

LONERGAN WORKSHOP

Looking Ahead:
Lonergan for the 21st Century

In Honor of Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran



volume 17

edited by
Fred Lawrence

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EDITOR'S NOTE

How appropriate that our millennial Lonergan Workshop should celebrate the Jesuit leadership in Toronto of the magnificent enterprise of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, Fred Crowe and Bob Doran! Our theme was "Looking Ahead: Lonergan for the 21st Century."

Frederick E. Crowe, SJ, senior among us, has long fulfilled the prophet Joel's saying about the outpouring of the Spirit that "your old people shall dream dreams" (3: 1). Whether on the notion of value or *The Spiritual Exercises*, the mission of the Son and Spirit, or the 'way up and the way down' in the mature Lonergan's writings, the meaning of the resurrection of the dead or the role of history in Lonergan's lifework, his talks at the Workshop have always been the most forward-looking and adventuresome presentations. His contribution to this Workshop—"The Future: Charting the Unknown with Lonergan"—is no exception.

As far as I know, among students of Lonergan, Robert M. Doran, SJ, has the most exigent, lucid, and dynamic grasp of systematic theology. What is so marvelous is that Bob not only talks about the nature of systematic theology—he does it. In "Lonergan and the Future of Theology" Bob gives us a taste of such systematics in showing forth the nexus among treatises on the Trinity, grace, and redemption in history. This is a piece of a series of articles published in *Theological Studies*, *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies*, and a previous *Lonergan Workshop*, which Bob has gathered together into a single volume to appear soon as a Supplement to this journal.

In addressing "The Future of Analogy," David B. Burrell, CSC, resumes one of the *pièces de résistance* of his lifework on the borderline between philosophy and theology. He has been perhaps the first to exploit the parallel between Wittgenstein's teaching about language-in-use and *Lebensformen* and Lonergan's about positions in philosophy and theology and conversion. He alone has developed this connection in his retrieval of the Thomist teaching on analogy: getting analogical expressions right is integrally joined to how we live our lives.

Lonergan Fellow (1999-2000) Richard J. Cassidy has been a friend of Lonergan's thought since his days as a student in Rome in the early 1960s. After years of leadership in the Office of Peace and Justice in Detroit, he decided to investigate the biblical foundations for his praxis to that date. A doctorate in

biblical studies in an ethical vein and a fruitful teaching career has seen the publication of his studies on Luke, Luke-Acts, and John. This led naturally to studies on Paul, especially the Letters of Captivity to which he devoted his sabbatical. Here he frames a key discovery from that research in terms of Lonergan's teaching on moral conversion.

Joseph Fitzpatrick first encountered Bernard Lonergan and his thought as a student in Rome, too. For most of his career since then Joe has been a schools inspector in England. He is one of the relatively few (Dave Burrell, Hugo Meynell, Michael McCarthy, Andrew Beards, Ulf Jonsson, and the late Vincent Potter, SJ, are others) knowledgeable and talented enough to relate Lonergan's work to British-style analytic philosophy. He gave a series of talks on Russell, Wittgenstein, and Lonergan at a recent mini-Workshop. These studies with others will appear soon as a Supplemental Volume. Here he responds to my request to reflect on education in light of Lonergan's thought.

Charles C. Hefling was the Lonergan representative in what was supposed to be a Girard-Lonergan conversation at a Girard Conference in May, 2000 at Boston College. As his talk makes evident, Charles is competent in the thought of both thinkers, but his interlocutor chose not to have that conversation. Hence, the title: "About What Might a Lonergan/Girard 'Conversation' Be?" Charles addresses issues of cognitional theory, systematic theology, Christology, and soteriology that are germane to both thinkers.

One of the characteristics of the modern transformation of practical and political philosophy is the loss of the city as a point of departure and return for ethical reflection. While he was a philosophy grad student at Boston College, Paul Kidder assisted Fr. Joe Flanagan, whose preoccupation with art and the imagination led him to connect the Jane Jacobs of urban reflection with the Heidegger-grounded *aperçus* of Christian Norberg-Schulz regarding the architecture of cities. Since going with Paulette to teach at Seattle University, Paul has been bringing undergraduate philosophers together with concrete urban issues, and singlehandedly re-inventing urban ethics in the process. Here he looks to the future of cities by tracing the American history of the dialectic between town and country in the leading theoretical and practical options that have emerged to date. (Someday, perhaps, we might be able to reproduce for you the Power Point beauty and effectiveness of Paul's presentations for recent Workshops.)

The talk of Michael E. McCarthy (Vassar College) was entitled, "Authority, Autonomy, and Authenticity." It ventures into the zone of political philosophy, in which he has for some time been laboring on a monograph on Hannah Arendt.

We had the opportunity to hear some draft-chapters at a mini-Workshop a few years ago. Michael's talk at this Workshop was extremely well received, and inspired Prof. Stephen Pope, the chair of BC's Theology Department, to suggest a mini-Workshop with Joseph A. Komonchak (Catholic University of America) on the same theme the following February. In the talk, Michael addresses issues of deep concern in society and church today, and uses Lonergan's notions to "make the best" of such modern thinkers on autonomy and liberty as Kant, Tocqueville, and John Stuart Mill.

In his contribution Sebastian Moore, OSB, gives us a chance to share his latest insights into the drama of human existence, especially as related to Christian soteriology. Sebastian has been fascinated for some years by René Girard's mimetic hypothesis, and applied it to the resolution of "knots" encountered on his journey. Always in the background is the wisdom of the venerable Benedictine spiritual director, Abbot John Chapman, who has pioneered the contemporary recovery of contemplative prayer. This year Sebastian brings these strands together with the concrete focusing method of psychologist Eugene T. Gendlin.

A newcomer to the Workshop ranks, Giovanni Rota, is a priest and seminary professor in the Archdiocese of Bergamo, Italy—the home locale of Pope John XXIII. When Sue and I were in Rome to teach at the Gregorian University in the spring of 1997, Fr John "Mike" McDermott, SJ, alerted us to the brilliant young priest who had just completed a doctoral dissertation on the development of the notions of 'person' and 'nature' in the thought of Lonergan.¹ So we followed up on this lead, and McDermott was absolutely right. In keeping with the theme, Giovanni's presentation for our Workshop pursues the topic of his dissertation into the future by drawing out implications of Lonergan's ideas in relation to contemporary problematics in phenomenology, especially the ethical concerns of Emmanuel Lévinas.

Giovanni Sala, SJ, besides being a student of Lonergan and translator of his work into Italian and German, is also a world class Kant scholar. He delivered his reflections on the relationship between Lonergan's thought and Pope John Paul II's Encyclical *Fides et Ratio* at the 1999 Lonergan Workshop. Because of an editorial mix-up, we have only published his remarks on Kant prepared for a *Docta Ignorantia* session of that year's Workshop. Here Giovanni brings out Lonergan's harmony with the Holy Father's vision, and shows how Lonergan's

¹See Giovanni Rota, "*Persona*" e "*Natura*" nell'*Itinerario Speculativo* di Bernard J.F. Lonergan, SJ, (1904-1984) (Milan: Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 1998).

thought is uniquely capable of helping us to be faithful to both reason and faith in a way suggested but not developed in the Encyclical.

We are especially grateful that this millennial Workshop began with a talk by the Learned Hand Professor of Law at Harvard Law School, Mary Ann Glendon. Her talk, "The Layman in the Public Square," used Charles Malik's unpublished diaries to describe the dramatic role played by this Christian philosopher from Lebanon in the UN's adoption of its Declaration on Human Rights. This story is now told in her wonderful book, *A World Made New: Eleanor Roosevelt and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights*.

Many thanks to Kerry Cronin for all her work on this volume.

Fred Lawrence,
Editor

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THE FUTURE: CHARTING THE UNKNOWN WITH LONERAGAN

Frederick E. Crowe
Loneragan Research Center, Toronto

We cannot chart the future ... Our course is in the night, our control is only rough and approximate. We have to believe and trust, to risk and dare. – Bernard Lonergan, October 10, 1974.¹

IN KEEPING WITH the theme of this workshop my question here began as a question about the future of Lonergan studies. That is still a major interest, but it is framed now by a general interest in the future. As the question became generalized, the attempt at an answer followed suit, and will be given only in the most general terms. That is no cause for apology, since students of Lonergan are supposed to be generalists,² but my audience should be warned that I have no details on tomorrow's weather, no tip on the stock market. My means are likewise general; I have no crystal ball or pack of cards to help me; I rely on a study of what it is to be human. My interest moreover is sober; I am less interested in what will be overthrown in the next revolution than in what will endure. In brief, don't expect too much.

The title of the paper suggests the order of its parts. It aims at tracing a faint trail in the unknown area of the future; it would take Lonergan as a guide on the journey; this supposes a certain view of the relevant features in his work; and so, on the good Thomist principle that what is last in intention is first in execution, my first part will attempt an overall view of Lonergan's work; my second will

¹ See 'Self-Transcendence: Intellectual, Moral, Religious,' a public lecture at Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Geneva, NY, October 10, 1974, p. 4 of the first draft of a transcription by Marcela Dayao of the tape-recording.—My own paper began with a panel discussion at the June 1996 Lonergan Workshop, Boston College, was developed into a lecture at a Lonergan Weekend in Vancouver in October of that year, and approached its present form in a Lonergan Research Institute Seminar, October 1998; its style shows its relation to a live audience.

² 'Questionnaire on Philosophy,' *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 2:2 (October 1984) 1-35, at 32; hereafter, 'Questionnaire.'

sketch his views on past history as context for the 'history' of the future; my third section will venture into that unknown area.

1. 'INSTANT' LONERGAN: AN OVERALL VIEW

To offer an overall view of Lonergan's thought sounds like a threat. Will it include all that has been said in these workshops since 1974? Be not afraid. For present purposes I offer an 'instant' Lonergan: a pair of headings that are comprehensive in intent but omit all details. I am told that one can put half of physics into seven typing spaces: $E = mc^2$. I present a formula like that for my overall view of Lonergan.

The formula, then, states that there are two components in his thinking. There is the structural principle. This focuses on the invariant, the hard and fast, the fixed and determined. But there is also what we may call the historical principle, which is not invariant at all but subject to continual change, is not hard and fast but open to development or to decline, is not fixed and determined but insecure and precarious, does not provide some instant utopia but would lead the human race forward in a steady process of learning.

Lonergan himself provides support for this formula: 'A contemporary ontology,' he says, 'would distinguish two components in concrete human reality: on the one hand, a constant, human nature; on the other hand, a variable, human historicity. Nature is given man at birth. Historicity is what man makes of man.'³ That is a statement in ontology; transfer it from ontology to his work and thought, and you have my instant Lonergan.

Still, even an instant view may be allowed some expansion. I will expand my first principle very briefly, my second not so briefly.

The obvious illustration of the structural principle is the four levels of consciousness.⁴ You have heard about those levels a dozen times, and it would

³ *A Third Collection: Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan, S.J.*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (New York: Paulist Press, and London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1985) 170; hereafter, *A Third Collection*.

⁴ Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran 5th ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992; hereafter *Insight*; the pagination of the 2nd ed., London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1958, will also be given, in brackets); see ch. 9 for a quick view of levels 1 to 3. For the fourth level add ch. 1 of his *Method in Theology* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, Ltd; New York: Herder and Herder, 1972; 2nd ed. 1973; hereafter *Method*).

bore you to tears to hear me go through them again. From my viewpoint it should bore you, as it should bore future generations; that's a position I'll take when I come to its future in part 3. So it needs no further discussion at the moment.

Next, the historical principle. The framework remains steady and becomes familiar with use, but what happens within the framework can be quite new and unfamiliar, infinitely various, infinitely rich, and very exciting. When I first worked on this talk, I happened to be reading an old book, *The Tales of Tchekhov*.⁵ The 'Introduction,' by Edward Garnett, speaks of Chekhov's 'picture of life's teeming freshness and fulness,' of the way he conveys 'a mysterious sense ... of life's ceaseless intricacy.' He points out how Chekhov's 'flexible and transparent method reproduces the pulse and beat of life, its pressure, its fluidity, its momentum, its rhythm and change ...'⁶ This may not at first sound much like Lonergan. On reflection, however, and thinking of the two principles in our instant formula, we might agree that it is the perfect partner to his thought on history. Garnett says of history in artistic terms what Lonergan says of it in his more theoretic terms. It is the addition of history, with its endless variety, to structure; it is not the steady framework, it is what happens within the framework.

And what is it that happens? What happens is Homer singing of Ulysses, Plato writing his dialogues, Archimedes taking a bath, Augustine hearing the child say 'Take up and read.' Thomas Aquinas happens, and so does Dante, so does Isaac Newton. Jean Vanier establishes his L'Arche communities, while others climb Mt Everest or land on the moon or give their lives for the poor and oppressed of the third world. Well, you get the idea: in 'the pulse and beat of life' anything and everything and everybody happens.

Such endless variety cannot be handled the way the structural principle was; it needs more study; and that brings me to part 2.

2. THE HISTORICAL PRINCIPLE

First, a few clarifications. There are two senses of history: the history that happens, and the history that is written about those happenings. Again, there is Lonergan's personal history, and there is his thinking about history. And yet again, there are his views, and there is my interpretation of his views. Much more

⁵ *The Tales of Tchekhov*, vol. 1: *The Darling and Other Stories*, trans. Constance Garnett (London: Chatto & Windus, 1925; original publication, 1916).

⁶ *Ibid.* 'Introduction' (pp. v-ix), by Edward Garnett.

important, there is his view of history, and there is the objective history he discusses; but I note at once that in my approach this pair come to the same thing: if his views are valid, then objective history is what he claims it is: if his views are not valid, then my whole project collapses, and we'd better take a long coffee break before the next paper. Another point: the question regards history, therefore it studies transitions in time, not concepts in their supposed timelessness; Scholasticism is a concept and as such has a permanent place among ideas, but history asks how it arose, how it related to its past, where it was heading. Finally, I will speak continually in terms of time, past and future; yet 'history,' not time, is the central term; this is not an essay on time as a predicament, but on human activities in time, that is, on history.

I hope through these early clarifications to forestall a good deal of possible confusion. There may be some oscillation from idea to idea, as well as some overlapping in discussion; still, the ideas are all quite simple, and the context will determine which of them is in question.

So we turn to Lonergan's historical principle, his counterpart to Chekhov's 'picture of life's teeming freshness and fulness,' his way of dealing with 'the pulse and beat of life, its pressure, its fluidity, its momentum, its rhythm and change ...'

2.1 The 'Essential' Lonergan

What is the role of history in Lonergan's thinking? I would claim that the need to understand history, basic history, the history that happens, is the chief dynamic element in all his academic work. From start to finish history is the pervasive theme: not insight, not method, not economics, not emergent probability, but history. I suggested something like that in this workshop a few years ago. The idea didn't exactly catch fire. Nevertheless I present it again, I will even call it the 'essential' Lonergan, and I will try to make a better case for it this time.

Any number of books use the word 'essential' in their title: *The Essential Augustine*, *The Essential Confucius*, *The Essential Darwin*; I suspect that most of them offer a selection of writings, and the selection is meant to convey the main ideas of a particular thinker. That is a legitimate use of 'essential' but it is not the usage here. I am not referring to a selection of writings; I am referring rather to the key to such a selection, and the key to someone's mind and life and works.

Notice that my 'essential Lonergan' is not the 'instant Lonergan' I began with; that was a mini 'table of contents'; it gave us two pegs to hang ideas on. It

was a summarizing word, the term of a process of reduction. But my 'essential' describes a principle rather than a term; it is not a later summary of works, but the prior inspiration that would make the summary; it can be a tacit influence even when it is not declared.

Think of it in terms of intentionality. What is the total intended goal of the total intending thought of Bernard Lonergan? What lies behind all his particular intendings, and all his achieved results? Behind all his labor to construct an organon, and all his efforts to apply it? He has taught us to recognize the intention of being latent in every concept.⁷ I would claim that there is a similar intention of universal history latent in all his writings, even in the great *Insight* and *Method*, which function then, not as the goal, but as an organon to move him toward the goal. This, I submit, is the essential and characteristic Lonergan.

Can such a claim be proven? In a sense it doesn't need proof, for it just puts in other terms what we would all say, that Lonergan was concerned all his life with the real world: method, he would say, is not an end but a means; withdrawal is only for a return. But the real world is the world of people and what they do; and the sum total of what they do is their history. Of course, we study physics and chemistry and biology and the natural sciences generally, but mainly because and insofar as they are part of our human world.

My position then hardly needs argument. Nevertheless I will argue. Think of prospectors in search of precious minerals: they watch for outcroppings of a hidden lode. Our outcroppings are certain little phrases that keep popping up: 'the transition from feudal to bourgeois society',⁸ 'systems on the move';⁹ 'ongoing discovery of mind';¹⁰ 'the emergence of ethical value';¹¹ the 'long transition from primitive fruit-gatherers, hunters, and fishers to the large-scale agriculture of the temple states';¹² 'from the compactness of the symbol to the differentiation of

⁷ See *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997) 57-59; hereafter *Verbum*. Pagination in the original book edition, ed. David B. Burrell (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press) 43-45; this pagination hereafter given in brackets.

⁸ *A Third Collection* 65.

⁹ *Insight* 559 (1958: 536).

¹⁰ *Method* 305.

¹¹ *Topics in Education: The Cincinnati Lectures of 1959 on the Philosophy of Education*, ed. Robert M. Doran and Frederick E. Crowe (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993; hereafter, *Topics*) 38.

¹² *Philosophy of God, and Theology: The Relationship between Philosophy of God and the Functional Specialty, Systematics* (hereafter, *Philosophy of God, and Theology*; London: Darton, Longman & Todd, and Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1973) 2-3.

philosophic, scientific, theological, and historical consciousness';¹³ 'how is there generated the transition from one level or stage in human culture to another later level or stage';¹⁴ and so on, and so on.

'On the move,' 'ongoing,' transition,' emergence,' 'from ... to' - they are all outcroppings of a lode, signs of a mindset, pointers to the essential Lonergan. Aristotle and Aquinas say that character is manifested in sudden reactions to the unexpected, 'ex repentinis.'¹⁵ These phrases have the same effect. They show us one whose second nature is to think in terms of change, development, history. They suggest the need to add to 'Insight Revisited' a more comprehensive 'History, or Lonergan Revisited.'

Let's revisit him at least at the start and finish of his career. There is that letter of 1938 when he said to his religious superior, 'philosophy of history is as yet not recognized as the essential branch of philosophy that it is,' and asked for freedom to work on that needed branch.¹⁶ Likewise in 1982 at the end of his career, in the last paper he gave, he was still deep into history: 'It is cultural change that has made Scholasticism no longer relevant and demands the development of a new theological method and style, continuous indeed with the old, yet meeting all the genuine exigences both of Christian religion and of up-to-date philosophy, science, and scholarship.'¹⁷ How many works can you find between 1938 and 1982 that do not include some reference to the transitions of history? I do not mean that you can find the word in every paragraph or even

¹³ *Topics* 55.

¹⁴ 'Questionnaire' 24.

¹⁵ *Summa theologiae*, 1-2, q. 109, a. 8: '... in repentinis homo operatur ... secundum habitum praeeistentem' (with a reference to Aristotle *Ethica* 3, c. 11, 1117a 18-22; see Thomas, *In 3 Ethicam*, lect. 17, # 579: '... in repentinis homo non potest deliberare. Unde videtur operari ex interiori inclinatione, quae est secundum habitum.' Also *Summa theologiae*, 2-2, q. 123, a. 9: '... in repentinis periculis maxime manifestatur fortitudinis habitus.'

¹⁶ Letter to Fr Henry Keane, Provincial Superior, August 10, 1938, asking approval of his plan to maintain interest in the philosophy of history. I would note also the significance of the motto from Thomas Aquinas that he prefixed to his student essay of 1935, *Pantón Anakephalaiôsis* (*METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 9:2 (October 1991) 139-56, at 139; it is not the famous statement on insight into phantasm; it is Thomas on the development of human thinking (*Summa theologiae*, 1, q. 85, a. 3).

¹⁷ *A Third Collection*, in 'Unity and Plurality: The Coherence of Christian Truth' 239-50, at 247. And see the analyses of history here and there in that chapter: p. 244 on 'the issue ... transported from the fifth century to the thirteenth ... and to the twentieth'; p. 245 on the five steps in the great medieval task: Abelard, Gilbert of Porreta, the books of Sentences, commentaries on those books, and fifthly, Thomas Aquinas.

every chapter but, as an ascetic finds God in a multiplication table, so in Lonergan, at a deeper level in his spirit, the intention of history is always operative.

These pointers are only my build-up; his own statements clinch the matter. In his 1958 lectures on education he stated that 'reflection on history is one of the richest, profoundest, and most significant things there is. In the past few centuries any great movement has been historical in its inspiration and its formulation.'¹⁸ Almost twenty years later he stated that 'to understand men and their institutions we have to study their history. For it is in history that man's making of man occurs, that it progresses and regresses, that through such changes there may be discerned a certain unity in an otherwise disconcerting multiplicity.'¹⁹ He links the two great works of his organon to a theory of history: 'I have a general theory of history implicit in *Insight* and in *Method*.'²⁰ And sees it as explaining doctrinal development: 'the intelligibility proper to developing doctrines is the intelligibility immanent in historical process.'²¹ And he expressly relates his 1938 position to that of twenty-five years later.²²

So much for the question that: is it a fact that history has a pervasive role in his mindset? Let us return to the question what. What are Lonergan's views on that history of the past which I hope to extend in part 3 into the 'history' of the future? I have three headings for this: the underlying structure of history, the possibility of history, the actual transitions of history.

2.2 The Underlying Structure of History

One may ask: What is 'structure' doing here? At the very start we distinguished it from history. Why then does it intrude in this historical section? I

¹⁸ *Topics* 233-34.

¹⁹ *A Third Collection*, in 'Natural Right and Historical Mindedness' 169-83, at 171. He speaks (ibid.) of the German Historical School and 'its massive, ongoing effort to reveal, not man in the abstract, but mankind in its concrete self-realization.' Elsewhere ('Questionnaire' 15), urging us to live and operate on the level of the times, he says: 'To put it bluntly, until we move onto the level of historical dynamics, we shall face our secularist and atheist opponents, as the Red Indians, armed with bows and arrows, faced European muskets.'

²⁰ Interview with Lonergan conducted by Eric O'Connor and Cathleen Going, 'Questions with Regard to Method: History and Economics.' See Cathleen M. Going, ed., *Dialogues in Celebration* (Thomas More Institute Papers 1980) 286-314, at 305.

²¹ *Method* 319.

²² See 'Insight Revisited,' *A Second Collection* 263-78, at 271-72, where he tells of his work in 1937-38 and declares: 'The whole idea was presented in chapter twenty of *Insight*.'

might respond that it is a boundary question, overlapping both sides, but that would not explain much. Some explanation is needed, for the 'structure' of history ranks high in Lonergan's thinking - certainly one of his top ten ideas, if we play the 'top ten' game. His first title for the final chapter of *Insight* was 'The Structure of History,'²³ and we saw that he still thought that way in 'Insight Revisited.'

It is structure, however, in a special sense, different from that of the four levels, so I call it the 'underlying' structure. It means the three factors of progress, decline, and redemption. That triad was worked out in the papers of 1937-1938,²⁴ and it was never abandoned.²⁵ In a sense it belongs to the first part of my instant Lonergan, for it is not a matter of historical transitions, but a permanent and constitutive feature of human life, always operative in human affairs, a continual dialectic at work within the human subject; we are always at one and the same time making progress, falling into decline, being renewed. In language much in use now, the three factors are synchronic: in the very act of making progress we may be guilty of hubris, and hubris from its first movement may be challenged by divine grace.²⁶

Why then does Lonergan call it a structure of history? Maybe it was diachronic when he first worked it out, thinking the way theologians commonly thought of paradise, the fall, and redemption; there we have the succession of states that fits a history; when he later realized it was not a matter of transitions but synchronic, he kept the name 'history.' More likely, he thought of it as a special case of 'what was going forward,' to use his later terminology for history;²⁷ the structure really does carry human affairs forward, not in a historical

²³ In a table of contents sketched while he was writing the book, Archives, Batch 4, Folder 2.

²⁴ File 713 of the Archives. For a study of these papers of the 1930s, see Michael Shute, *The Origins of Lonergan's Notion of the Dialectic of History: A Study of Lonergan's Early Writings on History* (Lanham-New York-London: University Press of America, 1993).

²⁵ For a late declaration see 'Questionnaire' (written 1976) 33: '... any attempt to introduce a new program of studies will find itself involved in the dialectic of progress, decline, and redemption.' Also *A Second Collection: Papers by Bernard J. F. Lonergan, S.J.*, ed. William J.F. Ryan and Bernard J. Tyrrell (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996; reprint of 1974 original edition) in 'The Transition from a Classicist World-View to Historical-Mindedness' (written 1966) 1-9, at 6-7).

²⁶ The synchronic point is made in *Topics* 69: the three factors 'have been described in isolation; I considered first intellectual development, then sin, and finally redemption; but in the concrete all three function together. They are intertwined. They do not exist in isolation but they have to be described separately before they can be considered together.'

²⁷ *Method* 178.

succession of events, but in the ongoing dialectic of growth, and in that sense it belongs to history. In any case, I venture the view that this threefold structure is the philosophy of history of his letter to Fr Henry Keane in 1938,²⁸ a philosophy that would, I think, be better named a theology of history.

2.3 The Possibility of History

My next heading is the possibility of history. On one occasion Lonergan distinguished possibility from potency; 'I would distinguish possibility as something conceptual and potency as something real.'²⁹ I'm not sure that he used the distinction very much himself, but it forces us to reflect on our usage. So I speak of real possibility. The conceptual possibility of history would lie, I suppose, in the ability to get our ideas straight and formulate a concept that at one remove intends being, intends it in the way every concept does. But real possibility is fully concrete; it intends this being as potentially in this matter. Lonergan's term for that possibility is potentiality, so we have to talk about that.

Potentiality needs far more study than it gets; it is a sleeper word; it seems of little consequence but turns out to be quite fertile. Or call it another outcropping, for it keeps popping up like history itself, another sign of a rich mineral lode. Potentiality comes out of the past but heads directly into the future and is understood through its future; it means the future, has no meaning of itself except with regard to the future. And it is infinite: infinite on the side of the physical world, infinite on the side of experience and potency to ideas, infinite on the side of the human world to be created by meaning and values. In view of Lonergan's work on economics in the evening of his life, it is most interesting that he sees that science as a link, maybe the chief link, between the merely material world and the world of human culture, joining the potentiality of one to the actuality of the other: 'between the potentialities of nature, whether physical, chemical, vegetal, animal or human, and on the other hand the standard of living,

²⁸ See note 16 above.

²⁹ See Philip McShane, ed., 'Bernard Lonergan responds,' *Language Truth and Meaning: Papers from The International Lonergan Congress 1970* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, and London, Macmillan Group, 1972) 306-12, 343, at 311. But this distinction does not seem to have become a fixed usage; see Lonergan's thought on possibility *Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988; original publication, New York: Herder and Herder; London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1967) in 'The Natural Desire to See God' 81-91, at 88-91; also *ibid.* in 'A Note on Geometrical Possibility' 92-107, at 102-7; also *Insight* 361-62 and *Topics* 256-57.

there is a gap to be bridged. ... some effort to make. Such an effort is termed economic activity.³⁰

The potentiality of the material world is for the human, but the potentiality of that human world is another infinity, going far beyond the field of economics. One may compare it, first, with the animal world: 'For the animals, safely sheathed in biological routines, are not questions to themselves. But man's artistry testifies to his freedom. As he can do, so he can be what he pleases.'³¹ Then, in comparison with the world of the infant: 'The world of the infant is no bigger than the nursery, but the world of the adult extends from the present back to its past and forward to its future. It includes not only the factual but also the possible, the ideal, the normative.'³² The infant world is the potentiality of that adult world.

We need to ponder that. Since this time a year ago a hundred million babies have been born into the world - the annual crop of barbarians, to adapt Lonergan's striking phrase (borrowed maybe in part from Toynbee): 'The annual crop of infants is a potential invasion of barbarians, and education may be conceived as the first line of defense.'³³ They really were born as barbarians. But they are the future of the human race: *spem gregis*, in a phrase I dimly recall from my Latin studies. They have to be brought to the level of our world, which is a world mediated by meaning and motivated by value. Think of a hundred million adult barbarians, not helpless like infants in their cribs, but some adult Neanderthal race, really invading our world, meeting us face to face, with power to annihilate us: how might we bring them to our level? That's the problem Lonergan so often refers to as the socialization, acculturation, and education of new arrivals, the process of actuating the potentialities of our infant barbarians, of saving our future.

Here is the place to mention his view on the plasticity of the human infant. He compares the infinite potentiality of human offspring with the fixed patterns of the animal. Piaget's studies of his own children 'revealed that, if the human

³⁰ See Lonergan, *For a New Political Economy*, ed. Philip J. McShane (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998) 205-6. See also *A Third Collection*, in 'A Post-Hegelian Philosophy of Religion' (hereafter, 'A Post-Hegelian Philosophy') 202-23, at 211: 'meaning is efficient ... We imagine, we plan, we investigate possibilities ... Over the world given us by nature, there is an artificial, man-made world.'

³¹ *Insight* 208-9 (1958: 185).

³² *A Third Collection*, in 'A Post-Hegelian Philosophy' 211.

³³ *Topics* 59. On the process of socialization, acculturation, and education, see *A Third Collection* 119, 122, 156, 181, 197, 217.

infant acquired slowly and laboriously what came to the animal cub spontaneously or at least rapidly, still the great advantage was on the side of the infant. The infant was slow because of its enormously greater plasticity, and it took longer because it learned immeasurably more.³⁴

There is another field in which potentiality plays a basic role: religion. Here we turn from infants to Feuerbach. Feuerbach saw religion as a projection of human qualities into an object of worship. Lonergan's answer is intriguing. The human quest 'is not mere quality but potentiality and finality; and it is potentiality and finality not confined to some category but ... scorning any arbitrary burking of questions.'³⁵ In other words he is saying, Let's get to the point: it's potentiality, not quality, that is the key to our human nature and our history and our religion.

There are two other terms I must mention but can only mention: finality and emergent probability. Lonergan linked finality to potentiality in his answer to Feuerbach. Indeed they are closely linked, almost identical; and when we add the third factor of emergent probability, we have the basis of possibility. Finality, however, has its own mini treatise in *Insight* and needs no exposition here.³⁶ The same is true of emergent probability; only I remind you that emergent probability is a factor in human affairs too, not just in the world of nature.³⁷ The three factors form a unity, for potentiality is related to finality as openness to dynamism, and finality is related to emergent probability as dynamism to its instrument. In these three factors we have the basic possibility of history.

³⁴ A Third Collection, in 'Aquinas Today: Tradition and Innovation' 35-54, at 38. Also *ibid.* *A Third Collection*, in 'Religious Experience' 115-28, at 119: 'Where the kitten or puppy is born with built-in instincts and skills, the human infant is born with a helplessness that leaves room for an indefinite plasticity.' And *ibid.* in 'Religious Knowledge' 129-45, at 133: 'In man ... there is an all but endless plasticity that permits the whole of our bodily reality to be fine-tuned to the beck and call' of the person. 'The agility of the acrobat, the endurance of the athlete, the fingers of the concert pianist, the tongue of those that speak and the ears of those who listen and the eyes of those that read,' leading up to free images, insight, judgment, empathy. Also *Insight* 213 (1958: 189): the 'initial plasticity and indeterminacy' of the human child grounds 'the later variety'; and see the index of the book under 'flexibility.' It is remarkable how often Lonergan returned to this idea.

³⁵ *A Third Collection*, in 'A Post-Hegelian Philosophy' 218.

³⁶ *Insight* 470-76 (1958: 444-51).

³⁷ See index to *Insight* under Emergent Probability. For its relevance to human affairs: 234-37 (1958: 209-11).

2.4 Lonergan's Analyses of History

So we come to Lonergan's analyses of actual historical transitions. It's a huge area, and this should be the major part of my paper, but I won't attempt the impossible; I'll just do what I can. What I perhaps can do is provide two samples, again one early in life and another late, not to study his argument, but just to indicate the character of his thinking. Then I will suggest, very tentatively, a tactic that might help us order the impossible multiplicity of his other analyses.

Sample one. Back in the 1930s when Lonergan was a student in Rome he wrote an essay on 'Philosophy of History.' It finds four main stages in the actual course of history, ordered in relation to social philosophy, which was a strong interest of his at the time. First: 'The world prior to the discovery of philosophy, that is, up to Socrates, Plato and Aristotle.' Next: 'The failure of philosophy to fulfil its social mission, that is, from Plato to the Dark Age.' His third stage: 'The automatic cultural expansion following upon the Dark Age and continuing up to the present.' The fourth stage is simply: 'The future.'³⁸ That fourth stage is concrete in a way you might not expect. It starts with 'the antinomy of church and state' (p. 113); it names liberalism (p. 114) and bolshevism (p. 116) as the enemies, and finds the counter to them in 'scholastic social theory culminating in the encyclicals of His Holiness, Pius XI' (p. 117, with correction of a typo).³⁹

Sample two. If we jump now to his 'Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon,' we see the change that forty years have wrought. He first distinguishes 'the terms whose meaning shifts' from 'the factors bringing about such shifts in meaning.' The former are (1) social contexts: 'accepted modes of human cooperation grouped under such headings as family and mores, community and education, state and law, economics and technology.' And (2) cultural contexts: 'such areas are art, religion, science, philosophy, history.'⁴⁰

³⁸ 'Philosophy of History' 102 (further references are given in the text); this is one of the papers in File 713 of the Archives (see note 24 above).

³⁹ For a far more detailed account of this document, see M. Shute (note 24 above) 74-99. It is useful to remember two factors in the context; first, that in 1937-38 (and likewise in the earlier 1930s) Lonergan was still a philosopher by vocation, expecting to specialize in that field and already working on a philosophy of history; second, that this was a period of social and political turbulence, during which he looked to the Pope for doctrinal guidance and to the Mystical Body of Christ as the social force to meet current aberrations.

⁴⁰ 'Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon,' *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 12:2 (Fall 1994) 138; this is an undated paper in the Archives, but the evidence points to late 1977 or early 1978 as the date of composition; see the 'Editor's Preface' *ibid.* 121-24.

Obviously there is still a strong sociological interest, but it is a good deal wider. What is quite new, however, is the way he organizes the factors that cause the 'shifts in meaning' in the social and cultural fields. He now sees them in relation to language: the linguistic, the literate, the logical, the methodical.

Each of these stages includes those that precede but adds a new factor of its own. In the linguistic stage people speak and listen. In the literate they read and write. In the logical they operate on propositions; they promote clarity, coherence, and rigor of statement; they move towards systems that are thought to be permanently valid. In the methodical stage the construction of systems remains, but the permanently valid system has become an abandoned ideal; any system is presumed to be the precursor of another and better system; and the role of method is the discernment of invariants and variables in the ongoing sequences of systems.⁴¹

Then he works out the series concretely, in religious history, and in Christian history.

These two sketches may give some sense of the categories Lonergan uses, of the way he organizes them, and of the broad sweep of his vision. As for the analyses I have omitted, there may be a simpler approach: not a detailed study of all his historical analyses, but not just a list of his analyses either: rather, something like a middle way. Anyway I suggest for this the concept of 'operators.' Operators are pivotal for understanding the levels of human intentionality; can we use them in some transferred sense to understand the analyses of history as well? If this tactic works, we might do an end run around an impossible task, and gain some general understanding of Lonergan's analyses by an easier route.

Thus, the operator in 'Philosophy of History' was the turbulent political situation of the times and the social thought of the Papal Encyclicals. A few years later essays on the 'analytic concept' of history⁴² focused on the structure of progress, decline, and redemption. One suspects the influence of Hegel, but in the second 'Analytic Concept' essay he declares: 'By the dialectic we do not mean Plato's orderly conversation, nor Hegel's expansion of concepts, nor Marx's fiction of an alternative to mechanical materialism.'⁴³ The operator here would

⁴¹ Ibid. 139.

⁴² The term occurs with slight variations in the title of three of the essays; see Shute 64.

⁴³ 'Analytic Concept of History' (identified by this simple title; the other two essays on the analytic concept have variants in the title), published *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 11:1 (Spring 1993) 1-29, at 11. Further to the question of Lonergan's sources, he speaks of the

therefore seem to be his own creative thinking transposing Hegel. His dissertation on *gratia operans* in Aquinas studied a historical pattern emerging in the eight centuries between Augustine and Aquinas, a pattern that he called the form of speculative development.⁴⁴ He expressly meant this to be a scientific statement of a verifiable hypothesis, and the operator would be the challenge of a positivism that excludes understanding. Positivism was still an enemy in the *verbum* articles, though now it takes second place to conceptualism, and the main operator is the recovery of a role for intelligence in Thomistic thought.⁴⁵ And so on. If this approach works it will have the further advantage of linking up with his curriculum vitae and with the 'essential' Lonergan I spoke of earlier.

3. CHARTING THE UNKNOWN

According to the program for this workshop I am to chart the future. According to the quotation I put at the head of my paper, 'We cannot chart the future ... Our course is in the night, our control is only rough and approximate. We have to believe and trust, to risk and dare.'⁴⁶ Was I bluffing when I proposed this topic to Fred Lawrence? It's time to find out.

And first I have to come to terms with my mentor. Naturally I have to agree with him that we cannot chart the future in any detail. But he does allow for a control that is 'rough and approximate,' and maybe the night is not total, not quite as 'Black as the pit from pole to pole' (*Invictus*). The future, after all, is the continuation of the present. It is also the second half of universal history; I used Lonergan himself for my study of the past, which is the first half, and the two form a unity: otherwise we could not speak of 'our' past and 'our' future.

I do not of course use 'half' quantitatively as a measure of time, but only in the sense that in a table of contents of time, the headings 'past' and 'future' take up equal space on the page. There is no way of measuring their relative length in

idea as his own: 'I worked out an analysis on the model of a threefold approximation' ('*Insight Revisited*' 271).

⁴⁴ Ch. II-1 in *Grace and Freedom: Operative Grace in the Thought of St Thomas Aquinas* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000; hereafter, *Grace and Freedom*, to appear as volume 1 in the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*).

⁴⁵ See the index to *Verbum* under Conceptualism; especially helpful are pp. 192-99 (1967: 183-91).

⁴⁶ See note 1 above.

reality. At one end of time some philosophers would argue for a beginning: 'Why is there something and not nothing?'⁴⁷ Theologians do so on the grounds of the Book of Genesis. It's a further question how it started: was it with a big bang? If so, that's fine with me. As for the other pole, the end of time, science may argue that the world must run down; philosophy may be silent on the question; theology struggles with the apocalyptic night-mares in religious literature; and we all live in fear that the crazies will push the wrong button and end everything. So we prophesy the shape of the future with the proviso always, if there is to be a future.

There are prophets in a religious sense, to whom God may have revealed the future; I am not in that class. There are modern prophets, whose expertise is really a keener insight into present trends, the 'signs of the times'; they are not really prophets, but they have a good set of antennae for the present (Harvey Cox is said to have the best set of theological antennae in the United States); I am not in their class either. But thirdly, there are those who study the past and discern patterns that seem to belong to our race, to be so much a part of the human condition that we can predict their extension into whatever future we may have; here all of us have a chance to say something.

3.1 The Future of the Structural Principle

My first step is the one I promised at the start: the future of Lonergan's four-leveled structure. I am optimistic on that. My hope is that by the end of this century the basic idea of the four levels will be part of our general culture; so much so that to explain them, and still more to prove them, will be quite boring. Pupils leaving primary school will be as familiar with this structure as they are with, say, the golden rule.

Consider that example. Who would attend a lecture that promises to prove or explain the golden rule? You would have to pay people to go. Not because they don't believe in the golden rule, but because they do, and do so by second nature; everyone holds it. Yet someone somewhere sometime long ago first formulated that rule; it was new then, and just because it was new, it had to be proved and defended. It's the way with any new idea. First, opposition. Then, opponents die off. The idea catches on. Finally, it becomes part of tradition. 'Sure, we always held that.' Well, I believe the same will happen with the four levels. They are so

⁴⁷ Leibniz' question, made famous by Heidegger. See Werner Brock in *Heidegger, Existence and Being* (London: Vision Press, 1949) 238: 'Aptly does Heidegger close his Inaugural Lecture about the problem of "nothingness" by renewing the question which the aged Leibniz once advanced ...' The question was put by Lonergan in his own terms, *Understanding and Being* 244.

simple and compelling: once the opposition dies off, they will win a hearing and be here to stay.

That does not mean that the whole area of the structural is quite static. To say that is like saying all works of benevolence will cease once the golden rule is accepted; in fact, they will just be starting. It's the same with the four levels. First of all, they have infinite applications, possibilities without end, and every application is a new thrill. Further, within the structure itself there is always more to learn, all sorts of questions too erudite to be taught in primary school. Who among us is ready to explain, for example, the *emanatio intelligibilis* of concept from insight? or the functioning of the operator on the downward path from level to level? or the open-ended character of the structure above level four and below level one? or the diverse relationships of the levels to the arts and sciences, to cultures and religions? And what of the 'boundary' questions, the reciprocal effect of the two principles on each other?⁴⁸ There is plenty of room for new discoveries. My point is simply that we don't expect radical changes in the basic structure, at least not every day.

On the side of the structural principle, then, I see a prosperous future, a future without many surprises, a comfortable future in which we wear the idea like an old shoe; it has been accepted; it fits. We have to get Lonergan in perspective on this question, and that is difficult when Insight and Method, the books and the ideas, fill the horizon.

3.2 The Future of the Historical Principle

The question is quite different for the complex historical principle. I would say, then, that the concern of what I called the 'essential Lonergan' will continue to struggle against heavy odds to become, at least in some cases, the concern of the 'essential human'; our human world and its history will always find students, but they will always have to struggle for a place in the sun: the Philistines are always with us, and they will always want to turn our universities into technical schools.

⁴⁸ In the Lonergan Research Institute Seminar, where an early version of this paper was presented, Robert Doran reminded us of some of these more recondite questions, questions that could hardly be grasped except by more advanced students; for example, the objectification of insights in concepts, and the contrast of common sense and science: things in relation to us, and things in relation to one another. Lonergan himself late in life proposed that we think of the structure as open at both ends, that is, to higher and lower 'levels,' in 'Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon' (note 40 above) 134.

I would say, secondly, that the tripartite structure of progress, decline, and redemption, will remain: progress, because no tyrant can forever suppress our questions; decline, because of our recurring flight from understanding and the precarious nature of our achievements; redemption, because God's love is stronger than our biases and failures. It's part of our human condition under God, and the only question is whether we will recognize it as such and cooperate.

Thirdly, I would say that the possibility of intelligible history, founded on human potentiality, finality, and emergent probability, will remain. To deny potentiality to the human race is to cancel the human, for from *non posse* to *non esse valet illatio*: it's good logic to say that what cannot be will not be. Next, to deny finality is to reduce human nature to the inert condition of sticks and stones. And lastly, to deny emergent probability is to condemn ourselves to perpetual chaos or some cycle of eternal return; against that, it's good to remember that survival of the fittest still has meaning and a degree of validity, and that it's good statistical science to say that in the long run what can be will be.

Fourthly, what of the various analyses of historical transitions that Lonergan has made? They are much more interesting; will they endure? It might help to look at the wider world of our own time. When I came to the study of theology in the 1940s kerygmatic theology was coming in strong, the effect largely of wartime experience in Austria; it was followed by biblical theology, which grew rapidly in the wake of *Divino afflante Spiritu*. There were also revivals: monastic theology, neo-scholastic theology, theology of the cross. Meanwhile new theologies multiplied: liberation theology, postmodern theology, and the latest I've seen: radical orthodoxy, and several others. These all arose as movements, and the movements belong to history. Once they have settled into place, however, they are less interesting to the historian, though historians may continue to reinterpret them.

In the light of the last half-century, then, we may consider the movements Lonergan studied. Are they still operative or have they reached their term? In any case is his analysis of them accurate enough to stand the criticism of the centuries? It depends. Some of them pertain to particular movements, like the transition from scriptural categories to theological. Some of them are great 'sweeps' through the long centuries of macrohistory, like the stages of meaning. His analyses therefore allow no simple prophecy. We are dealing with mountains of data: from a past that continues to be discovered, from a present that continues to create still more data. We are dealing also with a moving object; for example, the war to end all wars is a view of history that was very soon contradicted by the

moving object of events. We are dealing with human historians, and every day the historians enlarge their horizons, so that they have to rewrite in 2000 the history they carefully charted in 1990. Lonergan himself was fifty years old when he came to accept the new learning in scriptural studies; what other gaps remained in his thinking at the end?

This much, I think, is true in general, that the more fundamental the factors effecting shifts in meaning, the more likely the movement is to have an ongoing future; similarly, the more fundamental the categories in which Lonergan analyzed history, the more likely his views are to endure. In the 1930s liberalism and bolshevism loomed rather larger in the context of church and state than they do in the year 2000; as movements they may have had their day, but I think Lonergan's analysis in terms of sociology and philosophy may be more enduring. I would certainly expect his analysis of the dialectical development in theology from Tertullian through Origen to Athanasius to be a permanent acquisition. I would also expect his 1977 analysis of shifts in meaning, using the categories of linguistic, literate, logical and methodical, to survive the erosion of time.

So much for what I think is 'true in general.' I leave more particular questions to prophets or interpreters of the times with better antennae than I have; as for myself, I fall back on my mentor and say 'We cannot chart the future ... Our course is in the night.' I leave it to the future itself, if there is to be a future, to pronounce the verdict.

3.3 The Limits of Charting: The Unknown

Movements may come and go or they may come and stay. The great world can accommodate them all, if there is a world. I've talked about the survival of Lonergan's ideas, but neither his ideas nor anyone else's will survive without a world to host them. So what of that world itself: will it survive? When I say, 'If there is to be a future,' I raise a question that we must take seriously. The 'if' is real, and was real to Lonergan.⁴⁹ It is real with a vengeance to us today; like the Philistines, the crazies are always with us, and today they have power without precedent to destroy us. Fifty years ago we lived on the edge of extinction, waiting till the US or USSR, each fearful that the other might act first, pushed the button to end it all. Then that situation eased a bit but we began to worry about

⁴⁹ On the destructive element in our times, typical phrases are 'horror of mere destructiveness,' *A Second Collection* 99; 'destructive power,' *ibid.* 113; the need to 'banish all tendencies to hatred, reviling, destroying,' *ibid.* 187. But I have lost the reference to his statement on the real possibility of our destroying our world.

the 'rogue nations,' that now are able to do as much damage as a superpower. But at least we were dealing in both cases with national leaders who knew what the buttons meant, who calculated consequences, and even had some sense of responsibility we could appeal to. Not so today. Today we are at the mercy of any irresponsible maverick ten thousand miles away, who pushes buttons at random in the internet world. Who knows what their random actions may bring up? Not likely The Lost Chord; much more likely the lost universe.

But let us suppose a world where sanity reigns. There are two sober considerations that still raise the question of the world's future; they are intrinsic to the very notion of a free God and to the idea of a contingent creation, and I will end with a word on them.

First, divine freedom. Here my approach is entirely *a priori*, which means stating what I think I would do if I were God. Consider the possibilities. If this world fails this time, will God try it again? That would make God a divine Sisyphus, pushing a world up the mountain of eternity, losing grip and seeing it roll back to the bottom; then try again. I think we may rule that out.

But maybe this world, while not a failure, could be terminated as a project good enough to round off and preserve in the divine store-house of being. Lonergan rounded off *Insight* when he was only halfway through, and that half seems a presentable work all by itself. Well, what he or any one of us can do is surely possible to God too. A world that produced Francis of Assisi, Aquinas, Shakespeare, and Mother Teresa seems worth while; God might look on this creation in the year 2000, see that it is good, and say 'It is finished; store it in the universe of being.' Then God who has worlds without number in the divine mind could proceed to create another. This, if I were God, I just might see as an intelligent, reasonable, and responsible decision.

On the same principle, however, that for a world to be worth while it must have an intelligible unity, I would look farther than human greatness for that unity. I would think of the divine Three as entering our world. The divine Word has joined us and is recognized, in doctrine and worship and life. The divine Spirit has joined us and is recognized in doctrine, but not fully recognized in worship and life. The divine Mystery has not yet entered our world in the present sense of enter. I would say, then, that when the Spirit is given the role in the world that belongs to her, and when the divine Mystery is present in the mystic life of all believers, I would say that then the created universe is an intelligible unity and that God could look on it, say, 'It is good, it is very good.' But what at that point God might choose to do, whether to maintain this world in its now

optimum state or to transfer it whole and entire into another state, that is still hidden in the divine counsels. In any case the world, up to that point and to some extent after it, remains contingent, and our responsibility for its future remains.

Next, contingency, where the real problem lies for philosophy and theology. What is, is, and now necessarily is; in the example beloved of St Thomas: Socrates, if he is seated, necessarily is seated; the condition expressed by the 'if' has been fulfilled. But as long as the 'if' remains, so long does the 'to be or not to be' of the contingent future remain. It would be meaningless to affirm the contingency of future events and at the same time to surround those events with a protective shield that guarantees their coming to be. What is true of events is true of the universe: if its future is contingent, then that that future may not come to be is possible. Or, in the human universe, it is meaningless to say the human race has power to destroy itself, and yet at the same time say that such destruction can never be. A contingent world means a possible non-world. It also means a degree of human responsibility for the world that is and will be.

Now if our world is contingent, if to be or not to be is an open question on our future, it follows that there is not as yet in the divine counsels a decree one way or another. That is, there is no divine decree that there will be a future, and there is no divine decree that there will not be a future; for as soon as there is a truth in place in regard to the future, then the future is bound to correspond to that truth. Since the time of Aristotle philosophers including Aquinas and Lonergan have discussed this in the context of the sea-battle of Salamis. The question regards the truth today of a free and so contingent event tomorrow: Will there be or will there not be a sea-battle tomorrow between the Greeks and the Persians? Logic seems to say it must be one or the other. Lonergan says no; that is applying a two-valued logic where you need a three-valued logic, namely, (1) the truth is that it will be, (2) the truth is that it will not be, (3) the truth is still indeterminate. For as soon as the truth is determinately yes or no, the contingent future ceases to be contingent; it has to correspond to that determination. By the same token, responsibility for that no longer contingent future, insofar as it is no longer contingent, ceases to be ours.

But what about the crazies? How will God deal with them? Let us locate and specify the problem. The problem is not some frustration of the divine plan: scripture assures us that God is not frustrated. The problem is not the freedom of the crazies: God's transcendence gets its way without violating human freedom;

St Thomas took care of that problem.⁵⁰ No, the problem regards the contingency of the world, and it is partly a question of what God may have decreed and partly a question of theological understanding.

If God has decreed the future of the world, then, first, the world is no longer contingent, and second, there has to be an extrinsic denominator as counterpart to that decree.⁵¹ But the contingency of creation is a belief based not only on divine freedom but on the nothing out of which God creates. And what would the extrinsic denominator be for what is certainly a contingent statement about a divine decree?

These are real questions. In circles where the pursuit of truth is a delusive goal, they will be doubly indictable, prolonging the pursuit beyond this world, where it is already judged and found wanting, into another which is by our own admission impenetrable. But they are questions beloved of Thomas Aquinas and of his pupil, Bernard Lonergan. And some of us who follow in their steps find it impossible to brush the questions aside. Let me add at once that they are questions mainly for academic theology; while theology works at their solution, the rest of the world (and we along with it) may continue to exercise what limited responsibility we have, and to do so in an atmosphere of religious hope. 'We have to believe and trust, to risk and dare.'

⁵⁰ See *In I Peri hermeneias*, lect. 13-14; for Lonergan on Aquinas, see *Grace and Freedom* (note 44 above).

⁵¹ An extrinsic denominator is the created reality needed for the truth of a contingent statement on God. To say 'God created' is to make a contingent statement about God; if it is true there has to be a corresponding reality; that reality cannot be in God, in whom nothing is contingent; it is in creation existing as an extrinsic denominator of that contingent truth about God. See *Collection*, in 'On God and Secondary Causes,' 53-65, at 58. Also *Insight* (Index under Denomination); and *De Deo trino: II. Pars systematica* (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1964) *Assertum* XV, pp. 217-19, where it is called 'conveniens terminus ad extra.'

REFLECTIONS ON METHOD IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

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THIS PAPER PRESENTS some reflections on method in systematic theology, and more precisely on some of the relationships between the systematic ideal and the reality of history. The proximate collaborative context¹ to which these remarks are related is the one that takes its origin and inspiration from the work of Bernard Lonergan. There is, I believe, unfinished business in what Lonergan wrote about systematic theology, especially in *Method in Theology*, and it has largely to do with the complex relationships between system and history. That is what I wish to address. But I can do so only in part, as I will explain in a moment. I hope that these reflections might be of interest to theologians working in other contexts, and that dialogue on these issues will broaden and enrich the context in which I am working.

Lonergan taught systematic theology at two Jesuit seminaries in Canada in the 1940s and 1950s and at the Gregorian University in the 1950s and the early 1960s. Within the late Scholastic context of those institutions, he made remarkable contributions to systematic theology in his courses, especially through his own notes and texts. He also became increasingly aware during these years (most of which predated the Second Vatican Council) of the inadequacy of the entire late Scholastic context. *Method in Theology* established a related but also radically different context,² in which systematics becomes one of eight functional or operational specialties, with a complex series of relations to the other seven.

¹ 'Context' is understood as an 'interweaving of questions and answers in limited groups.' See Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (latest printing, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999) 163.

² The relation of the context of *Method* to the best of Scholasticism is genetic, not dialectical, but the difference can be explained only by appealing to the notion of a higher viewpoint as opposed to a homogeneous expansion.

But the chapter on systematics in *Method in Theology* leaves a number of questions unanswered. I am not alone in regarding it as the weakest chapter in the book. The issue is not what Lonergan *does* say there (and elsewhere) about systematics. The issue is that further questions emerge and are not answered, thus revealing that more is to be said.

I attempted to address some of the questions that emerged for me in *Theology and the Dialectics of History*,³ where I argued that systematics should be a theology of history and tried to derive some of the principal general categories⁴ of such a systematics, drawing on but, I think, also expanding Lonergan's theory of history. Three articles on grace express a cumulative attempt to make more precise the transposition that Lonergan offers from the category of 'sanctifying grace' in a metaphysical theology to the category of 'being-in-love' in a methodical theology that takes historical consciousness seriously.⁵ And three recent articles in *Theological Studies* addressed, in succession, the relation between Lonergan and Hans Urs von Balthasar (and, less centrally, liberation theology) in their respective importance for the future of systematic theology; the contributions of Lonergan's writings about methodological issues in systematics as well as the further questions that arise from these contributions; and the complexities of the relationship between systematics and history.⁶

In the present contribution I revisit some of the issues raised in these various works. I will employ the framework that I presented in the second *Theological Studies* article, which focused on Lonergan and the functions of systematic

³ Robert M. Doran, *Theology and the Dialectics of History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990; second printing, 2001).

⁴ 'General categories' are categories that theology shares with other disciplines. See Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 285-88.

⁵ See Robert M. Doran, 'Consciousness and Grace,' *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 11 (Spring 1993) 51-75; 'Revisiting "Consciousness and Grace,"' *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 13 (Fall 1995) 151-59; and "'Complacency and Concern" and a Basic Thesis on Grace,' *Lonergan Workshop* 13 (1997) 57-78.

⁶ Robert M. Doran, 'Lonergan and Balthasar: Methodological Considerations,' *Theological Studies* 58 (1997) 61-84; 'Bernard Lonergan and the Functions of Systematic Theology,' *Theological Studies* 59 (1998) 569-607; 'System and History: The Challenge to Catholic Systematic Theology,' *Theological Studies* 60 (1999) 652-78.

theology; but my presentation is governed by further questions that have arisen as I have tried to teach this material.⁷

The principal questions that sparked this discussion were treated in seven distinct but related sections in the second of the *Theological Studies* articles mentioned in note 6. The third article develops in some detail a theme that runs through several of these seven sections, namely, the complex relationship of system and history. In the present paper I will speak briefly to some of the issues that I raised in discussing the first six of these seven areas, in light of the questions that have arisen in conversation and teaching subsequent to the publication of the articles. Limits on the length of a deliverable paper prevent me from discussing the section on 'Anticipations,' except very obliquely. Material related to and building on the other two *Theological Studies* articles will be raised as these six areas are discussed. The question of system and history runs through all of the points that will be treated, but I do not touch in detail on all of the emphases that were covered in the *Theological Studies* article expressly devoted to system and history. More precisely, in that article I raised four quite distinct but related issues: (1) adjudicating the past genetic and dialectical history of theological systems and including that history in systematics as part of a theology of theologies that would also include an ongoing appropriation of the religious truth of non-Christian traditions; (2) anticipating a future genetic sequence of related systematic achievements; (3) accepting history itself as the mediated object of systematics; and (4) purposefully facing the intimate relations between systematic thought and options regarding praxis. Here I will not focus on the first two of these emphases, though those themes do run obliquely through a couple of the issues. My stress will be rather on the notion of history as mediated object of systematics, on grounds or foundations that can govern that kind of emphasis, and on the social responsibility of a theology that knows that its task is to '[mediate]

⁷ This work has been accompanied by a parallel effort at interpreting Lonergan's own writings on systematics. The *Theological Studies* articles are, in the last analysis, statements in direct discourse: they state my own position regarding a number of methodological issues in systematics. But behind them lies a series of studies of Lonergan's own texts, and these studies continue to go forward. See 'The First Chapter of *De Deo Trino, Pars Systematica*: The Issues,' *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 18:1 (2000) 27-48 and 'Intelligentia Fidei in *De Deo Trino, Pars Systematica*,' *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 19:1 (2001) 35-83. As Lonergan found it impossible to include in the same volume both his interpretations of Aquinas on understanding and inner word and his own transposition and development of Aquinas's views in the light of contemporary issues, so I have found it necessary to assign to distinct texts work in indirect and direct discourse.

between a cultural matrix and the significance and role of a religion in that matrix.⁸

Finally, I conclude this paper with a new question, one that was not raised in the articles on which the rest of this paper is based. It has to do with the respective extent of contingent and necessary predications about God and with what (unless I am missing something) seems to be a need for a development in the theory of relations.

I will begin here, however, as I did in the second of the articles in *Theological Studies*, by insisting on the importance of four emphases that can be found in Lonergan's writings about methodological issues in systematic theology.

1. FOUR EMPHASES FROM LONERGAN

Lonergan's texts on systematics contain at least four emphases that I believe are essential to the discipline or functional specialty.

The first of these is stated most clearly in *Method in Theology*, where he states that the *principal function* of systematics is to promote the kind of understanding of the mysteries of faith that was recommended by the First Vatican Council, when the Council wrote that 'reason illumined by faith, when it inquires diligently, piously, soberly, can with God's help⁹ attain a highly fruitful understanding of the mysteries of faith both from the analogy of what it naturally knows and from the interconnection of the mysteries with one another and with [our] last end (DS 3016).'¹⁰

Next, in *De Deo trino: Pars systematica*, in the third section of chapter 1, Lonergan recommends that the core or central problems of systematics are those raised by the defined dogmas; here is where the theologian will find those core meanings of the church's faith around which a systematic synthesis can most expeditiously and most faithfully be constructed.¹¹

⁸ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* xi.

⁹ *Deo dante*, perhaps to be translated more strongly ('by God's gift') to emphasize the element of grace in theological understanding.

¹⁰ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 336.

¹¹ The key passage here is Bernard Lonergan, *De Deo trino: Pars systematica* (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1964) 21-22. This entire section did not appear in the earlier version of this material, *Divinarum personarum conceptionem analogicam evoluit B. Lonergan* (Rome:

Third, in almost everything he wrote about systematics, Lonergan stressed that its proper order is what Thomas Aquinas called the *ordo doctrinae*. Lonergan provides perhaps as complete an explanation as we are likely to find of the difference between this 'order of teaching' and the order of discovery.¹²

And finally, there is the stress on explanation, on theory grounded in interiorly and religiously differentiated consciousness, and on the employment of

Gregorian University Press, 1957, 1959). Some of the issues that these changes illustrate are treated in the *METHOD* articles mentioned above in note 7.

¹² The differences are spelled out most clearly and most completely in the first chapter of *De Deo trino: Pars systematica*. This text can be filled out with a refinement that can be found in Part 3 of Bernard Lonergan, *De constitutione Christi ontologica et psychologica* (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 4th ed., 1964). The refinement has to do with the nature of the *priora quoad se* in theology, at least when one is making statements about God. In brief, while systematics begins with the *priora quoad se*, still, when such statements have to do with God, one is not talking about the causes of being, for God has no causes of being. In such statements, the *priora quoad se* and the *priora quoad nos* both have to do with the causes of our knowing. The *priora quoad se* are true statements about God that are the causes of our knowing other truths about God, or that articulate the ground of the truth of other true statements.

In this paper I will be adding several points to what I have already written about the relation of Lonergan to Hans Urs von Balthasar, and one of these is that there is some question of the extent to which Balthasar grasps, either in fact or with reflective explicitness, the distinction of *priora quoad se* and *priora quoad nos* or the corresponding distinction of *via doctrinae* and *via inventionis*. The issue of interpretation here is complex. On the negative side of the ledger is the statement at the beginning of the third volume of the English translation of the *dramatics* in which he speaks disparagingly of 'the usual textbook approach, which starts from an essentialist Christology that claims to have prior knowledge of Jesus' essential nature as the Incarnate Word even before the action begins, only subsequently moving over to a dramatic soteriology (christological doctrine of grace).' Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama: Theological Dramatic Theory*, vol. 3: *The Dramatis Personae: The Person in Christ*, trans. Graham Harrison (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1992) 13-14. The fact that a systematic christology begins with the *priora quoad se* at least in the order of knowing is not *in itself* a legitimate ground for criticism, nor does it *in itself* warrant the charge of 'essentialist.' The proper beginning of a systematic treatise lies in what is *priora quoad se*. The statement probably reveals that Balthasar is moving for the most part in the *via analytica* or *via inventionis* rather than in the *via doctrinae*, and that he may not appreciate sufficiently the difference between the two procedures. On the other side of the hermeneutic ledger, however, Balthasar has his own *ordo doctrinae*, for when he has reached a turning point that enables him to return to the concrete data of revelation with an organizing principle (which is usually dramatic or aesthetic), he moves quite securely (some might say, dogmatically) in the 'order of teaching,' almost banning any further questions in the way of discovery.

both general categories that theology shares with other disciplines and special categories that are peculiar to theology.¹³

2. MYSTERY AND DOGMA

The first question that I will address will occupy more attention than the others, since it sets up the others and brings us into the area of the 'foundations' or grounds of what we are about. The question is, What is the relation of 'defined dogmas' and 'mysteries of faith'? The point of this section may be stated at the outset. There are elements of Christian mystery that will best be understood by employing analogies from aesthetics and dramatic theory; on this point I am in agreement with Balthasar. On the other hand, Balthasar needs critical controls to keep his thought from slipping over into mythic consciousness, in the pejorative sense of that term, and to ensure the explanatory significance of the analogies, and to highlight the social dimensions of the drama of the encounter of divine and human freedom. Those critical controls are found in Lonergan's post-*Method* paper 'Natural Right and Historical Mindedness,' complemented by the explicit affirmation of an aesthetic-dramatic operator.

Now let us proceed to the somewhat circuitous argumentation that leads to these affirmations. On my interpretation of Lonergan's interpretation of the First Vatican Council's doctrine about doctrine, a church doctrine can qualify as 'dogma' only if it expresses a supernatural mystery that is otherwise so hidden in God that we could not know it at all had it not been revealed by God.¹⁴ Doctrines are of various sorts,¹⁵ but my concern has been to explore some implications of a twofold differentiation. First, among the church's doctrines some express mysteries of faith and some do not. Second, among the church doctrines that

¹³ On the categories, see Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 281-93. On theory grounded in interiority, the following statement is particularly significant: 'For every term and relation there will exist a corresponding element in intentional consciousness.' Ibid. 343.

¹⁴ '[T]he dogmas of DS 3020 and 3043 refer to the church's declarations of revealed mysteries' (ibid. 322). 'The meaning of a dogma is not a datum but a truth. It is not a human truth but the revelation of a mystery hidden in God' (ibid. 323).

¹⁵ Lonergan distinguishes primary sources, church doctrines, dogmas, theological doctrines enunciated in distinct traditions, methodological doctrine, and finally those theological doctrines that one selects by applying a methodological doctrine to the multiple choices presented in dialectical encounter with all of the other varieties (and, I might add, with the situation that prevails in one's own cultural matrix). See Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 295-98.

express mysteries of faith, some have received dogmatic status and others have not. Viewed in this way, dogma is a subset, twice removed, of the category 'church doctrines.'

Systematic theology, the synthetic and technical understanding of the meanings constitutive of the Christian church, is organized around that subset. Lonergan not only recommends this procedure; he also provides a systematic statement that could qualify as a synthetic distillation of dogmatic meaning around which an entire systematic theology could be organized. I quote from *De Deo trino: Pars systematica* 234-35 the following quite remarkable four-point systematic hypothesis.¹⁶

... there are four real divine relations, really identical with divine being, and so four special ways of grounding an imitation or participation *ad extra* of God's own life. And there are four absolutely supernatural created realities [four created graces]. They are never found in an unformed or indeterminate state. They are: the secondary act of existence of the incarnation, sanctifying grace, the habit of charity, and the light of glory.

Thus it can appropriately be maintained that the secondary act of existence of the incarnation is a created participation of paternity, and so that it has a special relation to the Son; that sanctifying grace is a created participation of active spiration, and so that it bears a special relation to the Holy Spirit; that the habit of charity is a created participation of passive spiration, and so that it has a special relation to the Father and the Son; and that the light of glory is a created participation of filiation that brings the children of adoption perfectly back to the Father.¹⁷

¹⁶ I am not claiming that Lonergan intended this hypothesis to have the centrality that I am recommending we grant to it. In fact, there is no explicit evidence that he did.

¹⁷ Translated (a bit freely and with a few additions, but accurately) from Bernard Lonergan, *De Deo trino 2: Pars systematica* (Rome: Gregorian University, 1964) 234-35. The passage appeared originally in the 1957 version of the same material, *Divinarum personarum* ..., at p. 214. The Latin reads: '... quattuor sunt divinae relationes reales, realiter identicae cum divina substantia, et ideo quattuor modi specialissimi qui divinae substantiae imitationem ad extra fundant. Deinde, quattuor sunt entia absolute supernaturalia, quae numquam informia inveniuntur, nempe, esse secundarium incarnationis, gratia sanctificans, habitus caritatis, et lumen gloriae. Quare, sine inconvenientia diceretur esse secundarium incarnationis esse participationem creatam paternitatis, et ideo specialem relationem ad Filium habere; gratiam sanctificantem esse participationem spirationis activae, et ideo specialem relationem ad Spiritum sanctum habere; habitum caritatis esse participationem spirationis passivae, et ideo specialem relationem ad Patrem et Filium

The statement expresses a synthetic understanding of the mysteries affirmed in dogmas regarding the Trinity, the incarnation, grace, and the life everlasting, and so it is equipped, at least in principle, to serve as a basic systematic theorem and eventually, with further additions and qualifications that I will mention later, as the core statement of a systematic construction.

We can grant all this and still realize that systematic theology is more than an understanding of dogmas. Let me attempt a definition. Systematic theology is the ordered, coherent, hypothetical, gradually developing, structured, synthetic, and in places analogical and obscure understanding of the realities intended in the meanings constitutive of the community that is the church. Lonergan emphasizes, I believe correctly, that it is centered on the mysteries so hidden in God that we could not know them at all unless they were revealed, and more precisely on those mysteries of faith that have received dogmatic status in the church. Its other functions are subordinate to this one. Still, the correlation of dogma and mystery is a one-way correlation. That is, 'dogma' is limited in fact as well as in principle to certain affirmations, and at times (as in the conciliar definitions establishing christological and trinitarian dogmas) clarifications, of mysteries of faith. But the 'mysteries of faith,' even some of those included in the creed, include more than the realities affirmed and clarified in explicitly dogmatic pronouncements.¹⁸ While dogma is dogma because and only if it affirms mysteries, mysteries extend far beyond what has been clarified or perhaps ever will be (or even can be) expressed in dogmatic statements, and this in at least two ways. First, there are elements of revealed mystery that have received and perhaps will receive no dogmatic status. Second, and just as important, the element of mystery is a permanent feature even of those elements of Christian constitutive meaning that *have* received such status. If we agree with Lonergan that systematics does best to draw its central problems from dogmatic statements, we must also ask about the rest, and in asking about the rest we are asking about the meaning of the category

habere; lumen gloriae esse participationem filiationis, et ideo filios adoptionis perfecte ad Patrem reducere.'

¹⁸ 'On the third day he rose again from the dead.' 'For us and for our salvation,' etc., etc., etc. The relationship between creed and dogma is complex. Some of the elements are treated in Bernard Lonergan, 'Theology as Christian Phenomenon,' in *Philosophical and Theological Papers: 1958-1964*, vol. 6 in *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996) 262-69, where conciliar dogmas are presented as clarifications and delimitations of the meaning of creedal statements, required because of particular historical circumstances. Thus the Apostles' Creed left itself open to an Arian interpretation, and this was one of the reasons that the Nicene dogma was necessary.

‘mystery of faith’ itself. What grounds the synthetic inclusion in systematic theology of elements of the Christian mystery that have not been and perhaps never will be formulated in dogmatic pronouncements?¹⁹ Are there aesthetic and dramatic analogies that can function in systematic theology? If so, how can they be made explanatory?

At this point I wish to go a bit beyond what I wrote in the previous articles, first by suggesting the category of ‘permanently elemental meaning,’ and second by integrating it with some themes in Lonergan’s ‘Natural Right and Historical Mindedness.’

From a descriptive point of view, permanently elemental meaning is meaning that will always be carried in bearers or carriers of meaning other than technical language: in primordial intersubjectivity, art, symbols, and the incarnate actions of persons and groups; in the symbolic, aesthetic, dramatic terms of scripture, literature, and drama, and not in the quasi-technical, post-systematic, metaphysically influenced formulation that characterizes most of the church’s dogmatic pronouncements.

For a more explanatory understanding of what permanently elemental meaning might be, we may turn to Lonergan’s discussion of elemental meaning in the context of his treatment of *art* and *symbols* as carriers of meaning.²⁰ Permanently elemental meaning would be meaning that resides permanently in an ‘experiential pattern’ that does not intend something other than itself. Again, it is meaning that, like a dream symbol, ‘has its proper context in the process of internal communication in which it occurs,’ or like a smile or a gesture finds its proper context in a process of intersubjective communication, and not in some

¹⁹ In ‘Bernard Lonergan and the Functions of Systematic Theology,’ I used the examples of the scriptural doctrines on both resurrection and redemption, and of the theological doctrines found in many forms in the church’s tradition with regard to the meaning, the immanent intelligibility, of both resurrection and redemption. Resurrection and redemption are both core elements in the Creed. But there is no explicit church dogma that does for either of these mysteries what Nicea and Chalcedon do for the mystery of the incarnation, the divinity of the incarnate Word, and the ontological constitution of Christ. And yet the resurrection and the redemption are at the core of the constitutive meaning of the Christian community, and they are there precisely as mysteries of faith. Thus, while dogma defines mysteries of faith, the mysteries of faith extend beyond what has been or will be formulated in explicit dogmatic pronouncements, and systematic understanding must include these mysteries as well as those that have been dogmatically affirmed. If systematics is an understanding of the mysteries of faith, it includes an understanding of these non-dogmatic elements. A methodological statement on systematics must account for such understanding.

²⁰ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 63, 67.

subsequent analytic interpretation.²¹ It is always possible to set elemental meaning more or less adequately within a conceptual field – there are art critics and dream interpreters and social psychologists – but never by so doing to reproduce the elemental meaning itself. ‘The proper expression of the elemental meaning is the work of art itself.’²² The proper context of the elemental symbol, such as the dream, is the developing or declining conscious intentionality (and, I might add, non-intentional consciousness) of the imagining or perceiving or dreaming subject.²³

If we may grant the possibility of permanently elemental meaning, we must ask about the relation to such meaning of systematic theology. To speak of the permanently elemental meaning of some mysteries of faith is not to claim that systematic theology must reproduce elemental meaning in the manner of a work of art or a dream or a dramatic portrayal. Systematic theology is technical discourse, and technical discourse can never reproduce elemental meaning. The issue is rather one of remaining faithful to the elemental meaning, not distorting it, and the relevant question for systematics is, Whence are derived the analogies that will render such technical discourse possible? More precisely (to link the discussion with the work of Balthasar), can some systematic analogies be drawn from aesthetics and dramatic theory? Again, in terms quite familiar to Lonergan and his students, how do we derive the appropriate categories? Or again, if we may employ aesthetic and dramatic analogies, how can we ensure that they achieve an explanatory significance?

Metaphysical analogies characterize the Scholastic search for theological understanding. Even in a dimension that is as laden with dramatic significance as the theology of grace, Aquinas demonstrated the power of metaphysical analogies. He understood sanctifying grace by analogy with the habit as understood in Aristotelian metaphysical analysis. He understood actual grace, or what he called *auxilium divinum*, by analogy with operation, again as understood

²¹ See *ibid.* 67.

²² *Ibid.* 63.

²³ See *ibid.* 67. The addition of ‘non-intentional’ is important. Non-intentional feelings and states are far more significant than might be gathered from Lonergan’s brief discussion (*Method in Theology* 30). To give but one illustration, if consolation without a cause is consolation with a content but without an apprehended object, then it is a non-intentional state. On consolation without a cause, see *Method in Theology* 106.

in Aristotelian metaphysical analysis.²⁴ But Lonergan, who studied with meticulous precision Aquinas's texts on grace, nonetheless says in the Epilogue of *Insight*, '... the theologian is under no necessity of reducing to the metaphysical elements, which suffice for an account of this world, such supernatural realities as the incarnation, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and the beatific vision.'²⁵ The basis of this statement is 'a very relevant distinction between the more detailed metaphysics of proportionate being and the generalities that alone are available a priori on ... supernatural elements.'²⁶ Balthasar has great respect for the theological significance of the metaphysics of Aquinas.²⁷ But he insists as well that the analogies that would best enable a properly theological understanding of at least some of the mysteries of faith will be drawn, not from that metaphysics, but from aesthetics and dramatic theory.²⁸ In this I want to agree with him, without at all calling into question the parallel need for as much metaphysical monitoring of theological meaning as we can achieve. But while agreeing with Balthasar on this question, I also want to emphasize that a concern for method in theology is a concern for some critical control over the process of deriving such analogies and their categories, and to

²⁴ See Bernard Lonergan, *Grace and Freedom: Operative Grace in the Thought of St Thomas Aquinas*, vol. 1 in *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), chapters I-3 and I-4.

²⁵ Lonergan, *Insight* 756.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ 'The metaphysics of Thomas is ... the philosophical reflection of the free glory of the living God of the Bible and in this way the interior completion of ancient (and thus human) philosophy. It is a celebration of the reality of the real, of that all-embracing mystery of being which surpasses the powers of human thought, a mystery pregnant with the very mystery of God, a mystery in which creatures have access to participation in the reality of God, a mystery which in its nothingness and non-subsistence is shot through with the light of the freedom of the creative principle of unfathomable love.' Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics*, vol. 4, *The Realm of Metaphysics in Antiquity*, trans. ed. John Riches (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1989) 406-407.

²⁸ See the example in *Theo-drama*, vol. 3, p. 35, which is the sort of thing Balthasar would build into a full-scale dramatic analogy: 'Even at the purely human level, it is the case that a freely given grace can bring happiness and liberation to the one who receives it, but, if the latter is proud, he can be humiliated and oppressed by it. In the former case, the recipient's liberated freedom unites with the freedom of the proffered grace; in the latter case, paradoxically, the one who refuses grace, which (alone) could bring him fulfillment, tries to be free and self-fulfilled and fails.' And on the next page: 'It is from this dramatic dimension immanent in human nature that the entire action of the theo-drama, with regard to the individual and mankind as a whole, will be developed.'

suggest that Balthasar does not always explicitly manifest that control. I have already mentioned the ambiguity in his work regarding the distinction of the way of discovery and the way of teaching. Two other problems, more theological than methodological, are (1) the fact that his trinitarian dramatics is sometimes dangerously close to mythic consciousness;²⁹ and (2) the absence from his work of any appropriate general categories for discussing the peculiarly *social* dimensions of the human and theological drama.³⁰

Such problems do not deter us from facing the question of deriving aesthetic and dramatic analogies for the systematic understanding of some of the mysteries of faith. What could dogma expressed in post-theoretical or post-systematic language do, for example, for the truth of the redemption? It could perhaps protect that truth against error or aberration by insisting that a revelational soteriology, while perhaps the beginning of a theology of redemption, is not enough. It might perhaps clarify the meaning of the creedal 'for us and for our salvation' in the context of the dialogue of the world religions. But *what* it would be clarifying (he died for our sins and was raised for our justification) may perhaps never be able to receive the kind of quasi-technical, post-systematic, metaphysically governed, dogmatic-realist meaning that *homoousion* expressed in response to the questions that it was formulated to answer. *Homoousion* responded to an exigence for positive conceptual clarification that could not be satisfied without the move to at least a 'tincture of systematic meaning.'³¹ But it may be that the best articulation of the mystery of redemption remains forever the symbolic expression of a 'position' or the aesthetic and/or dramatic presentation of a truth that, affirmed as truth, is constitutive of the community of believers. The issue is not one of metaphysics or science of any sort, but rather one of getting the story right, of not distorting what is essentially a narrative of the relations between divine freedom and human freedom. Again, and beyond what I suggested in the *Theological Studies* articles, there is a distinct possibility that an

²⁹ What controls does Balthasar offer to prevent the drama of the trinitarian processions as portrayed in the section on the dawn of divine freedom in the second volume of *Theo-drama* from collapsing into an affirmation of the contingency, and so creaturehood, of Son and Spirit? Nothing except dogmatic affirmation, which is not enough in *systematic* theology, where dogmas are to be *understood*. See Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-drama*, vol. 2, *Dramatis Personae: Man in God*, trans. Graham Harrison (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1990) 243-60.

³⁰ I pointed to this problem in 'Lonergan and Balthasar,' but it is much more fully developed in Thomas G. Dalzell, 'Lack of Social Drama in Balthasar's Theological Dramatics,' *Theological Studies* 60: 3 (1999) 457-75.

³¹ Ibid. 329.

adaptation of René Girard's work on violence and the sacred can contribute to soteriology, but the adaptation will not consist in moving *from* symbolic to metaphysical categories. It will consist, rather, in an explanatory employment of the symbols themselves, a further immersion in the symbolic categories so as to be able to employ them in a fashion that grasps the relations *to one another* of various elements in the drama. Metaphysical categories will go only so far in elucidating drama. The explanation of drama, that is, the relating to one another of the moments constitutive of the drama, has to look beyond metaphysics for the framework that will make possible what we are looking for.

Such questions must be faced in a methodological prolegomenon to systematics, and they push us back to the grounds or foundations of systematic understanding. Lonergan was prepared to admit that those grounds at times have to do with 'the refinement of human feelings,'³² with the emergence of a Christian religious sensibility, with the aesthetic and dramatic constitution of Christian living. And if that is so, then he was perhaps anticipating a dimension to theological foundations that he did not expressly articulate until after *Method in Theology*, namely, the dimension that I have attempted to indicate in speaking of a 'psychic conversion.'³³

If these questions are at all on target, then what is at stake is the expanded normative source of meaning that Lonergan presents in some of his later writings, and especially in 'Mission and the Spirit' and 'Natural Right and Historical Mindedness.' It is this expanded normative source of meaning that will enable us to answer the questions, How is mystery preserved in systematic theology? What are the grounds that will enable systematic theology to articulate an understanding of a mystery that can be expressed best, not in technical language, but in the other carriers of meaning?

In 'Natural Right and Historical Mindedness,' the issue is whether, once historical consciousness or 'historical mindedness' is acknowledged and embraced, there are still norms that can be specified to govern, not so much the behavior and performance of the individual subject, but the collaborative responsibility of communities, social institutions, and societies themselves. Lonergan responds to the question by focusing on meaning; he restates his

³² I refer here to his discussion of the Marian dogmas. See Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 320.

³³ The most complete articulation to date of what I mean by psychic conversion is found in *Theology and the Dialectics of History*, chapters 2, 6-10 passim. The notion is developed further in the present contribution, introducing the notion of an aesthetic-dramatic operator; here new dimensions are suggested beyond those expressed in *Theology and the Dialectics of History*.

familiar theory of history (progress-decline-redemption) in terms of meaning; and he states that there is a *normative* source of meaning in history, as well as a total and dialectical source of meaning. The normative source is expanded beyond his more familiar earlier presentations, to yield a twofold reality. The normative source consists, first, of the operators of conscious intentionality: questions for intelligence, questions for reflection, and questions for deliberation. But these several principles of integrity and authenticity are 'but aspects of a deeper and more comprehensive principle,' and it is this deeper and more comprehensive principle that is the expanded normative source: 'a tidal movement that begins before consciousness, unfolds through sensitivity, intelligence, rational reflection, responsible deliberation, only to find its rest beyond all of these,' in 'being-in-love.'³⁴ This tidal movement is an ongoing process of self-transcendence that in another paper from the same post-*Method* period, 'Mission and the Spirit,' is called 'the passionateness of being.'³⁵ Lonergan says that what he is calling the tidal movement or the passionateness of being has a dimension all its own, distinct from but intimately related to the operators and operations of intentional consciousness, a dimension that underpins, accompanies, and reaches beyond the operations of intelligent, rational, and responsible intentionality. As underpinning intentional consciousness, the passionateness of being or tidal movement is an operator that presides over the transition from the neural to the psychic, the unconscious to the conscious. As accompanying intentional consciousness it is the mass and momentum, the color and tone and power, of feeling. As reaching beyond or overarching intentional consciousness it is the operator of community.³⁶ In its totality it is a series of operators that I propose we call

³⁴ Lonergan, 'Natural Right and Historical Mindedness,' in *A Third Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1985) 175.

³⁵ Lonergan, 'Mission and the Spirit,' in *A Third Collection* at 29.

³⁶ In 'Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon,' Lonergan speaks explicitly of 'operators' at the 'lowest' and 'highest' levels (more tentatively regarding the lowest level, quite confidently regarding the highest). See Lonergan, 'Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon,' posthumously published in *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 12:2 (1994) 125-46. In other works, found in *A Third Collection*, he limited himself to speaking of quasi-operators at both the primordial symbolic level and at the upper level of community, solidarity, and love. From the beginning of my discussion of psychic conversion, I insisted on speaking of an 'operator' at the 'lowest' level. Moreover, there is mention of a sensitive operator in the treatment of mystery at the beginning of chapter 17 of *Insight*. ('Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon' is important in other respects as well, not the least of which is the mention of six levels of consciousness, four of which are intentional.)

aesthetic-dramatic. These join with the intentional operators (questions for intelligence, questions for reflection, and questions for deliberation) to yield the normative source of meaning in history. What I have, for better or for worse, called psychic conversion is the link between the two sets of operators; it is a turning of intentional consciousness to its aesthetic-dramatic counterpart. Psychic conversion is, if you will, a generalization, indeed a habituation, of *conversio ad phantasma*. It is from the ongoing clarification and appropriation of the aesthetic-dramatic operators that the *explanatory* use of aesthetic and dramatic categories and the development of aesthetic and dramatic analogies will be possible in systematic theology. It is such a habituation of the *conversio ad phantasma* that will keep systematic theology in touch with the mystery that it is attempting to understand.

3. THEOLOGICAL DOCTRINES

A second area of development or expansion has to do with the notion of theological doctrines. While systematics is centered in an understanding of the mysteries of faith, it is not limited to such mysteries, even when the notion of 'mysteries of faith' is taken in the more inclusive sense that we have just indicated. Systematics is an understanding of doctrines, yes, but there are other doctrines, both theological and ecclesial, that systematic theologians attempt to work into their synthesis, besides those that directly express the mysteries of faith. In particular, there are *theological* doctrines that one receives from the tradition or from one's contemporaries, or perhaps that one has developed on one's own. Moreover, these appropriated theological doctrines themselves have systematic implications. Thus elements of other *systematic* syntheses are part of the *doctrinal* inventory of a contemporary systematic theologian.

This position has support in some statements in *Method in Theology*. The clearest expression of the point is made near the beginning of the chapter on doctrines, when Lonergan writes that the doctrines 'meant in the title of the present chapter' are 'theological doctrines reached by the application of a method that distinguishes functional specialties and uses the functional specialty, foundations, to select doctrines from among the multiple choices presented by the functional specialty, dialectic.'³⁷ Theological doctrines thus understood obviously

³⁷ Ibid. 298.

include the mysteries of faith, but they include far more. And their immediate context is the academic discipline called theology, not the ongoing devotional and doctrinal life of the church. While the academic context is distinct from the doctrinal context of the church confessions, it interacts with the latter context, so that in the process of church history we may trace moments in which theological doctrines influenced later church doctrines even while church doctrines provided basic elements to be formulated and reformulated theologically in ever new contexts.

What, though, are the tests that, if passed, would endow systematic theological achievements with a certain doctrinal status? What sorts of things transpire in theological study itself to confer on some of its achievements something of a doctrinal status, if not for the church at least for subsequent theologians? In the article 'Bernard Lonergan and the Functions of Systematic Theology,' I mentioned three theological positions to which I would grant this kind of doctrinal status, and subsequently I have realized that each of these manifests and fulfills a different criterion. So I will speak briefly here of three distinct criteria, without attempting to be exhaustive.

First, a theological achievement may be granted a certain doctrinal status because one judges that *it has brought definitive closure to a particular theological debate*. A theological achievement that has assumed doctrinal status for me on these grounds is the position of Aquinas on operative and cooperative grace expressed in the *Prima secundae* of the *Summa theologiae*, q. 111, a. 2, precisely as that position has been interpreted by Lonergan.³⁸ For that interpretation brings definitive closure, in my view, to the *de auxiliis* controversy, pronouncing a plague on both houses.

Second, one may grant to a given analogy a certain doctrinal status because one judges that *it is the only analogy of nature yet discovered and developed that is useful for understanding a particular divine mystery*. I continue to maintain that this is the case for the Thomist psychological analogy for the trinitarian processions. If one grants that these are processions of Word and Love (and there is certainly scriptural warrant for doing so), then I do not see how one can refuse to turn to the psychological analogy for systematic understanding of these processions.

The analogy can continue to be better understood and more profoundly applied. This Lonergan has done in the *pars systematica* of his *De Deo trino*; and

³⁸ Lonergan, *Grace and Freedom*.

he has suggested a further and more radical development in a later suggestion that would find the analogy in a movement of consciousness 'from above' rather than 'from below.'³⁹ But I do not believe that any other analogy 'works' to provide the sort of understanding of this particular mystery that qualifies genuinely as systematic-theological understanding. If indeed it is the proper analogy, then it may be assumed that it will provide the resources as well to integrate important issues being raised in contemporary trinitarian systematics, and especially the relation of the 'immanent Trinity' to history and to the Paschal mystery. In fact, if one judges as I do that it is the only satisfactory analogy, then one must wager that it will successfully illuminate these issues, and one must set oneself the task of showing that this indeed is the case. In the process, the analogy itself is likely to undergo further development.

Third, there are doctrines that one may judge express *inescapable practical conclusions of the gospel*. The doctrine of liberation theology regarding the preferential option for the poor (a theological doctrine that has become church doctrine, by the way) is a clear instance of the fulfillment of this criterion.

These, then, would be some of the reasons why a particular theological achievement may assume something of a doctrinal status for a given theologian or tradition in theology.⁴⁰

³⁹ 'The psychological analogy ... has its starting point in that higher synthesis of intellectual, rational, and moral consciousness that is the dynamic state of being in love. Such love manifests itself in its judgments of value. And the judgments are carried out in decisions that are acts of loving. Such is the analogy found in the creature.'

'Now in God the origin is the Father, in the New Testament named *ho Theos*, who is identified with *agapê* ... Such love expresses itself in its Word, its Logos, its *verbum spirans amorem*, which is a judgment of value. The judgment of value is sincere, and so it grounds the Proceeding Love that is identified with the Holy Spirit.'

'There are then two processions that may be conceived in God; they are not unconscious processes but intellectually, rationally, morally conscious, as are judgments of value based on the evidence perceived by a lover, and the acts of loving grounded on judgments of value. The two processions ground four real relations of which three are really distinct from one another; and these three are not just relations as relations, and so modes of being, but also subsistent, and so not just paternity and filiation [and passive spiration] but also Father and Son [and Holy Spirit]. Finally, Father and Son and Spirit are eternal; their consciousness is not in time but timeless; their subjectivity is not becoming but ever itself; and each in his own distinct manner is subject of the infinite act that God is, the Father as originating love, the Son as judgment of value expressing that love, and the Spirit as originated loving.' Bernard Lonergan, 'Christology Today: Methodological Reflections,' in *A Third Collection* 93-94.

⁴⁰ These criteria can be complemented by some suggestions that Lonergan presents in *Divinarum personarum* 16 ('Sexto ...') regarding the sources from which theological hypotheses

4. THE TRANSPOSITION OF CATEGORIES

A third area where Lonergan's reflections on systematics can be filled out has to do with the transposition of categories. Again, the point is present already in Lonergan's own statements, and I am doing little more than heightening its importance and drawing attention to the difficulty of the task involved. In the second of the *Theological Studies* articles, I stay with the same three examples – grace, Trinity, and praxis – and argue for the necessity of rooting all one's categories in what Lonergan calls interiorly and religiously differentiated consciousness: '... for every term and relation there will exist a corresponding element in intentional consciousness.'⁴¹ Here I will limit myself to the question of the systematic theology of grace, since it is the area in which I have tried to call attention to a particular problem that I find in Lonergan's own work.

Lonergan's systematic understanding of the doctrine of grace is probably most fully expressed in a schematic supplement *De ente supernaturali* that he wrote for a seminary course in 1946. The first thesis affirms that there exists a created communication of the divine nature through which operations are elicited in us by which we reach the very being of God. And the second thesis affirms that this created communication of the divine nature is absolutely supernatural. We can agree with both of these affirmations, and in a systematics we can attempt to explain what they mean. But there must be a difference between the way in which we would try to explain their meaning and the way that Lonergan adopted in *De ente supernaturali*; and this difference is found in Lonergan's own insistence on what is required for a theology to be methodical. We now have to answer a question that, in that supplement, Lonergan did not face. The question is, What, *in terms of interiorly and religiously differentiated consciousness*, is an absolutely supernatural 'created communication of the divine nature'? What are the referents, in interiorly and religiously differentiated consciousness, of the metaphysical terms and relations that Lonergan employs to speak about sanctifying grace? In Scholastic metaphysical terms we are talking about an

can acquire a certain measure of truth. Briefly, (1) such hypotheses can be supported by natural knowledge of God and of creatures, (2) they can be bolstered by being in harmony with what we know from revelation, and (3) the deductions that can be made from such a hypothesis can be so strongly in agreement with what we know from these other sources that they lend strong support to the hypothesis itself.

⁴¹ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 343. For further and more detailed statements on the bases of the categories employed in theology, see *ibid.* 282-83.

entitative habit rooted in the essence of the soul. But one can accept that Scholastic metaphysical analysis in its entirety and still not have fulfilled the contemporary exigence, for that exigence calls not only for theory but also for some foundation of theory in corresponding elements in intentional consciousness and/or religious experience. Only then will the contemporary reader have some idea of precisely what is being affirmed. It is the task of systematic theology to answer that question on the level of one's own time: What in the world do these doctrines mean?

I have made three successive attempts at an approximation to an adequate formulation of these theological doctrines in categories derived from interiorly and religiously differentiated consciousness.⁴² I am mindful that further development is required. The three attempts are evidence of the difficulty of transposing from the metaphysical context of medieval theology to the interiority context of contemporary thought. The systematic issue is one of finding terms and relations in religious experience itself that correspond to the distinction of sanctifying grace and charity that Lonergan in *De ente supernaturali* takes from Aquinas and that he systematizes in his own way in the four-point systematic hypothesis or theorem that I have already presented. Lonergan's own expressions in terms of an exegesis of Romans 5.5 do not quite do the job, at least in that they do not always emphasize clearly enough that the phrase 'of God' in the verse, 'The love of God is poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who is given us' is a subjective genitive. The verse is speaking of God's own love, given to us in the gift of the Holy Spirit. Lonergan's texts are ambiguous on the issue, as is evidenced by the interpretation that has been given them even by some of the best Lonergan scholars. It is divine love that has been poured into our hearts, and the first manifestation or indication of that gift is the experience of being on the receiving end of such a gift. Romans 5.5 is not talking about our love for God except insofar as our love for God is God's own love operative within us; it is talking about God's own love, the love that is God, given to us in grace through the mission of the Holy Spirit. That love may become our love, so that we love with the very love of God; but the issue is that we are on the receiving end of the gift of divine love, and that that 'being on the receiving end' is equivalent to what a metaphysical theology called 'sanctifying grace.' Some way must be found, in categories derived from interiorly and religiously differentiated consciousness, to express the reception of the gift. The experience of that gift, however elusive it

⁴² See above, note 5.

may be, must be given more emphasis than is common in accounts of religious living.

Ultimately, only an explicit connection with the procession of the Holy Spirit, such as appears in Lonergan's four-point hypothesis, will provide the satisfactory conceptualization. That systematic hypothesis allows us to speak of sanctifying grace, however haltingly but also *sine inconvenientia*, as a created external term of the actively spirating love of Father and Son, just as the Holy Spirit is the uncreated internal term of the same love. This is fundamentally what it means to be *recipients* of the mission of the Holy Spirit. That mission is the eternal procession of the Spirit within the divinity joined to a created external term, namely, the created participation or communication of divine life that we call sanctifying grace. Something of this gift enters into religious experience, but it has seldom been subsequently articulated with any sufficient clarity. Upon reflection we should be able to understand some of the elements of our own religious experience in this way, and so locate something in *consciousness* (precisely as experience on the side of the subject, not as perception on the side of the object⁴³) that corresponds to that mystery that subsequent reflection enables us to *know* (on the side of the object) to be our election as recipients of the actively spirating love of Father and Son in the outpouring of their Spirit upon us. Clearly, of course, if the mystery of sanctifying grace has to do with an entitative habit, it extends beyond consciousness. But, as Karl Rahner emphasized as strongly as did the later Lonergan, it also must have some implications that can be specified in terms of religious *experience*. Such specifications provide the grounding categories for a theology of grace, the terms and relations that express an understanding of the doctrine of grace. What a theoretical theology articulated in metaphysical terms as sanctifying grace and the habit of charity can be spoken of in a methodical theology in terms of the religious experience of being on the receiving end of the gift of God's own love and of loving with that love, of being-in-love with a love that is a created participation of the Proceeding Love within the Godhead whom we call the Holy Spirit. There are two real relations within the Trinity that have to be reflected in the founding categories of a theology of grace: active spiration and passive spiration. Lonergan's four-point hypothesis states that sanctifying grace is the created external term of active spiration, and the habit of charity is the created external term of passive spiration. I am asking that some distinction be named *within religious experience itself* that will correspond to

⁴³ The most complete discussion of the difference is in *De constitutione Christi*, parts 5 and 6.

these metaphysical, theoretical affirmations. And I am suggesting that that distinction will differentiate in experience (1) being on the receiving end of the gift of God's actively spirating love and (2) loving with a love that is not our own but that is the very love of God that has been given to us.

5. *VETERA ET NOVA*

My fourth point can be stated quite briefly. It is important especially because it begins to point more directly to the need to incorporate the four-point hypothesis in a higher synthesis that formulates a systematics in the terms of history.

Categories that are transposed from the theological tradition in which one stands must be integrated with contemporary developments, whether those developments are one's own work or reflect the work of others. This integration will entail influence going both ways: the transposed traditional emphases will affect the appropriation of the contemporary developments, and these developments will affect the expressions adopted in the transpositions.

The point is best conveyed through an example. Liberation theology is an instance of contemporary theologians proposing new theological doctrines, and some of these new theological doctrines are among the doctrines that one attempts in systematics to understand. The same example shows that some of these new theological doctrines become part of the teaching of the church, while others remain affirmations that one may or may not hold without being in conflict with the church's official teaching. The systematic theologian will accept some of these doctrines among those that he or she tries to understand; and in fact, in some cases the systematic theologian will even propose some such doctrines for the first time. But my present question is, How are they to be integrated with the doctrines that one accepts from the tradition? To stay with and expand on the examples we have employed, we can ask, How are liberation emphases to be integrated with dogmas, church doctrines, and past theological doctrines regarding grace and the Trinity? Operative and cooperative grace, both habitual and actual, obviously can be integrated with the psychological analogy for understanding trinitarian processions. The basis of the integration is given in Lonergan's four-point systematic hypothesis. But what do operative and cooperative grace, both habitual and actual, and the psychological analogy have to do with the preferential option for the poor?

The question reveals that the four-point hypothesis is only part of the framework of a contemporary systematics. To it must be added categories derived from the philosophical and theological analysis of history. In particular, theology is in effect today developing a social doctrine and systematics of grace, a theology of grace that would correspond to earlier developments regarding the social constitution of sin. Theology today is also highlighting the social and historical dimensions of the trinitarian doctrines. Theology will integrate the affirmations it accepts from the tradition with developments going forward in our own time by placing *within a theory of history* the elaboration of the four-point hypothesis on the connections between the trinitarian relations and created grace.

6. MEDIATION

Before I turn to that issue, let me address the question of mediation, since it makes even more obvious the need to make an analysis of history part of the basic framework of a contemporary systematics.

We begin with the often-quoted sentence with which Lonergan begins *Method in Theology*: 'A theology mediates between a cultural matrix and the significance and role of a religion within that matrix.'⁴⁴ Seldom has the question been faced, What kind of mediation is performed by theology, and especially by systematic theology? In a posthumously published paper that he delivered in 1963, 'The Mediation of Christ in Prayer,' Lonergan distinguishes four kinds of mediation: simple mediation, self-mediation, mutual mediation, and mutual self-mediation.⁴⁵ Which of these best fits the sort of mediation performed by the functional specialty 'systematics'?

A full treatment of this question would entail presenting Lonergan's understanding of each of the four types of mediation, and in fact not only creating one's own examples of each of these types but also expressing the vision of theology that emerges if one regards the mediation between religion and a cultural matrix to be simple mediation or mutual mediation or self-mediation or mutual self-mediation. I cannot go into such intricate analysis in a paper that I am

⁴⁴ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* xi.

⁴⁵ Bernard Lonergan, 'The Mediation of Christ in Prayer,' in *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1958-1964* 160-82. Lonergan's re-reading of the work of Jean Piaget in the spring and early summer of 1959 was a factor in directing his attention to the notion of mediation. Also influential was Henri Niel, *De la Médiation dans la philosophie de Hegel* (Paris: Aubier, 1945).

striving to contain within manageable limits, and so I will simply state the point that I am trying to make. It is that the mediation that Lonergan refers to in the opening sentence of *Method in Theology* should be regarded as a mutual self-mediation.

Mutual self-mediation occurs between two human beings when one reveals one's own self-discovery and commitment to another and receives the self-revelation of the other; one opens oneself to be influenced at the depth of one's being, and others open themselves to be influenced by us. But what is to be said about the mutual self-mediation of communities or of different common mentalities, different sets of constitutive meanings? At the end of his discussion of self-mediation Lonergan says that communities perform self-mediation in history, and a similar comment could well have been appended to the discussion of mutual self-mediation. The mediation of religion and culture that theology performs is not simply a self-mediation of Christian constitutive meaning, a mediation that moves *from* the data on revelation *through* their ongoing consequences in history *to* the contemporary faith of the church. That is the kind of mediation that is found in Karl Barth's *Church Dogmatics*. It has a place in theology, no doubt. But, *pace* Barth and his disciples, the ongoing consequences of the data on revelation are a function of the *exchange* that takes place between the community grounded in those data and various cultural matrices. The very constitutive meaning of the church in its historical development is a function of that exchange. Theology *does* perform a self-mediating function, but this function does not adequately exhaust the role of theology as mediating *faith and culture*. In fact, it can be argued that self-mediation is what Lonergan is speaking about most of the time in *Method in Theology*, despite the emphasis on mutual self-mediation that is contained in the first sentence of the book. But as theology mediates faith and culture, its self-mediating function is sublated into the mutual self-mediation of the church's constitutive meaning with the meanings and values constitutive of a given way of life. Theology contributes to the mutual self-mediation of the constitutive meaning of the church with the meanings and values constitutive of contemporary cultural matrices.

What is perhaps Lonergan's most complete definition of 'a culture' can be found in notes that he distributed at Boston College for his 1957 lectures on existentialism: '... the current effective totality of: immanently produced and symbolically communicated contents of imagination, emotion, sentiment; of inquiry, insight, conception; of reflection, judgment, valuation; of decision,

implementation.⁴⁶ Theology in its entirety exercises a mutual self-mediation between that 'current effective totality' and the meanings constitutive of the Christian church. It is not simply a self-mediation of the ecclesial imagination, understanding, judgment, and evaluation found in the tradition. That self-mediation is but the beginning of theology's work. In its totality it constitutes the first phase of the entire theological enterprise: research, interpretation, history, and dialectic. Nor is theology the simple mediation from Christian constitutive meaning to a cultural matrix. The church is, or should be, a learning church, a church whose own constitutive meaning is, within the limits imposed by truly dogmatic meanings, changed by interaction with various cultural matrices.

There is a doctrinal component to this insistence on mutual self-mediation. Systematic theology is not only *de facto* a mutual self-mediation between the accumulated wisdom of the community and the cultural matrix. It is this type of mediation *in principle, de iure*. Why? The reason has to do with the universal mission of the Holy Spirit. The universal mission of the Holy Spirit, and as well the invisible dimension of the mission of the Word in whom all things were created, prompt the believing community at its best to *expect* to find meanings and values that are operative in the cultural matrix in ways that have yet to be realized in the church itself. This position is not simple accommodation, which would not be mutual self-mediation at all but simply an abdication of responsibility. There are elements in prevailing cultural matrices with which no accommodation is possible. Here mutual self-mediation is explicit dialectic, where dialectic involves saying no because one's own position is and must be simply and irrevocably contradictory to the prevailing values. But the initial attitude of the genuine Christian individual or community is not one of suspicion but one of a readiness to learn. The Ignatian presupposition for the director of the *Spiritual Exercises* says it well and can and should be generalized: '... every good Christian is to be more ready to save the neighbor's proposition than to condemn it.'⁴⁷

⁴⁶ The statement is taken from Lonergan's Notes on Existentialism distributed in connection with the 1957 lectures. The notes will appear in Lonergan, *Phenomenology and Logic*, vol. 18 in Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, ed. Philip J. McShane, to be published in 2001 or 2002.

⁴⁷ David L. Fleming, S.J., *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius: A Literal Translation and A Contemporary Reading* (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1978) 20, § 22.

7. STRUCTURE

The question of structure is the question, Is there one theorem or hypothesis that can serve as an organizing systematic conception for the entire discipline or functional specialty that we call systematics?

As we have seen, Lonergan proposed that the systematic theologian does best to look to the dogmas themselves for the central problems to be addressed in a systematic theology.⁴⁸ We have also seen that, in attempting to understand what the dogmas mean, the systematic theologian should proceed, as much as possible, according to the *ordo doctrinae*, 'from above' as it were. One should begin with that element or those elements the understanding of which does not entail understanding anything else but is rather the basis of understanding everything else. As chemistry texts begin with the periodic table, which itself is the product of a long history of work in the way of discovery, so systematic treatises should begin with achievements that themselves may have taken centuries to develop, but which, once understood, provide the key to understanding other elements. The question of structure, then, is (*mutatis mutandis*) the question, *What stands to systematic theology as the periodic table stands to chemistry?*

I have already indicated that there is a particular set of systematic theological meanings that Lonergan proposes in *De Deo trino* that *begins* to fulfill these methodological prescriptions and so provides part of the overall conceptual framework of the discipline or functional specialty of systematics; namely, the four-point hypothesis that I quoted above in the treatment of dogma and mystery.

The statement expresses a synthetic understanding of the major dogmatic affirmations of the Christian church: of the Trinity, of the incarnation, of grace, and of the last things. The understanding is synthetic in that it proposes a conceptual framework in which these mysteries are related to one another, a framework that enables us to achieve more than an understanding of each mystery in isolation from the others. Thus this four-point hypothesis provides a core set of meanings for systematic theology. Moreover, the hypothesis has the advantage that it is immune from the doctrinal misunderstandings that have sometimes been attached to Karl Rahner's famous trinitarian axiom that the immanent Trinity is the economic Trinity, and vice versa (misunderstandings, I hasten to add, that are not at all in keeping with Rahner's intentions).

⁴⁸ See Lonergan, *De Deo trino: Pars systematica* 21-23.

However, the four-point hypothesis, while essential to the systematic project that I envision, is not enough. It would serve equally well to organize a systematic theology within a classicist framework. As we saw in the section on *vetera* and *nova*, something more is needed for a systematics in the context of historical mindedness, and that 'something more' consists precisely in the general categories through which a theory of history can be expressed.

Let me expand on this claim, however briefly. In a paper that he presented at a seminar conducted by the Lonergan Research Institute, Toronto, in the spring semester 2000, my colleague Daniel Monsour proposed a test of the claim that Lonergan's four-point hypothesis can be taken as the organizing systematic conception. The test lies in the question, Can the five sets of special categories that Lonergan suggests in *Method in Theology* be mapped onto this four-point hypothesis? If so, then the hypothesis is a 'good bet' as an organizing systematic conception for the discipline. If not, then something else is needed as an addition to the hypothesis.

Lonergan's five sets of special categories regard (1) the religious experience of the subject, (2) subjects in communion and solidarity with one another in a historical community, (3) the loving source of our love, that is, the triune God, and the historical missions of Son and Spirit, (4) the dialectic of authentic and inauthentic Christianity, and (5) the dialectic of history understood in terms familiar to every student of Lonergan's work, that is, in the categories of progress, decline, and redemption.⁴⁹

Now, my own answer to Monsour's question is that the first and third sets of categories can be mapped onto the four-point hypothesis, without remainder, but that the other three cannot. In fact, as I have already argued, the hypothesis provides a key element for the clarification of some ambiguities in Lonergan's articulation of the first set of categories, those having to do with the religious experience of the subject. Clearly the trinitarian and christological core of the hypothesis allows it to fulfill the same requirement with regard to the third set of special categories. But mapping the other three sets onto the hypothesis is more difficult, and in fact any attempt to do so shows that something needs to be added to this hypothesis if we are to have a core statement around which a systematic theology can be organized. To be precise, it is necessary to choose a framework that locates within, or in relation to, the dialectical dynamics of history the four created supernatural realities that are the consequent conditions of the divine

⁴⁹ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 290-91.

missions and of the doctrine regarding our last end. The four-point hypothesis needs to be placed in history. It has to be made to function within a conception of history that will enable the integration of the second, fourth, and fifth sets of special categories into the overall systematic statement. There are indications in some notes that Lonergan wrote at the time of his breakthrough to the notion of functional specialization that in his view a contemporary systematic theology in its entirety would be *a theological theory of history*. Clearly, in these papers Lonergan means that the doctrines that express the constitutive meaning of the church are to be understood in the categories of a theory of history. The ‘mediated object’ of systematics, Lonergan says in these notes, is *Geschichte*.

I took a similar and related option in *Theology and the Dialectics of History*, where some of the general categories of such a systematics of history are worked out. I cannot go into detail here on those categories.⁵⁰ The affirmation that I wish to make here consists of three points. First, there is at hand an organizing systematic conception for the functional specialty ‘systematics.’ Second, we may say with a qualification that that organizing conception is provided in the four-point hypothesis that we have adopted from Lonergan. And third, the qualification is that the hypothesis must be placed within the context of the dialectic of history. And for that I would suggest Lonergan’s own theory of history, supplemented by the additions to this general-categorical framework that I have already proposed in *Theology and the Dialectics of History*. In the complex structure of general and special categories that emerges from integrating the four-point hypothesis of *De Deo trino* with Lonergan’s theory of history as developed and supplemented in *Theology and the Dialectics of History*, there can be discerned the overall contours of the synthesis that a contemporary systematics would attempt to construct.⁵¹

8. A QUESTION ABOUT THEOLOGICAL PREDICATION

A final question, one that does not appear in the articles on which the bulk of this paper is based, has to do with the intricacies of theological predication, and in

⁵⁰ A summary of the principal categories derived in that book is presented in the third of the *Theological Studies* articles mentioned in note 6 above.

⁵¹ It should perhaps be noted that what we are doing in this section is an exercise in the functional specialty ‘foundations,’ one of whose tasks is the derivation of the categories.

particular of contingent and necessary predication about God. As I stated earlier, all that I wish to do at present in this final section is raise a question, with the hope that it might catalyze a collaborative discussion.

A story that might or might not be apocryphal can serve as an introduction to the question. We might call the story 'Postcards from the Center.' A student of Lonergan's work and professor of theology is said to have written Lonergan a short letter, in which he asked one question. Included in the envelope was a self-addressed postcard. Lonergan was asked only to write on the postcard either 'Yes' or 'No' in response to the question. The question was, Do we make a difference to God? About a week later, the postcard from Lonergan arrived: 'No.'

But the story does not end there. Several days later, another postcard arrived from Lonergan. 'We make an eternal difference to God.'

Now the doctrine that we make an eternal difference to God, framed precisely in this way, matches in some respects the celebrated doctrine of election in which Karl Barth, working in his own context, definitively overcomes Calvin on predestination. (For what it is worth, I believe that Barth has made a permanent contribution to all Christian theology in his doctrine of election.) The heart of Barth's doctrine of election (as contrasted with, for example, his doctrines of creation and providence) is that the doctrine of election names eternal elements constitutive of the Godhead, while the doctrines of creation and providence make what Lonergan would name contingent predications about God. The doctrine of election is for Barth part of the doctrine of God, while the doctrine of providence belongs in the treatment of the doctrine of creation. I do not intend here to go into the intricacies of Barth studies. I want only to indicate that there is a major confluence of theological affirmations that Lonergan is tapping into if indeed he holds the view that is suggested on the second postcard in our story. The theology of Hans Urs von Balthasar also is part of that confluence. And the upshot of the confluence is that it just might be the case that some affirmations that Thomist-inspired theologians have for centuries regarded as contingent predications about God may in fact need to be conceived in terms of some further category that we may not yet have developed. If God is from eternity what God is because of the eternal decree of election and salvation, then we are confronted with a new set of methodological and theological requirements, one that, I might add, I am not at all prepared even to enumerate at the present time. I am not convinced that the doctrine is sufficient that election and redemption entail only notional relations attributed to God while real relations are found in the created external terms that are the consequent conditions of the truth

of those doctrines. I do not want to speak of changes in God, mind you, but I want some further category to enable us to speak properly about the kind of predication that is involved here.

I raise this issue here only because what I wanted to do in this paper is to present the major developments that have occurred in my own thinking about methodological issues in systematics since the publication of the three articles on which I based the bulk of the paper. The articles do not touch on the issue of theological predication, and it is a crucial methodological question. But here we can perhaps see that it is also a crucial theological issue. This final section presents nothing but a question. But I hope that the question can bring the movement that stems from Lonergan into closer dialogue and collaboration with several other contemporary theological emphases.

FROM ANALOGY OF 'BEING' TO THE ANALOGY OF BEING

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RALPH MCINERNY'S PHILOSOPHICAL reflection has been framed by careful and subtle probings into the analogous uses of language, where the inquiry has been motivated by an irenic yet persistent corrective to the tradition which has called itself "Thomist," taking issue first with the sixteenth-century commentator *par excellence* of Thomas Aquinas, Thomas de Vio Cajetan.¹ From *The Logic of Analogy* (1961) and *Studies in Analogy* (1968) to *Aquinas and Analogy* (1996), his goal has been consistent and unyielding: to show how Aquinas managed to articulate the logical and semantic structure of language in such a way as to display its analogical reaches. Hence his untiring emphasis: analogy is a logical doctrine in Aquinas. That is not to say, however, that attention to analogical uses of language has no metaphysical payoff; it is simply to note that conflating the two risks harming both. More precisely, a precipitate move to metaphysical assertion without careful preliminary attention to language will invariably overlook Aquinas' reminder that the "mode proper to metaphysical inquiry is logical" and so unwittingly resolve to the imagination.² This animadversion captures the point of McInerny's most mature reflections on these matters:

if the 'analogy of being' refers to real relations, so that what is first is the cause of what is secondary, and if 'analogous names' involve an ordered plurality of meanings of a common name in which the first, controlling meaning, the *ratio propria*, is not the cause of the rest, the difference is as important as the difference between logical and real orders. Thomas Aquinas took this difference between the order of our knowledge and the order of being to be decisive as between Plato and Aristotle. He accuses Plato of confusing these two orders and assuming that what is first in our

¹ *The Logic of Analogy* (1961) and *Studies in Analogy* (1968) (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff) to *Aquinas and Analogy* (Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1996)

² In 4 *Metaphysica* 4, 574.

knowing is first in being. Any confusion of the logical and real orders comes under the same criticism. A correct understanding of Thomas on analogy saves him from the grievous mistake he attributed to Plato (162-63).

The Plato whom Aquinas knew, of course, was the one whom Aristotle criticized and the one filtered through Proclus in the *Liber de Causis*, on which Aquinas commented.³ So McInerny's criticism is not of Plato but of Thomists who either confused these two orders or presumed a ready parallel between them, thereby constructing an "analogy of being" which was touted as the keystone of Aquinas' metaphysical "system."

Yet of course there is a parallel between real and logical orders for Aquinas, assured by the originating fact of creation. Its apprehension by us, however, will always be inverted, as "we are aware that what we last name is what is ontologically first," so that "knowledge of the source of all being of whom finally we know what he is not rather than what he is, ... is the ultimate point of philosophizing" (160-61) — not its beginning. Words like these would have warmed Karl Barth's heart, for the *analogia entis* which he found anathema to authentic Christian theology claimed that sort of parallelism between real and logical orders which McInerny is anxious to subvert by inverting. Moreover, they claimed it in the name of the real Aquinas, to whom it had been unwarrantedly attributed. Yet these summary remarks are dense, offered by McInerny as a valedictory to his latest clarifications of Aquinas' teaching regarding analogous uses of language. The standard set by these clarifications is exceedingly high, representing as they do some thirty-five years of sifting and of simplifying by a mind as subtle as it is witty; and subtlety and wit are the very stuff of recognizing and employing the analogous reaches of language. I shall be arguing that McInerny's reflections have as much to do with doing philosophy as they have with Thomas Aquinas' teaching; indeed, that analogy is at the very heart of doing philosophy, especially of a philosophy which seeks to integrate the Jewish, Christian, and Muslim conviction that the universe is freely created by one God. If it is that belief which assured Aquinas that the order of logic and of reality are indeed isomorphic, it is the same teaching which reminds us that we know God better the more we realize that we do not know our creator, as Aquinas frequently

³ See the recent English translation of Aquinas' *Commentary of the Book of Causes* by Vincent Guagliardo, O.P., Charles Hess, O.P., and Richard Taylor (Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1996).

put it. So the two orders, of logic and of reality, will be the inverse image of each other in these reaches.

CREATION AND PARTICIPATION

The remarks we have identified as valedictory to McInerny's treatment of analogy represent a fine specimen of philosophy serving as handmaid to faith, for the philosophizing in this book stops short of what is identified as philosophy's "ultimate point: knowledge of the source of all being of whom finally we know what he is not rather than what he is" (161). One explicit point of McInerny's book is to show that identifying the activity of analogous naming with "the causal dependence in a hierarchical descent of all things from God" (162) could mislead others about that source of all being. How so? It could, for example, lead one to suspect that we could know the character of that hierarchical descent, or that such a descent might already be inscribed in our language, so that we would feel no need to learn the specific practices associated with using terms of God which we have learned to use in our context. In other words, we might be tempted to turn philosophy into a proto-theology which could give us an adequate understanding of God — exactly Barth's complaint about *analogia entis* as it had been presented to him. Indeed, philosophy's preferred way of accounting for the origination of all things, the necessary emanation scheme of al-Farabi, which Aquinas came to know in Avicenna's amended version, promises just such a knowledge. Moreover, Aquinas was sufficiently taken with it to have recourse to it as an image for the unimaginable act of creating, yet only after he had shown it to be both false and redundant as an explanatory scheme.⁴ False, because the model of logical deduction which animated the scheme assured that the First in such a scheme could not adequately be distinguished from the premises which followed from it; redundant, because the act of creation must be the act of a cause of being whose effect follows immediately from it, absent any motion or mediation. Indeed, this is a paradigmatic instance of Aquinas' philosophical inquiry being shaped by premises from faith. The telling text is imbedded in a question regarding God's triunity, where it is asked whether the trinity of the divine persons can be known by natural reason? Aquinas captures the opportunity

⁴ This is the burden of my comparative study: *Knowing the Unknowable God: Ibn Sina, Maimonides, Aquinas* (Notre Dame IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1986).

offered by a sophisticated objection — that knowledge of the trinity must be accessible to reason since it would be superfluous to teach what cannot be known by natural reason, yet it would hardly be becoming to say that the divine tradition of the trinity was superfluous — to offer “two reasons why the knowledge of the divine persons was necessary for us,” and the first envisages “the right idea of creation: the fact of saying that God made all things by His Word excludes the error of those who say that God produced things by necessity, [a corollary of the emanation scheme. Moreover,] when we say that in Him there is a procession of love, we show that God produced creatures not because He needed them, nor because of any other extrinsic reason, but on account of the love of His own goodness” (*Sum. Theol.* [=ST] 1.32.1.3).

Philosophy could lead one, Aquinas thought, to understand that the universe must have been originated, but the prevailing schemes for elucidating that origination had dire consequences for a proper conception of the First as well as for human freedom, so the findings of faith will be required — “necessary,” as he puts it — to have the “right idea of” this origination, as an utterly free creation. As Josef Pieper has remarked, creation is the “hidden element in the philosophy of St. Thomas” — perhaps hidden because it requires a theological premise if it is to be properly understood.⁵ This example offers us a tangible instance where philosophy can serve the faith yet cannot pretend to elucidate the entire story by its own resources. It bears on McInerney’s treatment of analogy, for whatever exiguous knowledge we might have of God would be severely threatened without the resources of analogous language. The medieval witness to such a state of affairs was Moses Maimonides, who argued strenuously that no terms could be employed of both God and creatures, given the crucial “distinction” between creator and creatures.⁶ His arguments did not turn on the immense “distance” between God and creatures so much as on what Kierkegaard would call “the infinite qualitative difference.” It is not that God’s justice far outstrips ours, but rather that any statement made about God’s being just would be ill-formed, since it would presume by its very structure that justice is an attribute of God, whereas

⁵ Josef Pieper, *The Silence of St. Thomas* (New York: Pantheon, 1957): “The Negative element in the Philosophy of St. Thomas,” 47-67.

⁶ See his *Guide for the Perplexed* 1.51-60; for this use of “the distinction” see Robert Sokolowski, *The God of Faith and Reason* (Notre Dame IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981) and my interfaith commentary: “The Christian Distinction Celebrated and Expanded,” in John Drummond and James Hart, eds., *The Truthful and the Good* (Boston: Kluwer, 1996) 191-206.

God — to be God — must be utterly simple (1.57). So there can be, “in no way or sense, anything common to the attributes predicated of God, and those used in reference to ourselves; they have only the same names, and nothing else is common to them.” Otherwise, one might believe “that there is in God something additional to His essence, in the same way as attributes are joined to our essence” (1. 56). So the radical difference between the creator and creatures precludes any use of the same terms, since the very form of predication belies the manner in which God is just. This chapter (56) contains a passing reference to a set of terms which might so function, called “amphibolous” by Harry Wolfson, and ill-defined by Maimonides as “applied to two things which have a similarity to each other in respect to a certain property which is in both of them an accident, not an essential, constituent element.”⁷ Maimonides rejects such a suggestion, since “the attributes of God are not considered as accidental by any intelligent person.” The idea seems to be that such terms could not be predicated properly of either creatures or creator, since the shared accidental feature is extrinsic to both.

Prescinding from his inadequate characterization of a usage which might have been identified as analogous, this observation of Maimonides is telling for our reflections on Cajetan and Aquinas, since Cajetan’s insistence on proportionality as the normal form for properly analogous usage turns on whether or not the ratio can be predicated intrinsically of both subjects. Recalling Aquinas’ favorite example of ‘health’, it is easy to see that ‘healthy’ can be attributed properly only to an organism, so there is no something which healthy medicine shares with a healthy organism. Rather, medicine is called ‘healthy’ by virtue of its role in helping to cure a diseased organism. Yet Aquinas does not hesitate to offer this form of analogous usage as the model for our speaking of a just God. Note how Aquinas accepts Maimonides’ criteria here: there is no something, no shared feature by which Socrates and God might each be said to be just.⁸ As if to echo the Rambam, Aquinas eschews any similarity between God and creatures except for “the sort of analogy that holds between all things because they have existence in common” (ST 1.4.3). Yet existence [*esse*] cannot be a feature, so he goes on to specify: “this is how things receiving existence from

⁷ The Arabic term is *b’ishtarāk*; I tend to use Friedlander’s translation (New York: Dover, 1956), corrected from the Arabic where needed, since his use of philosophical terminology is more predictable than Pines (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), whose translations are lexically correct but often oblivious to philosophical terminology.

⁸ See my *Knowing the Unknowable God* (note 4) and Alexander Broadie, “Maimonides and Aquinas of the Names of God,” *Religious Studies* 23 (1987).

God [*illa quae sunt a Deo*] resemble him; for precisely as things possessing existence [*inquantum sunt entia*] they resemble the primary and universal source of all existence [*esse*].” I have inserted the Latin here to illustrate how the Blackfriars translator, Timothy McDermott, has brought what Pieper called the “hidden element” in Aquinas’ philosophical treatment into the clear light of day. There need not be any feature intrinsic to creator and creature to use the same term of both; indeed, there could be none such *a priori* if we are to respect “the distinction” between them; indeed, their “infinite qualitative difference.” We are required, however, to advert to the foundational fact that whatever perfections creatures possess “must pre-exist in God in a higher manner, ... since God is the primary operative cause of all things” (ST 1.4.2). Without the offices of a creator, analogous predication would have to be assured by an inherent proportionality between the related uses of a term. Yet as we shall see, it is precisely recognition of God as the cause of being which allows that the same terms may be predicated of creator and of creatures, without thereby implying that there be something they both hold in common. Whatever *analogia entis* there may be has to be governed by the rules which Maimonides discerned, the “distinction” which Sokolowski has articulated, as well as the negation which “dialectical theology” demands — all of which is already present in Aquinas’ insistence that “we cannot know what God is, but only what he is not” (ST 1.3.Prol), articulated in McInerny’s trenchant reminder of what knowledge we can expect to have of the “source of all being.”

These summary remarks (of McInerny’s) which we have been probing are contained in a chapter entitled “Analogy and Participation,” as if to remind us that if Aquinas “does not call the real hierarchy of being an analogy of being” (156), he does structure it according to the Platonic notion of participation.⁹ But that notion too is imported in an attempt to characterize the relation of creatures to the creator, once one has so accentuated their difference. So once again, creation emerges as the central, if unaccented, reality. It is as though we need to have a subset of terms — those intending perfections — which may be used of both creatures and creator, but we will use them properly only when “we are aware that what we last name is ontologically first” (160-61). That there be such a set of terms is, then, a necessary condition for their being used of both creator and of creature. What must be added to the terms (*parole*), however, is their use (*langue*) according to a heightened operative awareness that we are employing them here

⁹ For a sterling treatment of this topic, see Rudi te Velde, *Participation and Substantiality in Thomas Aquinas* (Leiden: Brill, 1995); see my review in *International Philosophical Quarterly* 37 (1997) 101-04.

of beings and of the cause of being, of the One in whom they exist pre-eminently. Moreover, when said of the cause of being, they cannot be predicated as attributes, strictly speaking, but as part of what it is to be the One whose essence is simply to be. The role of participation, then, is to remind us that there could be no such set of terms were the universe not itself derived from a source from which all that is, and notably what is perfect about what-is, flows. So the ontological ground of the set of terms lies in the fact that all-that-is participates in the One from whom everything derives, and their proper use demands that we bring this grounding fact to awareness. Yet we can only assert it, knowing as little as we do how to express this all-important “distinction” and the consequent relations obtaining between creator and creatures.

What participation clarifies, however, is a crucial ambiguity in Cajetan's criterion that properly analogous usage demands that the feature in question be possessed inherently by each party of which it is predicated, albeit in a proportional manner. For if we fail to avert to creation, understood precisely as participation, then such a criterion will be read to imply that there can be no properly analogical predication unless there be a common feature, such as justice, itself predicable of both God and Socrates. But the presence of such a common feature would effectively deny “the distinction” of creator from creature, as Maimonides articulates so well: to treat the creator as an item in the universe, which a shared feature would imply, is to deny the basis of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim faith in the free creation of the universe by one God. Indeed, what the device of participation is designed to do is to show us how ‘just’ can be attributed to creatures as well as to the creator without there being a feature, justice, common to both. *Pari passu*, the *res significata* of the analogous term, justice, need not be accessible to our understanding for us to use the term properly. We need only to be aware that it is a perfection, and so will outstrip any realization that we come across of it — indeed, it must do so if it is to function as it should, lest we have nothing but a conventional ethics, that is to say, no ethics at all! We will be more inclined to acknowledge that feature in practice the more we recognize that all such perfections have their pre-eminent source in a creator.

So here too, a properly analogous use of analogous terms demands an awareness that we are functioning as creatures ourselves in a created order whose principles remains unknown to us, yet whose lineaments can be glimpsed from time to time. Creatures can be just in their fashion, and hence properly be said to be so: the term ‘just’ can be predicated of them inherently, without there being a proportional similarity between God's justice and theirs. For as the cause of

being, the creator is not an extrinsic cause of creatures, since their very to-be is to-be-in-relation to the creator. That is why Aquinas can say that to-be [*esse*] is “more intimately and profoundly interior to things than anything else” (ST 1.8.1), and it is precisely this *esse* which accounts for whatever similarity can be had between creator and creature. Indeed, created *esse* brings them so close that the non-reciprocal relation of dependence, which is participated being, can be likened to Sankara’s notion of nonduality: the distinction does not amount to a separation, as though God could be pictured as one more being over against the universe.¹⁰ Ralph McInerny may never have suspected how his careful work in the semantics of analogous terms could facilitate moves so apparently radical as these; or again he may well have done so, but forbore drawing such conclusions, for they smack more of philosophical theology while he wished to underscore philosophy’s ancillary role. Yet without such astute servants the fare which theology serves can be ill-chosen and underdone.

PRACTICES TO HEIGHTEN AWARENESS: *LANGUE* AND *PAROLE*

Keeping the orders of discourse and of being distinct is a taxing job, notably for philosophers whose very trade involves using discourse to articulate what-is by showing the way it must be! Here is where Etienne Gilson’s observations that “‘analogy’ for Aquinas refers to our capacity to make the kind of judgments we do” can illuminate McInerny’s strategy as well as help us spell out its implications for our practice in doing philosophical theology especially.¹¹ Whoever understands that analogy is to be explicated “on the level of judgment” and not of concepts, Gilson contends, has also grasped the real divergence between Aquinas and Scotus.¹² He corroborates his point by noting, as does McInerny, that all discussion of “analogy of being” or of “analogous concepts” is utterly foreign to Aquinas, who speaks rather of “terms used analogously.”

¹⁰ On this comparison, see Sara Grant RSCJ, *Towards an Alternative Theology*: “Confessions of a Nondualist Christian” (Bangalore: Asian Trading Corporation, 1991), and Kathryn Tanner, *God and Creation in Christian Theology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988).

¹¹ Etienne Gilson, *Christian Philosophy of Saint Thomas* (New York: Random House, 1956) 105-7; *Jean Duns Scot* (Paris: Vrin, 1952) 101; the relevant texts he cites in Aquinas can be found in ST 1.13.5-6, 1.13.10.4, *Contra Gentiles* 1.34, 2.15.

¹² See my “Aquinas and Scotus: Contrary Patterns for Philosophical Theology,” in Bruce D. Marshall, ed., *Theology and Dialogue* (Notre Dame IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1990) 105-29.

Judgment is indispensable precisely because responsible analogous usage requires that we assess the way in which a term is being used in relation to its primary analogate. Yet such an assessment demands both that we identify the primary analogate as well as grasp how the use in question relates to it, and each of these discernments involves judgment. In practice, this comes to adducing appropriate examples, like the ones needed to make this very point. If we think of a relatively neutral but highly analogous term like 'order', we can imagine any number of situations in which the term may be properly used, while each varies widely from the other. A compulsive personality may need a clean desk at work yet learn to tolerate a great deal of mess at home, especially when children are young. She could still find herself spontaneously "cleaning up" when she comes home, however, especially if she brings a colleague who has no children into her home. Yet if she relates appropriately to each environment, she knows that her own sanity demands that she respect the order proper to each. In such cases, the term is properly context-dependent, so there is no set "primary analogate;" each case establishes a base line for proper use, which can be formulated functionally: an environment is "in order" when we can interact appropriately in it.

When such a term is attributed to the creator, however, the issue of a prime analogate quickly becomes problematic. Consider Aquinas' insistence that "the order of the universe as a whole is the object proper to God's intention, ... the direct object of God's creating act and intended by God" (ST 1.15.2). Whatever uses of the term 'order' may be functionally proper to environments in which we have come to be at home will doubtless fail when speaking of the "order of the universe," yet we do know that order must accompany intelligent agency. Here one's adeptness at shifting contexts in which the term can properly be used will doubtless help in assessing how little we can expect to understand the order God intends in a universe we apprehend so minimally. Our emerging consciousness of ecological realities, contrasted with the way in which we have proceeded to "improve" a natural order in the direction of serving human needs, yet quite oblivious to the complexities of that order itself, offers some salutary reminders of the difficulty of identifying the "order of creation." What we have discovered here is our endemic tendency to align the primary analogate with human needs as we perceive them; and a similar predilection clearly operates in the usual conundra spelled out with regard to human suffering or so-called "natural evil." Where these become ludicrous, indeed, is when any one of us attempts to "explain" to someone else the place their suffering holds in "God's plan." Indeed, the very use of the term 'plan' to introduce the order the creator bestows in

creating begs the question, since plans and planning must be part of our ordering process (and so belong to our mode of signifying) but need not characterize the way divine wisdom is operative in creating at all. So what we “intend to mean” (the *res significata*) in speaking of “the order of the universe [which] is the direct object of God’s creating act” lies utterly beyond our conceptual capacities. We can at best use our practiced judgment to recognize that we do not and cannot know it, all the while trusting that the universe be ordered. So analogous usage, especially in such domains, demands that we eschew any pretense of possessing a straightforward grasp of the *res significata*, while relying on an astute judgment regarding the direction of the pointers which we can articulate, much as Aristotle observed that properly metaphorical discourse required a deftness of judgment.¹³

Here is where we may have recourse to the work of Pierre Hadot to remind us that doing philosophy is ever a matter of the proper exercises, and in executing philosophical theology, of properly “spiritual exercises.”¹⁴ Indeed, it is questionable whether the reaches of analogical language can ever be appreciated so long as one identifies “philosophy” with a “set of propositional attitudes,” effectively restricting philosophical inquiry to analyzing what can be formulated, apart from the form of life required to carry it out. Yet the relationship between formulations and forms of life remains strangely elusive. Trying to understand it correctly, however, should illuminate Gilson’s insistence that analogical usage involves exercising judgments regarding our use of the key terms in question, while identifying the character of those judgments will help us see how deeply faith is intertwined with carrying out philosophical inquiry. Trying to grasp this inner relation of formulation to practices may also clarify the way in which we are able to appreciate something about medieval philosophy which medievals themselves could not be expected to see, since they were immersed in it: the formative character of their particular world of faith, be it Jewish, Muslim, or Christian. When such forms of life take on the shape of intentional choices, as they must for us, their formative function is cast more clearly into relief, whereas so long as they remain the air one breathes, that crucial role will often remain quite indiscernible.

¹³ Aristotle contends that being a “master of metaphor ... is a sign of genius since a good metaphor implies an intuitive perception of the similarity in dissimilars” (1459a5).

¹⁴ For an illuminating introduction to the work of Pierre Hadot in English, see *Philosophy as a Way of Life*, edited by Arnold Davidson (Cambridge MA: Blackwell, 1995); for a synopsis, see his *Qu’est-ce que la philosophie antique?* (Paris: Gallimard, 1995).

Robert Sokolowski supplied me with the clue to this observation in his genial monograph, *The God of Faith and Reason*, where he introduces "the distinction" of God from creation as a decisively Christian achievement, "glimpsed on the margins of reason, ... at the intersection of reason and faith."¹⁵ By focusing on the key role which making distinctions plays in philosophical inquiry, and then turning the very notion of a distinction into a conceit or trope, he proceeds to identify just how unique is the relation of the creator-of-all to all that is created, something which Jewish and Muslim philosophers were also taxed to articulate.¹⁶ "The distinction" then becomes a way of gesturing towards what indeed distinguishes those who believe the universe to be freely created by one God from anyone else. For the God in question would be God without creating all-that-is, so much so that everything-that-is adds nothing to the perfection of being of such a One. (To use a familiar abstract descriptor, that is what 'monotheism' entails; not a simple reduction of the number of gods to one.) What makes this so significant philosophically is that it forbids any ordinary brand of "onto-theology" wherein a notion of being can be stretched to include the creator as well as creation.¹⁷ Yet that is what philosophers seem to need: a univocal notion whereby we can find some sameness between creator and creatures, in order to predicate terms of God. That is what Scotus promised, in conjunction with his rejection of analogical character of 'being'. And while it can be argued that the account of analogy which he rejected was that of Henry of Ghent and not that of Aquinas, the legacy stands, presumably because it answers so well to a standing predilection of philosophers.¹⁸ What seems to defeat philosophers, ironically enough, is the practice of "Socratic unknowing." This practice of Plato's Socrates is linked with displaying a mode of discourse beyond the theoretical (Plato's *dianoia*), which Plato called "dialectic" and usually articulated in a mythic manner. What philosophical discourse could not realize had to be displayed in another idiom, gesturing towards something which language could only intimate.¹⁹ Yet as Pierre Hadot reminds us, the intellectual

¹⁵ See note 6, citation at 39.

¹⁶ See my "The Christian Distinction Celebrated and Expanded," note 6.

¹⁷ See J-L Marion, "Saint Thomas d'Aquin et l'onto-théo-logie," *Revue philosophique*, 95 (1995) 31-66, where he expands on his Preface to the English edition of *God without Being* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

¹⁸ See my *Analogy and Philosophical Language* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973) 96, and on the larger point, Eric Alliez, *Capital Times: Tales from the Conquest of Time*, tr. by Georges Van Den Abbeele (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).

exercise of dialogue itself could also be summed up as “dialectical,” so the virtues which Socrates’ interlocutors had to develop would have prepared them to respect the limits of the univocal discourse which theory [*dianoia*] requires, yet do so in such a way as to recognize that the very *élan* of their inquiry pointed beyond such language.

So philosophical dialogue, as exercised by Socrates, represents a mode of doing philosophy which is also a spiritual exercise, and which calls forth from its participants a palpable sense of “something more,” something towards which the inquiry is directed and which can be said to guide it to the outcomes which it can attain. Plato called this lure “the Good,” and the tradition which traced itself to Plato demanded of its adherents a way of living in relation to that Good which could not but affect the way in which they carried out intellectual inquiry. Medieval philosophers were often themselves participants in a vowed community life which made similar demands on them, demands which have also been called “spiritual exercises.” How can we identify the connection between these ways of life and their use of philosophical discourse? In approaching Aquinas for an answer to this question, I have found it useful to attend to the matter-of-fact way in which he will put things which we find arresting. Consider, for example, the straightforward introduction to questions 3-11 at the outset of the *Summa Theologiae*, where he announces that “we cannot know what God is, but only what he is not, so we must consider the ways in which God does not exist, rather than the way in which he does.” One could not, it seems, engage in “negative theology” so gracefully without having some other access to the One whose nature remains unknown to us, for philosophers trained in a modern idiom invariably find such statements utterly disconcerting. And that other access must be such that it does not reduce the “unknowing” but rather offers a way of living with it. In the terms which we have been using from Aquinas’ treatment of discourse *in divinis*, we need not be able to articulate the *res significata* to assure ourselves that there is such. What we need to be able to do, however, is to recognize that the very terms we use have a reach beyond the *modus significandi* that is accessible to us. Indeed, their proper use in human contexts demands just that, as my allusion earlier to conventional morality suggested. Normative language needs to have a purchase on us which carries us beyond the descriptive

¹⁹ For a telling example, consider the words of Socrates which form a transition to the closing myth in the *Phaedo*: “if you analyze [the initial hypotheses] adequately, you will, I believe, follow the argument to the furthest point to which a human being can follow it up; and if you get that clear, you’ll seek nothing further” (107b5-10).

domain of "everybody does it," and that must be inscribed in the key terms themselves, without our possessing a firm criterion for their transcendent use.²⁰ For that demand readily translates into asking one to articulate the *res significata*, the prime analogate proper to the creator rather than the ones accessible to creatures.

Aquinas had explicit recourse to the creature/creator relation to respond to Maimonides' objections to our using our perfection terms of God: "any creature, in so far as it possesses any perfection, represents God and is like to him, for he, being simply and universally perfect, has pre-existing in himself the perfections of all his creatures. But a creature is not like to God as it is like to another member of its species or genus, ... thus words like 'good' or 'wise' when used of God do signify something that God really is [*divinam substantiam*], but they signify it imperfectly because creatures represent God imperfectly" (ST 1.13.2). All of the semantic markers are here: the terms must be "perfection-terms," they cannot be univocal (pertaining to the same genus), and therefore they can "signify imperfectly" what they "intend to signify." Our capacity to do just that — intend to signify by the terms we employ — responds to the deeper objection of Maimonides, which Aquinas acknowledges: "when we say that a man is wise, we signify his wisdom as something distinct from other things about him — his essence, for example, his powers or his existence. But when we use this word about God we do not intend to signify something distinct from this essence, power or existence" (ST 1.13.5). How can we do something like that? By the power of judgment which directs our use of the discourse we employ. Aquinas has recourse to this power in his final assessment of our ability to "name" the God we cannot know, a capacity that is displayed in the way we make statements: "God considered in himself is altogether one and simple, yet we think of him through a number of different concepts because we cannot see him as he is in himself. But although we think of him in these different ways we also know that to each corresponds a single simplicity that is one and the same for all. The different ways of thinking of him are represented in the difference of subject and predicate; his unity we represent by bringing them together in an affirmative statement" (ST 1.13.12). The translator (Herbert McCabe, OP) supplies 'statement' here, but its addition is crucial for us to grasp how judgment enters in at this very point. Aquinas' term is *compositio*, which is the task he reserves to judgment,

²⁰ The work of Julius Kovesi, *Moral Notions* (New York: Humanities Press, 1967) continues to be fruitful here.

reminding us how for Aristotle, propositions or sentences are parasitic upon the act of stating something to be the case, as *langue* is posterior to *parole*, to language in use.

So it is never enough to identify a subset of terms which are susceptible of analogous usage; one must always display them in use. And to do so will exhibit a judgment in operation; in this case, a judgment informed by “knowing that” in God a “single simplicity” corresponds to these distinct terms. It is this judgment which reminds us that the compositional form of the statements made is improper when used of God. So it belongs to judgment to factor such a “knowing that” into one’s use, thereby offsetting the inherently misleading form of the statement itself. This will sound complicated to one who expects language to reflect on its face all that we accomplish when we use it properly; yet a bit of reflection shows that we make such subtle judgments all the time. In fact, when we cannot do so, our speech is justly described as “wooden.” So analogous usage need not be justified; it only needs to be pointed out. Yet justifying using it with respect to God does require the explicit premise of creation. And Aquinas insists that we need a trinitarian revelation if we are going to get that relation right, so Pierre Hadot’s observations about the need to understand philosophical inquiry in terms of the modes of life consonant with it are vindicated in Aquinas’ case. For revelation can never be a simple fact; it always requires our commensurate response. Such at least is the testimony of any faith-tradition, to which we must have recourse to learn the proper use of a term like ‘revelation’. Yet it should not appear all that strange that a thesis like Ralph McInerny’s — that “analogy” is a linguistic doctrine — should lead to such consequences, for language in use can take many forms, and respecting them, as Aristotle and McInerny note, is the mark of a wise person.

THE CONVERSIONS OF PAUL IN THE LIGHT OF BERNARD LONERGAN'S THEORY OF RELIGIOUS AND MORAL CONVERSION

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IN A PAPER that he himself delivered nearly twenty years ago at this annual conference, Fr. Lonergan spoke of conversion in the following terms:

Conversion is three-dimensional. It is intellectual inasmuch as it regards our orientation to the intelligible and the true. It is moral inasmuch as it regards our orientation to the good. It is religious inasmuch as it regards our orientation to God. The three dimensions are distinct, so that conversion can occur in one dimension without occurring in the other two, or in two dimensions without occurring in the other one. At the same time the three dimensions are solidary. Conversion in one leads to conversion in the others, and relapse from one prepares for relapse in the others (emphasis added).¹

At the time I had wondered to myself regarding concrete examples of instances in which conversion might occur in one dimension of a person's life without being present in the other dimensions. Only in recent years, as a result of concentrated study in the Letters of Paul and in the Acts of the Apostles, have I come to the hypothesis that Paul himself provides a classic example of an individual who first experienced religious conversion but only subsequently experienced a key dimension of moral conversion. It is this hypothesis that I wish to test in this paper. In attempting to do so, I set aside the related topics of intellectual and psychic conversion² and I begin by listing a number of the

¹ B.J.F. Lonergan, *A Third Collection: Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan*. Edited by F. Crowe (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), p. 247.

² Scholars who have addressed Lonergan's theory of conversion, including those forms not treated in this paper, include R. Doran, *Theology and the Dialectic of History*. (Toronto:

methodological cautions that must be respected in using the New Testament writings in the broad fashion in which I will use them in this paper.

PRINCIPLES FOR UTILIZING THE NEW TESTAMENT WRITINGS

Clearly there are methodological difficulties to be surmounted in using the Acts of the Apostles as a source for Paul's life. There are also difficulties involved in utilizing materials from certain Pauline letters whose authorship is disputed. There are further difficulties with respect to the chronology of Paul's undisputed letters and, in the case of Philippians, difficulties in determining the location from which Paul wrote.

For reasons that will be adverted to briefly in the notes for this paper, I judge that it is possible to draw upon Paul's undisputed letters and the Acts of the Apostles in arriving at an understanding of his conversions.³ I further judge that reports from Colossians, Ephesians and II Timothy, letters whose authorship is disputed, can be utilized to supplement the framework of Paul's journey constructed from his undisputed letters and from Acts.⁴ As far as the sequence of the letters that are of central consequence for this study, the position taken here is

University of Toronto Press, 1990); M. Rende, *Loneragan and Conversion* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1991); W. Conn, *Christian Conversion* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist, 1986). Among these, Robert Doran's salutary contribution in the area of psychic conversion deserves particular attention.

³ See R. Longenecker, "Realized Hope, New Commitment, and Developed Proclamation," pp. 18-42 in R. Longenecker, ed., *The Road from Damascus: The Impact of Paul's Conversion on His Life, Thought, and Ministry* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997) for an assessment of the compatibility between Luke's reports in Acts and Paul's reports in his undisputed letters. Longenecker, p. 26, rightly notes that Paul descriptions in Galatians 1:13-17 and Philippians 3:4-11 of the dramatic shift in his life are congruent with the descriptions of Paul's conversions that are narrated in chapters 9, 22, and 26 of Acts. For an analysis of Luke's accuracy in political identifications and the argument that Luke's narrative is reliable in other matters, see R. Cassidy, *Jesus, Politics and Society: A Study of Luke's Gospel* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1978), pp. 9-19 and idem, *Society and Politics in the Acts of the Apostles* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1987), pp. 145-170.

⁴ The significance of the fact that Colossians, Ephesians, and II Timothy image Paul as a Roman prisoner should be underscored at this point. Scholars are divided over whether Paul authored these three letters. However, even if it is concluded that Paul did not author any of these letters, it is still significant that other authors decided to assume the persona of Paul as a chained prisoner when they decided to write in Paul's name.

that Paul first authored Romans, later Philemon, and still later Philippians.⁵ Finally the location for Philippians is Rome where Paul, at the end of his journey, was a prisoner in chains.⁶

PAUL'S RELIGIOUS CONVERSION

Within studies of Luke-Acts, it is a commonplace to say that, if Luke considers an event to be important, he includes it once in his narrative. If Luke considers an event to have special significance, he describes it twice within his narrative. If it possesses the highest possible significance, then Luke draws upon his literary skills to find a way of mentioning the event three times.

Such is the case with the event of Paul's religious conversion, an event that some authors also prefer to characterize as the event of Paul's commissioning.⁷ This now well known event, Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus, is related fully three times within the story line of Acts. In Acts 9, it is a third person report of the events that occurred on the road and then subsequently in Damascus where Paul is befriended by Ananias. In Acts 22 it is proclaimed to the rioting crowd in Jerusalem by Paul in the first person. In Acts 26 it is again narrated by Paul in the first person as he addresses King Agrippa and the Roman governor Porcius Festus at Caesarea.

The three accounts contain varying details but agree in their essential descriptions.⁸ Since material from Paul's speech in Acts 26 will be referenced below, it is appropriate to treat the description of Paul's conversion that appears in the first part of that chapter. Paul begins by relating that, even though it was midday, he and his companions were overpowered by a light from heaven that

⁵A Romans-then Philemon-then Philippians sequence is rigorously argued for in chapter nine of R. Cassidy, *Paul in Chains: Roman Imprisonment and the Letters of Paul* (New York: Crossroad, 2001, forthcoming).

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Paul's commission to preach to the Gentiles is mentioned in all three conversion narratives within Acts. At Acts 9:15-16, in his instructions to Ananias, the risen Jesus announces Paul's commission in the following terms: "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel; for I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name."

⁸ See R. Longenecker, art. cit., pp. 26-27, for an enumeration of some of the differences and an underscoring of a key feature common to all three accounts, namely, that Christ himself is the author of the change in the strategy of redemption represented by Paul's mission to the Gentiles.

was brighter than the sun (26:13). Paul then heard a voice addressing him by name: "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" (26:14), Paul's response was to ask: "Who are you Lord?" To which question he received the reply: "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting" (26:15).

In essence, this divinely initiated encounter was decisive for a religious conversion that was profoundly Christological.⁹ It can be said that, from this point forward, Paul experienced and manifested a fundamental re-orientation concerning Jesus. From this point forward, Jesus, the one whose name Paul was striving to eradicate, became the Sovereign of Paul's life, the Lord whose name Paul henceforth ardently desired to proclaim.¹⁰ In essence, from this radical moment forward, Jesus became for Paul the one whom he loved with all of his being, the one for whom he would do all things. Paul was, so to speak, taken over by Christ Jesus. In the language of Philippians 3, it was at that point that Christ Jesus made Paul "his own."

More could be written at this juncture in an effort to take account of Paul's own references in his letters to his encounter with the risen Jesus.¹¹ More might also be written to explicate the relatedness that Paul came to experience with the Father and the Holy Spirit as a consequence of this decisive encounter with Jesus.¹² Also it is to be noted, if only in passing, that this dramatic experience of the risen Jesus never resulted in the abandonment of Paul's Jewish heritage. For the purposes of this paper, it must suffice to underscore the depth of what Paul had experienced. In words drawn from Lonergan,¹³ it can be said that the love Paul would henceforth manifest for Jesus would be "without condition, qualification, reservation." It would be "with all one's heart and all one's soul and all one's mind and all one's strength."

⁹ It should be emphasized that Paul's encounter was with a person, i.e., with Jesus. Paul recognized this person to be the expected Christ. In certain respects Paul's basic theology did not change (see J. Fitzmyer, *Paul and His Theology: A Brief Sketch*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1987), p. 31). Nevertheless, Paul's apprehension of the crucified Jesus as Messiah and Lord exercised a profound influence over all aspects of his outlook.

¹⁰ According to his memorable statement at I Cor 9:16, Paul actually experienced a "compulsion" to proclaim the Gospel.

¹¹ Gal 1:16 and I Cor 9:1, 15:8 are key references within Paul's own letters. See also Philippians 3:7-11.

¹² See G. Fee, "Paul's Conversion as Key to His Understanding of the Spirit," in R. Longenecker, *The Road from Damascus*, op. cit. pp. 166-183.

¹³ B.J. F. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (New York: Seabury, 1972), p. 242.

PAUL'S PERSPECTIVE ON THE IMPERIAL SYSTEM

According to the thesis of this paper, Paul's unqualified love for Jesus impelled him to undertake the vast missionary endeavor described in the pages of Acts and reflected in his own letters. This unqualified love led him also to endure the sufferings described in II Corinthians 11 and elsewhere. Finally, this unqualified love for Christ, coupled with insights that Paul gained as his journey unfolded, brought him to an aspect or form of moral conversion involving a revised estimation of the relative merits of the Roman imperial system.

In assessing the multiple facets of Paul's identity and in considering the complexity of his journey, attention must be given to more than one form or type of moral conversion. Given the pre-conversion Paul's commitment (within the setting of Judaism) to bringing about particular goods, a good of order, and terminal values, it is possible to say Paul had already experienced a degree of moral conversion. Nevertheless, he participated in the stoning of Stephen (Acts 8:1) and his own words at Acts 26:10-11 indicate his murderous disposition and conduct toward other Christians besides Stephen.

Paul's religious conversion affected his apprehension of the human good and also functioned to overcome the murderousness present within his heart and manifested in his conduct. Nevertheless, these two aspects of moral conversion are not focused upon in the present analysis. Rather the focus is now upon Paul's eventual reevaluation of the Roman imperial system as his life journey unfolded under the continued influence of his religious conversion.

Clearly, the topic of the Roman system and the emperors and governors who administered it and extended it is a topic unto itself. It is a topic that has filled the shelves of major libraries. Nevertheless, it is possible to arrive at the essence of Paul's initial perspective on this major topic by considering a single passage from his writings. The passage itself, as will now be seen, does not provide the rationale from which Paul so favorably assessed the Roman authorities and their empire.¹⁴ In unmistakable terms, it does, however, set forth the advice that Christians are to recognize the authorities of the empire as "ministers of God" and be subject to them. These words were specifically addressed to the Christians of

¹⁴ See chapter three of R. Cassidy, *Paul in Chains*, op. cit., for a discussion of the concrete factors in the circumstances of the Christians at Rome that may have influenced Paul to provide this counsel. The possibility that Paul's status as a Roman citizen may have biased his counsel will be discussed below.

Rome, residents of the capital of the empire. They were presumably written from Corinth in the middle 50s, more than twenty years after his experience on the road to Damascus.¹⁵ The following is the RSV translation of this passage:

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore he who resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of him who is in authority, then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain; he is the servant of God to execute his wrath on the wrongdoer. Therefore one must be subject, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience. For the same reason you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. Pay all of them their due, taxes to whom taxes are due, revenue to whom revenue is due, respect to whom respect is due, honor to whom honor is due (Romans 13:1-7).

The fact that this passage is one of the most commented upon passages in the entire New Testament is one indication of its significance. Scripture commentators have attempted to grasp the meaning of every word and every phrase employed here. Distressed at the counsel given in this passage, a small handful of scholars have proposed that Paul did not write these words.¹⁶ Rather they were composed by another author and inserted into the text of Romans at a later date. However, along with other factors, the New Testament manuscript evidence weighs heavily against such a theory; this passage is an integral part of all of the earliest manuscripts for Romans.¹⁷ Other scholars have sought to find nuances or loopholes that would effectively qualify the degree of support that this passage affords to the Roman authorities. The results of this scrutiny have generally not been persuasive. For, in the end, Paul's words have an obvious thrust to them: he counsels subjection and deference to the Roman authorities and their taxes on the grounds that these authorities are serving God's purposes.

¹⁵ See J. Fitzmyer, *Romans* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), pp. 85-88, for a thorough discussion of the date and place of composition.

¹⁶ See, for example, J. Kallas, "Romans xiii. 1-7: An Interpolation," *New Testament Studies* 11 (1964-65), pp. 365-74.

¹⁷ J. Fitzmyer, *Romans*, op. cit., p. 664, notes this point within his discussion of the various factors supporting the view that Romans 13:1-7 is authentically from Paul's hand.

It is significant that these words are addressed to Christians who are living in the capital of the Empire. Another of Paul's purposes in writing to the Christians at Rome concerns his desire to be hospitably welcomed by them on his way to Spain (15:24). He tells them confidently that he will first take his major collection to Jerusalem and then head to the Empire's Western frontiers with a stopover in Rome. Paul, who loves Christ Jesus with an unqualified love, will carry the name of Jesus to the frontiers of Spain. In the meantime, a part of his counsel to the Christians at Rome is that they regard the Roman authorities as divinely sanctioned, that they defer to them, and co-operate with them.¹⁸

PAUL'S EXPERIENCE OF ROMAN CUSTODY AND ROMAN CHAINS

Nevertheless, in the providence of Christ Jesus who loved Paul and made him his own, nothing of Paul's plans for Spain was to materialize. Rather in a complex scenario whose initial events will be passed over here (see Acts 21:27—23:25) Paul was arrested after he arrived in Jerusalem, put into chains by the Roman tribune, and sent under heavy guard to the Roman governor's residence in Caesarea.

The fact that Paul possessed Roman citizenship and declared it strategically influenced the circumstances of his custody and proved to be the vehicle by which his case was eventually transferred to Rome. Nevertheless, from Acts 21 to Acts 28, for a period encompassing more than four (!) years, Paul remained in chained custody. It is thus well to recognize that both in Acts, and within his own letters, an important new dimension appears in the previously established Paulusbild. To the image of Paul, the widely traveled missionary, and Paul the nurturer of Christian community is added the new startling image of Paul, the Roman prisoner.¹⁹

At this juncture, caution should be exercised in conjecturing that Paul's time as a Roman prisoner supplies the explanation for the moral conversion that he

¹⁸ See chapter three of R. Cassidy, *Paul in Chains*, op. cit., for an analysis emphasizing that Paul counsels his readers to comply with the Roman authorities in a thorough, virtually exceptionless, manner.

¹⁹ It is significant that, in addition to Acts, the following New Testament texts all portray Paul, the prisoner, in high relief: Philemon, Philippians, Colossians, Ephesians, and II Timothy. The image of Paul, the Roman prisoner, is thus far from marginal within the canon of the New Testament writings.

experienced, a conversion in which he radically revised his initial assessment concerning the good represented by the Roman empire and those who ruled it. The intention of this paper is not to assert that Paul's experience in Roman chains is the only possible explanation for the moral conversion that he underwent relative to imperial rule. Other factors such as his disgust with the licentiousness and debauchery that he became familiar with after his arrival in Rome may have also played a role in causing Paul to revise the counsel he had earlier given.²⁰ Nevertheless, by the time of his Letter to the Philippians, Paul's perspective relative to the Roman authorities has changed dramatically and it is worth remembering that Paul's chains weighed heavily upon him in the interval between Romans and Philippians.

Because the phenomenon of Paul's chains and his response to them is a topic that has traditionally been overlooked within New Testament studies,²¹ it is appropriate to take a few moments to appreciate just how compelling several New Testament passages are in reference to this phenomenon. Let us now transport ourselves back to the assembly hall in Caesarea and to the point in Paul's speech in which he has just finished detailing his encounter with the Risen Jesus. This speech has had an electrifying effect upon the audience. As we rejoin the scene, the Roman governor Porcius Festus has just tried to silence Paul with the exclamation (26:24): "Paul, you are mad, your great learning is turning you mad."

Paul denies that he is mad and turns to implore King Agrippa, implying that the King should become a Christian. When Agrippa asks if it is Paul's intention to cause him to become a Christian, Paul replies in the following way, with words that may be termed "incandescent":

And Paul said, "Whether short or long, I would to God that not only you, but also all who hear me this day might become such as I am – except for these chains" (Acts 26:29).

²⁰ In chapter ten of R. Cassidy, *Paul in Chains*, op. cit., an extended analysis is made of Nero's depravity and murderousness. Paul, arriving at Rome during Nero's reign, would have become much more familiar with Nero's aberrations.

²¹ Indicative of the tendency among Pauline scholars to prescind from the reality constituted by Paul's chains and Roman-mandated imprisonment are two English-language works that bear the same title. G. Caird, *Paul's Letters from Prison* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976) and J. Houlden, *Paul's Letters from Prison* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1970) both evidence scant appreciation for the significance of Paul's Roman chains for Philemon, Philippians, and the other letters in which Paul is imaged as a prisoner.

Within the New Testament writings, there are other texts that depict Paul, the prisoner, reflecting upon his chains. It is disputed whether Colossians was authored by Paul or by a disciple of his. If not written by Paul himself, the ending of this letter nevertheless portrays Paul uttering a *cri de coeur* to his readers regarding his situation. It is a visceral exclamation that is reminiscent of Paul's outcry at the conclusion of his speech at Caesarea. In the final verse of Colossians (4:18), one reads the following injunction: "Remember my chains!" Similarly, in Ephesians, another letter whose authorship is disputed, Paul portrays himself, or is portrayed by another author, as: "a prisoner for Christ Jesus" (3:1) and as "an ambassador in a chain" (6:20).

Along with Colossians and Ephesians, II Timothy is a letter of disputed authorship that also images Paul as a Roman prisoner in chains. The undisputed Letter to Philemon does also.²² According to the Acts of the Apostles, Paul reached Rome as a prisoner in chains not as the Spain-bound missionary that Paul had projected that he would be in Romans. II Timothy also portrays Paul as a prisoner in Rome (1:17). As noted at the outset, the judgment of this paper is that Paul's Letter to the Philippians also testifies to his situation as a prisoner in Rome.

THE PERSPECTIVE OF PHILIPPIANS

To be more precise, Philippians reflects Paul's situation as a chained prisoner in Nero's Rome. Nero reigned from A.D. 54 to 68 and Paul almost certainly arrived in Rome during the early 60s. It is beyond the scope of this paper to detail Nero's licentiousness, his brutality, his murderousness, and his efforts to arrogate to himself virtually every title or honor connoting exalted status.²³ According to Acts 28, Paul awaited the emperor's adjudication of his case in rented quarters. Chained and guarded by a soldier, he was nevertheless able to receive visitors.²⁴

²² Even if Paul's authorship of Colossians, Ephesians, and II Timothy is rejected, Philemon suffices to establish that Paul's experienced an extended interval of time as a chained prisoner and to establish that this status became important for his self-understanding. Read carefully, this letter discloses that Paul's condition in chains is central to the appeal that he is addressing to Philemon.

²³ See note 18 above regarding Nero's depravity. *Paul in Chains*, op. cit., chapter ten, section three, treats Nero's obsession with receiving every exalted title and unrivaled acclaim.

²⁴ In terms of the existing types of Roman custody, Paul's confinement was probably *custodia militaris*. In several ways, Paul's situation resembled that of contemporary "house arrest."

According to Philippians Paul is chained but has received assistance from Epaphroditus and enjoys good support from Timothy. In Philippians, the report that Paul's imprisonment is because of his allegiance to Christ has spread "throughout the whole praetorian guard" (1:13). In addition, at the close of the letter Paul is able to send greetings to the Philippian Christians from the Christians who are employed in "Caesar's household" (4:22). One further aspect to consider is whether Paul's letter was subject to censorship. Presumably, Epaphroditus will be the carrier of this letter, but it may be subject to review by those supervising Paul's custody.²⁵

It is also significant that Paul is writing to Christians who are, like himself, Roman citizens.²⁶ For such is the meaning of the fact that the city of Philippi has legal standing as a Roman "colony." The Christians of Philippi are held in evident esteem by Paul (4:15). He entertains the hope that he still might visit them again (2:24). Nevertheless he also recognizes that a capital verdict may be delivered against him (2:17). Inasmuch as the recipients of this letter were especially familiar with Roman judicial procedure and with the political situation in the capital, they were in a position to appreciate all that Paul was encountering and facing in Rome.

In writing to the Philippians Paul never expressly refers to the counsel that he had earlier set forth in Romans 13:1-7. Nevertheless, his counsel to the Philippians regarding the Roman social order and the Roman authorities themselves functions to set aside this previous counsel. Precisely this development, the fact that Philippians "supersedes" Romans, provides the rationale for this paper's thesis that, in Lonergan's categories, Paul's religious conversion was followed by a key element of moral conversion.

Within the confines of the present paper, it is possible to consider three of the passages in Philippians that signal a perspective that is significantly different

Nevertheless, Paul was bound with a chain as he received visitors. He actually may have been chained to the soldier who was assigned to secure his custody.

²⁵ Paul's achievement in critiquing the Roman order and encouraging faithfulness to "Lord" Jesus and the citizenship of heaven is all the more remarkable if he wrote to the Philippians knowing that any communication would have to be approved by Roman censors.

²⁶ The accounts in Acts that pertain to Paul's citizenship are at 16:35-39; 22:25-29; 25:9-12. C. Roetzel, *Paul the Man and the Myth* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999), pp. 21-22, and others whom he cites have questioned Luke's reliability in these reports without carefully considering the nuanced portrayal that Luke actually gives concerning Paul's estimation of his citizenship. On this point see R. Cassidy, *Society and Politics in the Acts of the Apostles*, op. cit., pp. 100-03 and the relevant notes.

from that of Romans 13. Again, it must not be thought that Paul wrote these passages to set forth a systematic revision of what he had previously written. What is clear, however, is that the author of Romans 13:1-7 could have hardly authored the following passages unless he had undergone a moral conversion.

The first passage to be considered is one that occurs in a section in which Paul is encouraging the Philippians to put aside any internal grumbling and disputing and to live lives that are uncompromised in every aspect. In giving this encouragement, he states the following rationale:

...that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world...(Phil 2:15).

There are nuances of meaning in the phrases of this verse that cannot be attended to here. Nevertheless, Paul's characterization of the society of Philippi (and by association, the society of the capital) as "a crooked and perverse generation"²⁷ is markedly in tension with the tenor of his words in Romans 13. Paul does not explicitly name the Roman authorities at Philippi as those responsible for the prevailing perverseness. Nevertheless, they are surely not exempted from the negative assessment that he expresses regarding the prevailing situation.

Two introductory exegetical points are appropriate regarding the next passage from Philippians. The first is to note that Paul's terminology at 3:19 is forceful to the point of coarseness. Those he is decrying are rebuked for treating their sexual organs as idols. In the preceding verse he has indicted them for living "as enemies of the cross of Christ." In effect, Paul's words charge these opponents with actively contravening, disparaging, and trampling upon the central values of Jesus' saving work, represented by the cross.²⁸

²⁷ Various commentators on Philippians consider that Paul is here referencing a Septuagint text to castigate as "a crooked and perverse generation" adversaries who promote the observance of the Jewish law. However, this interpretation fails to note that Paul actually states that the Philippians are living "in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation." Gordon Fee, *Paul's Letter to the Philippians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), p. 245, rightly observes that, while Paul's wording is influenced by a phrase from the Septuagint, his basic assertion is "is a fair reflection of his view of pagan society."

²⁸ This passage is analyzed at considerable length in section three of chapter eleven in *Paul in Chains*, op. cit. Because of their flagrant self-indulgence in sexual matters and because of their arrogance, the adversaries Paul to whom Paul refers are in diametric opposition to the spirit of self-sacrifice that Jesus incarnated in his crucifixion.

But who are these opponents? Paul's context in imperial Rome must again be recalled. It is the context of unrestrained licentiousness and the brutalization of the innocent. It is the context of Nero and those of his ilk. Indeed, Nero and his confederates are the adversaries of the cross of Christ whom Paul excoriates.²⁹

Consider now the following passage bearing in mind that exegetical comments have yet to be made regarding the latter verses in which Paul encourages the Philippians in their true calling:

For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, live as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their end is destruction, their god is their sexual organ, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will change our fragile body to be like his glorious body, by the power which enables him even to subject all things to himself (Phil 3:18-21; au. trans.).

As is evident, Paul is concerned here to draw a contrast between the destruction of those whose conduct is so reprehensible and the salvation of those who are committed in their faithfulness. In developing his argument, Paul implicitly recognizes the Roman citizenship that he and the Philippians possess in common. He emphasizes that heavenly citizenship, the second citizenship that they share in common is an incomparably greater citizenship. Its standards take precedence over the standards of any earthly citizenship because of the fact that the one who is truly "Savior," the one who is truly "Lord," resides in heaven.³⁰ In contrast to those who have the power to degrade their own bodies and brutalize the bodies of others, this Savior has the far great power for transforming the human body into a body of glory. Jesus indeed has the power "to subject (same verb as in Romans 13:1,5) all things to himself."

The third passage in Philippians that testifies to Paul's changed perspective regarding Roman imperial rule is the most celebrated passage within this letter:

²⁹ Paul's situation in chained custody in Nero's Rome, i.e., his situation as a prisoner in contact with members of the praetorian guard and members of the imperial staff, afforded him a new familiarity regarding Nero's aberrations and abuses. A possible explanation for the "tears" that Paul now experiences and refers to is that they arise from Paul's knowledge of the harm done to innocents and/or from his frustration that there appears to be no means for addressing such abominable conduct.

³⁰ In effect, because Jesus' sovereignty as heavenly "Lord" is unsurpassed, the heavenly citizenship associated with him provides the criterion for assessing all forms of earthly citizenship. Heavenly citizenship thus not only surpasses Roman citizenship. It provides the criterion for evaluating the worth of Roman citizenship.

the Christological hymn passage of Philippians 2. After Romans 13:1-7, Philippians 2:5-11 may be the most commented upon passage in the Pauline corpus. These verses might conceivably have come from an already existing Christian hymn. Conceivably, they might have been composed by Paul himself on another occasion and used again here. Or Paul may have composed these beautiful lines *ex abundantia cordis* right in the process of formulating his letter. In the end, what is important is that it was precisely these reflections regarding Christ's unsurpassed sovereignty that Paul decided to set before the Philippians:

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the human likeness. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Phil 2:5-11; au. trans.).

Every verse in this passage richly repays careful analysis. Nevertheless this paper's focus is necessarily upon the verses that describe Jesus' cosmic status as Lord. The first verses of this passage evocatively describe Jesus' self-emptying even to the point of a degrading death on a cross.³¹ However, God has therefore exalted him and has bestowed upon him every perquisite of sovereignty. The privileges of Jesus' sovereignty must now be considered with reference to Paul's circumstances as a prisoner. For Paul was awaiting trial before a Roman emperor who claimed expansive sovereignty and who prized every title including the title of "lord."

Paul affirms that the name God has bestowed upon Jesus "is above every name." Because Jesus is now so established, Paul emphasizes that two worshipful responses to Jesus are incumbent upon every being.³² At the name of Jesus, every

³¹ At this juncture the key insight to be grasped is that Jesus' death on a cross represents the verdict of the Roman governor and the implementation of that verdict by Roman soldiers. Jesus' degrading death is thus unalterably a Roman-imposed death. In effect, Paul was now pondering these aspects from his own situation as a disciple who was himself now proximate to the possibility of a Roman-imposed death.

³² That the entire universe, without qualification, is obligated to acclaim Jesus is signaled by the encompassing phrases: "in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth."

knee must bow before him. At the name of Jesus, every tongue must confess that he is indeed Lord.

As he writes to the Philippians, is it Paul's view that Nero and the other Roman authorities are somehow exempt from the obligation of acknowledging the sovereignty of Jesus? To pose this question directly is to touch upon the principal argument of this paper. For what is clear in Philippians is that the rulers who control the Roman social order now share the same fundamental responsibility as those they rule. The starting point for speaking about the Roman authorities is no longer the starting point of Romans: that they are servants of God worthy of receiving subjection and honor. In effect, the starting point of Philippians is that the Roman authorities are obligated to join the Christians they rule in genuflecting before the sovereign Jesus and in proclaiming that he is truly Lord.

In Romans 13:1-7 the sovereignty of Jesus was never alluded to. Now, in Philippians, the sovereignty of Jesus is everything. In Romans 13 the standards of Jesus relative to service and relative to taxation were never alluded to. Now, in Philippians, the standards that flow from heavenly citizenship are everything. In Philippians, Paul is not expressly setting aside the counsel he set forth in Romans 13. Nevertheless, Philippians 2 makes clear that the framework undergirding the specific counsels of Romans 13 is now radically reconfigured.

Would Paul, if he had been asked, have desired to continue any facets of the counsel of Romans 13? The data for answering such a question are simply not available. However, what is incontrovertible, is that there has been a fundamental shift in Paul's perspective between the time of Romans and the time of Philippians. What formerly appeared to him as a divinely provided instrument for the good of society now no longer appeared to him in the same light.

REFLECTIONS ON PAUL'S MORAL CONVERSION IN LONERGAN'S CATEGORIES

It is now appropriate to return to the categories of religious and moral conversion. It is this paper's thesis is that, after his first religious conversion, Paul subsequently underwent a moral conversion relative to his estimation of the Roman empire. As a result of this conversion, Paul came to set aside his originally favorable assessment regarding the Roman authorities and their system of empire. Formerly he had emphasized that it was important for Christians to be

subject to the Roman authorities. As a consequence of his later conversion, he came to emphasize that all existing beings, the emperor and the highest Roman authorities not excluded, were to be subject to Jesus, the one whom a Roman governor had crucified. While Paul did not elaborate upon the differences in Christian conduct that would follow as a consequence of this new emphasis, that there would be a practical conduct different from that recommended in Romans cannot be doubted.

Within Fr. Lonergan's writings, are there passages that shed additional light upon the nature of Paul's moral conversion? In response to this question, I would like to cite three passages from *Method in Theology* and conjecture regarding their applicability to Paul. I underscore that there is a high degree of conjecture present in the next paragraphs simply because it is not possible to know the precise path that Paul followed in his conversion with respect to the Roman empire.

In his chapter on Foundations, Lonergan speaks of the contribution of intellectual, moral, and religious conversion and briefly states that the force of moral conversion is to free a person from individual, group, and general bias. Fr. Lonergan previously described moral conversion in terms of a rooting out of individual, group, and general bias in his chapter on Dialectics.³³ In his chapter on Foundations, he describes this process in the following terms:

It must be ensured that positions are accepted and counter-positions are rejected. But that can be ensured only if investigators have attained intellectual conversion to renounce the myriad of false philosophies, moral conversion to keep themselves free of individual, group, and general bias, and religious conversion so that in fact each loves the Lord his God with his whole heart and his whole soul and all his mind and all his strength (emphasis added).³⁴

Certainly no firm conclusion can be reached regarding withdrawal from group bias as an appropriate description for the path of Paul's moral conversion. Nevertheless, if it can be supposed that Paul's holding of Roman citizenship had enmeshed him in a form of group bias, then his path toward moral conversion may have involved efforts to overcome the influence of that bias. Again, this may

³³ B.J. F. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, op.cit., p. 240.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 270.

not have been the case.³⁵ Nevertheless, the sketch of such a possible scenario can be a useful tool for engendering reflection about the path that Paul actually followed.

The second passage from *Method in Theology* that is relevant at this juncture is actually a continuation of the analysis made in the passage just cited from the chapter on Foundations. While Fr. Lonergan is here speaking about conversion in general terms, his reference to a person discovering what is unauthentic within himself or herself and turning away from it may possibly apply to the process that Paul followed in terms of his moral conversion:

Conversion is a matter of moving from one set of roots to another. It is a process that does not occur in the marketplace. It is a process that may be occasioned by scientific inquiry. But it occurs only inasmuch as a man discovers what is unauthentic in himself and turns away from it, inasmuch as he discovers what the fulness of human authenticity can be and embraces it with his whole being.³⁶

The third passage that is relevant to the present discussion occurs in the chapter on Functional Specialities. Here Fr. Lonergan speaks of conversion in general terms describing the profound re-orientation that conversion brings. The words that will be underscored would seem applicable to Paul's moral conversion as well as his religious conversion:

By conversion is understood a transformation of the subject and his world. Normally it is a prolonged process though its explicit acknowledgement may be concentrated in a few momentous judgments and decisions. Still it is not just a development or even a series of developments. Rather it is a resultant change of course and direction. It is as if one's eyes were opened and one's former world faded and fell away. There emerges something

³⁵ Fully apart from the prerogatives that were his as a Roman citizen, Paul's initially positive estimation of the Roman system may have been colored by the relative benefits that he enjoyed as an apostle who traveled widely within the territories of the empire. II Cor 11:23-27 provides eloquent testimony that Paul encountered nearly overwhelming calamities as he conducted his ministry. Nevertheless, despite these obstacles and calamities, he did consider that Roman "peace and order" had facilitated his highly successful ministry in seven or more of the empire's eastern provinces. Paul's words at Romans 15:19 indicate that he is well satisfied with what, aided by grace, he has been able to accomplish in these eastern provinces.

³⁶ B.J. F. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, op.cit., p. 271.

new that fructifies in inter-locking, cumulative sequences of developments on all levels and in all departments of human living.³⁷

THE OUTCOME OF PAUL'S CONVERSIONS

To summarize, it is the thesis of this paper that Paul experienced his former world fading and falling away not once but twice. Within a brief moment on the road to Damascus, Paul experienced the dissolution of the world of his anti-Jesus Judaism. (It was not Paul's Judaism, but rather his anti-Jesus zealotry that was dissolved. The heritage of Judaism was retained in Paul's religious conversion, but the anti-Jesus feature of his worldview was turned 180 degrees.) At the time of this religious conversion, Paul's identity as a Roman citizen and his favorable outlook toward the Roman imperial system were seemingly not called into question. The religiously converted Paul was thus able to write magisterially to the Christians at Rome including a counsel regarding the Roman authorities that did not yet reflect his moral conversion relative to Roman rule.

In time, during the course of the imprisonment described above, Paul experienced a highly significant form of moral conversion.³⁸ As a consequence of this conversion, Paul came to see the Roman authorities, their dominion, and their practices with a radically changed vision. As explained above, Paul's letter to the Philippians reflects both his religious conversion regarding Jesus and his moral conversion relative to the imperial order established and maintained by Roman power.

Although the New Testament writings do not afford any glimpse of Paul's decisive trial before Nero, it can be conjectured that Paul did indeed receive such

³⁷ Ibid. p. 130.

³⁸ Although Paul, within Judaism, may have possessed the type of conversion regarding the human good that Lonergan describes in *Method in Theology*, op. cit., pp. 47-51, his precise outlook regarding the Roman system and the Roman authorities cannot be determined until the time of Romans 13:1-7, that is, until after the time of his religious conversion on the road to Damascus. The deficiencies in his perspective regarding the Roman authorities and their system, as evidenced in Romans 13:1-7, are indeed serious deficiencies. Thus it is highly significant that, by the time of Philippians, Paul had experienced a type of moral conversion that re-oriented his outlook regarding the imperial system.

a trial.³⁹ It may be further conjectured that he made his presentation at that trial as both a religiously and morally converted person, perhaps utilizing many of the same concepts that he had brilliantly expressed in writing his Letter to the Philippians.⁴⁰

³⁹ At Acts 19:21 Paul opines that it is ordained for him to “see Rome.” At Acts 23:11, the risen Jesus encourages Paul in Jerusalem telling him: “...so you must bear witness also at Rome.” At Acts 27:24, in the midst of peril at sea, Paul announces this message from an angel of God: “Do not be afraid, Paul; you must stand before Caesar...” At the end of Acts, this prophecy remains unfulfilled. Nevertheless, Paul is now in the Rome of Nero. He remains uncompromised in his faithfulness to Jesus his Lord and, in principle, stands ready to render any testimony that may be required of him.

⁴⁰⁴⁰ Commentators have frequently noted the resemblance that Philippians has to many types of farewell addresses. It is also possible to read Philippians as a document in which Paul attempts to formulate various key concepts that he might well utilize in giving testimony during a formal trial before Nero.

BERNARD LONERGAN: EDUCATIONIST AND PHILOSOPHER

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BERNARD LONERGAN IS one of those thinkers it is very difficult to define and pin down with exactitude. This is not unrelated to one of the problems I wish to address in this paper, albeit at some distance from Lonergan's home continent of North America and also at some distance from academia, for I am not a professional academic — namely, the relative neglect of this profound and far-reaching thinker. It is a trait of modern life that we like our celebrities — of whatever kind — to be capable of being pigeon-holed, classified, neatly defined; those who defy any simple categorization — a philosopher, a geographer, a specialist in X, are in danger of frustrating the mode journalistic craving for a neat sound-bite. They not only fall between two stools, they have the worst possible fate of falling between many stools.

Loneragan is usually referred to as a theologian and even as a philosopher and theologian or — a rather unusual species this — a philosopher-theologian. He is also with good reason also referred to as a methodologist. But there is a very good case to be made for the claim that he is, perhaps first and foremost, an educationist. By calling Lonergan an educationist, I am not just referring to the fact that he was for most of his life a teacher, though he would not have been the educationist he was if he had not known education from the inside — in the classroom, the seminar room and the lecture hall, at what we in education sometimes call “the chalk face.”

In this talk I want to say something about Lonergan the educationist and to link these comments to some about Lonergan the philosopher. In a book of mine to be published by the Lonergan Workshop on Lonergan and the analytic tradition called *Philosophical Encounters*, I make the observation that if one is looking around for intellectual allies of Lonergan one is more likely to find them

on the education shelves of the library or bookshop than on the philosophy shelves. Reflecting on this myself since, I feel that there is a reason for this and the reason has something to do with the neglect or rejection of Lonergan in philosophical circles within the analytic tradition.

So, first, Lonergan the educationist. Education is about learning and Lonergan was fascinated and fascinating on the topic of how children, and all of us, learn anything. The notions we find in *Insight* about the “known unknown” and how we use the known to attack the unknown by creating a ‘heuristic structure’ are among the best things I have ever read on the nature of learning. One of the things the good teacher does is to use what the pupils already know to help them discover what they do not yet know; to provide them with the clues which will enable them to reach the answer; to furnish them with the skills which they then use to solve the problem. The way we see the world, the way we interpret it and the way we cope with it, all depend on what we already carry around with us in our heads. Conversely, Lonergan was also well aware of the fact that whatever new or original understanding we achieve has to be fitted into the body of knowledge and understanding we have already acquired and that this may cause a shift, which can be more or less fundamental and radical, among the beliefs we have entertained, perhaps for the best part of a lifetime. Learning is not a mechanistic or static thing but a dynamic, living activity and sometimes a bloody and messy business, which grows and develops and is driven and propelled by **asking and answering questions**.

Teachers are always asking questions and they begin to feel they are getting some where when their students begin to ask questions of their own. Lonergan is quite eloquent on the role of the question in driving inquiry forward and making knowledge possible. So within his cognitional theory, it is questions for intelligence that promote us from the experiential level to the level of understanding; and it is questions for reflection that promote us from the level of understanding to the level of judgment. He points out how our realization that our understanding and knowledge are incomplete commonly generates further questions; the questions identify the “known unknown” and so move us to further insights. Insights coalesce into viewpoints and lower viewpoints are raised by further questions to higher viewpoints. In the area of intellectual development, Lonergan terms the question “the operator,” the principle that moves us onwards and upwards. As he says, in one of his, deceptively simple statements in *Insight*: “Thus, unless one asks the further questions, one remains with the insights one has already, and so intelligence does not develop.” For the same reason, it is

when the stream of questions dries up, when there are no further questions to be asked, that we know we have reached the end of our investigations of a particular situation.

This emphasis Lonergan places on questioning and answering not only helps to illustrate the dynamic, living character of learning but also its subjective character. The questions are asked by the subject; the answers to the questions are proposed by the subject. It is not only the case that inquiry is an anticipatory activity - we ask questions because we anticipate finding answers to them; and hence we move inquiry along by means of predicting and hypothesizing. But this dynamic aspect, in turn, brings out the inescapable subjectivity of knowledge since "the proximate sources of meaning are in the subject." Again, "the fruit of knowledge grows on the tree of the subject." And here — as we touch on the vexed issue of subjectivity — is where we arrive at the cross-over point between Lonergan the man of educational vision and Lonergan the neglected philosopher.

For there can be no doubt that the ascendant philosophical tradition in Britain and the United States has great problems in handling the subjective, or even in acknowledging it. And hence Lonergan's strong focus on the subject is bound to create philosophical barriers between him and most — but not all — members of the analytic tradition. Yet in education, few would deny that a strong focus on the subject is inescapable. This is not only because teachers are all too aware of the subjectivity of knowledge, seeing every day as they do the difference between pupils of different levels of ability as well as the differences between pupils from different social backgrounds. It is also because education, in the Western tradition deriving from Greece and Rome, at least, is concerned with the whole person. In England, I belong to a group of people called school inspectors, and the government has set up a system requiring every school in the land to be inspected every six years. We inspect schools under many categories relating to learning, such as standards of attainment, the quality of teaching and learning, the curriculum and so forth. But we also inspect under the heading of the school's provision for the personal development of the students. We look at provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the students. Those are the headings or categories we inspect under and the reason is simple: schools are not just exam factories where students are graded according to the academic scores they achieve but they are places in which human beings mature, grow and develop. What is more, such is the widespread recognition of the subjectivity of learning in education that academic attainment cannot be separated neatly from personal development. A strong correlation is usually

found to exist between academic success and failure and social and personal development or failure to develop. The causes of academic failure in our schools are more often, in my experience, on the nurture side of the nature/nurture debate than simply on the nature side.

The radical compatibility I see between Lonergan's philosophy, and educational thinking is centered, I believe, on the focus of that philosophy on the subject. This was a focus which was sharpened and deepened as Lonergan moved from *Insight* to *Method*. In *Method* the first three levels of consciousness — the center of attention in *Insight* — are seen to be penetrated and sublated by the fourth level of consciousness, the level of freedom and responsibility, the level of action and values. In *Method* the subject's self-transcendence is considered to be the ultimate criterion of cognitive and moral objectivity, because objectivity is sharply defined as the consequence of authentic subjectivity. With such a notion of objectivity in play, it becomes very clear that the quality of the human subject in the humanities, the humane disciplines — their authenticity and capacity for self-transcendence — is central to accurate understanding and balanced judgment. Understanding and knowledge can never be neatly severed from the human authenticity of the subject who claims to understand and to know. Hence the notion of conversion that lies at the heart of *Method*.

As I have already made clear, it is this emphasis on the role of the subject in knowing and on subjectivity more broadly understood in the area of moral and social development, which creates the bond between Lonergan's thinking and much contemporary educational thinking; and it is the very same emphasis that sets Lonergan apart from — and makes him suspect in the eyes of — most contemporary analytic philosophers. I would like now to turn to the reasons for the embarrassment which analytic philosophers have over the notion of the subject and of how this came to affect broad philosophical tastes and preferences in the course of the twentieth century.

To understand this distaste for the subject in modern analytical philosophy, we might look first at the thinking of the German mathematician and philosopher, Gottlob Frege. Frege radically segregated the subjective and the objective domains of reality. He assigned all aspects of human subjectivity to psychology and ruled that psychology had no place in philosophical discussion. With the aim of bringing clarity to our understanding of mathematics, Frege, in his 1884 work, "The Foundations of Mathematics," set out several methodological or heuristic principles, the point of which was, "Always separate sharply the psychological from the logical, the subjective from the objective." In time, this became the basis

of Frege's semantical and ontological theories. The reason for Frege's strong way with psychology was related simultaneously to his strong desire to ensure the universal validity of science and his fear that empiricist notions of perception, set out in psychological terms, would undermine this universal validity. For, with some justification, Frege believed that if all knowledge claims — including those of science — are based on nothing more than the subject's inherently private impressions and ideas, as empiricism maintains, it becomes impossible to claim that meaning and truth can be truly objective. The shared meanings and concepts to which everyone has access in scientific discussion would be impossible. So Frege set out criteria of objectivity that, he believed, would ensure the universal validity of science — to be objective an entity must be intentionally accessible to all cognitive subjects and causally independent of subjective operations. Furthermore, Frege adopts something approximating conceptual realism, the notion that abstract concepts and thoughts exist even if there are no thinkers who conceive them or think them, just as the moon or the mountains or the North Sea exist even if there is no one to perceive them. By making the logical order independent of the intentional operations of the mind, Frege believed he had stated the conditions which made scientific discourse possible. What is ironic in Frege's espousal of a kind of Platonic conceptual realism is that it hinges on an acceptance of the empiricist conception of objectivity as what is already out there now real and — at the same time — a rejection of the empiricist account of how we achieve an understanding of what is out there now. Rejecting the idealist response to empiricism, which made reality dependent on the mind, Frege attempted to make reality totally independent of the operations of the mind. Objectivity and subjectivity were incompatible and the only way to safeguard objectivity was to get rid of subjectivity as being worthy of philosophical interest. Consideration of the subject and the operations of the subject were not the proper concern of philosophy at all, but the concern of psychology, and psychology had no place in philosophy.

This rigid separation of philosophy from psychology was powerfully reinforced by Wittgenstein, a fellow logician, who was a friend and correspondent of Frege. In the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, Wittgenstein wrote: "Psychology is no more closely related to philosophy than any other natural science. Theory of knowledge is the philosophy of psychology. Does not my study of language correspond to the study of thought-processes, which philosophers used to consider so essential to the philosophy of logic? Only in most cases they got entangled in unessential psychological investigations..." (*TR*

4.1121). Again, in the so-called Blue Book, written in the early 1930s, Wittgenstein says, "Supposing we tried to construct a mind-model as a result of psychological investigations, a model which, as we should say, 'would explain the action of the mind. This model would be part of a psychological theory in the way in which a mechanical model of the ether can be part of a theory of electricity... We may, find that such a mind-model would have to be very complicated and intricate in order to explain the observed mental activities... But this aspect of the mind does not interest us. The problems which it may set are psychological problems, and the method of their solution is that of natural science.'" (p6) So Wittgenstein posits a strong distinction between philosophy and science and sees psychology as belonging to the latter.

This hostility of philosophers in the analytic tradition to psychology was well brought out recently by Michael Dummett, in many ways a disciple of Frege, when he described what he considers to be the essential characteristic of the analytic tradition as "the extrusion of psychology from philosophy." The word extrusion is almost violent in context — the opposite of intrusion, it suggests that psychology has no right to play any role in philosophy and should be summarily and forcibly ejected. One only needs to hear these powerful words from some of the dominant figures in the analytical tradition and then think of Lonergan, to realize the kind of reaction they are likely to have to an epistemology and ontology grounded in a cognitional theory. The psychological basis of Lonergan's philosophy is a major reason for its neglect and rejection by members of the analytic tradition. It is also a major reason why Lonergan's thinking is more cognate with the thinking of many of the thinkers who influence educational thinking in our countries. Some of those mentioned by Lonergan would readily be on the syllabus of most education departments: Piaget, Maslow, Rollo May, Carl Rogers, all mentioned in *Method*, not to mention Stack Sullivan from *Insight*. The reason is that education is open to psychology in its various aspects much more than contemporary Anglo-Saxon philosophy. That is why one will find in contemporary theories about reading an underlying theory of comprehension that has much in common with what Lonergan has to tell us about learning in *Insight*. As the twentieth century progressed, reading came to be seen less and less as a mechanistic process of converting print into sound and more and more as a thoughtful process of grasping meaning in words and sentences, a process of interrogating the text, of predicting and hypothesizing and of checking provisional guesses by reading on and seeing how things hung together. Reading

for meaning was held up as an ideal in contrast to what came to be known as “barking at print.”

Cognitive psychology lies at the heart of modern theories of learning and modern reading theory and, while one will find traces of empiricism and idealism and pragmatism in the theories of cognitive psychologists, for the most part they are simply interested in coherent and credible accounts of how children — and all of us — learn or make sense of the world or of print. It is hardly surprising then that one will find that many in education hold theories of learning and theories explaining the reading process which bear a close resemblance to Lonergan’s theory of cognition.

There is, however, one important difference between the philosopher’s approach to cognitional theory and the psychologist’s or the educationist’s, and that is the issue of normativity. Normativity is the business of the philosopher. It does not really concern or interest the psychologist who is more concerned with giving an accurate account of the process we go through — in reading, in learning — than in attempting to explain the **validity of knowledge claims**. And this brings us to the heart of the matter. The kind of psychology against which both Frege and Wittgenstein were rebelling and which they wished to exclude from philosophy was empiricist psychology — the psychology of associationism, what Hume had called the cement of the universe. Frege rejected empiricist psychology because it could provide no basis for the enduring validity of science, it could not explain the public and enduring meaning of scientific terms. It undermined the general nature of mathematical propositions. Wittgenstein rejected associationism because it was free of norms and rules which might explain how words mean and how language works; associationism knew no rules, it was its own rule, since it depended on the purely contingent connection of one thing with another. Wittgenstein’s exclusion of psychology from philosophy is of a piece with his rejection of a private language. In the case of a strictly private utterance there can be no criterion of right and wrong: “One would like to say: whatever is going to seem right to me is right. And that only means that here we can’t talk about ‘right’” (PI 258). And the same can be said about associationism: it provides no rules explaining how language hooks onto the world: rather it makes the link between word and object a chance and contingent thing bereft of rules.

The exclusion of psychology from philosophy is given a new twist by Richard Rorty in *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, when he urges philosophers to abandon the epistemological quest altogether and to pass

epistemology over to the experimental psychologists who are much better equipped than philosophers to discover and explain the neurological 'wiring' by means of which we are hooked onto the world. In other words, epistemology should be abandoned by philosophers and handed over to the scientists. This is yet another way of saying that philosophy and psychology are two different disciplines and represents an attempt to drop epistemology from the philosophical agenda by placing it in the hands of psychologists.

When philosophers reject or exclude psychology, however, it is important to ask what kind of psychology it is that they are rejecting or excluding. Once more it is worth repeating that the psychology that is in such bad odor with philosophers like Frege and Wittgenstein is empiricist psychology and this differs radically from **intentionality analysis**. Empiricist psychology yields no norms which can explain how an argument or proof is valid or invalid; intentionality analysis can and does. Now what is it we mean by intention and intentionality in this context and how does intentionality differ from associationism?

To speak of acts as intentional is to say that there is a certain direction to them, that they are pointed or aimed in a particular way, that they have behind them a specific purpose or intention. To ask questions is intentional, not in the everyday sense of that word, but in the sense that questions have the purpose of achieving answers and that different kinds of questions have the purpose of achieving different kinds of answers. To attempt to answer questions is also intentional since this too is an activity aimed or directed at bringing something about.

Intentional activities are also spontaneous activities: we do not normally decide to ask the questions: What is that? Or Is that so? Such questions are not usually the object of preliminary debate and decision. They occur naturally. To say that something occurs spontaneously is not to say that it occurs automatically, since 'automatically' suggests that something is caused to occur by something else — as the bulb lights up when I turn on the switch. Rather, to say that something occurs spontaneously is to say that it follows naturally: it is in the nature of this organism to behave or react in such and such a way when such and such occurs. Spontaneity need not be the enemy of freedom and may be, as it is in humans, the precondition for free action. We are rational creatures for whom to ask questions and to act for a reason are spontaneous, natural activities.

What Lonergan is saying is that these spontaneous intentional activities are also structured, they follow a definite pattern. This pattern is not something we determine from without or by our own volition; it occurs spontaneously and

irresistibly and is self-assembling, self-constituting, one stage or part summoning forth the next, as it heads for completion. It is a basic intentionality aimed at achieving the truth and what is right. It is a conscious process and as such can become the object of reflection and analysis.

At the fourth level of consciousness, intentionality becomes self-conscious and we find people using the word 'intentional' explicitly, saying, "I intend (to keep my promises)," "You intentionally (set out to insult him)," etc. At the fourth level of consciousness, we take possession of our intentionality and become consciously responsible for it, saying "I intended it" or "I meant it." The four stages or levels of consciousness stretch from sensory experience to action but always they are to do with meaning — with its discovery (through inquiry) or with its creation (through planning and action); such is the native dynamism of our intelligence that we are meant for, or ordered for, the discovery and creation of meaning. While the analysis of intentionality may legitimately be termed a psychological activity, it is totally different in its outcomes from empiricist psychology. Empiricist psychology gives birth the associationism, with all the attendant problems it holds for epistemology, which have been brilliantly exploited by Wittgenstein. By contrast, intentionality analysis, uncovers the norms by which the legitimate discovery and creation of meaning are governed. Let me finish by summarizing what I have said in this paper;

- Lonergan has more natural allies among modern educationists than he tends to have among modern philosophers;
- The reason is that education places a strong emphasis on the cultivation of the individual subject and on psychological theories of learning and personal development;
- Analytic philosophy in the twentieth century developed an antipathy towards psychology and sought to exclude psychology from having any legitimate role in philosophy;
- The reason was that empiricist psychology failed to account for the rules or norms which made language a public possession accessible to all;
- Lonergan's cognitional theory differs profoundly from associationism and is better described as intentionality analysis;
- It uncovers the norms by which the legitimate discovery and creation of meaning are governed.

A corollary of this argument or reasoning is that, if we wish Lonergan's philosophy to penetrate the thinking of today's analytic philosophers, we need to explain how he can be both psychological in his approach and yet account for

normativity. And, what is more, if we are looking for an ally among the big guns of modern analytic philosophy, we should build bridges with John Searle. Searle, and indeed the whole legacy of JL Austin in modern analytic philosophy, offers a way of linking up with a particular development of the analytic tradition which most Lonerganians would find agreeable and enlightening. 'Enlightening' because it could extend and enrich our (sometimes narrow, exclusive or turgid) Lonerganian vocabulary; on the other hand there are aspects of Lonergan's thinking which I feel could help to systematize, enrich and deepen the thinking of men like Austin and Searle. If Lonergan is ever to emerge from the shadows, we will need allies and supporters from the dominant tradition.

ABOUT WHAT MIGHT A “GIRARD–LONERAGAN ‘CONVERSATION’” BE?

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PROXIMATELY, THE OCCASION for this informal paper was an unexpected gap in the lineup of speakers for the annual Loneragan Workshop at Boston College. That is why there is a paper at all. The remote occasion, which explains why the paper has the subject-matter it has, was another conference, also at Boston College, earlier in the same spring: the annual meeting of the Colloquium on Violence and Religion, this year convened by Robert Daly. At the convener’s suggestion, there was in addition to the primary theme of the meeting a subordinate theme, which was to take the form of a ‘conversation’ between students of René Girard, whose thought has inspired the Colloquium, and students of Bernard Loneragan. Among the latter, I was the officially designated conversation-initiator, and my assignment was to prepare an essay on “Loneragan for Non-‘Loneragians.’”

After some false starts and some consultations, the strategy I adopted was to introduce and present five ‘soundings’ in Loneragan’s thought. These five I chose, not because they are either logically or methodologically the most basic, but because my reading of Girard’s work over the years suggested that they were apt to evoke the a ‘conversation’ that would be valuable to ‘Girardians’ and ‘Loneragians’ alike. Very briefly stated, my ‘soundings’ were these:

Religion: the role of religious experience in Loneragan’s *Method in Theology*; how he characterizes it, its relations to other conscious realities and to tradition and language.

Solidarity: the constitutive role of *meaning* and meaningful performance, and what this entails for conceiving the unity of ‘man,’ not just as species but as a concrete, historical process.

History, and more especially the theoretical heuristic that Loneragan develops for understanding ‘what was going forward’ in terms of *progress* and *decline*.

Sin and grace, the real differentials of historical process, and the ground of theology's relevance to human studies and human self-constitution.

The 'law of the cross,' the specifically theological articulation of *redemption*, which for Lonergan counts as the third component of history, along with progress and decline.

Students of Lonergan will recognize that what I was attempting with these five 'soundings' was a kind of brief synthesis along the lines that Lonergan himself suggests in his essay on "The Transition from a Classicist World-View to Historical-Mindedness," with a considerable infusion of the 'Background' chapters of *Method in Theology*. So far as it goes, I think this strategy was sound, and I remain convinced that the five areas I proposed do cover many and perhaps most, though certainly not all, of the 'sites' where conversation with 'Girardian' thought is most likely to be fruitful.

What the paper as I wrote it did not do was indicate why my 'soundings' might be relevant to such a conversation. In order to do that, it would be necessary to say something about Girard as well as about Lonergan — in effect, to speak for both interlocutors, which was no part of my assignment as I (perhaps unwisely) construed it. At all events, there is no such restriction in the present context. This paper does offer suggestions as to where Lonergan and Girard converge and diverge. I would stress however that they are only suggestions. I do not pretend to have read everything Girard has written, much less to have reached up to his mind, to use the Lonergan phrase. I am an appreciative amateur whose appreciation has grown over the years, and I come to Girard's work with a set of questions that have to do with a rather specialized line of inquiry. For both these reasons, it is likely enough that I have overlooked what is important and concentrated on what is not.

To put the same point in 'Lonerganian' terms, this is not an exercise in the functional specialty Dialectic. In an illuminating essay on the genus "Lonergan and...", Frederick Crowe points out that where there is a definite topic to be investigated — Lonergan on X and So-and-so on X — the investigation is fairly straightforward. "We collect the data from both authors, interpret each in the appropriate context, set each in the ongoing discussion of the question, point out strengths and weaknesses, see them in a complementary, genetic, or dialectical

relationship, and perhaps argue for the superiority of one over the other.”¹ That is a lot, of course. Even so, it presupposes the prior task of discerning X, the relevant topic, the central question. Such discernment, I take it, can only be the result of what my students call the ‘guess and check’ method, and what Loneragan calls the self-correcting process of coming to know. I am not sure what the X in this case is — or the Xes, for there may well be more than one. This paper consists for the most part of guesses. Others may find them such as to make checking worth while.

GIRARD FOR ‘LONERAGNIANS’

Since the readers I anticipate for this paper are the inverse, so to say, of those for whom I wrote the one to which it is a sequel or supplement, it has to make mention of some central ‘Girardian’ notions. René Girard has been most recently a distinguished professor of French literature and culture. He has written on the novel, exploring the excellent question he has phrased as: *What makes great novels great?* He has written on religion, primarily archaic or ‘pagan’ or ‘primitive’ religion, in (and often against) the tradition of ethnological and anthropological studies of myth and ritual. He has written on Shakespeare, on Jung and especially Freud, on Heidegger and especially Nietzsche.

As several of the items in this catalogue — novel, theatre, myth — suggest, Girard’s work has been focused on *narrative*. As several of the others suggest, he is above all a shrewd and sensitive reader of *texts*. For Girard, and certainly for ‘Girardians,’ as I shall discuss later, the *narrative text* is the prime datum of investigation.

In and through his lifelong readings of widely various narrative texts, Girard has unfolded a kind of paradigm. He calls it a theory; in ‘Loneragian’ terms, it would be called a model or ideal type. The name is not important, however, and because Girard uses the term *model* in a different sense, I propose to sideline it here. What Loneragan *means* is a combination of abstract and concrete elements that form a coherent whole, which in itself is not a description of reality but which nevertheless serves a useful, heuristic purpose by guiding inquiries that do

¹ Frederick E. Crowe, “The Genus ‘Loneragan and ...’ and Feminism,” in Cynthia S.W. Crysdale, ed., *Loneragan and Feminism* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), pp. 13-32, at 14.

aim at describing reality. That is what Girard has proposed, and it has proven very useful indeed. Two of its elements have to be mentioned: *mimesis* and the *victimage mechanism* or *scapegoat mechanism*.

Mimesis of course means, roughly, 'imitation.' It is a basic tenet of 'Girardian' thought that human *desiring* is *mediated*, that what I think of as 'my' desires are 'mine' because they were first an other's. Crudely stated, I come to desire X because there is already desire for X on the part of someone else. Hence desiring has a triangular structure that comprises (in this case) myself, the relevant other, and the X we both come to desire. According to Girard, then, in contrast with Freud, desire is not 'pre-programmed' as desire for any object, still less to just one basic object.

Now, the convergence of my desire and someone else's desire on the same object makes it possible for that someone, the 'model' in Girard's sense of the word, to become a rival. In so far as desire is acquisitive, and that which is to be acquired is indivisible, the result is *mimetic rivalry*. Anger and antagonism escalate; pressure builds; the order of the community, whether it is a community of two or many, begins to dissolve. Here the second term of art becomes important. In Girard's paradigm, those who are involved in such an increasingly antagonistic situation spontaneously and unanimously release or 'siphon off' the mounting rage and rivalry by focusing it on someone — anyone, a random victim. Originally, the victim was murdered. He (or she, or it) may instead be excluded or expelled. Some symbolic substitute, an animal perhaps, may eventually replace a human victim. Such is the *scapegoat mechanism*.

For Girard the scapegoat mechanism lies at the origin of expiatory rites and explains the origin of the gods. For this mechanism does 'work.' It works in the sense that violence does get averted by the violent expulsion of the scapegoat or victim, and the 'miraculous' restoration of order attaches itself *to* the victim. At first 'demonized,' the scapegoat is at length 'sacralized.' But the 'success' of the mechanism depends on one further point, highly important in the present context. The complicity of the community in the violence that drove out the victim must be 'misremembered,' hidden, covered up. 'Sacred violence' is sacred only so long as its original source is disguised.

Two comments may be added.

First, what Girard has proposed is that a single *narrative structure*, a sequence of events or 'plot,' can be detected within any number of 'primitive' religious tales (and also within any number of great dramatic and fictional narratives). But it has to *be* detected. The 'founding murder' does not appear in

any obvious way, precisely because it is the founding murder. The innocence of the scapegoat, and the complicity of those who expel such a victim, have always — with one crucial exception, to which I will return presently — been concealed.

Second, this narrative accounts for the origin of *gods* because its structure is the structure of *sacrifice*. The verb ‘to sacrifice’ means ‘to *make* sacred.’ The victim, the oblation, *la victime*, *das Opfer*, becomes sacred precisely by being killed or slaughtered or immolated. In brief, violence gives rise to sacrality. Or, in more developed form, deity commands violence, requires sacrifice, sanctions the expulsion of the scapegoat.

All this is of interest, no doubt, to the student of literature or the student of ‘primitive’ religion. But mine, as I mentioned, is a specialized line of questions. Why, then, is Girard’s work of interest to a Christian theologian? The reason is that he has a thesis to argue about what he most often calls ‘the Christian text,’ meaning by that the New Testament but, more centrally, the narrative of the gospels.² And that thesis does bear on Christian theology, specifically on the classical dogmatic or systematic *loci* of Atonement and Incarnation.

Girard at first approached the gospels, and in some sense still does approach them, in the same way as any other text: as literature, as narrative, and as having played a role in Western thought. What he finds there, more especially at the climax of the gospel narrative, is surprising, viewed in the light of his mimetic theory. Indeed, it came as a surprise to him when he found it for the first time. Briefly stated, the whole scapegoat pattern, all the elements of the victimage mechanism, can be seen plainly laid out in the narrative of Christ’s Passion, *without* any effort at concealment. Collusion, the increasingly violent mob, the choice of an ‘outsider’ who is innocent, his expulsion, allegedly in the interests of peace — it is all there. What is not, on the ‘Girardian’ reading, is any attempt to overlay the victimage mechanism with a ‘sacrificial’ interpretation.

This last point is the crux. Girard (and even more, ‘Girardians’) would insist on the ‘disclosive uniqueness’ of the Passion narrative. Here, for the first time, the structure that underlies all religion is exposed. In that disclosure the significance of the ‘Christian text’ consists. The death of Christ was in no way a sacrifice, in no way sanctioned by God; and in the innocence of this victim the innocence of all victims is brought to light. But (it might be objected) has not

² I am aware of the fact that in his most recent writings Girard has taken to speaking of, and about, the ‘Judaean-Christian text,’ by which he means the Old and New Testaments together. Exactly what ‘together’ means in this connection is by no means a trivial question. I am not certain I have grasped the answer.

Christianity always construed the Passion of Christ in sacrificial terms? Yes, Girard replies, and more's the pity. A sacrificial reading begins already in the epistle to the Hebrews; it came to the fore in medieval theology; it has predominated ever since — until Girard's own project began.

(Here a certain delicacy is called for. Girard himself is a modest man. He consistently gives to the 'Christian text' the credit for exposing the victimage mechanism. All he has done is to expose the exposure, so to say. 'Girardians' are inclined to be more extravagant; one can't help being reminded of the way Luther is credited (by Lutherans) with having rediscovered the gospel beneath a medieval crust that had already begun to accumulate as early as the writing of certain canonical epistles.)

At length we reach the reasons for my own interest in Girard. The theology I 'do' is mainly Systematics, in something like the sense in which Lonergan gives that name to one of the functional specialties in his *Method in Theology*. More specifically, the theology I 'do' is Christology, and therefore also soteriology — the theology of atonement or redemption, in which Christ's Passion has traditionally been accorded a definitive place. Girard offers a reading of the Passion narrative that does not spin its wheels in the quagmire of historical-critical scholarship. More positively, and stated in 'Lonerganian' terms, he presents the Passion as a mediation of *meaning*; and that meaning undercuts the untenable (as I consider it) theology of 'substitutionary penal atonement.'

More on that presently. For the moment, I would observe that in itself the 'Girardian' reading of the Passion is not, at least not yet, systematic theology as I understand that enterprise. Virtually all the many 'theological' works published by followers of Girard belong to a genre that used to be called 'biblical theology.' Their project, by and large, is to apply the 'Girardian' paradigm in detail, to clear up particular passages and episodes and show how they cohere with the overall sweep of Girard's thesis. Such a project is 'systematic' in the sense of tidying up all the relevant *biblical* data — the entire New Testament, or the Pauline epistles, or the Bible as a whole.

Now, from a 'Lonerganian' such as myself, this procedure evokes a *methodological* comment. The *kind* of 'biblical theology' that 'Girardians' are adept at writing seems to be very much in line with what might be called the Bultmann Strategy, which had its heyday at the beginning of the second half of the twentieth century. That strategy is to show how the relevant texts can all be interpreted according to one fairly simple, flexible, approximately narrative scheme. Bultmann borrows his from Heidegger; 'Girardians' borrow theirs from

Girard. From there, to state it in terms of Lonergan's functional specialties, the *indirect* discourse of interpretation passes into *direct* discourse somewhere on the border between Systematics and Communications.

Lest I be misunderstood, I would emphasize that I am not identifying Girard's approach with 'demythologization,' which he knows all about and rejects. The parallel I am drawing is functional. Both Girard and Bultmann adopt a kerygmatic approach, and it is a very worthwhile approach to adopt. It takes the gospel message seriously as a message-*for-us* in the present, as *Heilsgeschichte*, as 'saving tale'; and in so doing (to repeat) it does not flounder in the quicksands of historical-Jesus research. In brief, it preserves the religious quality of the New Testament, and maintains a tie with devotional reading that is altogether admirable.

That on the one hand. On the other, while a kerygmatic approach to Scripture *need* not be unhistorical or antihistorical, it *can* be; and in this case I wonder how far it is. Readers of *Method in Theology* will recall the question Lonergan poses at the end of the chapter on the functional specialty Research: which data are relevant to Christian theology? Scripture only? Scripture and tradition? Tradition up to 325, or 1054, or Pius IX? Or (perhaps) forever? If Lonergan ever gave an answer, I am not aware of it; myself, I am inclined to say, 'forever.' It would be folly to suggest Girard is not aware that there are other data, other Christian texts besides *the* Christian text. He is aware of them and probably has read them all. My point is that part of the reason why the gospels constitute *the* Christian text, if they do, is that there are other Christian texts which mediate the gospels' meaning. That is what tradition is for.

To get at the same point differently, there is something troubling about the implicit comparison between the 'Christian text' and a novel. I am not dredging up a silly fact-fiction dichotomy. My point is that a novel, once it is published, has a certain independence of the novelist. Its being independent is neither here nor there, however, because the novelist doesn't matter; what matters is the story. Moreover, a novel is not at once the cause and effect of a community, at least not in the way in which the New Testament was (and is) at once the cause and the effect of the church. A novel (I take it) is a book that one reads by oneself, to oneself, at home or in a study or library. Now, there is nothing (at least, not since the Reformation) that prevents reading the Bible in the same 'private' way. Nor is there any reason why the gospels should not, simply as texts read on one's own, have the kind of transforming effect that they have, repeatedly, had down the

centuries. Indeed, that is exactly what happened to Girard. But two observations, possibly relevant, can be added.

First, the silent, solitary reading of Scripture, blessing and obligation though it is, has in most parts of Christendom never been the primary place of encountering the 'Christian text.' Its primary place has been in *lectio divina*, in liturgical reading, in the proclamation and preaching of the church.

Second, the 'existential' impact of the gospel narrative as kerygma, whether it is mediated by private reading or public recitation, does not put an end to all questions. The personal decision to follow the non-violent Christ portrayed in the gospels might lead to the question, *Who is he?*³ If there were an unambiguous answer in the New Testament, there would have been no need for the early Christological councils. My point is not to domesticate the Bible or withdraw it from culture at large into an ecclesiastical enclave. It is simply that the 'Christian text' has a *Wirkungsgeschichte*, a history of raising and answering questions about its meaning. Within that history, there emerged a specialized discipline, theology, which is not simply reducible to biblical interpretation, literary or otherwise. It has its own technical vocabulary and procedures, and arguably it has arrived, from time to time, at results that are permanently valid. Thus the argument I am advancing is in effect that the theology of the past, and even of the present, may be relevant when it comes to answering the further questions that any reading of the New Testament inevitably raises. More generally, from a 'Loneranian' viewpoint, a functionally-conceived theology will make the transition from *oratio obliqua* to *oratio recta* by making explicit not only historically-minded operations but also those belonging to Dialectic and Foundations.

GIRARD IN A 'LONERGANIAN' CONTEXT

Turning from methodology to content, and from 'Girardians' to Girard himself, my reference to Foundations suggests a way of initiating 'conversation,' at least within the confines of a short paper. Where, one might ask, does Girard's account of mimesis and its triangular structure belong in the 'Loneranian' universe of

³ Here I am gesturing towards the 'from above downwards' trajectory that Lonergan outlines in "Christology Today: Methodological Reflections," reprinted in *A Third Collection*, ed. by Frederick E. Crowe, S.J. (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1985), pp. 74-99; see pp. 83-85.

discourse? Which of Lonergan's basic terms and relations, that is, are the ones most likely to show that in some respect he and Girard are talking about the same thing?

I think the answer is plain. Such an inquiry should begin with *Insight's* chapters on 'common sense,' more particularly with the one on the 'subjective field' of common sense, and most particularly with the sections on what Lonergan calls the 'dramatic pattern of experience.' To remind those who are somewhat familiar with Lonergan's patterns of experience, all of us most of the time, and most of us all of the time, operate in some mixture of the dramatic pattern with another, the practical pattern. This combination of patterns is correlative to the *Lebenswelt*, the manner in which, nearly always, we are being-in-the-world. That being-in-the-world is of course what novels are about. In the sections I am discussing, emphasis falls on the *we* who are being-in-the-world; the following chapter of *Insight* turns to the world in which we exist.

As distinguished from the practical pattern, the dramatic pattern of experience is my making my living, my being-in-the-world, a work of art — dramatic art — by casting myself as a character in an episode or scene or act. In so doing, I am consciously (which for Lonergan does not necessarily imply *deliberately*) enacting a drama, defined by plot and, especially, character. Part of the point here is that by the time anyone can reflect on or think about his or her character, and *a fortiori* by the time anyone can evaluate or build or modify character, character is already shaping his or her living. Imagination and intelligence have already been collaborating; feelings have come to be associated with images and *vice versa*; these associations have fallen into arrangements. In the language of the 'later Lonergan,' reflection and deliberation about character inevitably begin within the horizon of the character one already has. Thus it is in the dramatic pattern of experience that we find the basis for what Lonergan had discussed in *Grace and Freedom* in terms of the fact that we never start from 'scratch,' ethically or morally speaking. Some acts are already far more likely to take place than others, because they have become 'habitual.' But the same is true at the level of living that is prior to deliberate decision and action: the dramatic pattern of experience can be thought of as a set of imaginative-and-affective habits.

From his discussion of the dramatic pattern, Lonergan moves on in a direction that serves the overall purpose of the book *Insight*. His immediate interest is the relevance of insight, the act of understanding, to curing of psychological disease. Accordingly, and for those purposes appropriately, he

concentrates on *individual* psychology and on the dyadic relationship of patient to psychotherapist or psychoanalyst. But possibly — here I speak under correction — his account can be taken in other directions too. In particular, I suspect that it can be enriched and supplemented with a good deal of what Girard discusses under the rubric of *interdividual* psychology.

To pursue the possibility, if we construe *mimesis* in a horizon that owes something to *Method in Theology*, what Girard is talking about is something along these lines. In ‘dramatic,’ everyday, commonsense interaction with others, with the *dramatis personae* of my living, I can and do respond to the ‘ontic’ value of an other, to someone else as be-ing and as a being. The intersubjective presence of that other thus evokes (as all true values do) my innate drive for self-transcendence, that is, for fuller or more authentic being-myself. I would be by being-like that other. The ‘Girardian’ twist enters in so far as *being-like* another involves wanting what he or she wants. For in this way, in and with admiration for someone, there is evoked a further feeling, or a differentiation of feeling, as a response, not to the ‘ontic’ value of the other, but more specifically to the value of what that other values.

As Aristotle pointed out, we all come to resemble our friends. That begins to happen long before we start to have ‘friends’ in the conventional sense; as Girard is well aware, the dynamics here are the ones that Freud discussed (and, says Girard, misinterpreted) in terms of the Oedipal drama. But not only do we all come to resemble our friends. The same dynamics, depending on the variable of what our friends value, account for how our friends become our enemies, that is, our mimetic doubles or rivals.

Here, it seems to me, there is a welcome corrective to a possible but inaccurate reading of Lonergan’s presentation of the human good. We who admire Lonergan, and who want what he wanted, tend to pick up the book *Insight*, read there that it defines ‘particular good’ as the object of desire, and conclude that the desires which define and indicate particular goods are ‘my’ desires. I think it is much more difficult to read *Method in Theology* in this way, and it may be a distortion of *Insight* as well. Instead of a fairly straightforward correspondence between a set of desires and a set of particular goods, Lonergan (in my view) invites us to think of the particular goods that are *human* goods — not, that is, just the correlates of biological extroversion — as the objects of *our* desire, the desire of an intersubjective community, before they are or can be objects of *my* desire. Otherwise stated, the point here is that ‘my’ desire is tutored.

And the arena of its tutoring, so to say, is the theater of mimetic drama. Such, in any case, is a possibly relevant hypothesis that others may wish to pursue.

Here, one consequence can be noted. If one were to incorporate the 'Girardian' triangle of mimetic desire into *Insight's* account of common sense, it would seem to follow that whereas Loneragan distinguishes between a dialectic of the 'dramatic subject' and a dialectic of community, mimetic theory would indicate that the relation is much closer, and perhaps that there is a dynamic pattern of experience that has to be thought of as prior to both.

TRANSITION: VIOLENCE AND DECLINE

I cannot pursue this line of thought at present. Turning from a possible 'Girardian' contribution to 'Loneraganian' self-appropriation, towards the converse, a 'Loneraganian' contribution to 'Girardian' thought, it seems very clear that to limit the 'conversation' to the subjective field of common sense is impossible. As I have suggested, *Insight* is a sustained campaign, written from what Loneragan called a 'moving viewpoint.' His discussion of the dramatic subject and the dramatic pattern of experience is interesting and important in itself, but it plays a part in that larger design. And part of what he means by those terms becomes clear only as the reader makes his or her way onwards, to the end of the book. Common sense is not the only way of functioning as a conscious subject. Loneragan's further terms and relations are in my view, not surprisingly, helpful in arriving at some further differentiation of Girard's insights.

A need for further differentiation is something that Girard himself might acknowledge. His principal terms of art are quite elastic, in some sense deliberately so. Just as much of his work is about literature, so too it tends to be written in 'literary' language, and there are indications (especially in some of the interviews and dialogues that have been published) that he regards precise definition with suspicion. Still, he also recognizes the possibility of misunderstanding what he has written, and some of his most recent writings have introduced clarifications and modifications. Mimesis, for example, is not (in later works) always or invariably acquisitive and rivalrous. But to say 'not always or invariably' amounts to writing a blank check — asking for further, positive specification. Possibly Loneragan can help to fill in the blank.

The place to begin, I believe, is with the notion of *violence*. This, in 'Girardian' circles, is an extremely elastic term. To judge by usage, 'violence' is

the all-purpose dyslogistic. When you assemble all the things to which it is applied, and ask what they have in common, almost the only answer is that they are bad. Some 'Girardians,' Robert Daly for example, have nobly followed Socrates' lead by attempting to introduce definitions. I propose to take a different route.

In order to know how to use 'violence' in the way 'Girardians' use it, what you need is a kind of imaginative gravitational field. (As stated, this is a contradiction in terms. That is exactly why I am using it.) At the center are a small number of concrete examples, particular scenes, dramatic instances — vivid, picturable cases of violence where the feeling-quotient is high. Euripedes' *Bacchae* is one of these; imagine Pentheus being torn limb from limb, even if it happens offstage. Or imagine a Roman pontiff slicing the throat of a bull, or the English burning Joan of Arc, or the physical details of death by crucifixion.

(Here I have been influenced by reading Marilyn McCord Adams's recent book, *Horrendous Evils and the Goodness of God*. Adams deliberately concentrates on (what she regards as) the worst evils, 'horrendous' evils, which she 'defines' by reference to their gruesomeness, their ability to 'overpower' the mind. The examples she uses are not exactly the same as the ones that show up in 'Girardian' writing, but the principle is the same: 'horrendous' evils are concrete, mainly physical, and usually blood-curdling.)

There is nothing wrong with defining by example. Nor do I wish in any way to suggest that the evils at the core of Girard's (or Adams's) imaginative gravitational field are *not* evil. My point is that, on a 'Lonerganian' position, the appeal to imagination *and* the appeal to feeling are, equally, *descriptive* in contrast with explanatory, *quoad nos* in contrast with *quoad se*, matters of common sense in contrast with theory. And my thesis, stated briefly, is that just as Girard's thought is relevant to *understanding* the dramatic pattern of experience, so too, in a curious way, it remains *in* the dramatic pattern — or, more accurately, in what Lonergan calls the 'symbolic mentality.' (Consult the section on symbols in *Method in Theology*, and you will find Lonergan restating and recontextualizing *Insight's* discussion of the dramatic pattern. Not surprisingly, this section is the one in which *Method* takes up questions of psychiatry and psychology.) By no means do I wish to claim that Girard does nothing but tell stories. I do, however, want to raise the question of the control of meaning.

Meaning and the controls it operates with form a very large topic. There is no possibility of summarizing here everything that Lonergan has to say. But for present purposes it is important to take note of two presuppositions that ground

the very idea of controlling what we mean. First, if there is such a thing as the control of symbolic, commonsense meaning, there must be a pattern of experience besides the dramatic (and practical) patterns. This further pattern, of course, is the one that Lonergan names the intellectual pattern. Closely related to this is the second presupposition, namely that there exists the oddly imperious drive that Lonergan names the desire to know. These presuppositions are extremely important in the present context because it is a basic Lonergan tenet that common sense cannot (beyond a certain point) criticize or correct common sense. That is why the book *Insight* does not begin with common sense. Lonergan does not want to write a descriptive, commonsense account of common sense but an explanatory account. The earlier chapters of *Insight* are meant to announce in no uncertain terms just what explanation, in contrast with description, amounts to.

The broad lines of Lonergan's (explanatory) account of common sense will perhaps be familiar to those who read this essay. As I have mentioned, there is a practical pattern of experience. Its chief element is insight, and in this case practical insight about what it might be possible to do in some particular situation. Now, insights are acts of intelligence, and intelligence develops. Incomplete development of intelligence may give rise to the form of bias that Lonergan calls egoism, and from this individual bias he proceeds to outline further biases in, or of, common sense, culminating in a (rather chilling) discussion of general bias. Bias, generically, is the exclusion of insights; general bias is the conviction that all insights are to be excluded — that ideas really do not matter *except in so far as they are backed up by force*.

A single paragraph will hardly do to convey Lonergan's argument, which even in *Insight* is lapidary. The proposal I would advance here is that without that argument — without the whole account of all the forms of bias, and the associated cycles, shorter and longer, of decline — in other words, without such a comprehensive heuristic as this part of *Insight* offers, there is little chance of doing justice to

- the 'Christian text' and what it may tell us about redemption;
- the human history that, on the Christian hypothesis, God is redeeming;
- the problem or problems that humankind is being redeemed *from*; or
- what, if anything, *sacrifice* might have to do with all this.

Here I would pause to introduce a possibly relevant aside. If the meticulous index of the new edition of *Insight* is accurate, the word *violence* occurs only once, namely in this passage of the Preface:

Similarly, insight into oversight reveals the cumulative process of decline. For the flight from understanding blocks the insights that concrete situations demand. There follow unintelligent policies and inept courses of action. The situation deteriorates to demand still further insights and, as they are blocked, policies become more unintelligent and action more inept. What is worse, the deteriorating situation seems to provide the *uncritical, biased mind* with factual evidence in which the bias is claimed to be verified. So in ever increasing measure intelligence comes to be regarded as irrelevant to practical living. Human activity settles down to a decadent routine, and *initiative becomes the privilege of violence* (*Insight* xiv [1957] = 8 [1992], emphasis added).

There are three things to note about this passage. First, it puts violence into the context I have been discussing, namely that of the longer cycle of decline. Second, as the clause I have italicized suggests, there is this much to be said in favor of violence: it does get things done. Further, it suggests that violence is a kind of counterfeit or substitute for the normative source of initiative and innovation, namely insight. Take these suggestions together, and they yield the further suggestion that violence can be resolved into two components: physical force, which does the work, and a lack or absence of insight, because of which the work that gets done is evil. In turn, this distinction points to a certain ambivalence in the notion of violence which may unsuit it for use as an all-purpose dyslogistic, and which may explain why it is not a notion that Lonergan makes much use of. Finally, third, the way in which the passage I have quoted introduces violence does not in any obvious way follow the pattern of mimetic rivalry — though neither does it necessarily exclude that pattern.

More important than the use of the word *violence* is the language Lonergan uses in the quotation above to characterize what, for him, is the underlying problem: *flight* from understanding. It is not the only language he uses. In later works, influenced by existentialism, he speaks more expansively of the unauthenticity that consists in spurning intelligence *and* reasonableness *and* responsibility. Either way, there is an echo of the biblical imagery, prominent in the gospel of John, of a refusal of light, the “light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world” (John 1:9). At present, however, I would emphasize the connotations of flight, of fleeing. Insight, understanding, authenticity, reasonableness, responsibility — all these are goods, specifically human goods, and as such one would suppose they are desirable. And so they are. Yet humans shun them, flee them, turn away from them. That fact does not seem to make

sense — which, as Lonergan will make clear towards the end of *Insight*, is exactly the point.

But if the point does not get made explicitly until the end of the book, the issue appears already in the chapters on common sense, and indeed in just the sections I have been discussing. At the beginning of §2.7, “Dramatic Bias,” Lonergan borrows the Johannine phrase and writes: “Besides a love of light, there can be a love of darkness.” If one reads through *Insight* from the beginning (Preface excepted), there should be a little jangle of discord here. This is the first ominous note in the book, the first little cloud on the horizon that presages the storm to come. By this point, the reader may well be expected to ask *why* — why ‘can there be’ love of darkness? Lonergan simply does not say why; and this reticence, I think, is deliberate. Not until chapter 20 does the full magnitude of the storm become apparent. In chapter 5 he is simply stating a fact which, it will turn out, is one element in his account of a *false* fact. Again, the phrase ‘false fact’ makes no sense; and again that is exactly the point.

The point, of course, is the sheer *un*-ness of evil. But more especially, the point is that in Lonergan’s presentation, the venerable notion of evil as *privatio* is made more precise. Evil ‘is’ something negative; what it ‘does’ is negate; but its negativeness takes its meaning from intelligence. Lonergan is not imagining evil, by first imagining some being or quality and then taking it away or erasing it. He is not imagining at all. His position is that the relevant negativeness is the negativeness of intelligence as expecting or anticipating something which it does not grasp. If an image is required (and we cannot have insights except through the use of images), then the little jangle of discord sounded in chapter 5 is the opening of a tiny rift, a gap, which begins in dramatic bias and widens more and more until, in the chapter on “General Transcendent Knowledge,” we are presented with failure to choose a *known* good — Lonergan’s definition of ‘basic sin.’

Thus there is a *privatio*, an absence, that runs all through ‘man’ (as subject, not as substance); it runs all through the human world in so far as that world is constituted by human meaning; and it runs all through the ‘concrete aggregate developing over time’ that is humankind in its historical unity. At any point along the way, it is possible to ask *why* this rift should be there, *why* there is such a lack or failure or flight; and Lonergan’s answer is always the same. *Why*-questions anticipate some intelligibility, but intelligibility is just what there is none of to be grasped. There is nothing to *be* understood. ‘Nothing’ *cannot* be understood.

(‘Nothing’ can be *conceived*; but that is not the same thing. Hence part of the issue here is the relative priority of acts of understanding and concepts.)

It is commonly objected against accounts of evil as *privatio* that they ‘do not take evil seriously.’ To this the only answer is: What is it to ‘take seriously’? With that question, we come back to the question whether there is an intellectual pattern of experience, and what relation it stands in to the images and affects of the dramatic pattern. In particular, we come back to the odd occurrence that Lonergan names ‘inverse insight,’ the insight that there is no insight to be had. If one is operating in the intellectual pattern, then the pithy remark at the end of Lonergan’s treatise on the Incarnate Word seems apt:

But what right, what entitlement, what reason have you got for trying to use final, exemplary, and efficient causality to explain defects of being and goodness that are irrational and unintelligible? The only cause — I do not say *reason* — that I can find for such a line of questioning is just blind habit. We are, of course, used to reducing intelligible things to their causes; so, in the same way, we also reduce to their causes things that in themselves are unintelligible! (*De Verbo Incarnato* 591).

As a coda, I might add that it is for reasons such as those I have been sketching that I think it a dubious project to make use of Girard’s work in order to rewrite Genesis — to posit nascently human anthropoids who at some point in the course of ‘hominization’ staged a mimetic murder and by so doing founded the human race. In the nature of the case, this is positing the unverifiable; but even if it were not it would not explain the human plight, any more than the snake in the Garden explains it.⁴

POSSIBLY RELEVANT MATERIALS FOR CONVERSATION (1)

My observations so far lead to two areas where, perhaps, a ‘conversation’ between those who take Lonergan’s position and those who take Girard’s might begin. No doubt there are others. The first is more philosophical than theological, and is presented more schematically. The second concerns Christian meanings, and I have elaborated it at greater length. Neither yields any definitive conclusions; both raise further questions. But that is no bad thing.

⁴ See Charles Hefling, “A View from the Stern: James Alison’s Theology (So Far),” *Anglican Theological Review* 81 (1999) 689-710, esp. pp. 704-709.

My first point of comparison brings together the account of evil I have been sketching, and Girard's schema of the mimetic triangle. As I have already indicated, the elements of this scene are, *first*, a 'model,' oriented to some particular good, the object of the model's desire; *second*, the evocation of my desire for the same good, such that my affective orientation mimics my model's; and *third*, anger and antagonism resulting from frustration of the desire that has been evoked. (It should be remembered that *ex hypothesi* my model and I cannot both possess the good we both desire, the presumption being that it is a good that will diminish if divided — in other words, that it is a good intrinsically conditioned by space and time.)

Such is the basic set of terms and relations. As Girard's writings show, the scheme he has proposed does illuminate a great many various situations. In 'Lonerganian' language, these terms and relations allow Girard to 'grasp many things in a single view,' which is a characterization of insight.

With the 'Girardian' scheme we may compare some elements of what might be called Lonergan's anthropology. There is, then, an orientation, a heading-for-being, the finality of 'self-transcendence' that propels the becoming of the existential subject. It is a drive towards intelligibility, truth, and goodness that begins in the zone of image and affect and unfolds by stages to a culmination in being-in-love. This drive or dynamism is, no doubt, often frustrated. More basically, however, it simply *fails* from time to time — not because of conflict or, indeed, because of anything at all. The rift opens. Why? If there were a reason, we would not be talking about evil.

Now, to pursue this comparison would be to raise questions that pertain to *foundations* in the sense in which Lonergan uses that incendiary term. Self-transcendence is the self-transcendence *of a subject*, using 'subject' in the full and nuanced sense which (in my judgment) is not fully articulated in the book *Insight* but appears for the first time about ten years afterwards, most remarkably in the 1968 Aquinas Lecture on "The Subject." As for Girard, he too uses the term 'subject,' but always in a sense that seems to have invisible quotation-marks around it. Subject-talk is a *façon de parler*. Properly speaking, the real *subject* in the mimetic drama *is* mimetic desire; Girard means that quite seriously. In other contexts, with equal seriousness, he will speak of violence, the form that mimetic rivalry takes, as the 'real subject.' To suppose that there were a 'real subject' in any *other* sense would be, in his view, to fall back into the 'traditional philosophical notion of individual,' by which he evidently means a 'substantial self.'

It might be added (though here I am less confident) that exactly the same conclusion can be arrived at by considering Girard's conception of *consciousness*. As Lonergan argues in his dialectical comparison of the two basic ways of conceiving consciousness — consciousness-as-experience and consciousness-as-perception — the latter has as one of its corollaries the non-existence of any psychological subject. Now Girard does, I think, conceive consciousness as perception. Consciousness arises in the perception of myself-as-other; perception of myself-as-other depends on the 'internal doubles' that result from the relation of mimetic rivalry. Such a perception cannot coherently be thought of as perception of that which does the perceiving; without the mimetic rivalry there would *be* nothing to perceive. Hence the 'real' subject is neither myself-as-perceiving nor myself-as-perceived-other, but that which gives rise to both, namely desire. Properly to follow through on the hints I have just offered would take more words than I can let this paper contain. But at present I am less interested in working out a dialectical comparison than in the methodological questions raised by the possibility of such a comparison. I will mention two.

The first question is simply stated. How would one judge the yes-or-no question whether there is a subject in Lonergan's sense? Alternatively, how would one judge whether the consciousness without a subject that Girard presents is correctly presented? If the self-deception under which Girard (in this respect a good 'postmodern') thinks we all labor is not really *self*-deception, how can we judge that it is deception? Lonergan remarks somewhere that it was from Newman that he learned to trust his own mind. That remark, it has been suggested, is naïve. If so, how shall we make the comparative judgment that some other standpoint is more sophisticated?

But the second question perhaps cuts even deeper. How, in the present intellectual climate — particularly, though not only, inasmuch as its prevailing winds are post-structuralist winds — shall one *say* what difference the first question makes, or what is truly 'at stake'? The situation, as it is commonly stated, is a dilemma: either the *res cogitans* in one of its subtle disguises or the dissolution of (what is called) the subject. If that disjunction is valid, there is no place for Lonergan; nor (which is my point) any place from which 'Lonerganians' can assess what is positional and counterpositional both in the 'substantial self' and in contemporary alternatives, including Girard's.

(I cannot help wondering here to what extent that other René, he of the *cogito*, is being blamed and scapegoated for most if not all of our philosophical woes. Expel Descartes, and all will be well.)

POSSIBLY RELEVANT MATERIALS FOR CONVERSATION (2)

My first gesture towards possibilities for 'conversation' began with Girard's position. My second will begin with Lonergan's. I have spoken of the flight from understanding. In so far as that metaphor can properly be used with reference to human culture, the situation is grave indeed. Culture (in Lonergan's sense of the word) is that second-order affair, that reflexive dimension of the world mediated by meaning, which evaluates and promotes the meanings of which communities are constituted. On the cultural level, then, the flight from understanding becomes a second-order flight, a reflexive flight. It amounts to the evaluative message that flight from understanding is a good thing. Not that the message often appears in so blatant a form — though it does, sometimes. There are subtler ways of promoting bias. One of them is to insist that human evil is just a fact, just the way things are, just human nature (which nobody can change), or the like.

As to the latter — human evil is just in the nature of things — it is well to recall that, for Lonergan, the problem he calls 'the reign of sin' pertains not to human nature but to human history, not to man as substance but to man as subject. Because historicity is a matter of meaning and meaningful performance, there is a kind of un-meaning in the reign of sin at the cultural level. The names Lonergan uses to refer to it are *rationalization* and, in certain writings, *ideology*. What he is referring to is a failure of truthfulness about humankind's failure in truthfulness.

Now, it would seem that there is a similar notion in Girard's thought, which in English is termed *misremembering*. Its place in the overall scheme was mentioned earlier. Complicity in the violence that eliminates victims and drives out scapegoats gets hidden. Hence Girard will sometimes speak of 'religions of the hidden scapegoat.' But his thesis is not only that founding victimization has been 'effaced' from 'primitive' or ancient myths; the same misremembering affects the latter-day equivalents of religion — psychology, aesthetics, philosophy. These, according to Girard, maintain themselves by covering up their origins, so that it will go unnoticed that they too are engaged in selecting, identifying, and eliminating scapegoats. Nietzsche is a case in point. So also is Heidegger, together with what Girard refers to as all the little mice to which the Heideggerian mountain has given birth.

As in Lonergan, then, there is in 'Girardian' thought a diagnosis of the human plight which has as a major component deception, rationalization, a corporate lie. For Lonergan, this consists most basically of calling a false fact a

real fact, and claiming that force, not ideas, is what people will pay attention to. The result is *Realpolitik*. For Girard, it consists in denying human complicity in violence, by sanctioning the scapegoat mechanism as God's will or some secular equivalent. Only violence can drive out violence. The result is *Realpolitik*.

One of the reasons why this convergence (if such it be) is important, from the standpoint of a theologian interested in Christology, is that both Lonergan and Girard stress *disclosure* of the truth that rationalization and/or misremembering obnubilate. Both Lonergan and Girard set this disclosure in a Christian context; both see it as in some sense the content of divine 'revelation'; and both point to the Cross as definitive of the revelatory disclosure. Perhaps the best way to fill out this idea, as it appears in Girard's work, is to give a few quotations, all from one of his most recent publications, *Things Hidden from the Foundation of the World*:

The thesis of the founding victim is the logical culmination of the great atheistic bodies of thought of the nineteenth century. It completely deconstructs the sacredness of violence, together with all its philosophical and psychoanalytic substitutes.

Within the same line of argument, the Judaeo-Christian text comes to the fore again ... because the revelation of the founding victim was first achieved in this text, and we have been incapable of recognizing or assimilating it, as the text itself predicted (443).

Violence is unable to bear the presence of a being that owes it nothing — that pays it no homage and threatens its kingship in the only way possible (209).

The problem of exegesis Christ puts to his audience [Luke 20:17] can only be resolved ... if we see in the words that he quotes [*"The same stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner"*] the very formula for the reversal, at once an invisible and an obvious one, that I am putting forward. The rejected stone is the scapegoat, who is Christ. By submitting to violence, Christ reveals and uproots the structural matrix of all religion (178–179, emphasis added).

To recognize Christ as God is to recognize him as the only being capable of rising above the violence that had, up to that point, absolutely transcended mankind. ... A non-violent deity can only signal his existence to mankind by having himself driven out by violence — by

demonstrating that he is not able to establish himself in the Kingdom of Violence (219).

The first quotation reiterates a point I have already made, that of Girard's work as republishing what the Bible has revealed. The second is the 'Girardian' version of the Johannine theme I have already noted in Lonergan: 'the darkness comprehended it not.' The third tells what happens when light does enter into darkness; note especially that it is 'by submitting to violence' that Christ 'uproots the structural matrix of all religion.' The fourth quotation moves towards a kind of functional Christology, though I have to say that the logic of this passage is not altogether clear to me.

Taken together what these passages present — and what I want to concentrate on — is a *reversal*. Figuratively, the rejected stone gets the top place. In the Passion, the same structure appears. For purposes of comparison, it can be set out in three 'moments':

(G1) mimetic desire, the victimage mechanism, *violence*

(G2) *submission* to that mechanism

(G3) a resultant good.

Those who are familiar with Lonergan will recognize that what I have done is expose what is, or may be, an isomorphism with the *lex crucis*, the 'law of the cross' in Lonergan. As he sets it out in *De Verbo Incarnato*, the law of the cross comprises three steps:

(L1) suffering and death, which are the results of sin

(L2) willing acceptance of suffering

(L3) 'a certain highest good.'

My question in the rest of this paper will be: Is the isomorphism I have set out significant or merely superficial? Upon closer scrutiny, the similarities turn out to be less solid than they seem. Take the 'moment' I have labeled G2. Christ 'submits to' violence. Submits — in what sense? My own search through Girard's published writings leads me to conclude that the one and only sense in which Christ 'submitted to' violence is that he himself had nothing to do with violence. He 'submitted' to violence in that he was entirely innocent; he 'submitted' in that he left violence behind; he 'submitted' to violence in that he himself gave up reprisal. When Girard discusses Jesus as presented in the gospel narratives, what he discusses is the preaching of the Kingdom, which in turn is roughly coextensive with a message of non-violent peace. The crucifixion, then, turns out to be the *expulsion* of that *preaching*.

Moving now to the subsequent ‘moment,’ G3 in my list, the Passion of Christ had a ‘good result.’ Exactly what result? The answer can perhaps be inferred from my previous discussion. The result was a demystification; it was the ‘deconstruction’ of sacred violence; it was a laying-bare of the victimage mechanism; it was a revelation of the innocence of Jesus the victim and of all victims. Being expelled, we read in the fourth passage quoted above, is a ‘signal’ of Deity — the only signal that a non-violent Deity ‘can’ give. Thus when Girard discusses the *logos* of the Prologue to the gospel of John, he insists that being expelled, revealing the scapegoat principle, is part of the very definition of the *logos*.

With that I turn to the three steps of Lonergan’s *lex crucis*. The thesis for which Lonergan argues is that the Son of God became incarnate, suffered, died, and was raised because from all eternity God has ordained and willed, *not* to overpower human evils, but to transform them. Evils are transformed, to put the matter imaginatively, by being absorbed. To quote Lonergan:

Sin is the source of evil in this world insofar as this world is a human creation and a human product. It involves an objective surd, and that surd is stopped, it is absorbed, only insofar as there is suffering. Sin leads to suffering, and it is only insofar as suffering is accepted in the spirit in which Christ accepted it that the surd of sin is, as it were, wiped out (*Understanding and Being* [1990] 375).

(It should be noted that these two sentences appear in a transcript of Lonergan speaking *ex tempore* in response to a question. But I do not think he would have rescinded what he said.)

The ‘reversal’ in the law of the cross is a reversal of role. What changes is *suffering and death*. From being the consequence of sin, it becomes a means of life. What then does Christ’s Passion ‘disclose’? Stated globally, it discloses how the love of God, the love that *is* God, acts and what that love *is* in this universe, the universe that actually exists, with its biases and its cycles of decline and its reign of sin. None of that is going to go away, on Lonergan’s view. The reign of sin is, stated more explanatorily, a statistical law, a matter of probabilities. Those probabilities can be lowered. But the problem is permanent, because it is a problem *in* human development.

With those clarifications, I return to the question posed above: Is the isomorphism set out schematically in my two lists substantive? Are Lonergan and Girard talking about the same thing, in different ways and from different

standpoints? My highly inclusive answer is: yes and no. Let me draw the comparison under five headings.

(1) Lonergan speaks of death becoming a means of life. For Girard, that is a formula for the 'pagan sacred.' It is the central theme in the myth of eternal recurrence, and it puts in a nutshell what Western philosophy has been saying from the pre-Socratics through Nietzsche.

(2) On the other hand, it might be argued that between Lonergan and Girard there is at least a kind of negative concurrence. Each of them endeavors to present an interpretation of the Cross of Christ that will counter or correct or replace what each regards as a mistaken or misleading interpretation; and these two mistaken interpretations turn out to be (more or less) the same. Two corrections of one and the same incorrect construal would have to turn out to be equivalent, if there were only logic to be taken into account.

For Girard, the mistaken interpretation is of course a 'sacrificial' reading of the New Testament in general and the Passion in particular. For Lonergan, the mistake has the somewhat more articulate form of a doctrine, common to (some) Protestants and (some) Roman Catholics, and known to the history of Christian thought as 'substitutionary penal atonement.' The common element, and the one that Lonergan and Girard oppose, is this: the significance of Christ's Passion is that God willed it, required it, was pleased by it, sanctioned it. Girard and Lonergan are thus uneasy with the language of 'propitiation' or 'expiation,' with the notion of 'placating' God. And of course all those terms can be regarded as the vocabulary of sacrifice.

(3) My first point indicated disagreement; my second, a measure of agreement. But that second point needs to be qualified. There is this difference: Lonergan does not claim to have 'discovered' anything. What he conceives himself to be doing in *De Verbo Incarnato* is sifting and carrying forward, 'purifying' and making coherent, the Christian tradition with respect to Christ's death, including especially Scripture but not Scripture only. Without in any way suggesting that Girard has not done his scholarly homework, it is perhaps legitimate to suggest that his own correction of previous ways of expressing what the Cross means has the appearance of a *Deus ex machina* that resolves all difficulties at a stroke.

It would, however, be particularly inappropriate to set a kind of academic rivalry going. I raise this comparison in order to move, as ‘Lonerganians’ are wont to do, to the *methodological* question of criteria. Why should I (or anyone else) take this or that interpretation of the Cross seriously? — where by ‘why?’ I mean ‘for what reasons?’ or ‘upon grasping sufficient evidence of what kind?’ One reason for introducing such a question here is the fact, which I am certainly not the first to have pointed out, that a ‘sacrificial’ interpretation of the Cross is by no means confined to a single (and admittedly rather anomalous) epistle. Besides Hebrews, there are hints in the gospels and rather stronger hints in Paul. Now, one may rule all that out on more or less *a priori* grounds. Or one may try to cope with it. Girard takes the first option, Lonergan the second.

For not only does Lonergan use the language of *self*-sacrifice, which as I have already noted is highly suspect to ‘Girardian’ ears. He has some rather astonishing things to say about sacrifice as such; for example, this passage from an early *opusculum*: “Hence the finality of a sacrifice, considered formally, is to be a symbolic compendium of the finality of the universe towards God” (*De Notione Sacrificii* §40). The operative word here is ‘hence,’ which would have to be explained in order to understand why Lonergan makes so sweeping an assertion. But if the reader is willing to take my own explanation on trust, without the textual evidence that would back it up, the basic principle involved is that insight grounds expression, to which it is prior. From that it follows, as Lonergan makes clear, that what matters most is a ‘sacrificial attitude’ for which the ‘appropriate symbol’ need not be violence at all.

(4) A further point of comparison takes us back to the question of ‘agency’ in regard to the Passion. Why did it happen, in the sense of who ‘caused’ it? Girard, as I have indicated, is firm in maintaining that the relevant ‘agent’ was not God, and it was not Jesus ‘doing God’s will.’ Only humankind is responsible for Christ’s violent death; or, more exactly, responsibility lies with mimetic violence itself.

But here again it would seem that Girard is exercising a certain selectivity. In my previous point I suggested that he is selective with regard to the *theology* of the New Testament, which includes rather more ‘sacrificial’ interpretation than he allows. Here, I would observe that his reading of the gospels precisely as *narrative* is selective. Now, selectiveness is of course a good thing. To pick out what is important and prescind from the unimportant remainder is what understanding is all about. The question, then, is whether Girard’s reading of the

gospels leaves out what is, in fact, important; and what I have in mind is the *deliberateness* with which Jesus makes his way towards Jerusalem and what would happen there. The more theological expression of that narrated deliberateness appears in the gospel of John:

For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again; this charge I have received from my Father (John 10:17-18).

That passage only emphasizes what the synoptic gospels portray, namely that Christ's Passion was in some sense active; something somehow chosen, and chosen freely; something decided and resolved upon. It was, to be sure, a reaction on the part of others to Jesus' preaching, as Girard rightly emphasizes. But it was something more, something positive on Jesus' own part, as well.

The difference here is important in that Lonergan does not discuss the law of the cross only as the Passion exemplified it. The law of the cross is in fact the Christian ethic, the feature that marks it as Christian. It is a law, that is, not only in the sense of an intelligibility, the intrinsic intelligibility of redemption, but also, for that very reason, in the sense of a precept that pertains to the members of Christ as well as to their Head. Thus Lonergan never discusses the *lex crucis* without also discussing *practices*, the ascetical and sacramental and moral implications of this law. 'Bear one another's burdens' is one example, biblically phrased. Another would be the practice that, in my estimation, corresponds in the realm of interiority to bearing the burdens of others, namely *forgiveness*, which in its most serious sense consists in taking on a burden not one's own, and transforming it into an occasion for good.⁵ In general, these practices enact the 'absorbing' that Lonergan speaks of; and that is the essential content of what he refers to in the early work I quoted above as a 'sacrificial attitude.'

It should be noted that there are some very recently published remarks which suggest that Girard himself (and, more noticeably, 'Girardians') may be willing to allow for a 'derived' sense of sacrifice that would be not entirely incompatible with the one Lonergan holds. To take the 'conversation' a step further, however, I would pose the question whether things might not be the other way around — whether Lonergan's 'purified' notion of sacrifice might not be 'primary,' and the sense Girard has clarified, the sense of victimization and

⁵ See Charles Hefling, "Grace, Christ, Redemption, Lonergan," *Lonergan Workshop* 14 (1998), ed. by Fred Lawrence, pp. 99-113, esp. pp. 108-112.

scapegoating, the 'derived' sense. Otherwise stated, a sacrifice would be a true sacrifice in so far as it included some approximation to the 'sacrificial attitude' that motivated Christ to accept his Passion; whereas Girard sees scapegoating as the real sacrifice, and 'self-sacrifice' as at best a transferred metaphor.

Nothing like that, to be sure, appears in Girard's own writings. Indeed, when it comes to the 'agency' of Christ in the process of exposing the scapegoat mechanism, he makes only such refreshingly candid statements as this one:

By remaining absolutely faithful to God's Word, in a world that had not received the Word, he [*scil.* Jesus] succeeded in transmitting it all the same. He has managed to inscribe in the gospel text the reception that mankind in its slavery to violence was obliged to offer him — a reception that amounted to driving him out. If we go beyond this point, we would become involved in questions of *faith* and *grace*, which our anthropological perspective is not competent to address (*Things Hidden* 216).

That quotation leads me to my fifth and final comparative remark.

(5) The last sentence of the interview that ends *The Girard Reader* reads: "Mine is a search for the anthropology of the Cross, which turns out to rehabilitate orthodox theology." Indeed it does — up to a point. As the quotation at the end of my last subsection indicates, however, Girard is aware of an anthropological perspective's limitations. *How* far, though, is it possible to 'rehabilitate orthodox theology' *without* addressing questions of faith and grace? I have already put forward the 'Lonerganian' view that 'Girardians' are at their best when reading texts, but that they have a tendency to suppose that reading texts is *per se* pretty much the whole of theology and as a result a tendency to 'short circuit' the cycle of functional specialties. My present point, clearly, is related to this, inasmuch as 'grace' and 'faith' are terms which (arguably) take their differentiated meaning from the functional specialty Foundations. But it is also a somewhat different point.

In order to approach it, consider the enormously important contribution 'Girardian' thought can make and has made to Christianity: it allows us to recover or reactivate the *disruptively* disclosive power of the Christian text, to let it be again a 'message-for-us,' and does this not least by undermining what Lonergan would call ideology. But to speak of a text as 'undermining' — or for that matter,

'doing' anything else — is to speak metaphorically; or, if not, then at least it raises the question of exactly how texts work or function.

Girard has described in very moving terms what happened to him when he came to consider the 'Christian text' in connection with his work on the novel. What happened was quite dramatic. He had his children baptized; he and his wife were (re-)married sacramentally. This was a conversion in the most serious sense; and as with Augustine it took place in association with, or in the presence of, what Lonergan calls the 'outer word,' including the black marks on paper that are constituted as a text by the meaning that they mediate. Still, in sober truth, the text did not do the converting. The text did not even do the meaning. Printed paper does not mean; meaners mean. Attentive, intelligent, reasonable, responsible, loving subjects mean. Meaning can become common, and the usual medium of its becoming common is language, spoken or written. And it would seem that when, in the Lonergan phrase, the Christian *kerygma* becomes a 'message-for-us,' that is what is happening: we join the community of those who hold in common the meaning mediated by the words on the page.

But if this line of thinking is to carry over into the realm of religious meaning, there is in Lonergan's view a prior condition that must be met; and if it is met the meeting is not a human achievement. For there is a 'prior word,' the 'inner word'; and part of what is meant by its priority is that it conditions anyone's acceptance of the 'outer word' in any of its dimensions. Lonergan once again relates his position on this score to the gospel of John. "No one," says Jesus, "can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him" (John 6:44), and this drawing Lonergan associates with the experiential state of unrestricted being-in-love and with the heart-flooding gift of the Spirit (Romans 5:5). To convey how this identification bears on the present context, I will quote and then comment. The first of the two following passages seems relevant to *faith*, and the second to *grace*, the two notions from which Girard prescind on methodological grounds.

... only within the context of higher truths accepted on faith can human intelligence and reasonableness be liberated from the charge of irrelevance to the realities produced by human waywardness (*A Second Collection* 8, with reference to *Insight* ch. 20).

Thus it is that a succession of so-called bold spirits have only to affirm publicly a dialectical series of rationalizations gradually to undermine and eventually to destroy the spiritual capital of the community; thus also a culture or a civilization changes its color to the objectively organized lie

of ideology ... and sin ascends its regal throne... To pierce the darkness of such ideology the divine Logos came into the world; to sap its root in weak human will he sent his Spirit of Love into our hearts... (*Collection* [1988] 27).

The point of the first quotation, I take it, is that if we manage to dispel ideologies we do not manage it, so to say, on our own. As Lonergan notes at the end of *Insight*, accepting the 'divine solution' to human waywardness is principally a divine, not a human, act. Moreover, if there exists a 'context of higher truths accepted on faith,' then I would suggest that part of that context is a collaboration which has given rise to a tradition of theological reflection. That tradition is not pristine and errorless; far from it. But neither is it irrelevant to appropriating the existential impact of the 'Christian text.'

More obviously germane, perhaps, is the second quotation. It draws together a number of the ideas I have already mentioned: the intellectual — or rather, anti-intellectual — component of human waywardness, the 'reign of sin,' the light-of-the-world metaphor. What Lonergan is saying is that God has an interest in dispelling ideology, including (we may agree) the scapegoat mechanism. But the divine strategy has two parts. In traditional language, these are the missions of two divine Persons, Son and Spirit, which correspond to the 'outer' and 'inner' words respectively — though the correspondence is more complex than I can indicate here. And notice especially that the root of ideology is interior, 'spiritual,' conscious (in Lonergan's sense of the word). It is the problem of 'moral impotence,' of a limitation on *effective* freedom which it is beyond the capacity of any finite being to reverse.

Whether any of this belongs to the 'orthodox theology' that Girard's 'anthropology of the Cross' rehabilitates I cannot say. What I can say is that from the standpoint of orthodox theology as I understand it there is a danger towards which Girard and, even more, 'Girardians' are inclined. It is not peculiar to them; it besets all theologians who immerse themselves in *texts*, notably Karl Barth. I mean the danger of Functional Binitarianism. A Functional Binitarian affirms the divinity of Christ (as Girard does), so that there are in some sense two who are divine. But those two get conceptualized as, on the one hand, God the Father and, on the other, a Son-*logos*-Word-words-preaching-text. There is a certain amount of support for such a view in the writings of the ante-Nicene fathers. It is not, however, fully Trinitarian. Still less is it Trinitarian in a way that meets the exigences of contemporary theology, as Lonergan assessed them.

The work of René Girard unquestionably bears on a 'theology of the Christian word.' Even to name everything which that theology might entail, were it to take account of both divine missions and all three divine Persons, is more than I can do at the end of a paper with a different focus. For a conspectus of what would be involved, there is at least one 'Lonerganian' study (now sadly out of print) that bears just that title: *Theology of the Christian Word* by Frederick Crowe. I will not try to summarize its argument. But to bring these rather random comments to a close if not a conclusion, it may be worth mentioning one of the conditions of the possibility of a fully Trinitarian, fully contemporary theology.

The cardinal notion is one that has already figured more than once in these remarks. It is the notion of the *subject*. For Lonergan, the three who are God are three subjects of one divine consciousness. As stated, that is a verbal formula, nothing more. It designates an analogy that neither depends on metaphysics nor reverts to physical images. But unless we are clear about what it might mean to speak of *temporal* subjects and the consciousness that constitutes them as such, the likelihood of clarity on *eternal* subjects is not very great.

THE FUTURE OF AMERICAN CITIES

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THERE ARE MANY ways to pose the question of the future of American cities. Most often the purpose in raising the question is to conjure an image that fuels the imagination, using aesthetic inspiration as a goad to practical preparation and speculative investment in the present. Such images of a future urban life are fashioned by urban designers, architects, artists, and engineers. They give us the look of a future urban stage and its futuristic sets and props. But the question of the future of American cities is more than a matter of a look and a style; it is the question of self-determination: How shall we live? How shall our progeny live? We can approach this deeper question by speculating on where our current trends will lead us, following the trajectories of our current patterns of growth and change, our current innovations, projects, and passions. Or we can approach the issue normatively, interpreting the question, "How shall we live?" as meaning, fundamentally, "How *ought* we to live?"

In the pages that follow I wish to consider this question of urban futures in light of these multiple strategies, beginning with reflections on the urban designs that have issued from great leaps of the imagination (yielding what I shall call the "fabulous future"); turning, secondly, to a very different vision of the urban future that results from the goal of moderation in lifestyle and innovation dedicated to long-term environmental health (what I shall call the "sustainable future"); examining, thirdly, the paradoxes of present-day American culture that make any sort of extrapolation from contemporary trends a complex and contradictory affair; and ending, fourthly, with a sketch of what I would recommend as a normative framework for assessing urban futures, an interdisciplinary field of investigation and reflection that I call "urban ethics."

Although these topics will lead us far from the traditional purview of philosophy and theology, they are nonetheless central to the wider scope of Bernard Lonergan's interdisciplinary thought. Investigation of these topics can assist not only in making sense of Lonergan's interdisciplinary ideas but also in carrying them forward, rooting them more deeply in Lonergan's central

theoretical insights and expanding their application further into an interdisciplinary field that was of some interest to Lonergan himself, that of urban studies. Lonergan's own interest in the field was a function of his fascination with the work of Jane Jacobs, and was more or less limited to that. In the writings of Jacobs he saw a mind that could produce five insights per page and had an intuitive sense that the practical intelligence of the person living in the concrete problem situations had more potential for producing solutions than all of the reigning abstractions of professional planners and government agencies. There was a corollary here to Lonergan's own efforts to pit his intellectualist cognitional theory and method against reigning conceptualisms in the fields of philosophy and theology. The "planning mentality" in the urban sphere had conceived the problem of rationalizing cities as one of ranging urban activities under distinct conceptual categories — housing, industry, business, transportation, recreation — and ordering them chiefly by separating them from one another. When Jacobs was first writing, the traditional and heterogeneous notions of "neighborhood" and "community" had more or less vanished from the planning vocabulary and it took detailed descriptions of actual street life, actual district functioning, and successful local economic strategies to revive those traditional notions and to render plausible her central thesis that the key to urban vitality is the mixture and diversity of uses and activities rather than their separation and homogenization.

Further scholarship on the Lonergan-Jacobs connection over the last twenty years has uncovered a wealth of further corollaries. An example is the role of statistical thinking, which Jacobs employs, from the beginning, in a central way rather than as an adjunct to classical planning conceptualities. Another is something she calls, in the introduction to the 1993 edition of her classic, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, "urban ecology," which bears a kinship, however coincidentally, to Lonergan's "worldview of emergent probability," in that it conceives the function of planning and design to be one of fostering the spontaneous emergence of new schemes of cooperation. But most importantly, Jacobs has been contributing, in all of her writings, to a comprehensive vision of the urban good, and Lonergan's theory of the human good forms an ideal companion to this effort, such that the field of urban ethics, as I conceive it, forms an arena for a wide-ranging exploration and application of Lonergan's ethics in a rich interdisciplinary context.

I. THE FABULOUS FUTURE

A tremendous amount of imagination in the twentieth century has been devoted to envisioning the twenty-first. A city, in its vastly complex blending of human purposes cannot help but form an expression of what human life is all about, and visionaries have sought to conceive and plan the city that would raise that expression to the level of stunning excellence. The turn of the century occurred under the dominance of an urban vision recalling splendors of the European past (witnessed, for example in Chicago's Columbian World Exposition of 1893), but within two or three decades a completely modernist vision had overtaken it. The city, according to this vision, was the place where the technological project of modernity — the mastery and possession of nature for the exploitation of its resources, the subjection of its scourges, and the enjoyment of its tamed majesty — was to achieve its final completion. We think of ourselves as so inconceivably beyond the nineteenth century, but in fact we have fallen far short of the lifestyle dreamed up for us in 1898, where New Yorkers float up Fifth Avenue in individual propeller-powered sky boats. Many future cities of the early twentieth century were extrapolations from the trajectory of New York: compounding layers of activity into the sky, exploiting to no end the potentialities of steel, concrete, population density, and, of course, capital. The division of urban realms, in fact, follows economic hierarchies: the beneficiaries of wise investment and managerial control sail through highways and luxuriate in gardens built high in the air, whereas one cannot even see what and who might dwell in the depths of the canyons below.

By the 1930s the design of the future city has undergone a materials revolution and sports an aerodynamic look. As the century progresses the vertical direction of urban growth is consistently imagined as direct defiance of gravity: light construction that floats upwards, in an approximation of space travel. There is no such thing as rest in this thoroughly fabricated city, but all is in motion. Forms of leisure become forms of leisurely motion. Density, once again, ceases to be a problem, for the ideal organization of space has been achieved. The gap between nature and industry has been closed because the energy problem has been solved; no degree of technology degrades the environment. In the atomic car, for example, designed by the Ford Motor Company, a nuclear reactor located in the back provides months of clean-burning fuel without a recharge. The

thoroughly transformed city of the fabulous future results from the consistent application of the founding principle of modernism: nothing should stay the same, look the same, or function in the same way as in the past. Modernism never begins from a sense of its limits, but rather approaches every limit with an eye to surpassing it. Popular disorientation or abhorrence of the fruits of modernism — the public put off by the strange sculpture in the plaza, the public feeling uncomfortable before modern buildings, the public leaving the concert hall when the Schoenberg piece comes on — these are all, we well know, routinely interpreted by modernists as signs of its success.

But the twentieth century was not all about the megalithic city, for its early years were dominated also by a reaction against the dirty, noisy, dangerous, and crowded conditions of large cities. The quintessential expression of this reaction can be found in the popularity in this country of Ebenezer Howard's ideal of the "garden city." People are attracted to both town and country, argued Howard, but for different reasons. A town-country synthesis could provide them with the benefits of both. A garden city would need to limit its size and separate its functions. Broad boulevards would separate industrial from residential uses, and the growth of both industry and population would be prevented from reaching the point where the activities would interfere with one another. The economic benefits that had previously been achieved through urban densification would now be obtained through improved transportation (chiefly rail lines and canals) that would link garden cities with unprecedented efficiency.

But as we all know, the development of efficient transportation raises the appeal of urban commuting. Why settle for a compromised city when one can easily catch the train to the real one? And for the developer: Why take risks on small-scale industrial ventures starting from scratch without an established labor force when one can avoid all such risks by locating in an established city? Under the pressure of such questions the Garden City movement ended up producing few true garden cities but many garden suburbs. With the emergence of the garden suburb, we have the familiar design ideal of the highly industrial and commercial city combined with the bucolic suburb. Such a pattern was well-established for the wealthy in this country by the turn of the century and for the middle class, in most large cities, by the 1920s.

The most significant modernist alternative to both the traditional model of urban growth and the Garden City movement was the revolutionary vision of French architect, Le Corbusier, who called it "The Radiant City." This alternative was achieved by drawing on elements of both development patterns, but

combining them in a single, fantastically-scaled plan. The megalithic city and the Garden City are here totally unified. The strategy was to further condense home and work, organizing it all into massive cruciform towers that thrust into the air combined with lower buildings of enormous length. A key inspiration here, both for the organization of uses and the aesthetics is the ocean liner. An impossibly diverse range of human activities can take place in the ocean liner because it is so brilliantly organized and orchestrated. The aesthetics of the ocean liner are utterly modern; form follows function without occasioning any nostalgia for earlier styles of architectural decoration. A city built upon this magnificent union of organization and modern aesthetics could also, it was believed, stem the rush of city dwellers to the suburbs, for the concentration of built space could free up the ground level for parklands. The whole of the Radiant City would be a Garden City.

There are many assumptions at work in the Radiant City ideal. There is an assumption that disorganization is a curse of the modern city and aesthetic diversity a defect. These could be corrected by the separation and organization of uses. There is a further aesthetic assumption that tastes in architecture are indefinitely malleable, such that citizens can learn to love sleek forms and bare concrete walls of the new "International Style" as much as they had loved Gothic arches and wood beams in the past. There is a shift in the meaning of futurism: one no longer merely extrapolates from contemporary trajectories but grabs entire process of history by the horns and makes it happen according to plan.

Few of Le Corbusier's own designs were built, but pieces of his vision have been constructed in cities all over the world. In this country the most consistent attempt to realize the Radiant city was undertaken in the urban renewal projects of the 1950s and 60s. In New York City, for example, Robert Moses was given a free hand to condemn acres of city lands for conversion to high-rise low-income housing complexes. His expressways cut huge swaths through older neighborhoods in the city. What many of the people in these neighborhoods being cleared experienced was the destruction of a whole way of life and the loss of long-established communities. People could not simply suspend their lives during the construction and relocation process, and those that did successfully relocate often found that the new project housing had problems of its own. Jacobs cut to the root of these problems, applying brilliant observations on how street neighborhoods actually worked and how they contributed to the social and economic vitality of districts and of the city. Against the "Radiant Garden City" she leveled charges that the conception is overly abstractive and reductive,

assembling the activities of human life like so many items on a grocery list — housing, commerce, industry, open space — finding in them the most reduced form of their value — shelter, nourishment, sanitation, light, air, exercise — and arranging it all in a simple, aesthetically pleasing patterns on the drawing table. The approach errs in its methods, ignoring the role of intelligent observation in empirical study. It errs in its definition of the kind of problem a city is, imagining it a set of two-variable problems rather than a multiple-variable problem. It errs in its politics, regarding as largely irrelevant the participation of the citizens to be affected by renewal projects. It errs in its economic sensibilities, failing to see the dynamic character of commerce and entrepreneurship that requires ways to start small and poor before being viable and profitable. It errs, finally, in its blindness to the fact that human life finds its meaning through culture and history, that the vital functions of human life, when separated from those sources, are mere variations on drudgery (Jacobs 1993; Byrne and Keeley 1987). Jacobs is famous for the slogan, “a city is not a work of art,” but the point is that the city is not the *planner’s* work of art; a city is, properly, a means for individuals and communities to realize their *own* artistic self-creation. In that sense the city is *above all* a work of art, but a work that is achieved by the flourishing of countless artists.

This alternative vision, too, is a vision of the human good, one that specializes in finding good in unsuspected places. It finds good in streets and street neighborhoods that create forms of environmental surveillance and incidental contact. It finds good in the density and diversity of neighborhood uses that keeps a mix of people on the streets at different hours and thus puts residential and commercial activity in mutual support of one another. It finds social good in the strength of weak social ties, and favors urban design that accommodates and promotes the formation of such ties. It finds political good in the role of districts, which bring together the power of city governments and the intelligence of street neighborhoods. It finds economic good in old buildings and the spin-off commercial ventures that often occupy them. It finds good, above all, in cities, in activity that is unmistakably urban, and it opposes any urban vision that regards that sort of activity as problematic by its very nature (Jacobs 1993).

If the city of the fabulous future has not come to pass it is due, in part, to this sort of criticism. The dream did not materialize according to expectations. Technology did not overcome its environmental externalities as it developed; Radiant City housing did not turn out to be especially livable; the public did not learn to love anything about bare concrete, however artfully engineered. The

forces of modernism met with the forces of preservation; the forces of industrial expansion met with a new consciousness of limits. It is possible today to describe a thoroughly countervailing sort of future for American cities: the sustainable future.

II. THE SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Perhaps no concept holds as much potential for changing the way we think about the future as the concept of sustainability. Over the last forty years we have seen enormous changes in the way development occurs due to the influence of the environmental movement. The notion of sustainability has evolved from earlier concepts that were much more narrow and immediate in their scope. In the 1960s the issue was "pollution" and the political imperative was to turn public policy to the task of cleaning up specific human environments, especially cities. The motive was to make these places more livable for their current inhabitants. Within the context of this project there came into public consciousness an awareness of the toll that pollution was taking upon animal species. The desire to preserve species from extinction now became a crucial element in environmental policy. The theme of "harmony with nature" came to the fore: the hope that there could be compatibility with human development and the preservation of species. Out of this desire came increased funding for research into habitats and ecosystems, and this research revealed that the ecological impact of human consumption and development had far greater impact on species than had ever been imagined due to interference with partial elements of vast and complex ecosystems. From such revelations has emerged, in some quarters at least, another sort of environmental consciousness: the realization that no human activity is environmentally neutral, that environmental impact is not an externality of development but that every aspect of development that does not positively contribute to environmental maintenance or environmental recovery is most likely contributing to its further degradation. Here we have the emergence in popular awareness of the concept of sustainability: conceiving oneself as a participant in natural cycles that will break down if we do not participate in just the right way. This conception represents a dramatic shift in locus of concern, for whereas the original task of cleaning up pollution was to keep nature serving us; the task of sustainability is to put our lives more profoundly in the service of nature. Our stricter environmental laws, our ever-weightier environmental impact statements, our newfound enthusiasm

for recycling are new forms of living for the future: regulating our current lifestyles for the sake of future generations and non-human animals. There is a reversal here of the modern ideal of the mastery of nature; we might call it, instead, "self-mastery of oneself as natural."

But the notion of sustainability becomes even more powerful when we extended beyond the traditional confines of environmentalism. In the 1990s Jane Jacobs came to see her earlier work on cities as born of a kind of emerging ecological consciousness. There was a sense of the dynamic interrelation among the physical design of urban spaces and the patterns of urban interaction that was decisive for their long-term viability. There was a sense of a natural symbiosis between the communal vitality of particular street neighborhoods and the economic vitality of the districts to which they belonged, a sense of cities as importantly self-contained economies within the largely political construct of nation-states. In a country that gravitates towards control at ever-higher levels of centralization Jacobs was making the countervailing argument that the centralized authority has legitimacy only to the extent that it grasps its obligation as one of serving those local systems that engender their own forms of vitality, that nest within one another by complex and fragile means, ultimately achieving the preservation of that most endangered of urban species, the truly livable neighborhood. Jacobs could be called, then, a theorist of community sustainability, and one who pursues that theory by developing an elaborate version of what might be called "urban ecology." Her most recent forays into the parallels between ecological models and economic systems, whatever value they may or may not have for economics, provide useful lenses for interpreting the underlying conceptual orientation of Jacobs' work as a whole.

Perhaps the notion of sustainability within the urban setting should include something like architectural sustainability. By this I do have in mind environmentally conscious building techniques, but also something more. A useful thought experiment might be to ask, how would you build a building if your intent were that it would last for four hundred years, or perhaps a thousand? Your choice of materials would be important, of course. (Plywood begins degrading after forty years or so.) You would want to engineer for the possibility of any number of natural disasters. But you should also be pressed, I would expect, into the question of the cultural permanence of design. One will need people to find the building worthwhile for many generations to come, for if it is considered ugly there will be no political support for its preservation. One will have basically two strategies at one's disposal: one may seek the timelessness of a

generic, or “cosmic,” geometrical style; or one may draw upon what has proved sustainable throughout history thus far. In either case you will want to pack the building with fundamental human meanings, meanings which, while they may be born of an identifiable history (time and place), are yet clearly striving for what is translatable into other times and places as the same quest for ultimate experiences, ultimate meanings, and ultimate hopes. The discipline of this architectural task might awaken in one a greater appreciation for architecture of the past, might cultivate in one a sense of the value of preservation of buildings. These are the elements, I would suggest, of an orientation toward architectural sustainability.

Let us consider one more form: political and economic sustainability. Consider the example of the novel entitled “Looking Backward: 2000-1887,” by Edward Bellamy. It was published in 1888 and quickly became one of the most popular books of its day. It is the story of a man, Julian West, who falls into a deep, trance-induced slumber in 1887 and wakes up in the year 2000 in Boston. In this new society of the future, West finds many delightful technological innovations, such as the ability to pipe music into your home from concert halls all over the city, but what is most astonishing is the way in which the extreme social and economic inequalities of the day have been overcome, largely through the institution of state socialism. The Bostonian of the year 2000 enjoys a productive life in the “industrial army” up until the age of forty-five, and then retires to a comfortable, creative, and long period of leisured maturity. Bellamy perceived the concentration of economic and political power in a few hands in his day as politically unsustainable. In order for there to be a future worth living for, he believed, there would have to be a redistribution, a new political mentality — a transformation, in fact, of the human spirit.

Bellamy was of course quite correct in some respects: we do indeed have music piped into our houses from all over. But inequality and capitalism are still with us, though the question is still constantly raised as to whether the capitalist system is not at the root of the unsustainability of contemporary American lifestyles. Lonergan used to characterize contemporary capitalism as the counterposition for which socialism provides the reversal. His own economics, though adaptable to either system, is meant to provide theoretical support for a transformed capitalism, one that would, by means of its ways of channeling the surpluses that result from economic expansions, achieve a more sustainable dynamic equilibrium.

III. THE PARADOXES OF THE PRESENT

I have been speaking of imaginative visions of the future in order to help explain the dynamics of the present, for the present is always structured by the pursuit of imagined futures. But the best hope of anticipating the *actual* future of American cities must proceed by following the trajectories of the actual behaviors that people of today manifest in their pursuit of their imagined futures. What one encounters in trying to interpret those behaviors is a set of paradoxes, a set of tensions between the fabulous future and the sustainable future that are so extreme as to be fraught with confusion and utter contradiction.

Let us begin with the question of urban planning and design. Today one can encounter in all sorts of professional fields associated with urban development in architecture, sociology, city government, in community organizing, and in planning, for example people who have been deeply influenced by Jane Jacobs and a variety of related authors. These people seek to implement policies of urban integration, in-fill, development, and strategic densification of urban neighborhoods. Yet every day you can see developments approved that follow the opposite mentality. In fact the most innovative new multi-use designs must often battle a host of regulations and building codes designed according to an ideal of separation. Usually they must battle the neighbors as well, for people who have long lived in single-family homes in residential neighborhoods inevitably see the introduction of storefronts and multifamily buildings as an invasion.

The pattern of separation continues to perpetuate itself in the form of suburban growth. While some American cities have developed central business districts that reach high into the air, the dominant pattern of growth has been horizontal, with a degree of low-density development that would be impossible without heavy use of automobiles. Americans will allow their business districts to reduce themselves to rows of characterless glass boxes and desolate concrete canyons, but only as long as they can retreat to their private bower in the pastoral garden suburb. To fill the space that has opened up between home and work developers have fashioned such new creations as the regional mall, which, in giving itself such names as "Towne Square" has sought to evoke the sense of a civic gathering space, but which in reality turns every civic function into a commercial one. Here the opportunities spread as far as the eye can see, and every need can be satisfied needs for clothing, for food, for celebration, for spiritual sustenance but all in the form of retail. The citizenry of this town speaks only through consumption.

Within the synergy of the residential suburb and the suburban mall has arisen another unique urban form: what Joel Garreau calls "Edge City." Once suburbanites can live and shop without driving into the city they are primed and ready to do away with the commute altogether. Businesses find suburban regulations and taxes lower, and so they begin moving, setting up suburban office towers or corporate campuses. This new city, the Edge City emerges without a plan, but according to strict rules nonetheless, for it must adhere precisely to the conservative formula that will bring the right yield on the developer's investment. By this logic the business of development cranks out whole cities according to the modular and uniform pattern of the regional mall. Each element is precisely calculated to accommodate in just the right way its citizens, conceived as beings that emerge from cars only for good reasons.

The result of the demographic shift from central cities to Edge Cities has been called the "doughnut hole" effect, and that effect has been staggering. Since the 1950s, while metropolitan areas as a whole have seen overall growth in that period, many of the traditional cities at the center of those metropolitan areas have seen staggering declines in their population, numbering, in some cases, in the hundreds of thousands. David Rusk, compiling demographic and economic data on 150 American cities found in the suburbanizing trend a point of no return. Central cities that had lost more than 20 percent of their population, had a disproportionate level of minority population (e.g. 30 percent) and had average income levels less than 70 percent of the levels in their surrounding suburbs were thereafter unable to close the gap, by any means (such as redevelopment projects, enterprise zones, neighborhood empowerment programs), by as much as a single percentage point. By 1990 twenty-four American cities had passed this point (Rusk 1995: 74-5).

The paradox of contemporary urban growth patterns, then, is this: that the success of metropolitan areas can be devastation for cities. When we say we want to make our cities more healthy and more livable, what we often mean is that we want them to be nicer places to commute to, or we want the metropolitan area to be more affordable. What we do not see is that these desires are precisely the ones that do the harm to central cities.

We can speak of a related tension and a related paradox in terms of what Jane Jacobs calls the conflict between "car people" and "foot people." When Jacobs was first writing the planners and officials were car people. Jacobs' polemic against them asserted not merely the rights, but the economic and social value of pedestrian usage supported by public transit. Today the foot people, in

many cities, have come to power. They are regulating urban development in favor of mixed use; they are designing for traffic calming and compact car parking; they are pushing through ambitious mass transit systems; they are rekindling ideas of community development and neighborhood autonomy. Meanwhile the prosperity of the middle class has created a run on vans, trucks, and sport utility vehicles that fit rather awkwardly in the compact parking spaces promoted by our progressive city managers. Vast numbers of car people, in some quarters of our nation, are in revolt. In Washington State an initiative was recently passed reducing license tab fees that funded public transit; another initiative that is in the works will eliminate high-occupancy vehicle lanes on highways and will turn huge sums currently dedicated to public transit over to highway maintenance and development.

Opposing tendencies manifest themselves in the area of architecture as well. Modernism, which was all well and good for downtowns that were being turned into central business districts, was ultimately rejected in the residential suburbs. America decided that the retreat from the city should also be a retreat into the past, and today new subdivisions can only demand the best prices by adopting some traditional American home style. Modernism in architecture was founded on principles of honesty, integrity, self-discipline, and universality: a building should show what it is and how it is engineered; it should avoid as much as possible the distraction and artificiality of decoration. But if suburban life tells us anything, it is that Americans *love* distraction, fantasy, and artificiality. If they cannot find enough of it in the mall, they will head off to Las Vegas or Disneyland. The postmodern architecture of the 1980s and 90s made its peace with decoration and with the past by invoking them in light-hearted and ironic ways. Contemporary sculptural architecture (for example, the so-called “deconstructive” architecture of Frank Gehry) has no compunction about monumentalizing the most fantastic flights of fancy. Though it often offends the public, the most creative contemporary architecture is born of the paradoxes and contradictions in public opinions about architecture. It explores the possibilities of an aesthetic universe where the seriousness of modernism has grown tiresome and nothing serious has been put in its place.

What are we to make of all of these contradictions? I believe that deep down Americans have a very keen sense that we need to learn how to live within stricter limits; we know that the evidence of this need is all around us if we would give it a good, sober look, but of course we don’t like the anxiety that is induced by looking. I think we are caught up in what I will call “the Mardi Gras effect,”

where the awareness of the approaching need to fast is precisely what sets us going on the binge to end all binges and the fear that Lent will be mere desolation sends our imagination reeling into the wildest of fantasies. There is no telling when the binge will end and the fast begin, though it certainly must end some time, one way or another. The future, in such times of blaring contradiction, is especially hard to predict. Therefore our attention must turn, I would suggest, away from the future that can be extrapolated from the dynamics of the present and toward the future that we can discern through normative reflection: the future that we *ought* to choose.

IV. INVENTING URBAN ETHICS

The task of choosing a future according to normative standards requires thought on the nature of urban ecologies, and a deeper integration of the disciplines, the professions, and the organizations that seek to maintain and develop those ecologies. We have by no means reached a point where planners, economists, developers, architects, politicians, and neighborhood leaders share a common vision, understand each other, or even speak the same language. In this situation I would like to propose that certain forms of ethical discourse could play a greater role in deepening the integration and providing a language that can be shared by a diversity of participants. The language of the human good is sprinkled throughout the debates on urban development and conceptions of freedom, rights, and justice are latent in every plan, every design, and every argument that is made on behalf of the city and its inhabitants. But the meaning of these terms fluctuates too much according to circumstances and perspectives, and what could be meant by an overarching conception of the human good in an urban context remains something that is not explicitly debated.

One concept that is helpful in tying the good of different constituents together is that of the stakeholder. When the concept first appeared in business ethics it was something of a radical idea. While there had been a common consensus that companies have certain obligations of fairness to employees and honesty with customers, there was also an assumption in place that company managers have a primary and overriding moral obligation to owners or stockholders because of the fiduciary responsibilities that exist between them. Playing on the word, "stockholder," the stakeholder concept broadens and levels the sense of the moral obligations at stake, insisting that moral duties are not

exactly parallel with legal and fiduciary responsibilities. The functioning of businesses depends upon a chain of relationships — between stockholders and trustees, between trustees and managers, between managers and employees, between companies and consumers, and among businesses, voters, and governments. If stakeholder ethics were followed to its fullest form then each of these roles and relationships would be dignified with genuine moral respect and from each would be expected responsible participation in the overall scheme. This sense of an ethical dimension that encompasses every stage of the production process, from investment to consumption, has now moved into the mainstream of business ethics. But were it were fully integrated into commercial life, the results would be truly transformative.

At present, it seems to me, the second weakest link in the chain of rights and responsibilities is that between investors and companies. While “socially responsible investing” is one of the fastest growing sectors in investment, still the basic wisdom of the stock market seems to be “buy low and sell high,” or in other words, ownership is a numbers game rather than an act of responsibility. The weakest link of all, however, is between companies and consumers. Companies communicate with consumers primarily through the systematically distorted discourse of advertising, which is not so much guilty of outright lying as of creating a world of partial truths that is so complete and so seamless that it masks the way to the further relevant questions that would reveal the truth about product ingredients, environmental impacts of production, labor practices, and profit margins. Consumers are not given such information and do not ask for it. Both consumers and producers in this economy continue to promote a fantasy world in which the most significant purchases in life are made according to fashion or whim under the blaring banners of advertised distraction. Stakeholder ethics, rightly understood, is incompatible with such a picture.

In the context of urban life, to conceive of ourselves as urban citizens rather than mere consumers will require perceptive and intelligent application of the idea of stakeholding. The word appears everywhere in urban planning today, but the meaning and implications are not followed out. Learning to think of oneself as stakeholder is a matter of inquiring into the nature of the schemes of urban interaction within which one participates. It is therefore a matter of self-knowing, but not an egocentric self-knowing. The relevant self-knowing sends one immediately beyond oneself and into a larger universe of intelligible relations. This self-knowing is not straightforward, either; it must devote great energy to discerning the forms of resistance and denial that prevent one from

seeking out the right kinds of information, the blind spots that keep one from asking the appropriate ethical question at the moment when it really matters. The process of self-knowing, when its self-correcting normativity is allowed free reign, become a process of character-altering self-appropriation (Byrne and Keeley 1989: 88-95).

It should be evident from the language I am using that I am proposing a compatibility between stakeholder ethics and Lonergan's theory of the human good. I am elaborating the laconic statement of Lonergan, "The human good is at once individual and social" (1972:47). Virtue ethics focuses on character, and in a sense all of ethics does depend upon the existence of people of decent character. But character is formed within system and history, among the options that are presented and the universe of discourse that speaks through one. One way or another our future will be more urban, as will all of the patterns of history that work through us. We have the opportunity to seek a better understanding and appropriation of those patterns, and to experience the immeasurable value of the creative seeking of measure. If the good of the city is ultimately something that transcends all of us and all of our efforts of reasonable cooperation, that does not render the undertaking futile, but all the more worthwhile.

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AUTHORITY, AUTONOMY AND AUTHENTICITY

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Human development is a movement from the relative dependence of childhood to the relative autonomy of maturity. (*Insight*, 478)

Grace perfects nature both in the sense that it adds a perfection beyond nature and in the sense that it confers on nature the effective freedom to attain its own perfection. Grace is not a substitute for nature. (*Insight*, 632-33)

PREFACE

LONERAGAN'S INSISTENCE in his post-*Insight* writing on the importance of historical consciousness did not imply a rejection of continuity with classical and medieval thought. The purpose of historical consciousness was to heighten critical sensitivity to the specific institutional and cultural contexts in which traditional thinkers and authors were operating. Lonergan remained appreciative of and deeply indebted to Aristotle, Augustine and Aquinas, the great minds of the past up to whom he had laboriously reached. In characterizing the purpose of his life's work as *vetera novis augere et perficere*, to augment and perfect the old with the new, he indicated that he aspired to do for our historical and cultural period what his great predecessors had earlier done for theirs.

As we look ahead to the twenty-first century and the third millennium of Christianity, it has been 16 years since Lonergan's death and nearly 50 years since the writing and publication of *Insight*. We are entering an increasingly global and interconnected society that is drawing Christianity into greater appreciation of the universal dimensions of its own redemptive mission. Our purpose in these annual workshops is to reach up to the mind and spirit of Lonergan, seeking to develop and articulate the fuller implications of his deepest insights for the century that lies ahead.

My own indebtedness to Lonergan can be simply stated. Reading *Insight* as a young graduate student in philosophy, I was inspired by his personal example to strive for genuineness in the practice of intellectual inquiry and critical reflection. I derived from Lonergan profound respect “for the inner dynamism of the human spirit, and greater openness to the mysterious implications” of the unrestricted desires of my own intentional consciousness.¹ When Lonergan encouraged theologians, philosophers, scientists, scholars and men and women of common sense to complete fidelity to their distinctive callings, I felt called to deepen my own emerging commitment to intellectual integrity and rigor.

Lonergan was a friend of human liberty and an unfailing supporter of human freedom and responsibility. He was also a Christian humanist, who emphasized the collaborative and cooperative role God has granted to human beings in the work of redemption. This paper was conceived and executed in gratitude for Lonergan’s spirit: for his genuineness in inquiry, his devotion to liberty, and his redemptive humanism. Lonergan was, I believe, a Christian thinker and teacher for all times and seasons.

I. LONERGAN’S PHILOSOPHICAL AND THEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Description of man. Dependence, desire for independence, needs.²

For Lonergan, the central fact about human existence is our need for development. “The concrete being of man is in process. His existing lies in developing.”³ Because of the complexity of human nature and the minimal powers with which we are born, human development is a long, difficult, many-layered, never completed process. The dramatic agents in that process are finite and fallible beings, invariably prone to error. Human fallibility is proper grounds for humility, however, rather than a basis for despair. “We are not to be discouraged by our failures, but should learn from them as lessons in personal weakness and as a stimulus to greater effort.”⁴

¹ Bernard Lonergan, *Insight, A Study of Human Understanding* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978) p. 730.

² Pascal, Blaise, *Pensées*, #78, trans. A.J. Krailsheimer (London: Penguin, 1996), p.21.

³ Lonergan, *Insight*, p. 625.

⁴ *Insight*, p. 677.

Human beings are intellectual, moral and religious animals. Every aspect of our existence is subject to the fact of becoming and change. We develop organically in order to develop psychically and sensitively, and on that organic and psycho-neural basis, our spiritual development gradually occurs. The key realities in our intellectual and moral development are our native intelligence and reasonableness and responsibility. We are constituted as spiritual beings by an unrestricted desire to know, what Lonergan called the *eros* of mind.⁵ We are also constituted by an *eros* for value, for the comprehensive good that is equally unrestricted in scope.⁶ These unrestricted desires are the deepest source of the relentless dynamism that characterizes human existence. They make us restless and dissatisfied with all prior human achievement, even as they make that achievement possible and worthy of remembrance and preservation.⁷

The central problem of human existence results from a lag in the order of our development. Human living precedes human learning and the arduous cultivation of effective good will.⁸ We are already fully committed to the process of living before we know how to live, and before we have developed the habitual willingness to follow the directive guidance of knowledge and responsible choice. In the blunt maxim of the Pennsylvania Dutch, we are “too soon old and too late smart.” And there is an even deeper aspect to the human dilemma. Although all human beings are capable of some measure of development, none of us is capable of sustained development.⁹ The actual pattern of human living is a complex mixture of development and decline, of progress and regression; and the fruits of our efforts, as Pascal noted, are a tangled knot of greatness and wretchedness.¹⁰ In the remarks that follow, I want to sketch a heuristic framework for an empirical, normative and critical account of human development based on Lonergan’s thought. This account revolves around three inescapable aspects of the human condition: authority, autonomy and authenticity.

⁵ *Insight*, p. 74.

⁶ Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972) p. 36; Lonergan, *Second Collection* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1974) pp 81-83.

⁷ Lonergan, *Method*, p. 36. “The transcendental notion of the good so invites, presses, harries us that we could rest only in an encounter with a goodness completely beyond its powers of criticism.”

⁸ *Insight*, pp. 225-226; 627; 689; 693; 697.

⁹ *Insight*, p. 630.

¹⁰ “What sort of freak then is man! How novel, how monstrous, how chaotic, how paradoxical, how prodigious! Judge of all things, feeble earthworm, repository of truth, sink of doubt and error, glory and refuse of the universe!

“Who will unravel such a tangle? ... man transcends man.” Pascal, *Pensées*, #131, p. 34.

Human authority has its basis and justification in human dependence, in the fact of our being born as children into historical communities that have effectively preserved many of the insights and achievements of earlier generations.¹¹ A central purpose of authority is to assist human development from above by reliably transmitting to each new generation the knowledge and wisdom that are required for authentic personal and communal living.¹²

Human autonomy has its basis and justification in the human desire for intellectual and rational independence, in the critical distance we need to develop with respect to the communities of our birth and adoption. The exercise of personal autonomy constitutes a form of development from below, in which we normatively proceed from sensory experience, to intellectual understanding, to critical judgment and responsible choice.¹³ In answering the call to autonomy, we seek to be faithful to the constitutive *eros* and exigence of the human spirit. Although autonomy enables us to become effective critics of *de facto* authority, our intellectual and moral independence clearly rely on a prior period of pre-critical communal belonging.¹⁴

Authenticity is the end and purpose of legitimate authority and genuine autonomy.¹⁵ Lonergan identifies human authenticity with effective freedom, with sustained development, with complete fidelity to the normative demands and desires of intentional consciousness. But because of moral impotence, we are unable to achieve authenticity through our own efforts.¹⁶ We constantly violate the *eros* and exigence of the spirit, we regularly succumb to bias and sin. And we do this not only as individuals, but even more frequently in the conduct of our collective existence. For this reason, our pursuit of authenticity, both existential and historical, requires a continuous commitment to repentance and conversion. Through the process of conversion, we seek healing for the disabling effects of inauthenticity, of the disabling consequences of illegitimate authority and the

¹¹ Lonergan, *Third Collection* (New York: Paulist Press, 1985) pp. 5-12.

¹² See Frederick Crowe, *Lonergan* (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1972) pp. 109-110.

¹³ *Method*, p. 9.

¹⁴ See Michael McCarthy, "The Critical Appropriation of Tradition," *Soundings*, Winter-Spring 2000.

¹⁵ Lonergan uses the term "authenticity," in "*Existenz and Aggiornamento*" as a way of characterizing personal responsibility for our lives and collective responsibility for the world. The term appears frequently in the essays assembled in *Second Collection*, and it is clarified as a term of art in *Method*.

¹⁶ *Insight*, p. 627; *Method*, p. 110.

presumptive pretensions of autonomous self-reliance.¹⁷ This process of restorative healing, though it clearly requires our free cooperation, finally depends on the help we receive from other persons, and on the providential goodness of God, the author and guide of all authentic development. Authentic human beings accept and acknowledge their profound interdependence, first on the cumulative achievements of earlier generations, and most basically on the triune God who creates, redeems, and renews the concrete universe of being to which we belong.

II. A NOTE ON METHOD

In contemporary ethical, political and ecclesiological discourse, there is a marked absence of agreement on the meaning of our central terms. The tangled residue of western history has burdened each of these terms with a high level of semantic ambiguity. Authority is regularly confused with despotism; autonomy with individual sovereignty; and as Lionel Trilling and Charles Taylor have shown, contemporary appeals to authenticity cover a very broad spectrum indeed.¹⁸ Liberals tend to think of authority as inconsistent with human liberty. Conservatives tend to think of personal autonomy as inconsistent with public order. And authenticity is more often associated with unbridled self-expression than it is with heroic and sustained self-transcendence.¹⁹

A central purpose of this paper is to restore some intelligible order to this semantic thicket. I want to distinguish legitimate authority from the many varieties of despotism; to distinguish genuine autonomy from inflated conceptions of human independence; and to distinguish the Christian notion of authenticity from the models of human integrity advanced by secular humanists.²⁰ I also want to show the indispensable roles that legitimate authority and autonomy play in promoting human development. Finally, I want to defend the claim that the true purpose of authority is to advance effective freedom, and that the internal goal of autonomy is growth in both personal and communal authenticity.

¹⁷ *Method*, pp. 237-243.

¹⁸ See Charles Taylor, *The Ethics of Authenticity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991) and Lionel Trilling, *Sincerity and Authenticity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971).

¹⁹ See Taylor, *Ethics of Authenticity*, "The Slide to Subjectivity," pp. 55-69. See Lonergan, *Method*, p. 104, and *Second Collection*, p. 166.

²⁰ *Insight*, p. 703-728.

III. AUTHORITY

Men are not corrupted by the exercise of power or debased by the habit of obedience, but by the exercise of power which they believe to be illegitimate and by obedience to a rule they consider to be usurped and oppressive.²¹ (Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*)

Imagine the newborn infant, able to suck, to cry, minimally able to move hands and feet. Then imagine the mature adult, able to move with economy and grace, to think and speak with force and precision, to invent, to build, to engage in the arts of government, to worship God with ardor and devotion. Causally linking the first image to the second is the process of human development. As Cicero remarked, we are all born male and female, but we need to acquire the arts and virtues to become human. Human development is the slow, uneven, often painful process of becoming more fully human.

How do we develop from the infant to the responsible adult? The broadest name for this transformative process is education. We are largely educated by others into greater maturity and freedom. But our teachers, our educators, themselves depend on a collaborative cooperation with the past in the advancement and dissemination of knowledge and power. As Lonergan writes, all human beings receive from and contribute to a common fund of knowledge and belief, in whose cumulative fruits each new child is invited to share.²² It is a clear sign of our radical dependence on other persons that we receive far more from this fund than we ever contribute into it. Human development, both personal and historical, depends on this active cooperation across the generations, in which the knowledge and achievement of the past are effectively communicated to the present, and then through teaching and learning transmitted to the individual child and the slowly emerging adult.²³ This complex process of human formation rests on the exercise of authority, which itself rests on the responsibility of parents, teachers and a broad range of public institutions to instruct the young in the ways

²¹ Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Volume I (New York: Vintage Books, 1960) p. 9. Tocqueville emphasizes the very different forms and modes that authority requires in democratic as opposed to aristocratic societies and cultures.

²² *Insight*, p. 703.

²³ *Method*, pp. 79-81.

of the world, and to teach them the greatness and wretchedness of the human past.²⁴ Human beings need authority because they need to be educated emotionally, intellectually, morally and spiritually, in order to become adults. And they need to be directed how to live before they become capable of charting the course of their own lives. The earliest stages of education are marked by pre-critical belonging, the tacit affiliation of the growing child with the larger teaching community.²⁵ The young learner is already essentially free, "but essential freedom is one thing, effective freedom another."²⁶ The purpose of authority and the key to its legitimate exercise is the development of effective freedom, the transformation of the dependent child into the relative independence of the mature adult. Legitimate authority exists to create authentic and responsible adults.

The justification of authority depends on a provisional, though occasionally enduring, inequality between parents and children, teachers and students, governors and those whom they govern. The relevant inequality is a significant difference in knowledge, wisdom and institutional responsibility. But the degree of inequality varies significantly from one authoritative context to another. Parents exercise what Aristotle called "royal authority" over their children, while political leaders govern their fellow citizens in accordance with "constitutional authority."²⁷ All effective authority, all authority that actually achieves its proper end, rests on the wisdom and competence of those who teach, lead and rule, and on the free assent or consent of those whom they serve.²⁸ As Jesus made clear to this disciples, legitimate authority is a form of service, a type of ministry, exercised for the benefit of the human beings who need it.²⁹

Lonergan based the justification of authority on fidelity to the transcendental precepts. When those who exercise authority are faithful to the *eros* and exigence of the human spirit, they seek to promote the same fidelity in those whom they teach or direct. As God, the model of all authority, consistently respects human freedom and responsibility in the providential governance of the

²⁴ For my concept of education, I have drawn liberally from Hannah Arendt's essay, "The Crisis of Education," from *Between Past and Future* (New York: Viking Press, 1969).

²⁵ See Michael Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962) pp. 203-245.

²⁶ *Insight*, p. 693.

²⁷ See Aristotle's *Politics*, Books III & IV.

²⁸ I have borrowed the concept of effective authority from Joseph Komonchak. Effective authority is a principal source of effective freedom.

²⁹ Matthew 20: 25-28; Matthew 23: 10-12.

world, so must legitimate human authorities.³⁰ Effective authority is the opposite of despotism or tyranny. It does not depend on the appeal to fear or the threat of punishment. Rather, it rests on the trust and confidence of those subject to authority in the wisdom and goodness of their parents, teachers and leaders. It also depends on mutual respect. To foster respect for authority, those who practice it must first show respect for the people they serve. Human beings who exercise authority are deeply accountable, ultimately to God, who authorizes their institutional leadership, but also to the larger human community they symbolically represent, and finally to the developing persons they teach or instruct.

De Facto Authority

To this point, I have been sketching a normative conception of authority, a standard of legitimacy and effectiveness by which all existing authorities can be measured. But *de facto* authority invariably falls short of this norm. Actual parents, teachers, leaders and rulers are subject to sin and moral impotence. They regularly violate the transcendental precepts; they frequently surrender to bias; their actual practice is typically a mixture of legitimate and illegitimate power.³¹ *De facto* authorities stand in need of honest, probing criticism lest they become idols, or sacred cows.³² Only the divine exercise of authority is beyond reproach. And even then the descendants of Job are quick to remind God how much better the world would be governed if they were in charge.

We are deeply familiar today with the various abuses of authority: parents who neglect or injure their children, emotionally and physically; incompetent teachers who fail to respect the intelligence and aspirations of their students; corporate executives who use their economic positions to become unconscionably rich; the numerous political despots, great and small, who suppress the liberties and rights of their citizens; pastors in parishes, bishops in dioceses, the magisterium of the church when they fail to teach and act in the spirit of the gospel.

Despotism is the opposite of legitimate authority; and the essence of despotism is the exercise of arbitrary power. For traditional and contemporary tyrants, the will of the sovereign is the final law. The sovereign will is accountable to no one. It refuses to heed the appeal to experience, to answer

³⁰ *Insight*, pp. 722; 726.

³¹ *Third Collection*, pp. 7-8.

³² See Walter Conn, *Christian Conversion*.

intelligent questions, to respond to reasonable criticism, to justify its decisions and choices. For the despot, truth and goodness are determined by will and decision rather than by intelligence, reasonableness and responsibility; and will divorced from its normative alliance with reasonableness and responsibility is invariably arbitrary and unaccountable.³³ "It's true because I said it; it's good because I want it; it's right because I have so determined." Those are the demoralizing refrains of arbitrary power.

The history of the world is sadly replete with examples of despotism masquerading as legitimate authority. By now, we are all familiar with the post-modern litany of domination: imperialism, colonialism, racism, sexism, anti-Semitism, paternalism, orientalism and patriarchy. Although weary from rhetorical overkill, we should not forget that each of these "isms" refers to an instance of systematic injustice that sought to legitimate itself by appeal to an allegedly intrinsic and enduring inequality. Not surprisingly, the flawed record of historical authority has made our contemporaries suspicious of authority as such. I have been trying to rescue the concept and practice of authority from that pervasive suspicion by explaining the human need for its exercise, and by showing that its ultimate purpose is to promote human freedom rather than to constrain and oppose it.

To balance the ledger, it is important to acknowledge that failures of authority are not only the fault of the shortcomings of people in power. While resistance to despotism is warranted and necessary, human beings are always free to refuse the truth, to disobey legitimate commands, to rebel against the exacting requirements of authentic growth. The sin of Adam was a sin of disobedience; the sin of Israel was repeated infidelity to the Mosaic covenant. Christians constantly fail to obey the commandments of love. Children scoff at the wisdom of their parents; students mock the aspirations of their teachers; workers violate legitimate contracts; citizens evade the law and show contempt for dedicated public officials. And the laity lazily blame their pastors for the impotence and folly of the church.

There is yet another way in which authority can fail to be effective. While those subject to authority can refuse to comply with its legitimate demands, we

³³ Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984) p. 26. "The consequence of Weber's emotivism is that in his thought, the contrast between power and authority, although paid lip service to, is effectively obliterated as a special instance of the disappearance of the contrast between manipulative and non-manipulative social relations. ... bureaucratic authority is nothing other than successful power."

know, especially in the twentieth century, of the dangers that flow from passive obedience, from uncritical submission to existing power, from the “good German” syndrome that enabled the horrors of the Holocaust to proceed.

A final word on the importance of ideology. Lonergan carefully distinguished between authenticity and alienation, between fidelity to the immanent norms of intentional consciousness and refusal to comply with their unrestricted demands.³⁴ Growth in authenticity is the proper object of human aspiration; the tangled blending of greatness and wretchedness is the typical pattern of human reality. Given human sinfulness and moral impotence, it is foolish to be scandalized by the fact of alienation, either in those who exercise authority or in those who live under its charge. But the dangers of ideology are far more serious.³⁵ Ideology is the intellectual attempt to justify alienation, to legitimate the illegitimate, to identify good with evil and holiness with sin. The confusions ideology creates are particularly threatening in the domain of authority. The justification of despotism in any of its forms creates systematic cultural disorder. It blurs the crucial distinction between legitimate authority and arbitrary power, weakens respect for authority as such, and increases the danger of passive obedience. As Tocqueville warned, despotism corrupts both the wielders of power as well as those who submit to their unjust commands. Ideology is also used to justify the refusal of legitimate authority, to conflate power with domination, and to support theories of freedom based on exaggerated accounts of individual self-reliance. As Lonergan insisted, the real problem is not power but illegitimate power, not obedience but compliance with arbitrary edicts and unjust commands. Legitimate authority and genuine liberty are complementary sources of human development. Ideologies that insist on their incompatibility need to be clearly identified and firmly opposed.

³⁴ *Insight*, p. 728; *Method*, p. 55.

³⁵ *Method*, pp. 357-361.

IV. AUTONOMY

Genuineness...does not brush questions aside, smother doubts, push problems down, escape to activity, to chatter, to passive entertainment, to sleep, to narcotics. It confronts issues, inspects them, studies their many aspects, works out their various implications, contemplates their concrete consequences in one's own life and the life of others. If it respects inertial tendencies as necessary conservative forces, it does not conclude that a defective routine is to be maintained because one has grown accustomed to it. Though it fears the cold plunge into becoming other than one is, it does not dodge the issue, nor pretend bravery, nor act out of bravado. It grows weary with the perpetual renewal of questions to be faced. It longs for rest, it falters and fails, but it knows its weakness and its failures and does not try to rationalize them. (*Insight*, 477)

A. Human Freedom and Responsibility

As spiritual creatures endowed with intellect and will, human beings are essentially free. Human freedom consists in the created capacity to base our actions and our response to the initiatives of others on intellectual apprehension and voluntary choice. There are extremely broad variations in the effective operational range of this spiritual capacity. Effective freedom is minimal in the newborn, more advanced in the adolescent, and highly developed in the mature adult.³⁶ The greater the measure of operative freedom the greater the scope of personal responsibility. As we become freer, we become more, not less, responsible for what we do and leave undone.

Both novelty and recurrence characterize the process of human development. Children slowly mature and then suddenly become the parents of their own offspring; students eventually replace their teachers; those who were directed and led by others gradually assume positions of direction and leadership. An inexorable shift occurs in the sources of human development. Reliance on authority slowly diminishes; we grow more from below and less from above; youthful dependence gives way to greater independence and self-direction. This growth in autonomy is clearly to be welcomed. It is, after all, the central purpose of legitimate authority.

³⁶ *Insight*, pp. 619-626.

As in the case of authority, an expansion of freedom does not mean an increase in arbitrary power. Effective freedom develops through fidelity to the *eros* and exigence of the human spirit.³⁷ What legitimates external authority also legitimates the growing internal authority of the responsible adult. According to Lonergan, a critical moment occurs in the early stages of manhood or womanhood. The young person discovers for herself that she has to decide for herself what she is to make of her own life.³⁸ In this discovery, she accepts personal responsibility for the constitutive decisions and choices that determine who she is and will become. The adolescent tendency to blame one's parents, one's teachers, or society at large for personal unhappiness is thankfully outgrown. I am responsible for what I do with what I have been given by others and by God.

This existential discovery is completed in what Erikson calls the generative stage of human development.³⁹ The emerging adult not only accepts responsibility for her own life, but she also embraces responsibility with her peers for the social institutions and cultural contexts in which individual human lives concretely unfold. Personal liberty develops into public liberty, into active engagement and responsible participation in the governance of human affairs.⁴⁰ Existential autonomy unfolds into collective autonomy, into social and cultural responsibility, as Lonergan's remarkable portrait of human genuineness becomes increasingly relevant and vital.

Concrete human freedom is always situated.⁴¹ We are born into a natural and human world; we live with and depend on other persons; the actual circumstances of reflection and choice are invariably mediated by the achievements and failures of our ancestors and contemporaries. In exercising our freedom, we respond either authentically or inauthentically, to the tacit or explicit claims of other people, to the silent call of God, to the obligations and imperatives of law, to the interior exigence for consistency in our knowing and doing.⁴²

³⁷ This integrated union of fidelity and freedom is the basis of Bernard Häring's moral theology. See Bernard Häring, *Free and Faithful in Christ* (St. Paul Publications, 1988).

³⁸ "In our lives there still comes the moment of existential crisis when we find out for ourselves what we, by our own choices and decisions, are to make of ourselves."

³⁹ Erik Erikson, *Childhood and Society* (New York: Norton, 1963) pp. 266-268).

⁴⁰ See Michael McCarthy, "Liberty, History and the Common Good," *Lonergan Workshop*, Vol. 12.

⁴¹ See Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989) "The Self in Moral Space," pp. 25-53.

⁴² Lonergan, *Insight*, p. 599.

Becoming relatively autonomous is the opposite of drifting, of surrendering to the prevailing social or cultural tides.⁴³ With increased autonomy comes an increased capacity for effective criticism. We neither passively accept nor defiantly reject the rules and expectations of society. The basis of all normative criticism, whether it be self-criticism, criticism of one's community, or the more complex historical critique of the inherited tradition is the immanent, operative, dynamic structure of intentional consciousness.⁴⁴ This structure which is universal on the side of the existential subject but vulnerable to distortion by the interference of alien desires and fears, provides a trans-historical and trans-cultural ground, in the very core of the human spirit, for critically appraising what human beings do and have done with "their precious freedom."

B. Inflated Autonomy

The modern age began and ended with an explicit rejection of inherited forms of authority. Luther rejected the authority of the papacy and the scholastic theology of the medieval church. Bacon and Descartes rejected the authority of Aristotle and the intellectual leadership of both clerics and academicians. Galileo and his descendants rejected the finite, geocentric cosmology developed by the classical astronomers. The revolutionary Jacobins in France later rejected the centralized monarchy and the aristocratic privileges of the *ancien regime*. Nietzsche brought one phase of modernity to a close by rejecting the authority of God as inconsistent with the freedom of autonomous man.

These celebrated repudiations of authority led to a more general rejection of human mediation in the name of individual liberty.⁴⁵ A distinctively modern conception of liberty developed in which the solitary individual stood alone and apart, effectively separated from nature and human society. As Charles Taylor has shown, the leading modern thinkers embraced a picture of man as a disengaged subject, a punctual self, whose freedom consisted in radical independence from the influence of others.⁴⁶ This picture dominated Descartes' conception of the rational ego, the atomistic individual of social contract theory, the Rousseauian

⁴³ For a forceful critique of the drifting subject, see Lonergan, "*Esistenz and Aggiornamento*," *Collection*, ed. F.E. Crowe (New York: Herder and Herder, 1967), pp.240-51.

⁴⁴ *Insight*, p. 603.

⁴⁵ For the serious cultural dilemma created by the modern loss of spiritual and temporal mediation, see John Dunne, "The Alienated Man," *A Search for God in Time and Memory* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1977) pp. 75-118.

⁴⁶ See Taylor, *Sources*, pp. 143-177.

account of the natural man, and especially the Kantian conception of the noumenal moral agent.

Kant became the leading theorist of modern autonomy, and his influential conception of human liberty still retains considerable cultural force.⁴⁷ Kant attributed autonomy not to the concrete empirical subject but to pure practical reason, to an invisible and postulated noumenal agent who stood completely outside the causal influence of God, nature and history. For Kant, the autonomy of the moral subject meant that the noumenal will legislates the moral law by drawing on the resources of pure reason alone. The autonomy of the will required that the volitional subject be bound only by laws it had legislated for itself. These laws were timeless and universal imperatives, binding on all rational beings, but having their legislative source in the autonomy of the solitary individual self.

The autonomous Kantian subject is clearly not the concrete, developing person, slowly advancing from radical dependence to increasing levels of freedom and responsibility. The noumenal subject does not develop, does not rely on authority, does not painfully achieve effective freedom, does not gratefully accept the gracious mercy of God. The pure freedom of the noumenal self is, for Kant, an ahistorical given. To preserve that freedom, that precious autonomy, the self needs only to be segregated from the causal influence of other rational and natural agents. To remain autonomous and free, the self needs simply to be left alone. Kant insists that to allow God, other persons, or nature to shape the maxims and motives of human choice is to be guilty of heteronomy, and to deprive human agency of its distinctive moral worth.⁴⁸

In the Kantian picture of moral autonomy, there is no place for divine revelation, for mutual giving and receiving, for drawing on and contributing to the common fund of practical knowledge and belief, for all of the enabling factors that allow human beings to grow in effective freedom. Kant's hypothetical moral subject is completely independent and self-sufficient.

Post-Kantian philosophy has severely criticized this segregated picture of human agency. Hegel reinserted the human subject into history. Kierkegaard placed the finite self directly before the mystery of God. Marx resituated the productive animal within an expansive socio-economic order. Darwin and Freud insisted on the natural origin and evolution of the finite ego. The romantics reemphasized the heart, the emotions and passions, and their critical role in

⁴⁷ For a concise account of Kant's treatment of moral autonomy, see I. Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (New York: Harper and Row, 1964).

⁴⁸ Kant, *Groundwork*, pp. 108-113.

human existence. Nietzsche mocked the manifestly fictional character of the Kantian self.

Kant had stressed the pure rationality of the noumenal subject. For the will to be free, it had to follow the directives of pure reason alone. But post-Kantian thought radically separated reason and will. Following Schopenhauer's lead, it made the blind and irrational will the ultimate noumenal reality. In Nietzsche, this primal reality becomes the will to power or self-assertion, with reason at most the servant of the will rather than its master and guide. The fundamental Nietzschean virtue is strength of will, the will's inherent capacity to overcome the natural and social obstacles that constrain its self-assertion.

The Nietzschean defiance of traditional morality is muted in modern liberalism.⁴⁹ But liberalism preserves a critical aspect of the Kantian legacy by focussing on negative liberty, the freedom to be left alone,⁵⁰ and by insisting on the rights of the sovereign individual to define its own ends and constantly to reshape its revocable life-plans and personal attachments.⁵¹

I agree with Iris Murdoch that this picture of the self, this conception of human autonomy, is profoundly over-inflated.⁵² In liberalism, the only check on the will's sovereign authority is respect for the sovereignty of others. In Nietzsche, even this constraint is abandoned, as human existence reduces to the struggle between weak and strong wills, between the aristocratic few and the herd-like many, between the sovereignty of the *Übermensch* and the ideals and imperatives of conventional society. These contemporary choices, I believe, are dreary and unpalatable. They leave us longing for a more genuine conception of freedom, rooted in the reality of human interdependence rather than the illusion of individual and collective self-sufficiency.

⁴⁹ MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, p. 22. "Both (Nietzsche and Sartre) saw themselves as by their analysis condemning conventional morality, while most English and American emotivists believed themselves to be doing no such thing.

⁵⁰ See Isaiah Berlin, *Four Essays on Liberty* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969) p. 122-131.

⁵¹ See John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971) pp. 407-416.

⁵² Iris Murdoch, *The Sovereignty of Good* (New York: Schocken Books, 1971) p. 47.

V. AUTHENTICITY

If the humanist is to stand by the exigencies of his own unrestricted desire, if he is to yield to the demands for openness set by every further question, then he will discover the limits that imply man's incapacity for sustained development, and he will acknowledge and consent to the one solution (to the problem of evil) that actually exists, and if that solution is supernatural, his very humanism will lead beyond itself. (*Insight*, p. 728)

Lonergan began to use the normative language of authenticity around the time of the second Vatican Council.⁵³ The idiom has marked existentialist overtones. Heidegger had explicitly contrasted authentic *Dasein* with *das Man*.⁵⁴ Authentic *Dasein* is being unto death, or living with the full consciousness of individual mortality. The they-self, by contrast, lives with the conventional suppression or denial of death, in a state of false consciousness and self-deception. Freud argued that the agencies of culture, with the exception of science, promote wish fulfillment and false consolation.⁵⁵ Nietzsche delighted in unmasking the poisoned sources of Western morality, in unveiling the *ressentiment* underlying the gospel of love.⁵⁶ Due to the influence of these seminal thinkers, the ideal of authenticity has come to imply confronting unwelcome truth, debunking the pretensions of culture, acknowledging the dark human motives in "the foul rag and bone shop of the heart."⁵⁷ In his famous study, *Sincerity and Authenticity*, Lionel Trilling argued that the term 'authenticity' is nearly impossible to define, but that it suggests "a more strenuous moral experience than 'sincerity' does, a more exigent conception of the self and of what being true to the self consists in, and a less acceptant and genial view of the social circumstances of life. At the behest of the criterion of authenticity, much that was thought to make up the very

⁵³ To the best of my knowledge, Lonergan's first published use of "authenticity" occurs in "*Existenz and Aggiornamento*."

⁵⁴ Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time* (New York: Harper and Row, 1962) pp. 290-311.

⁵⁵ Sigmund Freud, *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*, lecture 35, "*Welt Anschauung*."

⁵⁶ See Friedrich Nietzsche's, *Genealogy of Morals*.

⁵⁷ "Now that my ladder's gone, I must lie down where all the ladders start, in the foul rag and bone shop of the heart." The passage is from the Yeats poem, "The Circus Animals' Desertion," quoted by Lionel Trilling in, *Sincerity and Authenticity*, p. 11.

fabric of culture has come to seem of little account, mere fantasy or ritual, or downright falsification. Conversely, much that culture traditionally condemned and sought to exclude is accorded a considerable moral authority by reason of the authenticity claimed for it, for example, disorder, violence, unreason."⁵⁸

How does Lonergan's use of "authenticity" compare to these somber invocations of death, violence, and unmitigated realism? Despite several critical differences, there are important points of overlap. For Lonergan, as for his existentialist predecessors, the quest for authenticity begins with unsparing self-knowledge. The true self is the whole self, the fully concrete human being, and not the pure, autonomous ego postulated by Kant. The whole self includes the biological, psychic, intellectual, moral and spiritual dimensions of human existence. The true self is situated in history, in society and culture, with all of their concrete merits and limitations. Authenticity requires an acknowledgment of the dark side of human existence, of our ignorance, folly, sinfulness, violence, selfishness, prejudice, of our proneness to rationalization, of our vulnerability to despair. It means facing up to the problem of evil, both personal and historical, and of coming to terms with the reality of death.⁵⁹ Authenticity does not seek to debunk society and culture, nor does it take them at face value. It submits all things to evaluative criticism, but its notion of criticism is nuanced and mature. To criticize is to judge and evaluate by measuring the legacy of human existence against the immanent norms of intentional consciousness. By that measure, human existence is a tangled knot of power and impotence, of captivity and freedom. For Lonergan, unsparing self-knowledge reveals a complex dialectic of created nature, destructive sin, and redemptive grace.⁶⁰ To focus on violence and sin to the exclusion of nature and grace is, in its own way, a distortion of wholeness and a cruel rebuke to the depth of human aspiration.

Lonergan's post-*Insight* use of "authenticity" corresponds closely to his earlier notions of genuineness and effective freedom.⁶¹ Authenticity is the goal of human development and the *raison d'être* of legitimate authority and autonomy. As the basic normative aspiration of human consciousness, authenticity is defined as complete fidelity to the unrestricted *eros* and exigence of the human spirit.

⁵⁸ Trilling, *Sincerity*, p. 11.

⁵⁹ See *Insight*, Chapter 20, "Special Transcendent Knowledge," where Lonergan directly addresses the problem of evil and sin.

⁶⁰ See *Topics in Education*, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993) pp. 49-70.

⁶¹ *Insight*, pp. 475-479; 619-627.

Such fidelity, if it were unwavering, would result in effective freedom, in sustained self-transcendence, in continually going beyond the limits of our finite knowledge and goodness.

Intellectual authenticity would mean effective freedom of the mind, consisting in the complete openness of human intelligence to the universe of being in its full concreteness. Moral authenticity would mean the complete dedication of the human person to the comprehensive human good in all of its aspects and enabling conditions. Spiritual authenticity would mean constantly going beyond the narrow circles of affection and acceptance in which we are comfortable, to the whole-hearted love of God, neighbor and enemy. This threefold authenticity would begin at the level of the existential subject, but it would naturally develop into historical responsibility in which human beings, acting in concert, would fulfill the important role God has assigned them in the governance and direction of the world.⁶²

But this perfect conjunction of objective knowing and authentic living is not what critical self-reflection reveals. What existential and historical self-knowledge actually discloses is the awesome gap between human aspiration and human performance. Authentic self-knowledge is invariably a source of humility, for it does not bear witness to perfect fidelity to the transcendental precepts, but to bias, sin, violence, selfishness, the constant misuse of human freedom. "To assert moral impotence is to assert that man's effective freedom is always restricted, that he cannot sustain his created capacity for self-transcendence and development."⁶³

At one level, the existential supporters of authenticity are right. Unsparing self-knowledge confronts us directly with the problem of sin and evil, of captivity and death. It also returns us to the basic dilemma of St. Paul in the *Letter to the Romans*, the dilemma of the exclusively autonomous man. "The good that I would I do not; the evil that I would not I do... Wretched man that I am who will rescue me from this body doomed to death." (Rom. 7:19-24) St. Paul articulates a deeply sobering truth when he insists that we cannot heal our own sinfulness, nor the destructive consequences of our sins in the life of the world.

The critical moment in the dialectic of authenticity occurs when we confront the full implications of these existential truths: there is no human solution to the problem of evil and death; human power is always countered by human impotence; human achievement by human failure; human freedom and

⁶² *Topics in Education*, pp. 76-78; *Insight*, pp. 742-743; *Third Collection*, pp. 169-182.

⁶³ *Insight*, p. 627.

development by captivity and decline.⁶⁴ Historical self-knowledge, particularly in the 20th century, reinforces the critique of illusory hope and false consolation. The two world wars, the great depression, the totalitarian regimes in Nazi Germany, the Soviet Union, Maoist China, and Pol Pot's Cambodia, the specter of nuclear annihilation and irreversible environmental decline, all have chastened the innocence of liberalism with its naive trust in continuous human progress. They have also shown conclusively that the despotic and totalitarian resort to force and terror as solutions to human injustice are counsels of despair. Modern humanists have wanted to locate the root of the human dilemma in social institutions they could actively reform and in cultural blindnesses they could easily correct. But what candid repentance actually reveals is that the root of the human problem lies in the moral impotence of each person's intentional consciousness. In authentic repentance, we discover ruefully what Walt Kelly's cartoon character Pogo meant: "We have met the enemy and it is always us."

The critical fact of moral impotence underscores the merits as well as the limitations of secular humanism. Modern humanism was right to insist on the importance of human freedom and responsibility, but it was wrong to segregate human liberty and dignity from divine grace and revelation. The truth is, we profoundly need God's free and sustaining initiative, creative, redemptive, and regenerative, if we are ever to satisfy the depths of our longing and the full measure of our human obligations. Authentic self-knowledge and repentance provide cumulative evidence for Lonergan's Christian humanistic conviction that "to be nothing but a man is what man cannot be."⁶⁵ But where does this leave the quest for authenticity? It redirects it to religious conversion, to the full acknowledgment of our radical dependence on God, on the gift of creation, on the mystery of redemption, on the power and inspiration of the Spirit who draws us, slowly and freely and hesitantly, into more effective freedom and greater fullness of life.⁶⁶

The development of grace in each of us is principally the work of God who illuminates our intellects to understand what we had not understood; to grasp as unconditional what we had repudiated as error; and who breaks the bonds of our habitual unwillingness to be utterly genuine in intellectual inquiry and critical reflection; by inspiring the hope that

⁶⁴ *Insight*, pp. 690-693; 720-721; 727-728.

⁶⁵ *Insight*, p. 729.

⁶⁶ The centrality of repentance and conversion is acknowledged in *Insight*, 725-730; 743-746. It is explicitly thematized and emphasized in *Method*, pp. 241-243; 283-285.

reinforces our detached and unrestricted desire to know; and most importantly by refining the charity, the *caritas*, the love that bestows on human intelligence fullness of life.⁶⁷

The essence of authenticity is self-transcendence and the highest form of self-transcendence is the incarnate love that Jesus of Nazareth taught us on the cross. Greater authenticity than this hath no man or woman than he/she freely lay down his/her life for the world and its people. This is the awesome responsibility to which God summons us all in freedom and grace. "Love one another (freely) as I have first loved you."⁶⁸

⁶⁷ *Insight*, p. 730.

⁶⁸ John 15: 12-13. The term "freely" is my addition; though pleonastic, it stresses what is only implicit in loving.

WHAT GOD HAS JOINED AND MAN HAS PUT ASUNDER

Sebastian Moore, OSB
Downside Abbey, Bath

TWO IDEAS AND A POEM

Salvation through the blood of Christ (love's vivisection of doubt) exposes the dark roots of violence in us to the sunshine of perfect love.

Theology is the mind making a fool of itself for the love of God.

The man we love we call the Lamb.
His end its slaughter, pleasing God.
Who is the ultimate I AM
And no one finds this bloody odd:

Murder and holy sacrifice
In tantalizing counterpoint
Whose only role is to entice
The mind that love holds out of joint.

The interplay between these two
A dance of God within the heart,
The dancer is in love with you
You mustn't hold the two apart.

The dance is yours, it takes you out
Into new uplands of the mind,
Love's vivisection of doubt
Where even death is left behind.

The counterpointing is the point
For it is inexhaustible
Releasing Spirit to anoint
The mind as priestly king and fool.

We see this now, whose eyes are skinned
To look at murder as our source
And yet the bible said we sinned
Where pagans lived without remorse.

Our murder driven underground
Left only myth to mark the place
Of Abel, till the Word would sound
And join the two in blood and grace.

Murder with sacrifice its myth
Keeps history with bated breath
And there's no thing to end this with
Except that awful holy death.

Things come together for the mind:
Surprisingly, we find we knew
Already, and the past refined
Makes us cry out, 'My God, that's true!'

Indeed the thing is obvious:
The man we love, the slaughtered beast
Together stay outrageous
And send us inward to the feast.

But still we fear where God has fused
Profane with sacred in one deed,
This counterpoint has us bemused
Who will not hear that we are freed.

Sebastian Moore, 15.5.00

EMILE DURKHEIM, THE greatest of the brilliant founders of sociology and the one who most impressed Rene Girard, said that the one distinction made by every culture there ever was, is between the sacred and the profane. It is this distinction that is challenged, in all its neededness by humanity as we know it, by the murder of Jesus and its sacramental outcome. The best definition of divine revelation as proclaimed by the church could be derived from this challenge. Divine revelation is through a story whose interpretation brings into a mutual counterpointing, inexhaustible for the mind that explores it, of the sacred with the profane. Revelation is what underlies the fact that my whole lifetime as a Christian thinker has had, as its leitmotif, to insist that what preaching and theologizing presents as a supreme sacrifice is also, and indivisibly from this, a political murder. The poem I have just read you highlights, I hope, this obstinate and alluring paradox in a way that only a poem can.

How shall we think about what God in Christ does to the distinction, universal according to Durkheim, between the sacred and the profane? In the poem I use the convenient musical metaphor of counterpointing. The revelatory action brings the two together, while society does all it can to keep them separate—the very notion of the sacred connotes the separated from the common or profane. Now the counterpointing of two subjects in a Bach fugue illustrates this new mutuality between sacred and profane introduced by the Christ event. It illustrates how God joins together what man persists in putting asunder. But we can go further than this charming illustration. More dramatically, we can say that in giving to a political murder a sacramental outcome God is flouting Durkheim: which emphasizes Durkheim's towering genius. Name any theologian who has come up with a universal and therefore seemingly absolute human fact to which the Absolute, in the flesh, has replied, 'It is not absolute. Love is.'

By way of further illustration, we could instance a moment in the 18th century Stations of the Cross that we endured at Downside on Good Friday from time immemorial until the present Abbot. At the tenth station, Jesus is stripped of his garments, and we hear, 'His clothes are torn from his bleeding body, and he the Holy of Holies stands exposed to the vulgar gaze of the rude and scoffing multitude.' Here the sacred and the profane are held firmly apart. The sacred is the naked Jesus. The profane is the jeering mob — of Jews of course. There is no relish of salvation, no sense of God transcending our fearful tidy world. In consequence, the text, far from awaking love, incites to hatred of the Jews, in other words to standard Christianity for most of its history. It is the Jesus story bringing out not the best in us but the worst. It brings out the best in us when it

wonderfully concentrates the mind on the inexhaustible mystery of a political murder with a sacramental consequence. It brings out the worst when it restores the sacred and the profane to their original separateness, with all the implied sanctions on sacrilege, supremely exemplified by the mob of jeering Jews. The text belongs to the Catholic chamber of horrors.

Is the gospel's reassociation of sacred and profane to go on forever, forever alluring the mind into its challenge to our settled ways? Is the process that of an asymptotic curve? No, because the whole process looks forward to an eschaton when sacred and profane cease to exist as categories. And do we not thus stumble on a good definition of realized eschatology? The eschaton, the end of all things, is the dissolution of religion in love in which there is no more sacred and profane, a dissolution that is anticipated in a political murder with a sacramental conclusion. Do we not thus jazz up the sedate concluding clause of 'O Sacrum convivium!' O sacred banquet, in which we have a beginning of eternal life! We get the taste of the beginning in the bread and wine as the flesh and blood of the victim self-given to our murder. Does our liturgy ever make us feel suspended between our now and our forever?

Jesus has no Sinai, where God is segregated from secularity, only Tabor, where the Father is luminous in the self-giving victim Son. 'Neither on this mountain nor on any other bloody mountain, that's all over now.' The love at the heart of Jesus transgresses and dissolves the barrier on which religion blindly builds, opening his heart to murder by the profane heart of men. A soul like Therese, with her feeling for the criminal victim, undergoes a final Gethsemane that opened her writing to the charge of blasphemy, as she herself said, and as her *advocatus diaboli* correctly noted. I don't know what she'd have made of Girard. But it is only for the less than wholly converted that the understanding of love's transgression has to be sophisticated. To say the Lord's Prayer in its original ecstasy — 'as in heaven, so on earth' — is to transgress 'in spirit and in truth.'

Jesus says, 'what God has joined together, let not man put asunder.' In the crucifixion of his Son by us and its sacramental outcome and expression, God has put together the sacred with the profane, on the putting asunder of which culture and civilization depend. The medieval church put them asunder again, obscuring the political murder of Jesus as integral to the Christian mystery. The murder was done by 'the Jews', not by us who do it all the time to play the necessarily unknowing role in the design of God that weds the sacred and the profane to our embarrassment and, if we will, to our healing. Christian anti-Semitism is thus the index of a worldly church's putting asunder of the sacred and the profane: the

victim of our profanity becomes the Sacred Heart. Thus Girard's recovery of the original revelatory conjoining of the sacred with the profane leads him to praise the Enlightenment — the butt of Catholic criticism — simply as the dismantling of the church's reinstatement of the sacred, whose cross is, as Maritain observed, 'mounted on the crowns of monarchs and suspended upon honourable bosoms — les poitnnes honorables.'

Another consequence of this recovery of what God has joined together is to expose the phenomenon, very Catholic surely, of 'two Jesuses.' There is the Jesus who teaches and heals and expresses the progressive wisdom of his holy people. Then — on Holy Thursday — this Jesus suddenly becomes the first priest, carrying out a mysteriously prescribed ritual of consecration, agony, and 'sacrifice.' The 'sacrifice' part is protected from the murder dimension by the agreement to make this Holy Thursday switch: for, given the switch, Jesus is no longer the eye of a gathering storm of expectation and murder at its disappointment, but is now co-opted by the sacred that will turn murder into a holy sacrifice, as it has done for holy murder from the beginning. I first noticed this switch, in our community repeat, preached by a monk from another monastery. He took as his basis the Triduum, and who could fault that? If I had not been sensitized by Girard, I would never have spotted it, but gone through the process with the priestly Jesus — oblivious to the Letter to the Hebrews whose theme is, that the only priest we've got is Jesus, a layman, whose ordination was through execution as a trouble-maker.

In what follows, I hope to show this 'counterpoint' at work, in two sermons preached, one to our monks (the 'two streams') and the other to the sleepy English country town of Malmesbury (Jesus our beauty); finally in the ongoing experience of Focusing which relentlessly and joyously brings together two worlds that we habitually separate, and therefore may be deemed the praxis of realized eschatology.

THE TWO STREAMS OF CHRISTIAN CONSCIOUSNESS

Christian devotion in Holy Week runs cheerfully and confidently along two separate streams. I shall call these stream one and stream two.

The theme of stream one is the meekness of the Lamb.

The theme of stream two is slaughtered lambs as the stuff of the religion that Jesus was born in.

On stream one we follow Jesus in his agony conforming his will to that of the Father. We follow him through betrayal, arrest, trial, crucifixion and death. In all this, he is following, faithfully, a way laid out for him. Note that the emphasis here is on his faithfulness to the way; the way itself is presumed to be the divinely ordained, but we don't go into that, instinctively sensing a problem here. And problems and devotion don't go together. We are absorbed in a mystery of faithful obedience.

But on stream two, the very thing that was kept in the shade on stream one, namely the order to which Jesus was so faithfully conforming, comes into center stage. Whatever was the 'order' behind what happened to Jesus now appears in a triumphal liturgy of paschal slaughter!

On stream one, Jesus led like a lamb to the slaughter. On stream two, slaughtered lambs a jolly good thing. The cop-out here is to explain that of course the slaughtered lambs are 'only a type' of 'him who was to come.' If you carefully watch a theologian's eyes as he takes you across this one, you may notice a blink! (If you can find a tame theologian, that is, one who isn't worrying about his PhD!)

For the one thing we will not do is to hold in one consciousness, to allow to come into a single focus, the meekness of the lamb and the religiousness — of the slaughter.

A helpful suggestion *toward* this single focus, but not itself bringing me into it, is Rene Girard's useful idea that key texts, such as 'he was led as a sheep to the slaughter' — theme of Philip's catechizing of the eunuch — are 'texts in transition' or 'texts in travail', meaning texts that are carrying more meaning than their categories can bear.

For a long time I stopped at that station. But this morning at Mass, the two streams actually ran together, the gentleness of the lamb and the religiousness of the slaughter, and God blew religion apart in my mind with a love that makes all things new.

'Only connect!' says one of the Schlegel sisters in E.M.Forster's novel *Howard's End*. These two streams of Christian devotion in Holy Week are before us, crying out for the one connecting that changes everything, and that, for this very reason, everything in us resists. The iconoclasm of God is too much for us. The love of God swallowing up all our religious devices for keeping him at a

distance is too much for us. We are enormously invested in what Paul calls the reign of death (better, the rule of survival at all costs) of which the Easter victim is the dissipation. The reign of death, survival at all costs, even at the cost of each other, is held in place by the great separation of the sacred from the profane.

But don't let me moralize, for this doesn't help. It's better to just feel, identify with, each of the two streams, and then ask which side is God on here, of the lamb or of the slaughter. John of course plays with fire here. His chronology synchronizes the crucifixion with the slaughter of the paschal lambs. But his churchly interpreters have settled for a simpering 'little did they realize as they went about their now outdated slaughter...' Look, irony is not at someone else's expense — 'the Jews' for instance. It is at our expense. The Gospel is saying: Don't you see? You subscribe to necessary slaughter in all sorts of ways, you have your own lambs. Well, here you are invited into the heart of the lamb, which is the heart of God. Why do you think God got his people out of Egypt?

Why do militant Christians regularly show up on surveys as more likely to agree with capital punishment and harsh policies generally? Fundamentalism could be defined as the dam dividing Christian devotion into its two streams, gentle Jesus and angry God. But again, don't moralize! Think of God's love resorting to this desperate measure to cure our religiousness of its loveless streak, by allowing his people to religionize with slaughtered lambs, and then perhaps come into love's original focus, 'the lamb slain from the foundation of the world.'

Finally let me attempt a more subjective description. Something like this. Jesus takes me and us to God not through the man-made maze of sacrifice but through its demolition in his flesh. I don't think this reasoning is unlike that hammered out by the tortuous loving mind of Paul, the convert Pharisee, who knew all about the maze.

Jesus obedient all the way to what
We do not ask until we know the answer.
Our ugly truth we from the first forgot
Is on us, Jesus its all-daring chancer.

Not through the ritual maze of sacrifice
But through its demolition in his limbs
This lonely way he took beyond advice
While priesthood stores his lightning in our hymns.

The holy slaughter of the loving lamb
Once put together blows the mind apart
With love the everlasting, the I AM
In what we dared to call a sacred heart.
Cruellest hoax, or else the heart afire?
I cannot tell unless of my desire.

JESUS OUR BEAUTY

When I was four, I did something nasty to my sister who was sixteen, and my mother gave me a hiding. Then she went pious on me, showed me the crucifix and said, 'there is Jesus, on that cruel cross because of your sins!' My recorded reply was, 'why cruel cross. Wasn't its fault!' Theology began early with me. Here is how I do it now.

When things go wrong, we look for someone to blame. This is called scapegoating. Now there's an odd trick in this process, that people don't notice. It is this. Because having someone to take it out on makes us feel better, the victim takes on a medicinal quality. This sounds far-fetched, but look at the healing or charming powers that get attributed to gypsies, who are also blamed for things that go wrong. In the middle ages the Jew was blamed for everything, and the church's going-along with this discredits the church nearly fatally. And Jews were widely believed to be the best doctors — which they were, but that they were believed to be is important.

Now think about this. For this funny way we have of expecting something from the rejected person is the first hint we get that salvation is to come to us from a victim. It's only a hint of course.

Think of the public exposure and fall of a great person. Someone has said that we can't all be great, but we can all take revenge on one who is. Nelson Mandela said a more beautiful thing in his inaugural speech as president of a post-apartheid South Africa. He said that our servitude comes of a fear of the greatness in us. This makes us diffident and servile-and no use to God whatever!

Now just suppose that God, wanting to bring us to our senses and beyond our senses into his loving embrace, sent his own Son into the world to lead us out of our servitude, our captivity in power and violence. This person would personify us as God makes and sees us, our goodness, our beauty, our hunger for a world of love. What would we do to this person representing to us the beauty in

ourselves? Socrates gave us the answer. He compared human beings to people confined to a cave, trying to make sense of figures on a screen projected by an artificial light behind them. What would we do to someone who came to us out of the sunlight and described the beautiful world outside? He answers that we would destroy him, desperate to keep in place our power-driven, competitive and violent world: no world of love for us, thank you very much!

Now Socrates' story of the stranger out of the sunlight is only a fantasy. But with Jesus the fantasy becomes flesh and blood — torn asunder! That's amazing. But even more amazing is, that this crucified stranger comes alive for us more than he ever could be in life, and says, 'It's OK, I'm still with you, don't you see I had to come to you this way, through the terrible things you do to your own beauty, your full humanity. I am your beauty restored to you, and I'll never die again, you don't have to crucify me any more, you are free forever of the oldest human need, to have victims. Now you can love each other instead, as I have loved you.'

The resurrection breakthrough is when we *hear* the crucified one say, 'I'm still with you, you don't have to be afraid any more, can't you see it's only fear that makes you put me on the cross?' But to hear this, you have to listen. I'm still trying to learn to listen. The first step towards this is to listen to your body, your own sign that your creator loves you. I am learning this skill, called Focusing, about which I spoke to you last year.

The practice of Focusing could become, with faith, centered in the vision of the crucified held in hard focus. On the way there are these lines of Eliot in an early poem, when he was still short of faith.

I am moved by fancies that are curled
Around these images, and cling:
The notion of some infinitely gentle
Infinitely suffering thing.

Richard Rohr, an American Franciscan, points to the crucified and says, 'See what we do to goodness! See what we do to beauty! See what we do to fairness! See what we do to people who try to bring love into the world! See what we do to ourselves and to our beautiful planet earth!' But the crucified shows us a great deal more than this. He 'gathers into one the scattered children of God.'

This is the vision of the crucified one, of which my dear mother was giving me a theologically cobbled version. How the cobbling is done is obvious. Sin is

against God. Jesus is God, and so is the target of sin. So my sin is making him suffer, each No-No that I do bringing nerve and nail into new contact. This is unbelievable and therefore harmless. It exemplifies Bernard Shaw's observation that most people are inoculated with small doses of Christianity, and so never catch the real thing. God does not have the tidy spiritually banal mind of us theologians. His wisdom is near to street wisdom, its total transformation. The story of Jesus is unoriginal, it happens everywhere. It is only original in that it has a joyous ending. This is God's signature on the Jesus version of the universal story.

CONCLUSION

Lonergan said late in life that his whole method in theology would stand or fall on the issue of communication, the last functional specialty. What is communication in the end but a process, so far only in fantasy, whereby the aging people of Malmesbury, immemorially expectant of the holy noises, are laughed out of this spiritual slumber into the conversation of God. This change amounts to the rejoining for them of the sacred with the profane, the sacrifice and the murder, that the church has put asunder, with the Jews as safety-valve. To my surprise, the very thing that I thought would 'get them' was my story of myself at four and my mother brandishing the crucifix, and my reaction to 'cruel cross'. I tried to help them out by remarking how the child picks up the stale smell of adult rhetoric. But this is very sophisticated! The invitation to look at our absurd religious performance through the eyes of a four-year-old is sophisticated! What finally saved the situation and perhaps created a chance for communication was, that at the end of the Mass I lost my glasses, that were eventually found, out of their case, nestling in a wreath of flowers on the altar. I said, 'As you see, senility is setting in — my mother's getting her own back!' There was a burst of happy laughter.

This curious tendency for God's disarming simplicity to become sophisticated is shown in a book by an American novelist whose name I have lost. A country parson is musing on his regular congregation in this small country town. He describes his regulars, the district nurse, the doctor, the retired colonel and a few others, who look unhappy when he raises social issues. No one, he reflects, ever told them the strange Christian theory! The strange Christian theory is that God has pulled the rug from under our religious feet, and asked us to

remember how much we want love! Against this message, the universal and immemorial difference, between the sacred and the profane, stays in place, and preserves the expected holy noises from the iconoclasm of crucified love.

Paul says that there is a wisdom we preach among the perfect. What is this wisdom? He goes on to say that the rulers of this world did not have it. If they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. So their ignorance is essential to the carrying-through of God's working on the heart of man, that is 'deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.' 'Father forgive them for they do not know what they are doing.' So the wisdom among the perfect is a being privy to this mysterious design of God with the heart of the person in society. They have a glimpse of the ultimate mystery which transcends the world-wide and world-old difference between the sacred and the profane, bringing to a convivial conclusion the profane at its most shameful and euphemized, the political murder on which society builds its order. God outrages our decorum by presenting to us a political murder with a sacramental outcome. To enter into his design is to hear him saying, 'You make absolute the separation of the holy from the secular. This is not absolute. Love is.' God reveals himself to us only in revealing us to ourselves.

He gave himself for me to see
Myself a creature of the world
Whose fantasies about me furled
Forbid me ever to be free.

He loved as no one else could do
Unravelling our politics
With all their tricks and counter-tricks
To see that nothing may be true.

I only need to look at him
Whom crucifixion reveals
Whereas with others it conceals
To keep the world enthralled and grim.

There is no other clue but love
To cities upon cities built
The piling up of human silt
Imagining what is above.

He wakens me to see and feel
My catacombs in enneagram
And when he says to me 'I am'
My life is simple as a meal.

Only a love could simplify
Our maze, that knew the Father's kiss
And in some unimagined bliss
Could climb up on a cross to die.

I feel him where I cannot reach
Inside although I know it's there
And sometimes resonates to prayer
As what I try in vain to teach.

FROM THE HISTORICITY OF CONSCIOUSNESS TO THE ONTOLOGY OF THE PERSON

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1. INTRODUCTION¹

a) The Contemporary Relevance of the Category "Person"

"PERSON" IS A term that impressed itself indelibly upon the world of Western civilization, forming both thought and conduct. Though arising in a theological and philosophical context, it succeeded over time in penetrating political, juridical, and moral spheres.

The modern world's "turn to the subject" has sought to recuperate the dimensions of consciousness, existence, and history, while freeing itself from metaphysics. As a result of the neglect of metaphysics, "person" has not attracted much attention in specialized literature. Nonetheless public debates about moral, political, and juridical questions frequently appeal to "person" more or less directly²: recall the ongoing struggle over the defense of human rights, genetic

¹ This talk summarizes a train of thought which emerged in my doctoral thesis and has been deepened through discussions with my colleagues in the School of Theology where I teach. Giovanni Rota, "*Persona*" e "*natura*" nell'*itinerario speculativo di Bernard J.F. Lonergan, S.J.* (1904-1984), (*Dissertatio Series Romana* - 23; Roma - Milano: Pontificio Seminario Lombardo - Glossa, 1998).

² Paul Ricoeur, "Meurt le personnalisme, revient la personne," in *Lectures, II* (Paris, 1992) 198: "Revient la personne! Je n'insiste pas sur la fécondité politique, économique et sociale de l'idée de personne. Qu'il me suffise d'évoquer un seul problème: celui de la défense des droits de l'homme, dans d'autres pays que le nôtre, ou celui des droits des prisonniers et des détenus dans le notre pays, ou encore les difficiles cas de conscience posés par la législation d'extradition: comment pourrait-on argumenter dans aucun de ces cas sans référence à la personne? Mais je veux me concentrer sur l'argument philosophique. Si la personne revient, c'est qu'elle reste le

experimentation, and euthanasia. An immediate public consensus is often attained by calling all to respect³ the dignity of the person. But this consensus reveals itself as merely verbal as soon as a concrete application is attempted. Even if context and "rules of the game" provide such an apparent unanimity of meaning that in ordinary language "person" can be used without immediately creating the chaos of equivocal predication, explicit reflection changes the situation radically.⁴ Univocal clarity shatters into an equivocal multiplicity of meanings.

In the midst of this widespread disorientation about the identity and task of man in the world, which has assumed the dimensions of a social crisis,⁵ Bernard Lonergan's reflections can indicate a way out. He achieved in a critical manner the transition from metaphysical research to intentionality analysis of the subject and so developed a method to serve as the thread of Ariadne leading us out of the labyrinth of meaninglessness due to the unrestricted growth of isolated scientific specialization. This method would offer a universal viewpoint in terms of which individual temperament can be discounted, personal evaluations can be criticized, and the many and disparate reports on human beings emanating from experts in various fields, can be melded into a single view.⁶ From this viewpoint the recovery of the category of "person" can be attempted.

b) Lonergan's Reflections on "Person"

Lonergan's interest in the "person", both word and *res*, is closely tied to his Trinitarian and Christological reflections, where he rethought its meaning in accord with the Leonine program, "*vetera novis augere et perficere*." Employing the results of previous studies,⁷ *De Deo Trino*⁸ and *De Verbo Incarnato*⁹ formu-

meilleur candidat pour soutenir les combats juridiques, politiques, économiques et sociaux évoqué par ailleurs; je veux dire: un candidat meilleur que toutes les autres entités qui ont été emportées par les tourmentes culturelles évoquées plus haut. Par rapport à "conscience," "sujet," "moi," la personne apparaît comme un concept survivant et ressuscité."

³ Immanuel Kant, *Fondazione della metafisica dei costumi*, ed. V. Mathieu (Milano, 1994) 142f.

⁴ Bernard Lonergan suggests that Socrates had a similar experience in Athens at the end of the fifth century. See *Understanding and Being: The Halifax Lectures on Insight*, eds. Elizabeth Morelli and Mark Morelli. Revised and augmented by Frederick E. Crowe with the collaboration of E. Morelli, M. Morelli, Robert M. Doran, and Thomas Daly (CWL 5; Toronto, 1990) 39. All texts cited without indication of the author are to be attributed to B. Lonergan.

⁵ "The Original Preface of Insight," in *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 3/1 (1985).

⁶ *Ibid.*, 6.

⁷ Especially *Grace and Freedom: Operative Grace in the Thought of St. Thomas Aquinas*, ed. J. Patout Burns (New York - London, 1971); *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas*, 2nd ed., ed.

lated a definition of "person" embracing its ontological and psychological aspects. Although these works are a milestone in Lonergan's reflection, they do not supply his definitive achievement.¹⁰ They reveal an unusual mixture of the old with the new. Not only was the originality of his thought poured into the ancient literary genre of a theological treatise designed to supplement the professor's lectures and to facilitate private study,¹¹ but Lonergan's thought was still developing on certain points.¹² If the methodological and conceptual infrastructure of these treatises depended heavily on the investigations published in *Grace and Freedom*, *Verbum*, and *Insight*, Lonergan did not ignore the challenges arising from the discovery of historical consciousness and the results of historical research as applied to theology.

Insight had surely faced the questions raised by modern science and the Kantian critical turn in philosophy.¹³ Employing "generalized empirical method,"¹⁴ i.e., identifying the intrinsic conscious, intelligent, and operational norms *in actu exercito* of human intentional consciousness (*noesis*) which underpins every content known (*noema*), he analyzed the mind's procedures in mathematics, physics, and common sense to recover human cognitional structure in its own terms and fundamental relations.¹⁵ As a result Lonergan critically produced, first, a theory of knowledge, and thereafter an epistemology, and a metaphysics empirically verified in knowing processes.¹⁶

Frederick E. Crowe & Robert M. Doran (CWL 2; Toronto, 1997) and *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, 5th ed., ed. F.E. Crowe and R.M. Doran (CWL 3; Toronto, 1992).

⁸ *De Deo Trino I. Pars Dogmatica*, 2nd ed. (Romae, 1964) (henceforth: *DT I*); *De Deo Trino II: Pars systematica*, 3rd ed. (Rome, 1964) (henceforth: *DT II*).

⁹ *De Verbo Incarnato*, 3rd ed. (Rome, 1964).

¹⁰ See "An Interview with Fr. Bernard Lonergan, S.J.," in *A Second Collection: Papers by Bernard JF Lonergan, S.J.*, eds. W.F.J. Ryan and B.J. Tyrrell (London, 1974) 212 (henceforth: 2C).

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 211 f.

¹² This becomes obvious in comparing the methodological introductions to the various editions of *De Deo Trino*, in both the dogmatic and the systematic parts: *DT I* (1961) 5-12; (1964), 5-14; *Divinarum Personarum conceptio analogica* (Rome, 1957) 7-51; *DT II*, 7-64. On this point cf. F. Crowe, *Lonergan* (London, 1992) 129-130.

¹³ Crowe, *Lonergan*, 62-63.

¹⁴ Pierre Lambert, Charlotte Tansey, Catherine Going, ed., *Caring about Meaning: Patterns in the Life of Bernard Lonergan* (Montreal, 1982) 68 (henceforth: *Caring*).

¹⁵ "Lonergan's Own Account of Insight," in *Lonergan Studies Newsletter XII* (1991) 22-24.

¹⁶ "Bernard Lonergan Responds," in Philip McShane, eds., *Language, Truth, and Meaning: Papers from The International Lonergan Congress 1970* (Dublin, 1972) 307 (henceforth: *Language*).

But his transfer to Rome forced him, at least for pedagogical reasons, to take notice of the European cultural milieu with not previously considered¹⁷ problems associated with the *Geisteswissenschaften*, hermeneutics, historical criticism,¹⁸ and in general with the challenge of the existential, historical subject.¹⁹ He had to deepen his understanding of the structure of intentional consciousness and to bring to maturity that shift²⁰ in his own reflections which we can synthetically describe as a transition from the analysis of the knowing subject to the analysis of the existential and religious subject.²¹ The resultant method, spelled out in *Method in Theology*,²² permitted the integration of the nineteenth century's achievements in hermeneutics and historical studies "with the teachings of the Catholic religion and Catholic theology."²³

Even if Lonergan dedicated his final years to economics — a subject on which he had worked passionately in the 30s and 40s²⁴— further developments in many talks, seminars, and study weeks significantly deepened the results obtained in *Method*. Although the topic of "person" was not directly treated, nonetheless the importance of the theme supplies the underlying dynamic of his research, insofar as the classic idea of person is challenged by the results of today's psychological and sociological inquiries, which emphasize deeply the historicity and relativity involved in our attempts to attain the truth and achieve the good. These final studies also underscore the primacy of the practical and religious dimensions of reality and the need of adequate method capable of responding to

¹⁷ *Caring*, 105-106.

¹⁸ "Insight Revisited," in 2C, 276.277.

¹⁹ Crowe, *Lonergan*, 97-99.

²⁰ F.E. Crowe, "Early Jottings on Lonergan's Method in Theology," in *Science et esprit* 25 (1973) 131. On the *shift* in Lonergan's thought also F.E. Crowe, "An Exploration of Lonergan's New Notion of Value," in *Science et esprit* 25 (1977) 123-143 and the observations of W. Ryan and B. Tyrrell in the introduction to 2C, vii.

²¹ Pierre Robert, "De Panalyse du sujet connaissant a la reprise des dimensions existentielle et religieuse chez Bernard Lonergan," in *Science et esprit* 44 (1992) 128. *Caring*, 88, 90f.

²² *Method in Theology* (London - New York, 1972) (henceforth: *Method*).

²³ "Insight Revisited," in 2C, 277. During the Lonergan Congress (1970) Lonergan made it clear that his method was valid not only for theology but also for every human science that was investigating a cultural past in order to guide its future: "Bernard Lonergan Responds," in P. McShane, ed., *Foundations of Theology: Papers from The International Lonergan Congress 1970* (Dublin, 1971) 233 (henceforth: *Foundations*). See also *Caring*, 57.

²⁴ See *Caring*, 30f., 225; Crowe, *Lonergan*, 132-133; and "Lonergan's Essay on Savings: Editor's Introduction," in *Lonergan Studies Newsletter* 13 (1992) 27-28; F. Lawrence, "Editor's Introduction," in B. Lonergan, *Macroeconomic Dynamics: An Essay in Circulation Analysis*, ed. F.G. Lawrence, P.H. Byrne, and C.C. Hefling. (CWL 15; Toronto, 1999) xxv-xliiii.

the problem of the authentic meanings that constitute the person, society, and history.

2. THE FOURFOLD QUADRUPLE TRANSITION IN THE UNDERSTANDING OF HUMAN NATURE

As just noted, Lonergan's encounter with phenomenological and existential philosophies brought about some important transitions in his understanding of the human being and, as an upshot, in his final elaboration of the "basic and total science."²⁵ I think that there were four important transitions after the discovery of the uniqueness [singularity] of "human nature" persuaded him to surrender the primacy of metaphysics to a psychological analysis that became an analysis of the conscious intentionality of the concrete, social, and historical human subject.

a) The first transition is "from essence to ideal"²⁶ i.e., from a consideration of what man is in potency to what he ought to become through his own decisions. Whoever begins with the Greek definition of man as an *animal rationale* must recognize that according to this "logical" essence (grasped by determining its genus and specific difference) human beings do not evolve. For any individual, "no matter what he does, how intelligent or stupid he is, how wise or silly, how saintly or wicked"²⁷ is a living being potentially rational, and this possibility so prescinds from any development that differences are merely accidental and all development excluded.²⁸ But these differences are not accidental to one who is a rational being in act of whom a decision about oneself is demanded. One's own freedom is called into play, nor is freedom a once and for all endowment. The challenge of the decision about oneself perpetually recurs, and always under the threat of failure. Consequently, "time enters into, the essence of being a man."²⁹ "The self I am today is not numerically different from the self I was as a child or

²⁵ See "Questionnaire on Philosophy," in *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 2\2 (1984) 3.

²⁶ B. Lonergan, *Topics in Education: The Cincinnati Lectures of 1959 on the Philosophy of Education*, ed. R.M. Doran and F.E. Crowe, revising and augmenting the unpublished text prepared by James Quinn and John Quinn (CWL 10; Toronto, 1993) 79 (henceforth: Topics).

²⁷ *Topics*, 81.

²⁸ "Existenz and Aggiornamento," in *Collection: Papers by Bernard Lonergan*, 2nd ed. revised and augmented by F.E. Crowe and R.M. Doran (CWL 4; Toronto, 1988) 223 (henceforth: C).

²⁹ *Topics*, 80.

boy. But it is qualitatively different.”³⁰ Hence an analysis of the human being cannot restrict itself to the “logical” essence: decision, freedom, and time must be included in the human essence.

a) The second transition, following upon the first, is “from substance to subject”³¹ (or “from human nature to the existential human subject.”³² “Who is a man? Who is to be a man? The answer is ‘I’, ‘We’. That use of the first person supposes consciousness.”³³ Whoever is awake and conscious is aware of his obligation to be human, of his involvement in his own decision, of his own possible success or failure. In particular modern philosophy effected the transition from substance to subject, which implies that consciousness is constitutive of the subject. Indeed “we are always substances, but we are subjects only when we are awake, and we are subjects in different degrees according to what type of activity is going on in us.”³⁴

b) The third transition was “from faculty psychology to flow of consciousness.”³⁵ The study of the subject is different from the study of the soul: “It prescind from the soul, its essence, its potencies, its habits, for none of these is given in consciousness.”³⁶ Since “a contemporary philosophy is under the constraint of an empirical principle,”³⁷ a basic, total, and methodical science must have fun-

³⁰ “Self-Transcendence: Intellectual, Moral, Religious,” *Seminar and Lecture at the Hobart and Williams Smith Colleges*, Geneva, New York, Oct. 10, 1974, 2.

³¹ *Topics*, 81. See also “A New Pastoral Theology” (Nov. 12, 1973), *The Larkin-Stuart Lectures at Trinity College in the University of Toronto*, 19.

³² “Horizons and Transpositions,” *Lecture at Lonergan Workshop, with theme: Crisis of Liberal Education*. Boston College, June 21, 1979, 18.

³³ *Topics*, 81.

³⁴ “The Philosophy of History,” in B. Lonergan, *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1958-1964*, eds. R.C. Croken, F.E. Crowe and R.M. Doran (CWL 6; Toronto, 1996) 72.

³⁵ *Topics*, 82. Yet Lonergan tacks on immediately, p. 83: “There is nothing wrong with faculty psychology, but it is not enough for our present purposes, because it does not take us near enough to the concrete.”

³⁶ “The Subject,” in 2C, 73. “Potencies are not data of consciousness; operations and dynamisms are.” (*Caring*, 43) Lonergan explains why he abandoned faculty psychology in “Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon,” in *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 12.2 (1994) 129.

³⁷ “Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon,” 126.

damental, verifiable terms and relations,³⁸ of which the data of consciousness supply the fundamental evidence.³⁹

c) The fourth transition, resulting from the nineteenth century discovery of history, brought the awareness that the human being is “constituted in his humanity by historicity, by this historical dimension of his reality.”⁴⁰ Hence today “the development, the presentation, of any science or any subject” should be “four-dimensional, and philosophy is no exception.”⁴¹ Surely whoever follows a “classicist, conservative, traditional” position can consider human reality through abstracting from every aspect by which one individual differs from another and so arrive at “a residue named human nature” and at “the truism that human nature is always the same.”⁴² But whoever studies concrete persons must recognize the progress and historicity involved in the constitution of meaning that makes each one an actually intelligent, rational, and moral subject. Consequently two different perceptions of man are possible:

One can apprehend man abstractly through a definition that applies *omni et soli* and through properties verifiable in every man. In this fashion one knows man as such; and man as such, precisely because he is an abstraction, also is unchanging... On the other hand, one can apprehend mankind as a concrete aggregate developing over time, where the locus of development and, so to speak, the synthetic bond is the emergence, expansion, differentiation, dialectic of meaning and of meaningful performance. On this view intentionality, meaning, is a constitutive component of human living; moreover, this component is not fixed, static, immutable, but shifting, developing, going astray, capable of redemption; on this view there is in the historicity, which results from the human nature, an exigence for changing forms, structures, methods...⁴³

Hence, “if differentiated consciousness is itself a product of the historic process, it becomes evident in a particularly clear way that there is a dimension of human nature contained in historicity itself.”⁴⁴ Historicity and history constitute human

³⁸ “Bernard Lonergan Responds,” in *Language*, 307, 312.

³⁹ “Theories of Inquiry: Responses to a Symposium,” in 2C, 37; “Bernard Lonergan Responds,” in *Language*, 307.

⁴⁰ “Philosophy of History,” in *Philosophical and Theological Papers*, 72.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 79.

⁴² “The Transition from a Classicist World to Historical-Mindedness,” in 2C, 3.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 5-6.

⁴⁴ “The Philosophy of History,” in *Philosophical and Theological Papers*, 78.

reality: human beings can only exist as self-determining; they are the beings that have to be what they are; hence decision (the fourth level of consciousness) is constitutive of their reality, which is intrinsically both individual and social.

3. THE CONUNDRUMS ARISING FROM THE RECOGNITION OF HUMAN NATURE AS HISTORICAL

The recognition of human nature as historical marks a new epoch in contemporary thought, but a lack of precision about that nature's specifying characteristics undercuts any possible consensus.⁴⁵ This paper attempts to expand the path traced by Bernard Lonergan. We have to justify the constitutive role of history in the actualization of consciousness' formally dynamic structure, "how" and "why" pre-reflective experience does not already contain a realized meaning but attains it in that actualization of the subject which that experience both renders possible and demands. We shall develop this proposal in eight steps.

a) At the center of Lonergan's speculative journey is the discovery, thematization, and application of the formally dynamic structure of human consciousness, which is experiential, intelligent, rational, and moral. This is his only "a priori."⁴⁶

b) The centrality of consciousness signifies the recognition that the question of truth concerns not only knowledge but also, and more radically, *consciousness*. Only by considering the subject's effective constitution can one face the question of truth in a non-formalistic way. Lonergan himself has shown the Scholastic insistence on the objectivity of truth apart from the subject led to the neglect of the subject as the only condition of truth's emergence and existence. "The fruit of truth must grow and mature on the tree of the subject, before it can be plucked and placed in its absolute realm."⁴⁷

⁴⁵ A "culturalist" interpretation seems to run a double risk. One tends either to "historicism," which sees in cultural enterprises only an infinite process of subjective self-referential interpretations, or to "transcendentalism," which interprets the differences which emerge in history only as "categorical" (hence "accidental") manifestations of an immutable, transcendental structure, which *qua* universal constitutes of itself the truth dimension of the categorical reality.

⁴⁶ "Mission and the Spirit," in *A Third Collection. Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan, S.J.*, ed. by F.E. Crowe (New York/Mahwah - London, 1985) 28 (henceforth: 3C).

⁴⁷ "The Subject," in 2C, 71. See *Method*, 265, 292. In "The Subject," 70, Lonergan makes the distinction: "intentionally it [the objectivity of truth] is independent of the subject, but

c) Consciousness bears witness to its own passivity. Lonergan stressed this original dimension of consciousness, especially in the period of his research on St. Thomas. Against the theory of vital acts, he defended the “passion” of the *actus perfecti* in *sentire*, *intelligere*, and *velle* as a received perfection. This *pati* does not imply any diminution of the one receiving because it is called most properly a *perfici*.⁴⁸ The immediate experience of consciousness testifies that it is self-awakened in the original experiences of life, which anticipate the inseparability of the world and the self. Meanings are given to consciousness in these spontaneous experiences of life. These are suffered. Our original relation to the world is an “affective” experience, a being “affected by.” Hence consciousness is the locus where a passivity interior to the subject is experienced. This passivity can be specified in three ways: regarding one’s own body, the other, and social and institutional relations. Hence human beings know that even before acting they are acted upon (in Scholastic terminology man is actualized). They are already taken up into an experience that impinges upon them before they determine themselves, an experience ordered to their determination. In this original, constitutive passivity meaning is not created by subjects but is freely assumed by them in its manifestation. Human beings become aware of themselves in a desire that responds to the challenge which anticipates their being. Thus consciousness bears witness to an original “debt”, which calls it to freedom and constitutes it as responsible.

d) Consciousness’ passivity reveals itself uniquely in the *intersubjective* constitution of the person. Even if “person” emerged from the Trinitarian and Christological disputes that inevitably arose between the systematic differentiation of consciousness effected by Aristotle and its transposition to a Christian context by Thomas Aquinas, contemporary research on intersubjectivity has proceeded in “psychological, phenomenological, existential, and personalist channels.”⁴⁹ In particular “the contemporary view comes out of genetic biology and psychol-

ontologically it resides only in the subject: *veritas formaliter est in solo iudicio*.” Lonergan always rejected conceptualism for overlooking that the act is the subject’s and happens according to the subject’s own constitution. See *Verbum*, 39 n. 126, 194-195.

⁴⁸ *Verbum*, 131 ff., 146ff., 151 ff. For “vital acts” See *Verbum*, 221 n. 89; *DT II*, 267-272.

⁴⁹ “The Origins of Christian Realism,” in 2C, 254.

ogy.”⁵⁰ These studies show that the community, not the individual, is primordial. For the child’s “I” emerges only within the “we” of the family. Within the community, through intersubjective relations, differentiation of the individual person originates. So “person” denotes always a singular persons with all their individual characteristics resulting from the community in which the self lives. Through the community the self is formed and forms itself. “The person is the resultant of the relationships he has had with others and of the capacities that have developed in him to relate to others.”⁵¹ In particular the original relation-experiences with their sense of totality manifest this passivity. Relations between parents and children and those between man and woman are paradigmatic. The former communicate the comprehensive meaning of life. The latter supply the interpretative figure for the meaning of difference and of every relation to the “other.” In general, the passivity of meaning indicates an anteriority and an otherness which find their most immediate manifestation in the face of the other. The event which precedes me is the “proximate” presence of the other. The relation to the other is therefore constitutive of consciousness. The other is neither outside me nor subsequent to me; the other is in me. The appeal of the other to me constitutes my identity because his or her concern for me awakens me to my freedom as responsibility and concern for him or her. Clearly subjects can will only if their identity is anticipated as possible, yet no verification of their possibility exists aside from the effective relation which the “I” establishes with other subjects.

e) The presence of the other manifests the original *ethical* dimension of consciousness. Human experience emerges as the experience of a freedom called by an absolute meaning. This absolute is revealed to the subject in the “feeling” and desire for the good life as mediated through civilized forms. The absolute meaning experienced becomes anticipatorily effective for the subject in decision alone. There humans make themselves, for the act does not confirm something already given a priori, but establishes it in an original meaning. In deciding about the anticipated meaning of experience the action redounds upon subjects who irrevocably forms their own existence in the realized choice. Action realizes itself as self-actualization since in deciding what they do humans decide who they are.

⁵⁰ B. Lonergan, *Philosophy of God, and Theology. The Relationship between Philosophy of God and the Functional Specialty, Systematics* (London, 1973) 58.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 59.

Choosing not only settles ends and objects; it gives rise to dispositions and habits; it makes me what I am to be; it makes it possible to estimate what I probably would do; it gives me a second nature, an essence that is mine in virtue of my choosing; still it does not give me an immutable essence, achievement is always precarious, radical new beginning possible. In choosing I become myself, what settles the issue is not external constraint nor inner determinism nor knowledge but *ut quo* my will and *ut quod* myself, in the last analysis the ultimate reason, for my choice being what it is, is myself.⁵²

In deciding the human being constitutes her true identity as *subject*, i.e., as one “constrained to be free” and therefore “to decide.” Thus human action manifests a triple dimension: while deciding about the meaning offered to her — she accepts or refuses various opportunities — human beings decide about themselves — in deciding what to do they decide who they are. Deciding about herself, i.e., consenting to and entrusting herself to that meaning which anticipates her by authorizing and requiring her decision, she decides about the meaning of the totality. For she must decide about herself as a whole. This basic actualization of the subject is termed ethical insofar as it constitutes the matrix of the moral form of experience.

Contemporary phenomenological and hermeneutical research has been able to demonstrate that consciousness is set in the decision, i.e., within its most original ethical dimensions. Consequently the gnoseological or cognitive structures of intentionality have to be reinterpreted in the context of this original practical mediation of consciousness. Phenomenological investigation does not limit itself to noting that consciousness is open to a meaning which cannot be deduced from willing; it affirms rather that no meaning will be given to a human being apart from one’s willing. The human being’s free self-orientation occurs only in the act of consenting/entrusting in response to what anticipates the act. This act possesses the depth of self-determination. Truth is simultaneously recognized as a gift insofar as it is accepted as a task, and vice-versa: it is “for me” insofar it is “other”, and it is “given” insofar it is “to be accomplished.” Correspondingly freedom awaits its liberation because life’s ambiguous face,

⁵² B. Lonergan, *Existentialism: Lectures at Boston College, July 15-19, 1957* (Montreal: Thomas More Institute, mimeographed edition, 1957) 4 (henceforth: *Existentialism*). “At its real root, then, foundations occurs on the fourth level of human consciousness, on the level of deliberation, evaluation, decision. It is a decision about whom and what you are for and, again, whom and what you are against.” (*Method*, 268) See also “Bernard Lonergan Responds,” in *Foundations*, 230-231.

both promising and threatening, generates suspicion about the goodness of its origin as well as about the meaning of its goals.⁵³

f) This quality of the relation of consciousness to truth indicates what I mean by *historicity* as constitutive of the subject's existence. If we mean by evidence the form in which truth becomes accessible to man, we have to conclude that the evidence constitutes itself in a synthesis that is originally practical. If self-appropriation really requires understanding the conscious structural normativeness and necessity in the realm of actuation, consciousness' intentionality ought to be understood as originally practical.⁵⁴ Lonergan's analysis of the conscious, dynamic structure of intentionality arrives at the "transcendental precepts" (be attentive, be intelligent, be reasonable, be responsible). Their actuation and meaning are bound to the necessity of a subjective decision. But does this explanation sufficiently clarify the effective role of decision as self-disposition, starting from the understanding of a meaning which renders the decision possible? We must still explain the ontological importance of the hermeneutical act that accomplishes the synthesis between the emergence of meaning and the free decision that appropriates it. This connection is radically historical and therefore its evidence cannot be anticipated.

Lonergan has warned against attributing to method the false certitude of a structuralism, even if it is a structuralism of conscious intentionality:

And in this the one great delusion, to my mind, is the belief that there is an island of safety called "method." If you follow the method, then you will be all right. In the sense that there is some algorism, some set of rules, some objective solution, independent of each man's personal authenticity, honesty, genuineness. And that does not exist. The only solution lies in "the good man."⁵⁵

⁵³ Obviously here one should introduce a consideration of consciousness of guilt and Lonergan's explanation of sin. For a preliminary presentation see Giovanni Rota, "*Persona*" e "*natura*," 148-152.

⁵⁴ See analogous reflections by D. Tracy, "Bernard Lonergan and the Return of Ancient Practice," in F. Lawrence, ed., *Lonergan Workshop, vol. 10: The Legacy of Lonergan* (Boston College, 1994) 319-331.

⁵⁵ "The Human Good," in *Humanitas* 15 (1979) 126.

No mechanical method, independent of the subject, dispenses him of the responsibility of judging.⁵⁶ No human authenticity can be automatic.⁵⁷ But how does one justify the “excess” of the act, of “the good man” in relation to the formality of intentional structure?

The answer requires us to expand Lonergan’s analysis of the problem of existence.⁵⁸ He attained the solution to the hermeneutic and historical problem of the dispersion of meaning by referring to the dynamic and intentional structure of rational consciousness.⁵⁹ Yet his analysis indicates the difference between the structure of consciousness and its actuation. The truth of the human subject’s

⁵⁶ The fifth methodological precept in *De intellectu et methodo* (notes taken by F. Rossi de Gasperis and P. Joseph Cahill during a course at the Gregorian University in spring semester, 1959) says on this point: “responsabilitas iudicandi est acceptanda”. Lonergan then comments: “Saepe ex methodo expectatur quod tollat responsabilitatem iudicandi, atque methodus fingitur tamquam aliqua institutio publica succurrens indigentes. Hoc methodus facere non potest”. (p. 46). Then he notes that a fundamental objection is usually raised against his fifth precept: “enim tota cognitio pendet a iudicio, et hoc implicat responsabilitatem individui qui illud facit, iudicium erit bonum si homines erunt responsables; quod de facto raro accidit. Unde methodus, prout a nobis proponitur, totum opus scientificum opinionibus singulorum relinquit”. Lonergan responds: “scientiae non possunt progredi sine usu iudicii personalis singulorum individuorum, et quod iudicium est actus personalis.” (p. 47). See *Insight*, 297-299; “Method in Catholic Theology,” in *Philosophical and Theological Papers*, 38-41.

⁵⁷ “Man is called to authenticity. But man attains authenticity only by unfailing fidelity to the exigences of his intelligence, his reasonableness, his conscience.” (“The Ongoing Genesis of Methods,” in 3C, 152-153) See also “Horizons and Transpositions,” 9.

⁵⁸ This topic is explicitly treated in *De constitutione Christi ontologica et psychologica supplementum*, 4th ed. (Romae, 1964), 14-19, in *DT* II, 196-204, and more generally in *Existentialism*. Obviously these presuppose the investigations of *Insight*. One should be aware that Lonergan attributes two difference meaning to “existence, existential.” The first, which belongs to the vocabulary of general metaphysics, refers to the *esse* that actuates an *ens* and is recognized in the act of judgment (*Insight*, 274). The second appears in *De Constitutione Christi* in *DT* in reference to the human problem of becoming a “subject of the later time,” i.e., of understanding, judging, choosing, and wanting to be what one ought to be, despite the “radical evil” which afflicts people’s individual and social existence even as one awaits a supernatural salvation-revelation that is desired, prayed for, but never demanded as a right. These two meaning are not exactly equivalent, and perhaps they explain the double concept of nature which J. McDermott claims to find in Lonergan as in other transcendental Thomists: “Person and Nature in Lonergan’s *De Deo Trino*,” in *Angelicum* 71 (1994), 184 n. 56. As a matter of fact the uniqueness of “human nature” puts into question the gnoseological, epistemological, and metaphysical model of Aristotelian Thomistic derivation, which is grounded in the certain knowledge of causes; consequently, in order to deal with historicity it has to rely upon a double notion in its analyses of general metaphysics (*esse*) and freedom.

⁵⁹ *DT* II, 44. *Existentialism*, 28.

personal identity is not attained by merely analyzing the universal normativeness of rational self-consciousness, because the self-conscious subject not only knows himself but also realizes himself as truth specifically by performance, in the actuation of the subject who ought to recognize, appropriate, and prosecute responsibly the intelligent and responsible dynamic structure of the rational self-consciousness (compare the topic of conversion). This "ought" makes two things clear: first, actuation cannot be understood only as conformity or objectivization of what is already completely given and determined in its structure; second, freedom is the positive characteristic of spirit insofar as distinct from nature.⁶⁰ This freedom cannot be reduced to the quality of the human operation inscribed in the contingency of the world (i. e., only virtually unconditioned).

Ultimately, the human person decides about the meaning of his permanent, operative structure in practice, more exactly in the decision which, as *Insight* already stated, is a level of consciousness beyond intellectual and rational consciousness.⁶¹ One might say that the personal truth of human beings has not yet been exhausted by knowledge; for as such this truth still has to be constituted. Therefore, the problem of existence cannot be ascribed only to contingency, potentiality, and the human subject's structural limit. It points to the uniqueness of the spirit whose actualization does not consist in the empirical translation of what is already determined in essence; it constitutes its own truth (inseparably theoretical-practical). Hence stopping at the formally dynamic structure of rational consciousness appears rather to dissolve than to resolve the existential problem and the historical problem; as a matter of fact the structure constitutes itself fully in its truth finally only in practice, indeed, in the acts of decision. The level of consciousness' actualization cannot be considered external to its truth, as if it were formally predetermined in the permanent order of rational consciousness, which ultimately would remain exterior to the person's history and freedom.⁶²

⁶⁰ DT II, 42.

⁶¹ *Insight*, 631-642.

⁶² "Reality, truth, and freedom are given together not in the sense that one arrives at their connection through a deduction, but because reality's characteristic of truth includes the determination of my freedom. Their interrelation is not deductive because it is mediated by freedom. Praxis is not concerned with the actuation of a truth already established on a reflective level, but it refers to the form of experience which guarantees access to the foundation because it lays the foundation itself." (M. Epis, *Ratio Fidei: I modelli della giustificazione della fede nella produzione manualistica cattolica della teologia fondamentale tedesca post-conciliare* (Roma - Milano, 1995) 295

Thus, we have to overcome the temptation of an epistemological model which describes the knowledge of truth as originally speculative. In such a model the criterion of truth concerns knowing separate from willing, and the evidence of willing is interpreted as an extension, within a practical viewpoint, of the criterion gained in the analysis of the cognitive dimension of consciousness. Instead, we must initiate a deeper investigation of the same evidence of the original knowing in which the theoretical and the practical, the cognitional, and the existential are inseparable.⁶³ The will's decision actually does not relate extrinsically to a content, whose evidence is defined independently of consciousness' practical dimension. The act of realizing truth manifests a form that is undeniably theoretical-practical.

The original structure of evidence not only demonstrates the reductive character of the empirical-positive approach but also denies the more subtle ambition of speculative thought to determine the meaning of truth on a conceptual level which effective experience can only verify. Because the truth of experience is only effective in its free actuation, not only can the meaning of the truth be known solely in the decisive [decided] decision, but also this decision contributes to determining the meaning of the truth which renders the decision possible. The truth demonstrates its own transcendence because it grounds the free character of its own appropriation, and it integrates the response as a moment of its own truth. Because the human response belongs to the truth, in it is the foundation for what one can and should call the historicity of truth.⁶⁴

A return to Lonergan's theoretical model allows us to define the theoretical problem in terms of the following questions: Is generalized empirical method adequate for the thematization of the ontology inscribed in action? What is the relation between consciousness' a priori and freedom's practical mediation? Does not a method risk misconceiving man's free, historical act as the correct application of procedural rules and hence falsely assigning to freedom the role of merely confirming or transgressing a truth already structurally predetermined?

It was not by chance that Lonergan considered the practical dimension a subsequent expansion of the transcendental structure recovered through the mediation of the "tripod" of doctrine of knowledge, epistemology, and

⁶³ A. Bertuletti, "L'assolutezza della verità e l'evidenza della fede," in *Teologia* 15 (1991) 38.

⁶⁴ A. Bertuletti, "La decisione e la verità," in *Servitium*, n. 87 (1993) 63. See A. Bertuletti, "Sapere e libertà," in G. Colombo, ed., *L'evidenza e la fede* (Milano: Glossa, 1988) 444-465 and "Ermeneutica e libertà," in *Filosofia e Teologia* 8 (1995) 40-47.

metaphysics, but never as simply codetermining the structure itself.⁶⁵ For that reason religious experience as the fulfillment of the subject's self-transcendence was attributed to the category of love, which transgresses or surpasses the inventory of rational evidence.⁶⁶ Lonergan repeats Pascal's aphorism that the heart has reasons which reason does not know.⁶⁷ Thereby he underlines the insufficiency of the rational model for grasping the "reasons" proper to the dynamism of the moral and religious conversion that realizes the subject's self-constitution. Such is the overcoming of modern reason, which excluded from the sphere of reason and indeed of truth all that cannot be shown, through experimentation or logical deduction, to be "universal", i.e., not only as true but as true for all. Consequently it confined "knowing the truth" to that form of consciousness that by decree has to remain indifferent to desires and affections. In the extreme case, truth does not need the subject because it has to neutralize the risky subject's possibility of choice, its freedom. As a result, proper procedure should not seek to construct a shelter for the heart's reason against the rigorous, impersonal laws of reason, but question the alleged adequacy of this model of "reason" for grasping the truth of consciousness.

g) We have been led in this direction because the notion of person calls attention to the human subject's "excess", its irreducibility to "nature", to the dynamisms of transcendental subjectivity, and even to the very instruments employed for understanding the person.⁶⁸ In this sense "person" possesses a primarily critical significance. For "person" draws attention to the original irreducibility of the ontological constitution of the human being to that of other worldly beings, even though we must inevitably rely on these for understanding human's constitution. On account of this disparity we have to appropriate our rational self-consciousness in order to "exist" authentically, as Lonergan never wearies of repeating. Thus, on the one hand, we recognize that our complex nature, inserted into a whole universe governed by the law of generalized emergent probability, is assigned to us as a "given." As the previous condition of our own existence to which we "ought" to respond, our nature is removed from our total, free self-

⁶⁵ See G. Rota, "*Persona*" e "*natura*," 329 n. 197. For this "tripod" cf. "Cognitive Structure," in C, 213.

⁶⁶ *Philosophy of God*, 59.

⁶⁷ "The Future of Christianity," in 2C, 162; *Method*, 115; "Christology Today," in 3C, 77; "The Ongoing Genesis of Methods," in 3C, 161. B. Pascal, *Pensées*, n. 283 ed. Brunschvicg.

⁶⁸ Cf. P. Ricouer, "Meurt le personnalisme, revient la personne," in *Lecture II*, 195-202.

disposition. On the other hand in acting we decide about the meaning of our own nature insofar as we decide ultimately about himself, constituting himself in his own personal differentiation.⁶⁹ Therefore the ontological interrogation initiated by the person cannot be resolved by its transcendental moment. The subject's ultimate qualification cannot be metaphysically derived, since it depends on a free self-disposition. This involves not only the power of choice but also the same power of self-realization. This free self-disposition actually renders effective the very transcendental relation to the absolute — a relation, which is the condition for the characteristic freedom of consciousness. Paradoxically the topic of sin, which Lonergan studied in its personal, social, and historical aspects and effects, manifests a "quasi-transcendental" dimension, which is the fruit of human historical activity. We have to rethink the relation between truth and history and not separate them in order to restore the irreducibly unique and historical character of human being's relation to truth and hence truth's character of "event."

h) The starting point for understanding truth as *event* can be taken from Lonergan's analysis of self-transcendence, which reaches its final efficacy in "being in love."⁷⁰ He roughly classified love in three basic types: love of familial intimacy between husband and wife, and between parents and children, love toward one's mate; loyalty with regard to the civic community, which motivates us to contribute to human well-being; and finally love of God. This final love is a radical being-in-love,⁷¹ with God "with all one's heart, with all one's soul, with all one's mind, and with all one's strength" (Mk. 12:30). Usually, Lonergan identifies it with "the love of God poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Spirit that is given to us" (Rom. 5:5). It is "a being-in-love that is without conditions or qualifications or reserves, and so it is other-worldly, a being-in-love that occurs within this world but heads beyond it, for no finite object or person can be the object of unqualified, unconditional loving."⁷² Hence it "actualizes to the full the dynamic potentiality of the human spirit with its unrestricted reach and, as a full

⁶⁹ *Understanding and Being*, 229.

⁷⁰ "The Response of the Jesuit as Priest and Apostle in the Modern World," in 2C, 170, 171; *Method*, 289. In one passage, Lonergan adds to the usual four transcendental precepts (Be attentive, be intelligent, be rational, be responsible) a fifth precept: "be in love" (*Method*, 268).

⁷¹ "Natural Knowledge of God," in 2C, 129.

⁷² Loc. cit.

actuation, it is fulfillment ..."⁷³ It is "the crowning point of our self-transcendence."⁷⁴

Lonergan connects the person's self-constitution with the religious relation:

The person is the resultant of the relationships he has had with others and of the capacities that have developed in him to relate to others... If persons are the products of community, if the strongest and the best of communities is based on love, then religious experience and the emergence of personality go hand in hand.⁷⁵

The relation to the other, which is constitutive for consciousness, manifests an absoluteness irreducible to the two subjects involved. Though neither person can ground absoluteness, it nevertheless occurs in an actual relation. Every reciprocal relation, and pre-eminently the relation achieved in love, demands as the quality of its truth a necessary and free self-sacrifice, which can lead even to the giving of one's life for the beloved. The relation is necessary insofar as a *Sollen* (ie. moral exigence) and not a *Müssen* (ie. not obedience to a rule) is involved, and it is free since the sacrifice can only be awaited, and never claimed as a right. The absoluteness present in this relation is not justified by the subjects taken as individuals because that neither pretend to be the relation's foundation is the condition for the relation. Thus the relation opens on the question about God, i.e., the question about the real foundation of the absoluteness involved in the experience. True reciprocity excludes the subjugation of any partner to the desires of the other. The absoluteness, which supplies the norm for reciprocity, is irreducible to the partners involved: no substitute can be found for either partner and not even a relationship is adequate to this quality; in reality, every interpersonal relation is only a "sign" of the meaning which it bears. Every interpersonal relation is animated by the ultimate ground which calls it into existence, even while remaining beyond the control of the people involved.

In this way the absolute is manifest as the foundation guaranteeing and illuminating the original meaning of the desire constituting the subject. For this reason the "notion of God" can only occur as an event; it arises in consciousness and is nourished by religious symbolism so that the desire, quickened by the experience of reciprocity, can realize itself. There is a Third who stands surety for it. This Third is not a thought about God subject to my control. He remains even

⁷³ Loc. cit.

⁷⁴ "The Future of Christianity," in 2C, 153.

⁷⁵ *Philosophy of God*, 59.

when I am not actually thinking about God. Consciousness originally seeks not a thought about God, but confirmation in reality of the absolute that it carries in itself: an event manifesting its transcendent foundation.

4. THE CHRISTOLOGICAL EVENT

a) The thematization of the practical intentionality of consciousness implies the recognition of (actual) history's primacy and the subordination of the transcendental to the event. From a theoretical point of view it legitimates the transition to theology. The model just elaborated refers internally to truth's realization as a decisive event of human existence. The event brings definitively to light why God can reveal himself only within the form of reciprocity: this is not only the place or external form of His revelation; the truth of God is not external to the reciprocity.

In accord with this orientation, contemporary theology has stressed the Christian faith's irreplaceable reference to history as its characteristic element. For the biblical God's revelation is historical not only because it unfolds on the stage of history but, more radically, because it causes human beings' free agreement as its intrinsic moment. Consequently human history becomes the revelation of God in the sense that the human response affects God's very identity, in the sense that God cannot enter our history without making the history of the human beings who recognize him the form of his own revelation.

The category of event signifies that our response is intrinsic to God's intended revelation. If God's initiative, both irreversible and unilateral, grounds an authentic reciprocity, to say that revelation occurs in history would be an understatement. History is more than a frame for revelation; revelation occurs as history.⁷⁶

b) The history [story] of Jesus bears witness to the realist foundation of the desire animating the relation of reciprocity with its human hope. For in that history the unexpected act of God comes into the open. God is not the projection of human desire because human beings are not extrinsic to God but the very ones addressed

⁷⁶ Therefore the uniqueness of Jesus grounds the absoluteness of his revelation and dictates the conditions for recognizing him (faith). But because in the phenomenology of action such conditions are shown to coincide with the conditions of the original evidence, in the Christological event everyone can recognize that freedom enjoys access to its foundation, placing itself there as faith.

by God. Only for God is it true that his being addresses itself to us. The power of that address constitutes each of us before God as absolutely individual.

The history of Jesus manifests and realizes God's will to inscribes human otherness in the constitutive self-distinguishing of his own being. Christ is the firstborn of creation and the firstborn from the dead (Col. 1:15.18); this means that he is the reason for which human beings exist (creation) and can be fulfilled (salvation). Human beings are capable of fulfillment and ought to tend toward it, because the truth of their finitude consists in having been created. The priority of God's self-distinguishing guarantees human absoluteness and uniqueness: they are not a moment of the divine self-constitution but the addressees of God's free act. Creation is not necessary, because it is more than necessary, as belonging to an order transcending necessity, the order of freedom.

The meaning of Karl Rahner's statement that the economic Trinity is the immanent Trinity and vice versa⁷⁷ intends to protect the convictions of Easter faith that God gives himself in history and, more radically, that in history the permanent "novelty" that is God realizes itself. The absolute priority of the immanent Trinity allows us to think that the story of salvation constitutes a "novelty" for God Himself, for His truth allows itself to be co-determined by the human story of freedom. Theological ontology is concerned, not with an immutable essence of the spirit which is opposed and foreign to matter and becoming, but with the event of freedom, which makes matter and time the place and form of its communication.

c) In this context "person" can be taken as the cipher for the fundamental problem of theological language, once it is understood not as a concept applied analogously to God and man, but in such a way that "person" explains why one can only speak of truth in a theological sense within the horizon defined by the reciprocity of God and man.⁷⁸ Significantly, in Christological and Trinitarian dogma the same term "hypostasis" defines both the personal distinction in God and the hypostatic union of the incarnate Word; it preserves both the absolute priority of God (Trinitarian dogma prevents us from effecting the distinction in God) and the realism of His identification with humanity for whom such a history

⁷⁷ K. Rahner, "Der dreifältige Gott als transzendenter Urgrund der Heilsgeschichte," in J. Feiner - M. Lohrer, eds., *Mysterium Salutis: Grundriß heilsgeschichtlicher Dogmatik*, 11 (Einsiedeln, 1967) 593-609.

⁷⁸ A. Bertuletti, "Il concetto di persona e il sapere teologico," in V. Melchiorre, ed., *L'idea di persona* (Milano, 1996) 4.

can never be transcended and absorbed (Christological dogma protects the truth that human nature so belongs to God as to be personally identical with Him). The *homoousios* of Nicea provides the principle according to which the incarnate Word is not the extrinsic union of two natures but the reality through which we have to understand both God and man. Theological discussion interpreting the issue raised by the Christological event has to study explicitly God's becoming man. In this "the humanity of God is not a generic likeness of God to man, which in one way or another would play down the difference, but is God's positive disposition to make human existence his own."⁷⁹ Hence, "anthropology belongs to the very structure of theological truth."⁸⁰

As a consequence, theological theories about "person" assume the status of "category" or "model",⁸¹ i.e., an entire web of terms and relations expressed in a determinate cultural and philosophical context, whose relevance has to be judged by their aptitude to express God's Christological truth.

5. EPILOGUE

I can now conclude that the notion of person plays a key role in the history of thought, especially in the spheres of morality, law, and political practice,⁸² as well as in faith's understanding, because it preserves the fundamental ontological question of truth, despite the risks of its generic use.⁸³ Lonergan teaches us that we can and should confront the question of the person's definition without limiting ourselves to a merely rhetorical affirmation of the issue involved, a process that is always in danger of to nominalistic abuse. This is to investigate the root of man's relation to truth.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 31.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 4.

⁸¹ *Method*, 284f. (italics mine), and more generally, 281-293.

⁸² L. Sentis, "Penser la personne," in *Nouvelle Revue Theologique* 116 (1994) 679-700, 862-873; V. Melchiorre, "Presentazione," in *L'idea di persona*, VI-VIII.

⁸³ P. Sequeri, "La nozione di persona nella sistematica trinitaria," in *Teologia I* (1985) 23-39.

THE ENCYCLICAL LETTER OF
POPE JOHN PAUL II,
FIDES ET RATIO:
A SERVICE TO TRUTH

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INTRODUCTION:
CONTENTS OF THE ENCYCLICAL

THE THIRTEENTH ENCYCLICAL of His Holiness Pope John Paul the Second begins with the words: *Fides et ratio*, which show its theme. Faith—taken here in the sense of Christian Faith—is the source of our knowledge of that reality which we call “the saving reality.” Reason is the source of our knowledge of ourselves and of the world around us.

Faith finds its scientific expression in theology, whereas reason expresses its knowledge in the various sciences. But since philosophy reflects both upon man’s cognitive capacity and the reality that he can know, the relation between faith and reason turns out to be the relation between theology and philosophy. That is why throughout the Encyclical we find the recurrent expressions “faith and reason,” “philosophy and theology” and also “faith and philosophy.”¹

Before I submit to you my comments on the Pope’s document, I think it advisable to mention briefly its contents. The Encyclical aims at explaining the relation between faith and reason from the point of view of Christian faith. That is why it begins with divine Revelation.

¹ It would be mistaken to restrict religious faith to Christian faith and philosophy to western philosophy. Nevertheless there is a reason why the Encyclical focuses on the philosophy derived from classical Greek thought. For this philosophy on the one hand has had a development and a cultural influence that are incomparable with other philosophical traditions, so that nowadays it has taken on a worldwide dimension; on the other hand this philosophy has grown in such a close contact with Christian faith, that its history and its content would hardly be comprehensible apart from Christian faith.

The second chapter, "*Credo ut intelligam*," draws mainly from the wisdom literature of the Old Testament and shows how faith "stirs thought" (15c).

In the third chapter, "*Intelligo ut credam*," the mutual influence between faith and reason is documented in the opposite direction, starting from reason.

The fourth chapter considers the history of the relation between faith and reason: from the origin of Christianity up to the last stage in modern times, when a great part of philosophical thought gradually parted from Christian Revelation.

The fifth chapter deals with the interventions of the Church's Magisterium in philosophical matters, both in order to defend revealed truth from misunderstandings occasioned by philosophical ideas, and in order to favor an authentic development of philosophy.

The sixth chapter studies the way philosophy and theology interact as regards their contents.

The final chapter is a closer examination of the tasks of theology today, as it faces current philosophical trends, which in different ways hinder the knowledge of truth.

THE THEME OF THE ENCYCLICAL: TRUTH CHRISTIAN FAITH AS AN OPTION FOR TRUTH

"Faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth," says the Pope at the beginning of the Encyclical, in which he "means to reaffirm the need to reflect upon the truth." Since faith and reason, by different and autonomous paths, meet in the search for truth, the Pope intends to contribute to establishing friendship and cooperation between them.

In tracing the history of the encounter between Christian faith and reason (chap. IV), the Encyclical emphasizes the revolutionary contribution of Christianity to the cultural development of humankind, namely "the affirmation of the right of everyone to have access to the truth." Consequently the elitism, which "had characterized the ancients' search for truth," was abandoned (38b). In fact at the very center of the Gospel is Christ, the Savior of all men: He is the path to life because He is truth itself (Jo 14,6).

Going beyond the frontiers of Judaism, the first preachers of the Gospel were faced by this alternative: on one side there was the philosophical culture, restricted to a learned minority; on the other side there was a religious doctrine and praxis sunk in the darkness of polytheism and of distorted ideas of divinity.

Those very philosophers who were criticizing the anthropomorphic and mythical religions and had reached a notion of the divinity as one supreme being identical with the pure act of understanding or with the Good itself (36a). Outwardly, in their “civil” behavior, were followers of a religious praxis that in their own mind was groundless. At the root of this dissociation of reason and religious piety was a notion of religion as something having to do with a way of life and not with truth.

Facing this dissociation between the faith of religion and the truth of reason, the preachers of the Gospel sided with the truth of reason, in which they saw a sort of preparation for the greater truth they were entrusted with. To all men they announced the duty and the right of adhering to this truth, so as to be able to lead a life worthy of man and to reach salvation.

Siding with faith against myth implied the rejection of that “civil” religion that was so useful to the Roman empire, which, giving citizenship to all gods in its Pantheon, favored the submission of all conquered people; for Christians this meant centuries of persecution. But this was a price they had to pay, because they were convinced that only truth can give access to reality: the reality of a creation that is “good” because it issued from the wisdom of God, and the reality of a Redemption, that issued from the love of God for men.

A REFLECTION UPON TRUTH FROM ABOVE DOWNWARDS

The Encyclical deals with truth beginning with the ever recurring questions on human existence: *Who am I? Where have I come from and where am I going? Why is there evil? What is there after this life?* (1c). These questions, which all people, sooner or later, ask themselves, are at the same time the questions of philosophy in its “*sapiential dimension* as a search for the ultimate and overarching meaning of life” (81c).

More than a century after the Encyclical *Aeterni Patris*, in which Leo XIII gave a decisive impulse to a philosophy in accord with revealed truth, John Paul II considers again the relation of faith and philosophy, in the context of that current “fateful separation” (45a) of reason from faith, which has been pushed to the philosophical extreme of *nihilism*, based on “the negation of all objective truth” (90).

The Encyclical approaches the truth “from above downwards.” Hereby I am referring to that double way in which our intentionality can come to act, and on which Lonergan focused his attention in his later writings. It is the “way down,”

the way of gift as contrasted with the way of human achievement: it begins with the free and responsible acceptance of truth as a good that human beings cannot renounce, and then it descends from the knowledge of faith to its understanding, and finally to that living experience which enables one to see, albeit in a limited manner, the intrinsic truth of revealed mysteries and their agreement with those truths which reason can come to know by itself. That is why the Pope at the end addresses directly the philosophers, in order that they may "be open to the impelling questions which arise from the word of God and...strong enough to shape their thought and discussion in response to that challenge" (106a).

The Pope chooses this approach to dialogue with the contemporary culture because his intervention is not meant to be that of a philosopher speaking to his peers. He is speaking as a believer. Having "received the gift of the truth on human life" the Church intends to practice the *diakonia of the truth* (2), with which she was entrusted by Christ.

But, since revealed truth cannot contradict the truth which philosophy seeks, the teaching of the Pope on "the revelation of God's wisdom" (chap. I) urges the human mind to take into serious consideration this conception of life, and to ask whether this light from above may not throw a light on the path of philosophy itself. Not without good reason, the Encyclical recalls repeatedly "the human being's characteristic openness to the universal and the transcendent" (70c). On the basis of the unlimited dynamism of the human mind, the way chosen by the Pope in order to invite human reason to a dialogue with faith is quite justified.

This is the Encyclical's own character and also its limit, since the Pope is writing on the basis of "the Church's competence as the bearer of the Revelation of Jesus Christ" (6a). It is necessary to acknowledge this limit in order not to expect from the Pope what is out of his competence as the supreme pastor of the Church.

Since we have here no possibility of following the Encyclical in detail, I shall concentrate on some chosen topics. These topics are derived from the fundamental concepts to which truth is related: a) truth in relation to the metaphysical dimension of reality; b) truth in relation to man's freedom and responsibility; c) and finally truth in its relation to religious faith.

TRUTH AND METAPHYSICS

Under the title "Journeying in search of truth" (24-27) the Encyclical comments on the speech of St Paul at Athens. The context of a long philosophical tradition suggests to the Apostle that he should announce the Christian faith in a universal perspective. So he begins by speaking of "God who made the world and all that is in it" (Act 17, 24), the universal God, approached not in relation to the historical event of the election of Israel, but in relation to the whole world and to all humankind. This universal God, the true God, whom the Athenians adored without knowing him, "made all nations of men" and instilled in their spirit the insuppressable tendency to seek God, "yes, to grope for him and perhaps eventually to find him" (17, 27).

So the Encyclical comments: "The Apostle accentuates a truth which the Church has always treasured: in the far reaches of the human heart there is a seed of desire and nostalgia for God.... There is therefore a path which the human being may choose to take, a path which begins with reason's capacity to rise beyond what is contingent and set out towards the infinite" (24b).

A distinctive feature of this desire is that it is *unlimited*. Owing to this characteristic — the Encyclical notices in connection with the parallel text in the letter to the Romans — St Paul says: "The invisible perfections of God are manifest," since through all that is created the 'eyes of the mind' can come to know God (cf. Rom. 1, 20). The Pope comments: "This is to concede to human reason a capacity which seems almost to surpass its natural limitations. Not only is it not restricted to sensory knowledge, since it can reflect critically on the data of the senses, but, by discoursing on the data provided by the senses, reason can reach the cause which lies at the origin of all perceptible reality. In philosophical terms, we could say that this important Pauline text affirms the human capacity for metaphysical inquiry" (22a).

The Encyclical is able to affirm that supernatural Revelation "summons human beings to be open to the transcendent" (15a), because it recognizes in the human an *unlimited* dynamism of questioning.

Speaking of St. Thomas, the Pope affirms that his is truly a philosophy not of "what seems to be," but of "what is" (44c). Indeed we find in St Thomas the same explanation of the human mind's capacity to know being, that we find in this Encyclical. In the *Summa Theologiae*, I, q.79, a.7, St. Thomas writes: "The

intellect considers its object within the common notion of being because the passive intellect is the power of ‘becoming all things’; and this is a reference to Aristotle’s *panta ginesthai* (*De Anima* III, 5, 430a 14f).

Here we must distinguish two senses in which this unlimited openness makes our mind capable of knowing being. The Encyclical implies them both when it hints at “man’s metaphysical capacity,” but does not formulate the distinction. In one sense, reason is not confined to sensory knowledge because, asking questions, it goes beyond sense data, moving from these data to being or, in the words of the Encyclical, from “*phenomenon to foundation*” (83a), that is, to reality as reality, of which the senses only perceive the aspect correlative to the sense power itself. In this sense, the metaphysical capacity is the capacity of knowing the sensible reality in its ontological status of being.

But in another sense, the metaphysical capacity means the capacity of going beyond the knowledge of that which is proportionate to our way of knowing; the capacity, therefore, of asking whether a being inaccessible to our experience exists and what it is. The affirmative answer to this question rests on two premises. First, on the unlimited openness of our intellectual dynamism, which allows us to ask questions even about whatever falls outside the field of our experience. Second, on our capacity of forming an analogous concept of the transcendent reality and of affirming its existence as argued from the existence of the world.

THE METAPHYSICAL REALISM OF REVEALED TRUTH

One aspect of the relation between truth and reality deserves particular consideration. In the last chapter, the Encyclical recalls the demands that the word of God makes on philosophy and refers to a text of the Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, n. 15, which deals with the capability of human reason to reach reality; then it goes on to say: “The Bible, and the New Testament in particular, contains texts and statements which have a genuinely ontological content. The inspired authors intended to formulate true statements, capable, that is, of expressing objective reality. It can not be said that the Catholic tradition erred when it took certain texts of Saint John and Saint Paul to be statements about the very being of Christ. In seeking to understand and explain these statements, theology needs therefore the contribution of a philosophy which does not disavow the possibility of a knowledge which is objectively true, even if not perfect” (82b). Thus the

counterpart of the true Revelation is a "philosophy of *genuinely metaphysical range*" (83a).

True affirmations mediate for us the knowledge of reality. There is no need for me here to insist on the fundamental relevance that this thesis has in the philosophy of Lonergan and consequently in his theology. Allow me to recall a personal experience when I was attending his lectures on *De Verbo Incarnato*. From the very introduction to the thesis about the New Testament teaching on Jesus as true man and true God, the first philosophical theorem to which Lonergan appealed was on the "*vis iudicii existentialis quo per verum iudicium cognoscitur existens*." It is not enough—said Lonergan—to acknowledge that God reveals himself; we must also acknowledge that he reveals himself by teaching the truth. If we do not acknowledge the mediating role of the truth of the judgement, then we do not establish, but rather we would eliminate the Catholic position, since this teaches us that the object of faith is the truth revealed by God and defined by the Church. This means that the affirmations of the New Testament about Jesus are affirmations that assert who Jesus really is in his being and in his acting.

Thus the Scripture is not speaking only of the "*Christus pro nobis*" as Melancthon's interpretation would have it: "*Hoc est Christum cognoscere beneficia eius cognoscere, non, quod isti docent, eius naturas, modos incarnationis contueri*" ("This is to know Christ, to know his benefits, not, what they [the scholastic theologians] teach, to grasp his natures, the modes of the incarnation"). The Scripture speaks also of the being of Jesus, who is the source of the "benefits" of Redemption for the very fact that he is true man and true God.

The dilemma of Melancthon shows up again today as the dilemma between a "functional Christology" and an "ontological Christology." In rebuttal to Bultmann and his school, who interpret the affirmations of the New Testament about the divinity of Jesus as though they were affirmations only about the "for me" (pro me) of Jesus, that is, about his relevance (*Bedeutsamkeit*) for me, the Encyclical states the ontological meaning of these affirmations. The matter in hand is an ontological Christology, which, far from diminishing soteriological Christology, is instead its foundation. A meaningfulness not grounded on being would indeed be but an illusory appearance; it would be merely the powerless expression of human desires and needs.

The ontological value of New Testament Christology is but one aspect of the ontological value of the affirmations of Scripture in general, which are meant to be affirmations of the *truth*. It is because they are true that they communicate the

reality of salvation to those who accept them with the *yes* of faith. There is therefore a realism of divine Revelation that is constitutive of the Christian faith.

The thesis on the metaphysical value of our knowledge meets an anthropology which respects nature proper to the human being. The Pope writes: "In a special way, the person constitutes a privileged locus for the encounter with being, and hence with metaphysical enquiry" (83a). This means that, in principle, the anthropological turn that marks modern culture is not in conflict with that philosophy of being that during many centuries was the characteristic of Christian philosophy. The real point where modern philosophy has parted from the metaphysical tradition lies rather in the fact that the human subject has been more and more a subject deprived of the transcendent dimension of his own intelligent, rational and moral dynamism. Now it is in virtue of this transcendent capacity that the human spirit is open to the reality of the world as a reality in itself, to values that are authentic because in conformity with human nature, and, beyond this "worldly" transcendence, it is open to a personal reality who is the absolute unity of truth, reality and morality.

TRUTH AND FREEDOM

In his criticism of nihilism, "which appears today as the common framework of many philosophies which have rejected the meaningfulness of being," the Pope points out the connection of truth and freedom with this drastic affirmation: "Once the truth is denied to human beings, it is pure illusion to try to set them free. Truth and freedom either go together hand in hand or together they perish in misery" (90).

Freedom is the capability of the human being to perceive and to pursue the good; but it is not an absolute autonomy, because it is not conscience that creates the good that obliges it. The first obligation, which is constitutive of morality, is to seek what is really good. Only an objectively true value judgment is adequate that freedom which belongs to human autonomy.

To support and clarify this, the Pope recalls here what he had written in the Encyclical *Veritatis splendor*, where he denounced the fading away of the "need for truth" in the moral judgement, so that this has been conceived as radically subjective. The moral crisis is indeed a "crisis about truth." In fact, the Pope goes on, "once the idea of a universal truth about the good, knowable by human reason, is lost, inevitably the notion of conscience also changes. Conscience is no

longer considered in its prime reality as an act of a person's intelligence, the function of which is to apply the universal knowledge of the good in a specific situation and thus to express a judgment about the right conduct to be chosen here and now. Instead, there is a tendency to grant to the individual conscience the prerogative of independently determining the criteria of good and evil and then acting accordingly. Such an outlook is quite congenial to an individualistic ethic, wherein each individual is faced with *his own* truth different from the truth of others" (98a, quoting "Veritatis Splendor," 32).

But, if the moral judgement is not grounded on objective criteria, there arises the question as to what can be the reference point on which we may ground the common norms of behavior necessary for the very survival of a human society. The 'Communicative ethics' or ethics of discourse, which many authors nowadays support, has explicitly taken leave of any consideration of a "metaphysical understanding of nature,"² and so also of a God, lawgiver and judge;³ hence one has come to think that human persons, based on a discourse free from any constraint, establish what the end-purpose of human life is and what categorical imperatives (!) may oblige them. The Encyclical refers to this kind of foundation of the moral law, when it hints at "those who think truth is born of consensus" (56).

It is a logical implication of this way of thinking that objectively immoral actions may be declared moral and find common acceptance, as the facts show more and more frequently. In fact this subjectivism, far from making people free, rather enslaves them, narrowing them within their disordered inclinations and leaving them at the mercy of the prevailing opinions of society. Only the truth of being allows human persons to really transcend themselves and to become responsible principles of value and authentic love.

² Karl-Otto Apel. "Ist die philosophische Letztbegründung moralischer Normen auf die reale Praxis anwendbar?", in *Funkkolleg praktische Philosophie, Ethik*, published by K.-O. Apel et al., (Weinheim, 1984), 628.

³ K.-O. Apel, "Zur geschichtlichen Entfaltung der ethischen Vernunft in der Philosophie", *ibid.*, 126.

FAITH AND PHILOSOPHICAL REFLECTION: AUTONOMY AND COOPERATION

Since philosophy “is directly concerned with asking the question of life’s meaning ... it emerges then as one of the noblest of human tasks” (3a). But there is also another reason for the Pope’s high esteem for philosophy, and that is that philosophy is “an indispensable help for a deeper understanding of faith and for communicating the truth of the Gospel to those who do not yet know it” (5a).

There is then a reciprocity between faith and reason. The Revelation, which human beings accept in faith, “has set within history a point of reference which can not be ignored if the mystery of human life is to be known” (14a). This point of reference, the Encyclical says, quoting a well known passage of the Constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, n. 22, is “Christ, the new Adam, who, in the very revelation of the mystery of the Father and of his love, fully reveals man to himself and brings to light his most high calling” (60a). Reason, in its turn, allows human beings to make a truth that surpasses them their own in a human way, i.e. in an intelligent and responsible manner. Therefore “faith intervenes not to abolish reason’s autonomy nor to reduce its scope for action” (16b).

Expounding St Thomas’s contribution to the cultural dialogue of his own time, the Encyclical remarks that “in an age when Christian thinkers were rediscovering the treasures of ancient philosophy, and more particularly of Aristotle, Thomas had the great merit of giving a prime place to the harmony which exists between faith and reason” (43a), and thus he achieved “the reconciliation between the secularity of the world and the radicality of the Gospel” (43c).

On the contrary “the growing separation of faith and philosophical reason,” which marks modern culture, has had as a consequence that “each without the other is impoverished and enfeebled. Deprived of what Revelation offers, reason has taken sidetracks which expose it to the danger of losing sight of its final goal. Deprived of reason, faith has stressed feeling and experience, and so run the risk of no longer being a universal proposition. It is an illusion to think that faith, tied to weak reasoning, might be more penetrating; on the contrary, faith then runs the grave risk of withering into myth or superstition. By the same token, reason which is unrelated to an adult faith is not prompted to turn its gaze to the newness and radicality of being” (48a). Hence the strong appeal of the Pope that “faith and

philosophy recover the profound unity which allows them to stand in harmony with their nature without compromising mutual autonomy. The *parrhesia* of faith must be matched by the boldness of reason" (48b).

This last affirmation deserves particular attention. The word *parrhesia* has its origin in ancient Greek political language, where it meant the characteristic of the free man who was the citizen of a polis: he alone, and not slaves or strangers or women, enjoyed political rights and particularly the right of free speech, since he was responsible for the freedom of the state. The Acts of the Apostles tell us that St Paul in Rome "was teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus with all frankness" (*meta pasês parrhesias*) (28,31), thereby referring to this liberty. In fact the first Christians knew that, as they had embraced the faith, they were no more "strangers or aliens but fellow citizens of the saints and members of the household of God" (Eph. 2,19; cf. 70b). This awareness born out of faith was for them the ground of a new and greater frankness of speech.

To this frankness of faith, the Pope says, there must correspond the "boldness" of the believer, who introduces into philosophical discourse that final truth about the human being and the world that faith discloses. In the same way the Encyclical *Veritatis splendor*, 88, had appealed to believers "that, in the midst of the current process of secularization," which is banishing not only Christian truth but also fundamental truths about man, they may "rediscover the novelty and the autonomy of their faith and of their capacity to pass judgment on the prevailing and invading culture."

The Encyclical shows no hesitation in granting to philosophical reflection the autonomy which belongs to it even when it engages theology. Such an autonomy is not in opposition to the duty of the Church to intervene "when controversial philosophical opinions threaten a right understanding of what has been revealed, and when false and partial theories...spread" (49b). But "keeping in mind the unity of truth" (51a), this discernment of the Magisterium joins to its negative aspect a positive one "intended above all to prompt, promote and encourage philosophical inquiry," in order to correct errors and to extend the too restricted terms in which [philosophical thinking] may have "been framed" (51a).

Even more than with individual errors, the believer is faced today with a new situation: on the one hand there is an enormous increase of reason in the field of scientific research, where an "instrumental reason" is intended only "towards the promotion of utilitarian ends, towards enjoyment or power" (47a); on the other hand, reason has abandoned not only the Christian vision of the world, but also any metaphysical and moral conception of reality (46b). "A deep-seated distrust

of reason" (55a) has resulted therefrom in all the fields of human knowledge that have any existential relevance beyond mere power over nature (61b).

This distrust of reason has not only reached professional philosophers, but has also become "to some extent the common mind" (55a). Those trends of thought which appeal to so-called postmodernity, have given ideological support to this mentality, with the idea that "the time of certainties is irrevocably past, and the human being must now learn to live in a horizon of total absence of meaning, where everything is provisional and ephemeral" (91b). Against this mentality, faith, drawing light from on high, "becomes the convinced and convincing advocate of reason" (56).

In conformity with the overall procedure of the Encyclical as a discourse on truth moving from above downwards, the Pope addresses at the end the philosophers, asking them that "they should be open to the impelling questions which arise from the word of God and that they should be strong enough to shape their thought and discussion in response to that challenge" (106a).

I have repeatedly hinted at the Encyclical as a discourse on the truth beginning from divine Revelation to encounter human beings as an "explorers" of truth (21b). The leading idea of this pontifical letter is that, what the Church announces, presents itself to the human mind not as something foreign to it, but rather as something that the human mind is expecting and searching for, even if in an implicit way.

With this encyclical letter *Fides et ratio* John Paul II has reminded us today of the two wings that can elevate us to the contemplation of the truth, so as to rekindle in us the confidence that through our suitable cooperation science may become a wisdom, able to give a firm answer to our needs and anxieties.

