology does not provide even a preliminary ordering. On the other hand, differentiation is not independent of language and, in fact, not a little relevance is found when one distinguishes four stages: the linguistic, the literate, the logical, and the methodical.<sup>j</sup>

Each of these stages includes those that precede but adds a new factor of its own. In the linguistic stage people speak and listen. In the literate they read and write. In the logical they operate on propositions; they promote clarity, coherence, and rigor of statement; they move towards systems that are thought to be permanently valid. In the methodical stage the construction of systems remains, but the permanently valid system has become an abandoned ideal; any system is presumed to be the precursor of another and better system; and the role of method is the discernment of invariants and variables in the ongoing sequences of systems.

Now in later periods the scope of earlier stages may be enhanced: so the radio extends speech and hearing; the cinema extends the drama; television extends both. Again, the invention of printing extends reading and writing. Further, a symbolic logic provides an intermediate step between traditional logic and the digital computer.<sup>k</sup>

At the same time this distinction of stages in no way suggests that the later stages are universal. The invention of writing does not stamp out illiteracy. The discovery of logic leads to technical languages without displacing 'ordinary' language in ordinary living. The illusion of permanently valid systems is not automatically dispelled with the emergence of scientific or philosophic method.

Now the distinction of stages involves different apprehensions of social arrangements and cultural achievements. Moreover, it involves differences in the social arrangements that are projected and realized as

well as in the cultural achievements that are ambitioned and brought to birth.

Further, the fact that the stages are not universalized, that there may live together people who can and people who cannot read and write, people who can and people who cannot operate on propositions and construct systems of thought, people who can and people who cannot grasp that systematic constructs last their little day eventually to pass away in favor of better constructs — this complex fact has the twofold consequent of stratification and alienation.

It leads to stratification, for those in the more advanced stages are far more capable of initiating new and perhaps better social arrangements and of providing appropriate cultural justifications for their new social arrangements.

It leads to alienation. For inasmuch as the more advanced devise the social arrangements and invent their cultural justification, the less advanced find themselves living in social arrangements beyond their comprehension and motivated by appeals to values they do not appreciate. Inversely, inasmuch as the less advanced assume the initiative, the more advanced are alienated by *simpliste* social thought and crude cultural creations.

I have been sketching in bold outline — an outline that admits almost endless differentiations and refinements — (1) eight headings of social arrangements, (2) five areas of cultural interest, (3) four stages diversifying the scope of social and cultural initiatives, and (4) the increasing tendency of these stages to bring about stratification and alienation.

[It is] within these varying social and cultural contexts that religion discovers itself, works out its identity, differentiates itself from other areas, and interacts with them. But in its linguistic stage religion will manifest itself as myth and ritual. In its literate stage it becomes religion of the book, of the Torah, the Gospel, the Koran. In the logical stage it may reduplicate itself with the reflection on itself that would end dissension by dogmatic pronouncements and would seek overall reconciliation by systematic theologies. In the methodical stage it confronts its own history, distinguishes the stages in its own development, evaluates the authenticity or unauthenticity of its initiatives, and preaches its message in the



many forms and styles appropriate to the many social and cultural strata of the communities in which it operates.

Over the years each earlier stage brings to light an exigence for the next. To meet that exigence there forms an élite and, when its work is not merely abstruse and difficult but in some measure unsuccessful, the steadfast representatives of earlier stages express their alienation by voicing their grievances.

So Christianity began and spread through the words and deeds of Christ and his apostles. But by the end of the second century there had emerged an élite that studied the scriptures and read Ireneus in Gaul, Hippolytus in Rome, Tertullian in North Africa, Clement and Origen in Egypt.

The spoken word objectifies transiently. The written word objectifies permanently. It can regard a larger area and underpin a sustained scrutiny. So Ireneus, Hippolytus, Tertullian, Clement, and Origen propounded Christianity in its opposition to a Gnosticism that belittled and even ridiculed the creator God of the Old Testament who also was God the Father of Jesus Christ the Savior of mankind.

Now even the linguistic stage of a religion will be concerned not only with 'doing the truth' but also with the particular form of 'doing' that is 'saying the truth.' So scholars have discerned brief formulas of faith embedded in the New Testament, and the first epistle of John is thought to be opposing a form of Gnostic docetism. But apologetics and controversy lead into the logical stage of religion. The anthropomorphisms of the Old Testament had to be explained not as literal but as symbolic statements; and to express literally the Christian apprehension of God the Father, Christian resourcefulness turned to the achievements of the Greeks. For Origen God the Father was strictly spiritual and strictly eternal; and the same was true of his Son and Word.

Now an entry into the logical stage admits no logical retreat from it. Worse, arguments for one position can be matched by other arguments against it. There followed the councils. The Arians were rejected at Nicea, the Macedonians at Constantinople, the Nestorians at Ephesus, the Monophysites at Chalcedon. The doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation were formulated in all their austerity, and dangers of alienation were

warded off inasmuch as literate minds were permitted to regard the dogmas as laws, while the masses in the linguistic stage enshrined them in confessions of faith and liturgical prayers.

As there is a transition from 'doing the truth' to 'saying the truth,' so there is a further transition from 'saying the truth' to reaching some understanding of it. Even though the truth expresses mystery, at least it should not involve contradiction. This concern, of course, brings forth a further and still smaller élite. It had made a momentary appearance in Origen's comparison of the generation of the Son to the origin of willing from knowing. It had attained a brief but still compelling realization in Gregory of Nyssa's *Ad Ablabium* that explained the difference between the generation of the Son and the procession of the Spirit. It found a respected vehicle in Augustine's lengthy and largely rhetorical and logical *De trinitate*. But it became the occupation of a large and ongoing intellectual community in medieval scholasticism. The inspiration of scholasticism was Anselm's faith seeking, though hardly attaining, understanding. Its schoolmaster was Abelard's *Sic et non*. Its achievement was the collected works of Aquinas. Its tragedy was that a spontaneous method, stemming from the practice of *lectio et quaestio*, was led astray by the ineptitude of Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics*.

Scholasticism declined. Its decline was greeted by the alienation of the *devotio moderna*, which would rather feel compunction than define it, by the ridicule of the humanists in a new revival of learning, and by the invention of printing, which gave new life and vigor to religion of the book. On this wave rode the Reformation. Breasting it stood the Council of Trent. But if the Reformation rejected *en bloc* the ambiguities of scholasticism, if it stressed the scriptures, still it remained faithful to the Greek councils and so was committed to a logical stance, and in time to a scholasticism of its own.

It remains that Protestant insistence on scripture kept open a door. Through that door in due course there entered into scriptural studies the application of new, nineteenth-century methods to historical investigation and textual interpretation. So there came to light the differences between the mind of the scriptures and the mind of the councils, and there followed doubts that conciliar dogmas could be attributed to divine

revelation. The problem surfaces in nineteenth-century liberal Protestantism, in early twentieth-century modernism, and for a third time in the wake of the Second Vatican Council when even Catholic theologians find the definition of Chalcedon questionable and wish to change both our traditional understanding of Christ and our profession of faith in Christ.

The problem, indeed, I should say the crisis, is one of understanding. However radical its content, its roots are ancient, for problems of understanding are problems of method. Scholasticism went astray when its questions arose, not from its sources in scripture and tradition, but from the conflicts between theological systems. The sixteenth century went astray when its incomprehension of doctrinal development divided Christendom into the archaists, that pronounced developments corruptions, and the anachronists, that read later developments into earlier documents. Catholics went astray both by their long sustained opposition to advanced methods in historical investigation and textual interpretation, and by an uncritical transposition of scholasticism into the milieu of modern thought.

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My discussion falls into two parts. In the first I sought to set up a philosophy of religion by conceiving philosophy as foundational methodology, [and] philosophy of religion as foundational methodology of religious studies. This first part fell into three sections: in the first section there was effected a transition from the priority of metaphysics to the priority of cognitional theory; in the second, we moved from faculty psychology to intentionality analysis; in the third, we added the parts of intentionality analysis specifically relevant to religious studies.

The second part of the paper was concerned with heuristic structures in religious studies: a first concern was with the methodical handling of value problems; the second was with the ordering of the differences due to developments.

## EDITORIAL NOTES

- a This event enables us to date the present paper, since three of Duméry's books were put on the *Index* on June 4, 1958. It should be noted that Lonergan, in his Gregorian University courses, had referred to Duméry's work with great respect, while noting a deficiency; see his *De Verbo Incarnato*, 3rd. ed. (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1964) 16: "illud notate quod huic philosophiae, tam acute quam erudite elaboratae, unum deest, scilicet, illud verum absolute positum quo innotescit ens"; see also his *De Deo Trino*, vol. 1, 2nd ed. (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1964) 60, 274.
- b Coreth, Lonergan, and Rahner are a recurring trio in discussions of transcendental Thomism, but with varying emphases; see Vernon Bourke, "Esse, Transcendence, and Law: Three Phases of Recent Thomism," *The Modern Schoolman* 52 (1974-75) 49-64, where it is Rahner and Coreth who are discussed, with Lonergan added; or William J. Hill, "Thomism, Transcendental," *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 16 (Supplement 1967-74) 449-54, where Rahner and Lonergan are discussed, with Coreth added. But regularly it is Maréchal who is the focus.
- c Lonergan may be thinking of Philip McShane (ed.), *Language Truth and Meaning: Papers from The International Lonergan Congress 1970* (Dublin and London: Gill and Macmillan, 1972); see in that volume E. Coreth, "Immediacy and the mediation of being; an attempt to answer Bernard Lonergan," pp. 33-48, and "Bernard Lonergan responds," pp. 306-12, at 311. The original element in the exchange was Lonergan's review-article on Coreth, "Metaphysics as Horizon," *Collection: Papers by Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, vol. 4 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988) 188-204.
- d It is not clear that Lonergan ever repudiated faculty psychology as a metaphysical explanation, but around 1959 he came to reject the central role it played in scholastic thinking. See, for example, the lectures published thirty-four years later as *Topics in Education*, ed. Robert M. Doran and Frederick E. Crowe, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, vol. 10 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993) 209-10: "We must pass ... from thinking of a set of faculties and their actuation to thinking of a concrete flow of consciousness." A simple but fundamental statement is found in the 1981-82 interviews, published as *Caring about Meaning: patterns in the life of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Pierrot Lambert, Charlotte Tansey, Cathleen Going (Montreal: Thomas More Institute, 1982) 43: "Potencies are not data of consciousness; operations and dynamisms are" — which does not exclude potencies as conclusions from the operations and dynamisms; or, "the older schemes [such as faculty psychology] are not relevant" (*A Second Collection: Papers by Bernard J. F. Lonergan, S.J.*, ed. William F. J. Ryan and Bernard J. Tyrrell [London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1974] 79) — but to be irrelevant is also to be. And in the present paper he writes, "As long as psychology is basically a discussion of faculties ..." — so faculties may remain a topic, but not a basic one; again, "intentionality analysis transposes these issues into a new form" —

but the old form had its validity. When I read therefore, "I've dropped faculty psychology" (*A Second Collection* 223), I interpret that as a manner of speaking too hurried to stop, qualify, and footnote carefully.

- e Lonergan elsewhere (in the unpublished lecture of 1969, "Faith and Beliefs," p. 7 of the MS, Lonergan Research Institute Archives) gives a more precise reference: "*Hörer des Wortes* (Kösel-Verlag: Munich, 1963), p. 40"; there was a personal copy of this book in his room when he died, with sidelining on page 40. But it is not at all clear to what extent he owed his concept of sublation to Rahner and to what extent he conveniently found support in Rahner; the page referred to in *Hörer des Wortes* does not suffice as source for Lonergan's own view — is this found somewhere else in Rahner? In any case in his own *Insight*, written in 1953, Lonergan had already distanced himself from Hegel: "Hegel's sublation is through a reconciling third concept, but our development is both the accumulation of insights ... and the reversal of ... aberrations" (*Insight* 422 = CWL 3 447).
- f Lonergan often referred, directly or indirectly, to Karl Rahner on the Ignatian consolation without a cause, relating it to his own views on the gift of God's love (*Method in Theology* 106, 278; *Philosophy of God, and Theology: The Relationship between Philosophy of God and the Functional Specialty, Systematics* [London: Darton, Longman & Todd, and Philadelphia: Westminster, 1973] 38; *A Second Collection* 173 [in "The Response of the Jesuit as Priest and Apostle in the Modern World," 165-87]; *A Third Collection: Papers by Bernard J. F. Lonergan, S.J.*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe [New York: Paulist, 1985] 201 n. 48 [and text at 196], 249 n. 2 [and text at 242]), but I have not noticed any other explicit mention of the supernatural existential.
- g Thomas S. Kuhn begins to appear in Lonergan's lectures about 1974, sometimes on the present point, sometimes on the role of community in science. See *A Third Collection* 15 (in "Method: Trend and Variations," pp. 13-22), 63 (in "Prolegomena to the Study of the Emerging Religious Consciousness of Our Time," pp. 55-73), 138 (in "Religious Knowledge," pp. 129-145, the second of three lectures on Religious Studies and Theology); also "Questionnaire on Philosophy," *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 2:2 (October 1984) 1-35, at 5. For a little more on the present point, see Lonergan's "The Human Good," *Humanitas: Journal of the Institute of Man* 15 (1979) 113-26, at 121; also Cathleen M. Going, ed., *Dialogues in Celebration* (Montreal: Thomas More Institute, 1980) 289 (in an interview with Lonergan on "Questions with Regard to Method: History and Economics," pp. 286-314).
- h The reference is probably to Louis Mink, *Mind, History, and Dialectic: The Philosophy of R. G. Collingwood* (Bloomington/ London: Indiana University Press, 1969), a work Lonergan had referred to two years earlier (see *A Third Collection* 109, in "Healing and Creating in History," pp. 100-109).
- i To be compared with these lists of social and cultural contexts are the lists of 'social institutions' and 'cultural achievements' in "Dimensions of Meaning," *Collection*, CWL

- 4 232-45, at 234, and in "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness," *A Third Collection* 169-83, at 170. A possible source is Philip Bagby, *Culture and History: Prolegomena to the Comparative Study of Civilizations*, reprint (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1976) 77, a book Lonergan refers to in *Topics in Education* 230 n. 54; but Lonergan, in contrast to Bagby, maintains a rather carefully drawn distinction between the two sets.
- j Lonergan is explicit on the advance in his thinking here, and we may test the advance by comparing with these four stages the three plateaus of "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness," *A Third Collection* 169-83, at 177-80. Briefly, in terms of meaning, the three plateaus are characterized by "meanings such as prove operative in men of action; further meanings that involve a familiarity with logical techniques; and a still further plateau of meanings that attain their proper significance and status within a methodical approach that has acknowledged its underpinnings in an intentionality analysis" (180). See also *Method in Theology* 85-99, 108, where we find the three stages described as follows. "In the first stage conscious and intentional operations follow the mode of common sense. In a second stage besides the mode of common sense there is also the mode of theory, where the theory is controlled by a logic. In a third stage the modes of common sense and theory remain, science asserts its autonomy from philosophy, and there occur philosophies that leave theory to science and take their stand on interiority" (85). The distinction between linguistic and literate is not new — it was used for differentiations of consciousness in *Philosophy of God, and Theology* (57), and see *A Third Collection* (177) — but becomes in this paper the basis for still more fundamental divisions in human living.
- k A position perhaps foreshadowed in the 1959 course at the Gregorian University, *De intellectu et methodo*, where it is said of symbolic technique (that is, logic): "nunc est species quaedam scientiae mathematicae" (p. 10 of the student notes of the course, Lonergan Research Institute Archives).

## LONERGAN'S UNIVERSALIST VIEW OF RELIGION

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THE WORK UNDER study in this fall issue of 1994 is one of a series of papers, some published, some unpublished, that Lonergan wrote on the topic of religion in the last years of his life.<sup>1</sup> Like most of the series, this paper maintains quite explicitly "a universalist view of

<sup>1</sup> For example, in *A Third Collection: Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan, S.J.*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (New York: Paulist Press, and London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1985): "Prolegomena to the Study of the Emerging Religious Consciousness of Our Time" (ch. 5, 55-73; henceforth "Prolegomena"); the three "Lectures on Religious Studies and Theology" (part two, with chs 8-10, 111-65); and "A Post-Hegelian Philosophy of Religion" (ch. 13, 202-223; henceforth "Post-Hegelian").

Earlier papers that touch on religion, for example several in *A Second Collection: Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan, S.J.*, ed. William F.J. Ryan and Bernard J. Tyrrell (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1974, and Philadelphia: Westminster, 1975), are clear on the universal salvific will of God: "Theology and Man's Future" 135-48, at 139 and 146 (henceforth "Man's Future"); "The Future of Christianity" 149-63, at 155; "The Response of the Jesuit as Priest and Apostle in the Modern World" 165-87, at 174 (henceforth "Response of the Jesuit"); but they do not use the term, universalist.

The term occurs in *A Third Collection*: "universalist ... concern" in "Prolegomena" 69; "universalist movement" in "The Ongoing Genesis of Methods" (the third of the series on "Religious Studies and Theology") *Third Collection* 146-65, at 159; and see the idea in "Post-Hegelian," *Third Collection* 217-18.

The unpublished paper, "Faith and Beliefs" (see note 18) refers to the universalist aspect of faith, 1-2, 14-15 of the autograph MS. Also unpublished, "Sacralization and Secularization" (henceforth "Sacralization," a lecture at Trinity College, Toronto, November 1973; repeated with considerable revision, St. Thomas More Lectures, New Haven, February 1974) is on religion from beginning to end, and refers to various religions, but the argument does not call for a position on the universalist question. All unpublished papers referred to in this article can be found in the Archives of the Lonergan Research Institute of Regis College, Toronto.

religion."<sup>2</sup> That universalism, as Lonergan conceived it, is the central theme of my article, but I need a preface to determine exactly what Lonergan meant by the 'religion' of which he takes such a view, and I need a sequel for his position on the closely connected question of Christianity in the context of universalist religion. The result is something like a sandwich, with much more space given to the difficult first and third sections (especially the third), and much less to the relatively clear central theme.

### 1. RELIGION

What, then, does Lonergan mean by 'religion' in the present context? It is not any of the institutional religions with their expressed beliefs and codes of conduct, their rituals and customs. As numerous passages to be cited will show, that is exactly what is not universal; rather, it is all superstructure and, while 'religion' is regularly and legitimately used for the superstructure, Lonergan would go behind it to an infrastructure that is to be understood in reference to his sharply defined use of 'experience,' and in the present case, 'religious experience.'

Experience is used, by Lonergan and everyone else, in a very general sense of knowledge: a person of experience is one who "has long been engaged in some trade or profession, some art or craft, and has come to possess a full and balanced knowledge of the ins and outs of his way of life."<sup>3</sup> But Lonergan has his own technical sense in which experience is an element in the compound of experience, understanding, and judgment, three constituents which together result in knowledge. To get back to pure experience in this sense, we must go behind questions and ideas with

<sup>2</sup> "Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon," *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies*, above in this issue, p. 135. Further quotations from this paper will give the page reference in the text.

<sup>3</sup> *Third Collection* 57, in "Prolegomena."



regard to the data, go behind description of the data, go behind even the word 'experience,' for all that is superstructure.<sup>4</sup>

Religious experience is conceived in this same precisely defined sense. Lonergan refers to the work of William Johnston who "advances to an area that, as experience, is common to East and West, morally uplifting, cosmic in orientation but, when interpreted, takes on the distinctiveness of diverse traditions"; advances, that is, to an infrastructure that has not yet been "incorporated within an interpretative suprastructure."<sup>5</sup> He also refers here to the work of Raimundo Panikkar, and in a later paper returns to Panikkar's view that if we want a theology "that has its ground free from the influence of particular places and times, particular cultures and viewpoints, we have to have recourse to the wordless prayer of the mystics representing the world religions."<sup>6</sup>

Can we form a more positive view of this religious experience? There is language for it, in Christianity as in other religions, and I will collect some of the descriptions Lonergan uses, but with the reminder that in using language we are on the level of superstructure, and are merely pointing to an infrastructure that ceases, as soon as it is named, to be pure religious experience.

The *locus classicus* for Lonergan's views on religion and religious experience is chapter 4 of his *Method in Theology*,<sup>7</sup> entitled simply "Religion." But, since this chapter is strikingly different from what he

<sup>4</sup> *Third Collection* 57. Lonergan would agree that, except in the early life of the infant, experience is rarely, if ever, 'pure,' and would not in any case be observable in the pure state.

<sup>5</sup> *Third Collection* 67.

<sup>6</sup> *Third Collection* 218, in "Post-Hegelian." The question of pure experience now becomes the question of pure religious experience: does it occur? Since, as we shall see, it is the pure gift of God, we can hardly deny the possibility; if God wishes to give the pure gift of love 'without an intellectually apprehended object' (see text below, at note 56), who is to say, 'You can't do that; the gift must be historically conditioned'? It is true that any objectification of the gift, even internal to oneself, any attempt to express the gift is historically conditioned, but differences here do not disprove a pure common experience, except in a philosophy that makes language prior to internal acts — certainly not Lonergan's position.

<sup>7</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, and New York: Herder and Herder, 1972; 2nd ed. 1973, unchanged except for the correction of numerous misprints).

published fifteen years earlier in *Insight*<sup>8</sup> on the notion and existence of God (chapter 19, "General Transcendent Knowledge"), and seems, if we know only *Insight* and *Method*, to have come out of the blue, it may be helpful to indicate its antecedents.

Religious experience was, in fact, an integral part of Lonergan's theology before the publication of either *Method* or *Insight*. His early attitude may seem rather negative, but that is explained by the context: his opposition to a modernist view that opposed religious experience to dogma.<sup>9</sup> A more positive view is found the *verbum* articles of the late 1940s,<sup>10</sup> and soon after entered his theological method as a structural element. Thus a letter of 1954 puts the matter in this brief formula: religious experience is to theology and theology is to dogma as potency is to form and form is to act.<sup>11</sup> This succinct and very precise statement makes religious experience an essential element in Lonergan's theological thinking. An article written around the same time relates the abstract formula of the letter to the history of Christian thought. The documents of tradition, it says, are the product of a mind "that conceived and judged not in the objective categories of scholastic thought but in the more spontaneous intersubjective categories of ordinary human experience and ordinary religious experience."<sup>12</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1957; 5th ed. revised and augmented, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, vol. 3, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992). My references will be to the CWL edition.

<sup>9</sup> For example, *The Way to Nicea: The Dialectical Development of Trinitarian Theology* (A translation by Conn O'Donovan from the first part of *De Deo Trino*. London: Darton, Longman & Todd, and Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976) 129-30, where Lonergan opposes a "disjunction between religious experience ... and hellenistic ontology" (see the whole section, 127-37; also *Insight* 756).

<sup>10</sup> *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas*, ed. David B. Burrell (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1967) 92 (original appearance: in an article in *Theological Studies* 8 [1947] 77); and see note 33 below.

<sup>11</sup> Letter of May 5, 1954, to F.E. Crowe. I have substituted words for Lonergan's mathematical symbols.

<sup>12</sup> "Theology and Understanding," *Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, vol. 4 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988) 114-32, at 127 (original publication, *Gregorianum* 35 [1954] 630-48). One may mention also a paper, "Openness and Religious Experience," that Lonergan wrote a few years later (*Collection* 185-87; see note 19 below).

Up to this time, however, Lonergan's interest was focused on theology within the Roman Catholic church. It seems that the Second Vatican Council gave a new direction to his interests and concerns, for he speaks, as stemming from that council, of the church's "concern with ecumenism, with non-Christian religions, and with the atheist negation of religion";<sup>13</sup> one surmises an influence from the same source on his own concern. At any rate, from 1967 on there is recurring mention of religious studies in their relation to the human enterprise and to theology in particular.<sup>14</sup> The universalist theme begins to be considered not just in relation to Catholic doctrines, but in relation to empirical studies of religion.<sup>15</sup> On the latter point "Theology and Man's Future" is explicit: "Finally, there is the theological doctrine that God grants all men sufficient grace for their salvation. This doctrine is relevant to religious studies; it makes them studies of the manifold ways God's grace comes to men ..."<sup>16</sup> It is in this period too that more attention is paid to Christianity in relation to "the other world religions."<sup>17</sup> A very useful work in which the several features of this new direction are set forth is the unpublished paper, "Faith and Beliefs."<sup>18</sup>

<sup>13</sup> *Second Collection* 138, in "Man's Future," a paper of October 1968. This same trio of new interests was listed the previous year in "Theology in Its New Context" (henceforth "New Context") *Second Collection* 55-67, at 62. A curious result of coming simultaneously to these new concerns is that Lonergan, leaping in one bound to both ecumenism and the wider ecumenism, concentrated on the latter and never gave the same attention to relations between churches that he gave to relations between religions.

<sup>14</sup> *Second Collection* 62-63, in "New Context." See also "The Absence of God in Modern Culture" (henceforth "Absence of God") *Second Collection* 101-116, at 107; "Man's Future," *Second Collection* 138; etc.

<sup>15</sup> "Man's Future," *Second Collection* 146; "Future of Christianity," *Second Collection* 149-151, 156.

<sup>16</sup> "Man's Future," *Second Collection* 139.

<sup>17</sup> "Future of Christianity," *Second Collection* 155-163.

<sup>18</sup> "Faith and Beliefs" was a lecture at a plenary session of the American Academy of Religion, October 1969 (there is an inaccuracy in the program listing of the title), with Wilfred Cantwell Smith and Herbert Richardson as respondents. Extant in the Archives are Lonergan's autograph MS of 23 pages, and what seems to be a retyping by William Shea (13 pages, single-spaced), the latter with a transcription from the tape-recording of the discussion between Lonergan and Smith (pp. 13-15). My references will be to the autograph.

I should add here that, while the various references in notes 13 to 18 do indicate a new focus in Lonergan's interest in world religions and an increased concern to take account of what God is doing through them, we may not conclude that he had no interest

I shall return to these papers when I deal directly with the universalist theme; at the moment I simply note that chapter 4 of *Method* does not appear suddenly out of nowhere but had been in preparation since Vatican II, and further that it has antecedents that go back some twenty-five years.<sup>19</sup> This gives a better perspective from which to examine what *Method in Theology* has to say on religion and religious experience.

I begin with a statement found not in chapter 4 but in chapter 13: "an orientation to transcendent mystery ... provides the primary and fundamental meaning of the name, God."<sup>20</sup> Here we have the two poles: God and the religious subject. But we have also the mediating factor, which is located not in experience of God but in orientation to transcendent mystery. We shall see presently that Lonergan does not speak of religious experience as 'experience of God' or make God an object of ordinary experience; still less does this orientation to mystery make God an object in the sense of "anything that is intended in questions and known through correct answers, anything within the world mediated by meaning."<sup>21</sup> On the contrary orientation to transcendent mystery "is the principle that can draw people out of that world and into the cloud of unknowing."<sup>22</sup> What

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at all in such questions before the Second Vatican Council. In fact, his interest goes back at least to 1954 when he discovered Mircea Eliade (letter of May 5, 1954, to F. Crowe). The discovery occurred in time for him to insert a footnote in *Insight* (572) before it went to the printer; references to Eliade are regular from that time on; see two examples in note 48 below.

<sup>19</sup> I would assign an important mediating role to "Openness and Religious Experience" *Collection* 185-187; written for a 1960 congress, when Lonergan's Latin theology had nearly reached its term, it still precedes the new interest generated by Vatican II.

The paper was requested, and Lonergan's short response (just a series of headings, his opening remark suggests) provides clues on the relation of nature and grace; it relates the enlargements of human consciousness to the pure desire to know and speaks of the ultimate enlargement "when the subject knows God face to face" (186-187); it declares the fundamental place religious experience holds in the process that is "man's making of man" and in the philosophy that reflects on the process (187); but it does not take up religious experience directly.

<sup>20</sup> *Method in Theology* 341.

<sup>21</sup> *Method in Theology* 341.

<sup>22</sup> *Method in Theology* 342.

is immediately called for is not thought or words: "Man's response to transcendent mystery is adoration."<sup>23</sup>

Still, "withdrawal is for return," and we can reflect on our prayer.<sup>24</sup> For "adoration does not exclude words."<sup>25</sup> There are the words that describe the experience: "a conscious dynamic state of love, joy, peace, that manifests itself in acts of kindness, goodness, fidelity, gentleness, and self-control"; "it is an experience of mystery ... the mystery evokes awe ... the gift of God's love is an experience of the holy."<sup>26</sup> "Ordinarily the experience of the mystery of love and awe is not objectified. It remains within subjectivity as a vector, an undertow, a fateful call to a dreaded holiness."<sup>27</sup> There is another set of words by which we name God, whether it be that word 'God' with which most of us associate from childhood our religious experience, or words like "absolute intelligence and intelligibility, absolute truth and reality, absolute goodness and holiness,"<sup>28</sup> with which some of us try to relate God to the words and meanings and ways of thinking that philosophy has taught us.

Such in brief is Lonergan's view of religion and religious experience, expressed by a Christian, and held in virtue of a Christian faith. It is not his main purpose here to provide a language in which to speak to non-Christians, but he does attempt, I believe, to use terms that would get behind Christian language to something common. By definition that is impossible; what is common is God's pure gift and what it does to human consciousness, and as we cease to reflect on this, as our experience approaches the purity of its infrastructure, it becomes wordless; still, we must talk, even the mystics do that (if only in obedience to a spiritual director), and so we continue to attempt the impossible.

<sup>23</sup> *Method in Theology* 344.

<sup>24</sup> *Method in Theology* 342.

<sup>25</sup> *Method in Theology* 344.

<sup>26</sup> *Method in Theology* 106.

<sup>27</sup> *Method in Theology* 113; see 240-241, "It [religious conversion] is revealed in retrospect as an under-tow of existential consciousness, as a fated acceptance of a vocation to holiness, as perhaps an increasing simplicity and passivity in prayer."

<sup>28</sup> *Method in Theology* 116.

There is another avenue besides language to explore. As pure experience is wordless, so there is a wordless human intentionality that reveals itself more radically in performance than in terms and concepts, and we can set religion in that context. This common way of performing appears in the very effort we make to talk to one another; if we do not make that effort, there is no problem to discuss; if we do make it, we implicitly acknowledge something common in our performance.

At any rate Lonergan relates his view to the innate dynamism of human consciousness which carries us from level to level in a pattern I have already indicated in speaking of knowledge as a compound. There is the level of experience (in Lonergan's technical sense), with the dynamism producing questions for intelligence and issuing in ideas and concepts; this lifts us to the next level, where the dynamism produces questions for reflection and leads to judgments and knowledge; the same insatiable dynamism now asks questions for deliberation leading to a choice of values and decisions. — I have used words to describe our common intentionality, but intelligence, which is not bound by words, can discern what I am doing, and others may find in their own performance what I describe in those words.

The goal sought in all its activity by the dynamism of human consciousness is self-transcendence, but there are steps in its attainment; for example, "cognitional self-transcendence in his judgments of fact and moral self-transcendence in his judgments of value."<sup>29</sup> The steps are not always taken without the shattering experience of conversion, especially the third step.

Intellectual conversion is to truth attained by cognitional self-transcendence. Moral conversion is to values apprehended, affirmed, and realized by a real self-transcendence. Religious conversion is to a total being-in-love as the efficacious ground of all self-transcendence, whether in the pursuit of truth, or in the realization of human values, or in the orientation man adopts to the universe, its ground, and its goal.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>29</sup> *Method in Theology* 45.

<sup>30</sup> *Method in Theology* 241; see also 104-106 on cognitive, moral, and total self-transcendence. To be noted: religious conversion is not conversion to a church, or even to a religion, but to God.

Lonergan distinguishes capacity for self-transcendence, revealed in the spontaneity of our questions for intelligence, for reflection, and for deliberation, and the realization of the capacity. "That capacity becomes an actuality when one falls in love": love of intimacy, love of all the members of our human race, love of God.

Being in love with God, as experienced, is being in love in an unrestricted fashion. All love is self-surrender, but being in love with God is being in love without limits or qualifications or conditions or reservations. Just as unrestricted questioning is our capacity for self-transcendence, so being in love in an unrestricted fashion is the proper fulfilment of that capacity.<sup>31</sup>

Thus, we are in the grip of two complementary forces. On one side there is the gift of God's love,<sup>32</sup> the effect of which, prior to all images and reflection, is orientation to mystery, the response to which is adoration. On the other side there is the spontaneous intentionality of human spirit, starting from experience, asking endless questions, and seeking a good beyond criticism, intentionality therefore as human capacity for religion, reaching up toward love of God.

I do not wish to overload this introductory section with detail, but two further points deserve attention: the relation of the exact empirical sciences to religion, and the relation of religious experience to chapter 19 of *Insight*.

The first question is raised by present media interest. Someone orbits the earth and returns from 'space' to report that he did not find God out there; others carry physical science to the limit and report that they *did* find God there. From Lonergan's viewpoint the first statement has more validity, but the second is of greater interest. We do not expect to find God in space travel; but neither should we, for a doctrine on God, appeal to the

<sup>31</sup> *Method in Theology* 105-106.

<sup>32</sup> "That fulfilment is not the product of our knowledge and choice. On the contrary, it dismantles and abolishes the horizon in which our knowing and choosing went on and it sets up a new horizon in which the love of God will transvalue our values and the eyes of that love will transform our knowing" (*Method in Theology* 106). A reminder may be in place here: regularly Lonergan writes for, and uses the language of, his own Christian tradition, but he recognizes the problem of a common language when the dialogue is between or among religions; see my remarks on the 'immediate practical question' in section 3.2 below.

sciences, natural or human. Science works with data, and there are no data on God. As for deductions from the data, the situation has changed since the time of Aristotle who introduced no logical break between knowledge of this world and knowledge of ultimate causes. While modern science "still speaks of causes, what it means is not end, agent, matter, form, but correlation." Correlations are verified within this world. Modern science

is knowledge of this world and only of this world. It proceeds from data and to data it adds only verifiable hypotheses. But God is not a datum of human experience ... Again, between this world and God there is no relationship that can be verified, for verification can occur only between data ... there are no data on the divine itself.<sup>33</sup>

In other words metaphysics is not just 'meta' as another part of a book; it is 'meta' as a new genus in thought:

there are defects of intelligibility in the existing world, and those defects are universal. They cannot be eliminated by any possible development of science in the ordinary sense, that is, science that does not go on to raise metaphysical questions. There is no technique or method of obtaining from physics or chemistry or biology or any other similar science an answer to the question, Why should there be anything at all? A thing is, in fact, because it is a virtually unconditioned; its conditions have been in fact fulfilled. You can explain it provisionally by saying that *this* is because *that* is. But why is *that*? As long as you stay within the limits of the world of your experience, you do not get beyond the virtually unconditioned, beyond that which happens to be because its conditions are fulfilled.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>33</sup> "Belief: Today's Issue" (henceforth "Belief"), *Second Collection* 87-99, at 94-95. See also 107, in "Absence of God": "The divine is not a datum to be observed by sense or to be uncovered by introspection"; and 120, in "Natural Knowledge of God" 117-33 (henceforth "Natural Knowledge"): "there are no data on the divine. God is not among the data of sense and he is not among the data of human consciousness."

This is said, however, of ordinary experience and ordinary religious experience; Lonergan seems to have held from early on that in the mystics there is 'an awareness of God' and, though his terminology was not fully worked out at the time, I would equate this with the later use of 'experience' (see *Verbum* 92 and the *Verbum* index on awareness).

<sup>34</sup> *Understanding and Being: The Halifax Lectures on INSIGHT*, ed. Elizabeth A. Morelli and Mark D. Morelli. Revised and augmented ed., *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, vol. 5 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990) 243-44.



I cannot develop the point here, but it had to be made, for a confusion of physics and metaphysics leaves a gap in human knowledge that invites a gnosticism of pseudoexplanation. As Lonergan wrote in *Insight* of an analogous situation: "It is through this gap that there proudly march the speculative gnostic and the practical magician."<sup>35</sup> I doubt that we have much to fear today from the practical magician; we are far too pragmatic, too sophisticated, to rely on practices we know will not work; we are not about to revert to alchemy. Gnosticism is another matter; ideas are ersatz in origin and, if taken for knowledge, provide a truth that is too cheaply purchased. When verification is in the nature of the case impossible, what gnostics claim to verify will turn out to be a god reduced to the dimensions of science. That is impossible with the God of chapter 19 of *Insight*, but this can be understood only in understanding the difference between the 'is' of affirmation and the verification procedures of science.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>35</sup> *Insight* 565.

<sup>36</sup> This is a long story in Lonergan's thought, involving his early metaphysics. In terms of potency, form, and act of existence (the components of any being that is proportionate to our understanding), what is intelligible is the *quidditas rei materialis*, with form as directly intelligible, potency intelligible only as limit to form, and existence intelligible only in its dependence on a necessary being (*De ente supernaturali: Supplementum schematicum* [Toronto: Regis College edition available in photocopy, 1973; ed. Frederick E. Crowe, Conn O'Donovan, Giovanni Sala] 64; originally notes for students, 1946). See also *Verbum* 193: "contingent existence is not intelligible in itself but only in its relation to the necessarily Existent." More fully in "A Note on Geometrical Possibility," *Collection* 92-107, at 102.

Now this pattern is found in scientific thinking: "by verification the scientist knows contingent existence, by theories he knows essences and forms, and by appealing to instances he acknowledges matter as well as form and existence" (*Collection* 137, in "Isomorphism of Thomist and Scientific Thought" 133-141). But the Being whose essence is to be is not proportionate to our understanding, and so a different kind of intelligibility is operative in the transition from this world to its Creator; see *Understanding and Being* 243-44 (just now quoted in our text).

On the difference between verification and true knowledge of what is, see "Questionnaire on Philosophy," *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 2/2 (October 1984) 1-35, at 25-26:

Verification falls short of proof: for in verification the argument runs, not from affirming the hypothesis to affirming its implications, but from affirming the verified implications, to affirming the hypothesis. Such an argument is cogent if and only if the hypothesis in question is the only possible hypothesis; and proof of such unique possibility commonly is not available.

This leads directly to my second point, which can be made very briefly; it concerns the relation of religious experience to chapter 19 of *Insight*. In my view they are in direct continuity, with the continuity that exists between believer and philosopher in their search for God, with the continuity that a mystery loved as God's gift has with a mystery humanly understood to be mystery. Why is there something and not nothing? the philosophers ask.<sup>37</sup> This is not a question on the intelligibility of data; it is a question on the intelligibility of 'is'; now that raises the question of God and points to mystery. This is the same mystery to which we are oriented in religious experience, and when the two are found in one person, the philosophic mystery becomes the intellectual component of the religious mystery; their identity is realized in consciousness.<sup>38</sup>

## 2. LONERGAN'S UNIVERSALIST POSITION ON RELIGION

In this central section I examine Lonergan on the fact of a universalist faith and religion, the extent of the fact (just how universal is his 'universal?'), and the grounds for asserting the fact, which divide into the a priori of Lonergan's own tradition and the a posteriori of the empirical evidence. The three topics are not always distinguished in his discussion, and some overlapping is therefore involved in ours. Pedagogically I have found it

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This explains the rather cryptic remark in "Natural Knowledge": "I should like to see greater attention paid by certain types of analytic philosophy to the notable gaps between an observation and a process of verification and, on the other hand, true and certain knowledge" (*Second Collection* 125).

<sup>37</sup> Often quoted from Heidegger, and attributed to him as source; but Gilson somewhere (I have lost the reference) traces the question to Leibniz. Lonergan surely had this in mind in his own question, 'Why should there be anything at all?' (just now quoted in our text, from *Understanding and Being* 244).

<sup>38</sup> My language here is philosophic but the process described is an everyday one. As *Insight* has it: "because it is difficult to know what our knowing is, it also is difficult to know what our knowledge of God is. But just as our knowing is prior to an analysis of knowledge and far easier than it, so too our knowledge of God is both earlier and easier than any attempt to give it formal expression" (*Insight* 705). The point is made again twenty years later in *Philosophy of God, and Theology: The Relationship between Philosophy of God and the Functional Specialty, Systematics* (henceforth *Philosophy of God, and Theology*; London: Darton, Longman & Todd, and Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1973; originally the St. Michael's Lectures, Gonzaga University, Spokane, 1972) 55-56.

simpler to begin with the grounds, for they determine the full extent of 'universal.'

He himself, in "Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon," describes two approaches to the universalist position (135 above). One is the familiar Roman Catholic doctrine (it was gradually made clear and explicit in the 1800s and is accepted without question in the 1900s) that since God wills everyone to be saved (1 Timothy 2:4), then everyone is given sufficient grace to be saved.

In what does that grace consist? That is the question. Lonergan argues that it includes love, and in this way he ties it to his anthropology (intentional dynamism, self-transcendence realized in love). But his argument is brief in the extreme. At first he simply said, "it is difficult to suppose that grace would be sufficient if it fell short of the gift of loving God above all and loving one's neighbor as oneself."<sup>39</sup> Two years later he expands the argument slightly.

According to the thirteenth chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians, charity is necessary for salvation. Again, by common consent, charity is sufficient for salvation. But, as theologians argue from the first epistle to Timothy ... God wills all men to be saved. Accordingly, he wills to give them all the necessary and sufficient condition for salvation. It follows that he gives all men the gift of his love, and so it further follows that there can be an element in all the religions of mankind that is at once profound and holy.<sup>40</sup>

But Lonergan, as far as I know, never felt it necessary to develop this argument, and in "Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon" he seems simply to suppose "that those God wills to save will be given the charity described in the thirteenth chapter of the first letter to the Corinthians" (135 above).

<sup>39</sup> *Second Collection* 174, in "Response of the Jesuit." Lonergan admits that the "common opinion of theologians that God gives everyone sufficient grace for salvation" does not include the further step of equating this grace with the gift of charity (unpublished question sessions at the Lonergan Workshop, Boston College, 1977, p. 19 of transcript by Nicholas Graham). Sometimes he does not look for a theological argument, but simply turns to the empirical approach: "That this grace does include ... the gift of God's love, may be inferred, I think, from Prof. Heiler's account of the seven areas common to all the high religions" (*Second Collection* 155, in "Future of Christianity").

<sup>40</sup> *Philosophy of God, and Theology* 10.

The appeal to the divine universal salvific will is straightforward Roman Catholic doctrine. This supplies the real ground for Lonergan's personal adherence to the universalist position, but he could not suppose it to have cogency for others. As he said in his 1969 address to the American Academy of Religion, after asking whether 'universalist' should not extend beyond the world religions, "As a theologian ... I must expect an affirmative answer; but as a mere theologian, I must leave the factual answer to students of the history of religions."<sup>41</sup> We shall turn now to the empirical data, but it is good at this point to remind ourselves that basically he writes as a Christian to Christians, not as an ecumenist to non-Christians. From that perspective we have to take 'universal' as meaning just what it says, understanding always that we are talking of what is inmost and vital in the 'religion' of the religions, that is, of what lies behind superstructure and is religious experience as it comes in its purest state as the gift of God.

Lonergan's second approach, however, borrows from empirical studies of the many religions, to which he will add his own observations from time to time. With some caution he would appeal to Friedrich Heiler, who had "listed seven features common to all the high religions ... I feel that he would recognize at least a rough equivalence between his seven features and what I have said of being in love with God."<sup>42</sup> The caution is emphasized and the attitude made more specific a year later:

For present purposes it will be best to regard Prof. Heiler's position not as an exhaustive empirical statement on the world religions but as an ideal type or model, that is, neither a description nor an hypothesis but a heuristic and expository device open to all the additions and modifications that empirical investigation may dictate.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>41</sup> "Faith and Beliefs" 14.

<sup>42</sup> *Second Collection* 146, in "Man's Future."

<sup>43</sup> "Faith and Beliefs" 22, note 7. This parallels very exactly Lonergan's use of Arnold Toynbee on history: caution in accepting Toynbee's empirical side, with esteem for his 'ideal types' as tools of thought.

Toynbee thought he was contributing to empirical science. Since then, however, he has recanted. But, I believe, his work remains a contribution not to knowledge of reality, not to hypotheses about reality, but to the ideal types that are intelligible sets of concepts and often prove useful to have to hand when it comes

Heiler continues to be quoted on the seven common areas,<sup>44</sup> but in "Prolegomena to the Study of the Emerging Religious Consciousness of Our Time" Lonergan turns for support on the empirical side to Panikkar and Whitson,<sup>45</sup> and in the paper we are studying now he simply appeals to them and others without developing the point (135-136 above).

Generally, in referring to these empirical studies, Lonergan has in mind the high world religions, but sometimes he goes a good deal further. Thus, in "Faith and Beliefs" he first set forth his position "that a basic component of religious involvement among Christians is God's gift of his love," then went on to argue "that the same may be said of religious involvement in all the world religions, in Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Zoroastrian Mazdaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism" (appealing again to Heiler), and finally adds the rather startling question: "But may one not extend this view to the more elementary forms of religion? Can one not discern in them the harvest of the Spirit that is love, joy, peace, kindness, goodness, fidelity, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22)?" We have seen his answer: as a theologian, yes; as a mere theologian, he leaves the matter to students of the history of religions.<sup>46</sup>

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to describing reality or to forming hypotheses about it (*Third Collection*, in "Dialectic of Authority" 5-12, at 10; also *passim* in that volume — see the index, under Toynbee).

<sup>44</sup> In *Method in Theology* 109; also in the late paper, "Post-Hegelian" (1980), *Third Collection* 217.

<sup>45</sup> *Third Collection* 55-73; see esp. 65-70. But Lonergan's acceptance of Panikkar is qualified; in a paper of 1973 ("Variations in Fundamental Theology," Trinity College, Toronto; repeated with changes, 1974, St. Thomas More Lectures, New Haven; unpublished), he states that "the preverbal and, indeed, preconceptual foundation of theology proposed by Fr Panikkar *intends to be a common starting point. Insofar as one starts from it and moves towards Christ it corresponds to the foundational reality in chapter eleven of Method, a reality conceived by Christians in terms of St Paul's statement*" on God's love flooding our hearts (18-19 in the autograph MS). I have corrected the spelling and added the words in italics which are not in the MS but were part of the oral delivery at Toronto; the 1974 version of the paper revised the concluding pages, and the quoted passage was dropped.

I have not noticed a similar qualification in Lonergan's use of Whitson, and perhaps Robert Doran (see note 83 below) is right in suggesting that I could stress their agreement more than I do.

<sup>46</sup> "Faith and Beliefs" 12-14.

On other occasions, however, he does not leave the matter there. Indeed one might say that he strikes out on his own and casts his net beyond all religions to include the human race, as when he remarks that "Christians ... can become so devoted to the Christian cause as to forget its subordination to the cause of mankind";<sup>47</sup> or when he makes God's gift of his love the basis for a universalist faith, and says of the latter: "It does not presuppose any specific set of historical conditions. It can be bestowed on the members of any culture at any stage in its development";<sup>48</sup> or, finally, when he includes the 'unlearned' among those brought to God by love,<sup>49</sup> for this category applies to persons in their individuality more than does the category, 'the members of any culture at any stage in its development.'

We may further note, returning to the religions, that Lonergan applied to them in a positive way the text, "By their fruits you shall know them" (Matthew 7:16; see 135 above). Thus he states (though rather tentatively): "I am inclined to interpret the religions of mankind, in their positive moment, as the fruit of the gift of the Spirit, though diversified by the many degrees of social and cultural development, and distorted by man's infidelity to the self-transcendence to which he aspires."<sup>50</sup> And so

<sup>47</sup> *Second Collection* 158, in "Future of Christianity."

<sup>48</sup> "Faith and Beliefs" 15-16. See also "Sacralization" 16 (15 in 1974 MS): "Religions of the infrastructure [that is, those tied more closely to the world of immediacy] can, in principle, be as authentic and genuine as any, for I do not suppose that the grace of God is refused to certain stages in the unfolding of human culture yet granted to other stages." Some years earlier Lonergan had appealed to the work of Eliade to suggest the "possibility of mystical experience in the most primitive peoples, and of its having an influence on society" (*Topics in Education: The Cincinnati Lectures of 1959 on the Philosophy of Education*, ed. Robert M. Doran and Frederick E. Crowe, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, vol. 10 [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993] 56-57). Indeed, he saw Eliade's work as pointing to a common humanity in us all: "One can turn to the liturgists and the historians of religions to search, with Mircea Eliade, for a crosscultural language that is prior to manmade languages and independent of them" (*Collection* 242, in "Dimensions of Meaning" 232-245 — a lecture of 1965).

<sup>49</sup> "This complete being-in-love ... is the efficacious reality that brings men to God despite their lack of learning or their learned errors" (*Second Collection* 129, in "Natural Knowledge").

<sup>50</sup> *Second Collection* 174, in "Response of the Jesuit." See "Man's Future" 139: when we recognize God's will to save all, religious studies become "studies of the manifold ways God's grace comes to men ..."; and 146: "God gives all men sufficient grace for salvation. Nor is his grace without fruit."

On infidelity to God's gift see also *Philosophy of God, and Theology* 54: "No doubt, such experience [religious] takes many forms. No doubt, it suffers many aberrations. But

he could speak quite positively of the good in all religions: "an element ... profound and holy."<sup>51</sup>

A concrete instance of this, and a good index of his position, is his repeated reference to the statue of the Buddha: "So you can have an experience of God's gift of his love ... It's an experience that you can see on the face of the Buddha."<sup>52</sup> And, asked about the external expression of God's gift of his love: "Did you ever see a statue of the Buddha?"<sup>53</sup> And again, "anything affirmed is thereby objectified, and any objectification is a withdrawal from the ultimate solitude of the mystical state. The alleged atheism of the Buddhist may be, perhaps, the expression of non-objectivized experience."<sup>54</sup> And yet again, "The posture and, above all, the features of the Buddha at prayer radiate a serenity that reveals what might be meant by authenticity attained."<sup>55</sup>

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it keeps recurring. Its many forms can be explained by the many varieties of human culture. Its many aberrations can be accounted for by the precariousness of the human achievement of authenticity."

That aberrations occur among Christians too is a sad truism. But see "Sacralization" on primitive religions as more open "to palpable idolatry and superstition, to orgiastic and cruel cults, even to the ritual murder of human sacrifice" (1973 MS: 16; 1974: 15).

<sup>51</sup> *Philosophy of God, and Theology* 10; the context is the familiar one of God's salvific will for all. "Accordingly, he wills to give them all the necessary and sufficient condition for salvation. It follows that he gives all men the gift of his love, and so it further follows that there can be an element in all the religions of mankind that is at once profound and holy."

<sup>52</sup> Interview with Lonergan, recorded and transcribed by Richard Renshaw (to whom our thanks), January 18, 1973, p. 10.

<sup>53</sup> Interview of some professors and students from McMaster University, February 6, 1973, p. 10 of the transcript made by Nicholas Graham.

<sup>54</sup> "Religious Commitment," *The Pilgrim People*, ed. Joseph Papin (Villanova University Press, 1970 [but the congress was held in 1971]) 45-69, at 62. On Buddha Lonergan refers to Ernst Benz and Friedrich Heiler, both in *The History of Religions: Essays in Methodology*, ed. Mircea Eliade and Joseph M. Kitigawa (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959); see *The Pilgrim People* 69 n. 15.

<sup>55</sup> *Third Collection* 123, in "Religious Experience" (115-28). Add a reference in the question sessions of the Boston College Lonergan Workshop, 1977, p. 10 in the transcript by N. Graham. Also a most interesting connection that Lonergan makes in a list of what he would call the creative minority: "the saints and mystics who, like the statue of Buddha, place before our eyes the spirit of prayer and adoration" ("Reality, Myth, Symbol," *Myth, Symbol, and Reality*, ed. Alan M. Olson [Notre Dame & London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1980] 34). I have multiplied these references, because it is clear that Lonergan felt a deep affinity with the Buddha, and one wonders why;

## 3. CHRISTIANITY IN THE CONTEXT OF UNIVERSALIST RELIGION

It is one thing to say that religion as inner experience is a universal phenomenon, to go so far even as to claim that all institutional religions are of God; it is another to say that one of these particular institutional religions has a universal claim on the human race; it is a third to adopt both of these positions at once. That is the situation in which many Christians seem to find themselves today; their universalist view of religion, in the sense described for Lonergan, seems to be in conflict with counterclaims from the side of their own particular religion.

Jesus is the one mediator between God and the human race (1 Timothy 2:5); there is no other name under heaven given to us by which we may be saved (Acts 4:12); we are to go out to the whole world and preach the good news to every creature (Mark 16:15); in former times God spoke through prophets and in varied ways, now at the endtime God has spoken through the Son (Hebrews 1:1-2). What is one to make of these claims if the universal salvific will of God is fulfilled through the gift of divine love to everyone, Christian and non-Christian, in world religions and in primitive religions, in reference to institutional religions or independently of institutions?

There is question here of what is called, in the terms commonly used, the absoluteness or the uniqueness of Christianity, or again, its finality as something not to be surpassed, or its normativity as criterion for judging other religions. This question, arising early in our century, took on new life recently and has been vigorously debated for a decade. Lonergan's active career was at an end before that happened, and as far as I know, he never took this question up expressly. He did, however, leave a wealth of material on the basis of which a 'Lonerganian' statement, in distinctively Lonerganian terms, might be cautiously ventured. I will make a limited attempt in that direction, but first, some of the material that provides a basis for it.

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perhaps the theme of nonviolence would be worth studying here, for Lonergan abhorred the violence prevalent at this time in his church.



### 3.1 Background Material

If we start with the love of God as the basic factor in all religion, the first thing to notice is that this does not of itself include knowledge of God.

God's gift of his love is God's free and gratuitous gift. It does not suppose that we know God. It does not proceed from our knowledge of God. On the contrary I have maintained that the gift occurs with indeed a determinate content but without an intellectually apprehended object. Religious experience at its root is experience of an unconditioned and unrestricted being in love. But what we are in love with, remains something that we have to find out.<sup>56</sup>

This is fundamental Lonergan doctrine for all religious people and for all religions: we love an Unknown and need to find out what or whom we love.

It is not enough to find this out and give expression to it in the privacy of one's own interiority; we need also to give external expression to what we discover and come to believe. Thus, for Lonergan the gift of love is an inner word, and there is a need in human nature for a corresponding outer word by which we can communicate with ourselves, with one another, and with the object of our love. This need unfolds under three headings, though he did not always distinguish them. There is the need the community has to express for itself the religious experience its members share, and the need those members have individually to express to themselves their experience. There is, secondly, the need that God speak a public word to accompany the personal gift of divine love. And thirdly, there is the need that God speak such a word as will manifest the full, unlimited extent of the divine love.

To start with the first heading and its two subdivisions, there is our individual need for images, concepts, judgments — the whole cognitional

<sup>56</sup> *Philosophy of God, and Theology* 50-51; see also 38, 54. The same idea is found in *Method in Theology*: "God's gift of his love is free. It is not conditioned by human knowledge; rather it is the cause that leads man to seek knowledge of God" (283; see 340-41). And remarkably, it is found thirty years earlier in the articles on grace: "The first act [of operative grace] does not presuppose any object apprehended by the intellect; God acts directly on the radical orientation of the will" (*Grace and Freedom: Operative Grace in the Thought of St. Thomas Aquinas*, ed. J. Patout Burns [London: Darton, Longman & Todd, and New York: Herder and Herder, 1971] 124; original publication, *Theological Studies* 2 [1941] and 3 [1942]).

apparatus familiar to Lonergan students, and needed as much for communication internal to ourselves as it is for communication with others. Not so well recognized, but quite basic in Lonergan's thinking, is the community need; this need for an outer word arises directly from our social nature, from the dominant role community plays in the life of the most individualistic people; it is found in religion too. That is, God's gift is given to many, but the many are one social body; its members need each other; they communicate; they share their interiority; they support one another; an outer word enables individual members to check their experience and its expression against that of others, and enables the community to build up a tradition for itself.<sup>57</sup>

The same point may be made in the context of religious conversion. Conversion "occurs in the lives of individuals." But "it is not so private as to be solitary." The many who are converted individually, and individu-

<sup>57</sup> The point is often repeated. *Method in Theology* 118-19 is the familiar locus, but it builds on what had been said earlier. For example, in "Man's Future":

Deeply hidden, intensely personal, this love [of God] is not so private as to be solitary. The Spirit is given to many, and the many form a community. The community endures over generations, spreads over different nations, adapts to cultural changes. It acquires a history of its origins, its development, its successes and failures, its happy strokes and its mistakes. Its failures and its mistakes becloud its witness, but they argue not for abolition of religion but for its reform (*Second Collection* 146).

Lonergan agrees with Augustine that our hearts are restless till they rest in God. "But what it is to rest in God is not easily known or readily understood. Though God's grace is given to all, still the experience of resting in God ordinarily needs a religious tradition for it to be encouraged, fostered, interpreted, guided, developed" (*Second Collection* 146). Again, Christians who receive God's gift

need one another to come to understand the gift that has been given them, to think out what it implies and involves, to support one another in their effort to lead Christian lives ... to be members of one another, to share with one another what is deepest in ourselves, to be recalled from our waywardness, to be encouraged in our good intentions (*Second Collection*, 156-157, in "Future of Christianity").

And yet again, we need an outer word to balance the mystical and organizational aspects of human living (*Second Collection* 157-159), to overcome the "loveless isolation of individuals" (*Second Collection* 159), to know what's happening in the gift we have received (*Caring about Meaning: patterns in the life of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Pierrot Lambert, Charlotte Tansey, Cathleen Going [Montreal: Thomas More Institute, 1982] 235). And one last quotation: "Without the visible mission of the Word, the gift of the Spirit is a being-in-love without a proper object; it remains simply an orientation to mystery that awaits its interpretation" (*A Third Collection* 32, in "Mission and the Spirit" 23-34).

ally receive God's gift of love and the Spirit, "can form a community to sustain one another in their self-transformation, and to help one another in working out the implications, and in fulfilling the promise of their new life."<sup>58</sup>

If we substitute more general terms wherever Lonergan uses Christian language, all that has been said would apply to any religion and especially to any of the world religions. There are of course the religious hermits; but hermits derive their way of life from a parent religion and live it on the margin of the parent; when Thomas Merton felt the need to live in his hermitage, he worked out a very rational relationship to the mother house, including even procedures for going there to take a shower. Lonergan's position, then, rests on what is basic in human nature, and has at least potential application to all religions.

My first heading had to do with an outer word by which any religious-minded community might express for itself its relation to God. My second heading has to do with God speaking an outer word of revelation to a community, by whatever means that might be done. Lonergan understood this through the analogy of a man and woman in love; as they need to express their love for one another, so there is a need that God and a human community express openly their love for one another.

If a man and woman were to love each other yet never avow their love, then they would have the beginnings of love but hardly the real thing. There would be lacking an interpersonal component, a mutual presence of self-donation, the opportunity and, indeed, the necessity of sustained development and growth. There would not be the steady increase in knowledge of each other. There would not be the constant flow of favors given and received, of privations endured together, of evils banished by common good will, to make love fully aware of its reality, its strength, its durability, to make love aware that it could always be counted on.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>58</sup> "New Context" (*Second Collection* 65-66).

<sup>59</sup> *Second Collection* 173-174, in "Response of the Jesuit." See also *Method in Theology* 112-113:

When a man and a woman love each other but do not avow their love, they are not yet in love. Their very silence means that their love has not reached the point of self-surrender and self-donation. It is the love that each freely and fully reveals

An analogy, of course, proves nothing; its role is to serve understanding, not to establish a truth. Here it serves our understanding of God's reason for entering into the human world with a human word to take part in the human enterprise: "words ... are the vehicles of meaning, and meaning is the stuff of man's making of man. So it is that a divine revelation is God's entry and his taking part in man's making of man."<sup>60</sup>

Does this second aspect likewise apply to all religions? It seems that Lonergan is open to understanding it that way: "There is a personal entrance of God himself into history, a communication of God to his people, the advent of God's word into the world of religious expression. Such was the religion of Israel. Such has been Christianity."<sup>61</sup> Now to say that 'such was the religion of A and B' is to speak of a type of religion that may be exemplified not only in A and B but also in C and D and so on.

Another remark suggests the same conclusion: "God's gift of his love has its proper counterpart in the revelation events in which God discloses to a particular people or to all mankind the completeness of his love for them."<sup>62</sup> A 'particular people' could be the people of any religion, and 'all mankind' could be reached either through particular revelations to each religion, or through one revelation made to one religion but meant for the whole human race. As far as these statements go we might conclude either to one word of God spoken for everyone, or to various words of God spoken, one for Judaism, another for Islam, another for Hinduism, and so on.

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to the other that brings about the radically new situation of being in love and that begins the unfolding of its life-long implications.

And *Method in Theology* 283: "For being-in-love is properly itself, not in the isolated individual, but only in a plurality of persons that disclose their love to one another." Likewise in the McMaster interview (note 53 above): a man and a woman who "never avow their love ... are refusing themselves the development that that love could have if they were interacting and acknowledging their relation with one another" (7).

<sup>60</sup> *Second Collection* 62, in "New Context." The theme of God's entering the human world to take part in the human enterprise is a familiar one in Lonergan: faith "is admitting the possibility and acknowledging the fact that God could and did enter into the division of labor by which men come to know ..." ("Belief," *Second Collection* 97). See also *Method in Theology* 119, to be quoted immediately in the text.

<sup>61</sup> *Method in Theology* 119.

<sup>62</sup> *Method in Theology* 283; the passage continues: "For being-in-love ...," as quoted in note 59 above.

Nevertheless, Lonergan was definite on what is specifically Christian.

What distinguishes the Christian ... is not God's grace, which he shares with others, but the mediation of God's grace through Jesus Christ our Lord ... In the Christian ... God's gift of his love is a love that is in Christ Jesus. From this fact flow the social, historical, doctrinal aspects of Christianity.<sup>63</sup>

We come then to our third heading, to find the ultimate differentiating factor of Christianity pinpointed in Lonergan's address to the Catholic Theological Society of America (1977). The context was his familiar defense of the role of dogma, and his advice on what to do when old dogmatic formulas seem to have lost their meaning.

Personally I should urge that in each case one inquire whether the old issue still has a real import and, if it has, a suitable expression for that import be found. For example, at Nicea the real import was whether Christ, the mediator of our salvation, was a creature. Today many perhaps will be little moved by the question whether we have

<sup>63</sup> *Second Collection* 156, in "Future of Christianity." On the face of it, Lonergan seems here to make Christ the mediator of grace for Christians only. But that is certainly not the position of his Christology, where Christ is called *fons omnis gratiae* and *mediator omnis gratiae*; see Lonergan, *De Verbo incarnato* (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1964) 325: "Gratia capitis est gratia Christi qua caput corporis sui mystici; ideoque est gratia secundum quam Christus est mediator, fons omnis gratiae ... Christus est mediator omnis gratiae quia dilectio Patris erga Filium aeternum extenditur (1) in Filium qua hominem, unde gratia Christi sanctificans, et (2) mediante Filio in filios adoptionis." ("The 'grace of the Head' is Christ's grace as Head of his mystical body, and so it is on the basis of this grace that Christ is the mediator, the fountain of every grace ... Christ is the mediator of every grace because the Father's love towards the eternal Son is extended (1) to the Son as man (hence the sanctifying grace of Christ) and (2) to sons by adoption, by the mediation of the Son.") The same mediation is found in Lonergan's Trinitarian theology; see his *De Deo trino* (2 vols., Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1964) vol. 2, 239.

What Lonergan's view takes for granted is that mediation starts with God the Father, whose infinite love is the primary mediating agent. The present point was set forth in detail in "The Mystical Body of Christ" (unpublished 'domestic exhortation'), a talk that Lonergan gave to his religious community, Toronto, November 1951. The pattern here corresponds to that of "Theology and Praxis" (to be quoted at once in my text) where the meaning of the question whether we were saved by a creature or by a divine Son is found in the Father.

On what is distinctive of Christianity see also "Bernard Lonergan Responds" *Foundations of Theology*, ed. Philip McShane (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1971; Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1972) 223-234, at 233; *Philosophy of God, and Theology* 67; and "Sacralization" (17 in 1973 MS, 16-17 in 1974).

been saved by a creature or by God himself. But the issue may be put differently. One can ask whether God revealed his love for us by having a man die the death of scourging and crucifixion? Or was it his own Son, a divine person, who became flesh to suffer and die and thereby touch our hard hearts and lead us to eternal life?<sup>64</sup>

This is a radical shift on the question of the divinity of Christ. Instead of focusing on Christ himself, our mediator with God, we focus on God showing in the sending of the Son the divine love God has for us, and showing it in the most heart-rending way by delivering up the only Son to death. Christ is seen as God's Isaac, with God's love the analogue for Abraham's obedience. But where a higher voice from heaven intervened to spare Abraham's Isaac, there is no higher voice to overrule God's love and save the divine Isaac. So God "did not spare his own Son, but surrendered him for us all" (Romans 8:32, *NEB*). And "that is God's own proof of his love towards us" (Romans 4:8; see 1 John 4:8-9). Here, in regard to this ultimate act of God, Lonergan comes to ultimate clarity on what is distinctive of Christianity.

Equally clear, and in no need of proof-texts, is his own personal adherence to Christ, and indeed to his Roman Catholic faith. Clear too is his position on the loyalty Christians and Catholics owe to their tradition; some of his sharpest critiques are reserved for fellow-Catholics who seem to hedge their bets on the Council of Nicea and the divinity of Christ.<sup>65</sup>

There is no doubt either about his position on the universal import of Christianity.<sup>66</sup> A good index is his position to the end on the church's mission to preach the gospel. The last chapter of *Method in Theology* dealt with the church's mission to all peoples. A decade later his position was unchanged. In a paper of 1981, he wrote on the church's call "to leap

<sup>64</sup> *Third Collection* 198, in "Theology and Praxis" 184-201. To be noted: God did not choose the cross for Jesus in arbitrary cruelty; the cross has its own mysterious rationale — but that is another matter.

<sup>65</sup> One may note the curiosity that in *Third Collection* one of the most outspoken papers on universalist religion (ch. 5) happens to be followed by a paper with an equally outspoken critique of fellow-Catholics on their Christology (ch. 6).

<sup>66</sup> I speak of 'import,' choosing that neutral word instead of the 'claims' that a unique, normative, absolute, unsurpassable religion might make on the world. This is not to repudiate those claims, but rather to assert that a Lonerganian position will view the whole problem from a different perspective.

forward in its apostolic mission by preaching to mankind the living Christ."<sup>67</sup> A year later, he wrote on the diversity of apostles needed "to preach the gospel to all nations."<sup>68</sup>

All this sounds rather uncompromising. Still it is not the whole story.

### 3.2 *Christianity and Other Religions*

So what should be our position on Christianity and other religions? There is an immediate practical question, and there is an ultimate factual question of the divine overarching purpose.

The immediate practical question regards our *modus operandi* in carrying out the church's mission; we are not to ride roughshod over the beliefs of others; we are to dialogue with the other religions, and not necessarily in our own terms. Speaking of the lack of a common style of religious thinking, and of the long-term approach to such a common style, Lonergan has this to say:

at the present time specific discussion of emerging religious consciousness has to proceed on the basis of some convention. If it is not to be merely generic, it has to adopt the formulation of some particular tradition at least as a temporary or momentary convention. Commonly this could be the formulation of the group that is carrying on the discussion or the one most relevant to the material being discussed.<sup>69</sup>

When Christianity is to provide the terms of discussion, we will speak of God's love flooding out hearts. But presumably Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and other religions could be asked on parallel occasions to provide the terms, and then we must hold ours in abeyance.

There are scattered remarks in Lonergan on the way interdisciplinary and ecumenical and interreligious discussions should be carried on. They need to be brought together and studied in relation to his triad of dialectic, encounter, and dialogue; the move from conflict of statements to encounter of persons would be of particular importance for the present

<sup>67</sup> *Third Collection* 237, in "Pope John's Intention" (224-238).

<sup>68</sup> *Third Collection* 243, in "Unity and Plurality: The Coherence of Christian Truth" (239-250).

<sup>69</sup> *Third Collection* 70, in "Prolegomena."

question, and not to overload this article with detail, I suggest simply that what Lonergan has to say of the encounter of person with person might be adapted to the encounter of religion with religion. "Encounter ... is meeting persons, appreciating the values they represent, criticizing their defects, and allowing one's living to be challenged at its very roots by their words and by their deeds."<sup>70</sup>

But we have not yet tackled the real question of the ultimate divine purpose. To be open to dialogue is not to say it's all one with God whether we are Christian or Hindu; rather, it is to try to discover the divine purpose in its widest compass. To deal with that question I need to go back to still more general considerations, for it is not primarily a question of religions and their relationship, still less of their competing claims, but one of God's direction of universal history.

To begin, then, at the beginning, the matter is more in God's hands than in ours. Writing at the end of chapter 20 of *Insight*, Lonergan offered this ray of hope to anyone laboring in the search for religious truth: "Nor will he labor alone ... for the realization of the solution and its development in each of us is principally the work of God who illuminates our intellects ... who breaks the bonds of our habitual unwillingness to be utterly genuine ..."<sup>71</sup> This remark is not a bit of piety dragged in irrelevantly; those who were privileged to attend Lonergan's courses on divine providence and grace will recognize it as intrinsic to and deeply representative of his thinking. Now such an orientation affects our question in a fundamental way. For to know that the matter is mainly in God's hands leads us to ask what the divine economy is for the running of the universe, and that question both checks a tendency to attribute excessive importance to our own responsibility and opens an avenue to a more humble exercise of the responsibility proper to our secondary role.

There is, first, the divine economy of the gift of the Spirit, inseparably linked with the gift of God's love. There is a huge and inexplicable gap here in the work of a great many theologians, who can discourse at length

<sup>70</sup> *Method in Theology* 247.

<sup>71</sup> *Insight* 751. A similar point is made in the homely context of one's personal spiritual life: "When you learn about divine grace you stop worrying about your motives; somebody else is running the ship" (*Caring about Meaning* 145).



on religion and the religions without so much as a single mention of the Spirit, thus effectively ignoring half the divine input and ruling out of court half the available data.

The matter cries out for attention; for the Spirit is real, is really sent into the world, is really present among us, has a mission on earth as really distinct as the person of the Spirit is really distinct in the Godhead; and the potentiality of this divine fact for a theology of religion is disregarded by all except a minority of theologians.

Complementary to God's initiative in giving the Spirit, a fully awakened Christian sensitivity refuses to believe that billions of people, separated by thousands of miles and thousands of years from a gospel preacher, are to be condemned for not believing in Christ; in line with Lonergan's view I would maintain that through the Spirit given them they belong already to God's family.<sup>72</sup>

This does not eliminate the need of preaching the gospel. If God, in giving the Holy Spirit to the human race, nevertheless judged it necessary to send the Only-begotten to be one of us, then we have the strongest possible ground for continuing to preach the gospel, the ground namely of the very example of God. But equally if God can give the Spirit of Love, and yet with infinite patience keep the "divine secret ... in silence for long ages" (Romans 16:25), leaving millions of us without the gospel, then we seem to have two excellent clues to the working of divine providence, and two excellent directives on our manner of cooperating with the divine purpose in the exercise of our limited responsibility.

<sup>72</sup> Ten years ago I expressed my concern at the way theologians of religion neglect the role of the Spirit: *Son of God, Holy Spirit, and World Religions: The Contribution of Bernard Lonergan to the Wider Ecumenism* (Toronto: Regis College Press, 1984); this lecture was reprinted as ch. 19 in Michael Vertin's edition of my papers and articles, *Appropriating the Lonergan Idea* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1989) 324-43; see esp. 339 note 26. My suggestion (335-36, 339 note 26) that 'anonymous Spiritans' is preferable in Christian conversation to 'anonymous Christians' (both may be found offensive by non-Christians) has a basis in Lonergan: "there is a notable anonymity to this gift of the Spirit. ... What removes this obscurity and anonymity is the fact that the Father has spoken to us of old through the prophets and in this final age through the Son" (*Second Collection* 174-175, in "Response of the Jesuit"). But only when we know as we are known (1 Corinthians 13:12) will all obscurity and anonymity vanish; meanwhile we are anonymous members of the family of the Father from whom every family takes its name (Ephesians 3:15) — maybe 'God's anonymous children' would come nearer the truth than either of the other two expressions.

Our reflections have taken a fairly definite direction. The first two aspects of the divine economy, the mission of the Spirit as inner gift and of the Son as outer word, call now for a third: the working out of the divine economy in human history, and this in the whole of human history. We have not only to try to understand this working out in the long ages of the past; we have also to ask how much we can conjecture about its working out in the long ages that possibly still await us in a future that is largely contingent. To attempt a view of history in its universal scope and sweep, and within the rationale of a divine economy for the universe, sounds to the nontheologian like hubris. Theologians, however, recognize this kind of thinking as their calling, and here, I believe, is where Lonergan has a profound contribution to make, though he has left us only scattered elements of a theory, not a comprehensive and elaborated view.

The focus is no longer the possibility of salvation for all; that is now taken for granted, and as a question is relegated to the margins (as part of our religious living, of course, it is in no way marginal). Neither is the universalist claim of Christianity, or the claims of any other religion, the focus of discussion. From the perspective that I consider Lonerganian, the relevant question is, What is God doing in the divine economy, that extends over all ages, of the twofold mission? What was God doing in past ages? What is God doing now? What can we discern of the possibilities the future holds and of the actualities God's intentions may have already determined for us? Some total view of history seems called for: what does Lonergan contribute under that heading?

In a first approach to his thought we can discern two ways of attempting an overall view of history. The first is the familiar trio of progress, decline, and redemption. This he calls the structure of history, but I would modify that term, for there is a kind of structure also in the sequences of history which I will come to in a moment. So I suggest that we speak of synchronic and diachronic structures. The structure of progress, decline, and redemption is synchronic, not sequential; though emphases may vary in some sequence, we are always progressing in some degree, always declining, always being redeemed.<sup>73</sup> That familiar

<sup>73</sup> For Lonergan's very early work on the history that happened (as distinguished from the history that is written) see his essay "Analytic Concept of History," *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 11 (1993) 5-35. This essay (found after his death in File 713 —

synchronic view is paralleled in the field of religions by the simultaneous presence among us of the many religions, each with its fidelity to the Spirit present in them, each with its infidelity to the promptings of the Spirit.

The other way to attempt an overall view is to study sequences in history: sequences in meaning and expression, in social institutions and culture, in all that pertains to human living, and this, whether it be question of progress or question of decline. For the human race, or some part of it, can advance, when the emphasis is on progress, from level to level of meaning; and equally the human race, or some part of it, can decline when the emphasis is evil from bias to bias, until a rich heritage has been squandered.<sup>74</sup> There is a structure here too, certainly in the sequences of progress, and even in the disintegrating sequence of decline, and so I propose that we call this the diachronic structure of history.

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see note 74 below) certainly belongs to the period 1937-38 which some thirty-five years later he mentions in *"Insight Revisited"* as the time of his early interest in the topic (*Second Collection* 263-78, at 271-272). In the same *"Insight Revisited"* (272) he speaks of chapter 20 of *Insight* as presenting the whole idea, and it seems that at one point in writing the book he planned to call chapter 20 "The Structure of History" (*Insight* 802, editorial note r). The three-membered structure runs through his work — it returns in *Method in Theology* 52-55; in "Questionnaire on Philosophy" 33, and elsewhere — but the creative work goes back to his student days.

On progress, decline, and redemption as concurrent see Lonergan's *Topics in Education* p. 69: "in the concrete all three function together. They are intertwined. They do not exist in isolation."

<sup>74</sup> The data on the diachronic structure of history, like those on the synchronic, begin in the unpublished papers Lonergan wrote as a student and kept in a file numbered 713 and called "History" (now in the Lonergan Archives); for example, in the paper entitled "Philosophy of History" (not to be confused with a 1960 paper that has a similar title). More data are found in chapter 17 of *Insight*, in "Levels and Sequences of Expression" (592-595). Likewise in *Method in Theology*, in "Stages of Meaning" (85-99). But these few references are only high points in a long list of references, among which this very paper "Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon" (see pp. 121-147 above) is not least in importance.

For the sequences in the disintegrating order of decline see "The Role of a Catholic University in the Modern World": "besides the succession of higher syntheses characteristic of intellectual advance, there is also a succession of lower syntheses characteristic of sociocultural decline" (*Collection* 108-113, at 110); also *Insight* 256 on "the successive lower viewpoints of the longer cycle" of decline; and *Method in Theology* on the steps by which a "civilization in decline digs its own grave with a relentless consistency" (55). But again the references are legion.

In the context of this diachronic structure the question of Christianity and world religions arises in a new way. God has seen fit to allow — and promote — the simultaneous existence of many religions; has God a ‘plan’ also for sequences in the various roles of the various religions? Are some transient, and others meant to endure to the end, if there is to be an end? What is the rationale of the appearance at a particular time of the Judaic religion, of the birth, when Augustus was emperor of Rome and Quirinius governor of Syria, of Jesus of Nazareth? Was the appearance of Jesus ‘timed’ not only in relation to Augustus and Quirinius, but also in relation to the stage of development reached by the world religions?

In the wide context of such questions one could attempt to insert and interpret the scattered remarks and essays Lonergan has given us on the economy of salvation history and on the mission of Christianity: what he wrote in his student days on restoring all things in Christ;<sup>75</sup> what he wrote of the fulness of time in which Christ came;<sup>76</sup> what he wrote “on the concrete universal that is mankind in the concrete and cumulative consequences of the acceptance or rejection of the message of the Gospel”;<sup>77</sup> what he was preparing in his unfinished work on the historical causality of Christ;<sup>78</sup> his views on the diversity of Eastern, Semitic, and

<sup>75</sup> “*Pantôn Anakephalaiôsis: A Theory of Human Solidarity ...*” (the full title is much longer), *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 9/2 (October 1991) 139-172; the MS (also found in File 713) is dated very exactly “Dominica in Albis 1935” (April 28).

<sup>76</sup> “It was at the fulness of time that there came into the world the Light of the world” (*Insight* 764 — one should read the whole long paragraph). See also “Finality, Love, Marriage”: “only when and where the higher rational culture emerged did God acknowledge the fulness of time permitting the Word to become flesh and the mystical body to begin its intussusception of human personalities and its leavening of human history” (*Collection* 17-52, at 22).

<sup>77</sup> *Insight* 764.

<sup>78</sup> Charles Hefling, in his lecture at the Lonergan Workshop, Boston College, June 23, 1993, drew attention to two short lines in *De Verbo incarnato*: “*Ulterius desideratur consideratio de causalitate historica quam Christus homo manifeste exercet.*” (“There is need for a further consideration of the historical causality that Christ the man manifestly exercises.”) Found on page 416 of the 1964 edition as Scholion 2 to Thesis 12, this statement appeared also in the editions of 1960 and 1961, under the same heading, “*De potentia Christi hominis.*” We know that a fourth edition was in preparation when Lonergan’s career at the Gregorian University was cut short by lung surgery. Begun about 1963-64 the new work would have developed the account of the historical influence of Christ that was lacking in previous editions; so Lonergan told me in conversation in 1972. His unfinished work seems to be extant in Files 657 and 674 of his papers — some

Western religion,<sup>79</sup> his attempt, here in "Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon," to give "some account and ordering of the various contexts in which ... religious living occurs and ... investigations of religious living are undertaken" (p. 139 above). And so on.

Besides collecting these and other particular questions, we would inevitably be led to background questions of great generality. For example, the question of the order of the universe: this was a key concept for Lonergan's Latin theology of the 'convenientia' of the incarnation. It would have to be rethought now to relate the role of the Holy Spirit to the order of universal history:<sup>80</sup> what is the 'convenientia' of the interior gift of the Spirit to God's people? How should we conceive the overarching order of a universe when we give equal attention to the presence of Son and Spirit? Theologians argue whether theology should be Christocentric or theocentric; but their neglect of the Spirit's role leads to the omission of a prior question: is a view that makes the Son the center of theology to be modified by a view in which Son and Spirit are equally central, as are the foci of an ellipse? Only then should we take up the question of relating this to a theocentric theology.

For another example, there is the question of contingency; for Lonergan there is no contingent decision of God without a created

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300 pages revising his theology of the redemption and adding a section "De opere Christi" that discusses the social agent, the historical agent, Christ as agent, Christ as historical agent, and so on.

<sup>79</sup> See *Method in Theology* 114:

Eastern religion stressed religious experience. Semitic religion stressed prophetic monotheism. Western religion cultivated the realm of transcendence through its churches and liturgies, its celibate clergy, its religious orders, congregations, confraternities. It moved into the realm of theory by its dogmas, its theology, its juridical structures and enactments. It has to construct the common basis of theory and of common sense that is to be found in interiority and it has to use that basis to link the experience of the transcendent with the world mediated by meaning.

See also "Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon" (139-141 above).

<sup>80</sup> Both ideas, *ordo* and *convenientia*, may be studied in the little work *De ratione convenientiae eiusque radice, de excellentia ordinis ...*; this *Supplementum schematicum* was provided for his students the first year Lonergan taught Christology at the Gregorian University, Rome, 1953-54. It remains unpublished, but is scheduled to appear in vol. 16 of the Collected Works.

counterpart; only if the created universe exists is it true to say God creates. To put it starkly, as of now there is no tomorrow; if at midnight God so wills, tomorrow will come into existence as another today.<sup>81</sup> That is no great problem; the problem arises when we realize the implication: that as of now, God has no will for tomorrow, or for anything else that is not. The problem arises more acutely in the Christian religion with the implication of what was really contingent on Mary's *Fiat mihi* (Luke 1:38) to Gabriel, of what was really contingent on the *Non quod ego volo, sed quod tu* (Mark 14:36) of Jesus in the garden, with the question of what alternatives were available to God had the responses been other than they were.

The problem arises personally and contemporaneously, in the context of our own limited secondary responsibility, with the question of what is really contingent for me on my decisions from day to day, and what is really contingent for the human race on the aggregate of our decisions. If God's 'plan' is already in place for us, that is, in the 'already' of our 'now,' then to that extent we are no longer free. And if God has a determinate 'plan' in place for Christianity and the world religions, then we will let be what must be. But suppose God has no such plan, suppose that God loves a slow-learning people enough to allow them long ages to learn what they have to learn, suppose that the destiny of the world religions is contingent on what we all learn and do — say, on Christians being authentically Christian, Hindus being authentically Hindu, and so on — then responsibility returns to us with a vengeance, and the answer to the question of the final relationship of Christianity and the world religions is that there is no answer — yet.

To elaborate a Lonerganian theology of the divine economy working in human history would therefore be a long and difficult task,<sup>82</sup> and I

<sup>81</sup> The regular context for Lonergan's doctrine on God's contingent acts and the corresponding created entity is his Trinitarian theology of the divine missions; see his *De Deo trino*, vol. 2, Assertum XVII, 226: "Divinae personae missio ita per divinam relationem originis constituitur ut tamen per modum condicionis consequentis terminum ad extra exigat." ("The mission of a divine person is constituted by a divine relation of origin in such a way that it still requires, by way of consequent condition, an external term.")

<sup>82</sup> The task would be complicated by genetic and dialectical factors in the history of Lonergan's thinking and personal development: we cannot simply juxtapose what he wrote in his student days and what he wrote as a seminary professor, or what he wrote as a seminar professor and what he wrote in his *Method* period.

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do not know whether in the end enough data would be found for a comprehensive view; what I feel is the fascination of the question, the possibility that such a study would shake up very thoroughly the relation of Christianity to world religions, the hope that someone may yet be able to undertake the study. In any case it is a task for another occasion.<sup>83</sup>

<sup>83</sup> I am grateful to Professors Ovey Mohammed and Robert M. Doran, both of Regis College, Toronto, for reading my article in typescript and enabling me to eliminate some of its defects; those that remain are, of course, my own.





## LONERGAN'S "PHILOSOPHY AND THE RELIGIOUS PHENOMENON": A COMMENTARY

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EVERYONE WHO SEEKS to answer intellectual queries begins from her own biographical frame of reference, his own narrative context. So it is that Lonergan addresses the question 'posed' to him at the outset of this manuscript with a discussion of the neoscholasticism in which he was trained. He deals with the question of philosophy and religion by explaining why this was a non-question (or even a forbidden question, given his reference to Dumery's book being put on the Index) for those working out of a neoscholastic worldview. He indicates how this context has changed and why the question posed is now of central significance for both philosophy and religious studies. His central point — well taken, given his context — is that cognitional theory (and epistemology) must take precedence over metaphysics.

In a general way, my own cultural history is similar enough to Lonergan's that this initial and central point is one with which I have resonated. Yet my narrative context, my 'story,' differs in many ways from Lonergan's. I am of a different generation, such that the "turn to the subject" and the priority of cognitional questions were taken for granted in my educational milieu, and metaphysics — and/or the questions entailed by it — was barely, if ever, addressed. Further, my religious heritage, though Christian, was Biblical and Calvinist — leaping over the 1500 years of Christian history that included the medieval schoolmen and, therefore, eschewing neoscholasticism by mere negligence. So my own entre to Lonergan's work came through questions of truth about religious

and moral authenticity and authority: How do I know that the Bible is true?, How do I know I am doing the right thing? and What about my feelings?<sup>1</sup> This led me eventually to work on ethics and psychology, specifically on theories of moral development.<sup>2</sup>

My approach to "Philosophy and The Religious Phenomenon" ("PRP"), then, is neither as a specialist in philosophy of religion nor as one who shares the philosophical narrative out of which Lonergan answers the question about the judgment of philosophy on the viability of religion. Nevertheless, I found this manuscript fascinating, learned much from it, and came away from it with many further questions of my own. I will proceed, then, by discussing the two themes in this essay that most fascinated me, and with which my own work is most engaged: the priority of the existential and the role of development in any adequate explanation of religion. In a third and final section I will attend more directly to Lonergan's project here regarding the role of philosophy in judging the viability or validity of religious phenomena.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A few key 'moments' stand out in my own story. One is a discussion with Margaret O'Gara during the first year of my M.A. studies. As a Protestant with strong Biblical roots I was distraught over discussions in Foundations of Theology about the authority of Biblical truth. I was pre-occupied with the question of how I could know that the Bible was true. The key insight came when Margaret pointed out that the questions I was asking regarded, not so much how I could know the Bible was true, but how could I know *anything* was true. This heralded a shift in my academic work, which led to an introduction to Lonergan's work through a course on conversion with Tad Dunne. My interest in feelings (how do I know *they* are 'true'?) ended up in an M.A. thesis, done under the direction of Robert Doran, entitled "Anger: Self-Appropriation and Self-Transcendence."

<sup>2</sup> My doctoral dissertation, done under the direction of Michael Vertin, was entitled, "Development as Normative: A Philosophical Critique of Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Development Using Lonergan's Transcendental Method" (University of St. Michael's College, Toronto, 1987).

<sup>3</sup> There are important elements of Lonergan's essay that I do not address here, most notably his expansion of the four levels of consciousness into six levels and his discussion of a linguistic stage of meaning in history. I recognize that these are new or different elements in Lonergan's work but felt that others could better address the significance of his discussion here as it relates to Lonergan's corpus. I have chosen to address themes that touch on my fields of interest and expertise.

## 1. THE PRIORITY OF THE EXISTENTIAL

A common error of those first introduced to Lonergan's work is to construe his philosophy as intellectualist.<sup>4</sup> The focus of *Insight* on the pure desire to know, on our ability to make correct judgments about truth, can leave the impression that Lonergan assumes that life is always lived in the intellectual pattern of experience. And while there is ample evidence in *Insight* itself that the questioning involved in knowing truth is not the only manifestation of the eros of the human spirit, Lonergan has been subject to intellectualist interpretations.<sup>5</sup> Further, while many scholars may use the intellectualist label as a convenient way to dismiss Lonergan merely because they are too lazy to really understand him, Lonergan's 'intellectualism' — whether perceived or real — remains an obstacle for those who would otherwise benefit from self-appropriation.<sup>6</sup>

For these reasons I found the clear emphasis on the role of the existential level of consciousness in this essay welcome. This emphasis comes in the context of Lonergan's transposition of philosophy from a neoscholastic to a modern worldview. Specifically, the discussion of the existential occurs when Lonergan is speaking of the shift from faculty psychology to intentionality analysis. Such a shift entails a dynamic rather than a static view of human psychology, so that all levels of consciousness are integral to the human person, some levels sublate yet depend on others, and questions of priority among certain 'faculties' disappear.

It is here that Lonergan makes what I consider to be a most significant statement. He is speaking of how questions for deliberation sublate questions of the previous three levels. He continues: "They [questions for deliberation] end the one-sidedness of purely cognitional endeavor to restore the integration of sense and conation, thought and feeling" (130). This is significant because it suggests that the fourth level of consciousness is not only a move beyond knowing the truth, it *retrieves*

<sup>4</sup> I use 'intellectualism' here as Lonergan does in "PRP," to mean "an exclusive emphasis on the cognitional elements in man's makeup" (131).

<sup>5</sup> An argument against such an interpretation is evident in Robert Doran's use of Lonergan in "Dramatic Artistry in the Third Stage of Meaning," in *Lonergan Workshop*, vol. 2, ed. Fred Lawrence (Atlanta: Scholars Press).

<sup>6</sup> See my article, "Lonergan and Feminism," *Theological Studies* 53 (1992) 234-256.

something that questions of understanding and truth ignored, or even studiously avoided. Aspects of *experience*, data of consciousness, which remain unattended to in the quest for understanding and truth, suddenly emerge as central data in the task of deliberation. And to the degree that the process of deliberation involves discerning among feelings those which point to value and those which do not, feelings play a significant role in orienting the whole person toward or away from authenticity.

Thus, sense and feeling, which may be left behind in the detachment required for self-transcendence, cannot be left behind but must be integrated into the deliberation that guides such self-transcendence. Indeed, the success of intellectual pursuits depends upon such an integration:

[T]he hierarchy that intentionality analysis brings to light justifies traditional complaints about the one-sidedness of intellectualism, of an exclusive emphasis on the cognitional elements in man's makeup. While it is true that observation, understanding, and factual judgment are immediately under the guidance of the subject's attentiveness, his intelligence, his reasonableness, while it is true that this guidance excludes interferences from feelings and wishes, still this guidance is not the activity of some putative faculty named speculative intellect or pure reason. It is the guidance of the norms immanent and operative on the first three levels of conscious and intentional operations, and it is a guidance that attains its proper stature when formulated in a method and implemented by a decision to dedicate some part of one's life to scientific, scholarly, or philosophic pursuits (131).

Here Lonergan directly acknowledges the flaw in an intellectualist view of the human person, and asserts the priority of the fourth level of consciousness, of *decision* over 'pure reason.' At the same time, Lonergan goes on to recognize the problem in dismissals of scholarly or scientific projects, dismissals based on common sense grounds that such endeavors are "too abstract" (132). Lonergan refers to those who would emphasize 'right living' over 'right thinking': "But at the same time note that while undifferentiated consciousness does not need to be told to prefer orthopraxis to orthodoxy, it is prone to underestimate orthodoxy, while a just balance is to be had only by consciousness that is differentiated multiply, that has a proper appreciation of orthodoxy, and that learns to rank orthopraxis higher still" (132). He continues this line of thinking a page

later when he asserts: "And the higher integration of an orthopraxis, that justly appreciates an orthodoxy, is a complement to which experience, understanding, and factual judgment are ordained and which they need" (133).<sup>7</sup>

I find Lonergan's position here instructive, particularly as one who has struggled with feminist theory and the 'turn to the subject' of modernity. In particular my work has involved trying to understand the issues involved in moral development theory, in the debates revolving around 'justice' and 'caring' in reference to the work of Lawrence Kohlberg and Carol Gilligan.<sup>8</sup> An analysis of this debate reveals that issues of moral philosophy are as central to this discussion as questions of psychology, if not more so. The advocacy of an 'ethics of care' over against an 'ethics of justice' has as much to do with a reaction to Kantian rationalism as it does with empirical studies of gender.<sup>9</sup> What I have highlighted here from "PRP" gets to the heart of at least two caricatures that tend to function in these debates.

The first caricature involves the assumption that somehow the 'old' — that which preceded us, however one describes it — suffered from an oversight of concrete praxis, an oversight that must now be set right through eschewing any 'abstract' conceptualization of either the nature of human persons or their scholarship. What counts as 'old' and 'new' may vary according to the speaker. If the contrast is between a 'classicist' and 'modern' worldview, as is often the case in Lonergan's works and/or in Roman Catholic contexts, the old is dismissed as a set of abstract and uniform concepts, to be replaced by concrete pluralism and a praxis urgent for action rather than scholarship. If the 'old' is modernity itself, as is the case in discussions of post-modernism, or in the 'justice-caring' debate, the legacy of the Enlightenment is often dismissed in general as

<sup>7</sup> See also a similar passage in Lonergan, "Mission and the Spirit" in *A Third Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (New York: Paulist Press, 1985) 30-31.

<sup>8</sup> Key texts of Kohlberg's include: *The Philosophy of Moral Development* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1981) and *The Psychology of Moral Development* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1984). Gilligan's main argument is set forth in *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982).

<sup>9</sup> See my review of the literature: "Gilligan and the Ethics of Care: An Update," *Religious Studies Review* 20 (1994) 21-28.

too taken with the powers of reason and dismissed in particular as down right rationalist and idealist. The retrieval of intuition or feeling, or locating truth within concrete communities of narrative is the solution.<sup>10</sup>

While these are mere caricatures, Lonergan's position in "PRP" cuts into any false dichotomies that might function in such caricatures. It is true that he himself contrasts the neoscholastic worldview, with its emphasis on pure reason and metaphysics, with the existential emphasis that emerges in an intentionality analysis. But his complaint against metaphysics is not that it deals in abstract concepts but that the questions it asks are not primary but tertiary. The emphasis on praxis is new in modernity, according to Lonergan, but it is the praxis of the knowing subject, a praxis that can and must be formulated in explanatory categories. Furthermore, he insists, getting one's explanatory categories right is essential to the right practice of any scholarly or scientific method. The problem with the 'old' — in this case the classicist worldview — is not that it relies too much on abstract concepts but that it addresses questions no longer salient in the modern world. The questions of modernity must be asked in relation to the praxis of concrete persons, but not without careful use and verification of generalized categories. Thus, the rejection of the oversights of the classicist worldview does not require a rejection of orthodoxy. Likewise, the refutation of intellectualism, while warranted, does not entail an avoidance of abstract categories, and 'right living' doesn't correct anything unless combined with 'right thinking.'

Within the justice/caring debate another caricature emerges, when Kantian rationalism is criticized as the tool of patriarchy. While there is ample evidence to indicate that the attribution of reason to males has had a serious detrimental affect on the well-being of women throughout history,<sup>11</sup> the caricature of women as intuitive and men as rational, so that

<sup>10</sup> In general, Gilligan's criticism of Kohlberg's approach to moral development is twofold. She complains that his approach is too focused on reasoning, to the neglect of affective and relational aspects of morality, and she takes issue with his use of hypothetical moral dilemmas in his studies. One of her contributions to the field has been a shift toward eliciting moral dilemmas from subjects themselves in order to locate the study of moral development in the concrete life contexts of the subjects being studied.

<sup>11</sup> Articles that review issues of gender and rationality through history include: Genevieve Lloyd, "Reason, Gender, and Morality in the History of Philosophy," *Social Research* 50 (1983) 490-513; Loraine Code, "Responsibility and the Epistemic Community," *Social Research* 50 (1983) 537-555; Elizabeth A. Morelli, "Woman's Intuition:

women's moral reasoning needs to correct that of men, is fraught with problems. Let me make myself clear. That an ethics of justice has functioned in a way that is too rationalist and inattentive to concrete relationships, that our tradition of justice has seen women as deviant or deformed, that attention to the concrete valuing subject is much needed in moral philosophy, and that women are socialized in Western culture toward nurturing rather than judging: all of these I would accept as true. My concern is with arguments that dichotomize justice and caring, and tie them to gender, in such a way that reason and feeling, men's knowing and women's knowing, are polarized.

Here another piece of Lonergan's argument in "PRP" comes forward. When one shifts from a faculty psychology to intentionality analysis, one accurately understands morality as that which builds on but is distinct from 'pure reason.' Further, one grasps that 'pure reason' as such doesn't exist (in men or women) without the foundation and underpinning of questions for deliberation, which "end the one-sidedness of purely cognitive endeavor to restore the integration of sense and conation, thought and feeling" (130). To speak about 'justice' and 'caring' as two different ways of knowing based on 'reason' and 'feeling' (or empathy or intuition) is simply incorrect; it is incorrect because based on a false polarity between reason and feeling. There are not two kinds of knowledge, generated by two sets of operations: one based on reason (and apparently more prominent in men) and another based on feelings (and apparently more prominent in women).

In contrast to this false dichotomy, intentionality analysis yields the following position. The eros of the human spirit is all of one piece, and while there are distinct levels of operations, some of which appeal directly to 'feelings' as data for discernment and others of which do not, the relationship between thought and feeling is adequately understood neither in terms of a direct polarity nor in terms of a simple complementarity.<sup>12</sup> Feelings are data which are subject to a canon of relevance: as

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A Lonerganian Analysis," in *Lonergan and Feminism*, ed. Cynthia Crysdale (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994).

<sup>12</sup> Note that much of the Gilligan/Kohlberg debate and discussion of the last decade has revolved around how one understands the relationship between justice and caring. Some see them as complementary aspects of one another, others emphasize the

data, feelings are most often relevant to questions for deliberation but usually not relevant to questions for understanding and truth.<sup>13</sup> Further, they are subject to judgments of value that discern the values or disvalues that are the objects of feelings. Some 'caring' will lead to justice, while other 'caring' will not. Justice and care are values that are grasped and enacted through a compound set of operations in which both 'reason' and 'feelings' play a role.<sup>14</sup>

One further observation follows. It is possible that debates over justice and caring, as tied to distinct ways of knowing, is simply a reiteration of old arguments stemming from a faculty psychology. The failure to shift to intentionality analysis yields debates over the priority of various 'faculties.' If this is the case, Lonergan's comment on the old debates is apt: "Moreover, since clear-cut solutions to these questions do not exist, there result unending complaints about the one-sidedness of the other fellow's stand" (129). The shift to intentionality analysis ends these unending debates by showing, as Lonergan does, on the empirical grounds of concrete praxis, that reason and feeling are interrelated aspects of the unfolding of the eros of the human spirit.

## 2. THE ROLE OF DEVELOPMENT IN HUMAN LIVING

Implicit in the shift from metaphysics to philosophy as foundational methodology, from faculty psychology to intentionality analysis, is the

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distinction between an ethics of care and an ethics of justice. Gilligan herself has suggested the image of an optical illusion, as in the image of the vase, which in one perspective is a vase and in another is two human profiles. For literature dealing with this debate see my article in *Religious Studies Review* (cited in n. 8 above).

<sup>13</sup> Note here that I am speaking of subjective feelings, that is, feelings within the subject. Surely one can also study subjects other than oneself, and study the phenomena of these others' feelings, so that feelings become part of the data one seeks to understand. The one way in which one's own feelings become relevant to questions for understanding or for truth are when the object of one's inquiry is one's feelings — that is, when one seeks to understand, and understand accurately, just what it is that one is feeling.

<sup>14</sup> This is not to say that there are no gender differences. Indeed it seems that, in Western culture, women are socialized into patterns of experience that orient them toward intersubjectivity and nurturing relationships, while men are socialized into patterns of experience that orient them toward independence and a rational weighing of options. However, these differences regard patterns of experience rather than the *structure* of knowing itself.



incorporation of the dynamism of human development. Since most of my scholarly work has been in the area of moral and religious development, the allusions that Lonergan makes in "PRP" to processes of human development fascinate me. Indeed, in the fields of moral and religious development, questions of whether one can speak of 'stages' as discrete entities, the relations among stages, and whether 'higher' is always 'better' are constant subjects for debate.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, feminists generally take issue with anything that smacks of 'hierarchy,' such that even Lonergan's appeal to 'levels' of consciousness can be rendered suspect.<sup>16</sup> For these reasons I would like to draw out some of Lonergan's comments, on the shift from logic to method, on sublation, and on differentiations of consciousness.

Lonergan's discussion of logic and method pertains to the shift from neoscholasticism to modernity. Lonergan insists that philosophy is foundational methodology, that it must begin with cognitional theory rather than metaphysics. Expanding on the implications of this, Lonergan discusses a shift from logic to method on pages 127 and 128. Whereas logic regards the clarity and coherence of particular systems, "[m]ethod regards movement, movement from nonsystem into systematic thinking, and from the systematic thinking of a given place and time to the better systematic thinking of a later time whether at the same or at another place" (128). This is an accurate explanation of movement from one stage of intellectual development to another.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Lawrence Kohlberg's classic article in which he defends his 'higher is better' claims — and to which there was a great deal of reaction after its initial publication in 1971 — is "From *Is* to *Ought*: How to Commit the Naturalistic Fallacy and Get Away with It in the Study of Moral Development," in Kohlberg, *Philosophy* 101-189. See also Kohlberg, "Justice as Reversibility: The Claim to Moral Adequacy of a Highest Stage of Moral Judgment," in *Philosophy* 190-226.

<sup>16</sup> See Michael Shute, "Emergent Probability and the Ecofeminist Critique of Hierarchy," in *Lonergan and Feminism*, ed. Cynthia Crysdale (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994).

<sup>17</sup> The question can be raised as to whether this view of method as a movement from non-system to systematic thinking, and from one type of systematic thinking to another, is equally applicable to psychic, moral, and religious development. I believe that it is, but that such an application raises the question of the relationships among these aspects of human development. Surely, psychic, moral, and religious development involve more than a development of thinking. Indeed, I would say that they include a development of habits: affective and volitional habits as well as habits of holiness. But the movement from one set of habits to another involves some increasing 'systematization.' This

The significant point, for me, is Lonergan's insistence that the recognition of movement as part of world process or human development does not yield a *logic* of movement. That is to say, moving from one stage of understanding (valuing, commitment) to another is not governed by logical procedures. It involves a series of leaps, that is, a series of insights, that yield higher viewpoints. Explaining the process of human development requires accounting for the dynamism of inquiry and insight, a task for which logic is not adequate. This does not leave logic out of the picture: "But we would confine the relevance of logic to single stages in the process of developing thought, and we would assign to method the guidance of thought from each less satisfactory stage to each successive more satisfactory stage"(128).

This is relevant to developmental theory in that an adequate account of human development must give up any attempts to work out a logic of development. While it is commonplace today to accept the idea that humans develop through physical, cognitive, moral, and religious stages, the relationships among these stages remains an open question, and the tendency to construe them as automatically emerging entities remains. At the same time, theorists such as Lawrence Kohlberg, relying on Piaget, delineate a notion of stages very much in accord with what Lonergan says here about logic and movement.<sup>18</sup> However, Kohlberg's foundational philosophy tends to overlook the unpredictability of insight, and to assume that right answers to moral questions can be deduced. Thus his moral philosophy contradicts his psychology of development. What I find instructive in Lonergan's discussion here is the recognition that the adequacy of one's grasp of philosophy as foundational methodology — in which the dynamism of human consciousness is recognized and articulated — is directly related to the adequacy of one's developmental theory. To the degree that one still functions with the notion of philosophy as metaphysics, or with a faculty psychology, or with logic as the key to

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movement involves, not only greater systematization but also some form of integration among the levels of consciousness. This will be discussed at greater length below.

<sup>18</sup> See, for example, Kohlberg, "Stage and Sequence: The Cognitive-Developmental Approach to Socialization," in *Psychology*, 14ff. See also idem., "Moral Stages and Moralization: The Cognitive-Developmental Approach," in *Psychology*, 195ff.

one's cognitional theory, one's account of stages of human development will be problematic.

Another key issue in discussions of human development involves the relation of one stage to the stages before and after it. Piaget and those who have followed him would accept Lonergan's concept of sublation. Still, several points that Lonergan makes here go a long way toward clearing up what are often confused issues in developmental psychology. As he has done elsewhere, Lonergan rejects Hegel's notion of sublation and refers to Rahner's: "One reaches this related sense by distinguishing between sublated and sublating operations, and by defining the sublating operations as going beyond the sublated, introducing a radically new principle, respecting the integrity of the sublated, and bestowing upon them a higher significance and a wider relevance" (130). The central points here are a 'radically new principle' that respects the integrity of previously grasped truths/values yet bestows 'higher significance and wider relevance.' It is this sublation that defines development as development rather than mere change. And while some people have trouble accepting the imagery of a 'higher' stage, Lonergan points out that images of 'higher' or 'later' are merely metaphors for grasping an explanatory concept:

[W]hile we have spoken of successive levels, of earlier and later, of lower and higher, such terms are merely initial signposts. The real meaning is neither spatial nor chronological. The real meaning is in terms of sublating and sublated operations, and the meaning of sublation is the meaning already defined and illustrated (131).

Thus, just because one worldview follows upon another does not necessarily make it a 'higher' stage of development. The key is whether the 'later' worldview can account for earlier stages of meaning in a way that both comprehends these earlier worldviews, can adapt and apply them, yet moves beyond them to a further synthesis.

Lonergan expands on these ideas in the latter half of "PRP", where he explicitly discusses 'differentiations of consciousness.' He speaks of them in terms of culture and history, but what he means by differentiations of consciousness is equally applicable to stages of meaning within the life cycle. What is significant about his discussion here (138ff.) is that

he introduces it as the second of two main contributions that he believes philosophy of religion can make to religious studies. His overall point, as I grasp it, is that one cannot adequately understand religious phenomena without understanding them within a developmental framework — either in history or, I would add, within the life cycle. The role of philosophy is to delineate the integral structure of such developments of consciousness, as well as to recount — by way of illustration, as Lonergan does here — the narrative of the unfolding of such developments. The important point, to me, is that one cannot adequately grasp the meaning of anyone's religiousness without understanding such religiousness within the stage of meaning in which that practitioner of religion lives.

The implications of this are manifold. Since the hallmark of a 'higher' stage is that it preserves and integrates all previous stages, it means that no one at a lower stage can adequately comprehend the meanings of those who have moved beyond them.<sup>19</sup> So the philosopher of religion, in order to work out an adequate foundational methodology, one that will account for all the differentiations of consciousness that the scholar of religion will encounter, must herself be at the highest differentiation, what Lonergan calls the methodical. But Lonergan points to an even more important aspect of such a methodical differentiation of consciousness. Not only is it able to grasp the others but part of the 'radically new principle' that sublates earlier views is the insight that dynamism and development are *constitutive* of (religious) meaning: "In the methodical stage the construction of systems remains, but the permanently valid system has become an abandoned ideal; any system is presumed to be the precursor of another and better system; and the role of method is the discernment of invariants and variables in the ongoing sequences of systems" (139). So the significance of the methodical differentiation of consciousness is not only that it emerges from and sublates other differentiations but that it understands the dynamism of emergence and sublation itself.

Yet another implication arises if the role of method "is the discernment of invariants and variables in the ongoing sequences of

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<sup>19</sup> Kohlberg (*Philosophy*, 27, 131-32) notes empirical studies that show that children prefer the highest stage that they are able to comprehend but that they cannot comprehend more than one stage above their own. The study that he cites is J. Rest, "The Hierarchical Nature of Moral Judgment," *Journal of Personality* 41 (1973) 86-109.

systems" (139). In theories of human development it is evident that such a philosophical 'upper blade' is needed. Yet articulating the 'invariants and variables,' the integral heuristic structure, of human development immediately throws one into normative questions. This is the heart of the problem of the 'higher is better' argument. Can one articulate a series of stages without implying that 'higher' stages are 'better' ones? Human scientists are reluctant to make such normative claims. And those who do find that they must present an apologia for such evaluative positions.<sup>20</sup> Some reject the notion of development altogether for these reasons; others try to defend their 'ideals,' the 'telos' from which their theories hang, on a *posteriori* empirical grounds. This latter procedure is tenuous on two fronts: first, because it seeks its empirical grounding in studies of 'Tom, Dick, and Harry' rather than in self-appropriation of what one is doing as a human scientist<sup>21</sup> and, second, because, as Lonergan points out, "[T]his distinction of stages in no way suggests that the later stages are universal" (140). In fact, precisely the opposite is true: the higher the stage the harder it is to find a significantly sized sample to study! Thus, someone like Lawrence Kohlberg makes a valiant effort to ground his normative claims, tries to do it on a *posteriori* empirical grounds, but ends up appealing to a sample of like-minded Kantian rationalists to prove that his ideals are warranted.<sup>22</sup>

Lonergan's discussion of differentiations of consciousness makes several things clear. The primary one is that one cannot understand religious phenomena unless one understands them in developmental perspective. While his point regards religious phenomena, I believe that what he says here applies equally to any scholarship in the human sciences. Secondly, I believe his position on sublation and the dynamism of human consciousness makes it clear that one cannot do human science

<sup>20</sup> See n. 14, above.

<sup>21</sup> See Lonergan, *Insight: A Study in Human Understanding* (Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, vol. 3, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992) 13.

<sup>22</sup> Thus, Kohlberg's argument in his "Is to Ought" article waffles between asserting that he has empirical evidence for a normative position and recognizing that he must defend his norms on philosophical rather than a *posteriori* empirical grounds. When he is arguing the former position, he cites the results of his studies. When he is arguing the latter, he cites Kantian philosopher friends (that is, John Rawls) in an effort to claim that his philosophical foundation is warranted because it has academic defenders.

without invoking norms. In particular, there is no such thing as 'development' without implicit norms, on which one 'hangs' one's theory. Third, Lonergan would insist that the normative basis of one's developmental theory lies, not in the logic of abstract deduction, nor in empirical studies of others' operations, but in the appropriation of one's own rational self-consciousness.

So the role of philosophy as foundational method is to delineate the normative heuristic structure of human development. It can provide empirically grounded categories for understanding concrete phenomena. Such categories include emergence and sublation, such that 'higher' is 'better' to the degree that a subsequent stage incorporates the insights of previous stages but provides them with a 'higher significance and wider relevance.' Further, the operators that drive human development — the transcendental notions and imperatives — are at the same time criteria for determining the authenticity of human development. Higher stages are better stages to the degree that they respond to and promote greater attentiveness, intelligence, reasonableness, and responsibility. The goal of human development is ever greater self-transcendence. And in a religious perspective, this self-transcendence has its finality in some sort of loving union with the Transcendent.

This discussion of differentiations of consciousness leads me to explore several further questions. First, in what way does the 'upper blade' of a theory of human development relate to the 'lower blade' of specific empirical studies? Particularly, how do the normative dimensions of such a foundational methodology affect one's approach to empirical studies? Conversely, in what manner might the results of empirical human science lead to a revision of one's upper blade? While the ultimate ground of a theory of human development must be the evidence of the operations of one's own consciousness, surely the study of others' sets of meanings and values can raise questions for the revision of the categories and norms by which one explains both one's own and others' operations and their development.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Lonergan alludes to such an interaction between foundational and empirical elements on p. 135 of this text, where he discusses proceeding towards a 'universalist view of religion.' Such a procedure, he says, could begin with Pannikar's conception of fundamental theology based on mystical faith that is prior to, or even beyond, formulation. Or, it might take its rise from empirical studies of religious phenomena. He

Another aspect of this question regards the formal versus the substantive norms involved in grounding a normative theory of human development. In human science, particularly in the study of moral development, the application of the transcendental norms to the interpretation of particular samples within a given socio-cultural matrix requires increasing specificity. So, for example, one might study moral development in adolescents by asking them questions regarding the morality of cheating on a test. As one tries to group their answers into developmental stages, the general criterion of being able to distinguish value from mere satisfaction may become specified in the content of their answers regarding cheating.

At 'lower' levels of moral development one might be able to separate 'form' from 'content': some students may defend cheating on a test but exhibit reasoning that clearly distinguishes satisfaction and value. Still, as one moves up to higher theoretical stages this separation becomes less clear. The value commitments of the researcher — the way the researcher has himself lived out the imperative to be responsible — come to be central in defining the higher stages of development. So James Fowler begins with a notion of faith as *any* centers of value and power, and ultimately defends radical monotheism as the most authentic religious stance. Likewise, Kohlberg insists that all those at stage 6 of moral development will agree that Heinz should steal the drug.<sup>24</sup> The point is that defending the adequacy of one's theory of moral or religious development ultimately ends up become a defense of one's own existential choices.

It is clear that this is another version of the question posed at the beginning of "PRP," and it regards the issue of the distinction between the methodological and the non-methodological aspects of human science or religious studies. It is a question to which we shall return in the third section of this paper. In the meantime, let us turn to another issue. Loneragan himself raises the problems of alienation and stratification, which any theory that 'higher is better' must confront. Having made the point that

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concludes with a tantalizing suggestion: "Finally, it may seek to bring these two standpoints together into a single integrated view." One wishes that he had elaborated on how one might bring these two standpoints (the foundational and the empirical) together.

<sup>24</sup> See James W. Fowler, *Stages of Faith* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1981) esp. chs. 2 and 3; and Kohlberg, *Philosophy* 159-168.

later stages are not universal, Lonergan confronts the problems that this presents:

Further, the fact that the stages are not universalized, that there may live together people who can and people who cannot read and write, people who can and people who cannot operate on propositions and construct systems of thought, people who can and people who cannot grasp that systematic constructs last their little day eventually to pass away in favor of better constructs — this complex fact has the twofold consequent of stratification and alienation.

It leads to stratification, for those in the more advanced stages are far more capable of initiating new and perhaps better social arrangements and of providing appropriate cultural justifications for their new social arrangements.

It leads to alienation. For inasmuch as the more advanced devise the social arrangements and invent their cultural justification, the less advanced find themselves living in social arrangements beyond their comprehension and motivated by appeals to values they do not appreciate. Inversely, inasmuch as the less advanced assume the initiative, the more advanced are alienated by simplistic social thought and crude cultural creations.

My question is this: given that Lonergan claims that 'differentiations of consciousness' are an important contribution that philosophy of religion can make to religious studies (138), just what is the nature of this contribution? Is it not the case that a delineation of the various differentiations of consciousness itself contributes to alienation and stratification? Since foundational methodology, as Lonergan describes philosophy of religion, itself presupposes a methodical differentiation of consciousness, does it not further promote an elite, from whom the ordinary religious person grows more and more alienated? Is it not the case that the very solution to the impasse of some religious questions — that solution being a development into a higher stage of meaning — also becomes the occasion for solidifying the very impasse one is trying to overcome? It seems that the 'contribution' that philosophy of religion makes to religious studies is the contribution of providing helpful categories for understanding religious phenomena, but it is not a contribution that will in any way resolve dialectical or developmental differences. Indeed, it may even increase alienation and stratification.



One further nexus of issues arises in every class I teach on developmental theory. What is the relationship among the various aspects of human development — the psychic, the cognitive, the moral, and the religious? How is that some persons may become very 'developed' in one aspect of their lives and 'regressive' in other aspects? This is related to the issue of authenticity: is self-transcendence all of a piece or can it come piecemeal? My own answer to this question would appeal to Lonergan's discussion of the law of integration in *Insight*: whenever a development is initiated in one aspect of human life there is an inherent demand to integrate it with other aspects, and failure to do so would constitute a kind of flight from understanding. Still, this question leads us back to the role of philosophy of religion: can the methodical differentiation of consciousness (in the intellectual pattern of experience) contribute adequately to religious studies if there has not been an integration of equally differentiated psychic, moral, and religious consciousness?<sup>25</sup>

In conclusion, Lonergan asserts in "PRP" that one cannot adequately understand religious phenomena without understanding them within the context of stages of meaning. His discussion of method, sublation, and differentiations of consciousness, provides helpful explanatory concepts that can contribute to a foundational methodology for human development. Further questions remain, however: (1) What is the relationship between 'upper blade' foundations for human development and 'lower blade' empirical studies? Specifically, what is the relation between the 'formal' norms of foundational methodology and the more concretely specified value commitments of human scientists? (2) To what degree do 'higher' stages of meaning — in this case the methodical stage of meaning which grounds a philosophy of religion — perpetuate stratification and

<sup>25</sup> An example of the way in which a *theoretical* differentiation of consciousness may have failed to integrate other aspects of human consciousness has emerged with the retrieval of Native American spirituality. Whereas in the past such cultures were considered backward due to their lack of a systematic, theoretical differentiation of consciousness, now they are often looked upon with longing. The question can be asked about a host of aboriginal cultures: Is there not some attentiveness, some "cosmic consciousness," that the differentiation of Western culture lost in its sublation of the linguistic by the literate, the literate by the logical, stages of meaning? Is this not a consciousness that is now desperately necessary? Has the differentiation of Western culture not left behind some awareness that now threatens the extinction of the human species itself?

alienation as much as they resolve confusions? If greater differentiation perpetuates alienation and stratification, just what is the 'contribution' that philosophy of religion makes to religious studies? and (3) What is the relation among various aspects of human development — the psychic, the cognitive, the moral, and the religious — and to what degree does an authentic methodical differentiation of a philosophy of religion engage one in concomitant differentiations at the psychic, moral, and religious levels?

### 3. PHILOSOPHY AND THE VALIDITY OF RELIGIOUS PHENOMENA

Having discussed at length certain themes that interest me, let me return to the main question of Lonergan's essay. I will do this by highlighting several important points that Lonergan makes and then raising some further questions.

Though Lonergan's discussion of neoscholastic views of philosophy does not resonate with my intellectual history, one initial comment about contemporary philosophy stands out: "From my viewpoint, then, a contemporary philosophy is under the constraint of an empirical principle" (126). He goes on to indicate, of course, that for foundational methodology "the relevant data are the immanent and operative norms of human cognitional process." This theme is what many of us know from *Insight* and *Method* as generalized empirical method and his point, though at one level quite simple, is profound. It is the point on which the justification of Lonergan's entire philosophy stands. Further, I do not think it an overstatement to say that it is the point upon which the future of post-Enlightenment philosophy depends. That is to say, once modern science introduced the 'empirical principle,' philosophy (and religious studies and human science) had either to find a way to ground themselves empirically or to live anachronistically or to pronounce themselves arbitrary. The genius of Lonergan, and the point at which people either 'get' or 'don't get' his work, is that he has grounded his claims, not in first premises or arbitrarily asserted worldviews, but in judgments that can be verified empirically, albeit only through the self-involvement of self-appropriation.

The constraint of the empirical principle is central to another important theme, mentioned previously: that questions of cognitional theory precede questions of epistemology, which in turn precede questions of metaphysics. To the degree that modern philosophy is under an empirical constraint, various Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment attempts to ground philosophy (or religious studies or human science) on empirical studies of *objects* have run their course. It is clear that turning to the subject does not necessarily yield a correct cognitional theory or a correct epistemology or metaphysics. Nevertheless, the justification of theories about what we know will remain perpetually questionable if the conditions for the possibility of knowing anything remain under suspicion. Thus, two important pieces of Lonergan's position come to the fore: the appeal to empirical evidence and, specifically, to the evidence of the conscious subject.

This yields a third central theme — that of philosophy as foundational methodology. If modern philosophy is under an empirical constraint, and if that empirical constraint can only be met in reference to operating subjects — that is, as regards the data of consciousness — then the role of philosophy is to elucidate clearly just what those empirical operations are, both as they function spontaneously and as they might operate self-consciously and methodically. To the degree that philosophy does this adequately and accurately, it will be able to indicate when practitioners in various disciplines are consistently methodical, that is, when their theories and their scholarly self-concepts are consistent with themselves as subjects. So Lonergan comes to a first pronouncement on the ability of philosophy to judge the viability of religious phenomena:

Thirdly, a foundational methodology of religious studies will be able to pronounce on the viability or validity of this or that method of religious studies. But such a foundational methodology would go beyond its competence if it ventured to pronounce on the nonmethodological aspects of religious studies (128).

He concludes this section: "Accordingly, philosophy as foundational methodology can pronounce, not immediately and specifically, but only remotely and generically on the validity or viability of the results of religious studies" (128-129).

These statements seem to conclude his initial question, and conclude it in a way that removes specific evaluative judgments on religious phenomena from the domain of the philosopher. Yet it becomes apparent as the essay continues to unfold, that the self-involvement of the scholar of religion is unavoidable. Lonergan hints at this in the section quoted above when he says:

A philosophy of religion has much to say on the method of religious studies. The religious studies themselves, however, are not mere deductions from the method but applications of the method; and the attentiveness, intelligence, and reasonableness with which the applications are carried out are the responsibility, not of the methodologist, but of the student of religion (128).

Lonergan goes on from here to spend eight more pages "working [his] way out of a traditional scholastic context" (136), the material of which we have discussed at length already. On page 137 and following he addresses directly the question of the "integral heuristic structure" of religious studies, eschewing a full account of the philosophy of religion but indicating "two items in such a heuristic structure" (137). The second item we have already treated: it is his lengthy explication of differentiations of consciousness. The first contribution of philosophy to religious studies Lonergan treats in two pages, since, as he says, "I have treated it sufficiently elsewhere" (137). Let us take a look at these two pages (137-138) in order to discern Lonergan's key points and raise some questions about them.

Lonergan's first 'element' in a heuristic structure for religious studies is the distinction between authentic and inauthentic. His point, as I take it, is simply that one cannot study religious phenomenon adequately without acknowledging that both what one studies and those who do the studying are valuing subjects. This is an immensely important point for human science as a whole, though Lonergan makes it in reference to the 'exigences of a science of religions.' The attempt to translate natural scientific methods into human science has failed, largely due to the oversight that in human science one studies objects that are also subjects, so that meaning and value become operative not only in the researchers but in what they research. Lonergan points out that this problem is not new,

but has been addressed either by abstracting from the evaluative elements in the human behavior studied or by attending to these while overlooking or purposely negating the value-making of the researchers themselves. The first approach is faulty in that it fails to attend to data that are highly significant (especially, in this case, in the study of religion) to the questions being researched. The second is a 'hazardous procedure' since it leads to performative self-contradiction.

Nevertheless, once one recognizes these erroneous *a priori* assumptions, one is left with a host of problems. Are the values of the researcher assets or liabilities in the attempt to understand religious phenomena in others? What if the researcher is attentive, intelligent, reasonable, and responsible but comes to the conclusion that the persons he is studying are living unauthentically? Lonergan addresses these thorny issues with one optimistic sentence: "However, if empirical science bogs down in the empirical facts that followers of a religion follow differently and that interpreters of religion interpret differently, it remains that a philosophy of religion can resolve the issue" (137).

This is a bold statement, which leads me to a first set of questions I have regarding Lonergan's meaning here. If philosophy of religion can resolve the issue (of dialectical differences) how does it do this? The passage that follows this bold statement refers to Ricoeur and the hermeneutics of suspicion and recovery, as well as to Lonergan's own notion of dialectical interchange. But who are the agents in this dialectical conversation? 'Investigators,' presumably of religious phenomena. But where is philosophy in all of this? Are philosophers part of this encounter? Do philosophers engage in the dialectic of promoting what is authentic and reversing what is inauthentic in the followers of a religion? Presumably not, since philosophy is only to pronounce on methodological aspects of investigations. So one is left to assume that philosophy of religion 'resolves' the issue by delineating *procedures* for dialogue. But whether such a *procedural* or *methodological* delineation can ultimately *resolve* the differences arising from the fact that 'followers of a religion follow differently and that interpreters of religion interpret differently' remains an open question for me.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>26</sup> What resolves issues is, of course, either expanding horizons (in the case of complementary or developmental differences) or conversion (in the case of dialectical

A second curious aspect of this passage is that the dialogue that is to take place among investigators of religion is not only about the judgments they make on the authenticity of other scholars' interpretations of religious phenomena. Rather, they are to engage in a discussion of what they consider authentic in the *followers* of a religion. This means that the goal of religious studies is not only to determine what meanings and values *are* operative in a certain practice of religion, but to go further and determine which meanings and values *ought* to be operative. To put it mildly, this is a radical position to take given the current praxis of religious studies. It raises, further, the question of the distinction between theology and religious studies. If investigators end up dialoguing about what really is or is not authentically religious, how is it that religious studies is not inter-faith dialogue?

Further, while Lonergan acknowledges that religious practitioners may represent a religion authentically or unauthentically, he does not discuss major and minor authenticity. The question arises: is he presuming that scholars of religion will pronounce not only on the extent to which practitioners manifest a consistency between what they claim to believe and how they actually live, but that scholars will comment on issues of major authenticity, that is, whether they believe that the tradition as a whole is authentic or not? This is a nuance on the questions raised in the previous paragraph. Is the goal of religious scholarship to determine what is meant and then to judge whether practitioners are authentically living out these meanings, or is it to go further and pronounce whether these meanings are themselves consistent with the transcendental imperatives?

A third and related question brings us back to Lonergan's earlier claim that a philosophy of religion can pronounce on the viability of method in religious studies but cannot make judgments about nonmethodological aspects of religion studies (128). Is Lonergan's position on page 128, in which philosophers of religion can comment on the

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differences). The dialectical encounter outlined here merely provides the occasion for such expanded horizons and/or conversions to take place. But the way Lonergan has discussed this here — with his optimistic claim that philosophy of religion can resolve the issue [of differing religious practice and religious interpretations] — leaves his meaning open to question.

methods of religious studies but not on the validity of the content of religious studies, reconcilable with his position on page 138, in which just such concrete evaluative judgments on the content of religious studies are the subject of dialogue?

The answer to this question would lie in claiming that page 128 is dealing with philosophers of religion, while the dialectic described on page 138 is among scholars of religion. Still, this leads to the question: Where does one draw the line between the methodological and the non-methodological aspects of scholarship? This returns to questions that I raised earlier regarding the normative dimensions of human science: As one begins to articulate more and more precisely what 'being reasonable' or 'being responsible' means — supposedly a methodological task — formal norms become more and more substantive. In terms of religion, can one determine authentic *methods* for religious studies without also determining what religious authenticity is, and can one determine this in any useful way without invoking the culture-bound meanings of particular times, places, cultures, and religions? The dividing line between what philosophy of religion is competent to do and what it is not competent to do becomes clouded. Likewise, the dividing line between the role of the philosopher of religion and the role of the scholar of religion is not always clear-cut.

Let me provide some illustrations. In theories of religious development one clearly needs a set of norms — in this case a *telos* — toward which one believes stages of meaning are oriented. While 'self-transcendence' and the transcendental imperatives provide a starting point, since the principle of development is from undifferentiated consciousness to greater and greater specificity, these general norms need to be ever more concretely defined. Higher stages are more rarely evidenced such that there is less and less *a posteriori* empirical evidence to confirm postulated higher stages. The norms that govern higher stages come to depend more and more on the religious development of the scholar herself, a religious development that is necessarily manifested in particular beliefs and religious practices. Thus, for scholars such as Kohlberg the higher stages he asserts reflect more and more his own moral philosophy, so that debates over his work end up being arguments

on the adequacy of his philosophy. Likewise, James Fowler has run into trouble holding onto a purely formal definition of faith as a commitment to 'centers of value and power.' As he tries to delineate higher stages of development he finds that he must define more specifically what he believes authentic centers of value and power are.<sup>27</sup>

In conclusion, has Lonergan adequately answered the question that he poses at the beginning of this essay? I believe that he has provided some tools for thinking about the problem, but I do not think that he has presented a clear and consistent position here. It may be that the full corpus of Lonergan's work could yield such a position. Nevertheless, this text, I believe, gives an unclear answer as to the role of philosophers in making evaluative judgments about religious phenomena. Had Lonergan had more time or opportunity to develop this essay, perhaps some of the unresolved issues would be clarified. Maybe he himself was not satisfied with the clarity of his position, setting aside the essay for further revision or in favor of another text.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>27</sup> See Fowler, *Stages*.

<sup>28</sup> I would like to thank Joseph Komonchak for his extensive reading of various drafts of this article and the time he devoted to discussing them with me. Also, the comments of an anonymous reviewer/editor were helpful in getting me to articulate my questions more accurately.



## THEOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS ON "PHILOSOPHY AND THE RELIGIOUS PHENOMENON"

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*"Problems of understanding are problems of method"*

READING BERNARD LONERGAN'S later papers, such as "Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon" ("PRP"), is often like reading partially encrypted messages that will be clear to those who have already learned the code, but that may appear abstruse, even oracular, to neophytes. "PRP" is a succinct summary of Lonergan's foundational methodology for those familiar with *Insight* and *Method in Theology*, but scarcely the first essay of Lonergan that one would invite a beginner to peruse. While the dictum that "problems of understanding are problems of method" goes right to the heart of Lonergan's lifelong concern that learning critical thinking is more important than learning information or even mastering disciplines, it also may not be an immediately obvious axiom of human consciousness. This observation may suggest why Lonergan's foundational methodology may not have always enjoyed the kind of success that some of his followers (perhaps not Lonergan himself) seemed to have envisaged for it. Foundational method is not a set of conclusions easily summarized in article form, but rather an invitation to critical thought that may be more true to Lonergan's intent if one 'thinks along with' the issues he raises rather than merely exegetes what he has to say.

In what follows I will undertake the modest task of some exegesis, at least that of pointing to some problems of interpretation (to me at least) in the paper. Some of these puzzles can certainly be illuminated by references to Lonergan's other writings, and I will make a few suggestions in this regard. Those who have devoted many years to the study of the Lonerganian corpus, both in published and unpublished forms, will doubtless be able to bring many more materials to bear that will help resolve some of the questions I raise. But along with these exegetical notes, I hope to be able at least to initiate a more fruitful exercise of thinking along with some of the issues explicitly raised, or implicitly suggested, in "PRP."

Lonergan's essay, as he admits at the end, falls into two parts: one "setting up a philosophy of religion by conceiving philosophy as foundational methodology in religious studies"; the other "concerned with heuristic structures in religious studies." The term 'theology' is not a part of the title, and occurs only rarely in the essay, despite the fact that many of the historical phenomena and the contemporary issues discussed relate, directly and indirectly, as much to the study of theology as they do to philosophy and religious studies. As someone whose primary task is the teaching of historical theology, I was therefore led to ponder how Lonergan's reflections might or might not be relevant to theology. Two sets of comments suggested themselves: the first dealing with the role of theology in relation to philosophy conceived of as foundational methodology in religious studies; the second centering on Lonergan's brief sketch of the evolution of Christian thought in the concluding pages of the piece.

It would be a carping critic who would attack an essay for failing to do what it explicitly does not intend to do. Having been asked to address the somewhat convoluted question — "How, from the viewpoint of the lecturer, does philosophy view the religious phenomenon in terms of the viability or validity of that phenomenon?" — we should not ask Lonergan to provide any explicit account of the relation between philosophy of religion and theology. Still, "PRP" (at least to the 'unencrypted' reader who may not have read *Insight* and *Method in Theology*) does seem to invite further reflection on the connections between philosophy and theology, if only because of the essay's implicit and explicit appeals to the history of

theology and to modern constructive theological claims (such as the mention, perhaps unique in Lonergan's corpus, of Karl Rahner's supernatural existential). "PRP" provides much direct food for thought about how Lonergan sought to integrate his notion of method into the increasing diversity of religious studies in North America in the 1970s, but does it offer resources for equal reconsideration of the relation between foundational methodology and theology?

The first part of the essay is a succinct presentation of how Lonergan sought to relate the foundational methodology achieved in *Insight* to the critical study of religious phenomena. Central to his perspective was the shift from the abstract metaphysical perspective found in the neoscholasticism of his early training to an empirical foundation in human cognitive activity. Concentration on the operations of the knowing subject reverses the neoscholastic view that metaphysics is the foundational science and undercuts the Hegelian attempt to create a logic of movement, insisting that only attention to the critical appropriation of what you are doing when you know and why that is really knowing can help guide the methodological aspects of religious studies. But if methodology can 'pronounce on the viability or validity of this or that method' (would not 'guide' be a kinder, and perhaps more appropriate word?), Lonergan also insists that the actual character of the attentiveness to data, the intelligence of the investigation, and the reasonableness of the views advanced in religious studies are the responsibility of the student of religion and not of the methodologist as such. One would presume then that failures to exercise the requisite attention, intelligence, and reasonableness in any specific area of religious studies would become evident not so much on the level of *explicit* invocation of Lonergan's method as on that of detecting such flaws within the actual day-to-day intellectual operations by which a religious scholar comes to advance a certain position.

If foundational methodology supplies this needed corrective to traditional neoscholastic views of the philosophy of religion (note that Lonergan does not address, at least in this essay, how far such a corrective might be needed for more recent approaches to the philosophy of religion, especially those based on hermeneutical principles), we can still ask what this might have to say about the relation of philosophy of religion and

theology. Certainly, from the Lonerganian perspective, method is equally relevant *in* philosophy of religion and *in* theology, but what about the relationship between the two forms of application? The second section of the first part of the essay provides some tantalizing hints about this issue, but also invites some serious questions.

Experience, understanding, judgment, and decision as sublated and sublating operations, to use Lonergan's terms, are crucial to all human life, though they achieve a level of thematization in the conscious decision to dedicate one's life to the pursuit of truth. The level of decision, of course, involves both what Lonergan calls the practical (other-related) and the existential (self-related) aspects of the subject's life. Lonergan insists that this is the ground that makes it essential that true philosophy of religion (that is, foundational methodology) take up the question of the value judgments found in its subject matter. At this point he notes that "Catholic theologians" (my emphasis) consider that "the object of belief not only can but also should be believed." But how does the conviction of Catholic theologians relate to the foundational methodology that one presumes would be open to any methodologically-conscious philosopher of religion — Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, or whatever? To what extent should their critical appropriation of their own cognitional operations lead them to the levels of decision in which they can affirm not only the *credibility*, that is, the legitimate possibility, of a decision to believe Christianity, but also the *credentia*, that is, its existential advisability, or even necessity? I do not find a clear answer to this issue in the essay.

To be sure, Lonergan is helpful in pointing out the deficiencies of former answers to the great problem of the relation of reason and religious belief, especially the standard scholastic way out of this dilemma achieved through a metaphysical distinction between the natural and the supernatural. According to this position, the investigation of the *credibility* of Christianity is an exercise of natural reason, but the decision to believe (*credentia*) is the work of supernatural grace. Traditional scholasticism always had difficulties in clarifying the difference between *credibility* and *credentia*, even without the intervention of an extrinsicist conception of grace, however, and its abstract form of metaphysics has become increasingly problematic in the second half of the twentieth century. But what

answer does foundational methodology give to the 'philosophical' aspects of the issue of how the subject moves through the levels of critical reflection *toward* that of a belief that commits one to a specific form of religious or non-religious decision? And how do these philosophical aspects relate to theology, broadly conceived as the reflection of a *converted* subject upon the data of belief?<sup>1</sup>

In this essay Lonergan makes a number of brief appeals to a variety of possible relations between the three prior (that is, sublated) levels of intentionality (experience, understanding, and judgment) and the sublating level of existential decision implying belief in a religion, even 'the total commitment to religious living.' The first is an observation, made 'from a specifically Christian viewpoint,' about the reciprocity between the subject's intentional commitment to being in love with God in an unrestricted manner and the Pauline text (Rom 5:5) about God's love being poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, a theme developed more fully in *Method in Theology*.<sup>2</sup> Once again, it is not clear how far this observation would apply to a methodological philosophy of religion not based on the Christian religion. Lonergan may well have been adverting to this problem with his brief references to Raymond Panikkar's notion of 'fundamental theology' and Karl Rahner's 'supernatural existential.' But these are references, not arguments — and references to positions that may not be either mutually compatible or in easy accord with Lonergan's foundational methodology. It may be that here we are approaching what might be called the triumph and the tragedy of foundational methodology (at least as expressed in this essay): the combination of an illuminating universal viewpoint whose persuasiveness is inversely proportioned to its concrete applicability.<sup>3</sup>

I do not intend to speculate on how Lonergan might have developed these three somewhat disparate suggestions about the relation between

<sup>1</sup> This is not Lonergan's explicit definition, but my extrapolation from sections in *Method in Theology* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972), for example, 101-144, 149-151, 267-269, 364-367.

<sup>2</sup> *Method in Theology* 105-107 and 115-118.

<sup>3</sup> It seems to me that Lonergan would have been less upset by this than some of his followers, at least those who have taken his thought in the direction of the kind of system it was never intended to be.

philosophical thinking and religious commitment. Instead, at this point I would like to suggest a brief thought experiment — a thinking along with issues raised by the essay. At the risk of some simplification, it is possible to speak of two broad modes of understanding philosophy's relation to theology found in the medieval period. I believe that these may cast some light on one way in which Lonergan's philosophy as foundational methodology could be related to theology.

Most Catholic thinkers trained in scholasticism, like Lonergan, would have been familiar with the way in which Thomas Aquinas understood philosophy's real but ancillary function in relation to *sacra doctrina*. (Indeed, it may well be that Lonergan's earlier writings were fairly close to this position.) There was, however, another and older mode of conceiving of the relations between the two, one that, with suitable transpositions from the metaphysical to the methodological realm, may be closer to how the later Lonergan approached these questions.

On the basis of a clear metaphysical distinction between the natural and the supernatural realm, Thomas Aquinas recognized the existence and importance of "that part of the philosophy called *theologia*, or *scientia divina*," which could arrive, though with considerable difficulty in fallen humanity, at truths about God accessible to reason. This, however, did not negate the necessity for salvation of "the theology that belongs to *sacra doctrina*," whose content includes not only truths that can be naturally known about God (though now taught under a different modality) but also the supernatural truths that surpass all rational effort, such as the Trinity.<sup>4</sup> For Aquinas, of course, there could be no contradiction between natural philosophy and supernatural *sacra doctrina*,<sup>5</sup> but his abstract understanding of the nature/supernature distinction allows for a strict demarcation. Other scholastic authors, however, did not understand the distinction between the natural and supernatural in the abstract Aristotelian fashion adopted by Aquinas, but adhered, in various ways, to an understanding of philosophy that kept closer to the *ordo historiae*, the progress of truth found within salvation history. Aquinas's contemporary,

<sup>4</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* Ia.1.1.

<sup>5</sup> *Summa theologiae* Ia.1.8.

Bonaventure, is a good example.<sup>6</sup> Bonaventure allowed a proper realm for a philosophical science independent of revelation, though he considered it to have been often subject to error (especially by Aristotle and his followers!). Nevertheless, Bonaventure was more interested in a second form of the relation between faith and reason, one in which “philosophical metaphysics must be held open to further clarification at a level which can properly be called a theological metaphysics and which ... is the metaphysical elaboration of the implications of the revelation in Christ.”<sup>7</sup> From the viewpoint of disciplines, Bonaventure’s theological metaphysics acts as a mediator between human philosophy and theology in the proper sense. Other approaches to the relationship between reason and faith went further than Bonaventure by using philosophy and theology in virtually interchangeable ways, seeing both reason and faith as operative in different modes within that ‘love of wisdom’ that is also the ‘logos about God.’<sup>8</sup> Hugh of St. Victor, for example, the twelfth-century scholastic who gave the greatest attention to the relationship of the various arts and sciences to Christian teaching, is an interesting case in point. In his *Didascalicon*, the Victorine defines *philosophia* as “the pursuit of ... that Wisdom which is the sole primordial Idea of things”<sup>9</sup> whose task is “to restore within us the divine likeness, a likeness which is to us a form but to God is his nature.”<sup>10</sup> The *theologia* that is the highest branch of *philosophia* in Hugh’s integrated sketch of the disciplines is not based on the distinction between natural and supernatural, but rather on the historical distinction between the *theologia mundana* of the ancient philosophers and the higher *theologia divina* revealed by Christ — both forms of participation in the Word as *sola rerum primæva ratio*.

<sup>6</sup> For a brief summary, see Zachary Hayes, “Christology and Metaphysics in the Thought of Bonaventure,” *Celebrating the Medieval Heritage: A Colloquy on the Thought of Aquinas and Bonaventure*, ed. David Tracy, *The Journal of Religion*, Supplement 58 (1978) s82-s95.

<sup>7</sup> “Christology and Metaphysics” s83.

<sup>8</sup> Those who adhered to this line of thinking often insisted that there could be no real difference between ‘love of wisdom’ (*philosophia*) and ‘logos about God’ (*theologia*), especially given Christian identification of both *sophia* and *logos* with the second Person of the Trinity.

<sup>9</sup> Hugh of St. Victor, *Didascalicon* 1.4.

<sup>10</sup> *Didascalicon* 2.1.

I cite Bonaventure and Hugh of St. Victor only as examples of medieval attempts to present a more historical and possibly more dynamic understanding of the relations between reason and faith, between philosophy and theology. Lonergan's later thought demonstrates a similar, but more radicalized turn to a progressive dynamic view from two perspectives. First, as in the former part of "PRP," he insisted that it was not an abstract metaphysical view but an internalized and critical appropriation of one's own intentionality that was the grounding for philosophy. Second (as seen in the latter part of the essay), he applied the differentiations discovered in intentional analysis to the history of the development of Christian teaching.

In the final pages of the essay we have a brief but typically Lonerganian sketch of the development of Christian thought, that is, *theology*. In so far as Lonergan grounds his account of the history of theology in his foundational methodology, this is something quite new in Catholic thought; but in so far as he seeks to work out a developmental and historical, not an abstract understanding of the interrelation of reason and faith, he seems to me to stand closer to the tradition represented by Bonaventure and Hugh of St. Victor than to that represented by Aquinas.

In sketching the social and the cultural contexts within which Christian belief developed, Lonergan distinguishes four progressively differentiated stages: the linguistic, the literate, the logical, and the methodological. Not all differentiation is progress, however, as shown by the consequences of stratification and/or alienation, and the possibility of error in the process of differentiation (which I take to be the meaning of the threefold 'going astray' noted at the end of the essay). In pondering the significance of Lonergan's thumbnail sketch of the history of Christian theology, I was struck by the initial contrast it offers to the comparable sketches found in two essays by Hans Urs von Balthasar.<sup>11</sup> The Swiss theologian bases his account of the gradual differentiation of theology not on human intentionality as such but on the way in which the form of divine Truth revealed *inside* the convenantal relationship stands in

<sup>11</sup> Hans Urs von Balthasar, "The Unity of Theology and Spirituality," and "The Unity of the Theological Sciences," both available in English in *Convergences: To the Source of Christian Mystery* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1983). The German originals appeared in 1969 and 1968 respectively.



relation to what is *outside* this sphere. The contrast between Lonergan and von Balthasar is evident not only in the divergent grounds for their brief histories of theology but also in the function that differentiation plays in the respective accounts. For von Balthasar differentiation, while necessary, is always dangerous and to some extent destructive in so far as it distinguishes and sometimes even separates what exists in unity in the original form, as in the case of the separation of theology and spirituality. The present task of theology is the proper discernment of what can and should be given up and what should be creatively transformed in order to further the process of reintegration, or 'in-folding' (*Einfaltungen*, the book's German title). "Such discerning," says von Balthasar, "requires a knowledge and experience of the unity from which all multiplicity went forth, and into which it must again let itself be integrated if it truly was an explication of the One."<sup>12</sup> Lonergan, on the other hand, sees differentiation in a fundamentally more positive way, though he too envisages the present situation as a crisis of understanding whose "roots are ancient." Lonergan's later writings make it clear that he too, no less than von Balthasar, saw the necessity for the reintegration, not only of the various theological disciplines, but also of theology and spirituality. Foundational methodology, he insisted, was the necessary tool for accomplishing this task, but a foundational methodology centering, for the theologian at least, on the critical appropriation of religious decision, that is, on conversion. However differently they may play out in detail and application, there is an interesting convergence between Lonergan's insistence on conversion and von Balthasar's emphasis on the priority of the 'experience of the unity from which all multiplicity went forth.' Further thought about this possible convergence, as well as the dynamics of the relationship between critical philosophy of religion and theology proper, are among the tasks to which "PRP" invites us.

<sup>12</sup> *Convergences* 12.



## POST-HEGELIAN ELEMENTS IN LONERGAN'S PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

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### I. FROM PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION TO PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

ACCORDING TO FREDERICK Crowe, Lonergan wrote "Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon" ("PRP") as a draft for a symposium to be held at Carleton University in 1978.<sup>1</sup> The symposium organizers posed the question: "How, from the viewpoint of the lecturer, does philosophy view the religious phenomenon in terms of the viability or validity of that phenomenon?"<sup>2</sup> Lonergan tackles that far-reaching and somewhat ambiguous question in his characteristically methodical manner by first discussing his view of philosophy, and subsequently, his view of its relation to the religious phenomenon. In the first section of his paper, Lonergan contrasts his own view of philosophy with the scholastic view, the neoscholastic view, the modern empiricist view, and the Hegelian view. In the process he moves from a discussion of philosophy and religion, that is, philosophy and religious phenomena studied theologically, to a discussion of philosophy of religion.

Lonergan explains how it was not even possible for the scholastics to acknowledge a legitimate 'philosophy of religion,' because of their metaphysical starting point, and the consequent priority given to the natural/

<sup>1</sup> Frederick E. Crowe, S.J., "Lonergan's 'Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon': Editor's Preface," *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 12 (1994) 122.

<sup>2</sup> Bernard Lonergan, S.J., "Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon," *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 12 (1994) 125; hereafter citations will appear in the text.

supernatural distinction. Since philosophy was conceived as concerned with ultimate, naturally known truths about the universe, its purview was distinct from that of theology whose proper subject matter was supernatural truths. The scholastics, then, spoke of philosophy and theology, but not of philosophy of religion.

Philosophy of religion is made possible by the modern shift to empirical method. This shift is a twofold change of starting point and approach. The starting point is no longer metaphysics, but depending upon one's brand of empirical methodology, either data of sense or data of consciousness. Because metaphysics is no longer the starting point, the distinction between naturally known objects and supernaturally known objects remains valid but loses the absolute priority it formerly enjoyed. This renders the philosophical study of religions as socio-historical phenomena possible for the positivistic empiricist, and the philosophical study of both the natural and the supernatural dimensions of religious consciousness possible for the generalized empiricist, the transcendental methodologist.

Second, Lonergan not only indicates how a philosophy of religion is made possible by the modern shift, but also what shape such a philosophy of religion should take. The modern shift marks a change in approach, from the logical to the methodological; from the clarity, coherence, and rigor of static system to the radicality, dialectic, and critique of dynamic analysis. When philosophy becomes methodology, "philosophy of ..." becomes "method of ...".<sup>3</sup> Lonergan transforms the original issue of the relation of philosophy to the religious phenomenon to the issue of the foundational methodology of religious studies. The task of the philosopher is that of foundational methodology; the task of the student of religion is application of the method to empirical data on religions.

In sketching the general outlines of his foundational methodology and two specific heuristic structures for the study of religion, Lonergan contrasts his approach not only with that of the scholastics, but also with that of Hegel. He makes three brief but incisive remarks regarding Hegel in "PRP": on the relation of method to logic (127-128); on the meaning of

<sup>3</sup> Bernard Lonergan, S.J., "A Post-Hegelian Philosophy of Religion," *A Third Collection*, ed. F.E. Crowe, S.J. (New York: Paulist Press, 1985) 215.

sublation (130); and on the relation of philosophy to religion (133-134). In 1980, a couple of years after he drafted this paper, Lonergan gave a lecture titled "A Post-Hegelian Philosophy of Religion." Despite the title, comparison of his philosophy of religion to Hegel's is also very brief in this lecture; he primarily discusses Collingwood and Voegelin. Of course, Lonergan's purpose was to sketch a post-Hegelian approach, not to directly critique Hegel. Nevertheless, the brief comparisons with Hegel that he does draw in these two works, and the very title of the 1980 lecture, give rise to the question: In what sense is Lonergan's philosophic approach to religious studies post-Hegelian?

What does it mean to characterize a view as 'post-Hegelian,' as 'post-any thinker or movement'? The designation 'post-...' is at least chronological, but not simply that, because a thinker can succeed a thinker or movement temporally but not have any familiarity with or appreciation of the earlier position. Secondly, it is possible for a thinker to be 'post-...' while a contemporary of the thinker or movement. What renders a thinker a 'post-...'? A familiarity with that first thinker's or movement's fundamental ideals, questions, problematics, and tenets is required. Simple familiarity is not sufficient, however. Some degree of assimilation or adoption of these views would also be required. Yet, to be a 'post-...' is distinct from being a 'neo-...'. A neo-Thomist or a neo-Kantian, for example, normally designates a latter-day proponent of the former thinker's fundamental views. The designation 'post-...' denotes some significant degree of repudiation. To be 'post-...', then, is both to have assimilated and to have repudiated certain fundamental features of the former thinker's position.

If this analysis is correct, then, when Lonergan characterizes his own position as post-Hegelian, we should expect both a repudiation of facets of Hegelianism and agreement with certain elements of Hegel's philosophy. While the repudiation of certain features of the position of a thinker or a movement commonly is explicit, the assimilation is not always explicitly acknowledged. Postmodernists tend to illustrate this point. The scorn and ridicule they heap on the rationalist aspirations of enlightenment philosophy, seem to be fueled not only by their discovery of the prejudices and shortcomings of enlightenment thought, but also by their own remaining

and implicit enlightenment ideals. In contrast, Lonergan's designation of his approach as post-Hegelian is made in light of explicit acknowledgment of his debt to Hegel. Lonergan provides an essential comparison of his thought with Hegel's in chapters 12 and 14 of *Insight*. While a thorough treatment of the Hegelian dimension of Lonergan's thought would be a worthy scholarly project, it is beyond the scope of this essay. I shall limit my reflection to the question of how the remarks made by Lonergan regarding Hegel in his "PRP" shed light on Lonergan's post-Hegelianism.

## II. LOGIC AND METHOD

Lonergan distinguishes his approach to the philosophy of religion from Hegel's when he distinguishes a methodical from a logical approach:

Here a comparison with Hegel may not be out of place. Hegel rightly felt that logic was too static to deal with a universe in movement. But the solution to that problem, we feel, does not consist in the invention of a logic of movement. ... The guide of philosophy and science over time is method ("PRP" 128).

While Lonergan characterizes Hegel's aim as that of perfecting a philosophic logic rather than uncovering foundational method, Hegel was not entirely quiet on the subject of method. In fact, his discussion of the relation of method to the Notion will sound vaguely familiar to those acquainted with Lonergan's account of transcendental method and the notion of being. In the conclusion to his *Science of Logic* Hegel describes method as the self-knowing Notion that has itself as its subject matter, is unrestrictedly universal, is proper to every subject matter, is the sole and highest force of reason, and is the urge to know itself by means of itself in everything.<sup>4</sup> We should not think that Hegel did not have any conception of method, and particularly of cognitional method. As remarked by Forster, "Hegel [in his *Science of Logic*] gives a description of what he calls his 'absolute method of knowing' and says that it is only by way of this method that philosophy is able to be 'an objective, demonstrated

<sup>4</sup> Georg W.F. Hegel, *Hegel's Science of Logic*, trans. A.V. Miller (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd; New York: Humanities Press, 1969) 826-27.

science'.<sup>5</sup> The differences between Lonergan and Hegel would be obscured by the expectation that Hegel's philosophy is devoid of method. Nor, as Lonergan points out, is Hegel's philosophy logical in the sense of static. On the contrary, dialectical development from one standpoint to the next is the hallmark of Hegel's philosophic approach. Furthermore, as Lonergan's transcendental method is foundational for philosophy of religion, so the dialectic of Hegel's *Logic* is foundational for the dialectics of the philosophies of nature and of spirit, including his philosophy of religion.<sup>6</sup> Finally, as Lonergan's philosophic approach takes its stand on the basic position that knowing is a matter of intelligent inquiry and critical reflection, so Hegel with his critique of 'picture thinking' certainly does not accept the ocular model of knowing.<sup>7</sup> Hegel's approach can be at least partially characterized, then, as critical, foundational, dynamic, and in a sense methodical. Why then does Lonergan still consider it to be non-methodical, merely logical?

Despite these similarities, what makes Hegel's 'method' ultimately inadequate for Lonergan is that it remains under the domination of certain logical ideals, while Lonergan's approach is "under the constraint of an empirical principle" ("PRP" 126). In *Insight*, Lonergan characterizes Hegel's dialectic as "conceptualist, closed, necessitarian, and immanent."<sup>8</sup> First, the empirical principle under which Lonergan labors is a generous master; it allows that relevant data be given in consciousness as well as sense. With this access to the data of conscious intentionality Lonergan is able to work out the heuristics of religious studies. Rather than the progressive and inexorable interplay of determinate, conceptual contents, Lonergan's philosophy of religion offers avenues of inquiry based on foundational methodology. In short, Hegel's approach is logical rather than methodical insofar as it is conceptualist rather than heuristic.

<sup>5</sup> Michael Forster, "Hegel's Dialectical Method," in *The Cambridge Companion to Hegel*, ed. Frederick C. Beiser (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993) 131.

<sup>6</sup> Forster, "Hegel's Dialectical Method" 131.

<sup>7</sup> Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding* (1957), *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, vol. 3 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992) 396-97. References will be to the CWL edition.

<sup>8</sup> *Insight* 446.

Second, we can consider the closed and immanent marks of Hegel's approach in contrast to the demands of the empirical principle. Hegel's philosophic approach is closed insofar as the sets of concepts which progressively emerge form a system that is complete: "Without a system, philosophizing cannot be something scientific."<sup>9</sup> This system must encompass the totality; no empirical residue and, more significantly for religious studies, no existential act or surd can escape. The integrity of the whole is undermined if "certain facts are left 'external and accidental to each other'."<sup>10</sup> Hegel's approach is immanent insofar as the movement of dialectic operates wholly within this system. There is no movement from system to system, for any standpoint that emerges dialectically, for Hegel, is not in itself a system, but a partial actualization of the System. On the other hand, Lonergan is governed by the empirical principle, which will not allow neglect of the contingent and existential. As recounted in "PRP," he engages in an intentionality analysis that recognizes six levels of operations, two of which precede and three of which transcend the intellectual strictures of the conceptual and systematic. Hegel's dialectical method, then, is considered by Lonergan to be non-methodical, insofar as it attempts to systematize that which falls outside of any system.

Third, Hegel labors under the necessitarian ideal. There is 'something new under the sun,' for Hegel, but the novel emerges necessarily by the self-contradictory nature of each subsumed standpoint. It is this necessity, worked out in Hegel's philosophy as a whole and particularly in his philosophy of religion, that Lonergan repudiates: "I withdraw entirely from the necessity attributed by Hegel to dialectical logic."<sup>11</sup> Dialectical necessity, according to Fackenheim, has different senses in different dimensions of Hegel's system. In the *Phenomenology of Spirit* standpoints only necessarily move to subsequent standpoints notionally, that is as scientifically thought by the phenomenologist. A standpoint either remains statically

<sup>9</sup> Hegel, *Encyclopaedia*, par. 14, as quoted in Forster, "Hegel's Dialectical Method" 137 n. 27.

<sup>10</sup> Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, par. 9, as quoted in Forster, "Hegel's Dialectical Method" 137.

<sup>11</sup> "A Post-Hegelian Philosophy of Religion" 202.



what it is, or is actually subsumed by a more comprehensive standpoint only when it has reached the extremities of its position and is forced by its own inner self-contradictory logic to undergo transformation. Thus, the dialectical necessity of movement from one standpoint to the next is a conditional necessity, conditional on the time being ripe for the actual emergence of the new standpoint.

The dialectical necessity operative in Hegel's *Philosophy of Religion* is a twofold speculative necessity. First, philosophic thought transcribes the historical emergence of the major religious standpoints (nature religions, Judaism, and Greco-Roman religion), and shows them to be partial truths ultimately absorbed by the complete Christian truth. While Christian faith opposes the dogma of non-Christian religion, philosophic thought transcends such opposing, for it understands the prior development of these non-Christian religions to be necessary for the eventual emergence of the one, all-absorbing religion, Christianity. This necessity is not grasped by the person of faith from the religious standpoint, but by the person of speculative thought from the philosophic standpoint: "For Christian faith, the ripeness of time for Christ, brought about by the meeting of Jewish East and Greek-Roman West, is a contingent fact. For speculative thought, it is an inner, self-developing necessity."<sup>12</sup>

Second, this conflict between the perspective of faith and the perspective of philosophy is played out again in Hegel's treatment of the dialectical necessity within Christianity itself. The reality of Divine Love which the person of faith accepts as revealed truth from above, the philosopher comprehends as speculative necessity. The moments of divine history — creation, the fall, the Incarnation, and the Holy Spirit's operation through the Church — constitute the necessary manifestation in the world of the divine dialectic of the pre-worldly Trinity. "For Christian faith, it [the incursion of the Trinity in the world] is a free gift of Love, unneeded by the Divine, to its human other. For philosophic comprehension, it is an act of divine self-love, needed by a Divinity incomplete without it."<sup>13</sup> What for faith is both gift and paradox, for speculative

<sup>12</sup> Emil L. Fackenheim, *The Religious Dimension in Hegel's Thought* (Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1967) 200-201.

<sup>13</sup> *The Religious Dimension* 204.

thought is both divinely willed and necessary. We can put aside for the moment the problem with Hegel's view of philosophy's absolute comprehension of the religious standpoint; and we can summarize at this point that the logical ideal of dialectical necessity guides not only Hegel's account of the historical emergence of different religions, but also his speculative account of Christianity itself.

We must leave it to students of Lonergan's theology to elaborate how Lonergan would repudiate Hegel's account of the necessity of original sin and the Incarnation and, more generally, of the double dialectic of the Trinity. I believe that we are warranted in expecting that he does, in as much as he states that he "withdraws entirely from the necessity attributed by Hegel to dialectical logic."<sup>14</sup> We can nevertheless suggest how Lonergan repudiates dialectical necessity in general, and then how he rejects the necessary emergence of historically differentiated religious standpoints.

In contrast to logic's concentration on the coherence of particular systems, the method Lonergan proposes "regards movement from nonsystem into systematic thinking, and from the systematic thinking of a given place and time to the better systematic thinking of a later time whether at the same or at another place" ("PRP" 128). Because Lonergan's method is an empirical method and a *generalized* empirical method, it is not confined, as we saw above, to the systematic, but embraces pre-logical and post-logical operations as well. The key to this method in fact lies in the pre-conceptual operations of questioning and insight.<sup>15</sup> New systems emerge not as the necessary outcome of logical opposition, but rather as the "products of a cumulative succession of insights."<sup>16</sup> And the succession that in fact does emerge historically is not unique; it is not the only logically possible series that could emerge in response to the questions raised or problems confronted, "for identical results can be reached by different routes."<sup>17</sup> Therefore, the historical succession of more satisfying systems or standpoints cannot be determined *a priori* as the necessary

<sup>14</sup> "A Post-Hegelian Philosophy of Religion" 202.

<sup>15</sup> "A Post-Hegelian Philosophy of Religion" 204.

<sup>16</sup> *Insight* 446.

<sup>17</sup> *Insight* 446.

development; it must be uncovered through empirical research and verification.<sup>18</sup>

Lonergan's rejection of Hegel's necessitarian approach, specifically, to the philosophy of religion is evidenced in his use of the two heuristic structures derived from his foundational methodology as outlined in "PRP." The two heuristics are the distinction between the authentic and the unauthentic ("PRP" 137-138), and the differentiation of the various contexts of religious living ("PRP" 138-141). He refers to each of these tools as a 'dialectic': the dialectic of radically opposed positions, and the dialectic of historically emerging differentiations of consciousness. Neither of these senses of dialectic is the same as Hegel's notion of dialectical logic, and neither is necessitarian. I will limit myself here to showing how both applications of foundational methodology escape from under the ideal of necessity.

First, Lonergan proposes the application to religious studies of the heuristic structure which hinges on the opposition of authenticity and unauthenticity. Authenticity, for Lonergan, is the characteristic of intellectual, moral, and religious conversion; unauthenticity is the mark of the absence of one or more of these conversions. Lonergan elaborates the meaning of conversion in general and these three types of conversion in *Method in Theology*, chapter 10.<sup>19</sup> Briefly, a conversion is not a development but a decision that brings one from one standpoint on knowing, value, or one's relation to God to its opposite. While Lonergan himself elaborates a genetic heuristic structure for dealing with the movement from one developmental stage to a succeeding stage (as we will see below), he does not consider every kind of movement between standpoints to be genetic. "It is also possible that the movement into a new horizon involves an about-face; it comes out of the old by repudiating characteristic features; it begins a new sequence ... Such an about-face and new beginning is what is meant by a conversion."<sup>20</sup> This dialectical tool can be applied to both the subject and the object of religious studies. By the subject Lonergan means the student of religious studies; by the object

<sup>18</sup> "A Post-Hegelian Philosophy of Religion" 202.

<sup>19</sup> Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972) 235-66.

<sup>20</sup> *Method* 237-38.

he means the representations of the followers of a given religion ("PRP" 137). Lonergan provided a fuller account of the possible object of religious studies in *Method in Theology*: "Dialectic ... deals with conflicts. The conflicts may be overt or latent. They may lie in religious sources, in the religious tradition, in the pronouncements of authorities, or in the writings of theologians."<sup>21</sup> The heuristic distinction of authenticity or unauthenticity may be applied, then, to elements of a religion, to the followers of a religion, and to the scholars of religion, insofar as they express either the basic position of intellectual, moral, and religious conversion, or some variant counter-position arising from the absence of one or more conversions. It should be noted that discerning the presence or absence of intellectual as well as moral and religious conversion is relevant to dialectical assessment in religious studies, because Lonergan's dialectical approach presupposes the fundamentality of one's cognitional position: "It supposes that cognitional theory exercises a fundamental influence in metaphysics, ethics, and in theological pronouncements."<sup>22</sup>

In order to understand why Lonergan's employment of the dialectical heuristic of opposition is not necessitarian, we have to examine in what sense the opposition between the authentic and the unauthentic is a radical opposition. Towards this end, let us review the definition of dialectic he first offers in *Insight*: "A dialectic is a concrete unfolding of linked but opposed principles of change."<sup>23</sup> These principles are opposed yet bound together, and they are modified by the changes that result from them. Yet, while they are modified, and while they are linked, they remain unchanged in their opposition. What are the two basic contradictory principles underlying the authentic/unauthentic distinction? Following his general definition of the term 'dialectic,' Lonergan describes two instances of dialectic the dialectic of dramatic bias and the dialectic of community. The opposed principles of change in these two cases are, respectively, neural demand functions and censorship, and spontaneous human intersubjectivity and practical common sense. Later in *Insight*, we find that the opposed principles of change underlying the dialectical

<sup>21</sup> *Method* 235.

<sup>22</sup> *Insight* 414.

<sup>23</sup> *Insight* 242.

method of metaphysics are "extroverted biological consciousness" and "intelligent inquiry and critical reflection."<sup>24</sup> When Lonergan expands his notion of dialectic to encompass moral and religious conversion as well as intellectual conversion, he characterizes all conversions as having to do with self-transcendence.<sup>25</sup> Most generally, a lack of self-transcendence is characteristic of unauthenticity, and self-transcendence is characteristic of authenticity. In summary, the opposed principles of change fundamental to Lonergan's dialectic could be characterized as native, animal, self-interested desires on the one hand, and the pure, detached, disinterested desire on the other. Whether or not this formulation of the two principles is adequate, it remains that for Lonergan there are two fundamental principles in the human subject that are in opposition, and that remain so regardless of developmental transformations.<sup>26</sup> Unauthenticity is not to be identified with the principle of self-interested desires, however. Unauthenticity results from the failure to negotiate the tension between the two fundamental principles. "The union of sensitive and intellectual activities is a unity of opposites in tension ... the dominion of the detached and disinterested desire constantly is challenged."<sup>27</sup> In the case of the basic cognitional counter-position, for example, it is the result of allowing the expectations of animal extroversion to distort one's philosophic account.

Lonergan's heuristic of dialectical opposition is controlled by one operational principle: "The principle that positions invite development and counterpositions invite reversal."<sup>28</sup> Regarding its application to religious studies, Lonergan argues that acknowledgment of the values manifested in a religion is essential to critical religious studies. Further, one is not only to advert to the values manifested in a religion, but also to risk making one's own value judgments regarding them. What is unauthentic in the religion in question and, secondarily, in the researcher is

<sup>24</sup> *Insight* 410.

<sup>25</sup> *Method* 241.

<sup>26</sup> An example of this can be found in the realm of moral development. It is possible for one to advance through the six stages of moral development outlined by Kohlberg, and still not be morally converted. See Elizabeth A. Morelli, "The Sixth Stage of Moral Development," *Journal of Moral Education* 7/2 (1978).

<sup>27</sup> *Insight* 572.

<sup>28</sup> *Insight* 412.

thereby open to repudiation, and whatever is authentic can be maintained ("PRP" 137-138).

The unauthenticity uncovered in a person or a religious standpoint is not a partial truth, serving as a necessary moment to be subsequently subsumed, as Hegel would have it. Unauthenticity is not a matter of a lack of comprehensiveness, of mere finitude. For Hegel there is no real distinction between authenticity and unauthenticity. At best, in his system there is the 'Authenticity' of the absolute standpoint contrasted with the 'authenticities' of the stages along the way. Desmond describes Hegel's rejection of the possibility of 'radical evil' in the following way:

From the endpoint of this affirmative telos, every evil is inherently commensurable with dialectical comprehension. Relative to the fullest unfolding of the dialectic, evil itself is othered and reversed into its opposite. It becomes a transitional episode on the longer way of progress to the Hegelian good, and in a sense there is no radical, or absolute evil ... Evil is evil but also dialectically good.<sup>29</sup>

Lonergan, on the other hand, defines unauthenticity and treats it as surd, aberration, error, sin to be repudiated. Evil is not objectified in order to be assimilated, but in order to be excised. Lonergan's dialectical heuristic embraces the Kierkegaardian either/or and rejects the Hegelian both/and.

Not only is unauthenticity not necessary, it is also always possible. As Kierkegaard explains, sin is always a possibility confronted in anxiety whether or not one is living in sin: "No matter how deep an individual has sunk, he can sink still deeper."<sup>30</sup> Lonergan makes the same point conversely. No matter how authentic one has become, unauthenticity is ever possible: "Human authenticity is not some pure quality, some serene freedom from all oversights, all misunderstandings, all mistakes, all sins. Rather it consists in a withdrawal from unauthenticity, and the withdrawal is never a permanent achievement."<sup>31</sup> Unauthenticity is always a possibility because the two fundamentally opposed principles of change

<sup>29</sup> William Desmond, *Beyond Hegel and Dialectic* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992) 219.

<sup>30</sup> Søren Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Anxiety*, ed. and trans. Reidar Thomte (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980) 113.

<sup>31</sup> *Method* 252.

which constitute the dialectical nature of human existence are permanent. Neither principle is swallowed up by its opposite, nor are both principles dialectically subsumed by a third.

In Lonergan's heuristic of authenticity and unauthenticity, then, unauthenticity is not necessary, and we would all rather that there were not so much of it; but neither is authenticity necessary, and realization of this fact can fill us with dread.

Second, Lonergan recommends for religious studies a developmental heuristic structure, the dialectic of historically emerging contexts of meaning. This heuristic consists of three main elements and one result. The three main elements are eight terms of social arrangements, including the family and mores; five terms of cultural achievements, including art and religion; and four stages—the linguistic, the literate, the logical, and the methodical. These progressive stages mark out shifts in the meanings of the basic terms and the increasingly diversified scope of social and cultural initiatives. The result of this developmental dialectic is the "increasing tendency of these stages to bring about stratification and alienation" ("PRP" 140). The stages are developmentally progressive: "Each new stage includes those that precede but adds a new factor of its own" ("PRP" 139); and the later stages are not universal, which fact leads to the result of alienation and stratification.

Shifts in the meanings of such social arrangements as the family and such cultural achievements as religion do not take place necessarily. The emergence of a literate stage from the linguistic stage, for example, is not inexorable. A shift in meaning is a function of insights, which occur contingently on the condition of certain problems being faced and a degree of intelligence being present. "Now the distinction of stages involves *different apprehensions* of social arrangements and cultural achievements. Moreover, it involves differences in the social arrangements that are *projected and realized* as well as in the cultural achievements that are *ambitioned and brought to birth*" ("PRP" 140, italics added). None of this apprehending, projecting, realizing, ambitioning, or bringing to birth takes place necessarily. This development is a function of non-logical operations such as affective responses to values and disvalues, questioning, listening, creative imagining, insight, and decision. The

operations do not proceed necessarily in any deductive manner, and the resulting emergence of each new stage is a historical fact contingent on these operations. The historical emergence of just this succession of stages is not a matter of logical necessity, but of human intelligence and initiative, and not human intelligence as the inexorable self-explicating of subjective spirit, but as freely engaged.

While Lonergan firmly states his opposition to the necessity of Hegel's logic, he does acknowledge that he shares Hegel's aim of comprehensiveness:

I would find it difficult to be philosophic about religion if it were not possible to retain something of his comprehensiveness. And such a possibility I find in shifting attention from Hegel's dialectical logic to a philosophic account of empirical method.<sup>32</sup>

Lonergan provides the heuristic of historically emerging contexts of meaning in order to make possible a comprehensive account of religious standpoints. This heuristic is derived, however, not from the a priori dialectic of opposed standpoints, but from his empirical and foundational methodology. The four stages of religious living and meaning that have in fact emerged are not necessary but they are empirically verifiable through religious studies research.

Each of the heuristic structures Lonergan recommends in "PRP" for application to the study of religions, the authentic/unauthentic distinction and the four stages of meaning, escape the ideal of necessity which pervades Hegel's dialectical logic. I have attempted to show how each is non-necessitarian, but I would like to suggest at this point that the very distinction of these two heuristics is perhaps the most noteworthy advance made by Lonergan beyond Hegel's dialectical method. Hegel's dialectical method is both a logic of opposition and a developmental account, and the development takes place necessarily through the dialectical opposition. Lonergan, on the other hand, distinguished two methods, a dialectical method and a genetic method. The former enables us to interpret and assess radically opposed religious standpoints, to advance what is authentic and to reverse what is unauthentic. The latter

<sup>32</sup> "A Post-Hegelian Philosophy of Religion" 202.



enables us to comprehend the various religions that have emerged historically, to trace the transformations of meaning in the history of any one religion, and to understand the inevitable alienation that exists at any one time in the life of a religion due to the co-existence of followers at different developmental stages. As long as the properly dialectical is not differentiated from the genetic, aberrations will be treated as developments, and mere developmental differences will be treated as negative oppositions. The clarity provided by Lonergan's distinction results in a philosophy of religion that is at once more radical in its critique of unauthenticity and more understanding of possible religious differences.<sup>33</sup>

In summary, Hegel's dialectical method is fundamentally logical, according to Lonergan, insofar as it is conceptualist, closed, immanent, and necessitarian. While Lonergan's foundational methodology uncovers six levels of conscious and intentional operations, the closed and immanent conceptualism of Hegel's system is a tremendous elaboration of the logical operations of the intellectual level. And while Lonergan provides two heuristic structures for religious studies that are grounded in generalized empirical method, Hegel's philosophy of religion conforms to the ideal of speculative necessity.

Finally, it should be noted that as there is explicit acknowledgment in Hegel's *Logic* of the need for a scientific philosophy to be methodical, so also Lonergan's methodology makes provision for a role for logic. As Lonergan observes:

method, so far from excluding logic, includes it. It adds to logic such nonlogical operations as observing, describing, comparing, stumbling on problems, discovering solutions, devising tests, checking results. But integral to such nonlogical operations there are within method itself the properly logical operations of defining terms, formulating hypotheses, working out presuppositions, and inferring conclusions.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>33</sup> The distinction Lonergan makes between genetic method and dialectical method is analogous to a distinction he makes in phenomenological analysis between consciousness and intentionality. Both are brilliant clarifications which help to resolve many philosophic problems.

<sup>34</sup> Lonergan, "Aquinas Today: Tradition and Innovation," *A Third Collection*, ed. F.E. Crowe, S.J. (New York: Paulist Press, 1985) 47-48.

Lonergan's method comprises logical and non-logical operations, and both the logical and the non-logical are essential to methodical advance: "The logical tend to consolidate what has been achieved. The non-logical keep all achievement open to further advance. The conjunction of the two results in an open, ongoing, progressive and cumulative process."<sup>35</sup> While Hegel's dialectical method is fundamentally logical because of the logical principles that guide it, Lonergan's foundational methodology recognizes the essential yet subsidiary role of logical operations.

### III. THE SUBLATION OF RELIGION BY PHILOSOPHY

Let us turn now to a second comment in "PRP" on Hegel's approach to the philosophy of religion, in which Lonergan rejects another dimension of Hegelian thought. In this case it is a rejection of "the Hegelian program which was to sublimate religion by philosophy" ("PRP" 134-135). He proceeds to explain how his rejection of this sublation is in agreement with previous Catholic theologians; however, his rejection rests on different grounds. Rather than dismiss Hegel's sublation of religion by philosophy because it subverts the metaphysical subordination of the natural to the supernatural, Lonergan's rejection rests on foundational methodology:

For our opposition rests on our own primary context of intentionality analysis, in which one finds such cognitive or putatively cognitive operations as a Hegelian dialectic subordinated to the operations of the existential and practical subject ("PRP" 134).

Lonergan sums up his repudiation of Hegel's 'program' by invoking the weight of the whole of the Kierkegaardian enterprise: "In a word, Kierkegaard had a point" ("PRP" 134).

Central to Lonergan's rejection of Hegel's sublation of religion by philosophy is the divergence between what the two thinkers mean by 'sublation' itself. In Hegel's thought, 'sublation' (*Aufhebung*) is the term used to describe the movement from one dialectically opposed standpoint

<sup>35</sup> *Method* 6.

to the next. Forster provides the following summary account of this process of sublation in Hegel's dialectical method:

Beginning from a category A ... [it] proves to contain a *contrary* category, B, and conversely that category B proves to contain category A, thus showing both to be self-contradictory. He then seeks to show that this negative result has a positive outcome, a new category, C. ... This new category unites ... the preceding categories A and B. That is to say, when analyzed the new category is found to contain them both. But it unites then in such a way that they are not only preserved but also abolished (to use Hegel's term of art for this paradoxical-sounding process, they are *aufgehoben*). That is to say, they are preserved or contained in the new category only with their original senses modified. This modification of their senses renders them no longer self-contradictory.<sup>36</sup>

The paradoxical nature of the process of sublation is that the preceding standpoint is both destroyed in a sense and preserved by the subsequent standpoint. It should be noted also that Hegelian sublation takes place in a *dialectical* context, and that each step of this dialectic proceeds necessarily.

Lonergan also employs the term 'sublation,' but in a modified sense. In "PRP" he contrasts his sense of sublation with Hegel's, and briefly describes his new meaning, which he credits in part to Rahner:

One reaches the related sense by distinguishing between sublated and sublating operations, and by defining the sublated operations as going beyond the sublated, introducing a radically new principle, respecting the integrity of the sublated, and bestowing upon them a higher significance and a wider relevance ("PRP" 130).

A cursory reading of Lonergan's modified sense of sublation may lead one to conclude that the major difference between Lonerganian and Hegelian sublation is that the former eliminates the paradoxical nature of sublation. While sublation for Hegel involves the 'abolishing' or negating of the subsumed, sublation for Lonergan respects the integrity of the sublated. As we find in *Method in Theology*, sublation, "so far from interfering with the sublated or destroying it, on the contrary needs it, includes it, preserves

<sup>36</sup> Forster, "Hegel's Dialectical Method" 132-133.

all its proper features and properties, and carries them forward to a fuller realization within a richer context."<sup>37</sup>

Yet, for Hegel what is negated through sublation is also preserved; only its meaning is modified or transformed. What were formerly in opposition are no longer contradictory due to their containment in the new standpoint. The abolishing is not absolute nihilation, it is a transformation of meaning, and this seems to be not unlike what Lonergan means by "bestowing upon them [the sublated] a higher significance and a wider relevance" ("PRP" 130). So, how is it that Lonergan's meaning of sublation differs from Hegel's?

The meaning of sublation is transformed for Lonergan primarily because he uses the term in a different context. Sublation, for Lonergan, is not a dialectical movement but a developmental movement. The movement from one dialectically opposed standpoint to its opposite is neither necessary nor sublating. Conversion is not necessary because it is the result of a decision rather than rational deduction. It is not sublating because it involves repudiating the principles of the opposite standpoint rather than incorporating them into one's new standpoint. Lonergan employs the language of sublation to explain the relation of converted horizons to one another, not to explain the relation of the converted to the unconverted. So, for example, we read in *Method in Theology* that "religious conversion sublates moral, and moral conversion sublates intellectual."<sup>38</sup>

Lonergan also employs the term 'sublation' in his account of the relation of levels of conscious and intentional operations to one another. In "PRP" he explains that the hierarchy of levels explicated through intentionality analysis is a succession of sublations of sets of operations (131). Each level of conscious intentionality sublates the preceding level. Lonergan writes, for example, of the fourth level subsumption of the three underlying levels:

the fourth level of intentional consciousness the level of deliberation, evaluation, decision, action sublates the prior levels of experiencing, understanding, judging. It goes beyond them, sets up a

<sup>37</sup> *Method* 241.

<sup>38</sup> *Method* 243.

new principle and type of operations, directs them to a new goal but, so far from dwarfing them, preserves them and brings them to a far fuller fruition.<sup>39</sup>

The sublation of the prior levels of intentional consciousness by the fourth level of consciousness is a sublation of cognitional operations by moral operations. Moral judgment, for example, involves such operations as direct and reflective questioning, sensing, perceiving, remembering, imagining, attending to affects, practical insights and reflective acts of understanding; in short, the cognitive operations of the three underlying levels of consciousness. But, because the operations of the fourth level of consciousness intend value and head towards real self-transcendence, they are not merely cognitive but also moral and existential. This moral intention heightens the consciousness which qualifies the operations; they are now carried out self-consciously and with concern.<sup>40</sup>

While Lonergan's sublation is of operation by operation, Hegel's sublation is of concept by concept. As we saw above, Lonergan in *Insight* characterizes Hegel's dialectic as conceptualist. It is conceptualist both in what it intends to do and in what it overlooks. Hegel's *Science of Logic* is the systematic derivation of the life of the Absolute in its logical form as concept or notion. The dynamism of the unfolding of the sequence of ever more comprehensive concepts is in the logic of the concepts themselves. A concept gives rise to the subsequent sublating concept necessarily by its own internal logic. No extra-conceptual dynamism is required, and consequently no analysis of operations is provided. As Lonergan remarks, Hegel attempts "a deduction of the universe through an interplay of opposed *Begriffe*."<sup>41</sup> While the concept in its logical relation to other concepts is paramount, the pre-conceptual operations which give rise to concepts and the post-conceptual operations which may succeed conception are overlooked. So, for example, Hegel's system falls short of the grasp of the virtually unconditioned which is constitutive of factual knowledge, and the act of choice which is self-constitutive.

<sup>39</sup> *Method* 316.

<sup>40</sup> Lonergan's use of the term 'sublation' in the sense of successive levels of conscious and intentional operations is an extension of the theory of hierarchical stages of cognitive and moral development advanced by the psychologist Piaget; (*Method* 27-29).

<sup>41</sup> "A Post-Hegelian Philosophy of Religion," 221.

Finally, Lonergan uses the language of sublation when he describes the emergence of four stages of meaning or differentiations of consciousness: the linguistic, the literate, the logical, and the methodical. "Each of these stages includes those that precede but adds a new factor of its own" ("PRP" 139).

Thus, for Lonergan 'sublation' is a developmental term, variously employed in his accounts of the emergence of more fundamentally inclusive conversational horizons, higher levels of conscious intentionality, and more advanced cultural stages.

To return to the issue of the possible sublation of religion by philosophy, let us consider what Hegel means by the sublation of religion by philosophy. First of all it is a dialectical sublation. What remains for Christian faith an irreducible opposition of the human and the Divine, becomes for speculative thought necessary divine self-othering. Philosophy over-reaches faith and is able to comprehend how what faith merely believes is logically necessary. In fact, the reenactment of religious mystery in speculative thought is the necessary culmination of the divine process.<sup>42</sup>

Does Hegel advance such a position out of sheer hubris or philosophic totalitarianism? I think it is a disservice to Hegel to represent him as sacrificing the heart of religion for the comprehensiveness of his System. Hegel himself decries the emptiness of a merely formal position (without any interior appreciation), which asserts "that it stands on the very summit of religion and philosophy," but which in fact "falls back into the vanity of wilfulness."<sup>43</sup>

Hegel's subordination of religion to philosophy is warranted in a sense, inasmuch as he is attempting to advance a *critical* philosophic position. As Lonergan rejects the uncritical position that knowing is looking, so Hegel asserts that a critical philosophy must go beyond representational thinking (*Vorstellung*). Religion and philosophy (as well as art) are objectifications of Absolute Spirit, and they both have identical

<sup>42</sup> Fackenheim, *The Religious Dimension in Hegel's Thought*, chapter 6, 4.

<sup>43</sup> Hegel, *Philosophy of Mind* (Oxford: Clarendon Press), as reprinted in *Hegel: The Essential Writings*, ed. Frederick G. Weiss (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1974) 325.

content the truth. But the form of religious consciousness is that of feeling and representational thought. By 'feeling' Hegel means any affective consciousness of an object, and he characterizes such consciousness as lacking analytic clarity. By 'representational thought' Hegel means thoughts which are treated in the uncritical fashion of pictures seen. Such representations are accepted as simply given with no attempt being made to arrive at insight into their relations.<sup>44</sup> Philosophy, on the other hand, strips the truth of its pictorial associations. Hegel describes the process of moving from religion to faith as that of leaving the homely pictures of faith and proceeding to thought. Philosophy supersedes the immediacy and sensuousness of feeling and representational thought.<sup>45</sup>

As long as one conceives of religious consciousness in this fashion, one would have to recognize that philosophy subsumes religion. The very structure of conscious intentionality on which Lonergan grounds his rejection of Hegel's sublation of religion by philosophy, would provide the reason for assenting to it. Pictorial thinking and unquestioned affective responses are sublated by higher-level operations. Although Hegel's system as conceived could not contain the grasp of the virtually unconditioned that leads to judgments of fact, speculative thought does involve reflective as well as intelligent operations. It is Hegel's conception of religion that is inadequate, not the very reasonable conclusion that reflective thought supersedes the merely sensitively and imaginatively given.

Lonergan, on the other hand, affirms the existential dimension of religious consciousness, and for this reason concludes that religion sublates philosophy; as quoted above: "one finds such cognitive or putatively cognitive operations as a Hegelian dialectic subordinated to the operations of the existential and practical subject" ("PRP" 134). The existential or moral level of conscious intentionality consists of operations of conscience, deliberation, evaluation, moral judgment, decision, and action. Lonergan contends that every religion involves such operations. The very act of religious belief, for example, proceeds from the fourth level: "The object of belief not only can but also should be believed; and to judge that it should be believed is a value judgment" ("PRP" 133). To

<sup>44</sup> J.N. Findlay, *The Philosophy of Hegel* (New York: Collier Books, 1958) 346-349.

<sup>45</sup> Hegel: *Essential Writings* 322-323.

believe, then, would be a matter of decision, as Kierkegaard argues, an act that lies beyond the most sophisticated and comprehensive speculative system. In so far as religion engages one in the awakening of conscience, affective responses to the values carried by symbols, moral judgments, decisions, and self-transcending acts of faith and love, it supersedes the merely intellectual and reflective operations of the philosopher operating *qua* philosopher.<sup>46</sup>

In "PRP" the ground for Lonergan's objection to Hegel's sublation of religion by philosophy is clear; it is the subsumption of the lower levels of conscious intentionality by the existential. A difficulty emerges, however, when we consider Lonergan's account of the relation of philosophy to religion in light of his differentiations of consciousness. In "Aquinas Today" Lonergan lists six differentiations of consciousness: the prelinguistic, the commonsense, the religious, the scientific, the scholarly, and the philosophic. The religious development is described as that which "orientates man to God and in the universe"; the philosophic development is described as that which "reflects on all of these, assigns each its proper competence, and relates each to the others."<sup>47</sup> This account of the philosophic horizon as reflecting on and explaining all the other horizons, specifically, the religious horizon, sounds like a kind of Hegelian sublation of religion by philosophy. How is it that philosophy can give an explanation of the emergence of the religious horizon in its relation to all of the other horizons without in some sense comprehending or sublating religion? Further, how is it that philosophy provides the foundational methodology for religious studies without this provision entailing a sublation of the religious developments studied ("PRP" 128)?

We can resolve this apparent difficulty by means of a distinction of two kinds of sublation: thematic and existential. Lonergan's

<sup>46</sup> Of course, as Lonergan points out, the philosopher must also operate on the fourth level in the pursuit of philosophy: "Only through deliberate decision do people dedicate themselves to lives of scholarship or science, and only through the continuous renewal of that dedication do they achieve the goals they have set themselves. A life of pure intellect or pure reason without the control of deliberation, evaluation, responsible choice is something less than the life of a psychopath" (*Method* 122).

<sup>47</sup> Lonergan, "Aquinas Today: Tradition and Innovation," *A Third Collection*, ed. F.E. Crowe, S.J. (New York: Paulist Press, 1985) 37.



foundational methodology provides the transcendental ground for developing heuristic structures for any field of inquiry including the field of religious studies. Further, theoretical and interior advances in self-knowledge enable one to situate religious myth and mystery in relation to the rest of conscious phenomena.<sup>48</sup> In these two senses philosophy provides a thematic sublation of religion. However, insofar as religious living involves the concern, passion, freedom and love of the religious subject, religion provides the existential sublation of philosophy and all merely cognitive pursuits. Lonergan summarizes the complex relation of philosophy to religion in the "Questionnaire on Philosophy":

Theology is the sublation of philosophy. For philosophy is the basic and total science of human living. The Christian religion as lived is the sublation of the whole of human living. Hence the Christian religion as thematized is the sublation of the basic and total science of human living.<sup>49</sup>

So, while religion existentially sublates the whole of human living, including the intellectual pursuits of philosophy and theology, philosophy thematically sublates religion by providing the basic and total science of human living. Finally, Lonergan suggests a thematic sublation of both religion and philosophy by theology, which is the thematization of religious living made possible by use of the foundational methodology provided by philosophy. In conclusion, Lonergan rejects Hegel's sublation of religion by philosophy, because religion existentially sublates philosophy. Yet he leaves room for the thematic sublation of religious living by philosophy and theology.

Lonergan as post-Hegelian both repudiates and appropriates certain fundamental features of Hegel's philosophic approach. The few comments Lonergan makes regarding his relation to Hegel in "PRP" highlight basic differences in their views on the meaning and role of logic and method, the meaning of sublation, and the relation of philosophy to religion. Yet,

<sup>48</sup> For Lonergan's account of the advance in self-knowledge and its relation to religious myth and mystery, see *Insight* 569-72.

<sup>49</sup> Lonergan, "Questionnaire on Philosophy: Responses by Bernard J. F. Lonergan, S.J." *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 2/2 (October 1984) 8.

in our reflection on these differences certain basic similarities have also emerged. We have found that Lonergan shares with Hegel the aim to provide a foundational, critical, and dynamic philosophic method. Regarding their applications of method to religion, we have found that they both attempt to provide a comprehensive account of religious phenomena and the historical emergence of religious standpoints. Finally, as Hegel attempts to explicate how the Christian religion is the ultimate religious standpoint providing complete religious truth, so Lonergan considers the Christian religion as lived to be the sublation of the whole of human living, and as thematized, to be the sublation of the basic and total science of human living.

## RELIGIOUS STUDIES METHODOLOGY: BERNARD LONERGAN'S CONTRIBUTION

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OVER A DECADE ago I presented a paper on Lonergan's position on the relationship between theology and religious studies.<sup>1</sup> My purpose was twofold: primarily, to explore the implications of this position in the context of the functional specialty Foundations; secondarily, to understand ways Lonergan could contribute to methodological debates in the field of religious studies. The latter emerged out of my hypothesis that the theology-religious studies issue factored heavily in those methodological debates. Although the evidence is varied, this hypothesis has been proven valid.<sup>2</sup> Within the Lonergan corpus, particularly relevant here are the writings assembled in *Third Collection* which engage religious studies scholars (Wilfred Cantwell Smith is a primary one), although it is not clear that religious studies methodology is primary on Lonergan's agenda.<sup>3</sup> But in the article

<sup>1</sup>"Theology and/or Religious Studies: Bernard Lonergan's Option," in *Lonergan Workshop 4*, ed. F. Lawrence (Chico: Scholars Press, 1983) 115-139.

<sup>2</sup>With respect to a key journal in the field, see my "Theology and/or Religious Studies: A Case Study of Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses, 1971-1981," *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses* 13 (1984) 423-444. An interesting and related discussion in another journal provides further evidence: see the several contributions on the "St. Louis Project" in the *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 52 727-757, and a response by Ivan Strenski, "Our Very Own 'Contrast': A Response to the 'St. Louis Project' Report," in *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 54 323-335.

<sup>3</sup>Its title and audience — the 1980 meeting of the International Association of the History of Religions — to the contrary, even "A Post-Hegelian Philosophy of Religion" (in *A Third Collection: Papers by Bernard Lonergan*, ed. F.E. Crowe [New York: Paulist Press, 1985] 202-223) focuses more on theological method, adding to the presentation of religion in *Method* an excursus on Voegelin's contribution to foundations.

"Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon" ("PRP"), which explores "the foundational methodology of religious studies,"<sup>4</sup> Lonergan is quite clear that this is his primary interest. I have therefore taken it as an opportunity to pursue again the question of what Lonergan has to contribute to the methodological debates within religious studies.

I begin with what I argue is George Lindbeck's misrepresentation of what Lonergan can offer to religious studies; I then turn to illustrate the need for methodological clarification with reference to a recent account of religious studies as a discipline; and I close with an analysis of what the article "PRP" adds to our understanding of Lonergan's contribution to that discipline.

#### METHOD'S 'THEORY OF RELIGION': LINDBECK'S CRITICISM

One effort to identify Lonergan's contribution to religious studies came as part of George Lindbeck's methodological exercise, *The Nature of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age*.<sup>5</sup> When first published the work received considerable attention. Among scholars of Lonergan, Charles Hefling has taken issue with Lindbeck's model of doctrine as well as with what he sees as Lindbeck's misunderstanding of Lonergan's position. Hefling focuses on the centrality of judgment in Lonergan and frames his assessment of Lindbeck largely in terms of the functional specialty Doctrines.<sup>6</sup> Here I propose to return to Lindbeck, focusing specifically on what he presents as Lonergan's 'theory of religion' in *Method in Theology*.

One objective of Lindbeck's exercise is to articulate a theologically viable and empirically grounded theory of religion. This he finds in what he calls a 'cultural-linguistic' model of religion. Among the points on which he finds three alternative models — propositional, experiential-expressivism, and a hybrid of the two — deficient is their ability to incorporate the insights of non-theological studies of religion.<sup>7</sup> Lonergan is

<sup>4</sup> "Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon," *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 12 (1994) 125-147 at 128. Further references will be made within the text.

<sup>5</sup> (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1984).

<sup>6</sup> Charles C. Hefling, "Turning Liberalism Inside-Out," *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 3/2 (1985) 51-69.

<sup>7</sup> Lindbeck, *Nature of Doctrine* 20, 25.

featured in a discussion of all three alternative models; but it is the chapter on religion in *Method* that Lindbeck uses to illustrate the shortcomings of the experiential-expressivist model.

Lindbeck argues that Lonergan's description of religious experience — the conscious but pre-conceptual "dynamic state of being in love without restrictions"<sup>8</sup> — is a paradigmatic example of experiential expressivism. He focuses in particular on Lonergan's use of historian of religion Freiderich Heiler to link Lonergan to the conviction that this description of religious experience is transcultural, cutting across all religious traditions and expressions. This is a flawed position, argues Lindbeck, that does little to advance the understanding of religious traditions. "Because this core experience is said to be common to a wide diversity of religions, it is difficult or impossible to specify its distinctive features, and yet unless this is done, the assertion of commonality becomes logically and empirically vacuous."<sup>9</sup>

Parallel to Hefling's criticism of Lindbeck, one could challenge Lindbeck's use of Lonergan to represent experiential-expressivism, arguing that it neglects Lonergan's differentiation — meant to clarify but not to separate — of the world of immediacy from the world mediated and constituted by meaning.<sup>10</sup> But more relevant to our purpose is the possibility that Lindbeck unfairly forces Lonergan into a theory of religion that is derivative of Heiler and other theologically-oriented historians of religion.

Heiler (1892-1967) was not unique among early practitioners of the history of religions in his linking (liberal) theological convictions with the newly emerging non-theological approaches to religion. On his position, objectivity in the phenomenology of religions does not preclude subjective

<sup>8</sup> Lindbeck, *Nature of Doctrine* 31; quoting Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972) 120.

<sup>9</sup> Lindbeck, *Nature of Doctrine* 32.

<sup>10</sup> See *Method* 112-115. Lonergan puts this quite clearly in "Existenz and Aggiornamento" (Collection: *Papers by Bernard Lonergan, S.J.*, ed. F.E. Crowe [Montreal: Palm Publishers, 1967]; Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, vol. 4 [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988] 222-231), where he suggests religion "is identical with personal living, and personal living is always here and now, in a contemporary world of immediacy, a contemporary world mediated by meaning, a contemporary world not only mediated but also constituted by meaning" (CWL 4 231).

presuppositions; the difficulty, of course, is to secure the correct presupposition that opens one to the data of religion precisely as religious. This Heiler found in the conviction that the ultimate end of comparative studies was to improve relations between various traditions of the world and to promote inter-religious dialogue.<sup>11</sup> This conviction is the main thrust of the Heiler essay — a paper that appears to have been initially delivered at the 1958 IAHR conference in Tokyo on “Religion and Thought in East and West: A Century of Cultural Exchange”<sup>12</sup> — from which Lonergan draws the seven common features of world religions.

In this essay Heiler attacks a tendency towards absolutism, intolerance, and exclusivism in Western religions, and argues that these prejudices can be corrected by the scientific study of religion. He cites a litany of scholars, including Max Mueller: “There is only one eternal and universal religion standing above, beneath, and beyond all religions to which they all belong or can belong.”<sup>13</sup> He then goes on to marshal data from across several traditions and cultures to provide support for his proposed unity of religions, thus producing the seven common areas to which Lonergan refers. Heiler concludes this survey with the prediction that the objective, scholarly pursuit of truth in the science of religion will inevitably uncover further dimensions of this unity of religions in such a way that theory and practice, study and life, will coincide, for “[w]hoever recognizes their unity must take it seriously by tolerance in word and deed. Thus scientific insight into this unity calls for a practical realization in friendly exchange and in common ethical and social endeavor which the British call ‘fellowship’ and ‘co-operation.’”<sup>14</sup>

Readers of *Method* will agree that in citing Heiler, Lonergan was not arguing for the unitary essence of religions, nor was he promoting the religious harmony and interreligious cooperation that Heiler predicted

<sup>11</sup> On Heiler and related historians of religion, see Eric Sharpe, *Comparative Religion: A History*, 2nd edition (Lasalle: Open Court, 1986) 251-293.

<sup>12</sup> Sharpe, 271-273. Lonergan draws from F. Heiler, “The History of Religions as a Preparation for the Co-operation of Religions,” the version of the essay published in *The History of Religions: Essays in Methodology*, ed. M. Eliade and J. Kitagawa (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1959) 132-160.

<sup>13</sup> Heiler, “History of Religions” 141.

<sup>14</sup> Heiler, “History of Religions” 155.

would follow from the scientific study of religions.<sup>15</sup> Still, Lindbeck's misinterpretation of Lonergan on this point does suggest that Lonergan's use of Heiler may have been ill-advised in so far as he intended the chapter on religion in *Method* to lay out a generalized theory of religion. For Heiler represents a stage in the development of religious studies that had not sufficiently differentiated — among other methodological issues — theological and non-theological approaches to religion. There remains, however, the question of what Lonergan does offer, by way of a theory of religion, to an audience beyond the theologians for whom *Method in Theology* was primarily intended. To illustrate what form this contribution might take, I now turn to the theory of religion presented in the American Academy of Religion/Association of American Colleges 1990 report, "Liberal Learning and the Religion Major."

#### REPORT ON THE RELIGION MAJOR'S 'THEORY OF RELIGION'

As part of an Association of American College's three-year study of arts and sciences majors, the American Academy of Religion published a report in 1990, "Liberal Learning and the Religion Major: A Report to the Profession."<sup>16</sup> The *Report* tried to sketch a portrait of religious studies as a unified discipline that at the same time is both multicultural and multi-disciplinary. I focus on this presentation because it uses the term 'religion' in interesting ways to forge the unity of an apparently disparate discipline.

The *Report* suggests religious studies confronts diversity on two fronts: the data it studies, and the methods by which the data is studied. On the former, it is clear that the diversity of the world's cultures and histories makes religious studies in many respects "a meditation on cultural difference."<sup>17</sup> Yet, according to the *Report*, the category 'religion'

<sup>15</sup> Dialogue and cooperation among religions, of course, is a recurrent interest of Lonergan's. See, for one example, the final pages of Lonergan's 1976 Queen's University lectures: "The Ongoing Genesis of Methods," *A Third Collection* 163-164.

<sup>16</sup> (American Academy of Religion, 1990); also published as a chapter in *Reports from the Fields: Project on Liberal Learning, Study-in-Depth, and the Arts and Sciences Major*, vol. 2 (Association of American Colleges, 1991) 169-183.

<sup>17</sup> *Report* 12. The Berkeley-Harvard-Chicago report published in the same year also makes much of the multicultural dimensions of religious studies. See *Beyond the Classics*:

captures a "trans-cultural phenomenon" that can therefore be taken as "the fundamental object of study,"<sup>18</sup> cutting across the richly diverse data covered by this field. In a similar way, the multiple methods by which this data is studied are unified into "modes of discourse that are both discipline-specific and public"<sup>19</sup> by again invoking the category 'religion.' Here the *Report* is ambiguous in its use of 'religion' as a category.

On the one hand, the *Report* refers specifically to the emergence of the secular (as contrasted with 'sectarian') study of religion in the 1960s, and claims that use of this category "is what separates them [our students] not only from the monks but from the seminarians."<sup>20</sup> For it is by this category that students of religion impose on traditions a construct they themselves do not include in their own self-definition. Or, from the 'receiving-end' end of the category, the object of the study of religion most often does not recognize itself as such. A tradition's self-interpretation in this context is, of course, relevant; but only as one more *datum* to be refracted through the critical lens of properly academic study. Scholars, in effect, stand on the outside looking in; and, contrary to popular opinion, the word 'religion' applies not so much to what is studied as to the means by which the studying takes place. On the other hand, the *Report* uses the category of religion in a way that suggests the study from the outside is not an end in itself. Indeed, the process of studying 'religion' is one that is deeply personal and engaging, one that leads students to discover "the deep bonds that bind them in a common origin and a common destiny with other human beings."<sup>21</sup>

There are problems with this effort to unify both the data and methods in religious studies. Although the *Report* acknowledges the category 'religion' may be imbued with assumptions from the modern, Western academy,<sup>22</sup> it does not respond to W.C. Smith's call to exorcise

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*Essays in Religious Studies and Liberal Education*, ed. Frank E. Reynolds and Sheryl L. Burkhalter (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990).

<sup>18</sup> *Report* 11.

<sup>19</sup> *Report* 5.

<sup>20</sup> *Report* 16.

<sup>21</sup> *Report* 20.

<sup>22</sup> *Report* 10.



the category from the field.<sup>23</sup> Nor does the *Report* advert to the very different exorcism of the category proposed by Donald Weibe and others who claim that use of the category 'religion' implies the data constitutes an irreducible and *sui generis* phenomenon that social science approaches cannot adequately explain.<sup>24</sup> And more to the point, the *Report's* use of the category of religion reveals a fundamental ambiguity in its effort to portray an unified discipline. For it uses 'religion' in at least three different senses: (1) as the object of study that cannot be reduced to any one of the variety of methods by which it is studied; (2) as the category by which scholarly methods are imposed on the object of study; and (3) as a category that in deeply personal ways opens students to the religious experience of others and even of themselves.

The source of this ambiguity, I think, lies in the *Report's* inability to negotiate its way beyond an earlier paradigm that helped to establish the study of religion in universities but today is no longer helpful. That paradigm was articulated by Claude Welch in his 1970 account of the discipline of religious studies; it locates religious studies' identity in the emancipation of the study of religion from the confessional and sectarian world of the seminary into the secular, open, and critical world of the modern academy.<sup>25</sup> The ambiguity arises because the *Report* takes the Welch model seriously and seeks to establish religious studies as a *properly academic discipline*; yet it uncritically roots that identity in the apparently non-academic interest in *religious traditions precisely as religion*. If this *Report* is any indication, it seems that religious-studies scholars continue to have difficulty articulating the unifying basis of their own distinctive

<sup>23</sup> Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion: A New Approach to the Religious Traditions of Mankind* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1962/1978).

<sup>24</sup> Among his many polemical pieces, see Weibe's "The Failure of Nerve in the Academic Study of Religion," *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses* 13 (1984) 401-422; and also Robert A. Segal and Donald Weibe, "Axioms and Dogmas in the Study of Religion," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 57 (1989) 591-605. Particularly helpful also is Samuel Preus, *Explaining Religion: Criticism and Theory from Bodin to Freud* (Yale University Press, 1987).

<sup>25</sup> Claude Welch, *Graduate Education in Religion: A Critical Approach* (Missoula: University of Montana Press, 1971), particularly chapter 2, "Identity Crisis in the Study of Religion?" See *Beyond the Classics* 112-120, 146-147, and 225 on the inadequacy of the Welch paradigm.

method of inquiry. It is at this juncture that Lonergan's approach to religion may have something to contribute.

#### LONERGAN'S 'THEORY OF RELIGION' AS 'FOUNDATIONAL METHODOLOGY'

As noted above, Lonergan has contributed much to setting a context for interaction between theology and religious studies. In "PRP" the extension of this context to methodological issues in religious studies emerges explicitly. Lonergan argues that the shift from "a metaphysics of objects" to a "theory of cognitional operations" (127), and the consequent move beyond scholasticism's rigid separation of natural and supernatural knowledge (125-126, 127, 133, 134), make possible a philosophy of religion. And this philosophy of religion is best conceived as "the foundational methodology of religious studies" (128). Just what does Lonergan have in mind?

He begins with an outline of intentionality analysis, and among its virtues he specifies one that is particularly relevant for religious studies: the way it links intellectual and deliberative operations. Where Heiler's position was undifferentiated, and the *Report* was ambiguous in its use of the word 'religion' in this context, intentionality analysis both delineates and integrates the distinct operations of, on the one hand, understanding and judgment and, on the other hand, deliberation and evaluation (132-133). To this delineation and integration Lonergan adds the further virtue of extending the operational differentiations to include as particularly relevant to religious studies the levels of symbolic operation and interpersonal relations and religious commitment (134). At this juncture Lonergan sketches something very close to what Lindbeck presented as *Method's* theory of religion, referring to universalist approaches to religion that take a stand "on the lived religion or mystical faith that is prior to any formulation" and to an empirically grounded discernment of a "convergence of religions" (135). As noted above in the discussion of Lindbeck, this sketch may not be deemed helpful by scholars of religion. But what Lonergan goes on to offer in the way of heuristic structures for religious studies certainly may be.

The importance to theology of the first element of the heuristic structure Lonergan sketches — the distinction between authenticity and inauthenticity — is very much in evidence in *Method's* functional specialty

Doctrines and the notion of 'purification of tradition.'<sup>26</sup> When applied to religious studies, the structure serves to highlight the following methodological conundrum: should or can the scholar of religions maintain the neutrality proper to the academy in studying phenomena whose very nature is to lay personal, value-laden claims on individuals? In offering the authentic/inauthentic distinction as a heuristic structure, Lonergan suggests that it will engender a genuinely *critical* approach among religious studies scholars wherein authenticity — of both the traditions studied and the students of those traditions — will come to the foreground and, eventually, lead the discipline towards a Kuhn-like paradigm shift. Evidence of Lonergan's point, I believe, may be found in the way the *Report's* effort to capture the academic integrity of its discipline while at the same time opening students to the deeply personal nature of the study fails to the extent it is presented within the terms of Welch's limited paradigm. A conceptually more coherent and constructive application of the move beyond that limited paradigm is Robert Wilken's recent appeal, as president of the American Academy of Religion, for his colleagues to speak *for* religious traditions instead of only *about* them.<sup>27</sup>

The second element of the heuristic structure, derived from Lonergan's notion of differentiation of consciousness, is potentially even more constructive. For by providing "some account and ordering of the various contexts in which, first, religious living occurs and, secondly, investigations of religious living are undertaken" (138), Lonergan moves to the heart of the ambiguity of the *Report's* treatment of 'religion.' The heuristic structure sketched in this article yields a complex set of terms and relations that can illumine the way religions play out in various social and cultural contexts. The thumbnail sketch (and illustration from Christian doctrinal development) that Lonergan provides suggests the potency of a methodical study of religion. That potency lies not so much in a comprehensive theory of religion as in the tools for demarcating questions, the answers to which yield insights that may coalesce into

<sup>26</sup> See *Method*, 245-247, 298-299, 312; and "Natural Right and Historical-Mindedness," *A Third Collection* 179-182.

<sup>27</sup> "Who Will Speak for the Religious Traditions?", *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 57 (1989) 699-717.

richer contexts, yielding further questions, and from them further insights — that is, the method Lonergan refers to as “a framework for collaborative creativity.”<sup>28</sup> All the while the subject as operator is the key, turning us from the contexts in which religions develop to the context in which they are investigated. It is here, then, that Dialectic<sup>29</sup> emerges in scholars’ efforts to relate methodically their questions for understanding to the inevitable questions for deliberation and value. This, I think, is particularly important as religious studies — just as Welch did in the 1970s and the *Report* tries twenty years later — continues to map out its contribution to the academy.

### CONCLUSION

I have endeavored to identify Lonergan’s contribution to the methodological debates within religious studies. I have suggested it does not consist in the ‘theory of religion’ found in *Method*’s chapter on religion that George Lindbeck criticizes. Rather, that contribution consists in a philosophy of religion that would address the ambiguity evidenced in the *Report*’s account of religious studies as a discipline. Where could one go from here?

In terms of further work in Lonergan, this reflection on Lonergan’s “PRP” suggests further investigation of his reasons for including in *Method in Theology* a chapter on religion. Functional specialization is, of course, a key to that book. But the functional specialties constitute part two of *Method*, the Foreground, which rests on the preceding 145 pages of Background. In the preface Lonergan explains that the Background treats “more general topics that have to be presupposed in the second part”;<sup>30</sup> and elsewhere he suggests that the background chapters provide the ‘concrete context’ for the pivotal chapter on functional specialties (chapter 5) in *Method*.<sup>31</sup> And the chapter on religion, he continues in the preface, is

<sup>28</sup> *Method* xi.

<sup>29</sup> See “The Ongoing Genesis of Methods,” *A Third Collection* 155-159.

<sup>30</sup> *Method* xi.

<sup>31</sup> “An Interview with Fr. Bernard Lonergan, S.J.,” *A Second Collection: Papers by Bernard J. F. Lonergan, S.J.*, ed. William F. J. Ryan, S.J., and Bernard J. Tyrrell, S.J. (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1974) 228, n.4.

one of several 'prolongations' of the first chapter on transcendental method, part of his effort to provide "further aspects or fuller implications or added applications."<sup>32</sup> These remarks lead me to wonder if the chapter on religion could not be construed as a philosophy of religion relevant not only to theology but to religious studies as well. As Lonergan himself puts it in commenting on Gibson Winter, it is a philosophy of religion that

would follow the transcendental turn: it would bring to light the conditions of the possibility of religious students and their correlative objects. It would survey the areas investigated and the methods employed; it would provide the ultimate basis for appropriate method; and it would justify or criticize accepted distinctions and procedures.<sup>33</sup>

This suggestion is hardly an argument. But it could prove a fruitful avenue for exploring what Lonergan had in mind when he constructed the chapter on religion some ten years before he wrote "PRP."

Finally, this account of Lonergan's philosophy of religion provides another context within which theology and religious studies can be related to one another. This context includes but adds to the personalist emphasis that Lindbeck highlights in his criticism of Lonergan's theory of religion. This context would guide religious studies scholars in relating their multiple studies and methods and, ultimately, in their effort to provide an account of their discipline that is clear on the foundational questions around understanding and evaluation. And, to the extent that scholars of religion are able to accomplish this, theologians may find them helpful conversation partners as theology, too, seeks to locate its niche within the world of the modern academy.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>32</sup> *Method* xii.

<sup>33</sup> "The Example of Gibson Winter," *A Second Collection* 191.

<sup>34</sup> A case in point is John C. Haughey's recent "Theology and the Mission of the Jesuit College and University" (*Conversations on Jesuit Higher Education*, n. 5 [Spring, 1994] 5-17). His otherwise helpful programmatic essay is flawed by his decision to exclude religious studies from his reflections on the grounds that it "weighs religious behavior after the manner of science, seeking faith data as phenomena to be described, analyzed and categorized without any commitment to the data conveyed by the teacher" (7).



## GOD WITH/OUT BEING

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LONERGAN'S SHIFTING OF academic disciplines with determined material objects and faculties from a classical to an empirical model remains one of his more brilliant and illusive insights. The common-sense clarity with which he proposes a thorough overhaul of the functions and relationships of the human sciences, religious studies and theology comes out of a deep awareness of a development that differentiates the modern scholar from the ancient one. He has called it a shift from a metaphysical to a data-driven philosophy, from abstract objectivity to a converted subjectivity. It makes obsolete the hegemony of metaphysics as first philosophy, the metaphysical obsession with timeless permanence of truth, and the deductive process of reasoning from principles. By applying these same functions to religious studies and theology, Lonergan sought to overcome the isolation of these disciplines.<sup>1</sup>

### THEOLOGY WITH BEING

Lonergan's previously unpublished "Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon" ("PRP") touches on the relationship of philosophy and religious studies. Lonergan holds that philosophy as cognitional theory, epistemology and metaphysics — in this order — can pronounce generically on the validity or viability of the results of religious studies as it can of other disciplines. In this article I want to explore this thesis, not in religious studies, but in the field of theology with which I am better

<sup>1</sup> Even though, as Frederick Crowe's readable biography points out, Lonergan did not always achieve to the full what he intended! See *Lonergan* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1992).

acquainted. Can philosophy as foundational methodology pronounce generically on the validity and viability of the results of theology?

Foundational methodology shifts the traditional debate between philosophy and theology. In the Catholic tradition since Thomas Aquinas the debate was located in the question of the existence of an analogy of being between the divine and the human. The term analogy was borrowed from mathematics to link theology to a metaphysics of being, which at the time of Aquinas set the standard for what was thought to constitute general science. Lonergan's move toward cognitional theory serves the same intention as the predication of an analogy of being. Both the cognitional theory and the analogy of being want to confer a scientific status upon theology. For Lonergan the current standard of science is the empirical method which he has identified as cognitional theory. Cognitional theory shifts theology toward an empirical base. With this empirical shift Lonergan remains within the tradition of Aquinas by postulating an underlying congruity between human discourse and the reality of God. Underlying all reality, whether as proportionate being or as transcendent being, there is intelligibility. This article wants to root around this outer edge of human discourse about God in Lonergan by comparing his proposal with other proposals in order to expose its structure and dilemma.

For the readers of *Method* it is not necessary to repeat Lonergan's position. Philosophy acts as a partner of theology because philosophy deals with the explicitation of the operations underlying the cognitional activities of theology. Theology, in Lonergan's scheme of things, is not defined by its object, God, but by its operations: the cognitional process used by the religiously converted to communicate about God. It is method. In a time when knowledge cannot be contained within a static system and must account for historical movement, Lonergan has opted for a philosophy as method to guide theological thought (126). Accordingly, philosophy becomes an organon of theology, because it provides theology with the knowledge of what it is doing when it is doing theology.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup>In his *Philosophy of God, and Theology: The Relationship between Philosophy of God and the Functional Specialty, Systematics* (London: Darton, Longmans & Todd, 1973) Lonergan insists on the distinction but not separation of a philosophy of God and theology.



Three aspects of Lonergan's proposal are central to my exploration.

First, Lonergan's intentionality analysis differentiates four hierarchically organized levels of operations (experience, understanding, judgment, and decision).<sup>3</sup> But these do not operate univocally in the human subject. Conversions (intellectual, moral, and religious) so transform the horizon of the subject that the operations function analogously. The conversions and their attendant shift of the operations are not a cumulative process. Religious conversion may well precede intellectual conversion. The conscious guidance of the functioning of these analogous operations in a historical process is the task of method. Foundational methodology for theology, in other words, leads to the guidance of the operations of the religiously converted. It is good to remind ourselves that for Lonergan foundational method does not lead to a control over the object, only over the operations.

Second, it is Lonergan's contention that such a methodology is applicable not only in the realm of proportionate being but also in the realm of transcendent being. The coherence of Lonergan's theory of method is to be found in a proposed isomorphism between the structures of knowing, more accurately, of intelligibility, and not only the structures of the universe, that is, of emergent probability, but also the reality of God, that is, of transcendent being. Lonergan's transcendent being which is implied by the intelligibility of proportionate being is the unrestricted act of understanding. The application of intelligibility to transcendent being implies that intelligibility transcends the restricted capacity of human intelligibility. Lonergan postulates, for instance, that the unrestricted act of understanding must be able to integrate the non-systematic of proportionate being, particularly evil, as part of God's plan and intention.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> In other texts before and after "PRP" Lonergan continues to speak of four levels of operation. The addition of two levels of operations in this paper seems somewhat arbitrary. Was it perhaps this that made Lonergan hesitate to deliver it? The additional levels seem less generalizable than the other four levels. In this article I will make use only of the original four levels of operations.

<sup>4</sup> *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding* (NY: Philosophical Library, 1956) 687; *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, vol. 3 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992) 709.

Third, Lonergan is insistent that the intelligibility implied in the religious realm must not be understood only cognitively. Because foundational methodology deals with operations and not primarily with objects, it is distinctly subject-directed. Religious conversion concerns total commitment and ultimate concern. For that reason religious intelligibility is not primarily speculative but existential and practical. Lonergan seeks to place religion into an action system allowing for a precedence of orthopraxis over orthodoxy (132).

Hereby Lonergan radically reformulated the task of theology. Its focus is not primarily God as an object but the operations of the religiously converted. It looks to the conditions of authentic subjectivity as it pursues or is overtaken by God. This reformulation of the task of theology in an empirical culture cannot avoid taking up in a new manner the pernicious problem in theology associated with Aquinas's notion of *analogia entis*. Lonergan remains within the framework that has become one of the cornerstones of Catholic theology. In whatever way reformulated it remains true for him that "it is one and the same thing to understand what being is and to understand what God is."<sup>5</sup> Lonergan avoids the use of the terminology of analogy of being because it is too much oriented to content, that is, to substantive being. But that merely transfers the functioning of analogy to another level: that of the operations and the underlying intelligibility. What does it mean that intelligibility functions as the analogue linking philosophy and theology? What is the consequence of an analogous intelligibility?

These initial musings lead me to two interlinked questions. First, can foundational method pronounce on the validity and viability of the results of theology? Second, what is the relationship of continuity — and discontinuity — between the higher integration of transcendent being and the emergently probable order? Allow me to begin by problematizing the relationship of theology and philosophy. By placing Lonergan's position of congruence in relation with a position of radical incongruence, I hope to illumine an often unreflected dimension in current theology. It may also accentuate the tenuousness of the linkage of God with being.

<sup>5</sup> *Insight* 658 = CWL 3 680.

## THEOLOGY IN ANOTHER KEY: THEOLOGY WITHOUT BEING

The discussion of the relation of theology to philosophy has recently come alive again on both sides of the Atlantic. In the wake of the postmodern emphasis on difference, discontinuity, and the nothing, the metaphysical, onto-theological approaches to theology have been declared terminally inaccessible and void. In the United States George Lindbeck's popular *The Nature of Doctrine*<sup>6</sup> describes theology in terms of Wittgenstein's incommensurable and incommunicative language games. The doctrines of faith operate as sign-posts for competent believers, but have no external truth structure. Theology communicates only within, not without, the believing community. In France the refusal of an onto-theology is best represented by the writings of the philosopher Jean-Luc Marion. With the provocative title of his book *God without Being* he makes clear that the name of God is not to be contaminated with 'being.'<sup>7</sup> Marion's position is a frontal attack on the categories of being as applied to theology.<sup>8</sup> Goaded by his provocation I want to open up again the question of the uneasy relationship of philosophy and theology.

Marion is a philosopher who has barged into the theological space with a not-so-novel yet provocative thesis of God's radical alterity.<sup>9</sup> The alterity of the divine approaches us from across an infinite divide. For Marion this means a decisive no to any attempt to think God in categories of being. Theology and metaphysics are incompatible. An alliance of

<sup>6</sup> (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1984).

<sup>7</sup> *God without Being: Hors-texte* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991). The subtitle strengthens the provocation of the title. *Hors-texte* refers to the empty, unpaginated plates at the end of a book. God is 'outside the text.'

<sup>8</sup> A previous article with Paul Rigby and Paul O'Grady examined this position of Lindbeck and proposed that his refusal to engage the truth question can be challenged by the human sciences which provide empirical criteria. See "The Nature of Doctrine," *Theological Studies* 50 (1991) 560-592.

<sup>9</sup> In France the book has caused a lively debate. See for example, M. Duquesne, "Dieu sans l'être" in *Mélanges de Science Religieuse* 42 (1985) 57-76; J. Lacoste, "Penser à Dieu en l'aimant: Philosophie et théologie de Jean-Luc Marion" in *Archives de Philosophie* 50 (1987) 245-270; J.-D. Robert, O.P., "Dieu sans l'être: A propos d'un livre récent" in *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* 105 (1983) 406-410; J.-H. Nicolas, "La suprême logique de l'amour et la théologie" in *Revue Thomiste* 83 (1983) 639-649. See also D. Dubarle, *Dieu avec l'être: De Parménide à Saint Thomas: Essai d'ontologie théologique*. Introduction by J. Greisch (Paris: Beauchesne, 1986) and D. Bourget et al., *L'Etre et Dieu* (Paris: Cerf, 1986).

metaphysics and theology can lead only to idolatry, never to true faith. Like Levinas, whom Marion considers one of his masters, he holds that the concept of being is enthralled with sameness and reduces otherness — and particularly the Other — to a manipulable possession.<sup>10</sup> By proposing Being as ground, metaphysics determines the site within which God is located. This does not allow God to be different: Being determines how and who God is. God becomes perceived as the “destinal figure of the thought of Being.”<sup>11</sup> Marion insists that the figure ‘God/Being’ identifies God with the *causa sui* concept of modernity (Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz and Hegel).<sup>12</sup>

Marion’s position on the relation of philosophy and theology relies on a twofold heritage. On the question of Being he is fundamentally indebted to Heidegger’s — and Nietzsche’s — declaration of the death of God and the end of metaphysics and onto-theology. On the question of the ‘beyond Being’ of theology Marion draws on the tradition of Denys the Areopagite and Bonaventure.

Marion’s indebtedness to Heidegger is of two minds. On the one hand he derives, quite gratefully, from Heidegger the proclamation of the end of metaphysics and the onto-theological God. On the other, he detects in Heidegger a continuation of the very tradition that he abjured. Heidegger did not go far enough to untie the bond that has held God

<sup>10</sup> Marion has some beautiful and insightful pages on the ‘idol’ as opposed to the ‘icon.’ See *God without Being* 7-24. For the idolatry of metaphysics see 33-37.

<sup>11</sup> *God without Being* 34.

<sup>12</sup> In this article I discuss only one aspect of the complex and intriguing argument of Marion. I limit myself to the ontological question. In this context the identification of the metaphysical concept of God with *causa sui* unfortunately limits the validity of the argument. The *causa sui* concept slips the modern notion of causality into the definition of God. God’s identity lies in being an uncaused cause, while all other beings need a ‘reason for’ existence. This event initiated by Descartes created the modern tradition of the transcendental concept of causality and rationality that so dominated subsequent Western history and overshadowed the metaphysical tradition represented by Thomas Aquinas. Marion holds that the whole metaphysical tradition maintains such a concept of God as efficiency; *God without Being* 35. See also J.H.A. Hollak, *Van causa sui tot automatie* (Hilversum/Antwerpen: Uitgeverij Paul Brand, 1966). This is also the tenor of J.-H. Nicolas’s critique of Marion. See his “La suprême logique de l’amour de la théologie” in *Revue Thomiste* 83 (1983) 639-649. In his new introduction to the English edition of *God without Being* Marion backtracks on the inclusion of Thomas Aquinas in this tradition (xxiii-xxiv).

captive to Being. Marion believes that the end of metaphysics and onto-theology is the moment not of the death of God but of the victory of the divine God over the oppressive presence of the idol of God as Being or *ens supremum*. God is without Being or outside of Being.

For Marion, Heidegger's definition of the human as the question of Being — *Dasein* — is the reason why the human cannot break through to God. Being does not possess the capacity for God, in fact, it is indifferent to God. Pushed to its outer limits the *Seinsfrage* need never ask the *Gottsfrage*. The only God that appears within the *Seinsfrage* remains linked to the destiny of Being. For Heidegger in the destiny of Being the divine remains only one element among four. *Das Geviert* (the fourfold) of heaven, earth, mortals, and the divine, which together constitute the destiny of Being, leave no opening to Christianity<sup>13</sup> nor to a real question for God. For Marion this inability to give a place to God is indicative of the idolatry of Heidegger's ontology. God is not to be thought in the light of Being because it makes God in accordance with the human measure.<sup>14</sup> *Dasein*, enclosed by the question of Being, can only lead to *ennui* which recognizes the vanity of Being, that is, its incapacity to attain its highest possibility. This listless boredom of humans as questions of Being may in the final analysis be the incentive to become interested in that which is beyond Being.<sup>15</sup> But philosophy can only give a formal possibility to pass beyond idolatry in search of the true God.

With relish Marion quotes Heidegger's 1951 statement, made in a Zurich interview:

Being and God are not identical and I would never attempt to think the essence of God by means of Being. ... If I were yet to write a theology... then the word *Being* would not occur in it. Faith does not need the thought of Being. When faith has recourse to this thought, it is no longer faith.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>13</sup> See P. Ricoeur, "Note introductive" in *Heidegger et la question de Dieu* (Collectif) (Paris: Grasset, 1980) 17.

<sup>14</sup> *God without Being* 69.

<sup>15</sup> Marion provides an interesting interpretation of the book of Qohelet as well as 1 Cor 7:29-31 to unpack the notion of boredom and the melancholy that come from a surfeit of Being (*God without Being* 119-138).

<sup>16</sup> *God without Being* 61.

For Marion God is beyond being. It is impossible to think God as Godself. Only God can reveal or give God. That is why Marion crosses out the word God with the St. Andrew's cross. It is the task of theology to witness to what comes to the human beyond the boundary of Being. For Marion the limit of Being is not disclosed by ontology but by what is other than Being. Only God can reveal why Being is not enough. And what comes to us from beyond Being can only be described as a pure personal gift of Godself — not the impersonal *es gibt* of Heidegger — but charity. This gift casts a backward glow over reality allowing reality to be saturated with the excess, abundance or superfluity of the divine. In the light of this excess reality is not a manipulable object available for control by knowledge but an icon of the invisible.<sup>17</sup> The icon never makes visible the invisible; it only hints at or gives resemblances of the invisible. The icon reverberates with the outflow from the excess beyond Being and continues to point at something beyond the visible. God is the unthinkable not because of an irrational trait but by reason of the excess that crosses out our thought.<sup>18</sup> For Marion charity is such a name or sign. Derived from 1 John 4:8: "God [is] *agape*" — which "remains, paradoxically, unthought enough to free ... the thought of God."<sup>19</sup>

The traditions Marion draws on for this radical alterity are Pseudo-Dionysius' treatise *On Divine Names*,<sup>20</sup> Bonaventure's reference to God as *id quo nihil melius cogitari potest*,<sup>21</sup> Descartes' distinction between capacity and capability (*homo capax Dei*),<sup>22</sup> and Levinas' injunction by the Other.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>17</sup> *God without Being* 17ff.

<sup>18</sup> *God without Being* 46.

<sup>19</sup> *God without Being* 47

<sup>20</sup> References throughout *God without Being*.

<sup>21</sup> "L'Argument relève-t-il de l'ontologie?" chapter 7 of *Questions Cartésiennes: Méthode et métaphysique* (Paris: PUF, 1991) 221-258.

<sup>22</sup> Marion has written a number of books on the philosophy of R. Descartes and, like Levinas, has found support for his position there. See his *Sur l'ontologie grise de Descartes* (Paris: Vrin, 1975); *Sur la théologie blanche de Descartes* (Paris: PUF, 1981); *Sur le prisme métaphysique de Descartes* (Paris: PUF, 1986); *Questions cartésiennes: Méthode et métaphysique* (Paris: PUF, 1991).

<sup>23</sup> Although Marion critiques the ontological difference invoked by Levinas, (see *God without Being* 85) the whole thesis of an "otherwise than Being" and the alterity of the other seems inspired by Levinas. See his "l'Intentionnalité de l'amour" in *Prolégomènes à*

What is of central concern is the exteriority of the love with which God loves us. For Marion this love has two traits: (1) It has no conditions, limits or restrictions. It leaves God free to give with an unbounded liberality and is not dependent on the constraints of the one to whom this gift is given. (2) Love gives to thought by its excess "to be transplanted outside of itself," without allowing this outside to capture or freeze it in a representation or a concept.<sup>24</sup> It is a gift that gives itself to thought only to end in wonderment and praise.

In this scheme of things philosophy and theology become incompatible discourses. Philosophy is incapable of pronouncing the name of God except as an idol. Underlying all of this is a resolute refusal of an analogy between these two discourses. In this Marion follows Heidegger. The God which Heidegger links with the destiny of Being and universal harmony is not the divine God but the centre or ground of the Fourfold. This 'God' is accessible to the poet. He calls this sort of theology "theological discourse on 'God.'"<sup>25</sup> But the God beyond Being or liberated from Being calls for theology which philosophers who remain attached to Being and beings cannot engage. If God is God, God cannot have anything to do with Being. This is why Marion goes so far as to bracket out the 'is' in 'God [is] love.'

This demand that theology leave out all reference to Being transforms the genre of discourse of theology into radical incommensurability but also incommunicability. Since God's coming has no paths that prepare the way for humans, it can only be disclosed in a language that erases the reference to Being. To express this Marion uses such intriguing metaphors as "the *aura* of his advent, the glory of his insistence, the brilliance of his retreat."<sup>26</sup> The language of Being has its radical counterpole in the language of revelation. Quite boldly Marion claims that "biblical revelation does not say a word about Being."<sup>27</sup> It provides "a believing variant

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*la charité* (Vesoul: Éditions de la Différence, 1986) 89-120; "L'autre différent" in *L'idole et la distance: Cinq études* (Paris: Grasset, 1977) 274-294.

<sup>24</sup> *God without Being* 47-48.

<sup>25</sup> *God without Being* 64.

<sup>26</sup> *God without Being* 46.

<sup>27</sup> *God without Being* 86. Marion has to resort to some fancy footwork in exegesis to eliminate the possibility of such a reference.

of being.”<sup>28</sup> But staying away from the idol requires utmost attentiveness. Studying Heidegger, Marion recognizes how ingenious the tentacles of Being are. Heidegger had proposed such a theology without Being but Marion judges him to have fallen short of his aim. Heidegger’s *summum bonum* remains, after all, *summum ens*.<sup>29</sup> Marion finds his cue for a Christian theology first of all in revelation which he has severed from any other discourse. The core ‘act’ of this radically other faith is the revelation of God in the cross of Christ. God consists of loving. God is encountered as the Good and theology’s task is to promote a living in accordance with this loving. Love is what sets *Dasein* free to pray, to praise, to adore and raises in humans an indifference to the vanity of Being. If there is a discourse that is commensurate to the gift of God’s love, it is the discourse of praise. “Predication must yield to praise.”<sup>30</sup> And outside of this jubilation and praise there is silence.

This irreducibility of the two discourses — so intensely argued by Marion throughout his works — relies on an understanding of the texture of the theological discourse. In one text Marion explains it as follows:

On what does Christian theology bear? On the event of the death and resurrection of Jesus, the Christ. How does this event, separated from us by the course of time and documentary distance, occur to us? It occurs to us through a word spoken by a man, *fides ex auditu*. What does this word say? Inevitably, it transmits a text: that of the originary kerygma, in stating it or by allusion, or else by deploying its dimensions following the complete New Testament. In any case, the announcement makes use of a text in order to tell an event. The word does not transmit the text, but rather, through the text, the event. The text does not at all coincide with the event; at best, it consigns the traces of it, as the veil of Veronica retains the features of Christ: by rapid imposition of the event that transpires. The evangelical texts fix literarily the effects of meaning and of memory on the witnesses of an unimaginable, unheard of, unforeseeable, and in a sense invisible irruption. The Christian event lets its traces on some texts, as a nuclear explosion leaves burns and shadows on the walls:

<sup>28</sup> *God without Being* 86.

<sup>29</sup> *God without Being* 62-73.

<sup>30</sup> *God without Being* 106.



an unbearable radiation. Hence the text does not coincide with the event or permit going back to it, since it results from it.<sup>31</sup>

Between the event and the text, the original and its trace, there is such distance that the text is not conceived as the bearer of the meaning of the event but, in the Levinassian mode, a trace of its absence. For Marion the original event as event is not only past (Levinas's 'passed by') but its impact in the texts of the New Testament is a sign of the inability of the event to communicate. The transference of the event into the meaning of a text cannot recuperate or reinstall the original event, it only demonstrates the vanity of any such attempt. Even a word-event in preaching would have to "bypass its text from beyond."<sup>32</sup> And what is this beyond? Marion says, the one in whom the event took place: Jesus, the Christ. The theological word is therefore an imitation of a person, a proclamation of the divinity of the Word toward the seeing of "the exegete of the Father (John 1:18)."<sup>33</sup> The hermeneutic centre of this event is the Eucharist:

The Eucharist alone completes the hermeneutic; the hermeneutic culminates in the Eucharist; the one assures the other its condition of possibility: the intervention in person of the referent to the text as center of its meaning, of the Word, outside of the words.<sup>34</sup>

Where in the Eucharist is this center of meaning found? In the Eucharistic action and in the *person* of the priest as he, in *persona Christi*, carries out the hermeneutic of the text. As a consequence, the theologian par excellence is the bishop because he occupies the centre of the hermeneutic site in the Eucharistic appropriation.<sup>35</sup> Not only must the theologian be *in persona Christi* but, not unlike Lonergan's religiously converted theologian, he must be imbued with holiness. A true theology can only speak out of the transformed centre of the theologian in whom the Word event has taken flesh.

<sup>31</sup> *God without Being* 144-145.

<sup>32</sup> *God without Being* 147.

<sup>33</sup> *God without Being* 149.

<sup>34</sup> *God without Being* 150-151.

<sup>35</sup> *God without Being* 152.

Jean-Luc Marion's defense of the ineffable Name of God from blasphemy and idolatry may have its own problems facing the charge of being meaningless because of its incommunicable centre. My point is not to defend his position but to derive from it an undeniable truth for theology: the reality of God as that which the greater (or: the better) cannot be thought. At first sight this seems to place Marion at the other end of the spectrum from Lonergan. Despite Lonergan's refusal to give up on the language of being can he account for the ineffability of God without at the same time giving up communicability?

#### DISCONTINUITY VERSUS CONTINUITY

Marion's effort to abolish the analogy of being operates on two levels. Negatively, he breaks down the possibility of an analogy at the level of Being, understood as *ousia*. God has nothing in common with Being. Positively, the task of theology is to actualize the encounter with God through the event of the death and resurrection of Jesus. Since the referent of theology is a person, the only appropriate analogy Marion is willing to consider is an analogy of charity. But the love of God, charity, and *Dasein*, the human existence unto death are so disparate as to make unthinkable any approach by way of analogy. Marion's unconditional relation is non-relational. It is only on God's terms. But it is also unthinkable because the saturated horizon of God retains in its excess the limit beyond which it cannot be thought.

The question must be raised, as Lonergan raised it, whether all reflection on being ends up as a reflection on being as *ousia*. Is there a way of thinking being that makes the impossible, the excess, available? Can there be a process of thinking which retains the tension between the available and the unavailable, the possible and the impossible, where the mediation of the infinite and the finite is not condemned to silence? Is there a mediating space between excess and the ordinary?

Lonergan's approach to God seems at first sight to be incapable of meeting the challenge of Marion's excess of the divine. For Lonergan the question of God lies within the human horizon. Within the horizon of the human questioning there is room for the divine. He made this explicit in the famous chapter 19 of *Insight*, in which he insists that the very structure

of raising questions implies the issue of the existence of unrestricted understanding. The same case can be made, he maintains, for questions of valuing. And for loving! The question of God is raised by unrestricted desire. For Lonergan this unrestricted desire has an immanent source. He calls this unrestricted desire being. He postulates however that a chasm exists between this unrestricted desire and human capacity to know, value, and love. It raises the questions but does not answer them. But before we enter into this infinite distance, let us not forget that Lonergan holds on to a continuity between this unrestricted desire and human desire. God lies within the purview of being identified as unrestricted understanding, goodness, and love. This means that for Lonergan there is a way of thinking together God and being. The link is provided by the desire to know, by intelligibility. In this context Lonergan speaks of the 'analogous intelligibility' of the mysteries of faith.<sup>36</sup> He places the mysteries of faith into an intermediate intelligibility between human intelligibility and divine intelligibility. What obviously ties them together is intelligibility. The conscious and intentional operations function as the analogues for creating a continuity between human intelligibility and divine intelligibility as they encounter one another in the intelligibility of the mysteries of faith (theology).

With all the provisos that such a notion of being entails it, since it is no longer metaphysical but experiential, Lonergan does not fully escape the issue of analogy and continuity and hence the provocations of Marion. The notion of analogy has had an interesting history in philosophy and theology. It is worth repeating because it can help to understand the continuity-discontinuity debate in the discourse on God. For this I will make use of the helpful analysis which Ricoeur has given of the history of *analogia entis*.

<sup>36</sup> *Method in Theology* 339. See also P. Byrne, "Analogical Knowledge of God and the Value of Moral Endeavor," *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 11 (1993) 103-135.

THEOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY:  
THE TRAVAILS OF ANALOGIA ENTIS

In Study Eight, "Metaphor and philosophical discourse" of *The Rule of Metaphor*<sup>37</sup> Paul Ricoeur takes on an issue which is central to our examination of Lonergan and Marion. He asks what sort of relationship can be established between a poetic and a speculative discourse. The significance of this question lies in the fact that for Ricoeur the poetic refers also to the discourse about God in the Bible whose literary structures he identifies as the structure of revelation.<sup>38</sup> Or to put it in other terms: can theology admit reflection on being without relinquishing the otherness of the God of revelation? What sort of theology would that be?

Ricoeur begins with the effort of Aristotle to break the hegemony of the poetic (the discourse of the theological) by establishing a properly philosophical discipline and proceeds from there to examine Thomas Aquinas' appropriation of Aristotle's effort for theology.

### 1. The aim of a philosophy of being: Aristotle

Section One of Study Eight gives a historical analysis of Aristotle's attempt to establish metaphysics as a discipline thinking the unity among the multiple meanings of being. If the meaning of being can be said variously, is there a discourse, he asks, that links them into one? Denying that being is used either univocally or equivocally in these discourses, Aristotle sought a third term which might order the relation between a first term (*ousia*, or substantial being) and the other categories of being such as quality, quantity, action and passion. He considered paronymy as well as analogy, a term borrowed from mathematics. In other words,

<sup>37</sup> *The Rule of Metaphor: Multidisciplinary studies of the creation of meaning in language*. Translated by Robert Czerny with Kathleen McLaughlin and John Costello, SJ (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1977) 257-313.

<sup>38</sup> Ricoeur has attempted to raise these questions in a number of texts. See among others "Foi et langage" in *Foi-éducation* 37 (1967) 17-35; "Philosophical Hermeneutics and Biblical Hermeneutics" in *Exegesis: Problems of Method and Exercises in Reading*, ed. Fr. Bovon, trans. D.J. Miller. (Pittsburgh: Pickwick Press, 1978) 321-339; "Biblical Hermeneutics," *Semeia* 13 (1975) 29-148; "Nommer Dieu," *Études théologiques et religieuses* 52 (1977) 489-508; "Toward a Hermeneutic of the Idea of Revelation," *Essays in Biblical Interpretation* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980).

analogy or any such term, is intended to establish a discipline whose aim it is to bring under one discourse the proportions of being in the various categories of being.

For Aristotle this discourse of the relation among the categories of being is not to be confused with metaphoric attribution. He charged Plato of using empty words and 'poetical metaphors' when he presented 'participation' as the unifying concept of being. Plato held that there are various levels of participation in being. For Aristotle this was an unfortunate mixing of two disparate discourses: "Philosophy must neither use metaphors nor speak poetically, not even when it deals with the equivocal meanings of being." (*Metaphysics* A 9,991 a 19-22) For Ricoeur Aristotle's inability or hesitation to find a proper term to unite these various ways of saying being is indicative of the shaky status of metaphysics. But the intent is clear. The mathematical notion of analogy of proportion was to provide metaphysics and the categories with scientific status. But this extension from the mathematical to the metaphysical was at the cost of a logical break and modern logicians tend to disqualify analogy as unscientific. Analogy ought to apply only to the equality and/or similarity among four terms. When the radical dissimilarity of the categories of being is linked through analogy into a non-generic unity, equality and/or similarity between substantial and accidental being is so stretched that analogy fails to explain anything.

Ricoeur insists that this search for a 'scientific' status for metaphysics which has persisted up to our time postulates a non-univocal and non-equivocal unity among the terms. The concept of analogy as a third term was intended to escape the ambiguity of the metaphor. Aristotle's effort was to create a non-metaphorical discourse. The non-univocal and non-equivocal way of approaching being in metaphysics by a third term, analogy, may not have resolved the dilemma of the unity or the dispersal of the meanings of being but at least manifested its semantic aim. However tentatively, it sought to establish a properly philosophical discourse distinct from the poetic.<sup>39</sup> For Aristotle these two discourses must not be confused. But this is precisely the challenge of theology. If it calls upon being and its categories, theology must recognize that it invokes

<sup>39</sup> *The Rule of Metaphor* 259-272.

speculative philosophy to break its poetic, metaphoric discourse out of its isolation by bringing to bear upon it the norms and standards of rationality.

## 2. *The aim of onto-theology: Thomas Aquinas*

Aquinas' move toward onto-theology in the thirteenth century follows the thrust of Aristotle's desire to establish a metaphysics. For Aquinas theology was to become a scientific discourse in accordance with the then current standards of rationality. He was determined to move theology out of the orbit of the poetic forms of religious discourse, even if this meant that theology would break its ties with biblical hermeneutics.<sup>40</sup> The tool he used was analogy, borrowed from Aristotle's attempted ordering of the categories of being. But the problems inherited from Aristotle became aggravated because analogy had to fulfil two functions simultaneously. It had, first of all, to assure the scientific status of theology by linking it with metaphysics. But it had to ground as well the vertical relations between Creator and creatures. Could analogy accomplish both the horizontal and vertical task and thus become the science of theology? Only if analogy could be extended beyond the mathematical towards a flirtation with a non-formal use of relation. Could Aquinas succeed in inserting the Platonic concept of participation (to describe the creature-Creator relationship) into the concept of analogy? Aristotle, as we saw, descried participation as a poetic and not a philosophical concept. As a consequence Aquinas' theological discourse was destined to become an interplay of analogy and metaphor. Did he succeed nevertheless in his erstwhile aim of creating theology as a science? Ricoeur does not think so.

At issue is the possibility of applying the concept of the analogy of being to the question of the divine names. Marion, as we saw, denies the possibility. He believes that such a strategy of a common discourse of God and creatures destroys divine transcendence. But onto-theology is born out of the desire to break out of the total incommunicability of meaning. To God, it argues, it must be possible to apply some type of attribution.

<sup>40</sup> *The Rule of Metaphor* 273.

And so, trying to find a third modality between the univocal and the equivocal, theology turned to the controversial analogical attribution.

It is controversial in theology because the analogical predication is based on an ontology of participation. Participation presumes that certain things possess partially what another possesses fully. When theology uses analogy to express the relation of the full participation to the partial, what sort of relation is predicated? Is it a common form that one possesses fully and the other partially? No, between God and creatures there is no common form. Being is not a genus encompassing God and creatures. God creates the participation of the creature and the created is only an imperfect image or representation of the divine. Consequently discourse on the divine names and discourse on creatures is discontinuous. There is no single form that encompasses both. Does that make impossible any discourse about God?

Aquinas turned to the distinction in Euclid's mathematics between proportion and proportionality. When one speaks of a relation of proportion there is a direct and definite relation of two quantities of the same kind (e.g. a number and its double). In a relation of proportionality there is no such direct relation between two quantities or terms (6 is to 3 as 4 is to 2). In applying these two types of analogy to theology, Aquinas is able to keep the infinite distance between God and creatures intact. Between God and creatures there exists a relationship of proportionality. What this means is that what the finite is to the finite, the infinite is to the infinite. No determinate relation is established; it remains purely formal. The infinite remains infinite, the finite remains finite.

The breakthrough for Aquinas came in his *De Veritate* and in the two *Summae*. To break down the purely formal nature of the relation, Aquinas transformed the static concept of being into an active one. Being is act! If a bond of participation between God and creatures exists, it is because of the creative act. And this relation of effect to cause makes analogy possible. But again, we might ask, what type of analogy? Aquinas is forced to base the analogy on efficient causality. But if God's efficient causality were univocal, it would engender only the same. If it were equivocal, there would be no similarity between the effect and the cause. So

also divine causality must be understood out of analogy. Aporia upon aporia!

Yet, Ricoeur believes the intentional aim of analogy to have been correct. What the struggle around the concept of analogy manifests is the refusal to accept the hegemony of poetic discourse. Analogy is approached with such delicate care precisely to avoid the ambiguity of the metaphorical. But it is precisely the fuzzification of analogy that brought Aquinas perilously close to doing exactly that. Analogy is closest to metaphor when it is defined as proportionality.

In proportionality attribution takes place in two ways: (1) symbolically such as when God is called 'lion,' 'sun,' etc. (*De Veritate* q. 2, art. 11) which is clearly metaphorical, and (2) transcendently such as when God is called 'being,' 'good,' and 'true.' In the *Summa theologiae* (I, q. 13, art. 6) Aquinas makes his clearest statement regarding metaphor. This is how Ricoeur summarizes question 13: "Whether names predicated of God are predicated primarily of creatures?"

The answer distinguishes two orders of priority: a priority according to the thing itself, which begins with what is first in itself, that is, God; and a priority according to signification, which begins with what is best known to us, that is creatures. The first type of priority governs analogy properly speaking, and the second, metaphor: "All names applied metaphorically to God are applied to creatures primarily rather than to God, because when said of God they mean only similitudes to such creatures." Metaphor indeed is based on 'similarity of proportion'; its structure is the same in poetic and biblical discourse. ... On the other hand, the name is said primarily of God, not of the creature, when we are dealing with names that aim at his essence: thus goodness, wisdom. The split, therefore, does not separate poetry from biblical language, but these two modes of discourse taken together form theological discourse. In theological discourse the order of the thing has precedence over the order of signification.<sup>41</sup>

Despite all efforts Aquinean theological discourse did not succeed in eliminating the poetic. Theology remains a composite discourse in which

<sup>41</sup> *The Rule of Metaphor* 278-9.



the metaphor and analogy operate side by side to interact and enrich each other.

Thus the word *wise* can be applied analogously to God, even when it is not said in a univocal fashion of God and men, because the signification presents different features in the two uses. In man, wisdom is a perfection 'distinct' from every other; it 'circumscribes' (*circumscribit*) and 'comprehends' (*comprehendit*) the thing signified. In God, wisdom is the same thing as his essence, his power, his being; the term therefore circumscribes nothing but leaves the thing signified 'as uncomprehended' (*ut incomprehensam*) and as exceeding the signification of the name (*excedentem nominis significationem*). Through this excess of meaning, the predicates attributed to God retain their power to signify without introducing any distinctions in God. ... In this sense one can speak of an effect of metaphorical meaning within analogy.<sup>42</sup>

For Ricoeur this means two things: (1) the difference between poetic and speculative discourse must be maintained in theology, and (2) analogy is an inadequate tool to unify both discourses. What is required, according to him, is a discourse that respects both. For him this hybrid discourse is hermeneutics. In order to show the desirability of such a move to hermeneutics one further issue needs to be considered. And that is the role of and the need for the speculative. I will not enter into the whole question of the status of rationality today, only the need for the speculative in theology.

### 3. *The validity of the speculative in theology*

The tenuousness with which speculative discourse created its own discourse might lead one to conclude with Heidegger that "the metaphorical exists only inside the metaphysical."<sup>43</sup> By this he means that the metaphorical transfer from the literal to the figurative is equivalent to the metaphysical transfer from the sensible to the non-sensible. This thesis is seductive particularly in a postmodern sense because it suspects that all reality is adrift on the metaphorical. It is the task of thinkers, according to

<sup>42</sup> *The Rule of Metaphor* 279.

<sup>43</sup> *The Rule of Metaphor* 282.

Derrida, to unmask the metaphorical that underlies all reality and to show that all reality shares in the circularity of the metaphorical. This circularity of reality is masked in ordinary discourse which, he maintains, is no more than a dead metaphor. Accordingly, the whole conceptual effort of thinking is no more than a sublation or, as he calls it, a 'raising' of a dead metaphor. Hence the slogan, the metaphorical exists only inside the metaphysical.

For Ricoeur this fusion of the metaphorical and the metaphysical overlooks the proper and distinct functioning of each discourse. The transgression in metaphors from the literal to the figurative and the transgression in metaphysics from the sensible to the spiritual, or from the visible to the invisible world are different operations.

Metaphoric transgression creates meaning through the clashing of two semantic fields in which a literal, everyday understanding of language through the interaction with another semantic field is forced to release a resemblance between these two fields which is figurative. The interaction of the semantic fields associated with 'God' and 'shepherd' in Psalm 23 forges a resemblance between God and the pastoral life creating a transposition of meaning. The metaphorical creation of a new meaning is therefore a work of language, a transference from one region, the literal, to the next, the figurative. God 'is not' a shepherd in a literal sense; only figuratively, not ostensibly, can the imagination create a similarity or resemblance between God and a shepherd.

This operation of metaphors is quite distinct from the metaphysical search for the common ground between the visible and the invisible. There the relation is one of *Aufhebung* or sublation of the visible or sensible in the invisible and the spiritual. With language metaphors can explore the interaction of the visible and the invisible. But it does not name the relation between these two realms. The naming calls for the resources of the speculative. It alone determines how a unity can be thought between these categories. The speculative relation is not the work of language, as Lonergan sees so well. It uses different resources. The speculative calls upon the resources of the mind reflecting upon its own activity.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>44</sup> *The Rule of Metaphor* 296.

But even though distinct, these two operations can interact and mutually enrich each other. For theology this interaction is indispensable. On the one hand, theology consists of an analysis of the metaphorical interplay such as we find in the various scriptural discourses, on the other hand, theology takes into account that the metaphorical interaction of the various ways of naming God in the Scriptures "gives rise to thought"<sup>45</sup> or asks for a conceptual complement. Here Ricoeur differs considerably from Lonergan. For Lonergan the "rituals, narratives, titles, parables, metaphors" of the scriptural text are within the realm of "undifferentiated consciousness." They must be supplanted by a religiously differentiated consciousness.<sup>46</sup> Lonergan welcomed the move from Jerusalem to Athens. The metaphorical must be superseded. For Ricoeur the initial enigma of biblical discourse — its metaphorical wealth — may not, indeed cannot, be suppressed. But that does not mean a suppression of the conceptual. The metaphorical goads the conceptual question with which it maintains a continuous dialectic.

And that is how Ricoeur's hermeneutics is a composite discourse. It can maintain intact the metaphorical discourse of the bible and its configuration of an order which Ricoeur, like Marion, identifies as a gift. He can give full attention to its language of revelation in a manner that Lonergan does not. And so like Marion Ricoeur discovers in the biblical revelation a proclamation of an economy of the gift which manifests itself in the text through a language and logic of excess and superabundance. For Ricoeur too this gift precedes the order of the word, of love and even of existence. The economy of the gift is an enigmatic order which receives expression not first of all in the intellectual order but in love, justice,<sup>47</sup> proclamation<sup>48</sup> and prayer.<sup>49</sup> But Ricoeur's economy of the gift also

<sup>45</sup> Paul Ricoeur, *The Symbolism of Evil*, trans. Emerson Buchanan (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969) 347.

<sup>46</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *Doctrinal Pluralism* (Milwaukee: Marquette University, 1971) 23-24.

<sup>47</sup> *Liebe und Gerechtigkeit. Amour et justice*, trans. Matthias Raden, ed. Oswald Bayer. (Tübingen: Mohr, 1990)

<sup>48</sup> See among others "Critique of Religion and the Language of Faith," *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* 18 (1973) 220.

differs from Marion's logic of charity. Ricoeur insists that the order of the gift maintains its link with the language of human existence. Marion's excessiveness of God allows only for obedience and adoration (eucharistic) condemning the attempt to relate it to common experience and thought as idolatry. For Ricoeur the biblical text in its closure and genres is not only a unique case of the metaphorization of discourse and as such a mediation of naming the divine but also a place of intersection of human experience and the gift. For him something of the event of God is transferred to the meaning given it in the text of the scriptures. The Word has left a trace of Self in a written text.<sup>50</sup> It is not erased. It is true that he insists that the word God is not to be equated with being. "The word *God* says more than this [being]: it presupposes the total context constituted by the entire gravitational space of the narratives, the prophecies, the laws, the hymns, and so on."<sup>51</sup> Similarly of Christ he says that Christ is the incarnated symbol of God as sacrificial love. Christ's death and resurrection "give the word *God* a *density* that the word *being* does not contain."<sup>52</sup> As such the biblical text, also for Ricoeur, forges a reference that it never completes: a Name that is given as not given, a Name that is refused as a name.<sup>53</sup>

However, the fact that the scriptural naming of God says more than being does not exclude the functioning of philosophy as an organon of theology. For in the final analysis unless the biblical symphony addresses us as the 'thing of the text' through its intersection with our ordinary discourse it remains without avail. As Ricoeur says in "Bible and the Imagination":

49 "Experience et langage dans le discours religieux," *Phénoménologie et théologie*. Présentation de Jean-François Courtine. (Paris: Criterion, 1992) 16.

50 "Experience et langage dans le discours religieux" 22.

51 "Philosophical and Biblical Hermeneutics," *From Text to Action: Essays in Hermeneutics, II*, trans. Kathleen Blamey and John B. Thompson (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1991) 98.

52 "Philosophical and Biblical Hermeneutics" 98.

53 "La paternité: du fantasme au symbole," *Le conflit des interprétations: Essais d'herméneutique* (L'ordre philosophique) (Paris: Seuil, 1969) 485-486.

These limit-expressions, in effect, would be nothing more than hollow words if, on the one hand, human beings did not have some experience of limit-situations such as evil and death and the strong desire to be freed from them. It is these fundamental experiences that the enigma-expressions come *to configure*. But they would still only be words, if, on the other hand, they were not preceded by religious representations borne by an older culture which these limit-expressions come to correct. It is the task of hermeneutics to correlate what the limit-expressions intend with human experience in its religious quality and with the available representations, that limit-expressions continue their course beyond a narrative.<sup>54</sup>

This capacity of the biblical text to refer to life forces Ricoeur to open once again the ontological question. For Ricoeur the form of the text, the interplay of the genres, the metaphorical approach to the Kingdom of God in the parables have an ontological bearing. A metaphor, as we stated above, creates a resemblance between two semantic fields. Even though the resemblance is not literally true, there 'is' a resemblance. The 'is not' (the Lord is not a shepherd) is not a denial of an 'is' (the Lord is my shepherd). Ricoeur calls metaphorical reference a split reference. Through the bringing together of two semantic fields, metaphors, such as the 'Kingdom of God,' create a figure of the real and give a glimpse of the divine. This surplus of meaning is the work of language contained within the narrative, prophetic, legislative, hymnic, sapiential forms of discourse. Through their discourse the ordinary, every-day understanding of the real becomes surcharged with another reality. Although available only in poetic discourse, biblical discourse configures a real world. For Ricoeur this configured world of biblical discourse is a being-said of reality.<sup>55</sup> The being that is said in the poetics of faith and which begs to be thought is not substantive being. It resembles most the categories of being as potentiality and being as actuality. Ricoeur suggests that the liveliness of the metaphorical discourse with its constant tension of semantic fields, where 'is' remains simultaneously 'is not'; signifies 'things in act'<sup>56</sup> or

<sup>54</sup> *The Bible as a Document of the University*, ed. H.D. Betz (Chico: Scholars Press, 1981) 71.

<sup>55</sup> *The Rule of Metaphor* 304.

<sup>56</sup> *The Rule of Metaphor* 308.

things as living or as actions. For Aristotle potency and act or being as potentiality and being as actuality pertain to the categories of being. If this interplay of the metaphorical with the speculative creates a new ontology, it is of a different kind than that entertained by the scholastic analogy of being. The more precise contours of such a theology require a better understanding of what Ricoeur calls the "two most radical meanings of being": potency and act.<sup>57</sup> As Ricoeur indicates more clearly elsewhere, particularly in *Oneself as Another*,<sup>58</sup> this ontology is not foundational ontology but rather a practical philosophy.

The meaning brought forth by the metaphor, however, is not yet a conceptual meaning. It has not yet tried to think the difference of the metaphorical resemblance in terms of the same. The metaphor exists only in the tension of meanings. It creates a conceptual need but is not yet a knowledge by means of concepts. It provides a sketch "without any conceptual determination."<sup>59</sup> It opens up a trajectory of sense beyond the ordinary — for theology towards the excess of sense — without the resources to clarify it. The tension of meaning between the 'is' and the 'is not' calls for a determination of meaning through means other than those available to the imagination. For this raising of the ontological vehemence of the figurative to thought the mind makes use of the resources of the conceptual field. The concept is, however, not the result of the ontological vehemence of the figural. The concept comes from another source separated by an *époché* from metaphorical discourse. The conceptual field is worked out by transcendental philosophy or speculative philosophy which mine the structures of the mind.

This *époché* protects the discontinuity of the poetic and the speculative. In fact, the task of speculative discourse is to contain the metaphorical.<sup>60</sup> Both are distinct levels and orders of discourse.

The speculative is what allows us to say that 'to understand a (logical) expression' is something other than 'finding images.' It allows us to say, further, that the scope (*visée*) of the universal is

<sup>57</sup> *The Rule of Metaphor* 307.

<sup>58</sup> Trans. Kathleen Blamey (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992).

<sup>59</sup> *The Rule of Metaphor* 299.

<sup>60</sup> *The Rule of Metaphor* 302.

something other than the display of the images that accompany it, illustrate it, even coincide with the 'distinction' of speculative features and the 'clarification' of the tenor of meaning. The speculative is the very principle of the disparity [*inadéquation*] between illustration and intellection, between exemplification and conceptual apprehension. If the *imaginatio* is the kingdom of 'the similar,' the *intellectio* is that of 'the same.' In the horizon opened up by the speculative, 'same' grounds 'similar' and not the inverse. In fact "wherever things are 'alike,' an identity in the strict and true sense is also present." What affirms this? Speculative discourse does, by reversing the order of precedence of metaphorical discourse, which attains 'same' only as 'similar.'<sup>61</sup>

Ricoeur concludes from this that if theology is to protect both the figurative discourse of the Bible and speculative discourse, it must be a dual discourse. That is why for him theology must be hermeneutical whose task it is to protect this sensitive interplay. If hermeneutics is an understanding of human existence and human existence entails the metaphorical, hermeneutics must mediate these thrusts. In theology hermeneutics regulates the intersection of the metaphorical and the speculative. Interpretation or hermeneutics is for him the mode of discourse which, on the one hand, is in the service of the 'same', that is, of rationalization, so that it can be presented in the form of a concept and, on the other, in service of the experience that underlies the double meaning of the metaphor. Hermeneutics then is a mediating discourse at the point of intersection of the great diversity of discourses all of whom are off-centered in relation to one another. In Ricoeur's schema, in other words, there ultimately remains a common ground where the metaphysical and the metaphorical/poetical encounter one another. Hermeneutics is a "composite discourse"<sup>62</sup> calling forth, on the one hand, the surplus of meaning, not said or seen before, and, on the other hand, the need for conceptualization of the surplus.

<sup>61</sup> *The Rule of Metaphor* 301.

<sup>62</sup> *The Rule of Metaphor* 303.

## THE ROLE OF PHILOSOPHY

Lonergan's relation of theology and philosophy is based on different premises than Ricoeur's. A transcendental theology, if such we are allowed to call Lonergan's approach, differs from a hermeneutical theology. However, both refuse the dichotomization of religious discourse and experiential discourse in the manner of Marion. But Lonergan has a different way of introducing the discontinuous in religious discourse than does either Marion or Ricoeur. Because of his principle of interiority the discontinuous manifests itself in the subjectivity of the religiously converted. He acknowledges a radical difference brought about by religious conversion. Although its psychological analogue is love (an analogous form of intelligibility), the unrestricted love that comes to me in religious conversion is not a love of my making. It is the absolute donation of Godself. Here Lonergan parallels Marion's excess of the gift of God. Religious conversion depends on the absolute priority of God's gift of grace. God initiates religious conversion. The anteriority and exteriority of God's love, Lonergan insists, effects a break in human existence and experience. As he tells us, the "converted and unconverted have radically different horizons."<sup>63</sup> Elsewhere he states:

That fulfilment is not the product of our knowledge and choice. On the contrary, it dismantles and abolishes the horizon in which our knowing and choosing went on and it sets up a new horizon in which the love of God will transvalue our values and the eyes of that love will transform our knowing.<sup>64</sup>

Or a bit further in the same text: "So the gift of God's love occupies the ground and root of the fourth and highest level of man's intentional consciousness."<sup>65</sup> Religious conversion affects and transforms the

<sup>63</sup> *Method* 271. Lonergan suggests that it is possible to do research, exegesis, and history in the field of theology without conversion. But then he admits that in the light of religious conversion the perspective of these activities changes radically. Marion is much less sanguine. Exegesis which does not keep alive the referent, the Word, becomes trivial because all that remains is the encounter of the text with its reader. For Marion the conversion must remain explicit in the theological endeavor. See *God without Being*, 145.

<sup>64</sup> *Method* 106.

<sup>65</sup> *Method* 107.



intellectual and moral conversion.<sup>66</sup> The 'dismantling' and 'abolishing' of previous horizons are clearly a language of discontinuity. His metaphors of abolished horizons brought on by the experience of 'mystery,' 'unmeasured love,' 'the holy,' or 'ultimate concern'<sup>67</sup> raises the same questions of radical difference as does Marion. But the radical difference is an existential, practical difference in the subject.

Sometimes Lonergan minimizes the break and radical difference. He uses terms of continuity such as 'process.' He talks of religious conversion as a foundation of theology operative at the fourth level of human consciousness, that is, at the level of deliberation, evaluation, and decision. As foundational it makes use of "the immanent and operative set of norms that guides each forward step in the process."<sup>68</sup> Along these lines he proposes that foundational methodology can pronounce generically on the validity and viability of the results of theology. It is based on the presupposition of the underlying notion of being as intelligibility.

But in practice what does such a foundational methodology with its notion of intelligibility mean for theology? Is intelligibility more than a mirage? The cognitional theory organizes the functional specialties of theology. But is that any more than an internal arrangement of the areas of theology? It does not yet touch the validity and viability question of theology. For that question to be answered we must look to the authentically religiously converted subject: the human self transformed by God's love. The religiously converted subject is foundational. The viability and validity of the results of theology must be sought in the theologian (as part of a community) who has deliberated about this love, evaluated it and made it his or her own through a decision. This intelligibility, however, is a transformed intelligibility. It has become imbued with the radical otherness and difference of the love of God. For Lonergan this becomes the new horizon of understanding oneself and reality.

Intelligibility becomes an analogous intelligibility. I presume this means that theological intelligibility participates in unrestricted intelligibility. The mysteries of faith give us, as he notes, an "intermediate,

<sup>66</sup> *Method* 268.

<sup>67</sup> *Method* 106.

<sup>68</sup> *Method* 270.

imperfect, analogous intelligibility.”<sup>69</sup> But analogous intelligibility, as Ricoeur suggests, is like begging the question. The proposed unity of intelligibility is so shot through with difference that it explains very little. It becomes manifest in Lonergan’s authentic theologian. Like Marion’s, Lonergan’s theologian can only be the saint, the ascetic, or the mystic. His paragon theologian is the saintly Thomas Aquinas who at the end of his life wanted to burn his theological work as worthless straw and leave us only the silence of his prayer. By what intelligibility, or by whose intelligibility does he pronounce on the validity and viability of the results of theology? Faced with a similar dilemma Marion designates the bishop as the theologian, particularly in the eucharistic assembly. Lonergan’s theologian is identified more broadly than Marion’s. It is the intellectually, morally, and religiously converted. For a foundational methodology not to lose meaning it needs a phenomenology or an empirics of the saint and the mystic in order to determine who qualifies to make theological decisions. Is Lonergan not in fact proposing a position quite similar to Lindbeck, for whom intelligibility and communicability is reserved for the community of authentic practitioners? For Lindbeck doctrines are the linguistic signposts for initiates but unintelligible to the outsider. The difference between Lindbeck (as well as Marion) and Lonergan lies in Lonergan’s insistence that for the religiously converted there is a sublation of intelligibility, not an incommunicable chasm. But beyond being a semantic aim, it is not clear what it means.

Placing Lonergan’s theology in a dialogue with Marion and Ricoeur leads to some interesting insights into his theology. Marion helps to accentuate the excess and superfluity of the religious in Lonergan’s proposal. Although Lonergan’s emphasis on method seems to downplay alterity, the Other which the self cannot contain, the economy of gift, the discontinuous is clearly present in a manner that often parallels Marion.

Ricoeur, on the other hand, raises the question of the role of philosophy — continuity as in the underlying notion of being — in theology. Ricoeur, as we saw above, critiques the semantic aim of the analogy of being in its attempt to create a unified discourse about God. For Lonergan philosophy is a distinct but inseparable organon in

<sup>69</sup> *Method in Theology* 343.

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theology. Through method it seems to promise intelligibility, but does it really? Method rationalizes the functional specialties not the content of theology. For instance, the interaction of theology and cognitional theory leads Lonergan to look to doctrines as articulated in the various branches of theology as the immediate focus of theology. Doctrines stand within the horizon of foundations and this is to provide the norm for selecting among the doctrines. What role does philosophy play in this? The truth or falsehood of the selection among doctrines is based more on conversion or lack thereof than cognitional theory. The relationship between the conversions and the cognitional theory seems therefore much like the relationship which Ricoeur says exists between poetic and speculative discourse. For Ricoeur these discourses are dialectically related. He introduces hermeneutics as a mediating discourse. For Lonergan the two discourses of conversion and the operations seem to form a seamless robe. But, as I have tried to show, their interaction is not without its problems. This may be endemic to any attempt to think together the human and the divine in a unified discourse of being. Despite its aporias the aim of such a discourse is justified.



## REVIEW ARTICLE

### WHAT DID LONERGAN REALLY SAY ABOUT AQUINAS'S THEORY OF THE WILL?

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#### 1. INTRODUCTION

LONERGAN'S FIRST GREAT scholarly undertaking was his effort to arrive at an accurate interpretation of Thomas Aquinas's developing position on divine grace and human freedom. The results of his research were set forth in his doctoral dissertation, *Gratia Operans: A Study of the Speculative Development in the Writings of St. Thomas of Aquin*,<sup>1</sup> and again, in completely rewritten form, in the journal *Theological Studies*.<sup>2</sup> Some two decades later the articles were published as the book *Grace and Freedom*.<sup>3</sup> Parting company with the standard commentators, Lonergan uncovered the interrelations that knit Aquinas's positions on motion, causality, providence, grace, human freedom, sin, and the dynamic metaphysical structure of the finite universe into a coherent view; this, in turn, enabled him to show that the apparent problem of grace and freedom, which had bedeviled generations of

<sup>1</sup> Hereafter referred to in footnotes as *GO*.

<sup>2</sup> "St. Thomas' Thought on *Gratia Operans*," *Theological Studies* 2 (1941) 289-324, 3 (1942) 69-88, 375-402, 533-578.

<sup>3</sup> *Grace and Freedom: Operative Grace in the Thought of St. Thomas Aquinas*, ed. J. Patout Burns, S.J. (New York: Herder and Herder, 1971); hereafter referred to as *GF*.

theologians from the sixteenth century onwards, was largely the product of wrong-headed concepts and badly-put questions.<sup>4</sup>

In a pair of recent works, Terry J. Tekippe has attacked certain aspects of Lonergan's interpretation of Aquinas. First in an article published in *Gregorianum*,<sup>5</sup> then more expansively in a book entitled *Lonergan and Thomas on the Will: An Essay in Interpretation*,<sup>6</sup> Tekippe argues that Lonergan has thoroughly misunderstood Aquinas's position on the meaning of freedom. If Tekippe is correct, then the theological synthesis brought to light in Lonergan's study of operative grace falls apart.<sup>7</sup> Hence, the plausibility of Tekippe's accusations needs to be evaluated with care: Has he actually exposed a fatal weakness in Lonergan's comprehensive position? Have Lonergan's credentials as an interpreter of Aquinas been damaged irretrievably?

After reading and rereading "An Analysis of Error" and *Lonergan and Thomas on the Will*, it has become evident to me that, despite the industry and seriousness with which Tekippe has gone about his task, the critique he presents is based on so faulty an understanding of Lonergan's interpretation of Aquinas as to render it practically irrelevant. In what follows I will try to indicate my reasons for this judgment.

<sup>4</sup> See J. Michael Stebbins, *The Divine Initiative: Grace, World-Order, and Human Freedom in the Early Writings of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), chapters 6-8. For a favorable appraisal of the independence of Lonergan's approach, see Gerard A. McCool, S.J., "History, Insight and Judgment in Thomism," *International Philosophical Quarterly* 27 (1987) 300.

<sup>5</sup> "Lonergan's Analysis of Error: An Experiment," *Gregorianum* 71 (1990) 353-374 (hereafter referred to as "Error").

<sup>6</sup> Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1993 (hereafter referred to as *LTW*).

<sup>7</sup> In connection with Aquinas's understanding of grace and freedom, which integrates "metaphysics and psychology, divine providence and human instrumentality, grace, and nature," Lonergan says that "synthesis in a field of data is like the soul in the body, everywhere at once, totally in each part and yet distinct from every part. But to be certain of the fact of synthesis is as easy as to be certain of the fact of soul. One has only to remove this or that vital organ and watch the whole structure tumble into ruin; the old unity and harmony will disappear, and in its place will arise the irreconcilable opposition of a multiplicity" (GF 143).

## 2. THE CENTRAL ISSUE

In both the article and the book Tekippe singles out a section at the beginning of the fifth chapter of *Grace and Freedom*, where Lonergan discusses four different influences that Aquinas overcame in reaching his fully developed understanding of the human will and its freedom. Tekippe focuses especially on what Lonergan has to say about the second of these influences and quotes the following paragraph (I have included all the references given by Lonergan in the original text):

More complex is the role played by the idea of freedom as non-coercion. This relic of the pre-philosophic period of medieval thought appears in the *Commentary on the Sentences*, but there any tendency to assert that the will is necessitated but not coerced and therefore free is rejected.<sup>8</sup> On the other hand, in the *De veritate*, the *De potentia* and the *Pars prima* one does find incidental statements to the effect that non-coercion makes necessary acts free: of necessity yet freely God wills his own excellence,<sup>9</sup> the Holy Spirit proceeds,<sup>10</sup> the human will tends to beatitude,<sup>11</sup> the demonic will is fixed in evil,<sup>12</sup> and perhaps the sinner is impotent to avoid further sin.<sup>13</sup> This lapse in the teeth of contrary theory was repudiated with extreme vehemence in the later *De malo* as heretical, destructive of all merit and demerit, subversive of all morality, alien to all scientific and philosophic thought, and the product of either wantonness or incompetence.<sup>14</sup> The Church agrees that it is an heretical view,<sup>15</sup> and the historian cannot but regard the relevant passages in the *De veritate*, the *De potentia* and the *Pars prima* as a momentary aberration.<sup>16</sup>

As Tekippe sees it, "The basic point of [this] paragraph is plain as a pike staff. Lonergan says that Thomas held one position on the will in his

<sup>8</sup> *In II Sent.* d. 25, q. 1, a. 4; cf. d. 28, q. 1, a. 2.

<sup>9</sup> *De ver.* q. 23, a. 4.

<sup>10</sup> *De pot.* q. 10, a. 2, ad 5m.

<sup>11</sup> *De ver.* q. 22, a. 5, ad 3m (ser. 2); cf. corp. and ad 4m (ser. 1); *ST* 1, q. 82, a. 1, ad 1m.

<sup>12</sup> *De ver.* q. 24, a. 10, ob. 5a and ad 5m.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.* a. 12, ad 10m (ser. 2).

<sup>14</sup> *De malo* q. 6, a. 1; cf. *De ver.* q. 22, a. 7.

<sup>15</sup> DB 1094 (DS 2003).

<sup>16</sup> GF 93-94; cf. GO 173-174.

middle period; and that he violently rejected this in later life."<sup>17</sup> But Tekippe is convinced that no such change ever occurred. He argues

that Thomas always, early and late, held that in certain instances, such as willing the final end, the will had an act which was at once necessary and free; that the statements in the *De veritate*, the *De Potentia* and the *Pars Prima* were not a "momentary aberration," but were Thomas' considered and final opinion; that Thomas was *not* rejecting this in article 6 of the *De Malo*; and that Thomas' position, finally, was not opposed to the teaching of the Catholic Church.<sup>18</sup>

This quotation indicates what Tekippe considers to be the cardinal issue, namely, whether Aquinas's theory of the will leaves any room for an act of willing that is both necessitated and free. Lonergan says that it does not; Tekippe says that it does.

Let me try to express this divergence of opinion more precisely. In his developed theory of the will, Aquinas explains human choice in terms of two distinct but interrelated acts of willing. One of these acts does not involve any choice; it is the act of willing the end, the act of desiring some good for its own sake. The ultimate end, the end to which all other ends are subordinate, is happiness or the good. Once the will is willing the end, it moves the intellect to deliberate, that is, to consider possible means of attaining the end and to rank them in accordance with their relative merit. The will then chooses among the alternatives presented to it by the intellect; this is the other act of the will, *electio* (choice), the act of willing means. The cause of the act of willing an end is not the will itself, but God.<sup>19</sup> That is to say, the will cannot cause itself to begin willing, to make the transition from a state of potency in which it is not willing at all to a state in which it is actually desiring some end; like any other cause, it cannot give itself a perfection that it does not yet possess. Only God, who as creator of the will is uniquely capable of acting within the will itself, can

<sup>17</sup> LTW xiii (the pages of the introduction are not numbered, but their numbering can be extrapolated from the pagination of the preface).

<sup>18</sup> LTW x; cf. "Error" 355.

<sup>19</sup> For Lonergan's discussions of the key Thomist texts, see GO 246-251 and GF 100-103.



initiate the will's activity. But once the will is actuated, once it is in a state of desiring some end, it can cause itself to will means to the end.<sup>20</sup>

This is the backdrop against which the two authors present their differing positions on the human will's freedom. According to Lonergan, the act of willing means is free because it is caused by the will itself; the act of willing the end is not free because it is caused not by the will but by God, despite the fact that this causing entails no coercion. According to Tekippe, however, the act of willing the end is also free, precisely *because* it is not coerced:

[W]hen the will wills the end, when it is determined by nature to that single goal [i.e., the ultimate end of happiness or the good], when it wills that happiness or that good necessarily, when God moves it to that end, and it does not efficiently move itself — in that case, can the will be free?

Yes, Thomas answers, because the will is following its own nature. It is created to be free, and to freely love the good; in willing the good as its final end, it is fulfilling its own noble destiny, and so is free. Yes, he says, because the will, in willing happiness and the good, is responding spontaneously out of its own inner nature; and what could be freer than to follow one's own inner law, to reach for one's highest realization? Yes, because the will is not being coerced from without; no one is "holding a gun to the person's head" and saying, You must will happiness — or else! And freedom is not opposed to its own inner spontaneities — indeed, how could freedom be opposed to its own inner nature? — but only to external coercion. And, since no external coercion enters here, the will is free.<sup>21</sup>

This is the nub of Tekippe's argument: the act of willing the end enjoys freedom from coercion ('freedom of inclination'), which is compatible with necessity, while the act of willing means enjoys both freedom from

<sup>20</sup> Tekippe's position seems to be that the act of willing the ultimate end is caused by God only once for each person, at the beginning of his or her moral life (*LTW* 21, 111). But in fact, Aquinas holds, whenever the will begins to will — for we are not constantly in a state of active willing (*ST* 1-2, q. 9, a. 3, ad 2m) — God must move the will to its act of willing whatever good is its end in that instance (*ibid.* a. 4. c.).

<sup>21</sup> *LTW* 5.

coercion and freedom from necessity.<sup>22</sup> In other words, each act of the will is free, but in its proper way. That both acts of willing must be free seems beyond question, since "[t]he nature of the will is to be free."<sup>23</sup>

For his part, Lonergan acknowledges that the act of willing the end, though caused by God and hence necessitated, is not coerced because it accords with the will's own inclination. For Aquinas, willing the end is "a natural motion"<sup>24</sup> and "a vital, immanent, voluntary act"<sup>25</sup> (where 'voluntary' means 'of the will,' not free'). There is no controversy on this point. The question is, does the absence of coercion suffice to make acts of willing the end free? If it does, as Tekippe contends, then why doesn't it also suffice to make acts of willing means free? Couldn't one use the notion of freedom as non-coercion to argue that human beings are free even though their choices are determined by God, or by the intellect, or by psychological or biochemical forces beyond their control? This is the kind of argument that seems to have been opposed so vigorously by Aquinas in *De malo* q. 6; it is an argument against which there is no adequate defense once one accepts the view that non-coercion suffices to make an act of willing free, even when that act is necessitated or determined by a cause other than the will. Hence, Lonergan refrains from using the terms 'freedom' and 'free' to describe any necessitated act of willing: "there is no question of freedom in the realm of ends."<sup>26</sup> If freedom means anything at all, it means freedom from necessity (that is, freedom of choice). Such freedom pertains only to acts of willing means.

In order to determine which author has come closer to an accurate account of the mind of Aquinas, we must examine the texts on which they build their respective cases.

<sup>22</sup> *LTW* 110-114; see esp. the chart at the top of p. 113. Due to lack of space I am leaving aside the third type of freedom, associated with "re-willing the end," that Tekippe purports to find in Aquinas (see also *LTW* 51, 52-53, 64).

<sup>23</sup> *LTW* 28; cf. 62-63.

<sup>24</sup> *GO* 289; cf. 299-300 note 147, 313, 320.

<sup>25</sup> "On God and Secondary Causes," *Collection* 65 = *CWL* 4 63; cf. *De ente supernaturali* §§ 89, 91.

<sup>26</sup> *GO* 232-233; cf. 237.

## 3. A REVIEW OF THE EVIDENCE

As Odo Lottin points out, the idea of freedom as non-coercion was widely employed by twelfth-century theologians to explain why God, the angels, and the blessed, all of whom necessarily will the good, and the demons, who necessarily will evil, are free.<sup>27</sup> The idea did not stem from an explanatory understanding of the will and its activity; it met a number of specific theological problems but failed to provide a convincing account of freedom in general. The inadequacy of this approach is attested to by the continuing attempts of theologians in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries to incorporate into their work a philosophically coherent definition of freedom, one that involves the undetermined judgment of the intellect and the non-necessitated choice of the will. Lonergan would consider Tekippe's use of freedom from coercion an attempt to resurrect an idea that was judged long ago to be inadequate. The texts he cites in his dissertation and *Grace and Freedom* are meant to show that Aquinas himself had to struggle to free his work from the influence of "[t]his relic of the pre-philosophic period of medieval thought."<sup>28</sup> Prior to the *De malo*, the notion of freedom as non-coercion continues to surface, sometimes in tension with the notion of freedom as the absence of necessity.

I have already indicated some of the relevant texts cited by Lonergan. In "An Analysis of Error," Tekippe offers brief remarks on twenty-six articles from Aquinas's works, including most of those to which Lonergan refers.<sup>29</sup> In *Lonergan and Thomas on the Will*, he reduces the total number to

<sup>27</sup> Odo Lottin, "Les définitions du libre arbitre au douzième siècle," *Revue Thomiste* 10 (1927) 230.

<sup>28</sup> GF 93. The idea persists in such later authors as Alexander of Hales, Albert the Great, and Bonaventure, "créent un courant d'idées dont sans doute saint Thomas d'Aquin pourra malaisément se dégager" (Lottin, "Le traité du libre arbitre depuis le chancelier Philippe jusqu'à saint Thomas d'Aquin," *Revue Thomiste* 12 (1929) 269.

<sup>29</sup> In noting the places where Lonergan discusses these texts, however, Tekippe does not include the following loci: *In II Sent.* d. 25, q. 1, a. 1: GF 96 note 28; *In II Sent.* d. 25, q. 1, a. 2: GF 51 note 31, 96 note 29, 98 note 42, 120 note 17; *De ver.* q. 22, a. 6: GF 95 note 19, 96 notes 27, 29; *De ver.* q. 24, a. 1: GF 51 note 31, 96 note 28, 108 note 79, 118 note 9; *De pot.* q. 3, a. 7 ad 14m: GF 51 note 31; *De malo* q. 16, a. 5: GF 48 note 27, 51 note 31, 54 note 45, 103 note 58; *ST* 1, q. 82, a. 2: GF 94 note 17, 96 note 29; *ST* 1-2, q. 10, a. 2: GF 96 notes 30-31 ("Error" 357-363). Some of the texts Tekippe mentions are cited by Lottin but not by Lonergan.

five (two of which do not appear in the earlier article<sup>30</sup>) and translates each text in full.

### 3.1 *The early and middle periods*

Lonergan admits that the notion of freedom as non-coercion can be found in the *Commentary on the Sentences*,<sup>31</sup> but he insists that in that work “any tendency to assert that the will is necessitated but not coerced and therefore free is rejected.”<sup>32</sup> The first text Lonergan cites is *In II Sent.*, d. 25, q. 1, a. 4, which asks whether *liberum arbitrium* (roughly, free choice) can be increased or diminished.<sup>33</sup> Tekippe claims that in this article “Free choice is clearly defined in terms of freedom from coaction [i.e., coercion], not freedom from necessity; and this is explicitly said to be the essence of free will.”<sup>34</sup> This indeed might seem to be the case, for Aquinas says, “This however is natural and essential to free choice: that it not be sufficiently forced by a compelling coercion [*ut sufficienter non cogatur coactione compellente*].”<sup>35</sup> But just what is this freedom from compelling coercion?<sup>36</sup> Is it the same freedom of inclination that Tekippe is advocating? The text suggests otherwise. The compelling coercion referred to in this article is simply a coercion that necessitates; hence, the corresponding freedom would seem to be freedom from necessity.<sup>37</sup> In the corpus of the article

<sup>30</sup> ST 1-2, q. 111, a. 2; 2-2, q. 23, a. 2. Both are from the later period.

<sup>31</sup> In his dissertation, Lonergan gives *In II Sent.* d. 25, q. 1, a. 2, as an example (*GO* 173-174 note 4; cf. *GF* 51 note 31).

<sup>32</sup> See above, page 3 and note 8.

<sup>33</sup> Tekippe says that this is “the only [text] Lonergan, in his published work, appeals to for the position of the early Thomas” (“Error” 357); but see above, note 8 and below, note 37.

<sup>34</sup> “Error” 357; cf. *LTW* 9-10. The point of the text is said to be that “free will can never be coerced from without” (*LTW* 11).

<sup>35</sup> Tekippe’s translation; see *LTW* 8.

<sup>36</sup> He refers to this same coercion as *coactio sufficiens*, *compulsio*, *coactio perfecta*, and *simpliciter coactio* (*In II Sent.* d. 25, q. 1, aa. 2, 5).

<sup>37</sup> Aquinas distinguishes here between a compelling (*compellens*) and an impelling (*inducens vel impellens*) coercion. The former exerts a necessitating influence (e.g., the putative ability of the intellect to determine the action of the will); the latter, a non-necessitating influence (e.g., a virtue or vice, which gives a person the tendency to engage in a certain kind of activity). The point of this distinction becomes especially clear when

Aquinas calls the freedom in question *libertas a necessaria coactione*, and in the response to the first objection, simply *libertas a necessitate*.<sup>38</sup> Similarly, in article 5 of the same question freedom from perfect (that is, compelling) coercion appears to be equivalent to freedom from necessity.<sup>39</sup> Thus, Tekippe's claim that in article 4 Aquinas conceives free choice in terms of freedom from coercion rather than freedom from necessity simply is not borne out by the evidence.

But rather than get bogged down in a debate over terminology, it will be more helpful to say a word about *In III Sent.* d. 27, q. 1, a. 2, a text touched on in a single sentence in Tekippe's article<sup>40</sup> but not discussed by Lonergan. Here Aquinas indicates that some acts of willing are free and others are not. He distinguishes between, on the one hand, an inclination of natural appetite, which has an external principle and so lacks freedom, since to be free is to be the cause of oneself (*liberum est quod est causa sui*); and, on the other, an inclination of voluntary appetite, which is free because its principle is internal. But he goes on to state explicitly that the inclination by which human beings will happiness is a *natural* appetite; hence, one must conclude that acts of willing the ultimate end are not free. Yet, Aquinas continues, there is an aspect of the will that is free, for the will has a further inclination — presumably he is referring to *electio* — that is caused by the will itself. This sounds much closer to Lonergan's account than it does to Tekippe's.

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Aquinas says that the passions of sin (*passiones peccati*) can never compel *liberum arbitrium* to sin, for then sin could not be imputed to the sinner; instead, they merely give an inclination or disposition to the commission of further sin (see *In II Sent.*, d. 25, q. 1, a. 4, ad 4m; cf. a. 5 c.). See also *In II Sent.* d. 28, q. 1, a. 2, where Aquinas labels the view that human beings are impelled to sin by a kind of evil nature within them as an error that "entirely excludes *liberum arbitrium* and the nature of reason and of will."

<sup>38</sup> Tekippe suggests that Aquinas "uses [the term *libertas a necessitate*] loosely (following the Lombard) to mean 'freedom from the necessity of coaction'" ("Error" 357-358), but neither this article nor the articles that form its immediate context support Tekippe's conclusion that the freedom in question is what he calls 'freedom of inclination.'

<sup>39</sup> See corpus and ad 1m, which employ the threefold scheme of *libertas a necessitate*, *a peccato*, *a miseria*. See also *De malo*, q. 6, a. 1, ad 23m, where *libertas quae est a coactione* is apparently synonymous with *libertas a necessitate*.

<sup>40</sup> "Error" 359.

Less needs to be said about the middle period, where, Lonergan says, "one does find incidental statements to the effect that non-coercion makes necessary acts free."<sup>41</sup> To the extent that Tekippe succeeds in finding references to freedom as non-coercion in the texts of this period, he bolsters Lonergan's interpretative hypothesis.<sup>42</sup> The uneasy juxtaposition of the prephilosophical and philosophical definitions of freedom at this point in Aquinas's thought can plainly be seen in *De ver.* q. 22, a. 5. Aquinas explains that the willing of the ultimate end is necessitated but not coerced and, further, that since the will itself is a kind of inclination, it has an inclination toward whatever it wills — a statement that might appear suggestive to someone wanting to claim that the human will is free even though it is determined. But the same article also presents an analysis of the will reminiscent of the earlier one in *In III Sent.* d. 27, q. 1, a. 2. Here Aquinas argues that, just as human beings make use not only of their reason but also of their senses, which they share with the animals, so the will has not only a voluntary but also a natural aspect. The appetite for the good is a natural appetite; that is, it pertains to the will insofar as the will is "a kind of nature" which, like any other created being, is oriented by God to its appropriate good or end. But beyond this the will has another appetite by which it seeks a good "according to its [i.e., the will's] own determination, not by necessity";<sup>43</sup> this appetite pertains to the will in so far as it is specifically a will and not just a nature. As in the earlier work, this analysis appears to be pointing, though less explicitly, toward what Lonergan takes to be Aquinas's mature position on the freedom of the will.<sup>44</sup> At this point, however, the tension between the two definitions of freedom remains unresolved.

<sup>41</sup> GF 94; see above, § 2; cf. GF 51 note 31.

<sup>42</sup> In his article, Tekippe comments on thirteen texts from the *De veritate*, the *Summa contra gentiles*, the *De potentia*, the *De malo*, and the *Pars prima* ("Error" 359-363); in his book, *De ver.* q. 22, a. 5, serves as the representative text of this period (LTW 11-21).

<sup>43</sup> Where I have "according to its own determination," Tekippe has "according to its specific difference" (LTW 16). The text reads "secundum propriam determinationem."

<sup>44</sup> For a statement of the mature position, see ST 1-2, q. 10, a. 1.

### 3.2 *The later period*

Lonergan sees a breakthrough of sorts occurring in *De malo* q. 6, a. 1, where Aquinas explicitly and “with extreme vehemence” repudiates the notion of freedom as non-coercion.<sup>45</sup> It is with regard to this article that Tekippe launches his sharpest attacks. Lonergan maintains that in the *De malo* Aquinas rejects the compatibility of necessity and freedom *simpliciter*. But Tekippe goes to great lengths to show that Aquinas is speaking only about *electio* and hence is denying only the compatibility of necessity and the freedom from necessity that pertains to the act of willing means, while his position regarding the freedom of the act of willing the end remains unchanged.<sup>46</sup> This strikes Tekippe as crucial because he is convinced that Lonergan could say what he says about the *De malo* article only if he thought that Aquinas was speaking of the will in general, and not of choice in particular.<sup>47</sup> In other words, Tekippe claims that Lonergan simply overlooks the plain meaning of the text. “One can only conclude,” he avers, “that Lonergan read but a part of the article ... (it is a long and difficult one), or that he read the whole carelessly. Otherwise he would hardly have missed that the very article on which he builds his case repeatedly contradicts his thesis. Either possibility implies a certain hastiness.” Tekippe suggests that this haste might be explained by the fact

<sup>45</sup> See above, page 3. From this period Tekippe also considers *ST* 1-2, q. 6, a. 4; q. 10, a. 2; 2-2, q. 24, a. 11; 3, q. 18, a. 1 (“Error” 363, 365). While all of these have something to say about the compatibility of necessity and willing, they do not show such willing to be free. In the book Tekippe replaces these texts with *ST* 1-2, q. 111, a. 2, and 2-2, q. 23, a. 2 (*LTW* 24-31, 59-66), which provide a basis for his subsequent discussion of justification.

<sup>46</sup> *LTW* 48-57, 67-73; “Error” 364.

<sup>47</sup> Tekippe says, “The crucial difference between [his own and Lonergan’s interpretation] is whether Thomas is speaking of willing the means, or the will in general, regarding end *and* means. If Thomas is talking about choosing the means, and rejects a necessitated freedom, he is merely saying what he has always said: in choosing means, the will is contingent and free. But if Thomas is speaking of the will in general, and rejects a necessitated freedom, then he is criticizing his earlier position, and willing the end must be either contingent and free, or necessary and non-free” (*LTW* 71; cf. 49). He reconstructs Lonergan’s reasoning as follows: “Rather than concluding that willing the end is now contingent and free, [Lonergan] supposes that it is necessitated, and so not free. In the earlier work, then, Thomas held that willing the end was free, though necessitated, because non-coerced; now he sees the difficulty of that position, rejects the sufficiency of non-coercion and concludes, since willing the end is necessary, that it is not free” (*LTW* 68).

that Lonergan's dissertation research was cut short by the outbreak of the Second World War, or by "a certain impatience with the tedious work of interpreting texts."<sup>48</sup>

Now it is glaringly obvious that the article, which is entitled *De electione humana, seu libero arbitrio*, is about the act of willing means — so obvious that the many pages Tekippe devotes to demonstrating this fact are superfluous, so obvious that anyone familiar with Aquinas who failed to grasp this fact would be guilty not merely of haste but of outright stupidity. A hypothesis that stakes everything on the conviction that one has caught Lonergan out in a remarkable act of dull-wittedness is a hypothesis that bears further probing.

As it turns out, the conclusion Lonergan draws from *De malo* q. 6, a. 1, can be accounted for without positing the occurrence of any such misunderstanding. Here is Aquinas's summary of the argument he is attempting to refute:

[S]ome have maintained that the human will is moved by necessity to choose something, yet they did not hold that the will was forced. For not everything that is necessary is violent, but only that whose principle is extrinsic [*id cuius principium est extra*]. Hence, some natural motions are necessary, yet not violent: for what is violent is opposed to what is natural as well as to what is voluntary, because the principle of both of these is intrinsic, whereas the principle of what is violent is extrinsic. But this opinion is heretical ...<sup>49</sup>

Note that this is the identical argument used by Aquinas in some of his earlier writings to show that non-coercion makes necessary acts free.<sup>50</sup>

There is no question that in *De malo*, q. 6, Aquinas's chief concern is to safeguard freedom of choice, the non-necessitation of the act of willing means. But this is Lonergan's principal concern as well. Why does the church agree that the view expressed by Aquinas's adversaries is heretical? Because, according to the text Lonergan cites, it can be used to deny the freedom of choice that is a prerequisite for considering human

<sup>48</sup> "Error" 369-370.

<sup>49</sup> *De malo*, q. 6, a. 1 c.

<sup>50</sup> See the texts cited above in notes 9-13.



acts to be meritorious or non-meritorious.<sup>51</sup> Lonergan is not, as Tekippe supposes, trying to make Aquinas's text say something it does not actually say.

But the fact that the *De malo* article deals primarily with the willing of means does not preclude it from having implications for the willing of the end. For if the adversaries' argument cannot demonstrate the compatibility of necessity and freedom in the former act, then neither can it demonstrate their compatibility in the latter. One may attempt to resist this parallel by insisting that different kinds of willing are characterized by different kinds of freedom. But how does non-coercion qualify as freedom in any serious sense? It is a minimalistic notion, a tautological statement about the nature of the will: the will has an inclination toward whatever it wills, because to will something is to have an inclination toward it; hence, it is impossible that the will ever be coerced.<sup>52</sup> Moreover, as the article from the *De malo* shows, there are some who will not hesitate, as Tekippe himself does, to take the logically consistent step of claiming that the necessity of *any* act of the will is no bar to freedom. This potential for such a development is evident in Tekippe's references to freedom from coercion as the "essence," the "minimum condition," the "minimum requirement," the "bottom line" of free will.<sup>53</sup>

By contrast, Lonergan offers a nuanced but compact summary of Aquinas's understanding of human freedom in terms of freedom from necessity:

A free act has four presuppositions: (A) a field of action in which more than one course of action is objectively possible; (B) an intellect that is able to work out more than one course of action; (C) a will that is not automatically determined by the first course of action that occurs to the intellect; and, since this condition is only a condition,

<sup>51</sup> See above, note 15. The text condemns the following error attributed to Cornelius Jansen: "In the state of fallen nature, freedom from necessity is not required in man for merit and demerit, but freedom from coercion suffices."

<sup>52</sup> E.g., *In II Sent.* d. 25, q. 1, a. 2; *De ver.* q. 22, a. 5; *ST* 1, q. 82, a. 1; 1-2, q. 6, a. 4. See also Charles Boyer, *Tractatus de gratia divina*, 2d ed. (Rome: Gregorian University, 1946) 217.

<sup>53</sup> *LTW* 9. "If anything qualifies as the 'essence' of freedom in Thomas, it is the freedom of inclination, which is present in every state of freedom as a minimum requirement" (*LTW* 114).

securing indeterminacy without telling what in fact does determine, (D) a will that moves itself. All four are asserted by St. Thomas but with varying degrees of emphasis at different times ... Obviously, to select one of these four elements and to call it the essence of freedom, in the sense that freedom remains even though others are eliminated, is not the doctrine of St. Thomas.<sup>54</sup>

These four elements are ontological causes, each of which is relatively remote or proximate with respect to the occurrence of the free act. In this series, "the first cause is the objective possibility of different courses of action; the second cause is the intellect that knows this objective possibility; and the proximate cause is the will that selects, not because it is determined by the intellect, but through its own self-motion."<sup>55</sup> Without this self-motion — "the *dominium sui actus* [dominion over its act], the ability to produce or not produce this act" — there is no freedom.<sup>56</sup>

### 3.3 Reversal or clarification?

According to Tekippe, Lonergan construes *De malo* q. 6 as representing a dramatic about-face, "a momentous change" in Aquinas's thinking.<sup>57</sup> But the passage in *Grace and Freedom* to which he refers says

<sup>54</sup> GF 95, 96; cf. GO 177. The impossibility of coercion, which receives no mention here, is less a presupposition or condition of willing freely than an *a priori* characteristic of willing in general.

<sup>55</sup> GF 97. Lonergan elaborates on the same point in his dissertation: "If, however, one should ask which of the four reasons for freedom is the essential reason, it should seem that the last is at once necessary and sufficient. The first three are *causae cognoscendi* [causes of knowing], and they may be present, as in the case of the demons with respect to the choice between good and evil, without the will being, here and now, free. But the last, the will's ability to move or not move itself, is the *causa essendi* [cause of being]; it is the *primum quoad se* [first with respect to itself] from which the other three can be deduced as conditions; it solves the ultimate problem in the *via inventionis* (way of discovery) and so is the first proposition in the *via doctrinae* (way of teaching); it defines, not the *liberum arbitrium* which is the global difference between rational and irrational creatures, but free will, which is the central faculty in the process of free self-determination" (GO 178-179).

<sup>56</sup> GO 179.

<sup>57</sup> LTW 73. "Lonergan says that Thomas held one position on the will in his middle period; and that he violently rejected this in later life" (LTW xiii). "According to [Lonergan's] interpretation, Thomas at this point rejects everything he says in the previous 23 texts [*De malo* q. 6, a. 1 is the twenty-fourth considered by Tekippe in his article], suddenly seeing the pitfalls of allowing a compatibility of freedom and necessity"

only that Aquinas vehemently repudiated an opinion that had appeared in some of his prior works incidentally and in tension with his more usual theory. This is not a momentous change but only a clarification of an ambiguity that Aquinas had tolerated in his earlier writings.<sup>58</sup> Lonergan sketches the career of the idea of freedom as non-coercion in Aquinas's thought:

In the *Sentences* he took over the current and popular notion that freedom was the absence of coercion: *In II Sent.* d. 25, q. 1, a. 2 proves that the will is not forced with the same reason that *ST* 1-2, q. 10, a. 2 proves that the will is not determined by its object. In the *De veritate*, ... he took over the psychological theory of the necessity of grace, that is, the Augustinian tradition on *libertas a coactione, a peccato, a miseria*. In this enormous movement of thought, the idea of liberty as non-coercion slipped into his thought, was used systematically, but in no way falsified his position. When in writing the *De malo* he adverted to the use to which this idea could be put, he rejected it with the utmost vigour.<sup>59</sup>

Hence, "it would seem that non-coercion was simply a mode of speech in St. Thomas' earlier works; it was common enough in his predecessors; and certainly it was not a true supposition of his position ..."<sup>60</sup> Lonergan does not contend that Aquinas abruptly shifted from one extreme position to another. What he claims to find instead is a process in which historical circumstances eventually forced Aquinas to address a particular issue with a degree of precision that, while lacking in his previous writings,

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("Error" 363). Daniel Westberg also appears to exaggerate the magnitude that Lonergan attributes to the change that occurs in this article, claiming that Lonergan "completely polarized the difference supposedly to be found in Thomas" ("Did Aquinas Change His Mind about the Will?" *The Thomist* 58 [1994] 44).

<sup>58</sup> Lonergan says that "St. Thomas's thought on the issue treated in [*Gratia Operans*] cannot but be enigmatic," in part because his "[t]hought on liberty suffers from its starting-point a distorting bifurcation" (*GO* 336).

<sup>59</sup> *GO* 173-174 note 4. Note that on page 173 Lonergan says that the notion of freedom as non-coercion is used 'systematically,' not incidentally, in the *De veritate*. The stronger expression is misleading, and perhaps that is why it does not appear in *Grace and Freedom*. Note, too, that the last sentence of the quotation indicates that, contrary to Tekippe's expectation, he and Lonergan agree as to what Thomas was trying to accomplish in writing *De malo* q. 6, a. 1 (see *LTW* 56, 72).

<sup>60</sup> *GF* 51 note 31.

entailed only minimal consequences for his understanding of the will: "[T]hrough the denunciation in the *De malo* necessitates a modification of earlier forms of expression, no position need be changed."<sup>61</sup> In short, Tekippe misinterprets Lonergan's interpretation of the significance of *De malo*, q. 6, for the development of Aquinas's doctrine of freedom.

#### 4. OTHER ELEMENTS OF TEKIPPE'S CRITIQUE

In addition to the notion of freedom as non-coercion, Tekippe considers three other influences that, according to Lonergan, Aquinas had to shake off in order to work out his developed theory of the will.<sup>62</sup> He attempts to refute Lonergan's account on each point. While the issues at stake are not unimportant, they play a relatively small role in the overall critique; this fact and limitations of space force me to refrain from giving them anything but the most cursory mention.

(1) Lonergan contends that Aquinas rejected "St. Albert's view that *liberum arbitrium* was a third faculty distinct from both intellect and will."<sup>63</sup> Tekippe agrees with Lonergan in his article, but disagrees with him in his book: first, because what Aquinas rejected was the notion that *liberum arbitrium* is a distinct potency, not a distinct faculty; second, because Lonergan's formulation gives the false impression that Aquinas

<sup>61</sup> GO 173. Lonergan appends an explanatory footnote: "The point may be proved by enumeration. First, God's will of his own goodness, the procession of the Holy Spirit, and man's natural appetite for beatitude, are henceforth [not] said to be necessary and free: this change has no ulterior implications. Second, the immutable will of the demons is absolutely free *in causa*, for they freely chose to rebel; it is now free in the choice of this or that evil act, but necessitated in the choice of some evil. That is the position of *De malo* q. 16, a. 5. No more than that was asserted, really, in *De ver.* q. 22, a. 10. Third, the impotent will of the sinner is absolutely free *in causa*; it is free to sin or not in any particular act; it will necessarily commit some mortal sin. That is the position of *ST* 1-2, q. 109, a. 8; that is precisely what is asserted in *C. gent.* 3, c. 160, fin.; and no more is asserted in *De ver.* q. 24, a. 12" (GO 173 note 4). I am hypothesizing that Lonergan inadvertently left out the word 'not' when he typed his dissertation (perhaps it belongs instead before the word 'free'); unless the word is inserted, the sentence does not indicate any change at all and contradicts everything else Lonergan says about Aquinas's later position on the willing of the end. (The placement of the word 'said' is also unclear in Lonergan's typescript).

<sup>62</sup> LTW chapter 6; "Error" 368-369.

<sup>63</sup> GF 93; cf. GO 174. The rejection occurs in *In II Sent.* d. 24, q. 1, aa. 1-3.

came to identify *liberum arbitrium* with the will alone, when in fact he identifies it with the will as ordered in a certain way to the intellect.<sup>64</sup>

The first objection presumes that 'potency' and 'faculty' meant two different things to Albert; but Lottin indicates that, in the sense in which the terms are used in this context, they are synonymous.<sup>65</sup> Furthermore, while Tekippe makes much of the fact that Aquinas frequently quotes the Lombard's definition of *liberum arbitrium* as 'a faculty of will and of reason,' this says nothing about whether he accepts or rejects the notion of *liberum arbitrium* as a third, distinct faculty. What matters is that Albert held, and Aquinas rejected, the idea that the *object* of *liberum arbitrium* was distinct from the objects of intellect and will.<sup>66</sup> As to the second objection, Lonergan's summary of the four elements in Aquinas's notion of freedom<sup>67</sup> makes it abundantly clear that he does not conceive of free choice as being constituted by the will operating in isolation from the intellect.

(2) Lonergan says that in Aquinas's late work the term *liberum arbitrium* loses its earlier place of importance: "[I]t persisted until the *Pars prima* with distinct questions devoted to it and to the will; but in the *Prima secundae* there are sixty-three articles in a row, and though all treat of the will, the term, *liberum arbitrium*, fails to appear in the title of a single one."<sup>68</sup> Tekippe raises questions about this point in his article; in his book he presents a series of four statistical word-studies of the occurrence of the term *liberum arbitrium* in various works and parts of works.<sup>69</sup> The first three, he admits, tend to lend support to Lonergan's hypothesis because they show a decline in usage of the term over time, but the fourth gives a different result: throughout Aquinas's work, in particular sections of deal-

<sup>64</sup> LTW 115-118; but cf. "Error" 368.

<sup>65</sup> Lottin, "Le traité du libre arbitre" 250; cf. idem, "Liberté humaine et motion divine," *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 7 (1935) 52. As Tekippe acknowledges (LTW 116 note 3), Lonergan uses the term 'potency' in his dissertation (GO 174); in *Grace and Freedom* he follows Lottin in using the term 'faculty' (e.g., "Le traité du libre arbitre" *passim*).

<sup>66</sup> Lottin, "Le traité du libre arbitre" 250-251.

<sup>67</sup> See above, quotation at note 54.

<sup>68</sup> GF 93. Lonergan cites *De ver.* qq. 22 and 24, ST 1, qq. 82 and 83, and ST 1-2, qq. 6-17.

<sup>69</sup> "Error" 368; LTW 118-129.

ing with subjects related to the will or freedom, the frequency of occurrence of *liberum arbitrium* varies in accordance with the topic being treated.

But this is less threatening to Lonergan's position than Tekippe assumes. Lonergan himself says of certain works prior to the *Prima secundae* that Aquinas tends to treat the will and *liberum arbitrium* in separate questions;<sup>70</sup> thus, it is no surprise that Tekippe can show, for example, that there is a low occurrence of the term in *De veritate* q. 22 and *Summa theologiae* 1, q. 82, and a relatively high occurrence in questions 24 and 83, respectively, of the same works. That coincides with the point Lonergan himself makes: the former pair of articles deals primarily with the will, the latter pair with *liberum arbitrium*.<sup>71</sup> What is more, "Not only does [Aquinas] write about [*liberum arbitrium* and the will] in separate questions, but he treats freedom principally when he treats *liberum arbitrium*, and then he speaks not of the liberty of the will but of the liberty of man";<sup>72</sup> and as long as one attributes liberty to man generally, it is not yet clear exactly in what that liberty consists.<sup>73</sup> Although Aquinas did not hold *liberum arbitrium* to be a third potency, the separate treatment of the term tended to hinder Aquinas's formulation of an accurate theory of human freedom; as Lonergan says, "It took the great controversy in Paris over the passivity of the will to break down the inertia of the distinction of will and *liberum arbitrium* in the mind of St. Thomas, and bring him to explain how the will is active and how precisely the will can act or not act no matter what the object presented may be."<sup>74</sup> Despite the anomaly of *Summa theologiae* 1-2, q. 113, where the term *liberum arbitrium* occurs rather frequently, Tekippe's criticism lands wide of the mark.

<sup>70</sup> GO 174.

<sup>71</sup> GO 174 note 7. The same holds true for the two groups of texts from the *Commentary on the Sentences* that appear in Tekippe's fourth table and graph: *liberum arbitrium* appears with a much greater frequency in *In II Sent.* dd. 24-25, where the topic of many of the questions is *liberum arbitrium*, than in *In II Sent.* dd. 38-41, where Aquinas treats of topics related to the will.

<sup>72</sup> GO 174, 175 note 8.

<sup>73</sup> GO 175.

<sup>74</sup> GO 176.

(3) Lonergan states that Aquinas "overcame ... the Aristotelian doctrine that the will is a passive potency" moved by the intellect.<sup>75</sup> This development culminated in the analysis expressed in the *De malo* and the *Prima secundae*, according to which the intellect specifies the object of the will, but the actual willing of that object as a means is caused by the will itself.<sup>76</sup> Tekippe calls this analysis into question.<sup>77</sup> He argues that "Thomas never sets aside Aristotle's idea that the object moves the appetite."<sup>78</sup> Early texts attribute an active function to the will, and later texts continue to conceive of the will as passive in relation to certain objects. Furthermore, the distinction between the specification and exercise of the will appears in works earlier than the *De malo*.<sup>79</sup> Finally, Lonergan mistakenly says that Aquinas's mature view is that the intellect is the first mover of the process of willing; but Aquinas actually holds that God functions in that role.

Once again, Tekippe's criticisms do not really touch Lonergan's interpretation, which does not envision Aquinas moving from one extreme conception of the will to another. As Lonergan notes, "It would be inexact to think that St. Thomas held a purely passive or a determinist theory of the will at any time. I think the accurate statement is that in the earlier works he does not attempt to explain how it is that the will causes and determines its own acts,"<sup>80</sup> with the result that freedom tends to be explained primarily in terms of the non-necessitated judgment of the intellect. Similarly, we have already seen that the will retains important aspects of passivity in Lonergan's interpretation: it is moved to will the end, and its object is specified by the intellect. The intellect is first mover only in the sense that the will can will an object only if the object is first

<sup>75</sup> GF 94.

<sup>76</sup> GF 95, 101-102, 130; cf. GO 240. See *De malo* q. 6, a. 1, and ST 1-2, q. 9, aa. 1, 3.

<sup>77</sup> LTW 129-137; "Error" 368-369.

<sup>78</sup> LTW 130. "[I]t is Lonergan himself who says ... that the later Thomas abandons a passive theory of the will for an active one" (LTW 105). Westberg also takes Lonergan's statement to mean that Aquinas utterly rejected any notion of the will as passive ("Did Aquinas Change His Mind?" 44-47).

<sup>79</sup> For Lonergan's treatment of this distinction, see GF 95, 101-102; GO 240.

<sup>80</sup> GO 176 note 12. Lonergan also says that in the early works the passivity of the will "is not rigidly maintained" (GF 94-95).

apprehended by the intellect;<sup>81</sup> but the first mover of the entire process, as Lonergan affirms elsewhere, is God, the extrinsic cause of the will's activity with respect to the end.<sup>82</sup> As for the question about when the distinction between the specification and the exercise of the will first appears, one would certainly expect to find intimations of the idea in earlier works. Still, the examples Tekippe supplies do not show that Aquinas already grasped the distinction with the clarity manifested in *De malo* q. 6.<sup>83</sup>

(4) Tekippe devotes a lengthy chapter of his book to an attack on Lonergan's understanding of justification.<sup>84</sup> The gist of his criticism, which stems largely from his position on the meaning of freedom, is that Lonergan's interpretation of operative grace denies that human beings are free in the event of justification, which forces him into a position at odds with the doctrine of Trent.<sup>85</sup>

I must confess to being unable to clarify for myself exactly what Tekippe's own, positive position is on this issue, but it seems to involve claiming that justification is constituted not just by the infusion of sanctifying grace, but also by our free consent. What is clear, however, is that Tekippe's critique incorporates a misunderstanding of Lonergan's interpretation of the phrase *mens mota et non movens, solus autem Deus movens* (the mind is moved and not moving, but only God is moving), which Aquinas uses to describe the state of the will in receiving operative grace: "Lonergan's idea is that God is moving, and the mind is not moving; which involves the contradiction that God moves something, but it refuses to budge. Then, since there is no movement in God, there is no movement at all!"<sup>86</sup> It should go without saying that Lonergan's position is a bit

<sup>81</sup> Lonergan cites *De ver.* q. 22, a. 12, ad 2m, and *ST* 1, q. 82, a. 4, ad 3m (*GF* 95 note 22).

<sup>82</sup> *GO* 99-100, 249-251.

<sup>83</sup> Tekippe refers to *In II Sent.* d. 25, q. 1, a. 1, ad 2m; *ibid.*, a. 2; *De ver.*, q. 22, aa. 9, 12; q. 24, a. 2, ad 3m, and a. 8, ad 2m; q. 26, a. 6 (*LTW* 131).

<sup>84</sup> *LTW* 77-114; cf. xiii-xiv.

<sup>85</sup> *LTW* 77. Tekippe eventually concludes that, since Trent did not explicitly affirm the occurrence of free acts in justification, Lonergan "does not technically violate" the teaching of the council (*LTW* 114; see also 87-90).

<sup>86</sup> *LTW* 103; the text in question is *ST* 1-2, q. 111, a. 2.



more intelligible than Tekippe makes it out to be. In this context, the term *movens* means "acting as an efficient cause."<sup>87</sup> According to Lonergan, Aquinas's phrase means that God alone, without any agency on the part of the will, moves the will to a supernatural act of willing the end. To say that the will 'refuses to budge' is obviously incorrect, for the will, under the divine influence, is actually willing the end and is able to cooperate with grace by moving itself to proportionate acts of willing means.

##### 5. THE ISSUES BEHIND THE ISSUES

In my judgment, what divides Lonergan's and Tekippe's positions from one another is not just their reading of particular texts but, more important, their stands on several rather fundamental metaphysical issues. One of these has already been alluded to, namely, the question about what it means to say that an act is free. For Tekippe, at least with respect to the act of willing the end, freedom is a quality pertaining to the will insofar as it is an effect. For Lonergan, however, freedom is a quality pertaining to the will principally insofar as it is a cause. The will's activity of willing the end "is necessary in itself, but free as a cause of something else"<sup>88</sup> — necessary insofar as it is caused by God, free insofar as it constitutes a state of actuation which renders the will capable of causing itself to will means to the end.

This leads us to the next point of difference, which has to do with the nature of the will. Tekippe insists that the will's very nature is to be free, and therefore he argues for the freedom of all the will's acts, including the willing of the end. Lonergan, however, points out that such a claim is Scotist, not Thomist.<sup>89</sup> The will is not simply freedom but "a compound of nature and of freedom"; more specifically, "freedom lies in choosing, but

<sup>87</sup> For Lonergan's discussion of motion, immanent act, passivity and related concepts, see *Verbum* chapter 3, esp. 136-137.

<sup>88</sup> "[A] free choice is not the contingent effect but the cause of a contingent effect; freedom lies in the *dominium sui actus*; the *dominium* does not lie in the act that is dominated but in the act which dominates; but the act which dominates is not the will of the means (which is effected) but the will of the end (which is necessary in itself, but free as a cause of something else)" (GO 208; cf. 179 note 21, 304). On the notion of the act of willing the end as virtually free, see *De ente supernaturali* § 89.

<sup>89</sup> GO 299-300 note 147; cf. GO 77.

choosing presupposes the dynamic orientation from which free acts spring," and that orientation, the willing of the end, is not free.<sup>90</sup> Tekippe finds this position "implausible" because it implies that "the whole of human freedom depends on an act of unfreedom."<sup>91</sup>

Next, the fact that the will is not free in all respects is, according to Lonergan, central to grasping how God moves the will without impeding its freedom:

[O]n this theory [of liberty], as opposed to that of Scotus, the free act emerges from, and is conditioned by, created antecedents over which freedom has no direct control. It follows that it is possible for God to manipulate these antecedents and through such manipulation to exercise a control over free acts themselves ... God directly controls the orientation of the will to ends; indirectly He controls the situations which intellect apprehends and in which will has to choose; indirectly He also controls both the higher determinants of intellectual attitude or mental pattern and the lower determinants of mood and temperament; finally, each choice is free only *hic et nunc* [here and now], for no man can decide today what he is to will tomorrow. There is no end of room for God to work on the free choice without violating it, to govern above its self-governance, to set the stage and guide the reactions and give each character its personal role in the drama of life.<sup>92</sup>

Quite simply, human freedom is limited, and it is precisely because of these limitations that God is able to use the will as an instrument. Moreover, it is the function of grace as *gratia sanans* to liberate the will from the limits of disordered orientation, vice, psychological trauma, and so on, so that it can freely choose the good that brings happiness in the fullest sense.<sup>93</sup>

<sup>90</sup> GO 329. "In a word, the apex of the will which causes our free acts is, itself, not a free act" (GO 318).

<sup>91</sup> LTW 73. One might reply by saying that the act of willing the end is virtually free (see above, note 88). But in a narrow sense, Tekippe's characterization of this dependence is correct.

<sup>92</sup> GF 115-116; cf. GO 172, 213. Lonergan remarks that "the will has its strip of autonomy, yet beyond this there is the ground from which free acts spring; and that ground God holds and moves as a fencer moves his whole rapier by grasping only the hilt" (GF 142-143).

<sup>93</sup> GF 46-55; GO 215-246. "[St. Thomas's] solution of the problem [of grace and liberty] is, at root, a limitation of liberty: grace is compatible with liberty because of itself

Finally, Tekippe says at one point that his speculations about certain statements in the *De malo* "anticipate the 'physical pre-motion' of Bañez."<sup>94</sup> Just how firmly Tekippe embraces this viewpoint is not clear. In my own judgment, if there is anything Lonergan has succeeded in doing in his writings on operative grace, it is to discredit Bannezianism as either a plausible systematic understanding of reality or a correct interpretation of Aquinas's writings.<sup>95</sup> The Bannezians have constructed their concept of the physical premotion on the basis of mistaken ideas about efficient causality, active potency, instrumental causality, vital act, and divine transcendence; they cannot coherently account for free choice; they cannot show that their ideas on these subjects are identical to those of Aquinas. The debate between the Bannezians and Molinists degenerated into trench warfare almost as soon as it began, with the two sides equally matched in their ability to destroy each other's arguments, but with neither side capable of proposing a truly adequate explanation of the compatibility of divine action and human freedom. Lonergan has shown that Aquinas, who did not share many of the premises of the participants in the later debate, reached a different and much more satisfactory understanding of the matter. I suspect that there is little to be gained by a return to the stalemate of sixteenth-century theology, if that is indeed what Tekippe is hinting at.

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liberty is limited and grace enables it to transcend that limitation. He does not presuppose an unlimited liberty which grace confines to the good; he presupposes the limited liberty of psychological continuity, and makes grace an escape from the servitude of sin" (GO 230).

<sup>94</sup> *LTW* 59. See also his approval of the position of Norbert del Prado, O.P., who employs the notion of physical promotions in his theology of grace: "After months of studying Thomas' texts, and forming my own conclusions, I was amazed to discover ... that del Prado had anticipated many of my own conclusions early in the century" (*LTW* 92 note 56; see vol. 2 of Del Prado's *De gratia et libero arbitrio* [Freiburg, 1907]). For a critique of del Prado that finds his view of freedom "absolutely astonishing" (*valde mirum*), see Hermann Lange, S.J., *De gratia tractatus dogmaticus* (Freiburg, 1929) § 598.

<sup>95</sup> The relevant loci are too numerous to list here. One should consult Lonergan's discussions of Bannezianism in *Gratia Operans, Grace and Freedom, De ente supernaturali*, and "On God and Secondary Causes"; see also Stebbins, *The Divine Initiative*, chapters 6-8.

These are all larger issues that would have to be treated if one wanted to engage in a truly substantial discussion of the meaning of freedom in Aquinas's writings.

## 6. CONCLUSION

Tekippe claims to have shown that Lonergan's interpretation of Aquinas's teaching on the will is seriously in error. Furthermore, he avers, the results of his study have brought to light a more fundamental flaw, which is "Lonergan's tendency to make sweeping hermeneutical generalizations which, when confronted with the overall body of texts, do not stand up."<sup>96</sup> Tekippe offers several hypotheses to explain how Lonergan could have allowed himself to commit what he takes to be such considerable, and in some cases blatant, mistakes: perhaps he worked too quickly;<sup>97</sup> perhaps his desire to establish a pattern of development in Aquinas's thought acted as an unconscious bias in his handling of the textual evidence; perhaps, with regard to the question of freedom as non-coercion, he felt a need to defend Aquinas against possible charges of Jansenism.<sup>98</sup> Whatever the actual explanation, Tekippe opines that some good can be drawn from his exposure of Lonergan's wayward reading of Aquinas:

If there is a larger lesson in this exercise of interpretation, ... it may be the insight that interpreting an author's thought, particularly in the case of an author as profound as Thomas, and an opus as extensive as his, is fraught with difficulties and pitfalls. General observations should be made with the utmost care and modesty; even given the systematic nature of Thomas' thought, overly clear and simple statements should be greeted cautiously.<sup>99</sup>

<sup>96</sup> *LTW* 140. Tekippe acknowledges that readers of his book may be left with the impression that "Lonergan's clear, crisp discernment has been substituted for by a vague and confusing ambiguity" and that "the four lapidary observations of Lonergan have been replaced by a plethora of competing and unclear claims. That this perception bears a certain truth cannot be gainsaid," yet "[c]lear and penetrating conclusions are helpful only if they explain" (*LTW* 139-140).

<sup>97</sup> See above, at note 48.

<sup>98</sup> "Error" 369-371.

<sup>99</sup> *LTW* 140.

This is sage advice. Who could disagree with it? The only addition I would make is that such care in interpretation ought to be applied to the reading of any profound author, including Lonergan. Regardless of whether or not one regards him as a thinker of Aquinas's caliber, it is safe to say that his ideas generally resist being captured in just a few lines of text.<sup>100</sup> Like Aquinas, the elements of his position are to be found in many places and have to be assembled into a whole through an investigation that is painstaking and sympathetic. These qualities are generally lacking in Tekippe's two studies; the result is that his criticisms have not significantly damaged, or even seriously engaged, their intended target.

<sup>100</sup> In "Lonergan's Analysis of Error," Tekippe deduces from a very few texts (esp. the paragraph quoted above at note 16) what Lonergan supposedly must have meant, and thereby skews the entire article: "[In the article] I had misinterpreted what Lonergan thought to be the *terminus ad quem* of Thomas' development. In other words, if one abandons an act of the will as at once necessary and free, what will one put in its place? I had assumed it would be an act non-necessary and free; in fact, Lonergan holds, Thomas came to the position of 'necessary and not free.' Because I misread this, the texts I gathered from Thomas vindicated necessity more than freedom. In this the article is deficient, and Crowe is right to lament the lack of a wider reading of Lonergan" (*LTW* xiv; cf. 68). *Lonergan and Thomas on the Will* gives evidence of a somewhat broader reading of Lonergan.



## BOOK REVIEWS

*Jesus Christ: Fundamentals of Christology.* By Roch A. Kereszty. Edited by J. Stephen Maddux. New York: Alba House, 1991. 439 pages. \$19.95 (paper).

This textbook conforms to what has become a kind of standard plan for Christology. Like John Macquarrie in his recent book on Christ, Kereszty divides the subject-matter in three. First comes "The Christology of the New Testament," then "Historical Christology," and finally "Systematic Christology." Unlike Macquarrie, though, he finds no significant discontinuity between the contents of the first part and the second. So, whereas Macquarrie's constructive, direct-discourse proposal is presented as going straight to the New Testament for its foundation, bypassing the intervening centuries, Kereszty regards the third part of his book as continuous with the first two. Formally, however, the three parts are more or less independent, and even individual sections could be read, as their author intends them to be, on their own. Although the second part, especially, takes on the character of a reference book, Kereszty is always clear, enumerating his points, laying out the options, and offering solid, stolid summaries of positions, including his own.

The guiding principle throughout is a kind of Trinitarian *Heilsgeschichte*. Kereszty presumes an ongoing presence of Christ in the church and, consequently, an antecedent probability that what successive generations of Christians have said about Christ will be consonant on the whole. Not that dissonance is overlooked; in his first sentence Kereszty rejects the kind of harmonization of the biblical materials that has characterized most of Christian theological history. Still, he does allow theological interests to color his portrait of Jesus more vividly than many and perhaps the great majority of New Testament scholars would approve, for example when he brings in John 1:13 in support of Jesus' virginal conception and goes on to construe the 'brothers and sisters' of

Jesus, in the way the Fathers did, as close kin but not younger children of Mary.

It is on the Fathers, too, that most of the middle part of the book concentrates. The chapter on their Christology is preceded by a chapter on their soteriology — the sequence Kereszty will follow himself in the systematic part. Then come discussions of Bernard of Clairvaux, Anselm, and Thomas Aquinas, of Reformation and Liberal Protestant Christologies, and of Barth, Bultmann, and Bonhoeffer. Some of these are simply summaries, accurate as far as they go; a few, notably the one on Barth, evince deeper appreciation and closer study. None of them, Anselm excepted, seems to exercise much effect on Kereszty's own synthesis in part three.

The argument he elaborates there is that Christ had to be what he was in order to do what he did. What he did was die, and his death has overcome the alienation in which human sin consists. *How* it has done this is, of course, a systematic-theological question *par excellence*. Kereszty answers eclectically, blending the paradox of Luther's theology of the cross with the measured logic of Anselm's satisfaction theory. Whether the mixture is stable, the result intelligible, is best left of individual readers to determine. In any case Kereszty is keen to uphold, as corollary to his soteriology, the orthodoxy of the great Christological councils; and not only to uphold it but also to bring it into a contemporary context. Hence he is willing to cross the exegetical picket lines and discuss Christ's consciousness.

Here Lonergan's theology makes an explicit contribution. Having learned from Lonergan that consciousness pertains to the person, the subject, and not to his or her nature or faculties, Kereszty has no difficulty conceiving the incarnate Word as one psychological subject, and that one divine, of two consciousnesses, one of which is like ours in all respects apart from sin. But that is as far as it goes. Christ's psychological constitution is not integrated into the way redemption is understood. While Kereszty does acknowledge in Christ a beatific knowledge or 'vision' of God, and knows it is not identical with divine consciousness, he does not follow Lonergan in relating Christ's mediation of this knowledge to his willing acceptance of the cross. At the end of the day, Lonergan is one of a number of authors for whom Kereszty has borrowed particular ideas; only peripherally would his Christology be different had he never opened *De constitutione Christi* and *De Deo Trino*.



That does not, of course, change the fact that what *Jesus Christ: Fundamentals of Christology* does it does quite well. It introduces the graduate students for whom it is intended to the language and the history they need to know in order to raise intelligently the questions traditionally addressed in Christological treatises. It circumvents neoscholasticism's brittle precision by adopting a Patristic mode of thought that allows some theoretical differentiation without demanding extensive philosophical training. It acknowledges historical mindedness without handing theology over to historical-critical scholarship. If it does not, perhaps, meet all the needs of Christology today, it meets some of them.

*Interpretation and Bible: Essays on Truth in Literature.* By Sean McEvenue. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1994. 187 pages. \$12.95 (paper).

Most of those who have tried to implement Lonergan's recommendations regarding theological method have clustered in the neighborhood of the functional specialty foundations or else in something like communication. The mediating, indirect-discourse specialties have not been ignored, exactly; but while there has been a lot of scholarship *on* Lonergan, there have not been many scholars trained to do research, interpretation, or history who have taken Lonergan seriously. Sean McEvenue is an exception. He is an exegete, possessed of all the vast and highly specialized erudition needed to hold his own in the guild of biblical scholarship, and beyond that he has been bitten by the Lonergan bug. Not only does he know how serious the problem is that Lonergan speaks of as a wall built by modern scholarship between theologians and their biblical sources; he also sees *Method in Theology* as pointing the only hopeful way towards a solution. "Lonergan," he says flatly in one of the footnotes where he squirrels away a lot of his best insights, "presents a challenge which, if not met, will entail a rejection of the authority of Scripture."

Although he goes on to call his own work in the book under review an attempt to meet the challenge, not all the essays and addresses collected in *Interpretation and Bible* show any direct influence of Lonergan's ideas about method. On the whole, as his subtitle suggests, McEvenue approaches the biblical texts, more particularly those of the Old

Testament, and most particularly the Pentateuch, from the standpoint of literary theory. Lonergan provides a kind of second-order standpoint, from which McEvenue hopes to inform and regulate his reading of these texts as poetic, artistic literature. One of the morals he draws from the idea of functional specialization is that there is no need for interpreters, *as* interpreters, to paraphrase or otherwise extract kernels of propositional truth from the husks of literary form. We *may* decide, later on, to accept or reject a work on the basis of theological foundations and the corresponding conversions; we might also accept or reject it as literature, on an analogous basis of literary 'foundations.' But neither of these judgments belongs to interpretation as such.

McEvenue provides a number of samples of the kind of interpretation he recommends, and because it *is* that kind, to summarize any of these would be to betray his intention. What he says about the manna in the wilderness, about the 'rise of David' story, or about three episodes in the Elohist strand of Genesis needs to be read in concrete detail. Here, it can be noted that the aim is to clarify what he usually calls 'subliminal' meaning — a term not easy to define, because what it names is elusive. Roughly, it refers to the awareness, on the part of an author or a reader or both, not only of the articulated meaning of the author's expressions but also, at the same time, of their connotations, their background, and especially their unthematized but conscious effects as they are being heard or written or read.

Subliminal meaning need not be theologically relevant, but it can be; and if theological matters are what the interpreter is interested in understanding, McEvenue suggests that he or she will approach a text with the question, In what region of experience or activity is God self-revealingly active? On the answer to that question depends an author's — or reader's — spirituality, in the sense of "a foundational stance of expectancy regarding divine revelation or divine intervention." And it is in virtue of conveying such foundational stances that the Bible exercises spiritual authority.

C.S. Lewis once said that reading Scripture as literature is not impossible, but it is like sawing wood against the grain. You have to ignore what is written, implicitly, at the top of the Bible's every page: *Thus saith the Lord*. McEvenue does not have to ignore it, in so far as his account of subliminal meaning succeeds in resolving the dichotomy of literary art *versus* revealed truth. Interpretation is neither a matter of aesthetic

appreciation nor of restating statements of conceptualized fact but (in his words) of feeling one's way to the God-feeling of the author. The whole arsenal of higher-critical techniques can be helpful, but none of them is absolutely necessary, for finally a valid interpretation is a case of knowledge by identity – in the this case, identity of spiritual stance.

Many questions remain unanswered, some of them big ones. McEvenue almost always seems to envisage a single interpreter – exegete, ordinary reader, homilist – engaged in understanding a few paragraphs of text. The route from spirituality *then* to spirituality *now* is more or less direct. In other words, while he does acknowledge functional specialization in principle, McEvenue does not seem to envisage the interpreter as collaborating in a larger theological project such that communications would be a mediation of doctrines systematically understood. Nor does he have much to say about the 'what was going forward' question that for Lonergan moves indirect discourse from interpretation into history. There is no reason why the position sketched in *Interpretation and Bible* could not be developed in these directions, but McEvenue himself does not point the way. As he observes at one point, Roman Catholic biblical scholars have learned their craft from Protestant colleagues, and perhaps in so doing they have gotten the subliminal message that, as Schleiermacher argued, interpretation by itself is the way theologians move from text to sermon.

Functional specialization, however, is a means to an end, and the end is the *Selbstvollzug* that Lonergan named ongoing collaboration. We are still in the dark about what to do with the Bible once its expressions are no longer truths, in the first instance, but data, and only a collaborative effort seems likely to clear things up. To such an effort McEvenue has made an important contribution that deserves to be studied and developed.

# METHOD

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