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LONERGAN'S "MORAL THEOLOGY AND THE HUMAN SCIENCES"

Editor's Introduction

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THE ESSAY PUBLISHED here for the first time was found posthumously in File 105-131 of Bernard Lonergan's papers. The file, entitled "Theological Commission 1974: Moral Theology and the Social Sciences," contains as well what is obviously a covering letter (printed here as an appendix to the essay), dated February 28, 1974, and addressed to Francis Cardinal Seper, the President of the International Theological Commission at the time. The only other document in the file is a photocopy of an article by James M. Gustafson, "Basic Ethical Issues in the Bio-Medical Fields," on the first page of which Lonergan typed the source: "*Soundings* 53/2 (1970) 151-180."

Lonergan's own catalog of his files, made in the mid-1970s, lists one with the number '105' and the title "Commissio Theologica"; that file, however, which would surely have filled out the context of the present essay, was not among the papers in Lonergan's possession when he died; further data on the context have to be sought in the acts of the Commission.

Some information is given in *International Theological Commission: Texts and Documents 1969-1985*, ed. Michael Sharkey (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1989). A "Preliminary Note" (ix-x) informs us that this volume "gathers all the documents published by the ... Commission during the first fifteen years of its existence," and indicates further sources of information in the publications of the General Secretary, Monsignor

Philippe Delhayé. An appendix (327-330) gives the members of the Commission, with Lonergan listed among the first thirty theologians appointed (1969-1974), and his homeland given as Japan! (The French edition [Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1988] brings him a little closer to home: he belongs now to 'Etats-Unis'! See *Commission Théologique Internationale: Textes et Documents [1969-1985]* 419.)

Delhayé's introduction (105-106) to "Nine Theses in Christian Ethics" (106-120, a contribution from Hans Urs von Balthasar) shows Delhayé himself as Chairman of the Subcommittee for Ethics (and, presumably, that "organizer of the fourth section" of whom the conclusion of Lonergan's paper speaks), and tells us that Lonergan was a member of this subcommittee (105, note 1); also that it "carried on its research in a number of ... directions," one of which was "the use of the human sciences" (105). This gives a context, sketchy though it be, for Lonergan's letter to Cardinal Seper, where he says "I am sending you an interim report concerning the fourth subsection on *Moral Theology and the Human Sciences*."

Delhayé's introduction states also (105) that, with regard to "the use of the human sciences ... several valuable studies were gathered together by the Secretariat and published in *Studia Moralia* in 1972," that is, in volume 12. On consulting that volume I do not find Lonergan's paper (perhaps it was not judged valuable enough for publication), nor have I found any indication in the sources available to me that it received any more attention than did care for accuracy on his nationality. The Commission did, however, retain Lonergan's paper and make it available to members, for it came to the attention of Fr. C. G. Arevalo, a member of the Commission later, and it was through him that the essay first became known to Lonergan students.

I can hardly issue this little essay without at least a brief remark on its place in Lonergan's lifework, and the light it throws on a still neglected aspect of his career. We know now, with a widening perspective on his writings and especially with the posthumous discovery of essays written in his youth, that religious, moral, cultural, social, political, economic, and technological questions, and not cognitional theory, epistemology, and metaphysics, were the major controlling factor in his choice of work to be done. What makes cognitional theory, epistemology, and metaphysics

loom large to the beginner in Lonergan studies is partly that they were relatively first in execution (and so, as the scholastics say, last in intention), and partly that, though mainly instrumental to his long-range purpose, they consumed a disproportionate number of his productive years and have a disproportionate bulk in his literary output.

Insight and Method are to be seen, then, as the foundation of a complex organon Lonergan created to deal with religious, moral, cultural, social, political, economic, and technological questions: a gigantic withdrawal in preparation for a thoroughly effective return. But the return is not to be swift or flashy. The application of his organon to those controlling questions is an extremely laborious process requiring further creativity of a character and magnitude we are just discovering.

In that context this essay is seen to lie at the heart of the matter, as a very illuminating remark in his letter to the Cardinal makes clear. On possible projects to implement his ideas, Lonergan says that they "involve so much collaboration with nontheologians or so much creativity on the part of theologians that their investigation cannot be fitted into current structures of the Theological Commission" — lines that speak volumes on what Lonergan saw as one of the chief tasks of our time. His reference to the work of Gibson Winter tells the same story (one should consult his little essay, "The Example of Gibson Winter" — see note 1 to Lonergan's text below); and so does Lonergan's work on economics, to which he was to turn soon after the completion of his work for the International Theological Commission.

Editing has been kept to a minimum. Lonergan wove his references into his text, but it was not too difficult to separate them out into footnotes. The text of both essay and letter, extant in Lonergan's autograph, required very little editing: mainly points of spelling and punctuation, checking and filling out bibliographic data, and so on. Editorial work of slightly greater importance is enclosed in square brackets. Lonergan's scripture is left as he quoted it; so are his Latin phrases, except that the English for these is added when needed (again in square brackets).

MORAL THEOLOGY AND THE HUMAN SCIENCES

Bernard J.F. Lonergan

1. A DISTINCTION OF CASES

NOT ALL HUMAN sciences are equally developed in all their parts, and so we begin with a distinction of cases.

Case 1. Both morally good and morally evil courses of action are possible in areas in which neither the science itself nor its possible applications are in doubt. Such, for example, is often the case in medical ethics.

Case 2. The science is not sufficiently determinate to yield fully concrete applications. None of its proposals is morally objectionable. Which proposal would yield the best results cannot be determined *a priori*. There is advised a course of social experimentation in which social scientists, social philosophers, and moralists (a) collaborate, (b) are guided by feedback from the implementation of their proposals, (c) gradually discover ever better policies, plans, procedures.¹

Case 3. The human science is itself open to suspicion. Its representatives are divided ideologically. They advocate contrary courses of action, all of which have their respective good points, but none is without very serious defects. The notorious instance at the present time is economics.

¹See Gibson Winter, *Elements for a Social Ethic: Scientific Perspectives on Social Process* (New York: Macmillan; London: Collier-Macmillan, 1966; paperback, 1968 [Lonergan gave the subtitle as *The Role of Social Science in Public Policy*; this was indeed the misleading subtitle used on the cover of the 1968 paperback edition, but the title-page had the one given here.]). Also Bernard Lonergan, "The Example of Gibson Winter," *Social Compass: International Review of Socio-Religious Studies* 17 (1970) 280-282 [reprinted, Bernard Lonergan, *A Second Collection*, ed. William F.J. Ryan and Bernard J. Tyrrell (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1974; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1975) 189-192].

In Case 1 neither the science nor its applications are in doubt. In Case 2 the applications are in doubt. In Case 3 the science itself is under suspicion.

If the three cases are distinct, the list by no means pretends to be exhaustive. Its purpose is simply to indicate something of the diversity of the issues involved, and thereby to reconcile the reader to that larger consideration that goes beyond simple conflict between natural law and technical possibility, and moves toward the enlargement of the attainable human good and toward the critique of certain human sciences.

With this goal in mind it seemed appropriate to begin with a clarification of the notion of human science. First, we shall speak of human science as science, and so treat its empirical principle. Secondly, the topic will be human science as human, and so there is considered its dialectical principle. Thirdly, there is the concrete realization of both the empirical and the dialectical principle in the ongoing scientific community. So it is only in the fourth place that we come to Catholic Action, or under favorable circumstances, Christian Action, which operates beneficently both on the human community to which human sciences are applied and on the scientific community that develops and revises the human sciences.

2. THE EMPIRICAL PRINCIPLE

Human science as science is subject to an empirical principle. This principle is positive in its content but negative in its enunciation. It is that there are no true factual judgments without a foundation in relevant data.

Relevant data include the data of consciousness as well as the data of sense. Hence the empirical principle does not imply the behaviorist principle, which would confine human psychology to the methods available in animal psychology. It does not imply the positivist principle, which overlooks the *a priori* contained in man's questions for intelligence, for reflection, for deliberation. It is not to be confused with the verification or falsification principle, which confines human knowledge to the world of experience. Finally, statements about factual judgments are not to be extended to moral judgments, to judgments of value, and the like, which are not factual but normative.

While the ultimate significance of data is their bearing on judgment, their proximate significance regards human understanding, which operates and develops with respect to data. This Aristotelian and Thomist principle becomes a dynamic principle in empirical science. There, observations yield descriptions, contrasting descriptions yield problems, problems sooner or later lead to discoveries, discoveries are formulated in hypotheses, hypotheses are expanded in processes of experimentation, experiments yield new observations which either confirm the hypothesis or lead to new discovery, hypothesis, experiment, and so on indefinitely.

Hence, the modern notion of science differs profoundly from the ideal notion projected by Aristotle in his *Posterior Analytics*. Modern science is not *certa rerum per causas cognitio*² [certain knowledge of things by their causes]. It is not knowledge but hypothesis, theory, system. It is not in terms of final, efficient, material, formal causes, but of whatever intelligibility is brought to light by scientific method. While it may be certain in rejecting earlier views, its own positive contribution claims no more than probability. Hence a modern science offers, not demonstration, but the best available contemporary opinion; and so to object that it has not demonstrated is just *ignoratio elenchi* [ignorance of (the point of) the argument].

Finally, one may note that modern science implies a continuity of theory and practice: as developing human understanding mounts to its

² [Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics*, I, 2, 71b 10-12. I give the reference as it is found in "Theology and Man's Future," *A Second Collection* (135-148, at 139), but with the correction of book 1 to book 2 (with thanks to Danny Monsour). Lonergan's relationship to Aristotle needs study. He regularly praises Aristotle's insight into phantasm (see the title page of his *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990; also his *Understanding and Being*, ed. Elizabeth A. Morelli and Mark D. Morelli [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990] 18, 30-31, 48-52, 119, 199 note 24, 213, 238, 268, 290); but he regularly criticizes his science (see Lonergan, "Finality, Love, Marriage," *Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988] 17-52, at 21: the "mists of Aristotelian science"), and more importantly his very notion of science (see, for example, "The Future of Thomism," *A Second Collection* 43-53, at 47-48, 51; "The Subject," *A Second Collection* 69-86, at 72; "The Absence of God in Modern Culture," *A Second Collection* 101-116, at 103-104, 112; "Theology and Man's Future," *A Second Collection* 135-148, at 139-140). A thematic treatment in a wider context was given in Lonergan's unpublished lecture at Marquette University, July 7, 1959: "The Nature of Knowledge in the Natural Sciences."

presuppositions, it becomes theory; as it descends to its applications, it becomes practice; and so theory and practice are distinct parts of a single reality.

3. THE DIALECTICAL PRINCIPLE

Human science as human is subject to a dialectical principle. For the data on man are ambiguous: man's actions may be good or evil; his statements may be true or false; his development may be authentic or unauthentic.

This ambiguity is radical. It affects the very data on which an empirical science rises and rests. To cope with this radical ambiguity is the office of the dialectical principle. Its precise nature must be our immediate concern.

In general, mathematics and the sciences have to presuppose in their data (or quasi-data) an intelligibility to be discovered. In both fields there is the recurrence of the phenomenon that anticipated intelligibility does not exist so that anticipations have to be revised and fundamental categories modified. So surds are not fractions. Imaginary numbers cannot be approximated on a linear continuum. Uniform rectilinear motion continues indefinitely as long as no cause intervenes. Time is not a parameter but a fourth dimension. And so on, and so on.

The peculiarity of the human sciences is that error, evil, unauthenticity may be not merely an absence of intelligibility but an unintelligible absence. The point was acknowledged by Aquinas: he granted that God indirectly willed the evil of natural defect and the evil of penalty because of a good with which that evil was connected; but he denied that God in any manner willed the evil of sin.³ He urged that God neither willed evils to occur nor willed evils not to occur, but willed to permit evils to occur.⁴ He granted that, as the creature would slip into nothingness unless sustained by God, so it would fall into the nongood unless sustained by God; but he denied that it would tumble into sin unless sustained by divine grace.⁵ He denied the existence in things of an ontological falsity, when

³ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, 1, q. 19, a. 9 c.

⁴ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, ad 3m.

⁵ Thomas Aquinas, *De malo*, q. 16, a. 4, ad 22m.

things are referred to the divine intellect; but nonetheless made an exception for the evil of sin, which in scripture is accounted a falsity and a lie.⁶ Finally, for the relevance of the nonintelligibility of sin in a reconciliation of sin with divine providence, I refer to my *Grace and Freedom in Aquinas*.⁷

Now if the term 'dialectic' is employed to refer to a concrete process involved in contradictions, it has a twofold application in human science. There is a first application to the object which falls short of intelligibility. There is a second application to the subject of human science who may or may not anticipate complete intelligibility in his object.

First, then, with regard to the object. A human group, reflecting on its situation, may reach a new insight; the insight leads to a new project; the new project to a new course of action; the new course of action to a change in the situation. Insofar as the insight was relevant, the new situation will be an improvement on the old; but insofar as the insight was inadequate, the improvement will itself be incomplete; such incompleteness may lead to a new, further insight that complements the old; and its implementation may produce a further improvement that itself is incomplete. This process of gradual but ever incomplete improvements corresponds in the social order to the gradual but ever incomplete advances that characterize empirical science. It is a process that in some sense may be named progress, and it may be illustrated abundantly from Arnold Toynbee's account in his *Study of History* of the factor he names "Challenge and Response."⁸

It remains that progress is not the sole possibility, for man is subject to bias. There is the latent bias of unconscious motivation. There is the

⁶ *Summa theologiae*, 1, q. 17, a. 1 c.

⁷ Bernard Lonergan, *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) 109-115. [Probably respecting the international character of the Commission, Lonergan gave the references also to the Italian translation (*Grazia e Libertà: La grazia operante nel pensiero di S. Tommaso*, trans. Natalino Spaccapelo [Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1970] 154-160), and to the original publication in *Theological Studies* 3 (1942) 547-552.]

⁸ [Arnold Toynbee, *A Study of History*. Vol. 1: *Introduction. The Geneses of Civilizations*, Part One (London, New York, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1934; 2nd ed., 1935, paperback ed., 1962) 271-338.]

conspicuous bias of individual egoism that endeavors to circumvent public purpose for private gain. There are the shared delusions of group bias which considers its self-interest a contribution to the well-being of mankind. There is the general bias of all men of common sense, for common sense includes the common nonsense of its omniscience and so it insists on palpable short-term benefits at the cost of long-term evils.

Bias begins by conferring an elemental vigor to every process of change, provided, of course, that the change is in the right direction. The result is that changes are not only incomplete but also distorted improvements. The further result is that every attempt to complete the incomplete and to rectify the distorted meets with resistance and succeeds only when mangled in the mill of compromise. The cumulative irrationality of decisions and actions brings about an ever more distorted, unintelligible, irrational social situation, and as the situation mounts in unintelligibility, its capacity to suggest intelligible courses of action keeps decreasing until in the limit stagnation sets in. Such is the minor dialectic of sin. It changes progress into decline and decline into disaster.

But there is also a major dialectic. For the unintelligibility of the situation is an objective fact that both mirrors and reinforces a subjective spirit of darkness. Men are not content to decide and to act out of bias. They want their bias justified. They provide a market for an ideology that would justify their ways in the eyes of faltering followers and envious opponents. Nor is this enough. The ideology has to meet a far deeper need. Intelligence, reasonableness, responsibility can yield cumulative development in virgin territory. But the situation produced by sustained decline is not virgin territory. Mere ideas no longer work. The creative minority becomes a dominant minority. It needs the power to compel, the power of technology, of economic pressures, of political discrimination, of passionate ideology. But the ideology of the oppressors evokes a contrary ideology of the oppressed. Ideologies themselves splinter, divide, conflict. In the resultant confusion men speculate on utopia, put their confidence in leaders, or sink into apathy and despair.

4. THE CONJUNCTION OF THE PRINCIPLES

On the Aristotelian notion of science, science could be a habit in the mind of a man, and its principles could be logical premises. On the modern notion, science is the cumulative product of a scientific community. Its members have to submit to an initiatory program in a university and a graduate school. They achieve standing by the significance of their contributions to the common endeavor. They themselves by their authenticity — by their attentiveness, their intelligence, their reasonableness, their responsibility — are the principles whence the ongoing science proceeds and in whom, accordingly, the norms of empirical and dialectical procedure have to be incarnated.

In an appendix added to the second printing of his *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Thomas S. Kuhn remarked that, were he to rewrite his work, it would “open with a discussion of the community structure of science, a topic that has recently become a significant subject of sociological research and that historians of science are also beginning to take seriously.”⁹ In fact, his work as written does center on the notion of the scientific community. It is the scientific community that shares the paradigms that came into existence or survived the last breakthrough. It is the scientific community that normally is engaged in ‘mopping up,’ that is, in resolving the host of puzzles that will extend the dominion of the last breakthrough over the whole field. It is this backward-looking concern that makes most scientists resist each new breakthrough and so gives each new breakthrough the attributes of a revolution. Finally, it is the revolutionary character of the new that makes its acceptance a pragmatic affair, a matter of a gradual shift of the members of the scientific community from resistance to acceptance of the new view.

Now it is of major importance to our present inquiry that science is, not just an accidental form radicated in a possible intellect, but the ongoing occupation of a group and indeed a community of persons. For this implies that the moral theologian has to consider, not a single, but a double set of moral issues. On the one hand, there are the moral issues

⁹ Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962, 1970; first published, 1960) 176.

that arise in the object studied in the human science. On the other hand, there are the moral issues that arise in the subjects that do the studying of the object of the human science.

Moreover, just as sin and the justification of sin by ideology are to be found on the side of the object, so too they may infect the scientific subject. In particular, ideology is contagious. The sinner gains little from his justifying ideology, if the human scientist points out to all and sundry that the justification is merely ideology. Again, the warfare of conflicting ideologies is stultifying. It makes it difficult, if not impossible, for the scientist to have recourse to the philosopher or the theologian for a clarification of underlying issues. It makes it persuasive and even mandatory for scientists to eschew all theological and all philosophical issues and to pursue their proper tasks with complete autonomy and even contemptuous independence.

5. FUNCTIONS OF MORAL THEOLOGY

Our concern is with issues in which the moral theologian is to operate not in isolation but in conjunction with others. But the measure of this collaboration varies in different cases. In what we named Case 1, the human scientist presents an account of available techniques and of their relevant presuppositions and consequences; on the basis of this material the moral theologian passes a moral judgment. In Case 2, however, the issue is not so much a matter of avoiding evil as of achieving the good; positive precepts rather than prohibitions are relevant; and the precepts regard the collaboration of all those involved in the experimental process — the collaboration not only of moralists and scientists but also of all participants in the execution and amelioration of the program. But it is in Case 3 that the full challenge comes to light; what is at stake is the renovation of society; and it may be that the renovation can succeed only by going beyond the local scene to the regional, beyond the regional to the national, beyond the national to the international.

Further, complicating all cases, but the later more than the earlier, there is a real measure of indeterminacy. There is the general measure consequent on human freedom: courses of action cannot be demon-

strated.¹⁰ There is the specific measure consequent on the nature of empirical and especially human science: modern sciences do not demonstrate; they can offer men the best available opinion; but even that opinion can be distorted by ideology; and still more can the acceptance of that opinion be opposed and impeded.

To some it may seem that we have moved beyond the scope of moral theology and are engaged in the practical theology — or the pastoral theology as practical theology — that has been set forth by Arnold, Rahner, Schurr, Weber, and Klostermann in *Handbuch der Pastoraltheologie*.¹¹ But if the latter already exists as an idea in many volumes, I am not aware that it is as yet an ongoing process conducted by a scientific community. Indeed, I suspect that in most countries and for some time to come we shall have to count on the already highly practical men engaged in moral theology. In any case my present terms of reference are to moral theology, and it is to them or, alternatively, through them to others that I must address my more general and my more specific remarks.

My general remarks are addressed to Catholics and indeed, where ecumenical collaboration is operative, to Christians. In the first instance they are in terms of conversion: religious, moral, intellectual. Religious conversion is the basic precept of the Old Covenant and the New: “love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength” and “love your neighbor as yourself” (Mark 12: 31, 33; see Deuteronomy 6:4). Its fulfilment occurs basically when “God’s love has flooded our inmost heart through the Holy Spirit he has given us” (Romans 5:5). Its fruit is described in 1 Corinthians 13, and its harvest in Galatians 5:22. From religious conversion there follows moral conversion, when the criteria of our practical judgments shift from satisfactions to values. From religious and moral conversion there emerges in the course of time an intellectual conversion: it adverts to the fact that the world apprehended by faith is a world mediated by meaning; it reflects that the world of every adult also is a world mediated by mean-

¹⁰ Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, 1, q. 83, a. 1 c.

¹¹ *Handbuch der Pastoraltheologie*, ed. Franz Xaver Arnold, Ferdinand Klostermann, Karl Rahner, Viktor Schurr, and Leonhard M. Weber (5 vols., Freiburg-Basel-Wien: Herder, 1964 [2nd revised ed., 1970], 1966, 1968, 1969, 1972 [Index volume]).

ing; it concludes that the naive realism of childhood has to be replaced by a critical realism, a realism that knows the real because it knows what is true. On these topics a fuller account may be had in my *Method in Theology*.¹²

But if one is to “use good to defeat evil” (Romans 12:21), conversion to God, to the good, to the true, has to be complemented with knowledge of evil and with the will to overcome it. To knowledge of evil I have already alluded in the section on the dialectical principle. I have treated the same matter from a particular viewpoint in *Insight*.¹³ On the similar role of Christian suffering, see Thesis XVII in my *De Verbo incarnato*.¹⁴ The relevance of the last chapter of *Insight* to an ecclesiology has been developed by Bishop B.C. Butler in a chapter “Lonergan and Ecclesiology” in *Foundations of Theology*.¹⁵ Aquinas on moral impotence was set forth in *Grace and Freedom*.¹⁶

Very briefly, the perpetuation of social evils by the strict justice (*ad aequalitatem*) of “an eye for an eye” is broken by Christian charity. The determinisms of the technology, the economy, the polity, the sociocultural heritage can be withstood by Christian hope. The ineffectualness of truth in the midst of passionately competing ideologies is remedied by the power of faith.

The general procedure, finally, is a matter of developing positions and reversing counterpositions, where positions express religious, moral, and intellectual conversion, while counterpositions are opposed to any one or two or all three of these. Positions are developed by finding ever

¹² Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, and New York: Herder and Herder, 1972): Chapter 11 on Foundations, Chapter 4 on Religion, Chapter 2 on The Human Good, and Chapter 1 on Method.

¹³ *Insight* 214-31 on dramatic bias; 239-67 on tension, dialectic, and bias in community; 643-56 on liberation from moral impotence; 718-25 on the role of faith, hope, and charity in overcoming social evil. [Lonergan, of course, referred to the pagination of the 1957 and 1958 editions.]

¹⁴ *De Verbo incarnato*, 3rd ed. (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1964) Thesis XVII, 552-93.

¹⁵ B.C. Butler, “Lonergan and Ecclesiology,” *Foundations of Theology*, ed. Philip McShane, (Dublin: Gill, and Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1971) 1-21.

¹⁶ *Grace and Freedom* 46-55 [with reference again to the Italian translation, *Grazia e Libertà* 90-99, and to the original, *Theological Studies* 3 (1942) 74-82].

more situations in which faith, hope, charity advance the cause of the good. Counterpositions are reversed inasmuch as Christian acceptance of suffering robs evil of its power to blind, to threaten, to endure.

Specific procedures may be divided by their greater relevance to Case 1, Case 2, or Case 3.

Case 1 has long been familiar in moral theology and I at least can say no more than *consultantur probati auctores* [let the approved authors be consulted].

Case 2 regards collaboration of moral theologians and scientists in an experimental process that brings about a development of social policy. Here everything depends on the competence of the persons involved, and no more than a few general suggestions occur to me.

The first I draw from Gibson Winter in the work already referred to. He adverted to the fact that sociologists were divided into approximately four schools with a right wing of phenomenologists, a left wing of behaviorists, and a center of conflicting functionalists (Talcott Parsons) and voluntarists (C. Wright Mills). Confronted with such diversity, a person with no real apprehension of modern science might attempt to reduce conclusions to their logical principles and then adjudicate between the principles. In contrast a modern scientist is aware that the truth of principles is revealed mainly in their consequences, and so Gibson Winter asked himself which type of sociological theory would be most likely to prove helpful in dealing with various types of problem. He found behaviorists most likely to be helpful in dealing with traffic problems, voluntarists in analyzing revolutionary situations, functionalists in understanding ongoing processes, and phenomenologists in entering into the mentalities and aspirations that motivate and direct social continuity and change. In brief, as it is by their fruits that one knows men, so too it is by their fruits that one evaluates human sciences. While I do not consider this the whole story, anyone who wishes may find the complement I would add in my little book *Insight*.

A second but allied suggestion is a distinction between external and internal criticism. The external critic draws, not on the science he is criticizing, but on some distinct source. So the obligation to pay a family wage may be concluded from evident moral principles. But the *de facto* operative

economic theory may be that of a market economy, so that any employer that does pay a family wage sooner or later goes bankrupt because his wicked competitors do not pay a family wage. The *de facto* result is that a family wage is not paid and, indeed, cannot be paid until a modification of the market economy is brought about either by recurrent legislation on minimum wages or by a more radical criticism of the market economy itself.

In contrast, the internal critic operates along the very lines of scientific development. His criticism consists either in advertent to data that have been overlooked, or in bringing to bear fresh insights, clarifications, distinctions, or both of these. So the notion of religion in the *History of Religions* has undergone a series of developments in virtue of internal criticism and in each case the developments have been effected by investigators in the field. Talcott Parsons has sketched the process from the speculations of anthropologists such as Tylor, who conceived religion as pseudoscience, through the shifts brought about by Pareto, Malinowski, Weber, and Durkheim,¹⁷ to the position of topmost control in the cybernetic analysis of social continuity.¹⁸ While the progress is only from contempt of religion to respect for it, it nonetheless is progress and involves an openness to further developments.

For radical internal criticism of a human science one has to turn from the practitioners of 'normal' science to the independent minds that belong to a larger scientific community and so possess an independent base for criticism. Such was Paul Ricoeur who, after completing the first two volumes of his *Philosophie de la volonté*, did a five-hundred page study of Freud,¹⁹ and later was able to boast that hitherto Freud had confirmed the

¹⁷ Talcott Parsons, "The Theoretical Development of the Sociology of Religion," *Essays in Sociological Theory Pure and Applied* (New York: The Free Press, 1949) 52-66 (revised ed. 1954, 197-211).

¹⁸ Talcott Parsons, "Introduction" (to Part IV: "Culture and the Social System") *Theories of Society*, ed. Talcott Parsons et al. (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1961) 963-93; see also Robert N. Bellah, *Beyond Belief* (New York: Harper and Row, 1970), chapters 1 and 2.

¹⁹ Paul Ricoeur, *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation*, trans. Denis Savage (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1970). [Probably for the reasons stated in note 7 above, Lonergan referred also to the original, *De l'interprétation: essai sur Freud* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1965).]

the unbelief of many, but henceforth he could confirm the belief of many.²⁰ His technique in this achievement was the application to dialectic of the program of developing positions and reversing counterpositions in the particularized form of a twofold hermeneutic, a hermeneutic of suspicion and a hermeneutic of recovery.

In the opinion of the present writer the human science, economics, is in need of similar radical criticism. Its three principal variants, all operative to some extent, are the traditional market economy, the Marxist-inspired socialist economy, and the new transactional economy constituted by the giant corporations which are not socialist and are not controlled by the market. In all three the influence of ideology is discernible and what, I believe, is needed in the first place is a pure economic analysis of the exchange process untainted by any ideology. Until it is achieved, of course, it will be confidently pronounced to be no more than a pipe dream.²¹

6. CONCLUSION

The conclusion to the present paper is simple enough. What can be done principally on the basis of moral theology, as in Case 1, already seems to be being done. What calls for collaboration between moral theologians and those engaged in other fields, which in general are not theological, would seem to be extremely important. It is not, however, the type of work in which the Theological Commission up to the present has been engaged. It has seemed to me that it would be acting *ultra vires* for the organizer of the fourth section of a subcommittee to take the initiative in the matter without higher authorization.

²⁰ Paul Ricoeur, 'The Atheism of Freudian Psychoanalysis,' *Concilium* 16 (*Is God Dead?* 1966) 59-72.

²¹ For recent appraisals of the situation in the United States see: John Kenneth Galbraith, *Economics and the Public Purpose* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1973); Richard N. Goodwin, "Reflections: The American Condition," *The New Yorker*, January 21st and 28th, and February 4th, 1974 (I, pp. 35-60; II, pp. 36-68; III, pp. 48-91). [In the MS this was the last paragraph before the conclusion; it was crossed out in the copy provided by Fr. Arevalo, and so also, presumably, in the copy sent the Commission; perhaps Lonergan reflected again (see note 7 above) on what would most concern his trans-Atlantic readers; it was not crossed out in the copy he kept in his own file.]

Whether or not there exist cases distinct in a significant fashion from the three that have been considered, is an issue on which the views of others might profitably be sought. I am of the opinion that such further cases do exist, but that they are to be subsumed under some such rubric as Pastoral Theology or Practical as Pastoral Theology rather than under Moral Theology in its established sense and function.

APPENDIX:

Lonergan's covering letter to Cardinal Seper, written under the letterhead of Regis College, Willowdale (Toronto), Ontario

February 28, 1974

Your Eminence,

As requested in your letter of January 19th (Prot. N. 423/74), I am sending you an interim report concerning the fourth subsection on *Moral Theology and the Human Sciences*.

The report itself envisages methodological matters of relevance to moral theologians and human scientists. As such it could serve as a working paper for critical comments. But I believe someone else should solicit such comments and so spare contributors the complications and embarrassment of addressing criticisms to an author.

The report also by implication goes beyond merely methodological considerations. But here the conclusion is that either moral theologians already are doing their work satisfactorily (Case 1) or else other possible projects, highly laudable in themselves, involve so much collaboration with nontheologians or so much creativity on the part of theologians that their investigation cannot be fitted into current structures of the Theological Commission.

By this I do not mean that there could not be a special subcommittee to study the Political Theology of Johannes Metz or to follow up the work of Christian Duquoc and the group that contributes to *Lumière-et-Vie*. Surely there could be such subcommittees as there is for Liberation Theology. But I think it improper for a section of a subcommittee to commit the Theological Commission to new subcommittees.

I beg your forgiveness for the tardiness of this report. It has taken no little time and reflection. The request from R. P. Delhaye came at a time when I had long been committed to three series of public lectures — in November at Trinity College in the University of Toronto, in February

under the auspices of More House in Yale University, in the coming month of March at Perkins School of Theology in Southern Methodist University.

I am sending a copy of my reflections to Fr. Delhayé with a suggestion that he seek opinions from Fr. Houtart or any others he sees fit.

Yours faithfully,

BERNARD LONERGAN, S.J.

PROCESS MEDICAL ETHICS: A CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS AN ADEQUATE LONERGANIAN POSITION ON MEDICAL ETHICS

Miguel Bedolla, MD, PhD, MPH

INTRODUCTION

WRITING THIS PAPER presented me with a problem: I am not a 'professional' philosopher; I am a physician who teaches and consults on medical ethics at a university hospital. However, I have been studying the writings of Bernard Lonergan since 1972 and attempting to articulate a Lonerganian position on medical ethics. I understand at least this: that ethical decisions at the bedside of the patient are made in the realm of common sense, while one is in the dramatic pattern of experience. I also understand that I must be permanently on alert against my biases as an individual, my biases as a physician, and the general bias that comes with my concern to get things done.¹

What can someone like myself contribute to this issue of *METHOD* that the others cannot contribute? In his article, "Moral Theology and the Human Sciences" ("MTHS"), Bernard Lonergan makes a brief statement about his position on medical ethics. Is this position adequate? My contribution will be an attempt to answer this question.

My attempt will begin with a brief summary of Lonergan's position on medical ethics as stated in "MTHS." Next I will present and discuss three medical consultations in which I was the ethicist and relate them to Lonergan's article. Finally, I will explain the task of medical ethics and the

¹Bernard Lonergan, S.J. *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding* (New York: The Philosophical Library, 1957) 173-242 = *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, vol. 3 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992) 196-267.

medical ethicist as going beyond Lonergan's own personal position as expressed in the article toward what I consider a more adequate Lonerganian position.

LONERGAN'S POSITION ON MEDICAL ETHICS

Lonergan's article distinguishes three cases or types of relationships between moral theology and the human sciences. In Case One both morally good and morally evil courses of action are possible in areas in which neither the science itself nor its possible applications are in doubt. In Case Two the science is not sufficiently determinate to yield fully concrete applications. None of its proposals are morally objectionable. Which proposal would yield the best results cannot be determined *a priori*. In Case Three the human science itself is open to suspicion. Its representatives are divided ideologically. They advocate contrary courses of action, all of which have their respective good points, but none is without serious defects. Lonergan states that medical ethics is often an example of Case One. To test the adequacy of Lonergan's position I will present case studies of three medical consultations.

THE ETHICS CONSULTATIONS

First Case Study

I met Mrs. M in the Surgical Intensive Unit of University Hospital. She was elderly, paralyzed from the neck down and connected to a ventilator that was breathing for her. About two years before I met her she had written and signed an Advanced Directive to Physicians. In it she said that she did not want to have her life prolonged artificially. About a week before I met her she was in a moving vehicle accident. She sustained a section high in the spinal chord that left her in the condition described above. She was brought to University Hospital by the Emergency Medical Services immediately after the accident.² When I met her she was conscious and competent to decide if she wanted her Advanced Directive

²EMS technicians do not have the obligation to execute an Advanced Directive in Texas.

executed. That was the reason why the ethics consultation was requested. I met with Mrs. M and, after agreeing on the signs with which we would communicate I verified that she understood that she was in the Hospital because she had been involved in an accident and, as a consequence, she would never again be able to breathe or move on her own. She understood that she was being kept alive with the help of the ventilator. I asked her if she remembered writing and signing an Advanced Directive in which she said that she did not want her life to be prolonged artificially. She did. I then asked if she would want her physicians to execute her Advanced Directive and disconnect her from the ventilator. To the joy of those of her children who were present she answered 'No' unhesitatingly. One week later a second consultation was requested. The nurse who called said "She seems to have changed her mind." This time Mrs. M seemed to hesitate before expressing that she did not want her Advanced Directive executed. A week later a third consultation was requested. It was a day or so after Mrs. M's eightieth birthday. The nurse who called said "We think she has changed her mind." She had changed her mind. She wanted to be disconnected from the ventilator and be allowed to die. Her children accepted her decision. They thanked her physicians for the care they had delivered to their mother. Mrs. M was sedated and extubated. She expired minutes later.

Second Case Study

Mr. O was an elderly man who was once married and had been divorced for years. He was brought into one of the university affiliated hospitals with the diagnosis of Alzheimer's Dementia. Sometime after he entered the hospital it was diagnosed that his dementia was due, not to Alzheimer's, but to AIDS. I was asked to do a consultation because he was suffering from pneumonia, and because of his dementia, he could not give informed consent to the treatment that he needed. Mr. O did not have an Advanced Directive. In his chart there was a copy of a Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care signed by him in which he named Dr. S, his former brother-in-law, his attorney. The Durable Power of Attorney had been issued just before Mr. O came into the hospital six months earlier. The Hospital's own attorney reviewed the document and concluded that

Mr. O had given Dr. S the authority to make decisions concerning his health care. Since Mr. O could not give consent for the treatment that he needed, Dr. S had been contacted to obtain his consent. Dr. S refused to give it; he said that he did not want Mr. O to be treated for his pneumonia. Mr. O's physician felt Dr. S was not making the best possible decision on behalf of Mr. O and requested an ethics consultation. When I met with Mr. O's physician he told me that on the basis of a psychology note and a social work note in Mr. O's file he doubted that Mr. O was competent when he named Dr. S. his attorney. He stated his reason for doubting as follows: "Anybody who is as demented now as Mr. O is could not have been competent to sign a durable power of attorney six months ago." After discussing the situation we concluded that we did not have an obligation to respect the wishes of an attorney we believed to have been appointed by a patient who was probably not competent. We judged that the doubt about Mr. O's competency at the moment of signing the instrument was reasonable and should benefit Mr. O himself. We decided to treat him. The attorney, who was opposed to the treatment, chose to do nothing when he was informed of our decision.

Third Case Study

A large family of migrant workers was on its way back to South Texas when the van in which they were traveling turned over. The mother and several other family members died at the scene. Two minors — a boy and a girl — were seriously injured. The father suffered no injuries. All of the members of the family were Jehovah's Witnesses. The boy and the girl were brought to the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit of University Hospital. Their father went to South Texas to bury their mother. To the physicians in the Unit it became apparent that, given their diagnosis, it would soon be indicated to transfuse the minors with whole blood or blood products. The physicians discussed this situation with the minors themselves, with an aunt of the minors, and with two Jehovah's Witness ministers. All of them refused the transfusion of blood or blood products even if the physicians thought it was indicated. The minors' physicians were not Jehovah's Witnesses and they believed that not transfusing them would be a dereliction of the Duty to be Beneficent. The physicians were ready to obtain a

court order to transfuse the blood but decided to request an ethics consultation. I arrived at the unit and was met by the aunt of the children. She informed me that the family was a member of Jehovah's Witness community. She said that it did not want the children to be transfused. I obtained permission from her to speak to the minors. After discovering that they were competent I asked them if they understood their situation. They did. I asked them if they would accept the blood or blood products that they may need. Both answered that they did not want to be transfused. I then spoke to the two ministers who were with them. They explained to me that it was God's will that humans not receive transfusions of blood or blood products. I then explained to them that the minors' physicians believed that they would need a transfusion soon and that they were ready to get a court order to administer it. Then I asked: "If the children are transfused under the authority of a court will they commit a sin?"

They answered that the sin would be committed by the physician who administered the transfusion. I then asked if the children would be tainted by the transfusion. They answered that the children would continue to be in communion with all other Jehovah's Witnesses. I discussed the situation of the children with several physicians and medical students until we decided that we would respect the preferences of the children for now, while we attempted to identify a physician who was willing to care for the children without transfusing them blood, and ask that physician if he or she would accept the children as patients. But if before we identified that physician the transfusion became absolutely necessary we would go to the court and get the order to administer it.

Discussion of the Consultations

In all three case studies there is an interaction between the sciences of biomedicine, medical ethics and the law. The first consultation presented seems to be an example of Lonergan's Case One. Neither the relevant biomedical science, moral science, nor the relevant law, nor their possible applications are in doubt. Biomedical science allows physicians to understand the patient's situation, and to arrive at a prognosis. Physicians have a very good, scientifically grounded idea of what will happen if the

patient is removed from the ventilator. Moral science allows physicians to conclude that they must respect the patient's stated wishes, since she is a competent adult; it also allows them to distinguish between killing a patient and allowing a patient to die. The science of jurisprudence also enables physicians to know how they are legally obligated by the manner in which the competent, adult patient has chosen to exercise her right to self-determination. Mrs. O did not want her life prolonged artificially; she said so about two years earlier and she was saying it now after having the chance to think about it for more than two weeks. Extubating her as she wished would not kill her but allow her to die.

Likewise, in the second case study physicians understand the medical ethics and the law which are pertinent. Again, medical ethics tells them that they should respect the wishes of the competent adult patient and the law says that patients have a right to self-determination. But was the patient competent to state his wishes when he signed the Durable Power of Attorney? The biomedical science is not sufficiently determinate to answer to this question. The physicians do not want to treat the patient if this would be against his wishes. But their uncertainty about the wishes of the patient cannot be removed. There are a number of scientific attempts to deal with uncertainty. All of them rely on someone's ability to assign cost and determine value. Because the physicians were uncertain about the competency of the patient to give the attorney authority to assign cost and determine value they judged that the greatest value was in treating the patient and they treated the patient on the basis of this judgment. It turned out that this was the best decision because the attorney chose to do nothing when informed. But which decision — to treat or not to treat — would yield the best results for the patient could not be determined *a priori*.

In the third case study the biomedical science and its applications are clear to both sides. Both sides understand that the children need the blood products, the reasons why they need them and the consequences of withholding them. What is open to suspicion is the theological science of one group and the of the moral science of the other. Physicians suspect the theological science which serves as the foundation for the reasoning on which the Jehovah's Witnesses base their decisions about transfusions.

Jehovah's witness suspect the moral foundations of a medical practice that allows of physicians who go to court and get an order to enforce their recommendations. Thus, each side advocates contrary courses of action. Respecting the beliefs of the children has its good points, but transfusing them while knowing that they will not sin or be tainted and will have a greater chance to survive also has its good points. None of the proposals is without serious defects. The children are minors and one wonders if they are acting within the range of their effective freedom when they refuse to be transfused. Obtaining a court order to carry out the transfusion puts the weight of the law against the deeply held convictions of a community.

THE ADEQUATE LONERGANIAN POSITION

In order to move toward an adequate Lonerganian position on medical ethics it seems necessary to review briefly what I and the other physicians were doing during the consultations. In any of the three consultations described above we were moving through five different levels of consciousness: (1) A level in which our intention was to gather all of the data available. We sensed, perceived, imagined about the patient and the family, spoke to them, wrote about them, talked to them and about them. (2) A level in which our intention was to understand the data. We discussed the data until we reached a tentative conclusion; then we followed the tentative conclusion to its logical consequences. We attempted to find alternative conclusions. (3) A level in which our intention was to make sure that we understood correctly. We marshaled and weighed the evidence for our concrete understanding about the patient and our obligations as physicians in the data available in order pass judgment upon the correctness of our understanding. (4) A level in which our intention was the good of the patient. We deliberated upon the possible courses of action and decided upon one of them. (5) A level in which our intention was to encounter the patient and the family as subjects. We decided when to talk and when to listen, what to say, how to say it, and what to do in order to discover the meaning of their feelings, values and beliefs and with them develop a strategy to do what we judged to be ethical.

Yet, a physician who intends to gather all of the data available is being attentive; who intends to understand the data available is being

intelligent; who intends not just to understand, but to understand correctly is being reasonable; who intends to decide on the basis of his correct understanding is being responsible; who intends to encounter his or her patients as subjects and who intends their good as persons is being in love. Thus, what we did in order to be ethical physicians was not to keep in mind the pronouncements of moral philosophers and theologians and apply them as the need arose. What we did was to be attentive, intelligent, reasonable, responsible, and in love; that is to be loyal to the imperatives that, as Lonergan has argued, one hears as the self-organizing structure of the interiority of any human being. We used our minds as moral philosophers and theologians would have with the data that was available to us, rather than apply their pronouncements. I prefer to call this more adequate Lonerganian position Process Medical Ethics. Process Medical Ethics moves physicians beyond the simple understanding and application of the pronouncements of moral philosophers and theologians at the bedside. It moves them to use their minds as moral philosopher and theologians.

OMNIA AD MAIOREM DEI GLORIAM

SUSPICION AND RECOVERY: ETHICAL APPROACHES TO ECONOMICS

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ALL SCIENTISTS SUFFER from the occupational hazard of ignoring or misunderstanding what lies beyond their ken. Succumbing to this bias is particularly dangerous for researchers in the human sciences because their predictions from flawed or incomplete data of sense or consciousness can become ideologies that shape our institutions. Martha Nussbaum deplors the insufficiency of economic measures in *Poetic Justice*:

Today in fact, when the prosperity of nations is compared in "tabular form," by far the most common strategy is simply to enumerate GNP per capita. This crude measure ... does not even tell us about the distribution of wealth and income and thus can give high marks to nations with large inequalities ... Furthermore, such an approach, focusing exclusively on the monetary, fails to tell us about how the human beings who have or do not have the money are functioning with respect to various significant activities that are not well correlated with GNP. It does not even tell us about life expectancy and infant mortality — let alone health, education, political rights, the quality of ethnic and racial and gender relations.¹

Similarly, Schumpeter claims no completeness for economic science when he says, "The ends themselves, that is to say, the kind of society or culture we want, we must choose ourselves. No science can do more than indicate

¹ Martha Nussbaum, *Poetic Justice* (Boston, Beacon Press, 1995) 49-50.

the means of attaining whatever it is we want."² This view is one which has been expressed by many economists.

In his report to Cardinal Seper on "Moral Theology and the Human Sciences" ("MTHS"), Lonergan criticizes economics as a human science that is "open to suspicion. Its representatives are divided ideologically. They advocate contrary courses of action, all of which have their respective good points, but none is without serious defects" (5). He concludes, "what, I believe, is needed in the first place is a pure economic analysis of the exchange process untainted by an ideology" (17).

SUSPICION

Suspicion of a human science may be warranted for several reasons. Scientists may be inattentive to relevant data in their research. Or the science may study a situation that has been distorted by past social aberrations such as slavery, colonial infrastructure, or relations with native people. Thirdly, scientists may be consciously or unconsciously biased themselves by the prevailing opinions among their fellow scientists, or by political pressures from hostile regimes.

In his approach to the human sciences Lonergan uses what he calls a 'generalized empirical method.' Generalized empirical method is the term Lonergan gives to the application of scientific method not only to sense data but also to the data of consciousness. And "generalized method has to be able to deal, at least comprehensively, not only with the data within a single consciousness but also with the relations between different conscious subjects, between conscious subjects and their milieu or environment, and between consciousness and its neural basis."³ Generalized empirical method is thus an extension of the scientific method used in the more strictly empirical sciences, one which applies to the study of human behavior in the human sciences.

The use of dialectic is an important tool of generalized empirical method. As Lonergan put it, dialectic is to generalized empirical method

² Joseph Schumpeter, *History of Economic Analysis* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1954) 1145

³ Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, vol. 3 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992) 268.

what the differential equation is to classical physics. He defines dialectic as "any concrete unfolding of linked but opposed principles that are modified cumulatively by the unfolding."⁴ Dialectic denotes any combination of the concrete, dynamic and contradictory and can be in the history of philosophic opinions or in the historical process generally. "Dialectic is the principal of integration for specialized studies that concentrate on this or that aspect of human living and integrates factual reports and theoretical work. ... Dialectic distinguishes between insight and bias, progress and decline. It contains in general form the combination of the critical as well as empirical approaches essential to the human sciences."⁵

Integrating Economics with other Human Sciences

Just as the human being is partly a chemical system so also the organized collection of human beings that we call society is partly an economy.⁶ Lonergan describes society as an ecology of interrelated systems of which the political system and the economic system are two. These two systems are assemblies of schemes of recurrence. Examples of economic schemes of recurrence are the repeated rounds of production, distribution of income from work, consumption of what has been produced, and investment in new production.⁷ Economic schemes of recurrence can develop or break-down. The development of international arrangements for production is an example of emerging new schemes. Lonergan names the process by which schemes of recurrence appear, survive, and fail, emergent probability. Emergent probability is Lonergan's theory of world process:

One set of such social schemes is the economy, the myriad interlocking recurrences of activities within and between firms, between firms and households, and within households. Each of the

⁴ *Insight* 96.

⁵ *Insight* 242, 267-269.

⁶ Mark Doughty, a Fellow of Lonergan College, Montreal, has given an example of a chemical scheme of recurrence in the citric acid cycle in the human body.

⁷ See *Insight* 141-150, 233-237, 252 on schemes of recurrence and emergent probability in human affairs; Bernard Lonergan, "Essay in Circulation Analysis," typescript (1993), 86-87 (to appear as vol. 15 in *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* [Toronto: Toronto University Press]); K. Melchin, *History, Ethics and Emergent Probability* (New York: University Press of America, 1987) 111-113.

schemes is a possibility that occurred to some one at some point of ancient or recent human history, that has been combined with other schemes in proposed possibilities, that has been chosen with greater or less probability and maintained with greater or less deliberate choice, and any set of combinations that has existed has functioned with greater or less success for a longer or shorter period of time. In brief, an economy is just part of ongoing human history.⁸

As this quotation suggests we need to think of the economy as a dynamic historical process. What are the sources of our present situation? How can we go about correcting it or advancing it? In his article "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness" Lonergan defines historicity as "what man makes of man" or "the constructions of the human spirit."⁹ In other words our family ways and our economic and political institutions are developed within human communities and can be adapted through new ideas, through new interpretations of values, and through the expression of these new meanings in institutions, including those of the economy and polity. So the study of history is important to the understanding of how our institutions express our cultural values. We can, then, adapt our institutions as we reinterpret our cultural values in our daily lives.¹⁰ Lonergan sees human history as "the cumulative realization of concretely possible schemes of recurrence" by people who have "the operative insights ... and take the initiative to bring them about."¹¹

How do economic values, understood as respect for the constraints of the economic system and analogous to respect for our physical well-being, fit in with other human values? This is a question that is increasingly discussed by economists.¹² The mainstream approach to ethics in economics is derived from the general equilibrium model. Its assumption

⁸ "Essay in Circulation Analysis," 87; See *Insight* 173-181 on Common Sense.

⁹ Bernard Lonergan, *A Third Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (New York: Paulist Press, 1985) 169-183.

¹⁰ An example of such adaptation is the present concern with developing legislation to deal with new bioethical issues.

¹¹ *Insight* 227.

¹² Daniel M. Hausman & Michael S. McPherson, "Taking Ethics Seriously: Economics and Contemporary Moral Philosophy," *Journal of Economic Literature*, vol. 31 (June 1993) 672; T. Havrilesky, "Life Philosophy: Ethics and Economists" *The American Economist*, vol. 37, no. 2, Fall 1993, 32-36; various articles by Amartya Sen. See for example footnote 18.

of competitive firms leads to a solution in which all players are as well off as possible.¹³ Changes in policy that improve the position of any player should not do so by reducing the welfare of another player. Then a kind of economic good is achieved: a Pareto optimum.¹⁴ The model is idealistic but approachable by policies that try to provide an even playing field and to protect the rights of individual players.¹⁵ A major criticism of a Pareto optimum as a goal is that it abstracts from questions of equity by assuming that the status quo is acceptable. Economists generally try to predict human behavior by taking for granted that, when choosing alternatives, people will take what they want. Although the issue of making such behavior consistent with the common good was addressed in the beginning by Adam Smith, it was not often included in subsequent economic analysis, which tended to concentrate on the theory of the determination of market prices. Smith thought that pursuing your own economic advantage through increased production would be to everyone's benefit. But his notion of self-interest always included what he called 'sympathy' for others because they are like oneself.

Welfare economists following James Buchanan have developed public choice theory, which focuses on procedures and rights that increase the possibility of choice rather than on an optimum outcome because "social states cannot be arrayed in some order of ascendancy." But he did not reject utility functions that result from choices: "Persons choose among alternatives as they arise and there is hopefully enough consistency in their behavior to allow us to make some predictions about changes in outcomes as a result of changes in choice alternatives." Buchanan was sympathetic to Adam Smith's policy approach which sought to modify the structure of property rights in order to "correct for possible conflicts between individually adjusted behavior and mutually

¹³ The possibility of a general equilibrium solution was proven by Kenneth Arrow and Gerard Debreu.

¹⁴ Pareto optimality is the best overall economic outcome that can be had without resorting to policies that make some people better off at the cost of making others worse off.

¹⁵ Examples would be the aims of anti-trust legislation and laws concerning food and drugs.

desired collective outcomes." Buchanan did not think economists should be social activists. He himself studied the relationship between political institutions and the economic policies that emerge from them. Buchanan thought that man wants liberty not to maximize utility — he made no instrumental defense of liberty — but to become the person he wants to become. So his approach to the economic good is set in a broader concern for individual and social good in general.¹⁶ Buchanan also approached normative economics via the notion of justice through constitutional change. Two bases for implementing justice in social well-being are: (1) Buchanan's approach which is to increase opportunities for better average welfare through constitutional change, and (2) the Rawlsian approach which is to insure basic political rights and liberties and to judge institutions on the basis of how they promote the interests of the least well off.¹⁷

A third tradition of normative economics pays more attention to consequences rather than procedures. These economists focus on utility maximization based on people's preferences. They have been criticized because of the attempt to measure preferences in units of utility, which tended to be understood as a measure of pleasure or pain as it had been discussed by the philosopher, Jeremy Bentham. From time to time economists have tried to respond to such criticisms. Amartya Sen in particular has worked in this area recently. He has developed the notion of policy consequences to include assumptions about the capabilities and functionings of participants, as well as the procedures by which the social goods are produced.¹⁸ Sen recognized the results of Arrow's impossibility theorem¹⁹, but he proposes going beyond it to find other bases for social choice: (1) by finding other objective measures, such as measures of

¹⁶ James Buchanan, *What Should Economists Do?* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1979) 108, 88, 58-59.

¹⁷ Hausman & McPherson, 709; John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1971); James Buchanan, *The Limits of Liberty: Between Anarchy and Leviathan* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975).

¹⁸ Jean Dreze & Amartya Sen, *Hunger and Public Action*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989); Amartya Sen, "Rationality and Social Choice," *American Economic Review*, March 1995.

¹⁹ Kenneth Arrow's 'impossibility theorem' proved that given four seemingly innocuous requirements — universal domain, independence of irrelevant alternatives, the Pareto principle and nondictatorship — no social choice was possible.

income distribution, (2) by taking the more evolutionary view that preferences or values are developed through discussion, as Buchanan did, (3) by examining the motivations behind preferences, (4) in general, by including more information in the analysis of social choice.²⁰ Sen would like to see economic science produce an operational definition of the social good and identify policies that would best promote it.²¹ On the other hand, Hausman and McPherson leave the defining of a clearly specified and measurable social good to ethicists, while economists would say how best to achieve it.

In his chapter on the human good in *Method in Theology* Lonergan formalizes the structure of the human good, which he sees is concrete and at once individual and social.²² The structure is complex. Lonergan views goods as pertaining to individuals in their potentialities and their actualization, as pertaining to society, and as ends in themselves. While Sen stresses capabilities and functionings, Lonergan speaks of individuals' ability to develop skills to fill institutional roles. Sen seeks a broader interpretation of preferences while Lonergan sees that social decisions are taken by individuals acting freely, but 'within a matrix of personal relations.' This matrix includes the economic system that relies on people fulfilling their commitments, roles and tasks, although persons may differ concerning 'qualitative' values and scales of preference.' But individuals are also linked by their common experience, insights and values. People can move from 'misleading satisfactions to newly apprehended, or formerly overlooked, values.' In other words, for Lonergan, preferences can be broadly understood, and they will change over time. Clearly an analysis of human behavior that takes a static view of preferences leaves little room for the evolution of human understanding, judgment, and choice.

A central characteristic of the structure of the human good is the tension between spontaneous human feelings of intersubjectivity and the

²⁰ Examples would be measures used in the Human Development Reports, although there is controversy regarding their choice as well.

²¹ Robert Sugden, "Welfare, Resources and Capabilities: a Review of *Inequality reexamined* by Amartya Sen," *Journal of Economic Literature*, December 1993.

²² Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (New York: Seabury Press, 1979) 27-55.

constraints of cooperative living in the environment created by the cultural applications of human development in many fields of knowledge.²³ On the other hand, the evolution of institutional frameworks may lag behind human understanding or may develop before people can grasp what is happening in their environment. So one can expect that tension between individuals' feelings and social systems will make the human good difficult to discern. Sen also sees some tension between economists' analysis of preferences and the fundamental human choice question, "What kind of life should one sensibly choose?"²⁴ Such tensions can only be resolved through a dialectic that is a process of discussion and creativity.

While James Buchanan stresses the importance of procedures to increase the liberty of choice, Lonergan speaks of liberty as "the active thrust of the subject terminating the process of deliberation by settling on one of the possible courses of action and proceeding to execute it." But liberty, for Lonergan, is also exercised in a cooperating community bound together by "needs which include wants of every kind." The community needs to "develop its institutions to facilitate cooperation" and individuals need to "develop skills to fulfill the roles and perform the tasks set by the institutional framework."²⁵

Lonergan's notion of the social 'good of order' can, then, be characterized as both procedural and consequential. It is concerned with policy outcomes but also recognizes the formal and informal institutions essential to achieving those outcomes. Although institutions like the state, the law and the economy are the 'commonly accepted basis and mode of cooperation,' the terminal social good is the concrete manner in which institutions allow cooperation to work out. The good of order implies the ordering of individual operations so that they become cooperations that recur. And, secondly, the good of order implies the interdependence of effective desires or decisions with the appropriate performance by cooperating individuals.

²³ See Robert M. Doran, *Theology and the Dialectic of History* (Toronto: The University of Toronto Press, 1990) on the dialectic of community, 144, 361, 380.

²⁴ Sen, 1995, 15.

²⁵ *Method in Theology* 50.

Economics is the study of how such interdependence is worked out in the recurring rhythms of production and exchange. As the American economist Frank Knight put it, "Values are established or validated and recognized through discussion, an activity which is at once social, intellectual, and creative."²⁶ Technological and economic developments, such as we are witnessing in the emerging global economy, usually demand adjustments in human relationships that can only come through creativity which recognizes how to apply cultural values appropriately to the cultural developments that occur.²⁷ Lonergan also discusses the importance of creativity in dealing with social problems in his paper "Healing and Creating in History":

While it can take a series of disasters to convince people of the need for creating, still the long, hard, uphill climb is the creative process itself. In retrospect this process may appear as a grand strategy that unfolds in an orderly and cumulative series of steps. But any retrospect has the advantage of knowing the answers. The creative task is to find the answers. It is a matter of insight, not of one insight but of many, not of isolated insights but of insights that coalesce, that complement and correct one another, that influence policies and programs, that reveal their short-comings in their concrete results, that give rise to further correcting insights, corrected policies, corrected programs, that gradually accumulate into the all-round, balanced, smoothly functioning system that from the start was needed but at the start was not yet known.²⁸

But Lonergan stressed not only creativity in the development of science and scholarship and of their practical application in human affairs, he also noted the biases (neurotic, egoistic, group, or class) that can skew such a creative process. These biases do tend to correct themselves through a dialectical process such as the 'discussion' which Knight, Sen, and Buchanan also refer to, or the way in which groups in a free society interact to

²⁶ Frank Knight, *Freedom and Reform: Essays in Economic and Cultural Philosophy*, (New York: Harper, 1947; republished, Indianapolis: Liberty, 1982) 280; quoted in Sen, 1995, 16.

²⁷ Robert Doran, 100.

²⁸ Lecture presented at the Thomas More Institute, Montreal, May 13, 1975 (TMI Papers/75) 59.

renew their values to take account of new phenomena.²⁹ But the most serious source of decline in human affairs is what Lonergan calls 'the general bias of common sense.' This bias results in the failure of the creative process itself so that no new ideas are brought forward, no fundamental changes are undertaken. People cling to the status quo and hope to muddle through.

MOVING TOWARDS RECOVERY

Lonergan sees economics as partly an empirical or positive science, and partly a critical or normative one because it has to do with human behavior or choice. Economic science is normative in the sense that choosing the good requires a person to respect the nature or the systematic character of economic processes. Economics is an empirical science in that it analyses data on output, employment, interest rates, and investment among others. The data refer to an economy that is the product of the human ingenuity and choices that give us our technology, our political system, as well as the civil society and culture in which the economy is set. The direction of the evolutionary process depends on the institutional inertia and shocks to the system, and on the participants' understanding, judgment, and choices within those institutions. But because economics has to do with human choices, the economically acceptable or unacceptable choices that are made will lay foundations and communicate ideas in such a way as to determine with varying probability the new socioeconomic situation which, in turn, will provide the data of future empirical research.³⁰

²⁹ "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness," 182. The relationship between dialectic and dialogue is discussed.

³⁰ *Method in Theology*, 134-135. The steps in economic analysis follow those in all human sciences: research, interpretation, history, dialectic, foundations, doctrines, systematics, and communication. The first four steps represent the analysis of present understandings and institutions, interpreting their meaning, tracing their history and, through a dialectic, reaching judgments and making choices. Through this process the intellectual and social horizons of people are determined. These horizons, in turn, create the bases for personal and social choices, and for the systematization of ideas and institutions that are the result of such choices. As discussed above, public choice theory in economics studies the normative and actual human behavior that results from institutions and policies — which behavior creates the economic and other data for present and future analyses by human scientists.

Loneragan calls on economic theorists to include a new type of analysis "that reveals how moral precepts have both a basis in economic process and so an effective application to it."³¹ He asks economists to "think on the basis of freedom and acknowledge the relevance of morality." In *Method in Theology* he notes with approval Gibson Winter's grounding of social policy not only in social science but also in the value judgments of an ethics.³² But Lonergan adds, perhaps to distance himself from facile social criticism, "It is futile to excoriate what does exist while blissfully ignoring the task of constructing a technically viable economic system that can be put in its place."³³ We have, for example come to realize that the policies which extended social benefits after World War II, became very costly particularly in Europe as the shame of accepting government help disappeared. Then, as economic times became harder, more people came to depend on government income support.³⁴

In spite of developments in economic theory, such as the use of time series analysis, new growth theory, game theory, and Nelson & Winter's evolutionary model, current economic analysis has not moved beyond its base in the general equilibrium model of pure competition.³⁵ That model does not sufficiently raise moral questions, although it does achieve a sort of economic good, as discussed above. And through its axioms of competition among firms and freedom of entry by firms into an industry, it does limit economic power in the ideal case. However, a crucial weakness of the model is that it does not consider the meaning of variations through historical time in variables such as profit or income shares.

Loneragan's advice to moral theologians, that they regard economics with suspicion, can be understood to refer not only to the mainstream general equilibrium model but also to the policy advice representing different views on, for example, the role of government or the importance

³¹ Bernard Lonergan, "Healing and Creating in History," *Bernard Lonergan: Three Lectures* (Montreal: Thomas More Institute, 1975) 65-66.

³² *Method in Theology* 249.

³³ "Healing and Creating in History," 66.

³⁴ Assar Lindbeck, "Hazardous Welfare-State Dynamics," *American Economic Review*; May 1995.

³⁵ Richard R. Nelson & Sidney G. Winter, *An Evolutionary Theory of Economic Change* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982).

of the money supply and inflation in the economy. Keynesians and post-Keynesians often argue for a relatively large economic role for governments. They stress the failure of markets to achieve the good society. The alternative view stresses the failure of government spending to bring about the good society and urges a return of many social tasks to the private sector or market economy. Each side uses the same general equilibrium model of economic science in their analysis, but disagrees over the relative significance of the model's variables and the appropriate economic roles of individuals and institutions.

In the development of the economic theory of consumer behavior, the general equilibrium model assumes that people consume goods and services so that they will get the most out of their income. Changes in income over time are not central to the model. And Smith's question about sympathy for others, or the place of efficient consumer behavior in the overall scheme of human behavior was set aside in a search for precision within economics as a study of exchange activities in the market economy itself – the relations among supply, demand, and price variables that use money as a common measure.

On the production side, the model proves that maximizing profit, in the ideal case of pure competition and an unchanging economy, would insure that resources are allocated to the best uses in production, so that the maximum amount of goods and services could be produced for the common good. Furthermore, there would be no excess profit beyond the normal return to management, to a capital loan, or to the use of renewable resources. This result follows from the fact that higher profits would draw in new producers to claim it. And the greater the production, the lower the price of the product until the excess profit disappears, and the lower price makes everyone purchasing the good better off economically.

Clearly the pure competition model abstracts from all human behavior except that related to the narrowest economic decision of allocating a given income among goods and services or given resources in production. No account is taken of variations of income share (wages and profits) over time, or the influences on human behavior of the realities of political power in corporations, labor unions, and various special interest groups, or of individual behavior motivated by greed or a lack of Adam

Smith's 'sympathy.' Nor does the model of pure competition take account of the human costs of starting up or closing down centers of production. More importantly, it does not take account of the influence of human learning on behavior. Learning new preferences can change consumption and new ideas can change production processes.

Macroeconomics is the study of the national or global economy as a whole, which includes the way in which governments, central banks and the rest of the world can influence the economy and so have an economic role to play. But the analysis is based on the static microanalyses of demand and supply discussed above. The macroeconomic perspective can be illustrated by the stances taken by Marx and Keynes: Marx took the historical but deterministic view that the process of industrial production would inevitably pay workers less and less and raise profits ever higher until repeated and worsening 'crises' led to revolution and the emergence of the proletariat as the class of society that rules the polity and economy. Keynes, on the other hand, called for governments to spend and invest to keep the economy from spiraling downward in a crisis. He thought that central banks could cooperate by increasing the money supply through lowering the interest rate which they control.³⁶ While Marx has been criticized for his view that worsening crises were inevitable, Keynes's failure was not to foresee the political temptations of a government role in the economy. In both cases we have the advantage of hindsight, though Lonergan foresaw the limitations of both views in his early work on economics during the 1940s.

Lonergan's deep concern with the major economic upheavals of the Great Depression and of the recession and structural changes that began in the 1970s, drew him during both periods to work on economics. These systemic failures of the world economy seemed to cry out for some fundamental change in the way the economy is studied. Lonergan's response is his "pure economic analysis of the exchange process untainted by ideology." Like Ricoeur he wished through dialectics to "develop

³⁶ In the United States of America the Federal Reserve Board sets the federal funds rate, the interest rate at which federal reserve banks can borrow reserves from the central bank and so increase their lending.

positions and reverse counterpositions" by a "hermeneutic of suspicion and recovery" (17).

An Evolutionary Model ³⁷

Lonergan's macroeconomic model or ideal case is based on the evolutionary notion of a pure cycle of economic growth.³⁸ The model of pure competition briefly discussed above, explains the movement of a system towards an equilibrium economy in which endowments of resources, ideas and population do not change. Lonergan's pure cycle model is similar to the pure competition model insofar as it is an ideal model. There are no 'failures' of human behavior. But the models differ in that equilibrium within an evolving process, which has definite time characteristics, must take account of the phase the economy is in. Furthermore, an evolutionary model may add new meanings to key variables.

Lonergan begins discussion of his model with an extensive section on production, an ongoing current process which, through its output, serves the common good.³⁹ His emphasis on supply or production leads to a theory of profit in the pure cycle. Profit increases in the early part of the cycle as a reward to innovative activity. These systematic profits create funds for further investment that spread the new technology through the economy. On the other hand, as this occurs, a falling profit rate signals the increase in the output of consumer goods and services for which the expansion and increased productivity of resources were intended.⁴⁰ For

³⁷ *Method in Theology*, xii, 284. "Models, then stand to the human sciences, to philosophies, to theologies, much as mathematics stands to the natural sciences." Models are interlocking sets of terms and relations that help to guide research and frame hypotheses.

³⁸ See Peter Burley, "A von Neumann representation of Lonergan's production problem" *Economic Systems Research* 1/3, 1989, 317; Peter Burley & Laszlo Csapo, "Money Information in Lonergan-von Neumann Systems" *Economic Systems Research* 4/2, 1992 133-141. My own doctoral dissertation on Lonergan's economics (Montreal: McGill University, 1990) develops a model whose response to real shocks with neutral money reflects Lonergan's pure cycle. Non-neutral money shocks disrupt the growth process.

³⁹ In an exchange economy, Lonergan includes sale in the production process. In this way he abstracts from a discussion of variations of demand from equilibrium in a pure cycle.

⁴⁰ Resources include financial capital, machine capital, human capital in labor, physical capital or land, water, air, renewable and nonrenewable resources.

its part, the general equilibrium model of pure competition has very little to say about profit. The model's assumption that new firms can easily enter a profitable industry means that any excess profits would tend to disappear. In a real-life economy there are profits, but the mainstream model does not take them seriously because they ought to disappear.

A key distinction for Lonergan is between the functions of capital and consumer goods, and their different effects on the standard of living of people. Capital goods range from nets to catch fish or banking and insurance services for businesses, to human capital in the skills and capabilities that people acquire. In turn, catching fish, doing business, and producing goods or services with your acquired skills is accelerated once new skills, machines, or resources are applied to the production of goods and services that constitute our standard of living. Lonergan's analysis differs from general equilibrium analysis which can take account of many sectors but which does not mark a fundamental distinction between capital and consumer goods and services.⁴¹ Lonergan calls the two fundamental productive functions 'surplus' and 'basic.' The distinction is a functional one and the same production activity can be basic production at one time and surplus production at another. "So labor, services, power, transportation, materials can be known as contributions to the basic or surplus function only through further determinations and even special inquiries."⁴²

Lonergan's model is cyclical because of the fact that investment in capital goods accelerates the production of consumer goods and there is a time lag between the development and production of new or more capital goods and the use of those goods to create products that we actually consume as part of our standard of living. His model is a pure cycle

⁴¹ "Essay in Circulation Analysis," 11.

⁴² "Essay in Circulation Analysis," 66. Lonergan's cycle analysis deals with the money economy first in a simple 'national' economy without a government sector and without foreign trade. Later he elaborates his model to include both of these, discussing their effects at different phases of the cycle. In terms of the national economy, the central bank and monetary system, the government and the rest of the world act on the two central functions of production through what Lonergan has called the 'redistributive function.' The name reflects the redistributive role of finance, foreign exchange, income, art, and other old property through the actions of governments, banking systems and private agents.

because, in the ideal case, the growth of production in either function never becomes negative, even though the growth rate in each first increases and then decreases. Again in the ideal case, the economy as a whole never contracts although the production of some goods ceases and resources, including human resources, move to the production of other goods.⁴³ The pure cycle model has four phases: a stationary phase which is largely theoretical, and three expansion phases — a proportional expansion, a surplus expansion, and a basic expansion.

The economy can be characterized as being in a surplus expansion when the rate of growth of surplus goods production is greater than the rate of growth of basic goods production. The surplus expansion leads to rising profits and investment. Income growth goes to higher income groups who tend to receive the profits and do the investment. Income is relatively inegalitarian. Statistical work is needed to determine whether the economy is in such a phase. During this phase the means of production in the economy are transformed.⁴⁴ But the purpose of the transformation is to bring the economy into a basic expansion, which is identified by a relatively greater acceleration in the production of basic, or consumer goods and services and, consequently, a growth in the standard of living.⁴⁵

In the basic expansion there is a decrease in the rate of growth of savings and investment and, in the pure cycle ideal, an increase in the rate of growth of consumption. The latter is made possible by the growth in production of consumer goods that results from the prior transformation of productive processes. For demand to purchase this increasing output a more egalitarian distribution of income is needed as low income people consume more of their income. Rising output will be bought if incomes are more egalitarian. If incomes remain inegalitarian as is required in a surplus expansion, too much income will be saved and invested and not enough will be spent on the expanded output of consumer goods.

⁴³ This often creates discontinuities in employment as was the case when horses and harnesses were not needed for cars.

⁴⁴ *Insight* 233-234.

⁴⁵ "Essay in Circulation Analysis," 70-74.

Loneragan noted that historically human behavior has been better adapted to the surplus expansion and rising profits as expressed in the economic maxim of 'thrift and enterprise.' He suggests that a better precept might be 'benevolence and enterprise,' which would insure concern for investment to create appropriate work opportunities as well as "to employ people who really cannot be taught much" and will not be able to adapt to changes.⁴⁶ Lonergan argued that because the cycle and the role of profit in the surplus expansion are not understood, the decline in the profit rate at the end of a surplus expansion is misread. Production and output are reduced as firms try to protect their previous profit rates. Unemployment increases and recession occurs instead of the normative basic expansion described above.

Loneragan's criterion for dynamic equilibrium of the whole economy is that during the evolutionary process monetary flows between the productive functions balance, although their rates will vary. When there is an imbalance in the flows of supply and demand between the two circuits, various remedies are applied to prevent one or other circuit from being drained: "drawing on savings, obtaining credit, maintaining a favorable balance of foreign trade, deficit government spending, and redistributing income through an income tax."⁴⁷ These remedies are often not responsive to the evolutionary processes through which the economy is moving.

The biases in economic development that have occurred historically are caused as much by the lack of an adequate dynamic model as by a lack of good will. As Lonergan's essay concludes, misunderstanding economic processes has led to "international indebtedness, colonies and empires with their rivalries and wars, Marx and the Soviet Union, the welfare state, and the multinational corporations that create dual economies."⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Bernard Lonergan, *Caring about Meaning* interviews with Lonergan by Cathleen Going, Pierrot Lambert and Charlotte Tansey (Montreal: Thomas More Institute, 1982) 191.

⁴⁷ "Essay in Circulation Analysis," 63-64, 76-80, and the Cycle of Basic Income section 118-123.

⁴⁸ "Essay in Circulation Analysis," 88-89.

Applying Lonergan's Evolutionary Model

In response to the Great Depression, Keynes proposed to counteract the recession's downturn in production and employment by maintaining the demand for basic goods and services through government spending to create what became known as automatic stabilizers: welfare, unemployment insurance, business subsidies, and so on. The acceptance of a larger role for government in the economy led to what Schumpeter called 'socialist' policies within a capitalist system after World War II. Governments wanted to prevent the kind of postwar recession that had occurred in 1918. Schumpeter thought that the ethos of capitalism, which he defined as 'a scheme of values, an attitude towards life, a civilization of inequality and of the family fortune,' had gone in 1949. He saw in its place a socialist-type of ethos that demanded stabilization policies to prevent depression, greater equality of income through redistributive taxation, anti-trust regulation, government control of markets for labor and money, increases in government provision for health services, housing, and the arts, and security legislation.⁴⁹

Lonergan criticized government deficits which upset the balance of income in basic and surplus circuits of the economy. He saw that there was a tendency for government deficits to drain the basic circuit of funds. This occurs because such deficits can create a demand for goods and services without increasing the supply and, therefore, tend to be inflationary. Price increases feed profits which then go to buy the government bonds sold to finance the deficits. Government bonds can use up capital needed for investment and also raise the cost of borrowing money (interest rates) for capital investment. This process, in turn, drains the surplus circuit of funds. Furthermore, "Conventional wisdom favors taxing the rich and resists taxing the masses," says Lonergan and this also tends to reduce the investment needed in the economy in a period of expansion and technical change. While Lonergan saw that its generosity was intended to solve actual unemployment problems, as an ideal he regarded the welfare state as an aberration: "the long overdue basic

⁴⁹ Joseph Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, Third Edition (New York: Harper Torch Book, 1950) 410-414, 418.

expansion is doled out to one's own fellow countrymen under the haughty name of welfare." 50

Determining whether the global economy is in a surplus or a basic expansion requires statistical analysis. In a surplus expansion, we may expect to find an inegalitarian distribution of income because profits would be relatively high and rising. There should be a rising rate of investment and saving and a transformation of the capital goods sector of the economy. There is some evidence to support the view that this is the case, as the world economy is in the throes of major changes. Corporate profits have been rising in Canada and the United States. There has been some job creation but the new jobs demand skills that the labor force in general does not yet have. There has been a lot of what Schumpeter called 'creative destruction' as a result of the new technologies and new venues of production. But investment in Canada and the United States remains low relative to Japan. If we are in a surplus expansion, inegalitarian incomes, rising investment, and saving follow Lonergan's expectations. It seems clear that investment in retraining people and re-equipping industry is now important for the future of the North American economies. This does not mean that the poor and the unskilled are to be ignored. Private and public initiatives in the community service economy or non-profit sector are needed so that people who can work, may do so. Usually work in this sector also improves people's lives and surroundings.

If we are in a basic expansion we may expect a more egalitarian distribution of income, high and rising consumer spending matched on the supply side by an accelerating rate of production of consumer goods, and a falling rate of profit even though total profits in the economy continue to rise. Could the world economy be in a basic expansion? Perhaps the welfare state, the growth of public sector services to consumers, and the creation of government jobs since World War II could be viewed as creating a kind of basic expansion. From the 1960s until the 1980s incomes were more egalitarian. Inflation reduced saving. There was

50 "Essay in Circulation Analysis," 80. Buchanan also noted that government tax and spend policies restrict people's choices by inducing them to adapt their behavior to acquire free income or, if possible, to minimize income losses due to taxation.

growth of consumer goods and services, especially those provided by governments and those bought by consumers buying on credit. Consumer borrowing on credit became widespread during the 1970s. Business investment tended to be discouraged because of the borrowing demands of governments and consumers. And the higher interest rates needed to cover losses in the value of money owing to inflation also discouraged investment. But, towards the end of this period, the rise in the standard of living of the population in general was not always matched by employment opportunities, and dependence on government transfers increased.

CONCLUSION

Lonergan's analysis of the economic good can be understood in the framework of his writing on the human good. It is the course of action chosen in cooperation that integrates the developing capabilities and functionings of individuals (Sen), who make their choices in a way that reflects self-transcending creativity (Doran), and who critically maintain and adapt their institutions to insure the continuation of the economic processes of production and exchange. But the development of preferences by the cultivation of moral feelings is also necessary to good judgments of value. In turn, knowledge and moral feeling "head to the existential discovery of oneself as a moral being." We are searching for answers to the questions, "What is the drama of human life about?" or "Is the object of our choice really worth while? or "What kind of a life can one sensibly choose?" Generalizing about judgments of value Lonergan states that they presuppose "knowledge of human life, human possibilities, proximate and remote, of the probable consequences of a projected course of action. Where knowledge is deficient there is moral idealism, lovely proposals that don't work and often do more harm than good." ⁵¹

The suspicion of economic science and policy advice expressed in ("MTHS") is echoed in the writings of economists, moralists and concerned people in general. This paper has mentioned some approaches of economists who know the inadequacies of the general equilibrium model and who seek to correct them. A fully operational evolutionary

⁵¹ *Method in Theology* 38.

model has not yet been developed because of its mathematical complexity. Nevertheless, Lonergan's model is sufficiently clear in its analysis. It develops out of classical economic theory. And it constitutes a better basis for statistical work and policy planning.

In his call for a pure economic analysis of the exchange process Lonergan is asking for an analysis that is evolutionary. An evolutionary model, such as he develops, would focus more on investment for future jobs and output, rather than only on consumption which is a short term approach appropriate to a static model. This paper has argued that the basis for economic choices would be clearer if economic science had an evolutionary model. Such a model could account for the normative role of the profit rate, which rises for the sake of investment in renewing productive resources, but which falls as the output of consumer goods and services accelerates.

An evolutionary model also takes an historical perspective which may help people to understand economic development. A remaining problem would be one of whether people are willing to cooperate in sharing the risks of change instead of competing to keep the advantages which their various interest groups may have in the status quo. The social costs of change can be met by some policy combination of private or public social insurance, retraining for the unemployed, and community work initiatives. But these choices depend on the political willingness of persons to make them and to pay for them in a way which is accepted as equitable. Even so, political and economic policies which promote the social good still leave us with some personal responsibility to care for people within and beyond our families who are unable to adequately help themselves.

LONERGAN, ECONOMICS, AND MORAL THEOLOGY

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IN HIS ESSAY "Moral Theology and the Human Sciences" ("MTHS"), Lonergan wrote of three principal ideological variants of economics: the liberal market economy, the Marxian socialist economy and the new transactional economy of giant corporations. The second has since collapsed and the third remains mostly a trade secret, leaving the first as the main subject of theoretical writing. This paper discusses Lonergan's own economic analysis¹ in relation to this liberal theory (which has many sub-variants) and considers how the two relate to moral theology.

Much of the empirical inadequacy of the neoclassical liberal paradigm, which dominates mainstream academic economics, and which is congruent with the current *laissez faire* ideology, would seem to lie in its oversight of economic evolution.² The same is true of its main empirical tool, the stationary least squares regression paradigm. As E.J. Hannan has observed "In the natural sciences approximately stationary phenomena abound, but the continuing social evolution of man makes such phenomena rare in social science."³

¹ Bernard Lonergan, *Essay in Circulation Analysis* to appear as vol. 15 in *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press). I am grateful to Lonergan's literary trustees for permission to draw on the vision of this work.

² *Behavioral Norms, Technological Progress and Economic Dynamics: Studies in Schumpeterian Economics*, eds. E. Helmstaedter and M. Perlman (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996).

³ E.J. Hannan, "Stationary Time Series" *The New Palgrave: Time Series and Statistics*, eds. J. Eatwell and others (New York/London: Norton, 1990) 271.

Lonergan moves beyond this limiting horizon by invoking a more insightful Schumpeterian (discretely changing) underlying technology; and then raises new questions about the distribution of the dynamic profits it generates. This approach would seem timely in the view of observers, like Joel Mokyr, who consider macroeconomic innovation the current problem for economists.

As elsewhere in his work Lonergan seeks insights into data prior to defining limiting concepts to fit to such data. So to read his economics is to engage in Schumpeter's "incessant struggle with creations of our own and our predecessor's minds." In particular his 'competition' is the indeterminate Schumpeterian "doing things ... more successfully than the fellow next door" rather than the complete determinacy of neoclassical perfect competition where every producer does the same thing. Similarly his final distribution of innovation profits raises the potential indeterminacy of Schumpeter's 'struggle' towards the final stationary state. This last economic indeterminacy leads to important political and ethical questions according to Lonergan.

Lonergan's economics is distinguishable from, though in a sense subordinate to, his politics, both of which enjoy a similar relation to his ethics, which in turn is subordinate to his moral theology. In each case, however, the autonomy of the laws on the lower level is respected by having the higher one merely set conditions for it. Giving a pendulum an initial push does not falsify its normal law of simple harmonic motion. More to the point, Lonergan has something like the setting of lower level boundary conditions in hierarchical control theory — something involving alternative descriptions of the same data.⁴ His ethically good economic behavior will in fact produce a higher standard of living in a depression than the individualistic attempt at maximizing behavior of neoclassical economics. Conversely, however, what ought to be has to be contextualized by what is: social ethics has to be congruent with the economically sound to be effective in practice. It is useless, for example, recommending that more be distributed than can be produced.

⁴ H.H. Pattee, *Hierarchy Theory: The Challenge of Complex Systems* (New York: George Braziller, 1973). Lonergan recommended this as reading in his 1982 Boston College course on Macroeconomics and the Dialectic of History.

Loneragan begins his analysis with a dynamic model of production in which investment goods are focused on first, since they are observed to fluctuate more strongly than human consumption goods. Investment goods are disaggregated into a hierarchy where machines make machines which ultimately make consumption goods. Thus goods are classified here according to where they stand in the dynamic chain of production, rather than according to their commonsense microeconomic properties in the stationary state. Implicitly using a generalization of the correspondence principle, which Samuelson imported from physics into economics, such micro properties are simply laid aside for this macrodynamics of innovation. Major innovations involve strategic (structural) changes, which cannot be analyzed in terms of the usual tactical (marginal) variations about the stationary state. So, unlike the current mainstream economics, Loneragan's is not a macro theory based on micro foundations.

For this analysis the machines referred to above are more like the unimaginable fundamental particles of quantum physics than the imagined atoms of classical physics — or the micro goods of neoclassical economics. This more abstract, quantum mechanical like, use of unimaginable interdependent basic terms, together with the indeterminacy mentioned above, is typical of Loneragan's innovation economics. Appropriate social ethics, and more ultimately, moral theology, are invoked to provide the determinacy. As an aside, it is interesting to note that there are technical economic examples of this sort of determinacy in the exogenous setting of boundary conditions for innovation growth paths in the mathematical economic planning literature.⁵

Loneragan's novel system of National Accounting for Exchange is another good example of his approach. Two interdependent circulations of money are distinguished, based on investment and consumption activities respectively. These circulations are conceptually sophisticated, but well defined, and have the useful property of resolving some old confusions, perpetuated by Marxism and Social Credit, about the distribution of output. A crucial distinction is made here between the upswing and the downswing of the historical innovation cycle.

⁵ J. Tsukui and Y. Murakami, *Turnpike Optimality in Input-Output Systems: Theory and Application for Planning*, (Amsterdam: North Holland, 1979).

Different principles are seen to apply to innovation's growth phase and post-growth phase, which are rather similar to the neoclassical and post-Keynesian analyses respectively. Lonergan's analysis differs from Keynes, however, both in being less aggregative and in being dynamic, rather than quasi-static; and so is more concrete in important ways. Also, out of respect for autonomous human persons, he favors free cooperative, rather than socialist controlled, solutions to the economic dynamic pathologies resulting from individualistic optimization following innovation. This involves, however, looking to wider, more dynamic, aspirations than even the enlightened self-interest of the individualistic utilitarians, as follows.

While his growth phase is characterized by invisible hand optimism, the ensuing depression observed in practice is an example of what the Lonergan of *Insight* calls a social surd: which in this case is, according to him, akin to Joan Robinson's car driver applying the accelerator and the brakes at the same time. The point is that there is no collective point to entrepreneurs' seeking to preserve profits via cutbacks in the new technology when its accumulation phase is over, since entrepreneurs are also one another's direct or indirect employers. Here individualism fails by declining to go into what for it are further economic questions. This leads it to a want of *Insight's* good of order. "Man's practical intelligence devises arrangements for human living; and in the measure that such arrangements are understood and accepted, there necessarily results the intelligible pattern of relationships that we have named the good of order."⁶

Specifically Lonergan suggests that the ordered way around the depression's Schumpeterian 'struggle' is through a correct understanding of the role of his own 'pure surplus income' in a 'pure cycle,' and consequent economically responsible choices to avoid a downphase. This clearly involves an eventual redistribution to consumption, but is not spelled out in institutional terms. More generally it would rather seem part of a call from above for *Insight's* cosmopolis: "a heightened grasp of historical origins, a discovery of historical responsibilities. ... It is the

⁶ Tom Daly has pointed out to me that this would appear to follow the teaching of *Quadragesimo Anno*, see in particular par. 136.

higher synthesis of the liberal thesis and the Marxist antithesis.”⁷ Here we probably need to think in terms of a century of research and education, leading up from a widespread understanding and development of Lonergan’s economic insights, and leading down from moral theology, to morally responsible behavior congruent with them. This would entail a more cooperative notion of economic rationality, to accommodate the way more intelligent stakeholders motivated by the moral theology of the Christian tradition should treat one another in the dynamics of massive innovation.

This quest for a good of order (which “stands to single desires as system to systematized”),⁸ goes beyond a quest for individual satisfaction, and requires an appropriate (systematic dynamic) economic analysis.⁹ The neoclassical analysis is inappropriate, since individualistic maximization of satisfaction in the neighborhood of the stationary state fails to get a theoretical handle on the practically important innovating systems far from equilibrium which are currently emerging in the evolutionary economics literature.¹⁰

Economics is a primitive science and its non-evolutionary paradigms, based on the methods of nineteenth century physics, are about as useful as eighteenth century medicine. Lonergan points to some significant possibilities of developing it up towards an evolutionary moral science conditioned by a congruent moral theology; but concedes this would be a vast research program.

⁷ Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, vol. 3 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992) 266.

⁸ Bernard Lonergan, *Understanding and Being*, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, vol. 5 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990) 226.

⁹ Bernard Lonergan, “Healing and Creating in History,” *A Third Collection: Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan, S.J.*, ed. F. E. Crowe, S.J. (New York/Mahwah, Paulist Press, 1985) 100.

¹⁰ *Economics and thermodynamics: New perspectives on economic analysis*, eds. S.P. Burley and J. Foster (Boston/Dordrecht/London: Kluwer Academic publishers, 1994). A compact review of this collection is given by John Gowdy in *Journal of Evolutionary Economics* 6(2) (1996) 219-222.

LONERGAN AND GAGNEPAIN: THE HUMAN SCIENCES IN QUESTION

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WHAT LONERGAN HAS to say about the relations between moral theology and the human sciences depends to some extent upon his understanding of the nature of the human sciences. In this paper, I want to raise some questions about Lonergan's understanding of the human sciences from the standpoint of the work of Jean Gagnepain. Gagnepain's work, only now beginning to be known in France, is still virtually unknown in this country.

Gagnepain has developed a radically innovative understanding of the human sciences that draws upon, even as it goes beyond, the work of De Saussure, Freud, Marx, and others. Gagnepain's understanding of the nature of the human sciences differs significantly from that of Lonergan and, to the extent that it does, it may serve to challenge students of Lonergan to complement and develop their own understanding of the nature of the human sciences. At the same time, I believe that Gagnepain's work is itself in need of an essential complement and development of the sort that Lonergan's notion of dialectic can provide.

Given the range and difficulty of the works of these two authors, the complexity of the issues involved, and the fact that I am myself still seeking clarification concerning "the grounds of specifically human sciences,"¹ I do not propose to do any more here than to open a possible domain for further questions for students of Lonergan and Gagnepain alike.

¹ Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (New York: Seabury Press, 1972) 259.

The article has three sections. In the first, I raise a question about the nature of the human sciences, taking my point of departure from what Lonergan says about the human sciences in "Moral Theology and the Human Sciences" ("MTHS"). In the second, I lay out the theoretic ground — Gagnepain's theory of mediation — from which I believe a critique of Lonergan's position may be developed. In the third, I indicate briefly where and in what sense I believe Gagnepain and Lonergan may complement and develop each other.

1. NOTES ON THE NOTION OF A HUMAN SCIENCE REFLECTED IN "MTHS"

"it seemed appropriate to begin with a clarification of the notion of human science" ("MTHS" 6)

One part of the challenge posed to philosophy and theology by modern science concerns the nature of the human sciences, and it is on one aspect of Lonergan's understanding of this issue that I would focus attention here, namely their scientific status.

Lonergan's discussion of the human sciences in "MTHS" presupposes his vast effort in *Insight* to lay the foundations for theological method. In fact, his concern with theology apparently always had the human sciences in mind so the article which is the focus of this issue of *METHOD* may be seen as a continuation of a central, long-standing interest.² Recognizing this larger context and the extremely complex nature of Lonergan's philosophy of the human sciences, I want to examine briefly here what Lonergan says about the scientific status of the human sciences in "MTHS" and related writings.

In doing so, I want to make plain that my intention is to raise as a question something that is not a question for Lonergan in this text, namely, his understanding of the scientific nature of the human sciences. My reading, therefore, will be 'tendentious' and will attempt to recast as a

²For two central texts expressing this concern, see also Bernard Lonergan, S.J., *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding* (New York: The Philosophical Library, 1957) 743-747 = *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, vol. 3 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992) 764-769; and *Method in Theology* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972) 364-366.

question something that is not a question in its own context but that is a question in another context.

The difficulties of doing this are familiar. Problems are posed within horizons: a change in horizons not only changes the problems but changes the meaning of the vocabularies used in naming the problems. In the present instance, for example, this is the case with respect to the meaning of 'human science,' 'development,' 'empirical consciousness,' 'autonomy from or dependence on philosophy,' among other matters. In the following paragraphs I extract a view of the nature of the human sciences that one can find in "MTHS" and several related essays. I do not claim that it adequately represents Lonergan's view of the matter and it may not even be an altogether accurate representation of Lonergan's view of the matter in these essays. I claim only that there is warrant in Lonergan's essay for this reading of his understanding of the nature of the human sciences. It is this reading that I take as my point of departure. Two questions underlie these introductory paragraphs: What counts as 'science' when Lonergan speaks of the human sciences? What is the relation of the human sciences to philosophy?

1.1 Human science in "MTHS"

There are many human sciences and, as Lonergan tells us in his opening sentence, they are not "equally developed in all their parts" (5). That is surely true and one may therefore ask what might serve as a criterion or norm in determining the development of a human science.

In the opening paragraphs of "MTHS," Lonergan differentiates three cases which are given as examples of the unequal development of the human sciences and in terms of which he frames his later discussion. There is, first, the case in which "neither the science itself nor its possible applications are in doubt" ("MTHS" 5). Lonergan does not say which human science he has in mind here but he does say that such cases often arise in the area of medical ethics and I take him to mean by 'human science' here one or other of the biomedical sciences like physiology or anatomy rather than medical ethics itself. These are, of course, sciences of the human in the sense that they have 'the human' as part of their field of

inquiry but they are not ordinarily considered human sciences. They are, rather, natural sciences.

Then there are two other cases: one in which the human science is not itself "sufficiently determinate to yield fully concrete applications," the other in which "the human science is itself open to suspicion" since its representatives "are divided ideologically" ("MTHS" 5).

As I read him, Lonergan seems to envisage, on the one hand, a group of human sciences where the 'science' is not particularly in doubt (though more in doubt than in the first case) but which are nonetheless insufficiently determinate to yield fully concrete applications; and, on the other, human sciences in which the sciences themselves (as well as, presumably, their capacity to generate fully concrete applications) are open to suspicion. Lonergan appears to have in mind here a three stage progression in which, at one end, there would be, not a human science, but a natural science like anatomy or neurology; then, somewhere in the middle of the development, there would be still developing 'human' sciences, like psychology or sociology, that remain more or less reductionistic or mechanistic,³ therefore more or less emptied of human content, and still too indeterminate to provide any fully concrete applications; and, finally, at the other end of the progression, there would be human 'sciences' specifically different from natural science and from reductionistic versions of human science but 'sciences' whose scientific status is open to suspicion, which are riven with ideological differences, and which remain dependent upon one or other philosophic or literary trend. Economics, he says, is 'the notorious example' of the latter, but why economics is singled out for obloquy is not clear: there would seem to be other worthy candidates.⁴

³ Lonergan writes: "In the human sciences the problems are far more acute. Reductionists extend the methods of natural science to the study of man. Their results, accordingly, are valid only in so far as a man resembles a robot or a rat and, while such resemblance does exist, exclusive attention to it gives a grossly mutilated and distorted view. General system theory rejects reductionism in all its forms, but it still is aware of its unsolved problems; for systems engineering involves a progressive mechanization that tends to reduce man's role in the system to that of a robot, while systems generally can be employed for destructive as well as constructive ends" (*Method in Theology* 248).

⁴ Lonergan does say that his three cases do not pretend to be exhaustive and he also mentions, later on in the article, some future science of economics that would provide us with "a pure economic analysis of the exchange process untainted by any ideology"

Lonergan presents each of these framing cases as exemplifying one meaning (more exactly, one stage of development) of the human sciences and of the influence of the new idea of science in the human sciences; and, given his empirical and ecumenical position in the article, one can understand the general point he is making. Nonetheless, his use of 'human science' remains relatively indeterminate and one might argue that, strictly speaking, the term 'human science' does not and cannot properly apply to any one of these cases. Not the first because there it is a question of natural science. Not the second because the behavioral or cognitive sciences, as they have developed historically, are less human sciences than they are more or less organicist or mechanist natural sciences. Not the third because these so-called 'sciences' are not sciences as these are usually understood (their scientificity is 'open to suspicion'); they are rather more or less ideologically driven humanities or human studies or histories or phenomenologies.

More generally, in "MTHS," Lonergan uses 'human science' and 'human sciences' in a relatively loose, descriptive sense. There are these disciplines that claim in some broad way to study the human and, as Lonergan uses it in this article, the term 'human science' is sufficiently commodious to embrace parts of medicine, psychoanalysis, at least four schools of sociology, and the whole of economics!

Elsewhere Lonergan speaks, not of the human sciences, but of human studies, historical studies, humanities, or scholarship, and so on. Now all of these disciplines may be considered 'human sciences' in a broad and inclusive sense of 'intellectual disciplines,' but one may nonetheless wonder what characteristic these disciplines share as 'sciences,' other than some kind of disciplined thought and some effort to understand things in relation to each other rather than in relation to us.⁵

("MTHS" 17) but for the time being the advent of such an economics remains, as Lonergan says, a pipe-dream, at least in the eyes of others. I am leaving out here any consideration of his work on circulation analysis because I am not familiar with it.

⁵ Lonergan does propose 'a convention' by way of attempting to clarify this issue. He says, "Let the term, science, be reserved for knowledge that is contained in principles and laws and either is verified universally or else is revised. Let the term, scholarship, be employed to denote the learning that consists in a common sense grasp of the common sense thought, speech, action of a distant place and/or times" (*Method in Theology* 233). Fair enough, but one may then ask which of the human sciences, if any, meet that defini-

Much of what Lonergan says in "MTHS" about the human sciences relies upon earlier essays, so let us turn briefly to one of them to sharpen a central point at issue.

In *A Second Collection* Lonergan gives an account of the development of the behavioral sciences and the *Geisteswissenschaften* and attempts to chart the 'the exact nature and measure' of the influence of the new idea of science that emerged in the 17th and 18th centuries in the human sciences, philosophy, and theology. This development, he says, poses a radical dilemma in modern culture: "Is science to be conceived and worked out in total independence of philosophy or is it not?"⁶

In this same text, Lonergan focuses upon the various disciplines generally included in the field now called 'religious studies' and upon a putatively unitive discipline he calls 'the science of religion.' What Lonergan says about these 'disciplines' and 'sciences' may also be said, I would suggest, about the human sciences generally: they "cannot ... escape the radical dilemma confronting modern science." Lonergan puts this dilemma this way: "In the measure that they follow the model provided by natural science, they tend towards a reductionism that empties human living and especially human religion of all serious content. In the measure that they insist on their specific difference from the natural sciences, they risk losing their autonomy and becoming the captive of some fashion or fad in philosophy."⁷

There seem to be several issues mingled here, somewhat confusingly.

One concerns the autonomy of science. On the one hand, Lonergan recognizes that it would be "suicidal for scientists not to insist on their autonomy" at least as long as philosophy is a congeries of conflicting

tion of science while still remaining *human* sciences. To be sure, this is a question of definition and it is the definition of human science that is in question here. Lonergan's definition here serves to point up the non-scientific nature of, as he says, literature, exegesis, linguistics, history, but he does not himself give any examples of human sciences that meet his definition. Perhaps for him psychology, sociology, economics, political science, and so on, are such examples, although I doubt it. In any case, from the standpoint of Gagnepain's theory of mediation these disciplines as they are presently constituted do not qualify as human sciences.

⁶ Bernard Lonergan, *A Second Collection*, eds. William F.J. Ryan and Bernard J. Tyrell (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1974) 106, 107.

⁷ *Second Collection* 107.

opinions. On the other, he seems to think that a non-reductionistic human science 'risks' being dependent on one or other philosophy, presumably in ways that the natural sciences are not.⁸ There is then a perceived difference in the relative autonomy from philosophy of natural science on the one hand, non-reductionistic human science on the other.⁹

At the same time, Lonergan insists that, however autonomous scientists may be in the doing of their science, they tend to speak not only about the objects of their science but also about their science itself and, when they do, whether they know it or not, whether they admit it or not, they are talking cognitional theory, epistemology, and metaphysics and they become *philosophes malgre eux*.¹⁰ And this, presumably, is true of both natural and human scientists. In other words, scientists may conceive and work out science independently of philosophy but that independence is only relative, for once they stop doing science and start talking about it they are, at least implicitly, doing philosophy and the only question is whether they are doing it well or badly. Or, as he put it more generally in *Method in Theology*, "Both in the natural and in the human sciences, then, there obtrude issues that are not to be solved by empirical methods."¹¹ On this count, then, the main issue seems to be the relation of science to philosophy.

Another, not fully articulated, issue in this text concerns the scientific status of the human sciences. In discussing the relative autonomy of natural science and human science Lonergan contrasts natural science and non-reductionistic human science but he does not spend any time on the question of the scientific nature of non-reductionistic human science. We may sharpen the issue by paraphrasing, and interpreting somewhat differently than Lonergan does, what he says about the putative 'science' of religion: either these disciplines "follow the model provided by natural science, tend towards reductionism, and empty human living of all

⁸ *Second Collection* 107.

⁹ I will not deal explicitly with this issue here for reasons of space. However, it is an issue which may be worth reexamining in the light of the conception of the human sciences to be developed below. For other, related, texts see also *Method in Theology* 248, 259.

¹⁰ *Second Collection* 106.

¹¹ *Method in Theology* 249.

serious content" or "they insist upon their specific difference from the natural sciences but then they cease to be scientific in the way that the natural sciences are and they are subject to one or other philosophic or literary fad."¹² In what sense do these disciplines remain scientific?

That is not quite the issue Lonergan poses but it is the issue I want to explore. How ought we characterize a 'veritable' human science, that is, a discipline that is not reductionistic, that does not empty human living of any serious content, that respects the specificity of human beings in nature, and that is yet scientific in some recognizable sense? More pointedly: are the human sciences explanatory for Lonergan or only hermeneutical?

In sum, Lonergan's view of the human sciences in "MTHS" appears to be open-ended and to leave their scientific status relatively undefined. What seems important for him is less their definition as sciences than the fact that, as he put it in *Insight*, "an empirical human science cannot analyze successfully the elements in its object without an appeal to theology."¹³ Let this suffice as a brief evocation of a view of the human sciences to be found in "MTHS."

2. WHO IS JEAN GAGNEPAIN?

For radical internal criticism of a human science one has to turn from the practitioners of 'normal' science to the independent minds that belong to a larger scientific community and so possess an independent base for criticism ("MTHS" 16).

The thinker to whom Lonergan turned for a radical internal criticism of the human sciences was Paul Ricoeur and his three volume study *Philosophie de la Volonte*. I will turn, not to Ricoeur, but to Jean Gagnepain, whose principal work is a three volume study entitled *Du Vouloir Dire Traite d'Epistemologie des Sciences Humaines* (On Meaning An Epistemology of the Human Sciences).¹⁴

¹² *Second Collection* 107.

¹³ *Insight* 743 = CWL 765.

¹⁴ Jean Gagnepain, *Du Vouloir Dire*, vol. 1, *Du Signe De l'Outil* (London: Pergamon Press, 1982); reprinted (Paris: Livre et Communication, 1990); vol. 2, *De la Personne De la*

2.1 *The early development of the theory of mediation*

Jean Gagnepain is a professor linguistics and cultural studies at the University of Rennes. After an early formation in mathematics, classical languages, and philosophy, Gagnepain completed his *doctorat d'état* in linguistics in 1963. At that time, there was only one position open in the field of linguistics in all of France: in Rennes. It was offered to Gagnepain and he accepted it. He has remained there ever since.

Shortly after Gagnepain arrived in Rennes, his mother had a stroke which affected her speech. As a linguist, Gagnepain was much interested in the ways in which the stroke had affected his mother's capacity to speak. It happened that the new director of the Department of Neuro-psychiatry at Rennes, Octave Sabouraud, also directed an aphasia clinic as part of his service. Gagnepain sought him out. The neuro-psychiatrist was fascinated by the linguist who brought a whole new way of understanding to the problems of aphasia; the linguist was fascinated by the neuro-psychiatrist who was trying to think through problems of language of which the linguists were barely aware.

Like most linguists of his generation in France, Gagnepain began as a convinced follower of De Saussure. Only gradually, as he tried to understand linguistically different pathologies in the aphasia clinic, did Gagnepain begin to develop his critique of De Saussure and of contemporary linguistics. He found that the existing theories of linguistics were simply inadequate to explain the clinical phenomena of aphasia. In order to understand these phenomena, Gagnepain found it necessary to break apart, or 'to deconstruct,' the notion of language underlying contemporary linguistics.¹⁵

Gagnepain developed the theory of mediation beginning with language, but he quickly recognized that one has not exhausted the phenomenon of language when one has explained the articulations of 'the

Norme (Paris: Livre et Communication, 1991); vol. 3, *Former l'Homme Guérir l'Homme Sauver l'Homme* (Brussels: De Boeck Universite, 1995). De Boeck has now taken over the publication of all three volumes.

¹⁵ 'Deconstruct' here is to be understood in the sense of Gagnepain's theory of mediation, not in that of Derrida. In the theory of mediation 'deconstruction' has the sense of 'analysis' in the literal sense of a 'breaking down' of an object. It is generally used with respect to the deconstruction of 'constructed' objects like language, culture, and so on.

signifier' and 'the signified,' or the taxonomical and the generative structures constituting our grammatical capacity. There are other aspects of language which do not stem from that grammatical capacity; they stem rather from other cultural/rational processes which affect the grammaticality of our speech but are not proper to it.

Take, for example, writing — in the literal sense of making letters. It would be difficult to write if one did not have access to language, and in fact patients suffering from language problems usually also suffer from writing/reading problems. But the converse is not true. Some patients who have problems with writing do not have problems with language or, more exactly, with speech. This problem is tied to an incapacity to use paper and pen to write. When Gagnepain realized this, he said to himself that this problem could not simply be a problem with the tools involved in writing but must be more general. In fact clinical observation showed that the same patients who had trouble with writing also had trouble using needle and thread to sew, or using shovels and hoes and rakes in the garden, even when previously they had been able to do these things with ease. From such evidence Gagnepain was gradually led to the conclusion that the problems experienced by these patients were not problems of speech but problems connected with another rational capacity, the rational capacity that underlies our use of tools. The problem, in other words, was not aphasia, but atechnia. Though it is obviously connected with language, Gagnepain surmised that writing stems from rational processes of another order than those at work in speaking, that is, from another rational capacity of which it is the manifestation in language.

He was led by the clinical evidence to distinguish two additional levels or planes of reason. Over time he and his colleagues came to realize that there were patients whose speaking and writing were relatively unimpaired but who had problems communicating. Still others could speak, write, and communicate reasonably well, but had great difficulty in regulating their speech. For example, their speech, like that of certain neurotics, was too closely regulated and they could not speak in certain situations; or, at the other extreme, they could not be silent. We cannot examine this clinical evidence here but, anticipating our next section, it may be pointed out that although Gagnepain initially based himself on the

evidence available in the clinic of aphasia he also came early to recognize that with respect to the rational capacities involved in communicating on the one hand, and regulating our discourse on the other, he had been preceded by two clinicians of genius: Marx and Freud.

The pathological evidence that led Gagnepain to distinguish a third and fourth level or plane of reason only makes clearer and more unmistakable the existence of rational capacities that manifest themselves in normal behavior. For example, in spite of widespread misunderstanding of 'language' as 'communication,' it is clear that speaking and communicating involve different rational capacities. The pathological example of the psychotic who speaks very well but is unable to communicate points to a difference that cuts across all languages: the rational capacities underlying speech and communication are different capacities. Socially and historically, the rational capacity to speak is realized as different languages, for example, English, French, Swahili, which are as much media of non-communication as of communication. The tower of Babel is not a punishment but a condition of our being. As Gagnepain puts it humorously: dogs may speak dog, and cats may speak cat, but humans do not speak human. Similarly, the neurotic who cannot speak in certain situations or cannot be silent in others likewise points to a difference that cuts across all languages: the rational capacities underlying speech and the regulation of desire are different capacities. If I want to speak as a university professor, or a pretentious snob, or a boy in the hood, I regulate my speech accordingly.

So Gagnepain came to diffract, or deconstruct, 'language' and it was only this deconstruction of the traditional object of linguistics, that is, of 'language,' which allowed him to account for the different clinical phenomena of aphasia. Gagnepain came to believe that only such a clinically deconstructed object can serve as the object of a veritable human science. To be scientific, he came to think, linguistics has to become clinical.

In developing his position that linguistics — and, ultimately, all the human sciences — must become clinical, Gagnepain makes his own Freudian insight that nature itself, in the form of the specific pathologies of the human, provides the equivalent of the analytic 'scalpel' that has been lacking in the human sciences. Animals do not suffer from aphasia,

or psychosis, or neurosis, or perversion. Human beings do. In other words, pathological states provide the 'breakdowns' of human nature which are denied to us in the laboratory. The human object of study, Freud said, is like a crystal whose underlying structure is hidden from view. But when the crystal cracks, its structural fault lines appear. Analogously, when human beings break down in one pathological crisis or another — aphasia plays the same role for Gagnepain that psychosis, neurosis, and perversion play for Freud — the underlying structures appear. Pathology allows us to see what is covered over in ordinary life. As Freud put it: "There where there is a breach or a rent, there may be an articulation normally present."¹⁶ Hence, pathological states can help us to better understand the structures and functions of ordinary life. But an adequate human science cannot be only a science of ordinary life; it must also be able to account for pathological states and functioning. It was precisely because linguistic theory as he understood it was unable to adequately account for clinical phenomena like those of aphasia that Gagnepain was led to develop a clinical linguistics. Gagnepain raised Freud's insight to a methodological principle: only a theory that subjected its basic terms to the possibility of clinical verification deserved the name of 'science.' Gagnepain proposes that we "neither admit nor impute to the (theory) any dissociations other than those that can be pathologically verified."¹⁷ Gagnepain's theory of mediation is a clinical anthropology.

2.2 Gagnepain's Theory of Mediation: A Brief Overview

Though Gagnepain's theory of mediation is exceedingly complex in its details and its ramifications, there are only two fundamental principles underlying it: the principle of diffracted rationality and the principle of incorporated rationality (or, as Gagnepain now prefers, the principle of praxis.)

It was the clinical evidence that led Gagnepain to formulate the principle of diffracted (or deconstructed) reason: human reason is one, but it is diffracted into four different modes which Gagnepain names in terms

¹⁶ Sigmund Freud, *New Introductory Lectures*, The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, vol. 22 (London: The Hogarth Press, 1964) 58-59.

¹⁷ *Du Vouloir Dire* 1 13.

of their mediating functions: signs and speech, tools and art, persons and sociology/history, norms and regulation. These modes are of equal value — no one of them is better, more essentially human, than any other. Rather, each of them is reason in its entirety in one of its modes.

Concretely these four modes of our rationality are inextricably intertwined with each other. We can distinguish them analytically, but they are not separate in reality. Thus, for example, language is not just grammar; it is artificialized as phonographic or semiographic writing; it is instituted as 18th or 19th or 20th century English or French or Swahili; and, finally, it is regulated as is correct or incorrect English, reticent or verbose, respectful or insulting, and so on. Concretely, the modes of our rationality are intertwined; but critically and theoretically, these different ways we mediate our relations to the world and to each other must be distinguished if we are to escape from the confusions that so often beset our talk in the humanities and the human sciences.

In other words, what linguistics confusedly treats as one thing or object, that is, 'language,' Gagnepain's theory of mediation deconstructs from four different perspectives, and those perspectives in turn constitute/construct the objects of their respective sciences. According to Gagnepain's theory of mediation, linguistics will be composed of four distinct disciplines: glossology, whose object is the grammatical structure of speech; ergo-linguistics, whose object is the technical structure of writing; socio-linguistics, whose object is the ethnical structure of communication; and axio-linguistics, whose object is the ethical structure of regulation.

The second fundamental principle which, according to Gagnepain's theory of mediation, underlies the rationality human beings introduce into their animality is the principle of incorporated rationality (or principle of praxis).¹⁸ In the natural sciences, as Gagnepain conceives them, reason is placed on or in the object of observation by the observer. In the human

¹⁸ I recognize that the repeated use of alternative expressions, for example, principle of incorporated rationality (principle of praxis), is potentially confusing — and perhaps for some annoying. I have none the less decided to use these alternative expressions in two cases: 1. where the alternative expressions in fact appear in Gagnepain's theory of mediation; 2. when, in my judgment, alternative vocabularies may serve to clarify the meaning of a term as it is used in his theory of mediation.

sciences, on the contrary, reason is already incorporated within its object, that is, it is already operative in its object prior to the development of any science.

The principles of diffracted rationality and incorporated rationality draw their inspiration from three of the great predecessors whom Gagnepain acknowledges: Freud, De Saussure, and Marx. In elaborating these principles, Gagnepain takes a key concept from each of these three thinkers, criticizes it, transforms it, and uses it for his own purposes.

From Freud, Gagnepain takes the notion of a fundamental *Spaltung*, or split, in psychic life which conflictually divides the human being between what Freud called the conscious and the unconscious. Gagnepain criticizes Freud's use of 'conscious' and 'unconscious' to formulate his discovery. He finds the terms too dependent upon a psychology of consciousness that emphasizes 'knowing' to the detriment of other modes of rational mediation. Gagnepain prefers the terms 'implicit' and 'explicit.' For Gagnepain what is essential in Freud's notion of the *Spaltung* is the dynamic conflict between a dimension of psychic life that remains implicit and one that is explicit.

From De Saussure, Gagnepain takes the notion of 'structure.'¹⁹ De Saussure distinguishes the notion of *langue* ('language' in the sense of the underlying structure of a given language) from that of *parole* ('speech' in the sense of the actual speaking a given language) and he makes *langue* the object of linguistics. Gagnepain will retake this dichotomy, but in a quite original way. His debt to De Saussure is double.

On the one hand, what De Saussure calls *la langue* is the result of a methodological deconstruction. Early in the *Cours* De Saussure announces his anti-positivist — or, in terms of the theory of mediation, his deconstructivist — position: In matters of language, "far from the object preceding the point of view, it is the point of view that creates the object."²⁰ For Gagnepain, as for De Saussure, the object of a discipline (for

¹⁹ De Saussure himself apparently never used the term 'structure'; he spoke of 'system.' But 'structure' is the word that has stuck.

²⁰ Ferdinand De Saussure, *Cours de linguistique generale* (Edition critique preparee par Tullio de Mauro [Paris: Editions Payot, 1972]) 23. The whole text reads: "Someone pronounces the French word *nu*. A superficial observer will be tempted to see in this a concrete linguistic object; but a more attentive examination will reveal that there are three

example, *langue*) does not exist prior to the point of view which 'constructs' it, and, albeit on other grounds, Gagnepain repeats his gesture for today. What is decisive for Gagnepain here — as it was for De Saussure and the field of linguistics he brought into being — is the fact that what creates the object of the science is the point of view, that is, the act of analyzing, or breaking down, or deconstructing the phenomena. The object of the science, in each case, is not the immediately given phenomena but the simplification of the phenomena that results from its deconstruction. In the case before us, it is not the heteroclitite jumble of language that is the object of science but a specific underlying structure, what De Saussure called *la langue*.

On the other hand, there is the opposition of *la langue* and *la parole*, or between structure and performance. Gagnepain will use this distinction but in a way quite different than that of De Saussure.

To begin with, Gagnepain carefully distinguishes the grammatical capacity underlying our access from signs and the socio-historical capacity underlying our access to societies and histories — in this case the different languages which humans beings speak. De Saussure does not make this distinction but it is fundamental for Gagnepain.

Second, for Gagnepain, the opposition structure and performance is not only characteristic of the glossological plane of language; it also characterizes the other planes or levels of (deconstructed) language as well. He will therefore speak of oppositions, on the level of speech and signs, between grammar (structure) and rhetoric (performance); on the level of the use of tools, between technics (structure) and industry (performance); on the level of the socio-historic institutions of the person, between ethnics (structure) and politics (performance); on the level of normative behavior, between ethics (structure) and morality (performance). In other words, on each of the planes of reason, there is an opposition between an unconscious or implicit structure and a conscious or explicit performance.

or four completely different things depending on the way one looks at it: as sound, as expression of an idea, as the correspondent of the latin *nudam*, and so on. Far from the object preceding the point of view, it is the point of view that creates the object." (My translation.)

Finally, from Marx Gagnepain takes the concept of dialectic. Marx sought a scientific model of history and he found it in Hegel's notion of dialectic. Underlying history there is a dialectic whose conflicts are constitutive of human history. Marx, of course, limits his use of dialectic to a dialectical conflict of classes which, in his view, underlies history. Gagnepain generalizes this notion of dialectic. For him this dialectical conflict is at play and manifests itself not only in a conflict of classes but on all levels of culture: in society and history, to be sure, but also and equally in speech, in art, in moral/political life as well. It is at work in couples who fight and make up, in political parties which contest and compromise, in nations which wage war and engage in peace talks.

So Gagnepain's theory of rationality combines in a unique way the model of conscious/unconscious from Freud, the model of *langue/parole* from De Saussure, and the model of dialectical origination from Marx. His is a dialectical theory of reason: on each of the planes of reason there is a dialectical process in which the instance of reason negates our natural animality and organizes it structurally.²¹ This structure, in turn, on the level of performance, is itself negated and reinvested in the real. All we ever see, of course, is the performance.²²

This is all quite condensed and abstract, so permit me to give an example to illustrate this dialectical model at work. The example of speech is the most familiar, but I could just as easily choose an example from one of the other domains of rationality.

An animal can link two objects symbolically.²³ For instance, a dog can link my "Come!" and the action of coming; a chicken can link my clicking of the tongue and the advent of food. One is index, the other sense/meaning. For Gagnepain index + sense = symbol. In the animal world, there is always a direct fit between the two. In us, reason will negate this animal 'fit' and introduce a 'lack of fit' or, as Gagnepain says, an 'impropriety.' Reason negates the natural sounds and makes of them

²¹ As I suggest below, where Gagnepain uses 'negate' one might also use the term 'sublate' in a sense close to that of Lonergan and Rahner.

²² For a fuller treatment, see *Du Vouloir Dire* 1 25-34.

²³ I use 'symbol' here in the very particular — and etymologically precise — sense 'symbol' has for Gagnepain.

signifiers which it organizes phonologically; and it negates the natural senses/meanings and makes of them signifieds which it organizes semiologically. In addition to this bi-facial organization of signifiers and signifieds reason also introduces a bi-axial organization in terms of taxonomy and of segmentation and generativity. In other words, the 'instance' of reason, operative implicitly, negates and structures the naturally given in structures of signification and thus 'acculturates' it.²⁴

But this structuring of the naturally given, this structure of signification, which Gagnepain calls 'grammar,' is not yet speech. It only provides the stuff of speech, that is, the general laws of syntax and a lexicon, all of which is improper, does not fit, and as such is not speech but only structure. To actually speak, I must negate the generality of the structural rules and the polysemicity of the words in the lexicon and use them to designate what I want to say. In other words, I must refer them back to the speech situation in which I find myself and the reality I want to express.

Taken together, these three moments — nature, structure, performance — constitute the dialectic of reason operative on the level of sign.²⁵ A similar dialectic is at play on all four planes of our rationality. On each of them, the animality we share with other animals is negated and organized structurally, and that structure itself is in turn negated and gone beyond in the performances of making, instituting, regulating.

Where Gagnepain speaks of negation, transcending, going beyond, and so on, one might also use the term 'sublation' in a sense close to that in which Lonergan uses the term. In the sign, for instance, the natural gnosis is negated and gone beyond in the structural while yet being maintained as natural; and the structures of signification are negated and gone beyond in the performance of speech while yet being maintained as structural. In other words, the performance of speech involves a double sublation: a sublation of the natural into the structural and a sublation of the structural into the performative. The sign is a dialectical, dynamic unity of all three moments though only the last, the performative, moment is visible/audible.

²⁴ For a fuller treatment, see *Du Nouloir Dire* 1 34-67.

²⁵ For a fuller treatment, see *Du Nouloir Dire* 1 67-105.

The objects of the human sciences, then, are resistances interior to and implicit within human rationality. De Saussure calls this resistance 'structure,' Freud 'unconscious,' Marx 'historical praxis.' In each case, it is the resistance interior to human rationality that marks the objects of the human science: the structure of *la langue* resists the ordinary processes of speech, the unconscious resists the processes of conscious thought, historical praxis resists the history recounted by historians. In each case, also, it is only the pathology of speech, or work, or communication, or desire, that reveals the underlying resistance. And what these different pathologies show, Gagnepain holds, is that these structures are irreducible to one another.

2.3 Some Implications for the Human Sciences

The consequences of this model for a conception of the sciences of the human are important. Whereas the principle of diffracted reason would seem to differentiate Gagnepain's theory of mediation from any existing human science, the principle of incorporated rationality would seem to differentiate it from any natural science. Let me state this difference as simply and as clearly as I can.

In the human sciences, human beings take themselves as the object of their study. Their object is that which makes them human — not that which makes them physical/chemical mechanisms, not that which makes them biological organisms, but the cultural determinations that make them human beings, that is, rational. We need to understand this epistemological specificity of the human sciences clearly.

I said earlier that the object of a natural science is formalized by the science which deals with it and imposes its own order upon the object. In the natural sciences, for example, we quantify the object, we mathematize it, we operationalize it. In fact, we formalize the objects of our natural sciences by deploying the formal, logical resources of our linguistic rationality and those formalizations are not in the object but in us. In that sense, there is no physics without the physicist, no astronomy without the astronomer. In the human sciences, as Gagnepain would have us construct them, the situation is profoundly different. Here, the exercises of our specifically human ways of being present in the world have always

already introduced their own rational orderings into their objects prior to the development of any sciences of these orderings. Signs negate perception and organize an order of signification; tools negate activity and organize an order of fabrication; persons negate behavior and organize an order of institutions and history; norms negate desire and organize an order of regulations; and all of these 'instances' of our rationality carry out their transformations of the natural world prior to any scientific observation. In other words, human praxis already incorporates these rational orderings into the signs, tools, persons, and norms and it is these rational orderings that are the objects of glossology, ergology, sociology, axiology. The objects of these sciences, Gagnepain says, are auto-formalized. Thus, if we may say that there is no physics without physicists, no chemistry without chemists, no astronomy without astronomers, we may *not* say that there is no grammar without grammarians, no technology without technicians, no history without historians or society without sociologists, no ethics without ethicians. On the contrary, every human being is herself or himself a grammarian, a technician, an historian or sociologist, a judge in her or his very existence as a human being and has incorporated these forms of her or his rationality in speaking, working, communicating, ruling. The human sciences which study these objects are in that sense formalizations of formalizations, and therefore unlike any natural sciences.

Furthermore, since the rationality proper to these objects is already incorporated in them, the human sciences cannot simply impose the logic of language upon them. Each human science will have to discover the orderings or formalizations proper to the domain being studied, and these orderings or formalizations, though analogous to the *logos* of language, will also be different. Gagnepain will not speak of them, then, as 'logics,' but will rather distinguish *logos*, *tropos* (turn of the hand), *nomos* (law), *dike* (justice) to name the ordinances of reason incorporated in the objects of glossology, ergology, sociology, and axiology.

It is the clinical breakdowns of psychic life that allow us to affirm that, for example, glossology is solely concerned with the dialectic of grammar and rhetoric and to recognize at the same time that speech is also, but from other points of view, the object of ergology, sociology/

history, and axiology. One ramification of this systematic diffraction of the object of clinical anthropology is that Gagnepain's theory of mediation gives a new and unexpected twist to Marx's notion of infrastructure and superstructure. In Marx's theory there is one infrastructure, class conflict, and everything else is explained in terms of it. In Gagnepain's theory, our rational capacities are distinct and equal and cannot be reduced to one master mode. On the contrary, each can be infrastructure or superstructure, depending upon the object of analysis. This is not the place to work out the complex, far-ranging reordering of currently existing disciplines Gagnepain's theory of mediation implies. I would simply note that, in principle, it allows us to take account of distinct rational capacities and of the various ways in which they intersect with one another in a systematic, orderly fashion without reducing everything to a single 'infrastructure,' for example, class conflict, language, desire, and so on

In summary, the clinic of aphasia led Gagnepain to construct a clinical glossology and, analogously, a clinical ergology, and (with the help of the psychoanalytic clinic and Marx's study of the 'pathology' of history) a clinical sociology and a clinical axiology. These four together constitute what Gagnepain calls a clinical anthropology, that is, a clinically based, scientific study of the human.

Gagnepain's anthropology is clinical in the sense that it tries to find a place of verification for the hypotheses that it develops. In the case of cultural processes, clinical anthropology tries to validate, or invalidate, the propositions it develops about human beings by studying the pathologies of those processes. Those pathologies of the human manifest are the resistances interior to human rationality. What is phenomenally present on the level of performance is in contradiction to the structurations of reason that underlie the performance. Gagnepain therefore develops a scientific model which is explicative of the empirically observed. It is the model, not the empirically observed, that counts and it is the model that permits his clinical assistants to develop a whole series of experimental tests through which they attempt to understand clinically how a person suffering from a given pathology functions. The results, as he admits, are not always convincing but at least they try to construct the data on which they reason. Once again, it is the model that is explicative, not the data. In Gagnepain's

view, the methodological procedures in the human sciences are not fundamentally different than those in the natural sciences.²⁶

2.4 *The Aims of Reason*

For the sake of completeness, we need to consider briefly what Gagnepain calls the aims of reason. Gagnepain discerns three different aims in the exercise of any one of our four modes of rationality. Two of these aims are practical, one is aesthetic. We say, for example, "It is raining" when we see water falling from the sky or feel it on our skin. In other situations we speak in quite different ways, as when Christopher is said to have carried Christ across a river for the simple reason that, in Greek, his name means 'carry Christ.' In still other situations, we say "Water, water everywhere, but not a drop to drink." These three kinds of linguistic performance illustrate, on the level of glossology, the three aims which Gagnepain discerns in operation on all four levels. In the first situation, when we say "It is raining," language conforms itself to the world. In the second situation, when we invent a history to accommodate the Greek etymology of 'Christopher,' the world is made to conform itself to language. The first situation gives rise to science in the broadest sense of the word, that is, the effort to conform our knowing and our language to the world. The second situation gives rise to myth which is the effort to conform the world to language. (Myths are very far from being only ancient: one need only think of the political speech of recent presidential candidates). There remains the third example: it neither conforms itself to the world, nor conforms the world to itself. It is auto-referential. It finds its meaning in itself, in the universe of words, and it is there that it produces its meaning: it is what Gagnepain calls 'poem.' The aim here is not practical but aesthetic.

The same thing is true on the other levels. The tool conforms itself to the world: Gagnepain calls this 'empirics'; or the tool conforms the world to itself: this Gagnepain calls 'magic.' Or, thirdly, the tool — the work —

²⁶ There is much more to be said about Gagnepain's new science of the human; about the ingenious tests that have been constructed to verify the theory; about what the researchers at Rennes call induced elementary grammars, techniques, law, regulations; about the relations between the sciences of the human and the natural sciences — Gagnepain, for instance, holds that the latter depend on the former, not *vice versa* — and about a host of other, related matters. But this is not possible here.

takes itself as its aim: its aim is 'plastic' (literally: can be shaped or molded). Again, a people can conform itself to the world: its aim is 'synallactic' (from 'synallassein,' to exchange, bring into intercourse); or a people can attempt to conform the world to itself: its aim is then 'analactic' (from 'anallattein,' not changed in form by the inversion, as the sphere). Think, in the first case, of a people constantly changing its social and economic configurations to adjust to the realities of its situation and developing a 'progressive' politics; and, in the second case, of a people trying to hold onto its traditional ways no matter what the realities of the situation and therefore developing a 'conservative' politics. Or, thirdly, a people can simply celebrate itself in great national liturgies or ceremonies. Gagnepain calls this aim 'choral,' evoking the ancient bands of singers and dancers in Greek civic and religious ceremonies. Finally, moral rules can be conformed to the concrete situation or 'case': this is what Gagnepain, reviving an older term, calls 'casuistry'; or the case can be conformed to the moral rules, which Gagnepain calls 'ascetic.' Or, finally, the moral rules can, so to speak, auto-justify themselves in a kind of apotheosis: this Gagnepain names 'heroism.'²⁷

This is, admittedly, a great deal of material to compress in a few pages. Let us resume what we have seen so far. The theory of mediation offers itself as a new, non-philosophic theory of human rationality. Though exceedingly complex in its details, it is underlain by two principles, the principle of diffracted rationality and the principle of incorporated rationality. According to the principle of diffracted rationality, human rationality — human culture — is diffracted into four distinct modes which the theory names in terms of their principle function: signs and speech, tools and work, persons and social-historic institutions, norms and liberty. According to the principle of incorporated rationality, there is a dialectic of nature and culture in which the instance of reason negates the natural animality we share and structures it grammatically, technically, ethnically, and ethically; and that implicit structuration is itself explicitly contradicted in the performances of

²⁷ I have developed these notions and, in particular, the notion of aesthetics, in greater detail in "Rethinking the Question of Quality in Art," *Arts Education Policy Review*, vol. 96, no. 2 (1994).

speaking, making, instituting, regulating. Signs, tools, persons, and norms are dynamic, dialectical, conflictual realities whose implicit structures are only revealed in pathological situations. The theory of mediation has therefore constructed a model of human rationality to explain scientifically human cultural processes and attempts to verify its propositions clinically. It presents itself as a clinical anthropology. Finally, human rationality, in each of its modes, can have, performatively, three aims, two of them practical, and one aesthetic.

3. DIALOGUE WITH LONERGAN: RADICAL DILEMMA OR RADICAL DEPARTURE?

the internal critic operates along the very lines of scientific development. His criticism consists either in adverting to data that have been overlooked, or in bringing to bear fresh insights, clarification, distinctions, or both of these ("MTHS" 16).

A full-fledged comparison of Gagnepain and Lonergan is obviously not possible here. I will limit myself to three sets of remarks concerning, respectively, the mediation of meaning, a difference of emphasis with respect to the nature of the human sciences, and the relation between the theory of mediation and what Lonergan calls dialectic.

Gagnepain and Lonergan are obviously both concerned with the world mediated by meaning. In fact, Tad Dunne writes that "Lonergan, in courses on theological method he taught in the mid-1960s, organized most of his material on meaning by relying on the concept of mediation. But by the time *Method in Theology* came out, it was clear that Lonergan backed away from mediation as an organizing concept."²⁸ Dunne thinks the reason for this backing away was that Lonergan "kept finding different kinds of mediation and had to lie distinction upon distinction as a result."²⁹ What Gagnepain provides, I would suggest, is a methodological principle that allows us to distinguish the fundamental forms of mediation which are together constitutive of human rationality. This methodological principle is clinical: it holds that only those forms of mediation that can be

²⁸ Tad Dunne, personal communication (letter of August 9, 1996).

²⁹ Tad Dunne letter.

verified clinically deserve a place within the theory. For Gagnepain there are four fundamental forms of mediation. Might there be some others? It is possible: for Gagnepain this is an empirical question. However, thus far he and his colleagues have found no clinical evidence for any others, nor has he found the need to invoke any others to explain human phenomena.

Within the confines of the present article, I cannot examine the many ways in which mediations of meaning are differentiated according to Lonergan. Readers of this journal know Lonergan's texts on these matters far better than I. I would simply note here that there are some interesting overlaps between Lonergan's differentiation of functions of meanings and Gagnepain's differentiation of four fundamental modes. Lonergan, for instance, distinguishes the cognitive function (roughly analogous to the rationality underlying signs), the efficient function (roughly analogous to the rationality underlying tool making and using), the constitutive and the communicative (these are roughly analogous to the rationality underlying the person in Gagnepain's sense). And so on. This is not the place to analyze and compare what Gagnepain says about the modes of rationality with what Lonergan says about the functions of meaning. The single point I do want to make here is that Gagnepain offers a methodological principle for distinguishing the fundamental modes of meaning which is not found in Lonergan and which may offer possibilities for complementing and developing Lonergan's discussions of the mediations of meaning.

Second, we may note a distinct difference in emphasis between Gagnepain and Lonergan with respect to the way they envisage the history of the human sciences. For Gagnepain what is important in the historical development of the human sciences is the epistemological rupture introduced by Freud, De Saussure, and Marx. For Gagnepain, the efforts of these thinkers to treat human beings scientifically while at the same time respecting their specificity as human beings points to a new understanding of what counts as science. This is not the aspect of the human sciences that Lonergan emphasizes in his own accounts of the development of the human sciences. Lonergan emphasizes the historical, not the scientific, character of the human sciences; indeed, it seems to me that the historical and the hermeneutical becomes for Lonergan the hall-

mark of the human sciences. For him, the important figures in the development of the human sciences are not Freud, Marx, or De Saussure, but Schleiermacher, Boeckh, Droysen, Dilthey and others. It was Dilthey, he says, that "set himself the question of the possibility of historical knowledge and, more generally, of the human sciences conceived as *Geisteswissenschaften*. It was Dilthey who "decisively ... drew the distinction between natural science and human studies."³⁰ Dilthey's only problem, as Lonergan presents the situation, is not scientific, but philosophic. His account of *Verstehen*, for example, does not resolve the problem of getting beyond empiricist and idealist suppositions. "His *Lebensphilosophie* has empiricist leanings. His history and human science based on *Verstehen* cannot be assimilated by an empiricist."³¹

Let us put this somewhat differently. Dilthey, as presented by Lonergan, has clearly conceived the possibility of a human science that does not follow the procedures of the natural sciences, but in doing so he has found himself dependent upon philosophical suppositions of various sorts. Lonergan, of course, sees his own thought as providing a more adequate philosophic basis for Dilthey-like human science. For Lonergan, the problem is not the science but the philosophy. (Or it might be more accurate to say that for Lonergan only a philosophically critical human science could be scientific.)

Gagnepain on the other hand is directly concerned with the science, and because he is he insists upon the importance of De Saussure (who broke with the historical philologists), Freud, and (especially here) Marx, and a view of history quite different than that of Dilthey. Gagnepain is well aware that in the 19th century human beings became the object of history. In linguistics, for example, there was a move beyond the grammar that had characterized the approach to language since the Greeks: now explanations would be given in terms of earlier historical stages and the way was open for historical philology and comparative linguistics. In the 19th century this way of approaching the human through the historical was applied not only to language but to the entirety of the human.

³⁰ *Method in Theology* 210.

³¹ *Method in Theology* 212.

It is just here that Marx, rather than Dilthey and the others whom Lonergan invokes, is especially important for Gagnepain. Marx, like De Saussure and Freud after him, wanted to develop a science of the human and, imbued with the doxa of his time, he looked to history to find it. But he did not look to the history of the historians that Lonergan delineates so eloquently; rather, Marx turned to history of another sort, the history of infrastructures, the history of implicit, hidden praxis, the history — if you will — of the depths. As Freud was concerned with depth psychology so Marx was concerned with depth history.

What is important for Gagnepain in Marx is not his materialism but the fact that Marx wanted to develop a science of history and to do so he sought a model. The dialectical model that he found in Hegel and transformed in terms of praxis allowed him to combine an explanation in terms of a model and an explanation in terms of a cause in a truly new science of the human. This for Gagnepain is Marx's true genius: he invented a new form of human science. Historical praxis is itself dialectical and this dialectic underlies all the activities of human beings. As Gagnepain interprets him, Marx deconstructs 'History' and constructs a scientific model of history itself. Marx thus provides us a science of the human that is through and through historical and through and through scientific, albeit science now in a new sense.

Here then is a point of bifurcation between Lonergan and Gagnepain. Lonergan emphasizes the historical nature of the human sciences and the cumulative, on-going nature of their results. Gagnepain emphasizes the scientific nature of the human sciences and the fact that there is an explanatory model appropriate to its object — and the history-making capacity of human beings who make themselves be socially and historically is also part of that object. History, in that sense, is also part of the object of Lonergan's version of historical or hermeneutical human science but it is so in a quite different way than it is for Gagnepain.

For Gagnepain the model of the human science that is his theory of mediation corresponds to the rationality inherent in its object. Gagnepain agrees with Marx that there is a conflictual, dialectical rationality inherent in human praxis but for Gagnepain that praxis is found not only in our history but in our speech, work, and norms as well. For Gagnepain the

dialectic of nature — structure — performance underlies all human activity and an adequate theory must take account of it as it is operative in and across the four fundamental ways that reality is mediated by meaning. His theory of mediation, therefore, will be a dialectical theory of rationality in which there is, on all levels, a formal conflict between the natural and the structural and between the structural and the performative. The scientific model of explanation Gagnepain proposes incorporates both an axiomatic model in terms of four sets of axioms and an historical model in terms of a dialectical process of origination whereby the person emerges as speaker, maker, institutor, regulator.

The objects of the human sciences are not the performances of speaking, making, and so on, but the implicit rational or cultural capacities that manifest themselves above all in the clinic. It is in the clinic that the theory seeks its verifications. Gagnepain's choice of the clinic is crucial on several counts. It is the place where the dialectical nature of human rationality can be verified as well as all the other propositions of the theory. It is also the place that allows Gagnepain to solve the problem of 'translating' the classic model of natural science to the study of human beings while respecting the specificity of the human. As the laboratory is to the sciences of nature, so the clinic is to the sciences of culture. The clinic is the place of experiment of the sciences of culture.³²

It is also the place that marks the difference between the historical, hermeneutical human sciences as they appear in Lonergan's account and the human sciences as Gagnepain would have us understand them. Gagnepain's theory of mediation, no less than any historical interpretation, is itself caught up in the cultural processes it would explain. What differentiates Gagnepain's theory of mediation is its insistence upon clinical verification. The clinic, in other words, is what allows Gagnepain to distance himself from the processes he studies and to test the validity, or lack of validity, of his theoretical propositions. For Gagnepain, the clinic is a place of theory, not of therapy.³³

³² See Pierre Marchal, "La position épistémologique de l'anthropologie clinique," *Anthropo-logiques*, no. 1 (1988) 43-72.

³³ Gagnepain jokes that his theory of mediation is in that sense sadistic since the longer the patient stays sick the better it is for the theoretical research that his colleagues carry out.

So Gagnepain's theory of mediation proposes a new scientific model to explain the functioning of our cultural capacities. Between the natural sciences of the human which ignore the spiritual and humanistic studies which are not scientific, Gagnepain presents a middle way. His theory is not an historical materialism like Marx's; rather, he says, it is an historical spiritualism or, better, a dialectical spiritualism, that is, a science that grasps the dialectical relations between nature and spirit and which reifies neither one nor the other.

In developing his dialectical spiritualism, Gagnepain adverts to determinisms that have been to some extent overlooked, it seems to me, in Lonergan's account of the human sciences, namely, the structural, the implicit — that is, the whole domain of incorporated rationality as Gagnepain understands that domain. Lonergan, of course, also speaks of the unconscious, notably with respect to unconscious bias, and he is acutely aware of the dialectical contradictions that beset such bias on the level of individuals, communities, history itself. He is likewise aware of other human unconscious determinisms, for example chemical, neurological, biological, and so on. But these are clearly not the same determinisms that Gagnepain invites us to consider.

At the same time, it seems to me that Lonergan would find in Gagnepain's theory an illustration not only of his cognitive theory but of his theory of science as well. That is not a subject to further develop here but I would like to draw attention to one point. When Lonergan speaks of the problem of dialectic he points out that "The presence or absence of intellectual, of moral, of religious conversion gives rise to dialectically opposed horizons. ... Whether they are explicitly acknowledged or not, dialectically opposed horizons lead to opposed value judgments, opposed accounts of historical movements, opposed interpretations of authors, and different selections of relevant data in special research."³⁴

These problems are particularly acute in the historical, hermeneutical disciplines; natural science, he says, "to a great extent ... escapes this trap."³⁵ Why so? Because "It limits itself to questions that can be settled through an appeal to observation and experiment. It draws its theoretical

³⁴ *Method in Theology* 247-248.

³⁵ *Method in Theology* 248.

models from mathematics. It aims at an empirical knowledge in which value judgments have no constitutive role.”³⁶ Gagnepain’s theory of mediation would seem to share these same characteristics and, to the extent that it does, it too would seem to escape from the trap that ensnares the historical disciplines. Whatever the implications of this for the relationship between moral theology and the human sciences, it seems fair to say that, with respect to this issue, Gagnepain has adverted to data that have been generally overlooked and brought fresh insights, clarifications, and distinctions to the issue.

There remains the question of the relationship of the human sciences and philosophy. Readers of this journal are generally familiar with the way Lonergan approaches this question. I want to say a word about how Gagnepain envisages this issue and relate it briefly to what Lonergan says about dialectic.

Gagnepain talks critically and explicitly about the new human science whose development he sees as the task of our time and, in that sense at least, he is not a *philosophe malgré lui*. Is his theory of mediation, then, another philosophic theory? Not quite — at least not according to Gagnepain. The theory of mediation presents itself as a new human science, not a new philosophy. In one text, he says the theory of mediation is a non-philosophic theory of reason and culture. At the same time, Gagnepain himself gives as the subtitle of *Vouloir Dire: An Epistemological Treatise of the Human Sciences*.

Gagnepain, in fact, has a nuanced and well-developed, if somewhat idiosyncratic, notion of epistemology. For Gagnepain, epistemology is not another discipline to be juxtaposed with and among other already existent disciplines. It is, rather, the permanent contestation of all the disciplines. In that sense, it is, he says, fundamentally an ‘indiscipline.’ The disciplines that do exist, that have colonized our universities, and that together constitute the status quo of human or cultural studies in our university culture

³⁶ *Method in Theology* 248. Gagnepain would want to nuance the statement that value judgments have no constitutive role since, for him, the desire for truth, determinations of truth or falsity, and the like are part of science, just as are all the technical artificializations whereby we treat the data of science. This, however, is not important to the general point being made above. One of the benefits of Gagnepain’s method is that it allows us to ‘deconstruct’ science itself.

are, from the radical perspective of Gagnepain, mere pretenders to the title of human sciences.

Every culture organizes its 'sciences' and the ways it has of teaching them in its own way. Gagnepain calls this social and historical organization of knowledge in the context of a given civilization 'doxa.' This social and historical organization is not a rational and logical organization of knowledge but, precisely, a political organization of knowledge in and across the 'learned' languages that are the disciplines. Learning a language is never only learning the different words of the other language that translate the words of one's own. It is always also the learning of the different things that are said by the words. It involves entering into the doxa of that language and when one learns a language in this way one is in a different way. Something analogous takes place in the disciplines as well. French or English traditions in the social sciences, say in economics, are not the same as those of Germany or the United States, and so on. Neither what is taught nor the way it is taught is the same; rather, each manifests the socio-historic dimension of our rationality.

We may recall here that the theory of mediation recognizes three political aims of human reason operative in any field: one, conservative or anallactic, which tries to adjust the world to itself; another, progressive or synallactic, that tries to adjust itself to the world; and a third, aesthetic, that celebrates the being-together of a group and that Gagnepain calls choral. Like any political body, universities embody all three political aims but it is particularly the first two that are relevant here. There is a politics of the right intent upon preserving the status quo and the present disciplinary structure of the university. This conservative politics of the organization of the disciplines Gagnepain calls 'ideology.' There is a politics of the left, intent upon changing one or other aspect of the disciplinary structure of the university. This progressive politics Gagnepain calls 'epistemology.'

Gagnepain's theory of mediation presents itself as an attempt to renovate from within this progressive political organization of knowledge of the university. But unlike most 'progressive' university politics which tends to be timidly reformist, the theory of mediation proposes a

revolutionary politics that would force us to rethink all our present priorities.³⁷

By way of illustration, consider an obvious example. For many years now curriculum committees have proposed one or other form of interdisciplinary or multi-disciplinary approach to subject-matters as many and varied as the imaginations of faculty members permit: the family, sexuality, democratic government, body art, and so on. For Gagnepain, all this modish pluridisciplinarity is little more than a fundamentally conservative effort to preserve the present system while pretending to modernize it. The cards are regularly shuffled, but it is the same deck of cards, and basically the same game. The theory of mediation proposes new cards and a new game. It proposes not just another reshuffling of the existent disciplines in terms of one or other curricular option, but a revolutionary new perspective on knowledge itself and, in particular, on the human sciences. It proposes, in that radically renovating sense, an indiscipline and this indiscipline is precisely its epistemology: "the revolution is, in effect, a transformation of society and a mutation of man. This mutation, the theory of mediation proposes to live it on the level of knowledge and this is precisely the indiscipline that our epistemology preaches."³⁸

What is the object of this epistemology? Not, as for some versions of traditional epistemology, the presuppositions and procedures of one or other already existent discipline; rather, the object of this epistemology is the way in which the objects of the human sciences are constituted.³⁹ This needs some explanation.

For Gagnepain, it is simply naive to think that there is an object, or an objectivity, independent of the way in which the object is constituted but it is just such naivete that characterizes the inter-, multi-, pluridisciplinary studies that have proliferated throughout contemporary

³⁷ I have developed some of the implications of this for the contemporary university in an article entitled "Gramarye," *Ideas for the University*, ed. Ed Block, Jr., (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1995) 91-126.

³⁸ Jean Gagnepain, *Lecons d'introduction a la theorie de la mediation* (Louvain-le-Neuve: Peeters, 1994) 290. Gagnepain's program clearly has much in common with Lonergan's own. In "MTHS" p. 12, Lonergan writes "what is at stake is the renovation of society."

³⁹ Gagnepain, *Lecons* 291.

university life. They presuppose that the Family, or Sex, or Democratic Government, or Culture, or the Person are already existent realities that can be studied from different points of view, for example, psychological, economic, sociological, historical, and so on, as though it were the same object that were being studied. They fail to see that the object does not precede the point of view and that it is the point of view that constitutes the object. Because they fail to see this, they promote an illusionary notion of knowledge as the addition of one point of view to another, to another — all the while of course carefully preserving the social, intellectual, and economic prerogatives of the individual disciplines that together embody the status quo of the contemporary university. Against all these powerful vested interests Gagnepain proposes the permanent defiance of an epistemological indiscipline!

It is worth noting briefly that the illusionary notion of knowledge and learning that underlies the present organization of our universities encourages the worst sort of abuses in the formation of the young. They are encouraged to think, for example, that learning is a matter of collecting points of view one after the other: the behaviorists think this, the social interactionists think that, the hermeneuts think a third thing. A recent article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* praises as a brilliant innovation a course in art history given at Swarthmore that breaks with the traditional parade of historical epochs (Greek, Roman, Medieval, and so on) and replaces it with a parade of different and more or less modish 'points of view' on 'art' (psychoanalytic, deconstructivist, feminist, Marxist, and so on)

Gagnepain likens these parades of erudition to the fattening of cattle or the force-feeding of geese. As long as we continue along that route, as long as we fail to free ourselves from this illusionary notion of knowledge and its organization, we cannot do the work of science. We can only, he says, do 'philosophy,' that is, continue to think like those who believe that there is such a thing as Nature, Man, Person, Language, Sex, History prior to the point of view from which one would study these 'objects.'⁴⁰ Rather,

⁴⁰Need it be said that Gagnepain's description of philosophy is sometimes polemical?

epistemology, as Gagnepain understands it, requires that one choose a point of view, a unity of perspective, a set of analytic principles, prior to, and irrespective of, any object of study. It is just such point of view and such a set of analytic principles that the theory of mediation proposes.

Thus, whereas it may be true, as Lonergan says, that the scientist who talks about his science does epistemology, it may also be true that the scientist does epistemology in a new way. Gagnepain, at least, offers another view of what might be involved here and it would be good to know what students of Lonergan might make of it.

On the one hand, it seems to me that Gagnepain offers a view of the human sciences that is a development and a complement to the notion of the human sciences that is found in Lonergan and that might suggest to students of Lonergan that they consider in a new light the meaning of terms like 'data,' 'empirical principle,' 'verification,' 'application,' 'praxis,' 'human science,' if not also the nature of the relation of moral theology and the human sciences.

On the other hand, Gagnepain's so-called non-philosophic theory of reason seems itself to be in need of a philosophic complement that would accept the responsibility of deciding which theories, works, societies, histories, and norms mark a progress or a decline in the human adventure. Lonergan offers, if I understand him, not a dialectical theory of rationality, but dialectic as a functional specialty of theology concerned with "the concrete, the dynamic, and the contradictory" movements of human history and an appraisal of the worth or unworth of those movements in terms of progress or decline. Gagnepain is also concerned with the concrete, the dynamic, and the contradictory movements of human history, but for Gagnepain it is neither the contents of history, that is, the movements, nor an appraisal of their contribution to human progress or decline, that are of scientific interest. What is of scientific interest is rather the form of history, that is, the fact that dialectical conflict is the form of all human striving for meaning in every domain and that those 'laws' of history are to be found underlying any and all movements of history. The contents of history are infinitely variable and will always be subject to interpretation in terms of progress or decline but the form is not: the form always involves a conflictual dialectic of nature—

structure — performance as the pathologies of communication clearly reveal.

Moreover, for Gagnepain history is not only history, any more than science is only science. Both of them, for instance, also include a normative, axiological dimension. Gagnepain's theory of mediation therefore takes account of a 'moral' dimension in every human endeavor but here too its account will be formal. It will show how the dialectic of the ethical and the moral plays itself out in any given historical situation but it remains a 'science of morals' and does not itself pronounce moral judgments about the situation being analyzed. In other words, there is no less a need for dialectic in Lonergan's sense with respect to Gagnepain's theory of mediation than there is elsewhere in the sciences of nature and the sciences of culture.

Indeed, it is just here, I suggest, at this point of nexus between Gagnepain's dialectical theory of rationality and dialectic in Lonergan's sense, that students of Gagnepain and students of Lonergan might look for the connections between a veritable human science and authentic philosophy. It is to such an encounter that I hope this paper might make an initial contribution.

A PSYCHOANALYTIC COMMENTARY ON
LONERGAN'S
"MORAL THEOLOGY AND THE HUMAN
SCIENCES"

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INTRODUCTION

LONERGAN'S ESSAY ON "Moral Theology and the Human Sciences" ("MTHS") touches on a number of troublesome and problematic issues having to do with the relation of moral theology to empirical data and scientific methodology. He raises the lid to a modest degree on a contemporary Pandora's box, letting loose a host of complex and controversial considerations. To carry the metaphor a step further, Lonergan used a wide net to snare at least some of the questions he unveiled. But I confess his net is too unwieldy and cumbersome for me. My discussion, therefore, will be limited to the implications of the argument for psychoanalysis. Undoubtedly, since it is a basic psychological approach, psychoanalysis shares many of its concerns with other psychological approaches, but I will speak to the issues only from an analytic perspective.

Some questions come to mind regarding the terms of the discussion. It is not immediately clear to me what is meant by 'moral theology.' Lonergan seems to have taken it for granted that his readers would know what it referred to, but his treatment of it leaves me uncertain as to what extent he envisioned moral theology as distinct from or inclusive of ethics.

My understanding of moral theology includes a reflection on the data of revelation, as the central component of its data base, in order to explicate principles and values governing moral behavior. Moral theology and ethics may have much in common, but ethical reflection strikes a somewhat different note: its foundation is not any set of theological principles or revelation, but rather it works on the data of experience and philosophical understanding. It seems to me that the implications for the relevance of scientific knowledge are quite different depending on whether we are addressing a theological discipline or a philosophical one. The distinction does not emerge clearly in my reading of Lonergan's text.

A second question arises regarding what Lonergan had in mind with respect to human sciences. As far as I can make out, his primary models seem to have been sociology and economics. The psychological sciences receive passing reference, but do not enter the main current of the argument. I have no objection to this direction of his discussion, but I would follow it only at my own risk. Better that I stay on paths that I am familiar with rather than straying in foreign territory where I would find myself on uncertain footing. My bailiwick is psychoanalysis, one of the family of psychological sciences that impinges on ethical and moral problems. The questions stimulated by Lonergan's discussion touch upon problematic areas of the relation of psychoanalysis to both religion and ethical reflection. Within the limits of a psychoanalytic consideration, my comments can reflect the understanding of the human phenomenon generated in only one subsection of the broader field, but the problems and complexities encountered in that relatively restricted arena resonate meaningfully and sympathetically with methodological and conceptual issues encountered elsewhere in the psychological sciences. To enter this dialectic, a word about psychoanalysis as science may serve the interests of clarity.

PSYCHOANALYSIS AS SCIENCE

Psychoanalysis holds a somewhat ambiguous position as a scientific discipline. The arguments as to whether psychoanalysis is a science at all, or what kind of science it is, have flourished almost from the beginning of Freud's creative ventures. Freud himself was trained and invested in the

principles of materialistic and objective scientific method prevailing in the scientific world of his day. He was a medical researcher, and a distinguished neurologist.¹ His researches brought him to the threshold of establishing the neuron doctrine; his classic text in the study of aphasia² still retains its scientific interest and relevance, and he authored what had to be for his time the definitive treatise on infantile cerebral paralysis.³

One could hardly accuse Freud of not having been a competent scientist. But that, of course, is where the difficulty begins. Freud the scientist found himself confronted in his clinical work with patients, with matters of meaning and motive that lay beyond the compass of his scientific methodology and understanding. In fact, his discoveries led him more deeply, not only into the complexities of human subjectivity, a difficult matter on its own terms, but even more perplexingly into the mysteries of the unconscious which seemed to have such pervasive and powerful influences on human thought processes, feelings, and fantasies. He explored these matters not only in the formation of neurotic symptoms, but in jokes, dreams, and a broad range of ordinary human experiences.

He was caught on the horns of a dilemma — he was steeped in and committed to an ideology of scientific method on one hand, but he was dealing with experiences that spoke to human experience and emotional life, the stuff of poets and novelists rather than cold and objective science. Freud's answer was no answer — he resorted to a kind of split, one side devoted to trying to fashion an account of neurological processes and physicalist principles that would satisfy the demands of a legitimate science in his theoretical renderings, the other discussing not only the experiences of his patients, but even his own internal mental life (in his *Interpretation of Dreams* [1900] for example) in terms that were more oriented to finding meaning, purpose, intentionality (à la his mentor

¹ E. Jones, *The Life and Work of Sigmund Freud*, vol. 1 (New York: Basic Books, 1953); P. Gay, *Freud: A Life for Our Time* (New York: Norton, 1978).

² Sigmund Freud, *On Aphasia: A Critical Study* (1891) (New York: International Universities Press, 1953).

³ Sigmund Freud, *Infantile Cerebral Paralysis* (1897) (Coral Gables: University of Miami Press, 1968).

Brentano), and searching out the levels and complexities of human motivation in his clinical work and case descriptions.

Psychoanalysis is still caught in the coils of this ambiguity and diversity. The consensus at this juncture is that any attempts to construct analytic theory along the lines of physical science (the pure and paradigmatically acceptable models, at least in the reigning positivist climate) are doomed to failure. The reactionary trend to cast analytic method in terms of a hermeneutic, whether of suspicion or of recovery, has turned away from the emphasis on hard science toward matters of meaning and motive, largely along lines provided by linguistic models. This development has been salutary in so far as it has opened the way to a more comprehensive and fruitful exploration of the role of language and the complexities of levels of meaning inherent in analytic discourse. But it runs a palpable risk of divorcing the theory from its radical foundation in the physical organism, the body — this connection cannot be broken without sacrificing an authentic understanding of affects, of psychosomatic involvements, and a host of other clinical related phenomena. As this might suggest, psychoanalysis can be charged with being less a theory than a collection of partial theories. Besides the classical Freudian metapsychology and the hermeneutic orientation, there is the object relations perspective, the self-psychology perspective, the existential viewpoint, not to mention peripheral orientations of more or less moment that depend on certain central figures — Jung, Horney, Adler, Rank, and so on. All of these perspectives add complexity to the question of what kind of science psychoanalysis is or claims to be. Clearly it is not simply a science after the manner of sociology or economics; nor does it fit comfortably within the frame provided in Lonergan's assessment.

Within this frame of reference, psychoanalysis has been recurrently challenged and criticized. If we concede its divergence from established and accepted canons of scientific method and inquiry, argument persists as to what constitutes valid method and theory in this complex field. One dimension of this controversy has to do with the extent to which observations and experiences encountered within the analytic setting (analyst and patient working together) has any scientific validity, since it

is open to all the vagaries of subjective impression, selective memory, anecdotal recounting, and more. In so far as the data of such a setting are filtered through the conscious processing of the analyst, they are not only not repeatable but are inherently suspect. Among current critics, Grünbaum has offered a sophisticated and trenchant attack on psychoanalytic theory and methods of data collection and validation.⁴ Because of the inexorable subjectivity inherent in the analytic setting, he argues that the data are suspect and that any attempt at validation derived from the analytic setting and the patient-analyst interaction are inherently invalid. The only alternative, in his assessment, is to find ways to define and validate analytic variables outside the clinical situation. Such attempts at extra-analytic validation have a long and honorable history, but they inevitably run up against the problem that efforts to reproduce the phenomena under controlled and experimentally acceptable conditions fall short of reproducing the phenomena in question. Such studies are useful in defining situations and conditions that approximate the analytic data, or deepen our understanding of closely related phenomena, but the uniqueness of the analytic situation and the fact that the data are impregnated with the ongoing interaction between analyst and patient causes them to remain elusive and escape the grasp of such objectifying methods. Grünbaum's objection that the analyst's subjectivity, whether it involves countertransference or not, disqualifies the analytic method as a source of validation, is misleading since the analyst's subjectivity and the interaction with the patient are also part of the analytic data. A methodology that would explicitly eliminate an essential part of the data of investigation cannot claim to be scientific.⁵

With these considerations in the background, we can engage Lonergan's viewpoint as expressed in "Moral Theology and the Human Sciences" ("MTHS"). I would like to address these issues in two phases —

⁴ A. Grünbaum, *Foundations of Psychoanalysis: A Philosophical Critique* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1984); A. Grünbaum, *Validation in the Clinical Theory of Psychoanalysis: A Study in the Philosophy of Psychoanalysis* (Madison, CT: International Universities Press, 1993).

⁵ W.W. Meissner, S.J. "Foundations of psychoanalysis reconsidered," *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association* 38 (1990) 523-557; "Philosophy versus psychoanalysis — or how to bottle a cloud," *Contemporary Psychology* 39 (1994) 524-527.

first to examine Lonergan's view of science and the degree to which analytic concepts approximate or diverge from his view, and second to consider some aspects of the relevance of psychoanalytic understanding for ethical and moral reflection.

PSYCHOANALYSIS AND LONERGAN'S SCIENCE

Lonergan begins by dividing the kingdom of science into three cases — not unlike Caesar and Gaul. The first case eliminates doubt — the example given is medical ethics. But, the scientist objects, there is no science without doubt. Lonergan extended the exclusion of doubt to both the science and its applications. A contrary argument would suggest that science always deals with probabilities and that the probability in any instance never reaches 1.00. But what might Lonergan have had in mind? To take a simple example, if I drop a stone from Gasson tower, it will certainly and in every case fall to the ground. But this is not science. It becomes science only when I determine that the rate of fall will follow a specific formula for acceleration due to gravity. But the gravitational constant will vary with position on the earth's surface and related centrifugal forces due to the earth's movement, along with other factors affecting other gravitational pulls (mountains) or buoyancy (air density, atmospheric pressure). The result of the experiment, therefore is not exact, but only probable.

The second puzzle is that Lonergan's example for this case is medical ethics. I do not know in what sense medical ethics qualifies as a science, at least not with the connotation in place here. Ethics is a branch of philosophy, and the application of ethical principles to medical matters does not make it scientific. Even medicine itself is questionably a science; some would argue that it is really only an area of application of a collection of sciences that deal with aspects of the functioning of the human body. Medicine itself is more a matter of a practical art involving the application of medically related sciences to the treatment of health and disease. We might wonder whether, when Lonergan speaks of 'human sciences,' he is including not only ordinary scientific approaches to the human phenomenon (psychology, anthropology, sociology, economics)

but also the philosophical disciplines taking man and human behavior as their subject matter.

Sciences of the Case 2 variety are more readily recognizable. I presume Lonergan has in mind social sciences involving social and economic planning. All sciences deal with probabilities, social sciences especially so. Prediction of social processes are always open to a considerable degree of uncertainty, but to regard such predictions as morally unobjectionable may be a tad naive.⁶ The problem is that total scientific objectivity is always elusive, but the social sciences are uniquely vulnerable to political and prejudicial attitudes that can readily cloud the issue. It does not strain the imagination to envision a fervent Nazi sociologist advocating elimination of Jews in the interest of advancing Nazi programs for social policy and planning. But again, Lonergan's concept of science extends to areas of application of scientific concepts and not merely to the science itself. One could argue that science is only interested in the study of phenomena and as such generates theories to explain and understand the processes under study. When such results are used as the basis for application in the real world or creating proposals for courses of action, the realm of science has been left behind and something else is in the works that is open to various other influences (politics, greed, personal ambition, corruption, and the other vagaries of the political animal). The sketch Lonergan offers of these endeavors in the present description smacks of utopianism.

Sciences of the Case 3 type come closer to recognizability as human sciences. In my view, this category blends to a considerable degree with the Case 2 variety — both are uncertain and vulnerable to ideological corruption. Where extension beyond the limits of scientific inquiry and/or application to areas of human endeavor in which advantage or profit are involved, suspicion is an appropriate response. But this is somewhat different from theoretical divergences and variations in emphasis and perspective that are the stuff of ordinary scientific work and progress. The case in point is economics, but if economics is suspect, it is not because there are multiple and divergent points of view and theoretical perspectives alive in the field. The nature of the data and its inherent

⁶ Lonergan corrects this statement in his later consideration of bias and ideology.

uncertainties dictate that such should be the case, and part of the normal progression of that science. Suspicion should arise when the scientific considerations are extended to the field of economic application, at which point all of Lonergan's cautions become germane.

Psychoanalysis is certainly one of these latter types of science. But the constraint against advocacy plays an even more dominant role in matters therapeutic than in the social sciences. The psychoanalytic process is one of open and honest inquiry; its primary goal is self-understanding, and its secondary pragmatic goal is to enable the patient to free himself from emotional constraints and entanglements to a sufficient degree to allow him to choose that course of action or pattern of life that is appropriate and adaptive in his life circumstances. The analytic *credo* is that the first goal is what enables the patient to achieve the second. In this sense, any effort of advocacy, suggestion, or persuasion have no place in the analytic process.

But Lonergan also advances a proposition that challenges analytic experience. He proposes that the data of human science are data of consciousness and/or sense. There is a sense in which the proposition is relevant to psychoanalysis, and a sense in which it is not. The issue is the role of the unconscious,⁷ so central to the analytic perspective. But the

⁷ Lonergan's notion of unconscious mental processes and its relation to the unconscious as addressed in psychoanalysis is somewhat uncertain. My sense of his meaning in general is that 'unconscious' in his usage comes close to 'preconscious' in analytic usage, that is, that form of unconscious material that is actually unknown to the subject but is more or less readily retrievable by ordinary recollective techniques. In contrast, the analytic unconscious is not so readily retrievable and requires specialized techniques for recognition and reconstruction such as those of the analytic process. The reason for the difference is the role of repression and the repression barrier in the unconscious and not in the preconscious. But the situation is not so clearly delineated — for example, in his book on method (Bernard Lonergan, S.J., *Pour Une Méthode en Théologie*, trans. Louis Roy, O.P. [Montreal: Fides, 1972]), Lonergan compares his notion of the mentally clear-obscure (*clair-obscur*) quality of conscious subjectivity to the analytic unconscious, but his reference is to Horney's notion of self-alienation as developed in *Neurosis and Human Growth* (K. Horney, *Neurosis and Human Growth* [New York: Norton, 1950]). The dynamic in Horney's terms is an unconscious neurotic process of self-alienation driven by her pride system, but to my reading the comparison misses the mark. Lonergan may have included in his notion of subjectivity aspects that analysts might regard as unconscious. Consequently, I would hazard a guess that Lonergan's concept of the unconscious is not synonymous with the analytic, but there may also be significant areas of overlap. My usage in this article is meant to be analytic.

unconscious in itself is not a datum of analysis — it is more an inference. The data of the analytic situation are in the first instance sensory — the patient's appearance, behavior, the words he speaks, the physical concomitants of affective expression, and so on. Beyond the sensory, there is the story he tells, the meanings he attributes to events and experiences, the patterns of recall and association he generates, the conceptual equipment he brings to the analytic task, the quality of his relationships with significant others in his life and with the analyst in the course of the analytic work, and so on. Working with these data and carrying through on the essential task of inquiry, the analyst and patient gradually discover that there were attitudes, feelings, fantasies, and a host of other persuasions and commitments that have influenced the patient's thoughts and feelings, of which he was not aware and which he would never have even conceived otherwise. This is the stuff of the unconscious. It is the recurrent experience of discovering such phenomena that persuaded Freud and the host of analysts following in his footsteps that the unconscious is a real and powerfully influential aspect of human psychic functioning. To Lonergan's credit, he disparages the positivist falsification principle of verification, which hardly suits the analytic framework. The analytic inquiry seeks patterns of meaning and motivation, but these patterns are subject to infinite variation and frequent exception in human affairs. Relying on a principle of falsification would invalidate most if not all analytic data.

Lonergan's account of the genesis of hypotheses is quite consistent with the analytic approach, except that analysis does not have the luxury of experimentation to test its hypotheses. The analytic method is tied to the analytic setting in which any attempt at experimentation would not only be disruptive, but destructive of the analytic context. The most constructive advance in this area has been to introduce recording devices into the situation, but the advantages of such recordings for more detailed study of the analytic interaction are qualified by the uncertainties of introducing a parametric factor into the process with as yet questionable effects. Instead progress in analytic thinking and testing of hypotheses, both in the individual analytic setting and in the broader context of development in the field, depends on continuing careful collection of

analytic data and further delineation of patterns, consequences, and implications.

When Lonergan addresses the 'dialectical principle,' he verges quickly into the moral. His reliance on the social sciences draws him quickly into considerations of application to problems extant in the social order and hence to considerations of moral relevance. His insistence on the linkage between the science and its application draws us into the domain of the pragmatic where issues of bias, error, egoism, self-interest, as well as the 'shared delusions of group bias' become distortive and can readily lead toward the situations of group irrationality he describes. His diatribe against bias, whether individual or group, and ideology are well-deserved in realms of political and ideological conflict. The direction of his thinking points to the perspective from which his discussion originates. He observes:

Now it is of major importance to our present inquiry that science is, not just an accidental form radiated in a possible intellect, but the ongoing occupation of a group and indeed a community of persons. For this implies that the moral theologian has to consider, not a single, but a double set of moral issues. On the one hand, there are the moral issues that arise in the object studied in the human science. On the other hand, there are the moral issues that arise in the subjects that do the studying of the object of the human science (11-12).

The perspective he assumes here is that of the moralist who surveys science and scientists to pass judgment on the morality of their undertaking. This sheds some light on his insistence on joining the science and its potential application, since otherwise there is little moral meat to chew on. There is not much immorality in the subject matter of science, human or otherwise. There is plenty in the realms of application. This differs significantly from the approach in these comments: my interest here is directed to inquiring into the relevance of psychoanalysis as a human science for moral understanding and reflection, not into any consideration of its use or misuse as a guide for directing activity.

Lonergan's comment also raises the question as to how his perspective hits the analytic target. Certainly, moralists are well within their prerogatives to pass judgment on analytic findings. But the issue of

what is science and what is morality looms large here. For example, despite Freud's early discussions of masturbation as deleterious and as contributing to the actual neuroses, most analysts in our day have come to the conclusion that masturbation is relatively harmless, that it may reflect certain residual infantile conflicts, but there is nothing of itself damaging or involving any significant psychic consequences. Some developmentalists would even argue that it is a normal aspect of infantile development and makes a positive contribution to self-definition and a sense of bodily integrity. But these are not moral conclusions; they are simply statements of fact or informed opinion. They have nothing to say about the morality or lack of it — these would be moral propositions. If a psychologist takes it upon himself to say that there is nothing immoral about masturbation, he speaks as a moralist and not merely as a psychologist. This is again the issue of science versus application. If masturbation is to be judged in moral terms, it remains the business of moralists to do so or not. With regard to analytic theory or concepts, I cannot think of any that would qualify as immoral. Lonergan is not unaware of this issue, and he addresses it in terms of external and internal criticism — the former draws in material from outside the science, while the internal critic is merely doing the work of scientific investigation. But this draws my reflection to a further consideration of what psychoanalysis may contribute to moral reflection.

PSYCHOANALYSIS AND MORAL JUDGMENT

We can assume that moral theology, along with its related and contributing disciplines, operates in terms of an implicit anthropology, a theory of the nature of man with specific reference to his cognitive, affective, intellectual, and volitional capacities. To the extent that there is any conscious or deliberate reference to this view of human nature, it tends to be based on scholastic philosophical perspectives. I would presume, for example, that Lonergan's understanding of man's nature is rooted in his thorough understanding of Thomas Aquinas's assumptions and considerations in this respect. But Aquinas's rendering of the human phenomenon is based on ontological considerations and principles, and contributes little to the understanding of dynamic issues or the inner

experience of the human subject. The question is whether a psychoanalytic perspective adds anything to this presumptive framework.

The reader will note that I am not suggesting that the analytic perspective has anything to contribute directly to moral issues as such, but that its contribution, if any, is indirect, bearing on certain suppositions with which the moralist tends to approach specifically moral issues. Analysts are in no better position to pronounce on questions of morality than any other intelligent and informed layperson. Like everyman, the analyst makes his own moral and ethical judgments, lives out his life in terms of a set of values and value-orientations reflecting his personal commitments and the social reference contexts within which he lives. None of this gives him any privilege or power to pass judgment on ethical matters beyond his own private domain. Ethical pronouncements in the public domain belong to those who are equipped to offer them. This caution I would add also applies *mutatis mutandis* to politicians and rock stars whenever they pronounce on moral matters.

Having put the analyst in his place, what might he have to offer? The question is straightforward enough, but the answers are less so. I would remind the reader that the argument here verges onto relatively untrodden paths, and accordingly would have to be evaluated as no more than tentative suggestions for future areas of research and investigation. However, we are not working in a vacuum either. The ethical aspects of Freud's thinking have been well explored,⁸ but while an ethical reading of Freud can point the inquiry in helpful and meaningful directions, it is only a first step along the path of interdisciplinary exploration that stretches potentially before us, leading in the direction of a clearer understanding of the ethical or moral relevance of psychoanalytic perspectives.

I will focus in my response to Lonergan's initiative on two aspects of psychoanalysis that might offer the possibility for meaningful ethical input. The first is the psychoanalytic account of the ethical agent, the second the sense and extent to which analytic perspectives can be regarded as normative. Let us begin with the moral agent.

⁸ E. Wallwork, *Psychoanalysis and Ethics* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1991).

To simplify matters for the sake of argument, the moral agent in moral theology is an adult characterized by mature motives, good or bad, operating in terms of capacities for intellectual understanding and volition, especially presuming the capacity for free self-determination and choice. The psychoanalytic perspective would question and challenge all of these assumptions. While the moral image focuses on the mature man influenced by and interacting with extrinsic circumstances and forces as a matter of the immediate present intersection of circumstances, the analytic view envisions other assumptions. The moral agent in the analytic lens is not simply adult, but within the adult there is a child. The amplified understanding of this aspect of the ethical agent is that he is the product of an ongoing process of development and emergence that has extended through the whole of his life experience, and that residues from all of those developmental stages remain salient and active in the complex integration of his personality at every point of his life trajectory. How he responds to the continuing flow of his experience, how he relates to the world and external events, how he engages with the significant others in his life experience, are determined not only by the complex of operative factors in his immediate experience, but also by the determining influences from the past. Much of the effort of the analytic process is directed at discovering the residues of past experience as they persist and come to life in the present. The record of the past, even though continuously and dynamically active in the present, remains to a significant degree unconscious. This is the central consideration in the phenomenon of transference. One of Freud's central discoveries was that human agency was not limited to levels of conscious experience, but involved multiple levels of meaning and motivation, some of which was relatively easily available to conscious recovery, but some of which remained operative at levels of unconscious embeddedness that required extraordinary and prolonged effort, through the combined efforts of analyst and analysand, to begin to discover, and that within stringent limitations. In some degree in every analysis, much of the unconscious remains unconscious, and eludes the best efforts to gain access to it.

Along with this more complicated perspective on the moral agent in action, analysts have evolved a complex account of the development of

the moral agent. To a large extent this involves the account of superego development, but not exclusively so, at least in my view. In matters pertaining to ethical decision-making and moral action, more is involved than the limited accounting of the superego and its development can encompass. Complex ethical considerations as, for example judgments regarding right and wrong of specific actions or courses of action, or the acceptance, formation, and integration of personal and social values and value-orientations, are matters calling for considerations of nearly the whole of the psychic economy, cognitive, affective, intellectual, and volitional. The too simple and naive equation of superego with conscience, for example, needs careful rethinking, since the complex function of conscience as it is conceived in moral terms cannot be reduced to superego terms. Related to this, the meaning and connotations of guilt, whether conscious or unconscious, call for serious examination with regard to its potential ethical reverberations.

The point of my argument is that from an analytic perspective the moral agent involves multiple levels of functioning and awareness that reflect complex developmental attainments and failures, and correspondingly qualify the understanding of the process of ethical decision-making. An account of any ethical judgment, certainly as a matter of the exercise of judgment in the immediate context of a specific moral action, should take into account whatever can be known regarding the complex levels of meaning and motive that may be contributing to the process — some of which may be conscious, but much of which is not. How far these considerations can be extended to the level of ethical principles is a further question that deserves consideration, even though I confess I do not have any clear or firm sense of what may be fruitful areas of consideration in this regard. One possible connection is with the question of mitigated responsibility and the consideration of subjective vs. objective criteria of moral judgment. To what extent, for example, can unconscious motivations be accorded a moral standing in determining the responsibility of the agent? The simplistic response of the legal system tends to say “No consciousness, no responsibility.” But the ethical issues are more complex. If the person harbors a deeply unconscious wish to kill someone, who is to take responsibility for the wish? The law does not

bring people to court for mere wishes, certainly; but, let us say that the wish is displaced into some less drastic but still harmful form — let's say leaving something on the stairs, so that the victim trips, falls down the stairs, and is severely injured. What then? Leaving the offending object was inadvertent, thoughtless, careless, but not deliberately left with the intention of doing harm. But what then about the unconscious hatred and wish? I would not hazard an answer, but I would think the question raises issues for as yet undetermined inquiry and analysis. In a word, the analytic perspective would suggest that the understanding of the ethical agent is considerably more complex than most ethical or moral theories allow. But the question remains open as to whether and to what extent the added emotional, motivational, and meaning impregnated connotations of analytic understanding bring anything meaningful and productive to the ethical reflection. Insofar as the ethical agent is an integral part of the ethical process, these added considerations would seem to me to be not only relevant but significant.

The second issue I wish to suggest is whether analysis brings anything to the table that might pass for normative. Again, we are well advised to tread cautiously here. If we are agreed that it is not the business of analysts to make ethical judgments, then it would be inappropriate for any analyst to proclaim that any analytic finding or conclusion can be regarded as normative — that is, as involving issues of right or wrong. But the legitimate limits of analytic competence do not prevent raising the question. Let us consider an example. There is good reason to believe that emotional or sexual abuse in childhood can become traumatic and have deleterious effects on the functioning of the adult personality. Psychoanalysis has no exclusive claim to this discovery, but psychologists, particularly those interested in developmental vicissitudes, would have a fair degree of consensus on the question. If we can agree that such early experiences have traumatic effects that impair the capacity of the adult to function normally and satisfyingly in many areas of life experience, can we make the jump from fact to value? Can we say, on these grounds and not some other, that abusive behavior is morally wrong?⁹

⁹ Perhaps the argument here is in some ways analogous to questions in which the damage to the self is more apparent — smoking or the consumption of alcoholic

Or, to take another example, let us suppose that a patient has developed an agoraphobia that is severely limiting of her ability to work and carry out her responsibilities as a wife and mother. She is housebound, terrified of going anywhere beyond her front door, totally reliant on her husband to take her on any excursions — to the doctor, shopping, visiting her mother, and so on — to his great inconvenience and interference with his work schedule. We could think of her as the innocent victim of a neurotic process, in which case she would be absolved of all moral implication. However, the matter is not so simple — as you might have guessed! When we look into the motivation behind this symptomatic pattern, we find a congeries of less than salutary motives at work, no one of which is conclusive, but in conjunction they make her behavior overdetermined. At one level, the classic libidinal motive is at work, underlying the unconscious fantasy that when she goes out on the street she will be overwhelmed by libidinal impulses, want to strip off her clothing and expose herself, and become a sexually promiscuous prostitute. At another level, there is her anger at her husband for his immersion in his profession, working long hours, spending little time with the family and especially little or no personal time with her. Her affliction serves the purpose of gaining his attention and forcing him to spend more time with her in helping her with her phobia. It also draws him away from his work commitment, which incidentally is mingled with her concerns about his attraction to a pretty secretary and her fears of losing his interest to this other woman. And lastly, there is a deeper layer of motivation having to do with the patient's relation to her mother, who was also severely phobic and for many years agoraphobic. The patient had grown up feeling that she had to take second place to a more sickly and quite neurotic sister, who seemed to get all mother's interest and attention. The patient's phobia enabled her to gain a significant degree of sympathetic attention from her mother and also served to satisfy certain other deep-seated needs to identify with mother and become more like her. And, a point central to this discussion, all of this was quite unconscious and only became conscious in the course of her analytic exploration.

beverages. Are they morally wrong, in so far as they cause such severe physical damage? If so, in what sense? to what degree? under what circumstances? and so on.

What, then, might we think of such a case in ethical terms? I would suggest that there are at least two vantage points from which this material can be viewed. The first would have to do with the morality of the agent — in what sense and to what degree might we hold this woman responsible for her affliction and its consequences? There is no question but that she does significant harm to herself first of all, and secondarily to others involved with her. Can she be held responsible for this? The problem is analogous to the question of who is responsible for a dream. The dreamer does not dream with his conscious mind; he does not select and voluntarily organize the dream experience. But he and no one else is the dreamer. If he is not responsible, who is? In some sense, the dreamer must be held accountable for the content and form of his dream, but in what sense. The dream offers no footing for therapeutic leverage until the patient owns up to it and takes it as his doing. By the same token, there is little prospect for therapeutic modification of this patient's phobic anxieties until she takes some responsibility for them, thereby accepting the possibility that she can do something about them if she chooses. If the symptoms are of her doing, they can also be of her undoing. The point of my argument is not to render an ethical judgment on the matter, but to urge that a deeper consideration of the issues of motivation and responsibility are called for by taking the levels of unconscious motivation, unveiled by a psychoanalytic investigation, into account.

The second viewpoint for considering this material is the normative status of the psychic process and its results. Here we begin to encounter the distinction between sickness and sin, not simply as a matter of moral culpability, but in more objective terms. If we accept that psychic good health and adaptations are goods and that phobic symptoms and the undesirable consequences they create for both patient and involved others are evils, does that open the way to a consideration of such neurotic manifestations and the motivations underlying them as morally reprehensible? In other words, can identification of the fact of sickness allow us to infer a moral component such that psychodynamics that lead to psychic health and productive life experience are normatively good, and those that lead to neurotic maladjustment and other deleterious psychic consequences are normatively evil?

I would submit that the case is somewhat different for psychic illness than for physical disease. We would not blame the victim for catching a cold, or for falling victim to a cancer. Even so, there are subtle and quite uncertain questions that remain controversial and have eluded any firm conclusions, regarding the contribution of psychic motivations, conflicts, and defenses in the etiology of even physical diseases. The whole realm of psychosomatic diseases falls in this category, but questions abide with respect to the extent to which some form or degree of psychosomatic component is operative in even seemingly purely physical processes. But the issue of psychic determinants in distorted mental processes and illnesses looms much larger. The issue of the patient's responsibility, as discussed above, is salient, but the question in hand takes the argument a step further. Beyond the issues of etiology and responsibility, does the fact of the patient's psychic health or illness of itself become normative, that is, such that we can judge the condition of psychic health to be ethically good and the condition of psychic illness ethically evil?

Before the moralists leap at the jugular, let me add a few incidental considerations to spice up the brew.¹⁰ There is a delicate issue involved here that does not often come in for any significant degree of discussion in psychoanalytic circles, but remains salient in any case. One way to pose the question is to ask whether and to what extent psychoanalytic issues are imbricated with ethical issues. Despite his effort to kick any form of moralism out the front door and to proclaim therapeutic neutrality, Freud allowed ethical issues to re-enter the analytic framework by his introduction of the concept of the superego. The superego arose out of certain moral considerations. Freud's early development of the concept of repression explained that phenomenon by appeal to some form of moral standard that was being violated, causing the 'censor' to keep the offending material out of awareness. The censor was to re-enter the later structural theory in the form of the superego.¹¹ The superego was the intermediary of prohibitions and ideals that had an ethical or even moral implication. The superego was responsible for unconscious guilt that

¹⁰ I apologize to my readers for mixing metaphors.

¹¹ E.R. Zetzel and W.W. Meissner, S.J., *Basic Concepts in Psychoanalytic Psychiatry* (New York: Basic Books, 1973).

underlies many neurotic symptom formations and maladaptive behavioral patterns. Beyond the role of the superego, narrowly conceived, ethical issues tend to arise in relation to issues of character, accepting or avoiding responsibilities, in matters having to do with the interactions and relationships with others, issues concerning fairness, love, narcissism, and so on. Issues of this sort, if they are not flat out resonant with ethical connotations, are at least operating on the fringes of ethical concern. The question regarding the normative issue I am raising here has to do with that aspect of mature and adaptive behavior that implicitly, if not explicitly, involves ethical concerns. The issue is not often raised among analysts, although Erikson was bold enough to make the ethical dimensions of the developmental progression explicit.¹² The question comes down to the issue of whether the human agent can function maturely, adaptively, and with psychic integrity, without at the same time measuring up to certain ethical and moral standards, whether they pertain to personal values or socially endorsed and reinforced value systems. The question relates theoretically in psychoanalysis to the problem of the formation and integration of values and the role of the relatively autonomous and adaptive functions of the superego in sustaining healthy and mature functioning.

CONCLUSION

Hopefully I have said enough to at least suggest that there is something here worth exploring and considering further. It is one of the arenas of interdisciplinary collaboration and reflection that Lonergan advocated. However, as far as I can discern, it seems to me that the *status quaestionis* of such an inquiry would be cast in somewhat different terms than those envisioned by Lonergan. These do not strike me as questions related simply to the application of findings of the science of psychoanalysis, but

¹² E.H. Erickson, *Insight and Responsibility* (New York: Norton, 1964). See my discussion of this aspect of Erikson's work in W.W. Meissner, S.J. "Erikson's truth: the search for ethical identity," *Theological Studies* 31 (1970) 310-319; and W.W. Meissner, S.J., *Life and Faith: Psychological Perspectives on Religious Experience* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 1987).

rather pertain to issues inherent to the science that have ethical and moral implication.

But the collaboration Lonergan sought would not be without its risks and perils. If the moral theological mind-set were to open itself to the kinds of considerations I have suggested, the challenge to rethink many central issues in the moral domain would be difficult to avoid. By the same token, were psychoanalysts to find their way to a more open-minded realization of the implicit ethicality of many of their supposedly value-neutral concepts and principles, they might find themselves called to recast, rethink, and re-evaluate much of the established analytic lore. As a bottom line for this reflection, then, even if we can find certain aspects of Lonergan's approach and formulation problematic, one salvific aspect of his contribution may be to hear it as a trumpet call to invade troublesome areas of overlapping and mutually challenging concern. Despite the risks, it would offer the promise of a deeper understanding of the human ethical agent that might prove to be enriching for both the moral theological and the psychoanalytic enterprises.

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