

LONERGAN WORKSHOP

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Fred Lawrence

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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

To celebrate the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Second Vatican Council (1962-65), the theme of the Fortieth Annual Lonergan Workshop was "The Hermeneutics of Reform and Renewal." The Workshop honored the then living Cardinal Archbishop of Milan, *Carlo Maria Martini, SJ*, and former Boston College President, *J. Donald Monan, SJ*, whose friendly support helped Father Lonergan finish what God had given him to do.

In harmony with the theme of the Fortieth Lonergan Workshop, it was an honor and pleasure to have as a speaker the newly arrived Boston College Professor of the Practice and sacramental theologian, *Liam Bergin*, who had served for years as the Rector of the Irish College on the Aventine Hill in Rome. Liam's paper set forth an aspect of the developing understanding of the sacraments in "Contemporary Sacramental Theology: Retrieving the Eschatological Horizon."

Paul Bruno, who did his doctorate in philosophy at Boston College on Kant's *Critique of Judgment*, and now teaches philosophy at Framingham State University, spoke at the Workshop for the first time at the 2005 Workshop on "Lonergan and the Ethics of Everyday Life." (We are including Paul's paper in this issue.)

The Lonergan Workshop is fortunate to have as a regular speaker, *Victor Clore*, a fellow-student at the North American College during the entirety of the Second Vatican Council. Because Vic has a foot in both teaching (at Detroit/Mercy University) and as a pastor at Christ the King Catholic Church, Detroit, he brings an unusual combination of both academic and pastoral concerns to bear in his paper, "Understanding Natural Law: Josephs Fuchs and Realms of Meaning."

Ivo Coelho, SDB, formerly Salesian Provincial in India, was the superior of the Salesian community and theologate at the Ratisbonne Monastery in Jerusalem, where he welcomed the Lonergan Workshop to hold a week-long Workshop in August 2012. His paper, "Experience: 'A Most Enigmatic Concept'," tackles a theme in which all the complications of

polymorphous consciousness and the complexities of the structures of the dynamism of conscious intentionality are at stake.

Having completed her doctorate at Boston College, *M. Shawn Copeland* has made a name for herself at many institutions of higher learning, including Yale, St Norbert's College, Harvard, and Marquette, before returning home to BC – not to mention her work in collaboration with African-American and liberation theologians in the United States and abroad. Her talk takes up themes highlighted in Lonergan's early essay, "Finality, Love, Marriage," namely, "Education and Life, the Good Life, and Eternal Life."

My long-time colleague and former chair of the theology department at BC, *Robert Daly, SJ*, is a patristics scholar (esp. Origin), whose theological pursuits include liturgical and sacramental theology. He is also one who, as a translator into English of the late Raymund Schwager's *Must There Be Scapegoats?*, has been a leading exponent of the thought of the late René Girard in the United States. We were happy that he accepted our request to present at our Workshop his paper previously published in *Theological Studies*, which we re-publish here (with permission), "Phenomenology or Redemption? Or Theory of Sanctification?"

Peter Drilling is a fellow student from Roman days at the North American College, Rome. After finishing his doctorate at Regis College of the University of Toronto, Peter has been a pastor in several parishes, and has taught at, and been Rector of, Christ the King Seminary in Buffalo. His paper, "Themes of Bernard Lonergan's Lectures During and Shortly After the Second Vatican Council and Their Relation to Today's New Evangelization," recalls the days during the council when with full enthusiasm we read those writings. How fitting for a Lonergan Workshop in honor of Vatican II's 50th anniversary.

At Seton Hall University, *Richard M. Liddy* has embodied the idea – "spheres of personal influence" – described so eloquently by his dear Blessed John Henry Newman in the *Idea of a University*. Dick evoked Newman (whose influence, many felt, was so enormous at Vatican II) in his paper, "Newman's Idea of a University."

Having finished *Lonergan's Quest* – his *magnum opus* – Bill Mathews, SJ, of Milltown Institute, Dublin, shifted his ongoing reflections on the development of feelings and meanings in relation to human biography (as exemplified so beautifully in his book on Lonergan's evolution up to the completion of *Insight*) to a profound retrieval of Lonergan's central themes and ways of approaching the "Background" chapters of *Method in Theology*. His talk, "Meaning: Dimensions, Ontologies, and Dialectics," would provide a framework for future enriching explorations of the impact of Vatican II on the life of the church.

Russ McDougall, CSC (now director of the Holy Cross Congregation's Tantur Ecumenical Institute in Jerusalem) had spent a year as a Lonergan Fellow at Boston College while preparing his doctoral dissertation on the Book of Judges in the Hebrew Scriptures. As he had done in his presentations at the Lonergan Fellows seminars during the preceding academic year, he demonstrated *ad oculos* how, in the context of Vatican II's *Nostra Aetate*, it behooves Christian scripture scholars to open themselves to the differences between Jewish interpretations of Tanakh (Torah, Prophets, Writing) and the trajectories of Christian interpretation. His paper, "Beauty and Biblical Narrative: The Case of Jephthah" gave the larger audience of the Lonergan Workshop a taste of how the two traditions mutually cast light on each other.

Another former student at the North American College who'd had Fr Lonergan at the Gregorian University in Rome, Bernard McGinn, completed his doctorate in medieval studies under Norman Cantor at Columbia. After a teaching stint at Catholic University of America he has enjoyed a long career at the University of Chicago Divinity School, where, after retiring from teaching, he still works on completing his monumental series of volumes on mysticism. Bernie provides a *tour d'horizon* in his "Reflections of an Historical Theologian on Fifty-Year Jubilees."

After doing her dissertation on Lonergan and Balthasar at Milltown Institute, Hilary Mooney became a patristics scholar and theologian (who teaches at the *Pädagogischer Hochschule*, Wiengarten, Germany). Her *Habilitationsschrift* was on the medieval Irish philosopher and

theologian, John Scotus Eriugena. Her paper for this Workshop, "The Hermeneutics of Reform and Renewal: Ongoing Interpretation of the Person and Work of Jesus Christ," takes soundings in contemporary German approaches to Christological topics.

After many years in our theology department, friend and former BC colleague, *Louis Roy, OP*, was asked by his Canadian confreres to return to Canada to teach at Dominican University College, Ottawa. Louis is a life-long student of St Thomas Aquinas. Luckily for us, he appropriated Lonergan's way of interpreting the Angelic Doctor's writings. As his paper, "Overcoming Classicism and Relativism" reveals, he is well-prepared to confront the difficulties today associated with both anachronistic and outmoded scholastic and untethered postmodern ways of dealing with the post-conciliar philosophical and theological malaise.

"Passing the Torch: Incorporating Lonergan into the Scheduled Theology Curriculum," by Louis Roy's fellow Dominican, *Carla Mae Streeter*, who (like Peter Drilling) did her graduate work at Regis College, Toronto, and is now *Emerita* at the Aquinas Institute of Theology in St Louis, elucidated not only the merits but also the practical efficacy in the long-run of giving Lonergan's thought – not necessarily just his books – an integral role in the teaching of both undergraduate and graduate theology programs.

Before coming to BC, *Francis A. Sullivan, SJ*, was for some years a professor of ecclesiology and sometime Rector at the Gregorian University, as well as a colleague of Fr Lonergan during his tenure as a professor of dogmatic theology in Rome. Since the Second Vatican Council, Frank has been an authoritative interpreter of its texts and has argued persistently for the implementation of its suggestions about church structure and practices, as we see in his paper, "Why Does the Earnest Desire of Vatican II that Provincial Councils Flourish with Renewed Strength Remain Unsatisfied?" Frank notes that if the church in the United States had instituted provincial councils, in which lay people would have truly had a voice, the handling of the clergy sexual abuse crisis might have turned out quite differently.

Former Lonergan Fellow *Charles T. Tackney* had the good fortune to be taught philosophy at Fordham by the late and *formidable* scholar of C. S. Pierce and Bernard Lonergan, Vincent Potter, SJ, only to become a brilliant and adventuresome member of the faculty of Copenhagen Business School. He has carried out numerous international case studies in applied business practices in light of a framework of social justice illuminated by Lonergan's thought. This is evident in his paper for this Workshop, "To Redress Forgetting: 2012 Walmart Labor Organizing and a Theology of the American Workplace."

We owe the phrase, "meditative exegesis," to Eric Voegelin. It suggests a mode of study that ought to be a hallmark of research programs inspired by Lonergan's work. *John Volk* did his doctoral studies at Marquette University with Bob Doran; and we may surmise that John was inspired by Doran's ideas about feeling-laden insights in the fields of symbolic and incarnate meaning at the dynamic threshold between psyche and intelligence. As a result John's presentations as a Lonergan Fellow made clear that his study of the Law of the Cross in Lonergan's Latin Christology grew out of "meditative exegesis." which is evident in his paper, "Lonergan on the Wisdom that Regards All Things: Insights from *De Redemptione* and *Early Works on Theological Method*."

Once again we are most grateful to our manuscript editor, Regina Gilmartin Knox, who shepherds – with the kindness and love of the Good Shepherd – the authors, the texts, and the editor in order to bring the volumes of the *Lonergan Workshop Journal* to light of day.

Fred Lawrence
Editor

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CONTEMPORARY SACRAMENTAL THEOLOGY: RETRIEVING THE ESCHATOLOGICAL HORIZON

Liam Bergin
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THE FIRST OFFICIAL document to emerge from the Second Vatican Council was the dogmatic constitution on the sacred liturgy. Promulgated fifty years ago on the 4th of December 1963, *Sacrosanctum concilium* set a context for this ecumenical council with the bold proclamation that the liturgy “is the summit towards which the activity of the Church is directed” and at the same time it is “the fount from which all her power flows.”¹ The imminent golden jubilee of its promulgation has provoked significant comment as liturgists and sacramentologists assess the reception and influence of this document fifty years later. John Baldovin, our Boston College colleague at the School of Theology and Ministry, has just published two such articles, “Is the liturgy hitting its target?”² and “How are we doing? The liturgical vision of Vatican II 50 years later.”³ As the *magna charta* of the church’s post-conciliar worship, *Sacrosanctum concilium* has inspired and guided the reflections on the sacraments and the reform of the liturgy in the intervening half century.

The fortieth anniversary of the publication of *Sacrosanctum concilium* was marked by the apostolic letter *Spiritus et Sponsa*⁴ of Pope John Paul II. It called for a “sort of examination of conscience” of the liturgical and sacramental life of the church to see how the

¹ *Sacrosanctum concilium*, 10.

² *The Jurist* 72 (2012): 123-35.

³ *America*, May 27, 2013.

⁴ John Paul II, Apostolic Letter *Spiritus et Sponsa* on the 40th anniversary of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum concilium*, December 3, 2003.

conciliar teaching has been received and to foster a deepening of the vision proposed by the Second Vatican Council. Ten years ago, I wrote a paper⁵ to assess the contribution that the Second Vatican Council had made to sacramental theology and to project new avenues of study and research that would facilitate a fuller reception of the conciliar teaching. Much of the comments made at that time remain valid. However, some developments in the past ten years – the new English translation of the Roman Missal and the restoration of the extraordinary form, to name just two – have cast both light and shadow on this study and research.

Lonergan wrote little about sacraments. I am grateful to Joseph Mudd's fine doctoral dissertation⁶ (under the direction of Professor Lawrence) that identifies two early devotional works addressing the sacraments⁷. Mudd also recalls Frederick Crowe's assessment of Lonergan's early-career teaching of sacramental theology to seminarians as "mostly positive theology or collections of theological opinions on the subject for his students." Mudd also reports a 1962 interview with Lonergan where he discussed the challenge that faced sacramental theology. He commented that it is "a field in which the categories are not yet satisfactorily developed, fully developed, [where] there is an excessive attention to particular types of categories, such as the instrumental causality of the sacraments ... that has to be broadened out, I think."⁸

With some notable exceptions, catholic sacramental theology between Vatican I and Vatican II was inspired by the neo-Thomism encouraged by Leo XIII and was generally taught from manuals that

⁵ Liam Bergin, "Between Memory and Promise," in *Faith, Word, and Culture*, ed. Liam Bergin (Dublin: Columba, 2004).

⁶ Joseph C. Mudd, "Eucharist and Critical Metaphysics: A Response to Louis-Marie Chauvet's Symbol and Sacrament Drawing on the Works of Bernard Lonergan" (Ph.D. diss., Boston College, 2010), 2. (Text available online at http://www.lonerganresource.com/pdf/dissertations/Eucharist%20and%20Critical%20Metaphysics_Joseph%20Mudd.pdf)

⁷ "The Mystical Body and the Sacraments" and "The Mass and Man" in Bernard Lonergan, *Shorter Papers*, vol. 20 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert C. Croken, Robert M. Doran, and Daniel Monsour (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 77ff, 92ff. Reference from Mudd, "Eucharist and Critical Metaphysics," 11.

⁸ Audio available at <http://www.bernardlonergan.com/archives.php?id=102>. Reference from Mudd, "The Eucharist and Critical Metaphysics," 2.

were conceived as a "commentary" on St Thomas's treatise from the third part of the *Summa*. Lonergan's charge of "an excessive attention" to categories such as "instrumental causality" in the pre-conciliar period is certainly justified. A casual perusal of Bernard Leeming's sacramental textbook,⁹ for example, reveals that a significant portion of the work deals with causality with other important issues receiving cursory treatment by comparison.

This situation is all the more surprising given the structure and content of the text on which they purport to comment. In the *Summa*, Thomas begins with the notion of sacrament as sign. A sacrament is a sign of a holy thing that sanctifies us, so the argument unfolds in the first three articles of Q. 60 in the *tertio pars*. Not only are the rites of the new law covered by this definition, but so too are certain rites and ceremonies of the old law. This is reinforced by Thomas's deliberate avoidance of any reference to causality at this stage. The focus in the *Summa* is no longer on sacraments as remedy for sin, as was the case in his *Scriptum super Sententiis*, but as a means of offering cultic service to God and of sanctifying human beings. It is only in Q. 64 that Thomas begins his treatment of sacramental causality.

From the outset of his treatise, Thomas states that each rite of the Christian dispensation is a sign with a threefold function: "It is at once commemorative of that which has gone before, namely the passion of Christ, and demonstrative of that which is brought forth in us through the passion of Christ, name, grace, and prognostic, that is, a foretelling of glory."¹⁰

The Italian city of Orvieto is in festive mood this year as it celebrates another anniversary: the 750th anniversary of the Eucharistic miracle of Bolsena in 1263. The miracle was a significant contributory factor to the establishment the following year of the Feast of Corpus Christi which, in turn, gives us the rich liturgical texts that were most likely penned by Thomas Aquinas.¹¹ The *Magnificat* antiphon for second vespers, the *O Sacrum convivium*, offers a rich précis of the Eucharistic theology of St Thomas.

⁹ Bernard Leeming, *Principles of Sacramental Theology* (London: Longmans, Green, 1960).

¹⁰ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, III, Q. 60, Art. 3.

¹¹ See P. M. Gy, "L'office du *Corpus Christi*," in *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 64 (1980): 491-507.

O sacrum convivium, in quo
Christum sumitur, memoria
passionis eius recolitur, mens
impletur gratia, et futurae
gloriae nobis pignus datur.

O sacred feast! In which we
partake of Christ: His passion
is remembered, Our minds are
filled with grace And a pledge of
future glory is given to us.

This antiphon not only highlights the three aspects under which every sacrament may be considered but also brings the triple dimension of the sacramental sign into focus. The outward sacramental sign or the *sacramentum tantum* is the meal of bread and wine (*O sacrum convivium*). The intrinsic state, the *sacramentum et res*, immediately produced by the outward sign, is the presence of the body and blood of Christ under the appearance of bread and wine in which we partake (*in quo Christus sumitur*). The ultimate end of the sacrament, the *res tantum*, is the unity of the members of the church with Christ.

In his assessment of recent trends in Eucharistic theology, John Baldovin cautions that the legitimate desires to appreciate the sacred dimension of the Eucharist and to recover reverence for the real presence, risk downplaying and underemphasizing the ultimate aim and goal of the liturgy. Such an approach inflates the intrinsic state of the sacrament – the real presence of Christ in the Eucharistic elements – over and against its final end – communion with the Triune God and with each other. This, Baldovin argues, is contrary to the insistence on the active participation in the liturgy from Pope Pius X, to Vatican II and beyond.

In the *Magnificat* antiphon, Thomas presents the *res* under a triple aspect. As a remembrance of the passion of Christ (*memoria passionis eius*), the Eucharist is a *signum rememorativum*; it is *signum demonstrativum* insofar as it represents the grace given (*mens impletur gratia*); and it is a *signum prognosticum* insofar as it is a pledge of future glory (*futurae gloriae nobis pignus datur*).

In previous research, I have argued that, until recently, Catholic sacramental theology has focused on the commemorative and demonstrative aspect of the sacramental sign much to the detriment of

the prognostic aspect.¹² This narrowing of perspective has had serious implications for our understanding of these ecclesial rites. I have suggested various factors that may be responsible for the eclipsing of the prognostic in favour of the commemorative and demonstrative. These include factors internal to St Thomas's own shift in understanding from the *Scriptum* to the *Summa*, polemical factors that arose in the post-Reformation period, and semiotic factors that value cause over sign. In the context of this presentation, I think it suffices to say that early twentieth-century Catholic dogmatic theologians, preferred to comprehend sacraments as channels of present grace and their effects as the sure possession of such. This preference severed the form of sanctification from both its cause and its ultimate end and led to a distortion of the future dimension of the economy of human salvation. According to Thomas, it is because Christians are inserted into Christ's passion (cause) and united with him in his glory (ultimate end), that they are now reborn to new life through infused grace and virtues (form). When this equilibrium is upset, both the commemorative and the prognostic aspects of the sacramental sign are invariably relegated to presupposed premises, rather than given their proper place as references to the first and last coming of the Saviour.

Certainly great advances were being made in biblical, liturgical and patristic studies between Vatican I and Vatican II. One only needs to think of Jean Daniélou, Odo Casel, and Ansgar Vonier as exponents of the respective areas. However, the fruits of this research had yet to make any significant impact on the formulation of *de sacramentis in genere* or on the doctrine of the individual sacraments as taught in seminary and pontifical faculties at that time. Assessing the impact of biblical research on theological studies during this period, for example, Emilio Rasco claimed that until after the Second Vatican Council "the fact remains that the general outline of theological studies remained impervious. Professors of scripture certainly changed their outlook within their own fields, and many professors of fundamental and dogmatic theology felt the need for change. But that change did not come. A shock was needed, and that is exactly what the council

¹² Liam Bergin, *O Propheticum Lavacrum: Baptism as Symbolic Act of Eschatological Salvation* (Rome: Editrice Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 1999), 18-26.

provided – Samson brought the edifice down.”¹³ A similar judgment could be made on the influence of liturgical and patristic studies at that time.

Sacrosanctum concilium insists on the eschatological dimension of the rites of the church. Every liturgy, it states, is a foretaste of the liturgy of the heavenly Jerusalem.¹⁴ It is interesting that this eschatological aspect of the liturgy is the leitmotif of *Spiritus et Sponsa*. “What, indeed, is the liturgy other than the voice of the Holy Spirit and of the Bride, holy church, crying in unison to the Lord Jesus: ‘Come’? What is the liturgy other than that pure, inexhaustible source of ‘living water’ from which all who thirst can freely draw the gift of God?”¹⁵ Perhaps in giving this document an overtly eschatological title, Pope John Paul II is suggesting that, forty years after the conciliar reform of the liturgy, the prognostic dimension of the Christian rites has yet to be fully appropriated by the church.

It is an admission that the twentieth-century renewal of eschatology pioneered by Durwell, Moltmann, Pannenberg, Ratzinger, and others, has not yet had much impact on the way we understand and celebrate the sacraments. An unreconstructed and a largely unbiblical eschatology still pervade and permeate our understanding of Eucharist and the sacraments.¹⁶ Rather than abandoning a metaphysical approach as advocated by some, the challenge is to delineate a new “metaphysics of the future” (Haught) or a new “eschatological ontology” (Zizioulas).

In an eschatological perspective, sacramental actions anticipate now that fullness of life that will be given at the end of time. The Eucharist, for example, is understood as much as a participation in the eschatological banquet as a commemoration of the Last Supper and Calvary. Baptism is as much an entry into the presence of the glorified Lamb of the Book of Revelation as it is an insertion in the death and resurrection of Christ as proclaimed in the Letter to the Romans. In

¹³ E. Rasco, “Biblical Theology: Its Revival and Influence on Theological Formation” in vol. III of *Vatican II: Assessment and Perspectives: Twenty-five Years After* (1962-1987) (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1999), 344.

¹⁴ *Sacrosanctum concilium*, 8.

¹⁵ *Spiritus et Sponsa*, 1.

¹⁶ Dermot A. Lane, “Eucharist as Sacrament of the *Eschaton*: A Failure of Imagination?” (paper presented at the IEC2012 Theology Symposium, St. Patrick’s College, Maynooth, Ireland, June 2012).

fact, underscoring the eschatological dimension of the sacramental rites places them firmly within the history of salvation which awaits its ultimate fulfilment in the Second Coming of the Lord. Further, this approach accentuates the sacraments as a participation in the paschal mystery – death, resurrection, ascension, and Pentecost. It is the “whole” Christ who is encountered in these rites. The sacraments are the means by which believers are conformed to Christ who suffered and died, who lives in glory and who continues to act through the divine *Pneuma*. By baptism, for example, Christians are made partakers in the new age and so are assured that they will be taken up in the *parousia* that is still to come.

Approaching the sacraments from an eschatological perspective brings the church face to face with its future. Salvation has been won in Jesus Christ but awaits fulfilment in the history of each believer. Such an approach also opens the church and its members to the unknown that inevitably lurks in the tension between inauguration and fulfilment. To live solely out of memory or commemoration of the past is to stifle and limit the possibilities of the present. But to live out of anticipation or promise of the future is to nurture and expand the horizons of the contemporary experience of the ecclesial community.

Indeed, this was precisely the experience that underpinned the Second Vatican Council as, in Pope John XXIII's prophetic vision, it sought to throw the windows of the church open to the Spirit of God who comes from beyond and leads the bride into a future far beyond human possibility or reckoning. It was that Spirit that brought the church to a new understanding of itself and of its mission in the world; it was the same Spirit that brought Catholics to an appreciation of the divine presence in the hearts of men and women of other Christian communities and of other religions. It is that Spirit that we encounter yet, creating a new future and breaking down boundaries within and beyond the church.

Dermot Lane explains the neglect of eschatology within our Eucharistic *praxis* as a failure of the imagination.¹⁷ He quotes Amos Wilder, the literary critic and theologian, to sum up the fallout: “When

¹⁷ Dermot A. Lane, “Eucharist as Sacrament of Eschaton,” in the *50th International Eucharistic Congress: Proceedings of the International Symposium of Theology* (Dublin, 2013), 404.

imagination fails, doctrines become ossified, witness and proclamation wooden, doxologies and litanies empty, consolation hollow and ethics legalistic." Imagination overcomes the tension between past and future. While imagination lives in and through memory, it also fills in what is missing and recovers what is forgotten. Imagination recovers the fact that the Christ-event gives us a preview of the future. When the ecclesial community celebrates a sacrament, it unveils in the present the power of the future. The liturgical action is orientated toward the future. Eschatology is not surplus to ritual memory; It is constitutive of the ecclesial rite. By enacting the sacramental action, the future which is signified in it is grafted into the present experience of the worshipping community.

TOWARD A SACRAMENTAL SPIRITUALITY

Spiritus et Sponsa concludes with an appeal that a "liturgical spirituality" be developed. This spirituality should make "people conscious that Christ is the first 'liturgist' who never ceased to act in the Church and in the world through the Paschal Mystery continuously celebrated, and who associates the Church with himself, in praise of the Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit."¹⁸ What are the contours that might define such a spirituality?

Clearly the Word of God must be central. Listening to the scriptures believers come to know the divine will for them and for the world in which they live. This word spurs the hearer to worship and to action. This, according to Louis-Marie Chauvet, constitutes the tripod of scripture, sacrament, and ethics on which Christian life rests.¹⁹ The experience of the Hebrew prophet may be helpful here. First of all he listens, then he communicates in word and action. The listening takes place in a context: the Word of God is communicated to him in the intimacy of his relationship with the Lord of Israel and as a member of the chosen people. A liturgical spirituality calls for a reverent listening to the Word. "In a society that lives at an increasingly frenetic pace,

¹⁸ *Spiritus et Sponsa*, 16.

¹⁹ Louis-Marie Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament: A Sacramental Reinterpretation of Christian Existence*, trans. Madeleine M. Beaumont and Patrick Madigan (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1995).

often deafened by noise and confused by the ephemeral, it is vital to rediscover the value of silence."²⁰ Already there is a huge increase in the numbers of people within and beyond the church who are engaging in meditation and other forms of centering prayer. "The Liturgy, with its different moments and symbols, cannot ignore silence."²¹

Furthermore, a liturgical spirituality is inherently ecclesial: it unfolds within the community of believers and deepens the divine-human dialogue that lies at the heart of the ongoing history of salvation. The whole person of the Hebrew prophet is dramatically involved in communicating God's message to the covenant people. Similarly, a liturgical spirituality is an integral spirituality which touches every aspect of the believer's existence.

A liturgical spirituality would offer a healthy antidote to many of the new age spiritualities that are emerging today. These are inherently individualistic and private, focusing primarily on the person's inner peace and on a vertical relationship with the Other. A liturgical spirituality binds the individual to a community that worships the Lord of Life and that strengthens the horizontal bonds of communion between its members. Moreover, it commits the ecclesial community to a way of life that anticipates the new creation. Filled with the Spirit of justice and confirmed as sons and daughters of the heavenly Father, they utter a prophetic protest to the suffering and oppression that enslave the world and, by word and action, anticipate the *eschaton* that lies in the future with God.

In 1932, Odo Casel published the controversial but influential work *Das christliche Kultmysterium*²² in which he outlined his understanding of Christian life as a participation in the saving mystery of Christ through the liturgical activity of the church. This mystery is not primarily a truth beyond human reason but is, as in the Pauline scheme of things, the hidden yet communicated reality of the saving design of God. This gradual unveiling of the divine purpose finds its fulfilment in the mystery of the passion and death of the incarnate Son. According to Casel, being a Christian entails an actual sharing

²⁰ *Spiritus et Sponsa*, 13

²¹ *Spiritus et Sponsa*, 13

²² Published in English as O. Casel, *The Mystery of Christian Worship* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1962).

in these saving acts of Christ. For this purpose, the Lord has given the church the sacraments, "the mysteries of worship," which bring the participants into immediate contact with God. When the ecclesial community celebrates a sacrament it comes into contact with the entire saving work of Christ: "there is neither past nor future, only present. What is past in history, the death of Christ, for example, and what is in the future of history, his *parousia*, are present in the mystery."²³

This notion of the sacraments as a participation in the paschal mystery was taken up and developed by *Sacrosanctum concilium*. The sacraments, it suggests, are not just channels of grace or sanctification but moments of encounter between the celebrating community and the Glorified Lord. Sacramental grace is no longer viewed in a quantitative manner but as the unlimited self-communication of the living God who comes face to face with the church in the liturgical action. Furthermore, "in the perspective of *Sacrosanctum concilium*, the liturgical life of the Church acquires a cosmic and universal scope that makes a deep mark on human time and space."²⁴ This is particularly evident in the council's renewed attention to various aspects of the paschal mystery as celebrated over the liturgical year. This delineating of sacred space and time has proven to be rather successful in the "purple" seasons of Advent and Lent. Despite the weighty commercial baggage that leans on the pre-Christmas weeks, the post-conciliar church has made great strides in the celebration of this season. The same is true of Lent, particularly if the community is following the RCIA and is preparing to welcome new members at the Easter Vigil. However, it would appear that the "white" seasons of Christmastide and Easter have fared less well. The intense expectation and preparation that precedes Christmas Day and Easter Sunday do not translate into a prolonged mystagogical reflection on the presence of the Incarnate Lord or on the glory of the Risen Christ. This might well prove a worthy point of reflection for liturgists and pastors alike.

Central to any liturgical spirituality must be the conviction that everything that the Christian community says and does is "liturgy." The stuff of daily living from Sunday, through the week and back again to Sunday, proclaims that God saves and that God is glorified

²³ Casel, *The Mystery of Christian Worship*, 142.

²⁴ *Spiritus et Sponsa*, 3.

and praised whenever women and men cooperate with grace. Christian liturgy and sacraments are not isolated events through which human beings leave the secular realm of time and space in order to enter into the sacred sphere where the sanctifying grace to be conferred is grasped as a reality beyond normal experience. These ritual actions are manifestations of that holiness which already penetrates every level of secular existence. Immediately then, a liturgical spirituality calls the Christian community to sense that divine grace which is at work in the world. Sacraments, then, as they celebrate this divine presence and bring it to fulfilment, are the symbolic representations of the graced interaction with God in the lives of the participants. According to Karl Rahner, the primary locus for the renewal of the sacramental life of the church is to be found in the "mystagogy" which opens the mystical depth of everyday experience to believers. When this happens, sacraments are truly privileged moments in the ongoing self-communication of God to humanity.²⁵

A liturgical spirituality reminds the church that it lives between memory and anticipation, between *anamnesis* and *epiclesis*. As the sacramental rites recall the wonders that God has already done in the history of salvation, they also inaugurate a future in which all is made new. To gather with others in church is not just to keep the memory of Jesus alive but to encounter that oneness that marks the fullness of time. To pour baptismal water is not just to reenact the events of the Jordan and Calvary but to enter a space where the future shapes the present. To light an Easter candle is not just to remember that first dawn of resurrection but to ignite the radiance of the eternal day. To seal with oil is not just to cast out evil or to heal a wounded heart but to participate in that final victory where suffering and pain are no more. To break bread and pour wine is not just to remember the Last Supper and the passion of Christ but to experience a world where all creation is transformed by the Spirit.

Christians who worship the God of the future celebrate memory and hope, for without memory and hope we are only random atoms blown here and there by winds of happenstance and change. But with memory and hope, we are human persons, a unified family with a

²⁵ Karl Rahner, "On the Theology of Worship," in vol. 19 of *Theological Investigations* (New York, 1976), 148.

past and a future, called again to responsibility for one another for, in truth, there are no strangers, only fellow pilgrims on route to a new promised land. To live a liturgical spirituality commits the Christian community to anticipate its hope in the future, to awaken its faith in the past, and to forge a present where love finds a home between memory and promise.

LONERAGAN AND THE ETHICS OF EVERYDAY LIFE*

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I STARTED THINKING about Lonergan while doing some pleasure reading last summer. The subject of my reading was Michael Lewis's *Moneyball*, the book that profiles Billy Beane, the general manager of major league baseball's Oakland A's. The book is a fascinating read for a baseball fan, but I think it is also a fascinating read for just about anyone, and especially one interested in the relationship between organizations and ideas, or, put another way, for one interested in the social dimension of ideas. The phrase "everyday life" in my title is meant to convey a couple of different meanings. I hope to show in this paper that something as ordinary, mundane, and frivolous as the *game* of baseball can reveal to us something about how we live. The idea of "everydayness" is applicable to baseball in the most literal sense in that its season requires almost daily performance, unlike football in which teams play only once a week. But I also want "everyday life" to be understood as habitual, the habitual operations that make an organization an organization, the routine that reveals how organizations "do business" or the habits that accumulate to reveal one's character. What an organization does or what one does on one day has a bearing on what happens the next day, and the next day, and so on.

Another source of the title of the paper, you may be relieved to know, comes from my more academic pursuits. In teaching applied ethics courses, specifically Business Ethics and Current Problems in Ethics, I address not only ethical issues per se but the variety of

*Paul's paper was given at the 2005 Workshop and was inadvertently left out. We include it here with our apologies.

philosophical approaches to ethics. I am talking about Kantian, Rawlsian, Aristotelian, utilitarian, and feminist approaches to ethics. I dutifully go through the different approaches but admit to being haunted by the nagging thought that learning these different approaches does not necessarily increase the likelihood that a student leaving the course will be "more ethical." I am not concerned here with whether one addresses an ethical question from a Kantian, Rawlsian, Aristotelian, utilitarian, or feminist perspective. I will admit for the sake of argument that one can know what the good is in a particular instance from any and all of these perspectives. But I cannot admit that one will *do* the good even after arriving at a particular conclusion reasonably. This brings me back to the notion of habit. Habit connotes doing. To habituate an activity is to continually do it. So, at the outset, I am aware that my title can be seen as redundant. I want "the everyday" in my title to be understood as habitual, and I understand the Aristotelian sense of habit as the cornerstone of an ethics that is concrete and not merely theoretical.

But, I think this redundancy is important for one fundamental reason: that is, so much of human activity takes place within organizations, be they businesses, schools, governments, cultures, or religious groups. Human activity is thus realized within a "good of order" to use Lonergan's phrase. One's personal habits are usually practiced within a larger framework that is itself habitual or routine. And furthermore, as Lonergan points out in his education lectures, "... there is only one thing good by its essence, and that is God. Everything else is good by participation."¹ I am intrigued by the idea that things, in this case human beings, are good "by participation," but I will address that later in this essay. For now, I want to stress that everyday life happens within a larger framework, and the machinations of the larger framework constitute the circumstances of particular actions. The soldier in battlefield must make decisions within the framework of a war or a peacekeeping operation. If there is no war or peacekeeping operation, the soldier will not have to make a split second decision about whether the oncoming car is a threat to him.

¹ Bernard Lonergan, *Topics in Education: The Cincinnati Lectures of 1959 on the Philosophy of Education*, vol. 10 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert M. Doran and Frederick E. Crowe (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 31.

I want to emphasize this relationship between the larger framework and human action because at the conclusion of this paper I make what at first glance seems to be an absurd leap from "everyday life" to monstrosities that have defined human history. To go from baseball to the Holocaust of Jews is quite a leap and perhaps one that I ought not to make, but the many activities that have to accumulate in order to conceive, plan, equip, and ready a gas chamber establish the conditions for a given soldier's day.

One last bit of background clarification on the terms. A particular good is that which is sought in a given instance – a cleaner car when one visits the carwash, a new home when house hunting, and so forth. Lonergan calls the "good of order" the "setup."² A whole host of things must regularly recur in order for one to purchase a house, including the functioning of economy in general, the banking system, the municipal government, the legal system to name just a few things. As Lonergan writes: "The good of order is not a matter of mechanist planning. Planning has to work in every single detail or everything goes awry. But the good of order is a matter of sets of alternative schemes of recurrence... all along it works according to sets of probabilities"³ Thus, another way of saying what I have already stated is that human beings operate within different sets of "alternative schemes of recurrence."

The literary critic Cleanth Brooks once wrote of a conviction or attitude that was evident to him in William Faulkner's novels. It is an idea that raises important questions for our discussion. Brooks wrote, "Faulkner has small faith in social arrangements so perfectly organized that nobody has to take the trouble to be good."⁴ I want to suggest that there is no good of order that exists so that human beings become good by merely being cogs in the machine – plug 'em in and all is well. We also must recognize that there are all sorts of ways in which modern life almost demands that we become just that, cogs in the machine. The ever more sophisticated ways that corporations market their products to children, the consolidation of the media, the tight control the government exercises over communication, are all examples of ways in which human beings are reduced to being consumers, viewers

² *Topics in Education*, 34.

³ *Topics in Education*, 34-35.

⁴ Cleanth Brooks, *Massachusetts Review* (Summer 1962): 172.

in a ratings game, or pieces of poll data by very powerful institutions who do not always ask the fundamental questions about the value of their enterprise.

With the basic idea of a good of order in hand, let me return to baseball. As I mentioned earlier, Michael Lewis's *Moneyball* is a portrait of the Oakland A's management team, notably General Manager Billy Beane and Assistant General Manager Paul DePodesta. Beane had been a highly regarded baseball prospect who failed to make it as a big-league player, and DePodesta was a computer savvy Harvard graduate with a major in economics who was interested in the relationship between psychology and economics, specifically the role of irrationality in human affairs. Beane relied heavily on DePodesta when it came to player evaluation or scouting. Needless to say, DePodesta didn't quite fit in with a room full of baseball scouts, but Beane had developed a great deal of confidence in the power of statistical analysis, and DePodesta was an indispensable part of Beane's radical vision.

DePodesta was interested in a simple question: which baseball statistics correlate to winning? As Lewis writes, "[He] found only two, both offensive statistics, inextricably linked to baseball success: on-base percentage and slugging percentage. Everything else was far less important."⁵ We might phrase DePodesta's discovery this way: If two schemes of recurrence recur at a relatively high rate, you increase the probability of actually winning games (the particular good after all!). Thus, ballplayers that got on base frequently, whether via walk, hit by a pitch, or hit, are a central ingredient to winning; batting average, the traditional measure of a good hitter, was recognized as less important. And slugging percentage (total bases divided by at-bats; the best in the majors slug somewhere around .600) was the other important factor, this is in contradistinction to the traditional measure of home runs. Doubles, it seems, can be undervalued. The discovery of this correlation and Beane's willingness to use these statistics as the primary evaluation tool constituted a radical shift in the way baseball prospects were evaluated.

Beane eventually fired his entire scouting department. The problem with scouts, the guys who watch thousands of games a year

⁵ Michael Lewis, *Moneyball: The Art of Winning an Unfair Game* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2004), 127.

and make notes on what they see, is precisely that they are often fooled by what they see. Scouts loved guys who "looked" like ballplayers. That is to say, scouts loved players who looked good in uniform. Strapping young players who filled out the uniform were often atop the prospect list. But if you think about it for a second, baseball history is full of examples of good players who don't look particularly good in uniform. Exhibit A would be Babe Ruth, but Yogi Berra, John Kruk, Rod Carew, Carlton Fisk, David Ortiz, would also fit the bill.

Here is how Lewis describes the disconnect between computer geeks like DePodesta and traditional baseball men: "There was, for starters, the tendency of everyone who actually played the game to generalize wildly from his own experience. People always thought their own experience was typical when it wasn't.... there was the bias toward what people saw with their own eyes, or thought they had seen. The human mind played tricks on itself when it relied exclusively on what it saw..."⁶ Using Lonergan's terms, people who actually played the game tended to reduce player evaluation to the "already-out-there-now real" (part of the real says Lonergan, "is mere appearance").⁷ Bill James, author of *Baseball Abstract* (first published in 1977), was one of the first to question the adequacy of scouting that relies on mere appearance. Lewis points out that James's "most general point" was that "the naked eye was an inadequate tool for learning what you need to know to evaluate baseball players and baseball games."⁸ Apparently too many baseball men haven't read their Plato. James's challenge is made all the more poignant when we consider just what we would have to see in order to recognize the difference between what is good and what is average. Lewis quotes James at length:

Think about it. One absolutely cannot tell, by watching, the difference between a .300 hitter and a .275 hitter. The difference is one hit every two weeks. It might be that a reporter, seeing every game the team plays, could sense that difference over the course of the year if no records were kept, but I doubt it. Certainly the average fan, seeing perhaps a tenth of the team's

⁶ Lewis, *Moneyball*, 18.

⁷ Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding* (New York: Harper & Row: 1978), 251.

⁸ Lewis, *Moneyball*, 68.

games, could never gauge two performances that accurately – in fact if you see both [players] fifteen games a year, there is a 40 percent chance that the .275 hitter will have more hits than the .300 hitter in the games that you see. The difference between a good hitter and an average hitter is simply not visible – it is a matter of record.⁹

Despite this dramatic example, the habits of baseball management did not immediately change in response to James's work. To this day, many teams rely on the traditional way of evaluating players, but inroads are being made by the stat geeks or sabermetricians as they are sometimes called.

It must be stated that the traditional way of evaluating baseball players is not altogether mistaken. It has worked to a large extent. But what interests me is how the way of doing things becomes routine and how routine is so difficult to escape. When an organization does things a certain way, it is difficult to break the routine. Lewis quotes Voros McCracken, a contributor to *baseballprospectus.com*, regarding the difficulty statistical analysis has in winning converts to the game. "The problem with major league baseball," McCracken says, "is that it's a self-populating institution. Knowledge is institutionalized. The people involved in baseball who aren't players are ex-players..."¹⁰ With something as inconsequential as baseball, institutionalized ignorance is not so dangerous, but when it comes to institutions like governments, intelligence organizations, the military, or multinational corporations, the consequences can be far more perilous. What the example of baseball does show is just how difficult it is to effect change within an organization. Years of doing things one way is not easily changed no matter how much statistical evidence suggests those traditional ways are irrational. Why is it so difficult for someone to accept a new way of doing things, especially when that new way is characterized by a reasonable, deliberate approach and the efficacy of which is demonstrable? James and DePodesta simply improve upon what has long been a part of baseball's ethos, statistical thinking. They simply studied, refined, re-thought, and created ways to evaluate ballplayers. Yes, their reliance on statistical measures often directly

⁹ Lewis, *Moneyball*, 68.

¹⁰ Lewis, *Moneyball*, 241.

challenged the traditional way of doing things, but the challenge was not engaged with any sincerity; rather, the challenge was repaid with scorn. The backlash against *Moneyball* was swift, severe, and perhaps most distinctively irrational. Traditionalists were threatened.¹¹

When Lonergan talks about the process of development, he recognizes a "succession of creative personalities."¹² These creative personalities are those who withdraw themselves from mere routine and step back and consider ways in which things can be different. When withdrawn they are anonymous, but when they return they can profoundly transform the way things are done. Lonergan uses Karl Marx, a man who spent years withdrawn in a British Museum writing books nobody seemed to be reading, as an example of a "creative personality." Marx, after all, was perhaps the most influential man in the twentieth-century. While I'm sure Bill James and Paul DePodesta never suspected they would be compared to Karl Marx, they, like Marx, can be seen as "creative personalities." They were fascinated by the game of baseball and James especially spent years in his home in Kansas collecting data and evaluating it in order to gain insights into the machinations of the game of baseball.

Lonerger talks about the good "as object" and the good "as subject." You may recall that I emphasized the way in which human activity takes place within a good of order, but what really interests me is Brooks's observation about Faulkner and for this I need to comment on the good as subject. Central to Lonergan's conversation about the good as subject is the notion of sin. Lonergan insists that sin is not just a category of religious thought. Sin is a lack of the good and it is marked by human failure. I would venture to say that DePodesta and James, the baseball stat geeks, know something about failure. Their statistical calculations recognize the intimate relationship between success and failure, and consequently we may say sin. Human action is fraught with contingency. It is never the case that something must necessarily happen. Sin, to use Lonergan's phrase, is a "statistical phenomenon."¹³ (Lonerger uses this phrase when he is talking about sin as crime.)

¹¹ Bill James never really suffered the backlash that Beane and his ilk experienced because he was so far out on the fringes that no one in baseball noticed him.

¹² *Topics in Education*, 51.

¹³ *Topics in Education*, 59.

Human activity and organization are not going to be perfect. A familiar human response to contingency is to establish "[l]aws, the police, law courts, tribunals, prisons." However, a problem arises when such responses generate a notion of the good as simply "keeping out of jail." Lonergan does not elaborate on this idea, but surely there is something important in the idea.¹⁴

Sin is a fact of human life, and it is the concern of thinkers such as Nietzsche and Marx. Lonergan claims that Marx and Nietzsche have a profound hatred of sin – Marx's hatred is directed at bourgeoisie's sins and Nietzsche's against the masses' sins. When sin is a component of social process, Lonergan states that "[The good of order] develops under a bias in favor of the powerful, the rich, or the most numerous class. It changes the creative minority into a merely dominant minority. It leads to a division of classes not merely by their function, but also by their well-being. This division of classes gives rise in the underdogs to suspicion, envy, resentment, hatred, and in those that have the better end of the stick, to haughtiness, arrogance, disdain, criticism of 'sloth,' of 'lack of initiative,' of 'short-sightedness,' or in earlier times, of 'lowly birth.'"¹⁵

I believe this to be an important point in addressing the question I set out at the beginning of the paper when I quoted Cleanth Brooks's comment about Faulkner. There is no good of order so perfectly set up that human beings do not have to try to be good. I think Lonergan recognizes this. He tells us that the good of order "develops under a bias." The powerful rarely cede their power, although if you consider many former Eastern Bloc countries, it is not necessarily the case that the powerful always hold fast to their privilege.

Human beings are the agents of sin. Lonergan writes, "...with respect to the radical element in sin man is the initiator, the first cause."¹⁶ In talking about sin as aberration ("the evil that is opposite to cultural development"), he makes the point that "the moral impotence of man creates in man a demand for false philosophies in our day, for a high-level rationalization, just as it created a demand for degrading

¹⁴ In teaching business ethics, students will frequently justify a policy or particular behavior by stating "It's legal, so it is okay." The threshold for ethical action therefore is mere legality or "keeping out of jail."

¹⁵ *Topics in Education*, 60.

¹⁶ *Topics in Education*, 49.

myths in ancient times."¹⁷ Lonergan recognizes that the high demand for false philosophies invites ever new false philosophies; it is kind of like the idea that drinking salt water only makes one's thirst grow. Instead of development, aberrant behavior brings about evil, a downward spiral moving away from constructing a good of order.

Among the many shocking features of the Third Reich was the cool efficiency with which their operations were carried out. In order to avoid evil, one must "leap from unreason, from the unreasonableness of sin, to reason."¹⁸ Lonergan calls this "something existential." When human beings participate in a good of order, there is always an "existential" element involved, which is to say that for the person on the ground in the situation there must be "real apprehension and real assent to the truth."¹⁹ The difficulty, of course, is when the network of evil becomes overwhelming. To say that a "leap from unreason" is necessary to avoid evil sounds glib and wholly inadequate to the horror of the Holocaust of the Jews, or the Killing Fields in Cambodia, or genocide in Dafur. But understanding that the conditions for these events are the result of human history and that the outcome is an accumulation of sometimes small, sometimes large flights from understanding that become routinized and embedded in a common sense gives a greater sense of how evil can happen on such a large scale.

It is this sense of routine that I think Hannah Arendt is getting at with her term "the banality of evil." In "Thinking and Moral Considerations: A Lecture," Arendt tells us that her phrase was not meant as a theory on evil. She says the phrase was meant to be something "factual." There was nothing apparently wicked, pathological, or monstrous about Eichmann the man. In fact, the most striking thing about him was his ability to function within different organizations, different schemes of recurrence. Arendt states, "[Eichmann] functioned in the role of prominent war criminal as well as he had under the Nazi regime; he had not the slightest difficulty in accepting an entirely different set of rules.... To his rather limited supply of stock phrases he added a few new ones, and he was utterly helpless only when he

¹⁷ *Topics in Education*, 64.

¹⁸ *Topics in Education*, 65.

¹⁹ *Topics in Education*, 64.

was confronted with a situation to which none of them would apply."²⁰ Eichmann easily adapted to the tasks at hand when he was a soldier doing his duty just as he easily adapted to being tried for war crimes. He accepted his position in both cases. Arendt sees in Eichmann a profound flight from reason, which she characterizes as "the urge to think and to understand."²¹ The kind of examination that thinking entails is indeed dangerous "to all creeds," but the other option, non-thinking, is perilous as well. About non-thinking Arendt writes, "By shielding people against the dangers of examination, it teaches them to hold fast to whatever the prescribed rules of conduct may be at a given time in a given society."²² To use Lonergan's terms, the flight from reason means that the good of order had better be good. An order that is characterized by decline, aberrant behavior, evil, is a fertile ground for those disinclined to engage in the kind of examination that human being requires. Lonergan writes, "The good is human insofar as it is realized through human apprehension and choice.... human choice is good or evil; and so the human good is a history, a cumulative process where there is both advance of apprehension, and distortion, aberration, due to evil."²³

I want to briefly return to something I mentioned earlier. That is that human beings are good by participation. I think the idea is important because it addresses what is a common and often valid criticism of Western consciousness. The critique is that Western consciousness is anthropocentric;²⁴ human beings put themselves at the center of the universe at the expense of the environment and all other minerals, plants, and animals. Environmentalists often stress the importance of sustainability, which seeks to live in harmony with our natural environment, rather than living as "masters and possessors of nature," to use Descartes's phrase. I believe one step we

²⁰ Hannah Arendt, "Thinking and Moral Considerations: A Lecture," *Social Research* 38, no. 3 (1971): 417.

²¹ Arendt, "Thinking and Moral Considerations," 422.

²² Arendt, "Thinking and Moral Considerations," 435-36.

²³ *Topics in Education*, 32.

²⁴ See especially Lynn White, Jr.'s seminal work "The Historical Roots of our Ecological Crisis," *Science*, March 10, 1967. For a critique of the anthropocentrism critique that considers Lonergan's thought, see Fred Lawrence's "The Fragility of Consciousness: Lonergan and the Postmodern Concern for the Other," *Theological Studies* 54 (1993).

might take toward a more sustainable and harmonious relationship with the environment is to conceive of ourselves as participating in something greater than ourselves, as participating in a good of order that is wondrous and humbling.

In closing I must return to baseball. In *Method in Theology*, Lonergan spends a great deal of time on the topic of "horizon." He defines horizons as the sweep of our interests and of our knowledge; they are the fertile source of further knowledge and care; but they also are the boundaries that limit our capacities for assimilating more than we already have attained.²⁵

When Voros McCracken criticizes baseball's established culture as a "self-populating institution" he is making a statement about the horizon of baseball. Simply put, if you are playing baseball for a living, you are not learning about statistical analysis in an economics class at Harvard like Paul DePodesta was. Billy Beane was playing professional ball from the time he graduated high school, but his struggles to make the Major Leagues led to a touch of bitterness and moreover he became suspicious and critical of the baseball establishment. I suspect ballplayers like him typically leave the game, but he stayed (his first job after retiring as a ballplayer was a scout). His misgivings about the traditional baseball establishment left him open to new ways of doing things. He was open to possibilities presented by the computer geek who simply wanted to understand the silly little game called baseball.

²⁵ Lewis, *Moneyball*, 237.

UNDERSTANDING NATURAL LAW: JOSEF FUCHS AND REALMS OF MEANING

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THOSE OF US studying at the Gregorian during the years of the Second Vatican Council had Josef Fuchs, S.J., for a course on sexual ethics in 1963. He had been a parish priest and clearly had personal experience with married people. His position on natural law was conventional: human beings have the *ability* to know what is right and wrong, but because of sin we need the church to be the authentic interpreter.¹

Fuchs served on the Pontifical Commission on Population, Family, and Birth from 1963 to 1966, which occasioned an intellectual conversion in him.² He came to realize that we need to distinguish between physical nature and human personal nature.³ When Paul VI published the encyclical *Humanae Vitae* in 1968,⁴ Fuchs experienced a personal crisis. He stopped teaching that course on sexual ethics because he could not, in conscience, support the absolute ban on birth

¹ "The church, as our guide on this way, has the obligation of proclaiming and protecting the entire moral law, including the natural law, even in as far as it has not been formally revealed and *even down to its concrete applications*" (Josef Fuchs, S.J., *Natural Law: A Theological Investigation* [New York: Sheed & Ward, 1965], 158 (emphasis added)).

² Mark Graham, *Josef Fuchs on Natural Law* (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press), 2002.

³ "It is proper to man, created in the image of God, to use what is given in nature in a way that he may develop it to its full significance with a view to the good of the whole person. This is the cultural mission which the Creator has commissioned to men, whom he had made his co-operators" (Josef Fuchs, Pierre de Lochet, and others, "Final report on the Pontifical Commission on Population, Family, and Birth," in *The Encyclical That Never Was* by Robert Blair Kaiser, 3-18, 1967 [quoted in Graham, note 58, p. 109]).

⁴ http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/paul_vi/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_25071968_humanae-vitae_en.html (July 25, 1968).

control. But he continued to write and give lectures; about sixty of these essays, spanning from 1964 to 1992, are published in English in five volumes.⁵

Although Josef Fuchs (1912-2005) and Bernard Lonergan were near contemporaries, they rarely cite one another.⁶ But Fuchs does regularly interpret the Second Vatican Council in his arguments, joining a host of historians and theologians who continue to shed light on the meaning of the council.⁷ If he were alive today Fuchs would be in his hundredth year. Thus it is fitting to recognize Josef Fuchs at this Lonergan Workshop on Vatican II hermeneutics.

Many authorities to this discussion are familiar: John Mahoney, James Keenan, Margaret Farley, Todd Salzman, and Michael Lawler.⁸ My purpose here, as a pastor, is focused on the functional specialty of Communications. I want to understand and explain the vexing problem of sexual morality in our politically charged atmosphere. Morality asks many interrelated questions: What is Truth? What is Good? What

⁵ Josef Fuchs, S.J., *Human Values and Christian Morality* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 1970).

Josef Fuchs, S.J., *Personal Responsibility and Christian Morality* (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 1983).

Josef Fuchs, S.J., *Christian Ethics in a Secular Arena* (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 1984).

Josef Fuchs, S.J., *Christian Morality: Word Becomes Flesh* (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 1987).

Josef Fuchs, S.J., *Moral Demands and Personal Obligations* (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 1993).

⁶ Fuchs cites Lonergan's thinking about the two worldviews, *classicist or historicist*, in *Moral Demands and Personal Obligations*, 39-40, 50. He mentions Lonergan, Rahner, and Demmer as supporting the need for absolute meaning, in *Christian Ethics in a Secular Arena*, 116. He cites Frederick Crowe on conscience, in *Personal Responsibility and Christian Morality*, 223.

⁷ Giuseppe Alberigo and Joseph Komonchak (eds.), *History of Vatican II*, 5 vols. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1995); John O'Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010); Massimo Faggioli, *Vatican II: The Battle for Meaning* (New York: Paulist Press, 2012).

⁸ Margaret Farley, *Just Love: A Framework for Christian Sexual Ethics* (New York: Continuum, 2008); James Keenan, *A History of Catholic Moral Theology in the Twentieth Century* (London: Continuum, 2010); John Mahoney, *The Making of Moral Theology: A Study of the Roman Catholic Tradition* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon, 1987); Todd Salzman and Michael Lawler, *The Sexual Person* (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2008).

is Eternal Law? What is Natural Law? What is God's Will? These questions are tightly interrelated, and for pastoral purposes, each of them is important for helping people form their consciences. I have been reading Fuchs in the light of Lonergan's method, particularly the realms of meaning, which applies to all of them, but we only have an hour, so I will briefly acknowledge Truth, Good, and the Will of God, and then focus on Eternal and Natural Law.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY MORAL TRUTH?

We all know Lonergan's four realms of meaning: Commonsense assumes that truth is the world of my experience, already out there, now, real, waiting for you and me to see it, hear it, feel it, smell it. It is possible to explain morality reasonably in the commonsense realm.⁹ In the theoretical realm we realize that theoretical truth, although based on the external world, is not already out there, now, real. Some people transition into theory but think there is only one possible solution. These people often slip into ideology, and morality may be degraded into sheer obedience to an idea, rather than a search for realizing values.

Classical schools of thought assume that moral formulations are stable and can be applied verbatim to any situation, everywhere and always. But the hermeneutic method holds that we cannot simply accept the static meaning of a text written in the past; rather, we translate it into the present tense. In the modern era, our horizon of consciousness is historical-minded rather than classicist.¹⁰ This leads us to interiority, the realm of the subject, the knowing person. We all discover moral truth within our own worldview, our horizon. Moral truth is different from commonsense and theory; it is not seen as a stable external existence, already out there, now, real, like the force of gravity. Nor is it a clever conclusion of logical syllogisms. It flows from self-appropriation (*Method in Theology*, 262-66). Fuchs calls it self-realization, as an individual, in intimate relationships, and in society – being-as-spirit-in-a-

⁹ Melanie Barrett, "Five Building Blocks for a Sound Moral Theology" in *Chicago Studies* 51, no. 2 (Summer 2012).

¹⁰ Bernard Lonergan, "The Transition from a Classicist World-View to Historical-Mindedness," in *A Second Collection*, vol. 13 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. William F. J. Ryan and Bernard J. Tyrrell (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), 1-9.

body.¹¹ Fuchs defines moral truth as "the *moral judgment* that actually corresponds to a given, concrete, real personal situation."¹²

Truth is a judgment made by a knowing subject, based in objective reality, but perceived, understood, and judged in the interior realm of the knower. Moral judgment is not merely private opinion. It does respond to a specific situation, but it is rooted in countless human encounters: family upbringing, schooling, religion, civil laws, sports, art, literature, and so forth, all of which lead to our self-understanding as persons knowing *moral truth*. Over time, similar judgments, made by many, become formulated into general norms or maxims; these are *moral truths*.¹³

We realize that merely parroting a norm from the past would falsify its meaning. We engage in a mutual dialogue between norm and subject, with a view to the actual situation. Only then do we discover the concrete moral truth in the light of general moral norms. It includes subjective knowing; but it is not "subjectivism." On the contrary, it leads to greater objectivity.¹⁴

Church teachers, wanting to be "objective," sometimes declare "the truth" and make laws for every occasion. The goal seems to be assurance of personal certainty rather than reflecting on experience and coming to reasonable judgment. Being sure frees one from risk, but it practically eliminates a creative and authentic search for objective understanding.¹⁵ Humans can err, and in that case are not objective; but further experience and insight helps them realize this; objectivity increases and the truth becomes more clear. Thomas Aquinas says: "In discussing acts of moral behavior, we will be guided by natural reason,

¹¹ Fuchs, "Autonomous Morality and Morality of Faith," in *Personal Responsibility and Christian Morality*, 84-111 [1977], 97.

¹² Fuchs, "Moral Truth – Between Objectivism and Subjectivism," in *Christian Ethics in a Secular Arena*, 29-41 [1982], 29.

¹³ Fuchs, "Moral Truth – Between Objectivism and Subjectivism," in *Christian Ethics in a Secular Arena*, 29-41 [1982], 35.

¹⁴ Fuchs, "Excursus: Hermeneutics in Ethics and Law," in *Christian Ethics in a Secular Arena*, 42-47 [1983], 45.

¹⁵ Fuchs, "Moral Truth – Between Objectivism and Subjectivism," in *Christian Ethics in a Secular Arena*, 29-41 [1982], 39. Fuchs treats the issue of certainty further in a later essay, "The Faithful Must Not Be Unsettled," in *Moral Demands and Personal Obligations*, 189-200 [1990].

which is the standard of human behavior."¹⁶

Fuchs suggests three constants in ethical reasoning: (1) we can generally agree on basic moral insights; (2) we usually recognize some agreement about implications of these insights; and (3) when we differ, we can agree to test the questions that arise. Testing comes from rational discussion leading to judgments of similar (or different) evaluations. When we engage with genuine responsibility, we can arrive at correct insights of practical reason and be confident about the corresponding choices that flow from them.¹⁷ This is the *recta ratio* of Aquinas.

Finally, truth has a transcendent dimension. Paying attention, getting an insight, and making reasonable judgments are transcendent functions. Interior self-appropriation is a transcendent process. We search, find, and experience a way to freely live out our being to its full completion in some meaningful fashion. Fuchs holds that a moral subject does not make one's self the measure of truth, but rather, "allows him or herself to be measured by the unabbreviated fullness of the reality."¹⁸ That "unabbreviated fullness of reality" is the truth that transcends a limited individual's experience: proper relations to oneself, to immediate family and friends, and to society, bringing one's life to fulfillment, with an eye on the future. The main concern of moral truth is to promote the development of the person (humanity-in-society).¹⁹ Christians include image of God in their self-realized humanity, but the transcendent God loves even those without belief. If norms and values are truly human they are also Christian. But there are also transcendental attitudes and norms unique to Christians – a believer will add a further uniquely transcendent dimension to every moral judgment, the human person in his or her entirety.²⁰

¹⁶ Fuchs, "Autonomous Morality and Morality of Faith," in *Personal Responsibility and Christian Morality*, 84-111 [1977], 95.

¹⁷ Fuchs, "Autonomous Morality and Morality of Faith," in *Personal Responsibility and Christian Morality*, 84-111 [1977], 96.

¹⁸ Fuchs, "Moral Truth – Between Objectivism and Subjectivism," in *Christian Ethics in a Secular Arena*, 29-41 [1982], 33.

¹⁹ Fuchs, "Morality as the Shaping of the Future of Man," in *Personal Responsibility and Christian Morality*, 176-84 [1977], 177.

²⁰ Fuchs, "Is There a Distinctively Christian Morality?," in *Personal Responsibility and Christian Morality*, 53-68 [1968], 55.

Fuchs asserts, "The binding force of morality would be nonsense if it did not enjoy a fundamental ability to be perceived and understood."²¹ Sometimes people make an ethical judgment that varies from religious authority. Such conflict could be the result of selfishness and ignorance; but a genuine search for the truth should be given benefit if there is honesty, upright intention, convinced insight, and careful reasoning. And religious authorities are also engaging in self-direction, so they also need to be employing the same honesty, upright intention, convinced insight, and careful reasoning. Neither side deserves to be demonized. "A high degree of good will and responsible discretion is required in the proponents of ethical self-direction *and* those who uphold the authority of traditional norms."²²

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY MORALLY GOOD?

We assume that God is Goodness itself, but we rely on human experiences to speculate about God's goodness. We naturally turn to the human person. Some authors have distinguished the *humanum* from the *Christianum*, assuming that the Christian evaluation of the good was not only better than the human evaluation, but even opposed to it. However, the Vatican Council and John Paul II are clear that the value of the human person is incomparable. Recently, philosophers like David Walsh at Catholic University²³ proposed that the human person, with freedom and rights, can be recognized as a common denominator of goodness in our postmodern era.

A Christian, of course, considers the good from a unique perspective, but ultimately the human person is the believer, and this belief is lived and expressed in the genuine realization of being-human, of the *humanum*.²⁴ Human dignity is the decisive element in the

²¹ Fuchs, "Autonomous Morality and Morality of Faith," in *Personal Responsibility and Christian Morality*, 84-111 [1977], 95, 96.

²² Fuchs, "Ethical Self-Direction?," in *Moral Demands and Personal Obligations*, 181-88 [1992], 183, 185.

²³ David Walsh, *Guarded by Mystery: Meaning in a Postmodern World* (Washington, DC: Catholic University Press, 1999).

²⁴ Fuchs, "Is There a Distinctively Christian Morality?," in *Personal Responsibility and Christian Morality*, 53-68 [1968].

human person and the world.²⁵ Morality, properly speaking, describes the free person; human acts are right or wrong insofar as we judge them suited or unsuited to the reality of the human person as individual, in relationship, and in society.²⁶ Objective judgment in the interior realm must consider the new knowledge of medicine, psychology, and so forth. Historical development demands new evaluations in new light.²⁷

In summary, *morality* belongs to a free conscious person. The human good is in the realm of interiority. Lonergan calls consciousness the *Eros of the human spirit*. It unfolds in a single thrust: "To know the good, it must know the real; to know the real, it must know the true; to know the true, it must know the intelligible; to know the intelligible, it must attend to the data" (*Method in Theology*, 13). Lonergan's treatment of this topic has a chart of eighteen interacting variables that make up the human good: particular capacities, cooperation, particular goods, plasticity, development, skill, institutions, roles, tasks, the good of order, liberty, orientation, conversion, personal relations, terminal value (*Method in Theology*, 47-52). Lonergan concludes: "The process is not merely in service of the human; it is above all the *making of the human*, an advance in authenticity, the fulfillment of affections, and the direction of work to one's personal goods and a good of order that are worthwhile" (*Method in Theology*, 52).

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY THE WILL OF GOD?

Statements like "This is the will of God" imply unchangeable and universal laws. Our only option is to submit to each precept, as communicated. It is true that the Decalogue is set in "Thou shall and shall not" statements, but its purpose is to establish the terms of a personal covenant in which both parties are making a bond of fidelity for one another – interiority and transcendence. Likewise, Jesus is not a commonsense "lawgiver" in the Sermon on the Mount; rather he announces a new way to live the Covenant, the fullness of moral

²⁵ Fuchs, "The Absolute in Moral Theology," in *Moral Demands and Personal Obligations*, 15-29 [1989], 24.

²⁶ Fuchs, "Morality: Person and Acts," in *Christian Morality: Word Becomes Flesh*, 105-117 [1985], 106.

²⁷ Fuchs, "Morality: Person and Acts," in *Christian Morality: Word Becomes Flesh*, 105-117 [1985], 106.

goodness, without legalism or self-interest. "Christ came to earth not to found a new moral order but to redeem and transform sinful man."²⁸ Knowing the will of God is in the transcendent realm.

Fuchs has an insightful exegesis of Paul's moral judgment in I Corinthians 7.²⁹ Regarding marriage, his basic premise is, "You belong to Christ and Christ belongs to God." (Just as husband and wife belong to each other! He raises marriage to the transcendent realm.) Being circumcised or not counts for nothing (commonsense); what matters above all is belonging to Christ (interiority and transcendence). The household codes (commonsense) protect the freedom that Christ has won for us when they are transformed into the subjective and transcendent realms.

As to marrying or remaining unmarried, there is no absolute rule. Paul's personal experience is that *he* is able to belong to Christ more easily if he is not married. But he does not agree that every true Christian "should not touch a woman" (either-or commonsense solution). Whichever lifestyle, a person should make sure that it helps him or her belong to Christ. Either is possible in the subjective and transcendent realms: "Each has his own gift from God."

Paul promotes basic principles of goodness, while making practical and flexible applications to the real-life context of living in Corinth. The transcendent God transforms the limited potentials of the genuine subject; the will of God is in the transcendent realm but it emerges in the details of everyday living. The human person, being morally good and an authentic person, coming to self-realization, constitutes the will of God. Fuchs's understanding agrees with Lonergan's explanation of the transcendent realm of meaning, existing as a person in the fullest sense of the word (*Method in Theology*, 79, 121-22). I cannot achieve authenticity by myself. I need to inquire, search, and seek counsel. I need God's spirit flooding my heart with love. I am in a dynamic state of being in love. My capacity for self-transcendence yearns for a fulfillment that brings deep joy and profound peace. Faith is the knowledge of religious love (*Method in Theology*, 122). As Paul puts it: "the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy

²⁸ Fuchs, "Clarifications of Some Currently Used Terms: Will of God," in *Personal Responsibility and Christian Morality*, 203-206 [1973], 205.

²⁹ Fuchs, "Early Christianity in Search of a Christian Morality: 1 Cor 7," *Christian Morality: Word Becomes Flesh*, 83-102 [1981].

Spirit" (Romans 5:5). This is the will of God for us, and this is the good for which we yearn, and the goal of all our actions.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY THE ETERNAL LAW AND THE NATURAL LAW?

Eternal Law

Eternal law means all of created reality is present in God, and God has personal interest in the universe. "God's Law" or some cognate is in the Bible hundreds of times – a commonsense description of God as a good monarch who is just, compassionate, powerful, covenant partner, final authority, administer of punishment, and so forth. As Christianity was taking root, the Roman legal system was a theoretical breakthrough and a significant advancement. Church Fathers extrapolated an ideal universe from this orderly system, with God reigning eternally, and the church with just laws at the apex of this classical orderly cosmos. Aquinas saw "natural law" as the human participation in the eternal law, the basis for both positive civil laws and personal morality. The phrase *Divine Law* or *Eternal Law* is used in church documents up to the present, including by Vatican Council II, such as in the Declaration on Religious Freedom # 3:

...the divine law itself, the eternal, objective and universal law by which God out of his wisdom and love arranges, directs and governs the whole world and the paths of the human community. God has enabled people to share in this divine law; they can, under the gentle guidance of God's providence, increasingly recognize the unchanging truth.

This is a powerful realization, but the wording is undifferentiated, and implies imprecise and unjustified conclusions. God maintains a universal redeeming embrace over all creation, but the concept of "law" in regard to God is misleading. The commonsense but simplistic idea that God personally orchestrates the movements of every star, planet, and blade of grass, like a giant puppeteer, is simply unfitting for God. God is *other* than created reality, not part of it.

Secondly, the uncontrolled use of terms like *immutable*, *objective*,

and *universal* (which are commonsense descriptions of God) gives the impression that all moral norms and truths are eternal and immutable. But everything is in the eternal law: the changeable and unchangeable, along with the policies and laws that humans create, very few of which are immutable.

This leads to a third misconception, that God is universal legislator, publishing laws, accessible to human minds. A corollary assumption is that certain people can actually read and understand the Eternal Law, and bring it to the rest of us, like Moses with two tablets. But *nothing* about God is directly accessible to our minds. Only the Word of God knows the Father. We cannot assume what is in divine law, and then deduce from that what we should do. No one begins from a material participation in eternal law and then proceeds to true moral knowledge.

It actually works the other way around. We first experience rules in our homes and at play and come to accept positive laws in everyday life. After experiencing law and order, we try to understand principles, norms, and solutions to use in day-by-day judgments. Then we postulate a theoretical "natural law" as a perfect model of all laws. In the realm of interiority, we may come to the so-called law of love. Finally we infer a hint about God's reign in the universe and begin to ponder Divine Mystery, choosing eternal law as an analogy to get a glimpse of God. We speculate that we participate in eternal law through our own autonomous knowledge of moral truth – but the Divine Mystery itself is in a "Cloud of Unknowing." For the most part, in our daily decisions, we only arrive at moral certitude – but it is reasonable, and thus reliable.³⁰

Natural Law

Fuchs prefers "*moral* natural law" or "*ethical* natural law" because the *nature* we are examining is *human* nature, with the power of reasoning and love. Fuchs treats this often.³¹ We focus on moral natural

³⁰ Fuchs, "Clarifications of Some Currently Used Terms (Eternal Law)," in *Personal Responsibility and Christian Morality*, 208-210 [1973], 210.

³¹ Fuchs, "*Epikeia* Applied to Natural Law?," in *Personal Responsibility and Christian Morality*, 1983, 185-99 [1980]; "Faith, Ethics and Law," in *Christian Ethics in a Secular Arena*, 1984, 114-27 [1983]; "God's Incarnation in a Human Morality," in *Christian Morality: Word Becomes Flesh*, 1987, 50-61 [1985]; "Natural Law or Naturalistic Fallacy,"

law, because we employ natural human experience; we cannot directly draw moral norms from eternal law.³² Let us consider sexuality in the four realms of meaning.

1. "Commonsense" is the simplest form of human reasoning. At the commonsense level, I judge things by how they look *to me*; it is a form of *recta ratio*, but it is limited by personal and practical experience. Human sex looks like any male and female animal copulation, with the purpose of propagating the species. Commonsense rejects same-sex unions because it looks unnatural – persons of the same sex cannot engage in natural genital copulation or propagate.

2. At the realm of "theory," I understand how things relate among themselves. The power of reasoning flourishes in the theoretical realm, identifying categories and universals in the world, which is naturally ordered in an interrelated order, often with complementary but distinct pairs. Anything unmanageable or unpredictable seems unnatural. Natural order inspired the teaching that sex for any purpose other than begetting children violates nature, for example, artificial birth control or masturbation. There has been endless discussion about sexuality and natural law, notably over *Humanae Vitae* and homosexuality. We have been in a logjam over this for decades.

How might we clarify this debate?³³ Some suggest *epikeia*: if the letter of the law does not cover a situation, one reasons to the *intent* of the law, to find the right thing to do *here and now*.³⁴ In our moral

Moral Demands and Personal Obligations, 1993, 30-51 [1988].

³² Fuchs, "God's Incarnation in a Human Morality," *Christian Morality: Word Becomes Flesh*, 1987, 50-61 [1985], 51-52.

³³ Pius XI 1930 (http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xi/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_31121930_casti-connubii_en.html); Pius XII, October 2, 1951, Allocation to the Congress of the Catholic Union of Italian Midwives (<http://www.catholicplanet.com/TSM/Address-To-Midwives-Pius-XII.htm>); Paul VI, 1968 (http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/paul_vi/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_25071968_humanae-vitae_en.html); CDF, 1975, *Persona Humana* Declaration on Certain Questions Concerning Sexual Ethics (http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19751229_persona-humana_en.html); John Paul II *Splendor Veritatis* (http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_06081993_veritatis-splendor_en.html); CDF *Donum Vitae* on bioethics, 1987 (http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19870222_respect-for-human-life_en.html); Todd Salzman and Michael Lawler, *The Sexual Person* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2008); The U.S. Bishops' critique of Salzman and Lawler (www.usccb.org/doctrine/Sexual_Person_2010-09-15.pdf).

³⁴ For example, compare with John Mahoney, *The Making of Moral Theology*.

text in 1963, Fr Fuchs answered that *epikeia* cannot apply to natural law, because we use natural law itself to discover this *right thing to do*. Natural law cannot contradict itself. But he added a qualification: "it may exist in some (inadequate) formulations of the law."

In a more recent essay on *epikeia* Fuchs made a useful distinction among different kinds of norms: (1) There are transcendental norms (for example, One must act in a rational manner.); 2) there are categorical norms, which are deductions from transcendental norms. Some categorical norms are analytic; they define a transcendental norm directly (for example, Be just; Don't be cruel.). Transcendental and analytic categorical norms always apply because they are strictly universal. Farley provides an empirical cross-cultural summary of analytic sexual norms.³⁵ Then there are particular categorical norms, also based on natural law: synthetic, which specify how to be just and chaste and truthful. Synthetic categorical norms are judgments made in a given time and place: What degree of relationship constitutes incest? Who milks the cows, women or men? These are general norms in that time and place, but not universal; they can change over time.³⁶ In the case of synthetic categorical norms, we do proceed as with any inadequate positive law, because humans (even in the church) can have blind spots in formulating such norms.³⁷ Specific practical instructions, which are judgments formulated by humans in specific times and places, may be general (if relevant at all), but certainly not strictly universal (for example, intrinsically evil).³⁸

The idea of "development" is helpful here. Aquinas observed that the human is a changing being. Moral judgments once formulated

³⁵ Farley, *Just Love*, 104: (1) all cultures have social norms for rearing children; (2) all provide for stability in family and community relationships; (3) incest taboos are everywhere; (4) all traditions regulate sexual desires that are not for reproduction; (5) all cultures have gender-based roles and structures for men and women; (6) everywhere tensions exist between asceticism vs. sexual pleasure, between individual vs. communal concerns, and between past practices vs. new circumstances. The specific norms, taboos or customs drawn from these are *synthetic norms*.

³⁶ Fuchs, "Epikeia Applied to Natural Law?," in *Personal Responsibility and Christian Morality*, 1983, 185-99 [1980], 188.

³⁷ Fuchs, "Epikeia Applied to Natural Law?," in *Personal Responsibility and Christian Morality*, 1983, 185-99 [1980], 198.

³⁸ Fuchs, "An Ongoing Discussion in Christian Ethics: 'Intrinsically Evil Acts'," in *Christian Ethics in a Secular Arena*, 71-90 [1981], 79.

as universal are not always well stated. They may not anticipate all possible consequences. They may not make distinctions that we now consider obvious and significant. They may be stated as universal, but in fact are merely *general*. We must consider the whole reality of the here and now. Lonergan points out that when we interpret church doctrines, "permanence attaches to the meaning and not to the formula" (*Method in Theology*, 323). Human sexuality is embraced in the love of persons, in the third (*subjective*) realm of meaning.

3. The interior realm recognizes that humans have subjective nature, which goes beyond biological processes and theoretical analysis, to the realm of self-awareness, responsibility, reflection, and intercourse. *Intercourse* is mutual exchange between subjects. It transforms sex: animals naturally copulate; humans naturally have sexual intercourse. Interiority transforms a legal contract into a loving covenant. Sex between humans without love is unnatural – even if they are married and it results in a child – a woman can be *raped* by her husband. On the other hand, human sexual intercourse during infertile periods, or with sterile spouses, *is* natural – for that couple, at that time, even though they cannot conceive. Mutual spousal love transcends that physical "unnatural" condition and fulfills the subjective nature of sexual intercourse. Human sexual morality enshrines the personal nature of intercourse in the subjective realm.

When we speak of the subjective realm, we must ask about the need for absolutes. The commonsense realm is uneasy about ambiguity, so the early medieval practice composed *penitentials* that classified sins by degrees of seriousness. In recent centuries some sins became classified as evil in themselves – intrinsically.³⁹ The question is: Are there orders of morality that reveal meaningful and absolute expressions of the whole of "being human"?⁴⁰ Fuchs cites Lonergan, Rahner, Wojtyla, and Demmer who support absolute obligations. Some religions, notably Judaism and Islam, consider the will of God to be expressed in absolute terms, which eliminates the need for natural law. Christian theology

³⁹ The word "intrinsically evil" is not a constant term in Catholic theology; it appears in an official church document for the first time, describing artificial contraception, with descriptive adjectives like "vicious," in *Casti Connubii*, 1930; compare with Fuchs, *Christian Ethics in a Secular Arena*, 74.

⁴⁰ Fuchs, "Faith, Ethics and Law," in *Christian Ethics in a Secular Arena*, 114-27 [1983], 115.

sees the question differently. God is transcendent Lord of all creation, including human beings and their bodies; but it is not correct to infer from God's transcendent reality that God is a lawgiver in society, as if he were an absolute monarch. Rather, God belongs to the human family in Christ. We are the image of God and we participate in God's providence. God does not *give us* rights and duties; rather we discover an absolute order of rights and responsibilities in what it means to be humans in society. Christian teaching inherited a commonsense Stoic revulsion against the pleasure of sex. Pius XI permitted sex between spouses in the infertile periods; but based on the theoretical physical finality of sex, he maintained the logical conclusion that all other sexual acts are intrinsically evil.⁴¹

Fuchs points out that it is important to consider the particular natural reality of specific actions, but the finality of the physical sex act itself is not enough to make a moral judgment about the human good without considering the whole concrete human reality of husband and wife making love. Physical nature does not dictate an ethical obligation; it only states its being – what it is, how it functions, and what its natural goal is – in other words, its reality in the commonsense realm (male-female copulation propagates the species). An ethical obligation is in the subjective realm. Deducing a moral obligation only from what something “is” in nature results in a naturalistic fallacy. The terms “ethical natural law” or “moral natural law” draw attention to the fact that we ought not be talking about what exists in nature; but rather, “the judgment of human reason, which itself is a given in nature with a view to right conduct in the human, personal world (for example, husband-wife sexual intercourse).”⁴²

God the Creator and Redeemer has given us a freedom that binds us to strive for a right understanding of our reality, and of the way to true self-realization.⁴³ Self-realization means coming closer and closer

⁴¹ The term “end” or “finality” is something like the *purpose* for an object or action (the *end* of an axe is to chop wood), except that *purpose* implies human intent, whereas in Aristotelian philosophy “finality” is said to exist in the object itself, regardless of the human intent. Modern philosophy does not put an intrinsic value on objects or events; its evaluation is made by the acting person.

⁴² Fuchs, “Natural Law or Naturalistic Fallacy?,” in *Moral Demands and Personal Obligations*, 30-51 [1988], 33-34.

⁴³ Fuchs, “Faith, Ethics and Law,” in *Christian Ethics in a Secular Arena*, 114-27

to authentic living – not self-centered, but in a continual development of personal responsibility. The finalities of physical nature alone cannot fully express our moral and personal responsibilities. Moral norms and judgments are not given by *human nature*, but by *human reason*, which is natural, and is measured by the whole human being. The moral natural law is not a written code of norms, but the image of God written in our hearts. Therefore our moral norms and judgments, if they are rightly formulated, *are* true natural law and participate in the eternal law of God.⁴⁴ Fuchs insists that only formulations that are truly exclusive (e.g., never kill someone merely to give pleasure to another person) are universal in the strict sense. “If negative, they indicate an ‘intrinsically evil’ act, as we used to say.”⁴⁵ He concludes:

On one hand, binding force cannot be founded simply in established norms. On the other hand, we can, in a human way, experience and understand instances of absolute binding force, and also the concrete content of what is binding a true, binding natural law.⁴⁶

Whenever we recognize a moral norm and act on it, we participate in the eternal law by the *natural* process of paying attention, insightful understanding, reasonable judgment, and responsible decision. Facts of nature do not determine morality, but we should consider them. We must interpret and evaluate all the elements of a human reality, and integrate them into the person as a whole, and the person’s conduct as a whole – in the subjective realm of meaning.

A passage from Lonergan describes this development:

History differs radically from nature. Nature unfolds according to laws. But the shape and form of human knowledge, work, social organization, cultural achievement, community, communication, personal development, are involved in

[1983], 119.

⁴⁴ Fuchs, “Faith, Ethics and Law,” in *Christian Ethics in a Secular Arena*, 114-27 [1983], 120.

⁴⁵ Fuchs, “Faith, Ethics and Law,” in *Christian Ethics in a Secular Arena*, 114-27 [1983], 121.

⁴⁶ Fuchs, “Faith, Ethics and Law,” in *Christian Ethics in a Secular Arena*, 114-27 [1983], 126.

meaning. Meaning has invariant structures but the contents in the structures are subject to development and decline. So it is that *humans stand outside the rest of nature*, that we are historical beings, that each human person shapes his or her own life but does so only in interaction with the traditions of the communities in which he or she was born, and these traditions are the deposit left them by the lives of their predecessors. . . . Meaning enters into the very fabric of human living but varies from place to place and from one age to another." (*Method in Theology*, 81)

As we discuss moral judgment based on human nature, we keep three things in mind.⁴⁷ First, the reality of the human person was not known in the past as it is known in the present, and we cannot guess the future. This is Lonergan's insight about classicist versus historicist horizons of consciousness. Secondly, we never completely grasp nature; moral judgments are based on interpretations of nature, which can change. For example, we once interpreted sexuality having a primary end, begetting children, and a secondary end, mutual support of the spouses. Since *Gaudium et Spes*, we interpret in sexuality a natural coherence of these two ends; theoretical notions of primary and secondary lose their meaning. Lonergan understood this in 1943!⁴⁸ Thirdly, besides interpreting, we also make personal evaluations of natural realities, which can and do change. In some cultures a man may have more than one wife, and as many children as he can; the tribe's fruitfulness depends on it. This is not relativism – it is cultural diversity, as Lonergan explains in the eighteen variables that interact in searching for the human good (*Method in Theology*, 48).

We quoted from *Dignitatis Humanae*, #3 above. This conciliar teaching about the freedom of conscience is clear about human dignity, intelligence, and our responsibility to seek the truth by free inquiry and entering into social dialogue – even with people of different experiences and faith. And it reinforces the obligation to follow our conscience, even

⁴⁷ Fuchs, "Natural Law or Naturalistic Fallacy?," in *Moral Demands and Personal Obligations*, 30-51 [1988], 36.

⁴⁸ Bernard Lonergan, "Finality, Love, Marriage," in *Collection*, vol. 4 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 17-52.

in religion (see the remainder of paragraph #3).⁴⁹

4. The fourth realm of meaning is transcendence. Transcendence reaches beyond limits and integrates differentiated features into something new – for believers, into the realm of Grace. It is natural for Christians to lift up desires, hopes, and fears to the transforming Cross of Christ. Christian husbands and wives naturally transform their sexual love by mutual self-revelation, by being intimately available to each other and to their children, by sharing grief and suffering with a transformed attitude of hope, and by making their marriage a part of their heritage and posterity. They transform their family into an experience of God's faithful love. We participate in the wisdom of God by right reason, the right insight and judgment that interprets our personal being aimed toward self-realization. "God translated himself into our human reality by participation, incarnation into human morality."⁵⁰ Gay and lesbian couples report that this transforming love is also possible for them.⁵¹

This is easier said than done. Moving from commonsense to theory, and from theory to interiority requires "differentiated consciousness"

49...God has enabled people to share in this divine law, and hence they are able under the gentle guidance of God's providence increasingly to recognize the unchanging truth. Therefore all have both the right and the duty to search for religious truth, so that they may form for themselves right and true moral judgments. Truth is to be sought in a manner befitting the dignity and social nature of the human person, namely by free inquiry assisted by teaching and instruction, and by exchange and discussion in which people explain to each other the truth as they have discovered it or as they see it, so as to assist each other in their search. Once truth is known, it is embraced by personal assent. People grasp the precepts of the divine law by means of their own consciences, which they are bound to follow faithfully in all their activity, so as to come to God, their end. Nor must they be prevented from acting according to it, especially in religious matters. The practice of religion consists in voluntary and free internal acts, in which one relates to God directly; and these can neither be commanded nor prevented by any merely human power (Vatican Council II, *Dignitatis Humanae* #3. Norman Tanner (trans.), *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, Vol. Two: Trent to Vatican II*, [London: Sheed & Ward, 1990], 1003.) We consider the context of a statement to understand its meaning. This document on the freedom of conscience generated debate, but its teaching is consistent with *Lumen Gentium* and *Gaudium et Spes*.

50 Fuchs, "God's Incarnation in a Human Reality," in *Christian Morality: Word Becomes Flesh*, 50-61 [1985], 52.

51 Charles Hefling, "By Their Fruits: A Traditionalist Argument," in Charles Hefling, *Our Selves, Our Souls, and Bodies: Sexuality and the Household of God* (Boston: Cowley, 1996), 157-74.

(*Method in Theology*, 84). Undifferentiated consciousness insists on either-or thinking; if commonsense makes sense, theory must be wrong. If the theory is logical, people's experience must be wrong. Differentiated consciousness helps us realize that commonsense, theory, and interiority, though different, can (and should) be integrated. This is critical to grasp moral natural law. For example, some Old Testament images of God are violent, commonsense evaluations from ancient tribal culture. But we can integrate Christian morality with biblical attitudes of violence and vengeance, transforming them in transcendent meaning.⁵²

Consider the moral evaluations of war. Some Christians are absolute pacifists; killing is always wrong (commonsense). But we have a "theory" of justifiable warfare, so most Catholics feel permitted, even encouraged, to be patriotic and enlist in the armed forces. They return from Vietnam, Afghanistan, or Iraq; they have witnessed the horror and bloodshed – they themselves may have indiscriminately killed civilians in "the fog of war." They are often tormented by a complex of guilt (an ethical reaction) and anger (against God and Country, for having placed them in an impossible dilemma). Now the theoretical justification becomes meaningless. They are thrust back into the commonsense aversion to killing, which they often turn inward, against themselves and their families – sometimes in suicide. They are desperate for reconciliation. They must accept the fact that *war is sin* (even if unavoidable), that they have participated in that sin (even if unwillingly), and they now need to be reconciled – with their nation that sent them to war, with the "enemy" (some of whom they have killed), with their families, themselves, and with God. This reconciliation can only take place in the realms of interiority and transcendence.⁵³

Two issues are drawing public opposition from church leaders: public funds for birth control and legalizing same-sex unions. I think Fuchs would say that their arguments fall prey to the naturalistic fallacy – they focus on the finality of the physical act rather than on the finality of committed people who love each other. I think Lonergan would say their arguments are confined to the commonsense and

⁵² Fuchs, "Ethical Problems in the Christian Prayer of the Psalms," in *Moral Demands and Personal Obligations*, 122-37.

⁵³ William Mahedy, *Out of the Night: The Spiritual Journey of Vietnam Vets* (New York: Random House, 1986).

theoretical realms in undifferentiated consciousness. They have not yet made their way through "the long and confused twilight of initiation that is required to find one's way into interiority, to achieve through self-appropriation a basis, a foundation, that is distinct from common sense and theory" (*Method in Theology*, 85).

The question is this: Are there circumstances in which it can be morally permissible, even good, in the subjective and transcendent realms of meaning, for a married couple to have sexual intercourse while consciously inhibiting conception? A more challenging question: Can it be morally permissible, even good, for couples of the same sex to express their mutual commitment in sexual activity? The answer should be framed in their relationship. Do they care for each other? Are they intending lifelong commitment and trying to develop and refine their love? Are they sensitive to each other's needs? Are they rearing children? (Same-sex couples often do.) Are they sacrificing for one another? Are they willing to serve the community?

In the conversion process among realms of meaning, Lonergan proposes "sublation":

What sublates goes beyond what is sublated, introduces something new and distinct, puts everything on a new basis, yet so far from interfering with the sublated or destroying it, on the contrary needs it, includes it, preserves all its proper features and properties, and carries them forward to a fuller realization within a richer context. (*Method in Theology*, 241)

I propose that the meaning of sexuality in the subjective and transcendent realms sublates the commonsense and theoretical realms of meaning, not destroying them, but carrying them further to a fuller realization within a richer context. The sticking point is this clause: "preserves all its proper features and properties." What are the proper features and properties of sexual intercourse? One feature is propagating life. Therefore, if an otherwise healthy couple were to use contraception, or even natural family planning throughout their entire marriage, with a so-called "contraceptive mentality," selfishly focused on each another, with no intention of rearing children, this would *not* be good, moral sexuality. As Lonergan notes, transformation from theory to interiority involves *moral conversion*, choosing the truly

good, "even for value against satisfaction when value and satisfaction conflict" (*Method in Theology*, 240).

If, however, they have children, are caring for them responsibly, making sacrifices for them, they *are propagating* life, day by day. Their subjective and transcendent intentions sublimate their acts of sexual intercourse into true acts of love, because sexual intercourse has another proper feature – the unique experience of affection and mutual gift of self to the other – "making love." The same would be true of homosexual couples, many of whom rear children, sometimes with heroic generosity by adopting orphaned or special-needs children. If they do not have children of their own, they can do what childless heterosexual couples do – volunteer time and resources for the benefit of children in the community.

Gaudium et Spes (# 49, 50, 51) considers the whole personal and interior finality of the human relationship of married persons. Josef Fuchs, Bernard Lonergan, and the Vatican Council all expect Catholics to grow up, from extrinsic conformity to mature responsibility. All the baptized are the People of God. They engage in full, active, and conscious participation in their liturgy and in their church. They are called to lay apostolate and to the church's mission to the world. They are called to make their household a *domestic church*. They are competent to judge whether their life together is modeled after the redeeming generosity of Christ – or closed self-centeredness. "Conversion is not continually turning to a norm that has been formulated once for all, but the always new commitment to seek the right answer to a given concrete human reality as a whole, and to embrace the corresponding action itself as the answer."⁵⁴

One might object that with the sexual excesses in recent years, this is no time to "relax" church teachings about sex. But this is not proposing a "relaxation." It is elevating the discussion to mature adulthood and responsibility, which is what conscience (and sexuality) is all about. Sexual excesses and violations, including the scandal involving Catholic clergy, have all been happening *despite* the church's "taboo" mentality about sex. In the long run, excesses and violations will decrease only when the general population, many of whom are

⁵⁴ Fuchs, "Natural Law or Naturalistic Fallacy?," in *Moral Demands and Personal Obligations*, 49.

Catholics, develop a more integrated sexuality in themselves, in their relationships, and in the public forum. The "new evangelization" is an opportunity for this dialogue, but it will not succeed if it relies on rehearsing tired formula. We need to stimulate the inquiring interest of the countless young men and women who are drifting from their church and engage them in intelligent conversation about a mature approach to conscience formation, based on reasonable analysis of real experience, in the subjective and transcendent realms of meaning.

Paul VI's *Humanae Vitae* was addressed to all persons of good will. It stressed human dignity and critiqued a sexual revolution that confused sexual satisfaction for values. It painted a reasonable and beautiful portrait of human love. The furor, and the subsequent wholesale rejection of the encyclical, is instructive: the entire conversation was short-circuited by its ideological and authoritarian position against birth control.⁵⁵ And we lost moral high ground. That loss of moral authority was then compounded by the hypocrisy of sexually abusive clergy and incompetent bishops. In the last couple years, the ethical question being asked by myself as a pastor, and by many of the faithful I know, is this: Is it reasonable, and therefore moral, for the United States Catholic apparatus to spend millions of the Catholic Faithful's dollars fighting against affordable health care over a technicality about birth control? This campaign has played into the hands of a hard-headed and hard-hearted political logjam. And as always, the poor stand to suffer in the long run. I think Pope Francis is calling us to recalibrate our moral compass.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Fuchs, "Is there a Distinctively Christian Morality?," in *Personal Responsibility and Christian Morality*, 53-68 [1968], 53.

⁵⁶ "Pope Francis spotlights social teaching with blunt calls for ethical economy," *National Catholic Reporter*, June 1, 2013 (<http://ncronline.org/news/vatican/pope-francis-spotlights-social-teaching-blunt-calls-ethical-economy>).

EXPERIENCE: "A MOST ENIGMATIC CONCEPT"

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KARL LEHMANN NOTED in 1975 that experience was one of the most enigmatic concepts in philosophy.¹ My own interest in the notion of experience was sparked off by my Indology teacher in Pune, Fr Richard De Smet, SJ,² who remarked casually to me that the term experience had gained currency in the West only with the Reformation and that it had become accepted in Catholic circles only after Vatican II.

A perusal of even a few philosophical and theological dictionaries and encyclopedias more than confirms this remark. W. J. Hill in the *New Catholic Encyclopedia* observes that within Christianity, the term experience became prominent only from the Reformation onward. From Luther to William James there is one common note in Western Christianity apart from Catholicism: that religious experience is the ultimate criterion and rule of faith, every constraint of dogma, authority, and reason having to give way to it.³

Within Catholicism, the stress on experience finds place on the fringes, in Jansenism, and in modernism. Hill describes Jansenism as a semi-Protestantism within Catholicism; it spoke of grace as experienced delectation determining the assent of the will, resulting in an

¹ Karl Lehmann, "Esperienza," *Sacramentum Mundi: Enciclopedia Teologica*, ed. Karl Rahner and others (Brescia: Morcelliana, 1975), 3: col. 593. The original German appeared in 1967: see *Sacramentum Mundi*, ed. Karl Rahner (Freiburg: Herder, 1967), Band 1: Abendland bis Existenz.

² See Ivo Coelho, "Richard V. De Smet, SJ (1916-1997): A Life," *Divyadaan: Journal of Philosophy and Education* 23, no.1 (2012): 1-72.

³ W. J. Hill, "Experience, Religious," in *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1967), 5:555.

excessive depreciation of theoretical reason, with the concomitant extolling of affections and sentimentality. The soul was deemed capable of an immediate feeling of the rapport between itself and God.⁴ As for modernism, it arose within the context of the historical and biblical criticism that itself followed in the wake of liberal Protestant theology. Catholics like George Tyrrell began suggesting the need to clarify whether revelation consists "in certain divine statements, or in certain spiritual experiences about which *man* makes statements that may be inspired by those divine experiences, yet are not divine but human statements."⁵ Catholic suspicions about experience, already raised by Jansenism, were, at the end of the nineteenth and the early twentieth century, reinforced by modernism.⁶

However, more positive attitudes are also found within the Catholic sphere, beginning from Newman, who did not believe his dogmatic principle threatened by his constant appeals to experience, both collective and personal. There was also Kierkegaard who, despite his fideism and individualism, won a Catholic hearing.⁷

Dilthey, Husserl, Whitehead, Blondel, Scheler, Jaspers, Marcel, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, Bultmann, and Gadamer raised the agenda of experience for Catholic fundamental theology. Theologians such as Guardini, Mouroux, Bouillard, Congar, Rahner, Schillebeeckx, and Balthasar also took up the notion.⁸

The term found official acceptance in the documents of Vatican II, though it is used there rather sparingly. The noun *experientia* is found thirty-two times, and the verb *experior* seventeen times. *Gaudium et Spes* has the most frequent usage, followed by *Dei Verbum* with fourteen occurrences of the noun and eight of the verb. Nowadays,

⁴ Hill, "Experience, Religious," 555-56.

⁵ Cited in Alessandro Maggiolini, "Magisterial teaching on experience in the twentieth century: From the modernist crisis to the Second Vatican Council," *Communio* 23 (1996): 230. On page 231, Maggiolini notes that Tyrrell conceives of revelation as an interior and personal experience to which every exterior factor, whether historical or theological, is subordinate.

⁶ Gerald O'Collins, "Experience," in *Dictionary of Fundamental Theology*, ed. Rene Latourelle and Rino Fisichella (Middle Green, UK: St Pauls, 1994), 306.

⁷ O'Collins, "Experience," 307.

⁸ Hill, "Experience, Religious," 556. See O'Collins, "Experience," 307.

according to Gerald O'Collins, the fear of the term has disappeared. John Paul II, for example, has frequently used the language of experience. His encyclical *Dives in Misericordia* (1980) uses the noun thirteen times and the verb six.⁹

This is not to say that everything is clear and that there are no problems. As I noted already, Lehmann observed in 1975 that experience is one of the most enigmatic concepts in philosophy. Lehmann is probably echoing a remark of Gadamer's: "However paradoxical it may seem, the concept of experience seems to me one of the most obscure we have."¹⁰

On the religious front, I have heard many Catholic preachers saying: "We must have a God-experience. Without an experience of God, our beliefs remain abstract and our concepts empty." Setting aside questions about modernism, we could ask: What might experience mean here? What might the preacher really have in mind, and what might people in the pew be looking out for, if they take the preaching seriously?

There is, further, the danger of identifying religious experience with good feelings. There is also the danger of searching for something extraordinary, when instead God might be in the still small voice and the gentle breeze (1 Kings 19:12). And, we might ask, is it really possible to have religious experience "on tap"?

Then there is the fact that liberalism and modernism find surprising echoes in Oriental religions. A common enough understanding of Advaita Vedanta maintains that when one has attained the Supreme Experience, one must drop the sphere of expression – creeds, codes, cults, community structures. And *Vipassana*, the classical Buddhist meditation, teaches that the mind is a liar, and that the way to liberation consists of remaining – without attachment (*tanha*) – at the level of pure experience, with the awareness of breath and of sensations.

It appears to me that these threads come together in that interesting combination of Western Enlightenment and Eastern mysticism that goes by the umbrella term "New Age." New Age challenges profoundly not only authority but also all claims to divine revelation. No word, it believes, is able to bear the weight of the Spirit.

⁹ O'Collins, "Experience," 307.

¹⁰ Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 2nd rev. ed., trans. J. Weinsheimer and D. G. Marshall (New York: Crossroad, 1991), 346.

So there is a whole set of problems, a problematic, connected with the notion of experience: What is experience, and what are the consequences of different notions of experience for spiritual theology and, simply, for life and prayer? What does experience have to do with grace, and is it really possible to understand and speak of grace without any reference to experience or consciousness? What is the relationship between religious experience and expression, between the apophatic and the kataphatic? What is the place and value of codes, creeds, cults, and communities? And what are the consequences of different notions of experience for ecumenism, theology of religions, and interreligious dialogue?

I end this introduction with the extraordinarily penetrating remark of Charles Hefling, Jr:

That all religion is founded on an experience, or a dimension of every experience, with which virtually everyone has some acquaintance and which has come to be expressed in a variety of rites and symbols, stories and doctrines – that, or something like it, is a theme which harmonizes nicely with the privatism that is modernity's *leitmotif*. It allows Christian denominations, not to mention different non-Western traditions, to be regarded as so many brands of the same generic product . . . Not surprisingly, then, variations on this theme make up the standard repertoire of religious professionals, clergy and academics alike. It is, after all, what the audience likes to hear.¹¹

As it stands, this remark seems to be a challenge to Lonergan himself, or perhaps to a simplistic understanding of Lonergan.

A simplistic understanding of experience does seem to have its merits. Its extremes seem to me to be Ecumenism and Interreligious Dialogue Made Easy on the one hand, and neo-orthodoxy, fundamentalist and quasi-fundamentalist movements on the other. So we might ask ourselves: What might be a sensible way of following Jesus today? What might be the "right" way to be Christian? This is a question that cannot be avoided if you live in a country like India, and certainly not if you live in Jerusalem.

¹¹ Charles Hefling, Jr., "Turning Liberalism Inside-Out" (review of George Lindbeck's *The Nature of Doctrine*), *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 3 (1985): 51.

My dream is a comprehensive study of experience and consciousness, with the aim of being able to push Lonergan's contribution further into the ongoing conversation. In the present paper I restrict myself to an assembly and classification of philosophical opinions about experience. Circumstances have obliged me to restrict myself further to material available to me in the library of the Studium Theologicum Salesianum in Jerusalem. This means that, in concrete, I will present opinions about experience from a certain number of philosophical and theological encyclopedias ranging from 1959 to 1968. The fact that these are encyclopedia articles gives them a certain representative status. And the fact that the years in question cover also the period of Lonergan's major publications (*Insight* in 1957 and *Method in Theology* in 1972) is simply, from one point of view, a curious coincidence.

SOME CONTEMPORARIES ON EXPERIENCE / *ERFAHRUNG*

Gustave Siewerth, *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche* (1959)

Gustav Siewerth (1903-63) is a German philosopher influenced by Maréchal as well as Heidegger. He has a book with the title, *The Destiny of Metaphysics from Thomas to Heidegger*¹² and is the founder of a school of Thomism that dialogues with Eckhart, Hegel, and Heidegger. He in turn seems to have been a great influence on Balthasar.

In his article on experience in the *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche*,¹³ Siewerth proposes that, according to the meaning of the word and its essence, experience is a type of knowledge that is obtained through encounter with real things. Opposed to it is a type of knowledge that has only the act of knowing as its source: intellectual intuition. Only God and the angels have this kind of knowledge, the latter insofar as they are in possession of their own formal essence and are interiorly enlightened by God. Since Aristotle it has been

¹² Gustav Siewerth, *Das Schicksal der Metaphysik vom Thomas bis Heidegger* (Einsiedeln: Johannes Verlag, 1959).

¹³ Gustav Siewerth and A. Halder, "Erfahrung. I. Philosophisch. II. Religiöse E.," in *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche*, 2nd ed., ed. Josef Höfer and Karl Rahner (Freiburg: Verlag Herder, 1959), 3: col. 977-81. Halder is responsible only for a very small part of the section on religious experience.

accepted that the human spirit, instead, is originally potential, and that therefore it neither has ideas that are innate nor any inner actuality that can be immediately known without being provoked by an actuating specification. Siewerth, therefore, holds that human knowing and experiencing are identical.¹⁴

The article goes on to list several different modes (*Grundweise*) or meanings of experience. Strangely, the description of the first seems to contradict what has just been said: *a priori* or *transcendental experience* is the natural grasp of truth, the "original experience" of human beings, obtained through intuitive (not discursive) judgments. Such experience seems to include the actualization of all received faculties of human knowledge, the transcendentals and their necessary relations, the immediate presence of the knower to herself in her I or Subject-Ground, in her acts of understanding and judging and in the universal intentionality of these acts, and even in her habitual orientation. Transcendental experience is naturally complete and precedes all particular or *a posteriori* experience; the grounds of truth are brought to light in it; it contains somehow all possible variations of conceptual schemes, which thoughtful deduction can make explicit; and in it the subject co-founds itself in the modal structure of the act and means of knowing.¹⁵

The description of the second mode of experience is also strange in the sense that it overlaps with the first: *a posteriori* experience is essentially connected either to the sensible beginning and imagination or to the self-presence of the soul in its acts and volitions. It consists of (1) the unmediated presence of things in their particular qualitative, quantitative, and figurative appearances; (2) the collection, ordering, and comparative classification of particulars in thought, fantasy, and sense as same, similar, different, or related; (3) the rational grasp of the grounds of Being, essence, and existence and of the appearances ordered to these. These *a posteriori* experiences may further be divided according to the *field* into inner and outer experiences, according to *grounds* into metaphysical, phenomenological, and physical experiences; and according to the *degree of sublation* of particulars by understanding.¹⁶

¹⁴ Siewerth and Halder, "Erfahrung," col. 977-78.

¹⁵ Siewerth and Halder, "Erfahrung," col. 978.

¹⁶ Siewerth and Halder, "Erfahrung," col. 978-79.

Siewerth's list of further meanings of experience is also interesting: (1) the Aristotelian meaning of experience as accumulation and memory of many particular instances; (2) experience about the range of rules, the probability of instances and possibilities, developments that cannot be fixed in individual cases (the progress of an illness, human relationships, the rules of social living, possibilities of moral, religious, artistic life living and expression, et cetera); (3) experience of the personal, the individual, the extraordinary, the anomalous, the spiritually unique; (4) the experience of the world or of life, of fate or destiny, of call or vocation, which often summarizes or somehow encompasses the whole sphere of experience.¹⁷

The references and bibliography indicate the influence of Aristotle and Husserl, among others, but it would appear that Kant also hovers in the background. At any rate, it is very clear that the governing description of experience is in terms of a knowledge obtained through encounter or contact with real things, in opposition to knowledge that is purely a priori, that has only the act of knowing as its source. The list of modes of experience indicates two more points: that the knower is immediately present to herself, and that a posteriori experience includes not only the unmediated presence of things in their particularity but also what we might call elements of understanding and judging.

Karl Lehmann, *Sacramentum Mundi* (1967-69)

Karl Lehmann (1936-) is bishop of Mainz and was named Cardinal by John Paul II in 2001. He did his doctorate at the Gregorian on the question of being in Heidegger. Early in his teaching career he was assistant to Karl Rahner. From 1971 he has been co-editor of *Communio*. From 1974-84 he was member of the International Theological Commission.

Lehmann's references include the work of Siewerth, and, in fact, his article in *Sacramentum Mundi* reflects that of Siewerth in *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche*. The one new note is that he places Siewerth's opening description of experience under the heading "prenotion" or "preconcept" and avoids mention of encounter or contact with real things. Ordinarily, says Lehmann, experience is understood as a particular form of knowing which, in contrast to discursive thought,

¹⁷ Siewerth and Halder, "Erfahrung," col. 979.

or pure thought, or what is accepted on authority or through historical transmission (tradition), arises from immediate reception of data or impressions. With Siewerth he also notes that, since the finite human spirit is by nature potential, and since therefore in order to know it has need of something that is intuitively received, "knowledge and human experience are identical in their most profound reality."¹⁸ He adds, however, that the presence of what is experienced, which gives itself, involves a type of incontestable certainty¹⁹ – something that recalls Lonergan's experiential objectivity, except if it involves a Siewerth type of assumption that experience involves, somehow, an encounter with real things.

With Siewerth, Lehmann also goes on to distinguish between transcendental experience and a posteriori experience. Transcendental experience: human beings, even prior to any concrete performance, articulate their being in the unlimited spiritual horizon understood, for example, in an indeterminate way as an infinite openness in general, and in an intuitive-abstract way as "Being," or as a sense of the world and of truth that realizes itself historically. Particular a posteriori experience, instead, is essentially linked to perception and to actual sensible presentations or to the presence of the soul to itself. Thus this kind of experience divides into external experience, which is experience of corporeal objects, and internal experience, which is lived experience of one's own psycho-spiritual conditions, which may be either unreflective (representations, fantasies, etc.) or reflective (self-consciousness).²⁰

Further indications about Lehmann's own position are provided by his outline of the history of the concept of experience. For *Kant*, experience includes an a priori element: experience is possible only in virtue of certain synthetic a priori principles. In *early German idealism*, and especially in Hegel, experience as consciousness is intellectual intuition or the immediacy of self-intuition; but also the fact that experience becomes itself only by appropriating the other, through history. The *post-idealist critique* (the Marxist, for example) stresses that experience cannot be understood solely in terms of consciousness. Husserl and the

¹⁸ Lehmann, "Esperienza," col. 593. See Siewerth and Halder, "Erfahrung," col. 978.

¹⁹ Lehmann, "Esperienza," col. 593.

²⁰ Lehmann, "Esperienza," col. 593.

early Heidegger also insist on a return to the immediacy of experience, to the event of the true self-evidence of being in its real immediacy. Husserl has been criticized for understanding transcendental experience as something achieved by subjectivity, and for not recognizing the constitutive originality of a transcendental experience that is in the subject and the object before any distinction between them. Thus Heidegger, for example, seems to stress that experience is not constructed by the subject and not abstracted from the concrete being but is an access to a reality that manifests itself as such only *in* this experience. On his own, it seems to me, Lehmann adds that experience itself is intrinsically and naturally open to further experiences: ongoing experience acquires a better knowledge of what it knew; the nothingness of "useless" efforts and the negativity of painful experiences bear in themselves a singular fruitfulness. He is certainly speaking for himself when he notes that a fundamental problem is the relation of experience to reflection. Reflection is necessary insofar as it penetrates into the genesis and structure of experience and therefore continually challenges the security of the praxis of life. It is only reflection that has the capacity to challenge the false pretences of experience, so as to distinguish it from arbitrary feelings or obscure opinions. Reflection is condemned to come always in second place, but, turning back, it develops also a new critical force to which, up to a certain point, every experience must expose itself. The preeminence of the value of experience is clear. But it would be fatal to oppose reflection and experience, scientific experience and experience. Lehmann ends by noting that the relationship between experience and reflection calls for a deeper explanation.²¹

W. J. Hill, *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (1967)

R. J. Masiello's article on experience in the *New Catholic Encyclopedia*²² does not seem to commit itself to any particular description of the term, contenting itself with a survey of opinions, from Aristotle through the empiricists (Hobbes, Locke, Hume) and pragmatists (Dewey), to end with a mention of existentialism. He does seem to be critical of the excessive prominence given to the notion of encounter

²¹ Lehmann, "Esperienza," col. 594-98.

²² R. J. Masiello, "Experience," in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 1st ed. (New York: McGraw Hill, 1967), 5:750-51.

in recent philosophies: "As a result of the false dichotomy introduced between dynamism and 'staticism,' prominence is given to experience in contemporary philosophies that stress the notion of encounter." The metaphysics of Aristotle and Aquinas, he says, rejects such a prominence of dynamism; its aim is to go beyond discovering the truth of being that can be experienced to being that defies sensory perception.²³

W. J. Hill, instead, in the article on religious experience,²⁴ clearly defines experience in terms of contact. The primary signification of experience is "the impression and immutation of a conscious rational subject resulting from actual contact with things, from living through an event or events." We may note also that, like Siewerth, experience here is complete knowledge rather than infrastructure: it is defined as resulting from actual contact with *things*. Hill maintains, in fact, that the actuality and concreteness of the contact is what distinguishes experience from the ideal and the imaginary and locates it largely in sensation and feeling, while not excluding intellectual and volitional elements, as long as "direct intuitional contact with reality is involved." He goes on to note that every experience is both cognitional and appetitive, with the latter predominating. Thus, while experience is "largely subjective," it involves not merely passive immutation of the subject but also her vital responses.²⁵

M. M. Rossi, *Enciclopedia Filosofica* (1967)

The article on experience in the *Enciclopedia Filosofica* published by the Centro di Studi Filosofici di Gallarate is long and complex, with M. M. Rossi responsible for the first two parts (Meanings and Forms of Experience, and Phenomenology of Experience) and G. Giannini for the third (The Problematic of Experience).²⁶ Since the two contributions are markedly different, I will deal with them separately.

Mario Manlio Rossi (1895-1971) is an Italian philosopher with a Waldensian background. Leaving Italy because of Fascism, he settled

²³ Masiello, "Experience," 555.

²⁴ Hill, "Experience, Religious," 751-53. W. J. Hill is a Dominican, one of the editors and translators of the Blackfriars edition of the *Summa Theologiae*.

²⁵ Hill, "Experience, Religious," 555.

²⁶ M. M. Rossi and G. Giannini, "Esperienza," in *Enciclopedia Filosofica*, 2nd ed., Centro di Studi Filosofici di Gallarate (Firenze: G.C. Sansoni Editore, 1967), 2: col. 983-1001.

in the United Kingdom. Professor of philosophy and literature at the University of Edinburgh, he is known for his essays on Berkeley, Vico, Jonathan, Neoplatonism, and British empiricism. His output does not include much on phenomenology, but the piece we are studying, probably first published in 1957 in the first edition of the *Enciclopedia Filosofica*, is phenomenological in the sense of the phenomenology of perception rather than linguistic phenomenology. His bibliography includes the work of Hedwig Conrad-Martius, who was a student of Husserl's, but makes no mention of Heidegger.

Rossi begins by distinguishing practical and theoretical meanings of experience and then subdivides these to obtain seven meanings:

1. Wisdom, or practical experience in the generic sense
2. Expertise, or practical experience in the specific sense, in some restricted area
3. Experiential knowledge of a single event
4. Experience as accumulation of experiences of type (3)
5. Experience in a phenomenological sense: the elaboration of a previously known datum
6. Experience as systematization and structuring of experience in sense (4), as in the expression "laws of experience" and "analogies of experience"
7. Experience as inductive²⁷

Under the section on the phenomenology of experience, both wisdom and expertise are then dismissed as lacking in philosophical value: wisdom, because it is a pragmatic rather than an ethical concept, and expertise because its "laws" are valid within such narrow limits that its predictions are extremely abstract.²⁸ Under phenomenological gnoseology, which he distinguishes from psychology, Rossi now distinguishes two meanings of experience: (1) experience as constituted by the intellectual elaboration of sensations, and (2) the accumulation of sensations as itself constituting experience. On this latter account, he seems to distinguish between (1) those, like Locke, who affirm the empiricity not only of the data or elements of experience, but also of the relations

²⁷ Rossi, col. 984-85.

²⁸ Rossi, col. 986-87.

between these elements; (2) those, like Hume, who deny the empiricity of such relations; and (3) rationalists and intellectualists who hold that the structure of experience is due to a process that is not itself experience, but reason, or thought, or intellect.²⁹

There follows a very interesting discussion of the "genealogical illusion." The question is about the genealogy of ideas: How do ideas arise in our thought? Or, how are we to interpret the contrast between the "given" of experience and the structure? Rossi regards this as the central problem of phenomenological gnoseology. But why speak of the "genealogical illusion"? Because all attempts to explain the genealogy are, according to Rossi, fallacious or at best inadequate. Thus for both empiricists and Kant, the problem of causality was predominant; so when they try to explain the emergence of ideas, they seek a causal explanation, or at least a sufficient reason. But when they go on to include the principle of causality itself among these ideas, they fall into a vicious circle. This is the problem of Hume, who criticizes causality by reducing it to a habit, but in doing so merely substitutes the principle of causality with another cause or reason that would explain the principle of causality. Again, when innatism explains that general ideas are connatural to reason, it accepts the principle of reason, and merely excludes an extrarational genesis of ideas. As for Kant, he provides a sufficient but not a necessary reason for the possibility of concepts, since he is not able to prove that this is the only possible reconstruction. Rossi's point is that every genealogical gnoseology is forced to fall back into an ontology, like Aristotle who sought a ground for the principle of non-contradiction in the ontological nature of the individual.³⁰

Is the genealogical illusion then inevitable? In order to explain experience, are we forced to fall back into ontology? Rossi seems to suggest that it is not, that we can bracket the gnoseological-phenomenological ground of the genealogical illusion itself, so as to explore experience without compromises. This ground seems to be the temporality of thought and of experience.³¹ A gnoseological

²⁹ Rossi, col. 986-90.

³⁰ Rossi, col. 990-91.

³¹ "Per descrivere l'e. senza 'darne ragione', occorre esplorare le basi gnoseologico-fenomenologiche dell'illusione genealogica e vedere se sia possibile porle fra parentesi onde esplorare l'e. senza compromessi genealogici. / È evidente che l'illusione genealogica deriva dalla temporalità del pensiero e quindi dell'e." (Rossi, col. 991).

phenomenology must consider experience on the basis of the temporal links between the elements. Now psychology considers this link as a faculty or function called memory, which assimilates the "before" and "after." From the point of view of gnoseology, however, memory is paradoxical: it is immanent to consciousness and at the same time transcends it by rising above "before" and "after," and so seems independent of time as the flow of consciousness. According to Rossi, it is only a conception of conscious time in which there is no way of clearly distinguishing one moment from another that can overcome the paradox. Thus Husserl speaks of the present, not as a point between past and future, but as a zone of flux, within which by abstraction we can distinguish past and future. Given that the genealogical illusion arises from a clear distinction between cause and effect, it might be helpful to transfer the phenomenological conception of the psychic present as a zone rather than a point also to the description of experience. It would still be possible and even necessary, for purposes of analysis, to speak of elements of experience, but the elementariness of these should be recognized as distended in time, such that there would not be a sharp distinction between prior and posterior elements. The search for a prior element as sufficient reason of a posterior will then appear as presupposing arbitrary abstraction. In the gnoseological-phenomenological reality, the elements of experience are distinguished qualitatively and not "quantitatively," that is, with respect to their collocation in time.³²

Having done this kind of bracketing and phenomenological "seeing" of experience, Rossi presents his phenomenological finding: the aporetic cohabitation of experience and reason. These two elements, in other words, are contradictory, but must nonetheless be maintained in their contradictoriness, because experience is constituted by this very contradictoriness. To describe this more exactly, Rossi insists again that there is no intuition of isolated elementary units. A seemingly atomic sensation can always turn out, upon analysis, to be in fact complex. The atomicity of the elements is, therefore, in a certain sense relative. Interestingly, Rossi goes on to note that the related concept of the "system of experience" is itself also relative and even arbitrary. A true and proper system of experience is not a phenomenological finding,

³² Rossi, col. 991-92.

in the sense that it is not really thinkable or knowable, because as pure system it would consist of relations without terms, and thus would be the same as the empty concepts or ideas of Kant. We have to admit, then, as Kant saw, that a concept is a function of sensation as well as of something fixed and autonomous. All this leads us to recognize that the fundamental aporia of experience assumes a dynamic aspect. Like the atomic "present" that is in fact a zone rather than a point, the elements-system aporia also shifts continually. It is not possible to think and know apart from this aporia, but it remains a generic aporia and not a fixed and determinate one as might have been the case if elements and system were static.³³ A very convoluted way, perhaps, of recognizing that the mind is a factory producing concepts rather than a static system of concepts.

In an attempt to simplify, Rossi explains that we have experience when we say: "This X and this Y are red." "This X" is totally different from the "red" that constitutes X and Y into a system. Similarly, the red and the green are elements that are gnoseologically totally different (*disformi*) from that system of relations that we denote by "color." Thus pure phenomenological gnoseology teaches that experience is intuition of the singular, and at the same time a system of intuitions. This is perhaps in the end a recognition of the empirical residue as well as the element of intelligibility. In fact, Rossi does go on to speak of the emergence of the concept at a certain moment in the flow of consciousness: once this happens, he says, the aporia is suspended, and phenomenological gnoseology gives way to gnoseology and metaphysics. The questions that then emerge are: Are the empirical concept and the empirical law true concepts or only pseudo-concepts? Will they be instances of a regularity of law, or merely of pragmatic uniformity? Will the result of experience be correct or erroneous, true or false?³⁴

G. Giannini, *Enciclopedia Filosofica* (1967)

In part 3 of the article on experience in the *Enciclopedia Filosofica*, Giannini³⁵ takes up the problematic of experience, in which he

³³ Rossi, col. 992-93.

³⁴ Rossi, col. 993-94.

³⁵ About G. Giannini I have not been able to find much, except that he quotes Rahner, Lotz, and Fabro, and that he has the neo-Thomist tendency to assume that we reach

deals with the gnoseological problem and the metaphysical problem. The gnoseological problem is: Can knowing reach the being in itself of things, or is experience the fruit of a synthesis between the stimulation coming from the "noumenon" and the a priori forms of the knower? The metaphysical problem instead is the question about the conditions of possibility of the transcendent real, which is the question of its ontological consistency.³⁶

The primitive datum of our knowing, admitted even by Kantians and idealists, is that knowing consists in the effort to adequate oneself to the object given. What characterizes the first contact with reality is the act by which one notes the vital presence of a datum, in an unconditional openness. In this initial, non-reflective phase, experience grasps the real through a subjective modification, giving rise to judgments referring to the recognition of the modification perceived by the senses, and here Giannini draws support from Aquinas (*Summa*, I.17. Q 2, Art. 1). The existence of subjective modification already raises the problem of the relationship of this to the being of the thing and reveals a deeper dimension in the datum.³⁷

It seems impossible, Giannini maintains, to dissociate experience, in its gnoseological aspect, from a fundamental judgment of existence, which is nothing but the explicitation of that contact with the real essentially connected with the recognition of the presence of the datum. To reduce experience to a mere internal spectacle of representations, put into motion by a functional apparatus about which we have present only the internal mechanical determinism, means to confound the finality of the instrument with an inventory of its constitutive parts, ending finally by negating the proper function of these very parts. There is therefore an experience that can demand with full right the title of objective validity and overcome with full critical motivation the instrumentality of its merely subjective phase. This does not mean, evidently, that every experience is such; a careful work of revision and control is necessary with the aim of separating the subjective part from the objective in the genesis of experience.

knowledge of reality already in experience.

³⁶ Giannini, col. 994.

³⁷ Giannini, col. 995.

It is natural that experience, through which this reality comes to be known, adequates itself, by reason of its attitude of unconditional openness, to different and graduated levels with which it comes successively into contact, and that such adequation is articulated in terms of a process of continuity that is speculative as well as rational, insofar as it is directed to grasping fully the intelligibility of the real. In this sense, we can speak of an integral experience of the real itself, as a knowledge that attains the ultimate causes of the real, or of an experience that grasps the real according to its situation in the striving of being. In this line, physics and mathematics are degrees of knowing that express a partial experience of the real, while metaphysics reveals itself as integral experience. There is, therefore, a metaphysical experience that, allowing as it does the grasp of reality as reality or in its relation to being, is the integral solution to the problem of experience.³⁸

In fact, the being that we experience in the data of sensation, is being in becoming, and such a being demands the search for that which gives it the sufficiency and justification that it does not have in itself. The being of the finite therefore identifies itself not with subsistent Being but with its necessary relation to subsistent Being. The whole problematic of experience, in its double aspect of gnoseology and metaphysics, reaches thus a coherent solution.³⁹

Nicola Abbagnano, *Dizionario di Filosofia* (1968)

Nicola Abbagnano (1909-1990) is an Italian philosopher whose early output (the Naples period) includes *Le sorgenti irrazionali del pensiero* (1923), *Il problema dell'arte* (1925), *La fisica nuova* (1934), and *Il principio della metafisica* (1936). On moving to the University of Turin, he turned to existentialism, working out an original form of existentialism in works such as *La struttura dell'esistenza* (1939), *Introduzione all'esistenzialismo* (1942), *Filosofia religione scienza* (1947), and *Esistenzialismo positivo* (1948). In the postwar period he turned to American pragmatism, especially John Dewey, the philosophy of science, and neo-positivism. In the 1950s he worked out a new philosophical program that he called first New Enlightenment and then "methodological empirism" – stemming from his various interests,

³⁸ Giannini, col. 999.

³⁹ Giannini, col. 999.

but freed from the negative implications he saw in Heidegger, Jaspers, Sartre, Dewey, and neo-positivism.

In his article on experience in the *Dizionario di Filosofia*,⁴⁰ which is a sort of personal Summa (all the articles being authored by Abbagnano himself), our author distinguishes two basic meanings of experience: (1) personal participation in repeatable situations, and (2) the appeal to the repeatability of certain situations as means for controlling the solutions that they make possible. The first is clearly based on the distinction between experience and art/science first enunciated by Plato and given classical form by Aristotle. The second, according to Abbagnano, is the characteristic of empiricism, which he distinguishes from the sensism that consists simply in asserting the intuitive and therefore privileged nature of sensible knowing, without making it the guide or control of knowing in general.⁴¹

Setting aside the first meaning, I would like to concentrate on Abbagnano's rather lengthy and complex exposition of the second. Abbagnano begins by distinguishing two basic interpretations of this meaning: (1) the theory of experience as intuition and (2) the theory of experience as method. The former regards experience as an immediate relationship with an individual object, modeling experience on the operation of sight. An object known by experience is, on this theory, a present and particular object. More precisely, it would seem that this theory presupposes the existence of original and elementary data, or elementary empirical units, that have the task, in the final analysis, of verifying our knowledge.⁴² The theory of experience as method, instead, considers experience itself as the operation that can test knowledge and judge its correctness. In this sense, perceiving is an empirical operation not insofar as it is the sensation that Mr. X has of red, but only insofar as it is the operation directed to ascertaining whether, for example, there is a red object in the room. This theory, therefore, does not presuppose the existence of elementary empirical units; the empirical object is not the sensation or impression, but the red thing,

⁴⁰ Nicola Abbagnano, "Esperienza," in *Dizionario di Filosofia* (Torino: Unione Tipografico-Editrice Torinese, 1968), 315-22.

⁴¹ Abbagnano, "Esperienza," 315-16.

⁴² Abbagnano, "Esperienza," 316.

the presence of which can be ascertained either by normal perceptual operations, or by other instruments.⁴³

Experience as Intuition

The appeal to experience, when it was formulated for the first time on a philosophical level in the thirteenth century, was an appeal to intuition. Francis Bacon contrasts experience with reasoning: a demonstration can lead us to a conclusion, but doubt is not removed and certitude is not attained until the soul satisfies itself in experience, in intuition. For Ockham also, experience is the perfect intuitive knowledge that has present things as object, in contrast to imperfect intuitive knowledge that has past things as object. By such intuitive knowledge, the intellect immediately judges the existence of a thing, but also the inherence of one thing in another, the distance between one place and another, the relations between things, and in general any contingent truth. However, where Bacon admitted not only sensible intuition but also supernatural experience deriving from divine illumination, Ockham distinguishes between intuitive knowledge of external things and intuitive knowledge of internal states such as understanding, volitions, joy, and sadness. The post-Renaissance anti-rationalist polemic led to the limitation of experience to sensible intuition. Experience thus becomes a restraint or limit on the claims of reason.⁴⁴

The intuitive interpretation of experience prevailed in sixteenth-century empiricism thanks to Locke and Hume. Locke's theory of experience can be summarized thus: (1) the reduction of experience to intuition either of external things (sensation) or of internal acts ("reflection"); (2) the resolution of both sensation and reflection to simple elements (elementary empirical realities) – "ideas" and immediate relations between "ideas"; (3) the use of the notion of experience as a criterion that is both limiting and foundational to human knowing, given that human knowing cannot go beyond experience that provides it with ideas, and that at the same time it receives from experience the criterion of its validity. Abbagnano points out, however, that Locke has an empiricist attitude that goes beyond his theory of experience:

⁴³ Abbagnano, "Esperienza," 319.

⁴⁴ Abbagnano, "Esperienza," 316-17.

he applies the limiting rule of experience not only in the area of human knowing, but also in that of politics, morals, and religion, that is, in fields where the conception of a direct relationship with the object makes no sense.⁴⁵

Hume proposes that all objects of human study divide into relations between ideas and matters of fact. The former can be discovered through pure operations of thought. The latter are founded on the relationship between cause and effect, which in turn can be founded only on experience. But can experience really found the relation of causality? Hume's answer is well known: that the future will conform to the past is merely a supposition, a simple instinct. The foundation of this critique, according to Abbagnano, is the reduction of experience to impressions and to the relations between impressions, and since these relations are themselves intuited, that is, perceived in the here and now, they are without any significance or reference that transcends the instantaneousness of the impressions themselves. Hume has therefore worked out a most radical reduction of experience to intuition, because he reduces intuition to instantaneous intuition, something that means nothing outside of itself. The construction of procedures for prediction becomes impossible. As Kant realized, Hume had made impossible the formation of any science whatsoever.⁴⁶

Interestingly, it is precisely Hume's theory of experience that becomes, through Mach, the presupposition of contemporary neo-empiricism. Mach divides empirical facts into physical and psychical. Such facts are nothing but sets of relatively constant simple elements: colors, sounds, heat, pressure, space, time, and so forth. A color is a physical object as long as we consider its dependence on sources of light, et cetera. But if we consider it in its dependence on the retina, it is a psychical object or a sensation. This doctrine gives to the notion of "elementary empirical unit" the form in which it continues to exercise a central function in contemporary neo-empiricism. Wittgenstein, for example, makes use of it in the *Tractatus*. Here Hume's distinction between truths of reason and truths of fact becomes the distinction between analytic or tautological propositions (mathematics and logic)

⁴⁵ Abbagnano, "Esperienza," 317-18.

⁴⁶ Abbagnano, "Esperienza," 318.

and elementary propositions of the natural sciences that represent states of affairs or atomic facts.⁴⁷

At this point Abbagnano turns to Carnap, the second phase of whose thought he considers an extreme development of the concept of experience as intuition. In his first phase, Carnap tried to reduce all scientific knowing to intuitive experience, and the elementary empirical unit to which he made appeal was "elementary lived experience" (*Elementarerlebnis*), considered as anterior to the distinction between objective and subjective. However, as Popper and other members of the Vienna Circle pointed out, such a conception made prediction and therefore science impossible. Carnap therefore modified his theory in the direction of empirical verifiability rather than verification or attestation, reducibility rather than the unlimited possibility of reduction. Abbagnano points out, however, that this modification does not constitute a correction of the concept of experience as intuition. In his second phase, Carnap still presupposes a strict correspondence between a true expression and a determinate intuitive experience. There persist the distinction between analytic and synthetic expressions, the intuitive notion of experience, and the belief in elementary empirical units. The only change is that these last are no longer subjective experiences or perceptions, but objective determinations or sensible qualities.⁴⁸

Interestingly, Abbagnano points out that the theory of experience as intuition is shared not only by empiricists but also by their opponents. Husserl, for example, reproves empiricism for ignoring the essences, but maintains that true knowing consists of vision or intuition of the individual, even though qualified as "essential vision." In his posthumous writings we find him saying that experience "in its first and most pregnant significance" should consider itself as "the direct relation with the individual."⁴⁹

Experience as Method

We come now to Abbagnano's comments on the theory of experience as method, where experience itself is the operation that can test knowledge, and which is marked by the absence of (1) the

⁴⁷ Abbagnano, "Esperienza," 318.

⁴⁸ Abbagnano, "Esperienza," 318-19.

⁴⁹ Abbagnano, "Esperienza," 319.

distinction between truths of reason and truths of fact, and (2) the postulate of elementary empirical units. This notion was created by the very practice of scientific research from the beginning. Thus the "sense experience" of Galileo that has the character of control was never separated from mathematical argument, and Francis Bacon understood experience as the field in which verification was done.⁵⁰

Abbagnano includes Kant among the upholders of experience as method but points out that the great philosopher suffers from a fundamental ambiguity in his notion of experience. At the beginning of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant notes that our knowledge does not derive totally from experience. Elsewhere, however, he holds that experience is knowledge itself. It is not, therefore, a mere rhapsody of perceptions but a synthetic unity of phenomena. The whole Kantian concept of the a priori as that which is "independent of experience" derives, therefore, from an ambiguous use of the term experience. Still, if we go by his explicit definitions, we could say that the conception of experience as method has in Kant a restricted sense: it is identified with causal explanation.⁵¹

In contemporary philosophy, the concept of experience as method is defended by pragmatism and by instrumentalism. Peirce, for example, understands experience as something that not only strikes the senses but is also subject of thought. For Dewey, experience is not consciousness and cannot therefore be reduced to intuition; it includes knowledge, but also all that can in some way be experienced by us; and reason has a necessarily constructive function in it. Abbagnano, however, while considering these points important, regards Dewey's approach as too generic. He returns, therefore, to Quine's critique of the two dogmas of empiricism, which, according to him, constitutes a preliminary condition of an adequate theory of experience as method: the distinction between analytic and synthetic expressions and the sensist reduction. As for the first, Quine holds that a clear boundary between analytic and synthetic expressions has not been established; that such a distinction should be made is, according to him, precisely a non-empirical dogma of the empiricists, a metaphysical article of faith. As for the second, he maintains that it is reducible to the first,

⁵⁰ Abbagnano, "Esperienza," 319-20.

⁵¹ Abbagnano, "Esperienza," 320.

so that the two dogmas are, in fact, identical at root. It is true that, taken collectively, science has a double dependence on language and on experience; but this duality cannot be carried back to the individual expressions of a science. Experience does lead to a revaluation of assertions, but, on the one hand, there is great latitude in the choice of assertions to be revalued in the light of a single contrary experience, while on the other, no assertion is immune to revision.⁵²

Abbagnano comments: "It is significant that precisely one of the major contemporary logicians has liquidated the logical presupposition of the doctrine of experience as intuition; and that precisely one of the major exponents of contemporary neo-empiricism has tried to liquidate this very concept of experience." However, he says, Quine did not carry his second undertaking to its conclusion, because he continues to speak of the "flux of experience" which should, on his own considerations, be considered a mythical concept, given that it would be a succession or current of instantaneous intuitions, a succession precisely of the elementary empirical units that Quine's criticism has contributed to eliminate.⁵³

But it is Abbagnano's concluding comment that I find really interesting, with its call for something like a self-appropriation of knowing:

In conclusion one sees today the need to pass from a *gnoseological* theory of experience to a *methodological* one. For the *gnoseological* theory, experience, as form or element or category in itself is formed of characteristic and irreducible elements, to which is to be reduced, directly or indirectly, every empirical expression. A theory of this type presupposes a preliminary and rigid classification of the forms of knowing and therefore also in general of the forms of human activity (theory – practice; logic or language or reason – experience; empirical expressions – elementary empirical unities; logic as central – experience as periphery). A *methodological* theory of experience must instead prescind from every preliminary classification, and from any rigidity in classification, of human activities as a whole. Its analyses should be directed to the procedures of verification and control actually available to

⁵² Abbagnano, "Esperienza," 320-21.

⁵³ Abbagnano, "Esperienza," 321-22.

man, whether as an organism or as a scientist. The analysis of these procedures must determine the conditions and the limits of validity of each. Only in this way would the study of the logical-linguistic components never be separated from the study of the factual components, as per Quine's demand. The distinction itself between such components should, at any level, become useless. Unfortunately, if contemporary psychology is making reasonable progress in the analysis of the procedures of verification and control available to man as organism (see, for example, especially the contributions of functional psychology to the analysis of perception), scientific methodology, that is, the study of the procedures of verification and control available to man in science, is still merely a wish and a hope. It is clear, however, that from the point of view of such methodology, experience would be merely the totality of fields in which the techniques of verification or of control available to man prove to be effective.⁵⁴

Bernard Lonergan

This is familiar terrain for many, but let me go over the basics in a synthetic rather than genetic manner.

Lonergan distinguishes a broad meaning and a strict meaning of experience. In a broad sense, experience is roughly the same as ordinary knowledge. Strictly speaking, it is a preliminary and unstructured sort of awareness that is presupposed by intellectual inquiry and completed by it.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Abbagnano, "Esperienza," 322.

⁵⁵ Bernard Lonergan, *The Ontological and Psychological Constitution of Christ*, vol. 7 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, trans. from the fourth edition of *De constitutione Christi ontologica et psychologica* by Michael G. Shields (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 157, 159. On experience in the broad sense, see Bernard Lonergan, *Understanding and Being: The Halifax Lectures on Insight*, vol. 5 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, rev. and augmented by F. E. Crowe with the collaboration of E. A. Morelli et al. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 121; Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, vol. 3 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 308; Bernard Lonergan, *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1958-1964*, vol. 6 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed.

In the strict sense, experience may be external or internal. Outer experience is sensation as distinct from perception. Inner experience is consciousness as distinct from self-knowledge or introspection.⁵⁶

What we experience exteriorly we apprehend both by some special act and as an object. What we experience interiorly is known to us neither by some special act nor as an object. In the very act of seeing a color I become aware not only of that color on the side of the object, but also, on the side of the subject, of both the one seeing and of the act of seeing.⁵⁷ External experience is the presence of object to subject. Internal experience or consciousness is the presence of the subject to herself, not as another object, but as subject. This is presence in another dimension, presence concomitant and correlative and opposite to the presence of the object. Objects are present by being attended to. Subjects are present as subjects, not by being attended to, but by attending.⁵⁸ By their intentionality, certain operations make objects present to the subject. By consciousness they make the operating subject present to herself.⁵⁹

Consciousness is not, therefore, an inward look. It is not being confronted by an object, or the strange, irreducible, mysterious presence of one thing to another. It is not gazing, intuiting, contemplating. It is an awareness immanent in cognitional acts.⁶⁰

While consciousness is the presence of the subject to herself, the focus is normally on the object. In an incomplete and elusive fashion, the subject can shift her attention from object to act and subject.⁶¹

Robert C. Croken, Frederick E. Crowe, and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 170; Bernard Lonergan, "The Emerging Religious Consciousness of Our Time," in *A Third Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (New York/Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1985), 57. On experience as infrastructure, see Bernard Lonergan, "The Emerging Religious Consciousness of Our Time," 57.

⁵⁶ *Insight*, 423, 663; *The Ontological and Psychological Constitution of Christ*, 159; "The Emerging Religious Consciousness of Our Time," 57.

⁵⁷ *The Ontological and Psychological Constitution of Christ*, 159.

⁵⁸ Bernard Lonergan, "Cognitional Structure," in *Collection*, vol. 4 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 209-10.

⁵⁹ Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 7.

⁶⁰ *Insight*, 344-45.

⁶¹ Bernard Lonergan, *Phenomenology and Logic: The Boston College Lectures on*

What is known by consciousness is attained not under the formality of the true and of being, nor under the formality of the intelligible and definable, but under the formality of the experienced.⁶² Consciousness does attain being, but not under the formality of being. It does attain the true, but not under the formality of the true; and so on.⁶³ Consciousness is knowledge of the subject under the formality of the experienced, not under the formality of being, or of the intelligible, or of the true.⁶⁴

This does not mean that introspection is not important. In *The Triune God: Systematics*, Lonergan insists on the importance of apprehending and studying consciousness under the formality of the true and of being, for then the meaning and nature of consciousness are preserved, as also the method of traditional theology that treats of truths and of beings, and Catholic dogma, which through the true attains God as triune. If one rejects such study, instead, so that one might examine the subject more intimately, one involves oneself in immanentism, idealism, relativism, and joins the liberals and modernists.⁶⁵

In the light of the authors we have been examining, it is important to keep in mind Lonergan's notion of experiential objectivity and of the given. Experiential objectivity is the given as given. "It is the field of materials about which one inquires, in which one finds the fulfillment of conditions for the unconditioned, to which cognitional process repeatedly returns . . ." The given is unquestionable and indubitable. It is residual and of itself diffuse. The field of the given contains differences, but insofar as they simply lie in the field, the differences are unassigned. It is equally valid in all its parts but differently significant in different parts. "It includes not only the veridical deliverances of

Mathematical Logic and Existentialism, vol. 18 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Philip J. McShane (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 197.

⁶² *The Ontological and Psychological Constitution of Christ*, 161.

⁶³ *The Ontological and Psychological Constitution of Christ*, 163.

⁶⁴ Bernard Lonergan, "Christ as Subject: A Reply," in *Collection*, vol. 4 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 167-68, 172, 178.

⁶⁵ Bernard Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics*, vol. 12 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, trans. from *De Deo Trino: Pars systematica* (1964) by Michael G. Shields and ed. by Robert M. Doran and H. Daniel Monsour (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 323.

outer sense but also images, dreams, illusions, hallucinations, personal equations, subjective bias, and so forth." Lonergan employs the name "given" in this broad sense because his account of the given is extrinsic, involving no description of the stream of sensitive consciousness, and no theory of that stream. It does not enter into a discussion of the contribution of the empirically conscious subject or of other "outside" agents. It simply notes that inquiry and understanding presuppose materials for inquiry and something to be understood.⁶⁶

Lonergan adopts the term *conscientia-experientia* because of the functional relationship between consciousness and reflexive activity: just as the data for direct activity are supplied by sense, so the data for reflexive activity are supplied by consciousness.⁶⁷ Under *conscientia-perceptio*, instead, he lists all the notions of consciousness that he disagrees with.

Conscientia-experientia presupposes the Aristotelian theory of knowing by identity. Lonergan contends that an adequate notion of consciousness is had by making more explicit the Aristotelian-Thomist doctrine of the identity in act of subject and object.⁶⁸ *Conscientia-perceptio* instead presupposes the Platonic theorem of knowing as confrontation. For Platonists, knowledge is rooted in duality. Thus, subsequent to the Ideas, Plato posited gods to contemplate the Ideas.⁶⁹

On the Aristotelian theory, consciousness is rooted in identity. It is "experience strictly so called which is in the operating subject on the side of the subject, and through which the operating subject is rendered present to itself under the formality of the experienced."⁷⁰ Lonergan denies the assumption that consciousness is a matter of knowing an object. It is not true that we know only objects. We know objects, and simultaneously we "know" also the subject, the knower. Further, this "known" subject is constituted by consciousness – it is self-luminous – it is *das Sein in seiner Gelichtetheit*. "[T]he subject in act and his act are constituted and, as well, they are known simultaneously and

⁶⁶ *Insight*, 406-407.

⁶⁷ "Christ as Subject," in *Collection*, 166n14.

⁶⁸ "Christ as Subject," in *Collection*, 179.

⁶⁹ *The Ontological and Psychological Constitution of Christ*, 255.

⁷⁰ *The Ontological and Psychological Constitution of Christ*, 255.

concomitantly with the knowledge of objects."⁷¹ The *sensibile actu* is the *sensus actu*, and the *intelligibile actu* is the *intellectus actu*. "[O]n this view the object is known as *id quod intenditur*, the subject is known as *is qui intendit*, and the act is known both as the *intendere* of the subject and the *intendi* that regards the object."⁷²

On the Platonic assumption, consciousness, like all other cognition, "is a kind of intuition or perception or confrontation through which an object is known; and consciousness is distinguished from all other perceptions, intuitions, or confrontations in that the object that is known is precisely that which is perceiving, intuiting, being made conscious."⁷³

If consciousness is conceived as an experience there is a psychological subject; if it is conceived as the perception of an object, there is no psychological subject.⁷⁴ *Conscientia-perceptio*, according to Lonergan, is "simpliste." "It takes account of the fact that by consciousness the subject is known by the subject. It overlooks the fact that consciousness is not merely cognitive but also constitutive. It overlooks as well the subtler fact that consciousness is cognitive, not of what exists without consciousness, but of what is constituted by consciousness. For consciousness does not reveal a prime substance; it reveals a psychological subject that subsequently may be subsumed, and subsumed correctly, under the category of prime substance. Similarly, consciousness does not reveal the psychological unity that is known in the field of objects; it constitutes and reveals the basic psychological unity of the subject as subject. In like manner, consciousness not merely reveals us as suffering but also makes us capable of suffering; and similarly it pertains to the constitution of the consciously intelligent subject of intelligent acts"⁷⁵

If consciousness is experience, then by itself alone it does not constitute a knowing that is complete in itself but only a part of knowing. If consciousness is perception, then by itself alone it does constitute a knowing that is direct and immediate. For this reason one has to bend every effort to state what precisely is known through

⁷¹ "Christ as Subject," in *Collection*, 165.

⁷² "Christ as Subject," in *Collection*, 165-66.

⁷³ *The Ontological and Psychological Constitution of Christ*, 255.

⁷⁴ "Christ as Subject," in *Collection*, 164.

⁷⁵ "Christ as Subject," in *Collection*, 165.

such consciousness, and to distinguish this object most carefully not only from the objects of other kinds of perception but also from those that indirectly or through a process of reasoning are derived from such consciousness-as-perception. We cannot expect those who do this to be all of the same opinion, for it is rather difficult, Lonergan notes, to identify with accuracy the object of a nonexistent perception.⁷⁶

But we might still ask: On what grounds does Lonergan, and how might we, make an option for one theory of knowing over another? The answer is a dialectic that includes discernment. "[O]ne who discusses human consciousness will easily fall into error, unless he or she has a thorough grasp of virtually all philosophies, discerning what is true from what there is false in them."⁷⁷ The same point is made in the lectures on the philosophy of education (1959), where Lonergan asks why Aquinas chose Aristotle's first philosophy and not something else, and how he knew he had to develop and correct it. He answers that there is no recipe for producing men of good judgment: one has to grow into wisdom. A little later he takes up the question again, and this time he answers it precisely in terms of selection of the notion of being. Since wisdom is not a foundation from which we begin, but rather a foundation toward which we tend, it is only "by studying different philosophic systems, comparing them, and seeing the different consequences of the different systems that one arrives at the wisdom of one's own that entitles one to prefer one notion of being to another."⁷⁸

A PRELIMINARY ATTEMPT AT DIALECTIC

I have presented the positions of our authors very briefly, and I am quite aware that there would be need for a more precise – perhaps

⁷⁶ *The Ontological and Psychological Constitution of Christ*, 257-59.

⁷⁷ *The Triune God: Systematics*, 317.

⁷⁸ Bernard Lonergan, *Topics in Education: Cincinnati Lectures of 1959 on the Philosophy of Education*, vol. 10 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 157, and also 149-53. See also Bernard Lonergan, *Understanding and Method [De intellectu et methodo]*, *Early Works on Theological Method 2*, trans. Michael G. Shields and ed. Robert M. Doran and H. Daniel Monsour (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 51-67; and Ivo Coelho, *Hermeneutics and Method: The "Universal Viewpoint" in Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 43.

explanatory – pinning down of their meanings. For one way of engaging in dialectic is to first study properly each of the authors – to engage, therefore, in a proper attempt at interpretation, and perhaps also history. Another way, however, is to see them as representing positions – which is what Lonergan often does in *Insight*.⁷⁹ Perhaps this latter way will serve as a model for this preliminary – and perhaps shabby – attempt at dialectic. So if I have been assembling materials on the topic of experience, let me now engage informally and in an undifferentiated manner in comparison, reduction, and classification – setting aside completion (which has perhaps been done in a mild way in the assembly) and selection (of which there is no need, since I am already dealing with something pertaining to the basic positions).

Siewerth, Hill, (and Lehmann?): Experience as Encounter

Siewerth and Hill clearly describe experience in terms of encounter and contact. For Siewerth, experience is knowledge that is obtained through encounter with real things, quite distinct from intellectual intuition or knowledge obtained solely from the act of knowing, something available only to God and to angels, not to human beings. Hill defines experience in terms of the impression and immutation of a conscious rational subject resulting from actual contact with things or events, or direction intuitional contact with reality.

Lehmann, despite his dependence on Siewerth, does not mention encounter with real things in his initial description of experience. Ordinarily, he says, experience is understood as a particular source or form of our knowing which, in contrast to discursive thought, or pure thought, or what is accepted on authority or through historical transmission (tradition), arises from immediate reception of data or impressions. However, when he speaks of external experience, he does make mention of corporeal objects: external experience is experience of corporeal objects.

We might note that for all these authors experience, far from being an infrastructure, is itself knowledge. Hill is the clearest in this

⁷⁹ "[S]cattered throughout the work there occur bold statements on the views of various thinkers. May I express the hope that they will not cause too much annoyance? As the lengthy discussion of the truth of interpretation in chapter 17 will reveal, they can hardly pretend to be verdicts issued by the court of history . . ." (*Insight*, 24).

regard: "The actuality and concreteness of the contact distinguishes experience from what is ideal or imaginary and locates it largely in sensation and feeling, not, however, to the exclusion of intellectual and volitional elements, as long as direct intuitional contact with reality is involved."⁸⁰ Experience here is perception, knowledge, truth. But of course we would have to ask: What is "reality" here? It does seem to be a subdivision of the already-out-there-now, or "body."

Rossi and Giannini: Experience as Intuition

Rossi is careful and complex. He never describes experience in terms of contact or encounter, being content to identify two meanings: (1) experience as intellectual elaboration of sensations and (2) experience as accumulation of sensations. The first could probably be what for Lonergan is the understanding of experience. Does the second notion correspond to what Lonergan calls experience in the strict sense? I would think not, given that for Rossi experience is constituted by the tension between experience and reason, and given his finding that experience is at once intuition of singulars and system of intuitions. Perhaps the point is, however, that there is a great deal of fluidity in the interaction between experience and reason, if we might speak that way: intuition, it would seem, reveals neither isolated elementary units, nor "pure system." This might, in the end, be a phenomenological way of moving beyond the fixity of Kant's categories and recognizing the basically dynamic and creative character of the intellectual component in our knowing.

Giannini's piece, though meant to be in continuity with that of Rossi, is somewhat discontinuous. Rossi is extremely careful to avoid assumptions about objects and reality. Giannini instead, after noting that the effort to adequate oneself to the object is a primitive datum of our knowing, goes on to speak of this effort as our first contact with reality. In this non-reflective phase, he maintains, experience grasps the real through a subjective modification, giving rise to judgments referring to the recognition of the modification perceived by the senses. He concludes that it seems impossible to dissociate experience from a fundamental judgment of existence, which is nothing but the explicitation of that contact with the real essentially connected with

⁸⁰ Hill, 555.

the recognition of the presence of the datum. Beyond this initial judgment of existence, he does see the need for a careful work of revision and control, since not every experience can be presumed to be objective. It is impossible not to think here of Maritain, especially when Giannini goes on to speak of an integral experience, which he also calls the metaphysical experience, in contradistinction with the "partial" experiences that characterize mathematics and physics.

Abbagnano: Experience as "Method"

Of all the authors we have studied, Abbagnano is the clearest in his rejection of the notion of experience as intuition, and refreshing in his option for experience as method. His historical survey reveals how the theory of experience as intuition stretches at least from Francis Bacon through the empiricists down to contemporary neo-empiricists such as Wittgenstein, and his observation that this theory is shared not only by empiricists but also by their opponents such as Husserl will sound very familiar to Lonergan scholars.⁸¹ Abbagnano's sketch, ending in Quine's identification of the two dogmas of empiricism, and his criticism of Quine himself for not having carried out his program (for the liquidation of the doctrine of experience as intuition) to its conclusion, can be seen as the counterposition reversing itself over history. His call for a shift from a gnoseological theory of experience to a methodological one, in the sense of passing from a rigid classification of the forms of knowing and of human activity to a study of the procedures of verification and control available to us as organisms and as scientists, does seem to me to at least enable classification with Lonergan.

I would think, of course, that in Lonergan we find what Abbagnano thinks is as yet only a *desiderandum*: an analysis of cognitional and other interiority, an epistemology in the sense of dialectical determination of the basic notions of knowing, being, and objectivity, and a metaphysics that can be deemed empirical as well as critical. We have the definition of experience *stricto dicta*, experience as infrastructure, a definition that remains heuristic. We have the

⁸¹ On sense and reason as criteria of reality, and how they determine the various philosophical viewpoints, see Bernard Lonergan, *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas*, vol. 2 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 20.

subdivision of experience in this sense into external and internal. We have a notion of internal experience or consciousness flowing out, not from Aristotle's well-known notion of experience, but from Aristotle's fundamental option for a theory of knowing as identity, an option that Aquinas was both aware of and explicitly followed. We have Lonergan's careful attention to and phenomenology of understanding and of judgment. We have his brilliant description of experiential objectivity. And, as we have mentioned, we have a dialectic that is able to tie things up, and the eventual transformation of this dialectic into the functional specialty dialectic.

The foregoing throws up repeatedly the categories of encounter/contact/intuition. Several of our authors assume that experience involves encounter or contact with real things. We might note here that it would be wrong to assume that there is no element of confrontation at all in human knowing. In the words of Lonergan himself, experiential objectivity does involve an element of confrontation.⁸² So it is not that knowing as confrontation is all wrong. It is the theorem of knowing as confrontation – the assumption that *all* knowing involves confrontation, that all knowing is like taking a look – that is problematic.

Again, intuition is interpreted in terms of (1) contact with real things and (2) reception of sense impressions and other data.

Quine as represented by Abbagnano might be seen as engaging in a sort of reversal of a counterposition, or at the very least in pointing out that empiricism itself presupposes non-empirical assumptions or dogmas: (1) the distinction between analytic and synthetic expressions, which is a dogma precisely because, according to Quine, it is untenable on empirical grounds; and (2) the sensist reduction as itself reducible to the previous dogma.

I would need to think through the first "dogma" in order to examine the validity of Quine's allegation. But I tend to think that the sensist

⁸² The extroversion of function of the biological pattern underpins the confrontational element of consciousness itself. Conation, emotion, bodily movement are a response to stimulus. Stimulus is over against the response. Stimulus is a presentation through sense, memory, and imagination of what is responded to, what is to be dealt with. The stimulating elements [= the presentations] are the elementary object. The responding elements are the elementary subject. When the object fails to stimulate, the subject is indifferent. When nonconscious vital process has no need of outer objects, the subject dozes and falls asleep (*Insight*, 207).

reduction is a dogma in its own right. That there exist "elementary empirical units," whichever way they are conceived, is not an empirical datum but an assumption.

Perhaps a careful gnoseology or phenomenology (not necessarily in Rossi's sense) or methodological investigation (Abbagnano) is really what is needed and is what Lonergan is providing. It is possible to note in several of our authors the tendency to lump together experience, understanding, and judgment. Also, when someone speaks of experience as involving contact with real things, there are far too many assumptions: that there are real things that are at least one pole of experience; that experience is able to "reach reality" under the formality of the true and the real; and so on.

But it is also interesting that several of our authors have been exploding the assumption that the mind imposes rigid categories on to whatever is received in experience or intuition. While accepting the contribution of the mind in human knowing, Kant is here being pushed beyond staticity and rigidity in the direction of dynamism and creativity.

It is also quite clear that none of the authors examined has an adequate phenomenology of judgment, and though someone like Giannini seems to assume a Maritainian position, Lehmann for one calls more than once in the space of a single article for a deeper reflection on reflection.

CONCLUSION

I have been trying to engage in a dialectic of opinions about experience among six thinkers, or seven if we include Lonergan:

- Siewerth, *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche* (1959)
- Lehmann, *Sacramentum Mundi* (1967-69)
- Hill, *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (1967)
- Rossi, *Enciclopedia Filosofica* (1967)
- Giannini, *Enciclopedia Filosofica* (1967)
- Abbagnano, *Dizionario di Filosofia* (1968)

These authors have been dealing mostly with the notion of experience as it emerges in the modern period of the West, and even when some-

one like Rossi engages in phenomenological analysis, it is largely a phenomenology of perception. Obviously, there is need to fill in this work with further material – I am thinking especially of Heidegger and Gadamer – before going on to a study of opinions about religious experience. It is in the field of religious experience that a proper understanding of experience, and of the internal experience that is consciousness, becomes really significant and important. We might expect that the dialectic between *conscientia-perceptio* and *conscientia-experientia* will continue to play a large role. We can expect also, I think, that this dialectic will cut across confessional lines. In this context, I look forward to exploring the thought especially of Jean Mouroux, Hans Urs von Balthasar, and Joseph Ratzinger.

EDUCATION AND LIFE, THE GOOD LIFE, AND ETERNAL LIFE¹

Our hearts irrigate this earth. We are fields before each other.
How can we live in harmony?²

The ascent of the soul towards God is not a merely a private affair but rather a personal function of an objective common movement in that body of Christ which takes over, transforms, and elevates every aspect of human life.³

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IN THIS ESSAY, I wish not so much to make an argument as to tell a story, to offer not a set of propositions but a meditation. The story I wish to tell is plotted along two coordinates: the sesquicentennial of the founding of Boston College sets the first; the sesquicentennial of the Emancipation Proclamation sets the second coordinate. Because of the historical period in which it was founded, because of the place in which it was founded, the story of Boston College unfolds against the backdrop of the struggle of Irish immigrant and black slave for life, their search for the good life, and their desire for eternal life. In

¹ This essay is adapted from the School of Theology and Ministry Fifth Anniversary Lecture given at Boston College on October 30, 2012.

² Attributed to Thomas Aquinas, "We Are Fields Before Each Other," 129, in *Love Poems from God: Twelve Sacred Voices from the East and the West*, trans. Daniel Ladinsky (New York: Penguin Books, 2002).

³ Bernard Lonergan, "Finality, Love, Marriage," in *Collection*, vol. 4 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 27.

that struggle, that search, and that desire, education held and holds a cherished position.

Moreover, in this story, Boston is no insignificant setting. Consider this entry from the 1638 journal of John Winthrop, Governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony: "Mr. Pierce in the Salem ship, the Desire, returned from the West Indies after seven months. He had been at Providence, and brought some cotton, and tobacco, and negroes, etc., from thence, and salt from Tertugos."⁴ Here we find the earliest record of New England's participation in the trade in black bodies and, although the colonists farmed no staple crop requiring a large labor force, they "showed a marked preference for black slaves as opposed to white indentured servants."⁵ A few years later, in 1645, Winthrop's brother-in-law Edward Downing agitated for the necessity of slave labor: "The colony will never thrive," he wrote in a letter to Winthrop, "untill we gett . . . a stock of slaves sufficient to doe all our business."⁶ In his study of race and slavery during the colonial period, A. Leon Higginbotham observes that by the end of the seventeenth century, "some blacks in New England were perpetual slaves and that status was transmitted to their children."⁷ In the beginning of the eighteenth century, Boston's "selectmen were particularly concerned that public officials keep the Indians, Negroes, and Melattoes in Good Order."⁸ Thus, formal codes were introduced to regulate the lives, behavior, and movement of nonwhites. These codes covered a wide range of situations, preventing nonwhites from carrying weapons, "idle[ling] or lurk[ing] together in groups of more than two," burying, violating curfew, gambling, visiting free nonwhites, and owning hogs.⁹ Gradually, "black, Indian, and

⁴ James K. Hosmer, ed., *Winthrop's Journal: "History of New England," 1630-1649*, Vol. I (1908; New York: Barnes & Noble, 1946), 260.

⁵ A. Leon Higginbotham writes, "Unlike Virginia . . . which developed a legal framework for slavery in response to societal custom, the Massachusetts Bay and Plymouth colonies statutorily sanctioned slavery as part of the 1641 Body of Liberties. Massachusetts was the first colony to authorize slavery by legislative enactment," 61-62, *In the Matter of Color: Race and The American Legal Process: The Colonial Process* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978).

⁶ Cited in Higginbotham, *In the Matter of Color*, 71.

⁷ Higginbotham, *In the Matter of Color*, 71.

⁸ Cited in Higginbotham, *In the Matter of Color*, 78.

⁹ Higginbotham, *In the Matter of Color*, 76, 77-82.

mulatto slaves were more and more closely identified as chattel," as property, not as human beings.¹⁰

Yet, in Boston, more properly Charlestown, Crispus Attucks gave his life for the cause of American liberty; in Boston David Walker, Sojourner Truth, William Lloyd Garrison, Maria Stewart, and Frederick Douglass denounced slavery and demanded its abolition; and from Boston in March of 1863, the all black 54th Regiment Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry under the command of white Colonel Robert Gould Shaw trooped to war. Such commitments to freedom crystallize the desire of the descendants of the enslaved people for life, for the good life, for eternal life.

Boston is no insignificant setting. Although, at present, overdetermined by Irish identity, Boston was not always so hospitable to the people of the Isle of Erin. In their *History of Boston College*, Donovan, Dunigan, and FitzGerald point out that during the decade prior to the American Revolution "Catholics [read: Irish] were denied domicile in Boston and if discovered there, were subject to many legal penalties."¹¹ Even so, Patrick O'Murphy and John Larkin were among the dozens of Irishmen who died at Bunker Hill.¹² Such prejudicial regulations against the Irish continued "until the adoption of the state constitution of Massachusetts in 1780. This act removed many restrictions from Catholics, but an oath with an explicitly anti-Catholic clause was still required of all officeholders until Massachusetts amended its state constitution in 1822."¹³ But, scarcely a dozen years later on a hot August evening, incited by lurid rumors of young nuns confined against their will and preyed upon by lecherous priests, an unruly drunken mob, shouting anti-Catholic slogans, swarmed and burned the convent of the Ursuline Sisters in Charlestown.¹⁴

¹⁰ Higginbotham, *In the Matter of Color*, 78.

¹¹ Charles F. Donovan, David R. Dunigan, S.J., and Paul A. FitzGerald, *History of Boston College: From Beginnings to 1990* (Chestnut Hill, MA, 1990), 2.

¹² Thomas D'Arcy McGee, *A History of the Irish Settlers in North America, from the Earliest Period to the Census of 1850*, 5th ed (Boston: P. Donahoe, 1852), 45.

¹³ Donovan, Dunigan, and FitzGerald, *History of Boston College*, 2.

¹⁴ Nancy Lusignan Schultz, *Fire and Roses: The Burning of the Ursuline Convent, 1834* (New York: The Free Press, 2000); see also W. Jason Wallace, *Catholics, Slaveholders, and the Dilemma of American Evangelicalism, 1835-1860* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010), 9-12.

By that same year, John McElroy, future founder of Boston College, had been in the United States for more than three decades. He was not part of the desperate exodus for survival brought on by the potato blight between 1846 and 1851.¹⁵ But when in 1847 Jesuit McElroy came to Boston, he encountered the more than 130,000 of his country-folk who had come looking for survival, looking for life.¹⁶

The third bishop of Boston, John Bernard Fitzpatrick, knew that beyond sheer life, immigrants must be equipped for the good life, and education was key. Boston Irish Catholics were furious at the ridicule and misrepresentation of their faith in the city's public schools.¹⁷ This situation made an alternative school system imperative; at the same time, there was a pressing need to educate leaders among the laity and clergy. Fitzpatrick was eager to open a college, but his practical commitment to its realization seems to have waxed and waned on more than one occasion. On the other hand, McElroy was determined – despite public discrimination against Catholics, despite reversals of building permits and disputes over land purchase, despite delays and disappointments and recurring opposition, despite the bigotry and intolerance displayed by the City Council.¹⁸

On April 7, 1858, ground was broken in the South End on Harrison Avenue for the new Church of the Immaculate Conception. Twenty days later, a small group of Catholic men including Bishop Fitzpatrick and Father McElroy, John Williams, the vicar general of the diocese,

¹⁵ For representative treatments of the famine, see Cecil Blanche FitzGerald Woodham Smith, *The Great Hunger: Ireland 1845-1849* (New York: Old Town Books Firm, 1989) and Edward Laxton, *The Famine Ships: The Irish Exodus to America 1846-1851* (London: Bloomsbury, 1996).

¹⁶ Donovan, Dunigan, and FitzGerald, *History of Boston College*, 2.

¹⁷ The Eliot School Rebellion occurred in nineteenth-century Boston: In 1859, Thomas Whall, a young Catholic primary school student, was asked by his teacher to recite the Ten Commandments. Whall refused because the form of the commandments to be recited was taken from the Protestant King James Bible. Several days later Whall was asked to recite the commandments and again he refused; this time he was beaten by the principal, who then ordered all who would refuse to recite the commandments as found in the King James Bible to leave and one hundred boys did. Jesuit Bernardine Wiget, Father McElroy's assistant, urged Catholic resistance. Historian John T. McGreevy in his *Catholicism and American Freedom: A History* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2003) argues this incident brought about the system of Catholic parochial schools in Boston.

¹⁸ Donovan, Dunigan, and FitzGerald, *History of Boston College*, 10-14.

James A. Healy, the chancellor of the diocese, and Jesuits John Rodden, Bernardine F. Wiget, and Aloysius Janalik gathered without fanfare or publicity to lay the cornerstone of the church.¹⁹ This ceremony effectively marks the laying of the cornerstone of Boston College.²⁰

The chancellor of the diocese of Boston was an accomplished and talented man, and he was a priest with a secret. The Reverend James Augustine Healy was the son of Michael Morris Healy, an Irish immigrant, turned Georgia planter and slaveholder and his black common-law wife and slave Eliza Clark Healy. How James Healy came to witness the laying of the cornerstone of Boston College is part of the extraordinary story of this family, particularly that of the brothers James, Patrick, and Sherwood – all priests. The saga of their desire and ability to elude the “one-drop rule” that made them black lies well beyond the scope of this paper, but historian James O’Toole has told their story, confronting head-on all its contradictions and paradoxes, and he has told it well.²¹ The story of the Healy family uncovers the angular position of descendants of enslaved Africans in the United States: Consider the framers of the Constitution and their disingenuous “intentional non-disclosure of their legitimization of slavery” and presumption of black inferiority and white superiority.²² Consider the custom of *partus sequitur ventrem* – the child follows the condition of the mother; thus, no matter how fair the complexion of skin, how fine the texture of hair, how thin the nose and lips, slave status marked all children born to slave women.²³ Consider the Fugitive Slave

¹⁹ Donovan, Dunigan, and FitzGerald, *History of Boston College*, 21.

²⁰ “[B]oth [the church and the college] buildings were built simultaneously as one project and, as far as can be ascertained, no thought was given to a separate cornerstone laying for the college” (Donovan, Dunigan, and FitzGerald, *History of Boston College*, 21).

²¹ See James M. O’Toole, *Passing for White: Race, Religion, and the Healy Family, 1820-1920* (Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2002), 6-22. James would become the bishop of Portland, Maine; Patrick, a Jesuit, would serve as a president of Georgetown University in Washington, DC; and Sherwood was a theologian, assistant to Bishop John Williams in Boston, his *peritus* at the First Vatican Council, and rector of Boston’s Cathedral of the Holy Cross. See also Cyprian Davis, *A History of Black Catholics* (New York: Crossroads, 1995), 146-52.

²² A. Leon Higginbotham, *Shades of Freedom: Racial Politics and Presumptions of the American Legal Process* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), chap. 6, “The Constitutional Language of Slavery: From Non-disclosure to Abolition, 1787-1866.”

²³ A. Leon Higginbotham, *In the Matter of Color*, 38-47; Higginbotham, *Shades of Freedom*, chap. 4, “The Ideology of Inferiority (1662-1830).”

Law of 1850 that put escaped slaves, free blacks, even in the North, and blacks attempting "to pass" as white at risk of capture and sale by ordinary white citizens.²⁴ Consider the legal prohibition to teach slaves to read and write.²⁵ Consider the legal institutionalization, the cultural transmission, and perpetuation of black inferiority even into the twentieth-first century.²⁶

"Our hearts irrigate this earth. We are fields before each other."²⁷ Daniel Ladinsky translates this lovely phrase, attributing it to Thomas Aquinas. To apply the metaphor of field to Irish immigrant and black slave certainly may be plausible, but doing so evokes experiences of brutality. For these were women and men whose bodies were used as ground in which others might plant their pleasure, ground on which others might exact revenge or arrogance, ground on which others might build a fortune. Indeed, Boston's Back Bay stands as an exquisite example of nineteenth century urban design, but the labor to fill in the tidal basin and the fens cost many Irish men their lives. Chattel slavery was an economic regime in which race – blackness – made slaves and owning slaves made men white.²⁸

To apply the metaphor of the field to black slave and Irish immigrant may be plausible, but doing so is ambiguous. The Irish spoke and wrote and sang with rhapsodic pride of the green fields – North and South – they tilled and cursed, yet loved. Black slaves spoke and sang dolefully of the cotton fields they tilled and cursed and despised. Yet, they toiled the fields for the sake of another universe that neither of these two peoples could or would inhabit. They were laborers –

²⁴ United States Statutes at Large/Volume 9/31st Congress/1st Session/Chapter 60, http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/United_States_Statutes_at_Large/Volume_9/31st_Congress/1st_Session/Chapter_60. In *Twelve Years a Slave* (1853; Minneola, NY: Dover Publications, 1970). Solomon Northup recounts his kidnapping and sale.

²⁵ During the Colonial era, in the Healy's birth state of Georgia, slaveholders who taught a slave to read and write was penalized fifteen pounds sterling (see Higginbotham, *In the Matter of Color*, 258-59; also, George M. Stroud, *A Sketch of the Laws Relating to Slavery in the Several States of the United States of America* (1827; 1857; reprint, New York: Negro Universities Press, 1968).

²⁶ Higginbotham, *Shades of Freedom*, chap. 2, "The Precept of Inferiority" and chap. 3, "The Ancestry of Inferiority (1619-1662)."

²⁷ Attributed to Thomas Aquinas, "We Are Fields Before Each Other," 129.

²⁸ See Walter Johnson, *Soul by Soul: Inside the Antebellum Slave Market* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999).

these proud women and men – and fought with hoe and hand against rock and weevil to pull life from bruised and bitter soil. They toiled the fields and pinned their hopes on a future life that would not be their own, the future life of their children. Education became a prized route to that future.

Hope shaped the life that both Irish immigrant and black slave sought, for neither the system of land-tenancy, nor chattel slavery, destroyed the human spirit. First, that life should fulfill vital needs: food, clothing, and shelter, and, yes – music and song, tale and poem, riddle and mirth. That life called for a home – an ample place of simple joys: an unguarded smile, a hand held, a cheek caressed, a bruised finger kissed; a quiet and plentiful meal, a comfortable chair, the warmth of a fire. And, home would be more – a place inviolate, a place secure, and, above all, a place in which to live and flourish in undiminished dignity.

Such active hope for life logically implies community, for when we consider what is necessary for sustaining human and humane life, the natural sociality of the human person becomes obvious. Personal relations of various kinds – acquaintances and partnerships, intimate friendships and marriage, clubs and associations, church and sport – anchor us *as* community. Still, community must be achieved; it emerges not from neighborhood proximity, not from regional or national habitation, not from ethnicity or race merely. Rather, community is realized in sharing and acting on cherished meanings held in common, and, thus anchored we may stretch beyond ourselves to and with others in community in action for the sake of human good.

We may call such active stretching virtue and insofar as virtue is essential to realization of human good, it is an essential condition for the good life. The good life for which the Irish immigrant yearned and strove was shaped by hope expressed in creative, active struggle for personal autonomy, security of person, human respect. The good life for which the black slave yearned and strove was shaped by hope expressed in creative, active struggle for freedom and emancipation. As concrete, lived expression of the good life, virtue only appears easy and especially so when the virtuous person exercises it. Rather, virtue entails intelligently and sensitively figuring out what to do and how to do it and doing it over and over again with ease, with alacrity, even, with grace. In the mid-nineteenth century, in so sharply divided a

nation, looming civil war put virtue to the test. Irish immigrant and black slave would fight with distinction and honor for the Union and for freedom, but courage rises not only on the battlefield. How should Catholics – how should Irish Catholics – *think* about slavery, abolition, emancipation, and civil war? How should Catholics – how should Irish Catholics – *act*?

Catholics in the United States and in Europe differed widely in their opinions on slavery, abolition, emancipation, and war. "Boston's Catholics," O'Toole writes, "wholeheartedly supported the war, but theirs was a narrow interpretation of what was at stake: preservation of the Union, not freedom for the slaves, was the goal."²⁹ And historian John McGreevy notes that only a "handful of European Catholic theologians criticized slavery in the early nineteenth century."³⁰ American Catholics – cleric, lay, and vowed women and men religious, including the Jesuits of Maryland – owned and sold slaves.³¹

Catholic theologians argued masters must permit and respect slave marriages, educate their slaves in the rudiments of the faith, but slavery itself, as confirmed by Aristotle and Saint Paul, did not violate either the natural law or church teaching. . . . [A]ny shift in the Catholic position on slavery faced formidable obstacles.³²

Rare and vigorous public dissent came from Cincinnati's Archbishop John Purcell and his brother, Father Edward Purcell, editor of the *Cincinnati Catholic Telegraph*. The Purcells insisted on "the moral

²⁹ O'Toole, *Passing for White*, 84.

³⁰ McGreevy, *Catholicism and American Freedom*, 50.

³¹ See Thomas Murphy, *Jesuit Slaveholding in Maryland, 1717-1838* (New York and London: Routledge, 2001), John Francis Maxwell, *Slavery and the Catholic Church: The History of Catholic Teaching Concerning the Moral Legitimacy of the Institution of Slavery* (Chichester and London: Barry Rose Publishers, 1975), Randall M. Miller, "Catholics in a Protestant World: The Old South Example," in Samuel H. Hill, ed., *Varieties of Southern Religious Experience* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1988), Davis, *The History of Black Catholics in the United States*, 35-41, Jon L. Wakelyn, "Catholic Elites in the Slaveholding South," in Randall M. Miller and Jon L. Wakelyn, eds., *Catholics in the Old South: Essays on Church and Culture* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1983), 211-39; David B. Chesebrough, *Clergy Dissent in the Old South, 1830-1865* (Carbondale and Edwardsville, ILL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1996).

³² McGreevy, *Catholicism and American Freedom*, 49.

necessity of emancipation."³³ In one speech, the archbishop explained why, unlike most Catholics, he would vote the pro-abolition (then, the Republican) ticket. Slavery he reasoned was "an unchristian evil, opposed to the freedom of mankind [sic], and to growth and glory of a republican country." He continued, "The Catholic Church has ever been the friend of human freedom. It was Christ's mission to set men [sic] free, and Christian people disregard his precepts and principles and example, when they seek to uphold or perpetuate involuntary human servitude."³⁴

With the irruption of the civil war, Boston College became the site of the Jesuit "scholasticate for forty-six scholastics and eight brothers" from across the country as well as from France, Germany, England, and Ireland.³⁵ Did this community discuss the war, its causes and effects, or slavery and abolition? Jesuit historian Raymond Schroth thinks not. In his history of the American Jesuits, Schroth records a fragment of a letter written by Father John Bapst on March 3rd, 1861, to a friend. Referring to Abraham Lincoln's approaching inauguration, the rector concluded, "we are just at this moment resting upon a volcano."³⁶ When "the silence on the war in the community was broken," Schroth tells us, "it was Bapst's role to restore peace."³⁷ On McGreevy's account, "only one Jesuit, Francis Weninger, publicly defended emancipation, perhaps because he had personally witnessed the horror of a New Orleans slave auction."³⁸ Certainly, none of the Healy brothers, whose mother was a slave, spoke for emancipation or publicly protested slavery. If James Healy followed newspaper accounts of civil war battles keenly and was zealous that "Catholic interests be safeguarded during the war," it did nothing, O'Toole observes, "to encourage [him] to reconsider the distance he had put between himself and African Americans. If anything, it confirmed his self-definition as white, different from them."³⁹

³³ McGreevy, *Catholicism and American Freedom*, 82.

³⁴ McGreevy, *Catholicism and American Freedom*, 82-83; Raymond A. Schroth, *The American Jesuits: A History* (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 81.

³⁵ Schroth, *The American Jesuits*, 80; Donovan, Dunigan, and Fitzgerald, *History of Boston College*, 25.

³⁶ Schroth, *The American Jesuits*, 80.

³⁷ Schroth, *The American Jesuits*, 80.

³⁸ McGreevy, *Catholicism and American Freedom*, 78.

³⁹ O'Toole, *Passing for White*, 88.

Courage, Aristotle argues in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, is a moral virtue essential to the human good. Courage lies in a mean between cowardice as deficiency and rashness as excess.⁴⁰ The courageous person has a proper and authentic orientation toward what is shameful and fearful. Thus, courage entails grasping what is shameful and what is not, deciding and acting on experiential knowledge and broad understanding of particular situations, as well as acknowledging and facing what might induce fear and shame.

For Catholics, in the matter of slavery, courage was difficult to discern and even more difficult to exercise. Perhaps, the blatant discrimination and bigotry Catholics experienced in America should have inclined them toward abolition, but growing Catholic affluence and influence only generated moral dilemma. Nearly all the bishops of the United States accommodated the customs and culture of slavery; they considered it a social or political question even as they urged humane treatment of slaves. When pressed, the bishops marshaled theological arguments that upheld slavery as consistent with the natural law and Sacred Scripture, and, therefore, tolerable, even acceptable. Only with rare exception did clergy and laity dissent from this view. Yet, as early as 1843, Daniel O'Connell, Ireland's great champion of liberty, suffrage, and democracy, attacked Irish American tolerance of slavery.⁴¹ Few Catholics took membership in abolitionist organizations and "not one prominent American Catholic urged immediate abolition before the Civil War."⁴² Did Weninger and Purcell exercise the moral virtue of courage for the sake of the human good? Was Bapst's conformity and the silence of the Jesuit community a sign of prudence, cautious concern for the fragile college in the face of anti-Catholic prejudice? Was the silence of the Healy brothers on race and slavery, abolition and emancipation an act of courage, defying and transgressing racial categories or a successful strategy for personal achievement and individual autonomy?⁴³

⁴⁰ Aristotle defines virtue as "a state of character concerned with choice, lying in a mean, i.e., the mean relative to us, this being determined by a rational principle, and by that principle by which the man of practical wisdom would determine it [2.6, 1107a1-3, 1105b5-12], *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. W. D. Ross (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925).

⁴¹ McGreevy, *Catholicism and American Freedom*, 50.

⁴² McGreevy, *Catholicism and American Freedom*, 51.

⁴³ O'Toole states that after their arrival in Massachusetts, James, Patrick, and

As disappointing as we – most especially those of us who are Catholic, African American, and Irish – find the public responses of the Healy brothers to the evil of slavery, their lives exemplified an old “black” adage they, perhaps, never had heard: “Education is the one thing no one can take from you.” In my childhood, this saying held nearly sacred status. To be sure, few of those who repeated this adage in the presence of family schoolchildren had had the benefit of college or university education; yet, they held such education in awe and expected much from those who received it. Like their Irish counterparts, these immigrants from Southern white racist oppression and peonage recognized education as crucial to the human good life. When Father McElroy called for contributions of “25 cents a month”⁴⁴ to help retire the debt on the fledgling college, Boston’s Irish community responded. They held education in esteem. Perhaps, some of them may have been products of the Irish hedge schools; more likely their parents were.⁴⁵ Nonetheless, their aspiration for the good life for their sons was considerable. To greater and lesser extent, the achievement of the good life is governed by historical development, directed by reason, although it cannot evade chance entirely. That life stands as a unique and non-repeatable process for each person and shared by all according to their position and role in the “space-time solidarity” of humanity.⁴⁶ Humble though they were, Irish immigrants sensed, if not understood, the difference between education and information. They would have resonated with John Henry Newman’s explanation of the purpose of the Catholic University of Ireland:

Our *desideratum* is, not the manners and habits of gentlemen; – these can be, and are, acquired in various other ways, by good society, by foreign travel, by the innate grace and

Sherwood never again returned to the South and rarely if ever spoke of their mother. Wagering against the “one-drop rule,” Michael Morris Healy and Eliza Clark Healy gave up their sons to Catholicism and to whiteness. Only a merciful God can judge the ultimate meaning of such calculation.

⁴⁴ Donovan, Dunigan, and FitzGerald, *History of Boston College*, 24.

⁴⁵ The penal laws prevented Irish schoolteachers (nearly all men, but some women) from teaching Catholics. Open air or “hedge schools” were the result. Donovan, Dunigan, and FitzGerald suggest that the hedge schools may have closed in the late eighteenth century [3], but other authors suggest the schools persisted into the nineteenth.

⁴⁶ “Finality, Love, Marriage,” in *Collection*, 38.

dignity of the Catholic mind; – but the force, the steadiness, the comprehensiveness and the versatility of intellect, the command over our own powers, the instinctive just estimate of things as they pass before us, which sometimes indeed is a natural gift, but commonly is not gained without much effort and the exercise of years. This is the real cultivation of the mind.⁴⁷ (xv)

Irish immigrant and freed slave lived in radical hope of attainment of the good life. Radical hope reaches and acts for the best good even in the presence of unknown outcomes. Such hope intimates that human excellence remains possible and patient of education. Jesuit pedagogy would promote such excellence through promoting intellectual and moral formation. According to *The Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Boston College, 1894-1895*, "The acquisition of knowledge, though it necessarily accompanies any right system of education, is a secondary result of education, not its end. Learning is an instrument of education, not its end. The end is culture, mental and moral development."⁴⁸ Thus, a Jesuit education is oriented by and seeks to orient the whole person – mind and imagination, heart and soul. How does a Jesuit education accomplish this? By teaching virtue, by properly ordering appetite: Reasonable good conforms to rational appetite, to be unreasonable is to submit to disordered self-love. Or put differently: As Ignatius of Loyola knew, virtue might be taught by understanding and reverencing the unity of the human person. Each individual is recognized as a subject – responsible, independent, free, and capable of making her and his decisions, capable of finding God's will within. Thus, the hallmarks of Jesuit education express that understanding and reverence: *cura personalis* (care for the individual person), *magis* (more, excellence in all endeavors to bring about the greater glory of God), contemplation in action (reflection leading to gratitude leading to service leading to reflection), reflection and discernment, wisdom,

⁴⁷ John Henry Newman, *Discourses on Scope and Nature of University Education Addressed to the Catholics of Dublin* (1852; Dubuque, IO: W. C. Brown Reprint Library, 1967), xvii, cited in Michael Buckley, *The Catholic University as Promise and Project: Reflections in a Jesuit Idiom* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2007), xv.

⁴⁸ Cited in Gerald McKeivitt, "Jesuit Schools in the USA, 1814-c. 1970," in *The Cambridge Companion to The Jesuits*, ed. Thomas Worcester (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 280.

finding God in all things – engaging the world with passion and delight. For the human person is as a tender field of possibility to be cultivated for life, for the lived good life, for eternal life.

In *The Catholic University as Promise and Project*, Jesuit Michael Buckley critiqued the simplistic reduction of religion to morality.⁴⁹ I affirm his conclusion: Religion, theology, and ministry deserve and require proper and rigorous research, teaching, and study. In some form or another, these three “specializations” have been part of the curriculum of Boston College almost since its inception. The earliest courses in the nineteenth century were concerned with Catholic apologetics in an anti-Catholic context. In 1863, the Jesuit seminary still occupied the college buildings and although in 1882 a scholastic was listed as studying theology privately, a seminary was never McElroy’s intention.⁵⁰ Still, from the shadows of the University’s history two constituent schools emerge – Weston School of Philosophy and a School of Theology with pontifical approval to offer the Licentiate in Sacred Theology. Each school had its own dean and faculty; each was academically and financially distinct one from another and from Boston College, although the University awarded its degrees. Predictably, friction over lines of authority marred this “unusual [and] casual” working arrangement. Finally, in 1968, these schools decamped to Cambridge.⁵¹ Yet, it is interesting to discover that more than four decades earlier, Cardinal William O’Connell had asked the University to organize a formal summer school for religion teachers – in particular, religious sisters. This, perhaps, precursor of the Institute for Religious Education and Pastoral Ministry (IREPM) thrived for a number of years and served hundreds. Thus, in the light of these events, the joining of the forty-year old IREPM with its intensive summer focus and Weston Jesuit School of Theology in order to form the School of Theology and Ministry at Boston College strikes a familiar note – the old has become new again. In the first quarter of the twentieth century, who could have imagined the sight of hundreds of women and men – cleric, scholastic, and lay – studying theology together with all the “intellectual seriousness,” passionate disinterest, and joy that

⁴⁹ Buckley, *The Catholic University as Promise and Project*, 13.

⁵⁰ Donovan, Dunigan, and FitzGerald, *History of Boston College*, 32.

⁵¹ Donovan, Dunigan, and FitzGerald, *History of Boston College*, 325.

higher education demands.⁵² In the middle of the nineteenth century, who would have imagined that women would take up pastoral ministry in the Roman Catholic Church? Who in the first 100 years of Boston College could have imagined that the University would welcome women faculty – lay and religious – to teach church history, theology, spirituality, and ministry to future priests?

The great genius of the Catholic university has been its drive for unity and its reverence and simple humility before incomprehensible Divine Mystery. Here is Rainer Maria Rilke:

I find you, Lord, in all Things and in all
my fellow creatures, pulsing with your life;
as a tiny seed you sleep in what is small
and in the vast you vastly yield yourself.⁵³

This drive for unity is made paradoxically concrete in the Jewish Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ of God: He is the *impossible union* of God and humanity, of pure active spirit and "exuberant holy matter."⁵⁴ "The Catholic university," Buckley writes, "is a union of faith and all human culture. God becomes incarnate in humanity; faith becomes incarnate in human culture."⁵⁵ The incarnation – the scandalous nitty-gritty engagement of God in history – changes forever our perception and reception of one another, of the world. For humanity is Christ's concern, neither merely, nor incidentally; humanity and the world are his concern comprehensively, completely. Thus, a Catholic university knows that nothing is foreign to it; studies, touches, weighs, sifts and teaches; scours and purifies all dross; engages all things good. In the Catholic university, theology prepares Christian intellectuals competent to interrogate the relation between the natural and supernatural ends of human living, to clarify the continuity and discontinuity of those ends, and to identify manifestations of the work of grace within human culture and history. In the Catholic university,

⁵² Buckley, *The Catholic University as Promise and Project*, 14.

⁵³ Rainer Maria Rilke, "I Find You, Lord, in All Things and in All," 8, *Ahead of All Parting: The Selected Poetry of Rainer Maria Rilke*, edited and translated by Stephen Mitchell (New York: Random House, 1982).

⁵⁴ Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *The Divine Milieu: An Essay on the Interior Life* (1957; New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1960), 82, 81.

⁵⁵ Buckley, *The Catholic University as Promise and Project*, 17.

pastoral ministry as a critical practice forms Christian intellectuals competent to assist human persons to negotiate the meaning of everyday life. Neither theology nor pastoral ministry may substitute for the empirical human sciences, but they may relieve the human sciences of their empirical burden: Human beings are much more than problems to be solved, more than statistics to be counted and analyzed, more than a mass of howling needs, more than mere biological drives, more than consumers to be manipulated. What theology and pastoral ministry study, announce, and pursue is the meaning and implications of the most crucial message of the Gospel: "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly" (John 10:10).⁵⁶

Above all, the Catholic university holds and teaches Christ as the Wisdom of God, the Revelation of God, the Power of God. All things are understood through him and on his terms, which are love and truth, mercy and justice. Christ is the example of what it means to live a fully human life, what it means to be a human being.

This is what the Catholic university teaches; this is what Boston College teaches. This is the education for which immigrant Irish and freed slave sought for their children and for themselves: education for life, for the good and virtuous life, for eternal life. Somehow these humble peoples caught a glimpse of the most basic horizon of human life. And, through the mercy and justice of grace, they understood that "the ascent of the soul towards God is not merely a private affair, but rather a personal function of an objective movement in that body of Christ which takes over, transforms, and elevates every aspect of human life."⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Buckley, *The Catholic University as Promise and Project*, 19.

⁵⁷ "Finality, Love, Marriage," in *Collection*, 4, 27.

PHENOMENOLOGY OF REDEMPTION? OR THEORY OF SANCTIFICATION?*

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PHENOMENOLOGY OF REDEMPTION?¹ The question mark points to the particular challenge of this article. It attempts to bring together two genres of discourse that normally have little to do with each other: the traditional language of theology and the technical languages of the social and natural sciences. Behind this attempt is the general observation that no genuinely human problem or issue can be adequately treated without attending to the myriad complexities that both enrich and bedevil all areas of human life. Thus, the crossing of boundaries that accompanies interdisciplinary research and conversation, however susceptible to superficiality, is necessary. This is especially true when dealing with the mystery of redemption commonly referred to as the atonement.²

¹ I am not using "phenomenology" (hence the scare quotes) precisely in any of the many ways of understanding philosophical or religious phenomenology (see, for example, Thomas Ryba, "Phenomenology of Religion," in *The Blackwell Companion to the Study of Religion*, ed. Robert A Segal [Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006], 91-121), but rather in the somewhat pretechnical, commonsense meaning of the study of the "phenomena" (that is, those human experiences that, qua space-time experiences, are subject to sociological, psychological, and scientific analysis) that Christian theologians refer to as constituting the human experience of redemption.

² This article extensively develops material that first appeared in two other published works: "A Phenomenology of Redemption?," in *For René Girard: Essays in Friendship and Truth*, ed. Sandor Goodhart and others. (East Lansing: Michigan State 347 University, 2009), 101-109; and then somewhat more extensively in

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Paul, writing to the Romans, seems to have been at least implicitly aware of this (in modern terms) crossing of boundaries when he penned the verses that mark the transition from the more doctrinal to the more pastoral part of his letter to the Romans:

I urge you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to offer your bodies (*parastēsai ta sōmata humōn*) as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, your spiritual worship (*tēn logikēn latreian*). Do not conform yourself to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect. (Romans 12:1-2)

Immediately obvious to those familiar with both the cultic language of the Bible³ and the technical language of the philosophers⁴ is that Paul is here combining – confusing, his critics might say – things that, in terms of intellectual respectability, are quite different and need to be kept apart. Paul, from his location in Hellenistic Judaism, is not only using the sacrificial ritual language of Second Temple Judaism centered on the very physical, material offerings in the Jerusalem temple; he is also using, in the same breath, the already impressively developed language and concepts of Greek religious philosophy that was aware of the uselessness of trying to offer anything material to a spiritual deity. With his typical boldness regarding human expectations when speaking of life in Christ, and within the few words of one sentence, Paul combines both of these ways of thinking and speaking. First, *by the*

"Sacrifice and Girardian Mimetic Theory: The End of Sacrifice?," in *Sacrifice Unveiled: The True Meaning of Christian Sacrifice* (New York: Continuum, 2009), 202-22. On atonement, see my "Images of God and the Imitation of God: Problems with Atonement," *Theological Studies* 68 (2007): 36-51.

³ See, for example, Suzanne Daniel, *Recherches sur le vocabulaire du culte dans la Septante* (Paris: C. Klincksieck, 1966).

⁴ For an overview, see Philipp Seidensticker, *Lebendiges Opfer: Ein Beitrag zur Theologie des Apostels Paulus* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1954), 1-43. For English readers, the most accessible treatment of this material is in Raymond Corriveau, *The Liturgy of Life: A Study of the Ethical Thought of St. Paul in His Letters to the Early Christian Communities* (Brussels: Desclée De Brouwer, 1970), 155-85. Much of what we know about this subject builds on the 1913 magisterial work of Eduard Norden, *Agnostos Theos: Untersuchungen zur formgeschichte religiöser Rede*, 5th ed. (Stuttgart: B. G. Teubner, 1971).

mercies of God is a vivid, anthropomorphic image referring, literally, to the bowels of God. It is not something a respectable philosopher would say, but it is the kind of language one might expect from a Jew familiar with the Hebrew Scriptures. So too with the words *offer your bodies as a living sacrifice*. But right away, even within the context of Jewish religious language and cultic practice, one begins to feel uneasy over these words. Offer our *bodies*? That stretches Paul's readers to the limit of what they might accept, but once he adds *as a living sacrifice*, he is pulling them far beyond that. For although *holy and pleasing to God* is the kind of reassuring language often found in the Septuagint to refer to properly offered sacrifices that are acceptable to God, the mention of *bodies as living sacrifices*, with its human-sacrifice associations, has left many readers uncomfortably close to a conceptual no-man's land. Then, the coup de grace: *your spiritual worship*, unmistakably using the *logikêthusia* language of spiritualized Greek religious philosophy, abruptly dumps us into the middle of that no-man's land.⁵

What is going on here? First of all, Paul is doing something that he characteristically does when speaking of the mystery of life in Christ: for example, when he mixes organic images from plant life with static images from buildings in order to emphasize that Christian life is both organic and structural: we are both "God's field" and "God's building" (1 Corinthians 3:9). Nor is Christ just the head of the body that is the Church, he is also (see the deuterio-Pauline Ephesians 2:20–22) the cornerstone and capstone (and seemingly both at the same time) of the building that is the church. So, what part of the mystery is Paul attempting to express here in Romans 12:1? Quite obviously it is the essentially incarnational reality of Christian life, worship, and sacrifice. It is anything but the dematerialized, radically spiritualized worship that Greek religious philosophy had concluded is the only worship worthy of a spiritual god. It is, rather, worship ("sacrifice," if you will) that is incarnated in the very down-to earth, practical,

⁵ Curiously, the magisterial commentary of Joseph Fitzmyer, *Romans: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 637–44, gives scant attention to this line of exegesis (though he documents my own use of it in *Christian Sacrifice* [Washington: Catholic University, 1978]), in contrast to many of the German commentaries, most notably that of Otto Michel, *Der Brief an die Römer*, 4th ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966), 292–93, who acknowledges indebtedness to the extensive work of Seidensticker in *Lebendiges Opfer*, 1–43.

ministerial – that is, bodily – preaching and living out of the Word of God.⁶ And notice how Paul's appropriation of technical philosophical terminology presages what the Church Fathers will be doing at Nicaea three centuries later in appropriating philosophical terminology (*homoousios*) to try to explain the mystery of Christ, what Augustine will be doing in his "use" of Platonism, and Aquinas too in his use of Aristotelianism. Thus, what Paul was doing almost two millennia ago is what theologians have always had to do when "pushing the envelope" of theological understanding. Without implying that I can hold a candle to any of these theological giants, this is also what I am trying to do in this article: to bring together different genres of discourse that have had little to do with each other in order to grope toward a deeper understanding of some aspect of our faith – in this case, to try to begin to answer the question, What is going on in this-worldly time and space when human beings are experiencing "salvation"? What, in other words, is the "phenomenology" of redemption?

Theologians have spilled vast amounts of ink, indeed sometimes quite bitterly as in the infamous Jesuit-Dominican grace controversy of some 400 years ago, arguing about the ontology of grace.⁷ Millions of pages have been written, and are still being written, about the practical, spiritual, and sometimes mystical experiences of conversion and the life of grace. Preachers, spiritual writers, and theologians are constantly talking about what it means to be "saved" – that is, about the mystery of atonement. But they have generally been doing this mostly on a devotional, non-scholarly level; or, if as scholars, then generally in traditional biblical, historical, and school-theological terms that have little or no connection with contemporary scientific and social scientific thinking. There are some fine contributions to a

⁶ I develop this further in "Offer Your Bodies as a Living Sacrifice, Holy and Pleasing to God, Your Spiritual Worship (Romans 12:1): Ethical Implications of the Sacrificial Language of the Church's Eucharistic Prayers," in *"Ahme nach was du vollziehst . . .": Positionsbestimmungen zum Verhältnis von Liturgie und Ethik*, ed. Martin Stuflesser and Stephan Winter (Regensburg: Pustet, 2009), 151-67.

⁷ For brief background, see "de Auxiliis," in *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, ed. F. L. Cross, 3rd ed., ed. E. A. Livingstone (New York: Oxford University, 1997), 459. For more detail see Consuelo Maria Aherne, "De Auxiliis," in the article "Grace, Controversies on," in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 15 vols., 2nd ed. (2003) 5:401-405, at 403-404; or Friedrich Stegmüller, "Gnadenstreit," in *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche*, 10 vols., 2nd ed. (Freiburg: Herder, 1960), 4:1002-1007.

still somewhat inchoate conversation between science and theology.⁸ But on the topic of redemption, few theologians even begin to ask about what is happening psychologically, sociologically, anthropologically, culturally, politically, when people are in the process of being "saved."⁹ And on the other side, most natural scientists and social scientists never get around to connecting their research – which is, in fact, uncovering some of the actual raw data of a "phenomenology" of redemption – with theological questions. Or, more typically, loyal to the positivist presuppositions of their discipline, they classify such questions as irrelevant or beyond the scientific principles and methods of their field.

One of the scholars of our own day who has tried to break out of this disciplinary narrowness, and, although himself not a theologian, has invited biblical scholars, theologians, and others also to do the same, has been René Girard.¹⁰ It was, in fact, when I was invited to be part of a panel discussing Gil Bailie's *Violence Unveiled*,¹¹ one of the more successful attempts to communicate the insights of Girardian mimetic theory to a wide reading public, that I first began to formulate the specifically theological question of the possibility – indeed the necessity – of a "phenomenology" of redemption. Thus a few words are in order about how mimetic theory can serve as a serendipitous entry

⁸ There come to mind the impressive body of work produced by such authors as John Polkinghorne, Arthur Peacocke, William Stoeger, and John Haught; the dialogues sponsored by the Templeton Foundation; and the ongoing topic session "Theology and Natural Science" of the Catholic Theological Society of America.

⁹ This question does not get raised, not even in passing, in, for example, Stephen T. Davis, Daniel Kendall, S.J., and Gerald O'Collins, S.J., eds., *The Redemption: An Interdisciplinary Symposium on Christ as Redeemer* (New York: University, 2004).

¹⁰ See especially René Girard's groundbreaking *La violence et le sacré* (Paris: Bernard Grasset, 1972); ET, *Violence and the Sacred*, trans. Patrick Gregory (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University, 1977); and also *The Girard Reader*, ed. James G. Williams (New York: Crossroad, 1996). In his later work Girard has begun to make explicit what was at first (and perhaps also to him as well) only implicit: that behind his basic theory is a fundamentally Christian sense of things. This became (scandalously to some) clear with the Press publication of his *Des choses cachées depuis la fondation du monde*, with Jean-Michel Oughourlian and Guy Lefort (Paris: Grasset, 1978); ET, *Things Hidden Since the Foundation of the World* [see Matthew 13:35], trans. Stephen Bann and Michael Matteer (Stanford, CA: Stanford University, 1987). See also the more recent *I See Satan Fall like Lightning* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Press, 2001).

¹¹ Gil Bailie, *Violence Unveiled: Humanity at the Crossroads* (New York: Crossroad, 1995).

into this theological question. But first a few words about Lonergan and Girard on redemption.

LONERGAN AND GIRARD ON REDEMPTION

Early in 2010, several years after I began asking my question but, happily, before the completion of this article, Robert Doran published in this journal an article that takes up the very questions I am asking and locates them methodologically at the heart of the Christian theological endeavor.¹² Having stated that "it is in the realm of soteriology that Girard will make his greatest contribution to theology,"¹³ Doran goes on to state his "thesis that Lonergan provides a heuristic structure for the systematic understanding of the doctrine of redemption, while Girard contributes a great deal to filling in the details of that structure." Doran immediately adds a question that he repeats several times in the course of his article, and that I am trying to answer in this article: "How thorough is Girard's filling in of the structure?"¹⁴ By "heuristic structure" Doran has in mind Lonergan's famous image of intellectual development as a scissors action:

The upper blade is the set of heuristic notions needed to arrive at the desired conclusion, while the lower blade provides the data that will be clarified by the meeting of the two blades. . . . In the present case, Lonergan's "Law of the Cross" is an upper blade, while Girard's notions of acquisitive mimesis, mimetic rivalry and violence, and the victim mechanism provide at least some of the data that the upper blade allows the theologian to organize into an understanding of this particular doctrine.¹⁵

But we are getting ahead of ourselves. A few words on Girardian mimetic theory are now in order.

¹² Robert M. Doran, S.J., "The Nonviolent Cross: Lonergan and Girard on Redemption," *Theological Studies* 71 (2010): 46-61.

¹³ Doran, "The Nonviolent Cross," 49.

¹⁴ Doran, "The Nonviolent Cross," 50.

¹⁵ Doran, "The Nonviolent Cross," 50-51.

INTRODUCTION TO GIRARDIAN MIMETIC THEORY¹⁶

The claim has been made that René Girard has been one of the seminal thinkers of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. He provides the beginning of what could be called a unified field theory on the issue of religion and violence. Compare his achievement with, for example, that of Sigmund Freud. Until Freud, a significant array of human phenomena had persistently resisted attempts to explain them in a coherent way: the meaning of dreams, infantile sexuality, the activity of the subconscious, hypnosis, hysteria, and humor. Then, in the space of little more than a decade, more or less by 1905, Freud had provided a coherent, rational explanation for all these. Though many disagree with some of the details of Freud's theory, few deny that his insights have changed the face of Western cultural history.¹⁷ A similar claim can be made for the influence – at least the potential influence, for he is not yet as widely known – of René Girard. As the philosopher Paul Dumouchel put it, Girardian mimetic theory – in its mobilization of the disciplines of ethnology, history of religion, philosophy, psychoanalysis, psychology, and literary criticism – has completely modified the landscape in the social sciences, and has begun to exercise significant influence on what have been called the intellectual and moral sciences, including theology.¹⁸

The comparison with Freud helps us contextualize Girard's achievement in providing something that is lacking in traditional biblical theologies: a coherent, rational explanation for the pervasive presence of violence not just in history generally but also in both testaments of the Bible. If we look clearly, we find that the history of Christianity cannot be separated from the history of human violence. Yes, normatively, apart, of course, from certain fringe elements and in terms of its preached ideals, Christianity is a religion of peace and nonviolence. Descriptively, however, and right from its earliest roots

¹⁶ The most comprehensive and convenient source for material is the website of The Colloquium on Violence and Religion (COV&R), the international organization of scholars devoted to the study of Girardian mimetic theory: <http://theol.uibk.ac.at/cover/>.

¹⁷ See my further development of this point in the foreword to Raymund Schwager, S.J., *Must There Be Scapegoats? Violence and Redemption in the Bible* (New York: Crossroad, 2000), v.

¹⁸ Paul Dumouchel, *Violence and Truth* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University, 1988), 23, as reported in Bailie, *Violence Unveiled*, 6.

in the Hebrew Scriptures, the history of Christianity is a history of violence.¹⁹ How can we explain this? Girardian mimetic theory can help the theologian begin to do this.

Although Girardian mimetic theory, like almost any theory, can be presented in misleading oversimplifications, those attempting to understand it well can find it to be forbiddingly complex.²⁰ Raymund Schwager, however, suggests that its fundamental insights can be summed up briefly:

1. Fundamental human desire is of itself not oriented towards a specific object. It strives after the good that has been pointed out as worthy of effort by someone else's desire. It imitates a model.
2. Imitating the striving of another person (who is also one's model) inevitably leads to conflict, because the other's desire aims at the same object as one's own desire. The model immediately becomes a rival. In the process, the disputed object is forgotten. As desire increases, it focuses more and more on the other's desire, admires and resents it together. The rivalry tends finally towards violence, which itself begins to appear desirable. Violence becomes the indicator, and hence worthy of imitation, of a successful life.
3. Since all human beings have a tendency towards violence, living together peacefully is anything but natural. Reason and good will (social contract) are not enough. Outbreaking rivalries can easily endanger the existing order, dissolve norms, and wipe out notions of culture. New spheres of relative peace are created, however, when mutual aggressions suddenly shift into the unanimous violence of all against one (scapegoat mechanism).
4. The collective unloading of passion onto a scapegoat renders the victim sacred. He or she appears as simultaneously accursed and life-bringing. Sacred awe emanates from him or her. Around him or her arise taboo rituals and a new social order.

¹⁹ Developed at greater length in my article: "Violence and Institution in Christianity," *Contagion* 9 (Spring 2002): 4-33, at 5-6.

²⁰ This complexity has been discovered by many who have tried to get a "quick fix" on Girardian mimetic theory by thumbing through *The Girard Reader*.

5. The sacrifices subsequently carry out in strictly controlled ritual limits the original collective transfer of violence onto a random scapegoat. Internal aggressions are thus diverted once again to the outside, and the community is saved from self-destruction.²¹

Quite obviously, this is a "grand narrative," one of those broad-ranging, broad-brushed cover stories that claim to explain the way things are (or are supposed to be), the way things work (or are supposed to work). In a postmodern age of deconstruction, we are conditioned to be suspicious of such stories.²² Experience tells us that another story eventually, indeed sometimes quickly, comes along and shows us that our favorite story is all wrong, or that there is a better way of explaining things, or at least one that is more "politically correct," more attuned to the prejudices of our age. Some of the more influential of these grand narratives in the age of Western modernity we associate with figures like Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679), John Locke (1632–1704), Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778), Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831), Sigmund Freud (1856–1939), and Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche (1844–1900).

Although suspicious of these grand narratives, we still learn from them. Those who told these "stories" are giants on whose shoulders we stand. Further reflection also quickly tells us that, suspicious as we may be of any *grand récit*, we also cannot do without them. They are part of our human nature. Even the most radical of deconstructionists has a story, albeit a story of radical deconstruction. In other words, I, like everyone else, have a story, a story to which, in this article, I am attempting to make a contribution. My story, of course, is my own understanding of the story of Catholic Christianity and, especially as I work on this article, the contribution being made to it by the mimetic

²¹ Schwager, *Must There Be Scapegoats?*, 46–47. One of the most helpful introductions to Girardian mimetic theory, this book first appeared as *Brauchen wir einen Sündenbock?* (Munich: Kösel, 1978). It was first published in English by Harper & Row, San Francisco, in 1987.

²² In addition, Girard seems to play into postmodernity's suspicion of grand narratives by the way he cavalierly – as even his supporters will admit – and against the current scholarly sense of "political correctness" cuts across the fiercely defended boundaries of the different disciplines. A perceptive, sympathetic, but also honestly critical discussion of this can be found in Michael Kirwan, *Girard and Theology* (London: T. & T. Clark, 2009). For those first looking into mimetic theory, his *Discovering Girard* (London: Darton, Longman, & Todd, 2004) can also be recommended.

theory of René Girard.

In this theory, especially as summarized by Schwager in the above five points, one cannot miss the central role played in it by *desire*. This flows from, but does not depend on, the total accuracy of Girard's particular "great story" about the origins of human culture. Gil Bailie's unforgettable account of a nursery scene illustrates the general validity of Girard's story despite arguments one may have with particular aspects of it. Bailie asks us to imagine a nursery scene in which a small child sits dreamily in a room filled with toys. Another child enters, surveys the scene, and reaches for one of the toys. What toy does he reach for? Precisely that toy in which the first child seems to be expressing some, but until then only mild, interest. What then happens is something that everyone experienced in the care of young children can tell us. The second child's interest in that particular toy in which the first child had hitherto expressed only mild interest, now awakens in that first child a strong desire for that same toy. As Bailie describes it:

The two children simply feed each other's desire for the toy by demonstrating to each other how desirable it is. Each further intensifies the desire of his rival by threatening to foreclose the possibility of possession. As the emotions rise, the opportunity for parental compromise declines rapidly. Each child treats the suggestion that he take turns playing with the toy as a betrayal by the adult who makes it. . . . As long as the conflict remains unresolved, the suggestion that both children bear some responsibility for the squabble will be resolutely rejected. Each child will be certain that the other is the sole cause of the conflict. Already in the children's nursery, therefore, we have the basic dynamic of scapegoating fully manifested . . . the same dynamics – writ large – that operate in religious or ethnic or nationalistic conflicts.²³

Mimetic desire (not just desire pure and simple) is fundamentally central to how we act as human beings. Once alert to this, we are able to notice how the Ten Commandments culminate in the prohibition of desire. The previous commandments in the second half of the Decalogue have been prohibiting acts of violence against one's

²³ Bailie, *Violence Unveiled*, 116-17.

neighbor. As Girard, following Williams (see below note 25), puts it: "The tenth and last commandment [in the version found in Exodus 20:12–17] is distinguished from those preceding it both by its length and its object: in place of prohibiting an *act* it forbids a *desire*. "You shall not covet the house of your neighbor. You shall not covet the wife of your neighbor, nor his male or female slave, nor his ox or ass, nor anything that belongs to him" (Exodus 20:17).²⁴

The Hebrew word *chamad*, which we translate as "covet," means "desire." Williams, whom Girard is here following, had previously pointed out that this final commandment articulates in a kind of *conclusio* the ethical principle underlying the previous four commandments.²⁵ This is the background for what I will now say about original sin as disordered desire.

ORIGINAL SIN AS DISORDERED DESIRE²⁶

The story of the primordial sin of Adam and Eve recounted in Genesis

²⁴ Girard, *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning*, 7.

²⁵ James G. Williams, *The Bible, Violence, and the Sacred: Liberation from the Myth of Sanctioned Violence* (San Francisco: Harper 1992), 108–13.

²⁶ Many readers will be reminded of the work of Sebastian Moore: *Jesus the Liberator of Desire* (New York: Crossroad, 1989), and his recent *The Contagion of Jesus: Doing Theology As If It Mattered*, ed. Stephen McCarthy (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2008). In the first of these brilliantly insightful books, Moore had apparently not yet encountered Girard but, on a parallel track, so to speak, was coming up with remarkably similar insights. The *Contagion* book (a play, perhaps, on the title of the Girardian journal, *Contagion: Journal of Violence, Mimesis, and Culture*) joyfully appropriates Girardian theory as contributing to his own *approfondissement* into the mystery of human – ultimately Christian and even trinitarian – desire. Some pregnant quotes: "Once we understand desire – all desire – as solicitation by the mystery we are in, we understand something that is often noted in spiritual writings: that whereas desire that is simply a felt need ceases once the need is satisfied, vital desire *increases* with satisfaction" (*Jesus the Liberator*, 11); "I have long been persuaded that desire is not an emptiness needing to be filled but a fullness needing to be in relation. Desire is love trying to happen" (*Jesus the Liberator*, 18); "The Christian story is the story of desire becoming love through all the violence and pain of history, the pioneer of this evolution being Jesus the willing victim of our violent way of association, which, with his resurrection and the explosion of the Spirit, issues in the new humanity whose polity is of love, the politics of the Kingdom" (*The Contagion of Jesus*, 131); "Now God is love. This is why desire, which is the creator's dangerous mark in the conscious animal, 'is love trying to happen'" (*The Contagion of Jesus*, 143).

3, as it is now understood by most mainline Christian theologians, is not to be read as a literal description of a historical first sin, but as a psychological description of all sin, reminding us of what is repeatedly happening in our own sinful existence. When read this way the question arises: What is God forbidding? The answer seems to be that God can give everything to us *except* that we do not owe. For, by nature, as creatures, receivers of gifts is what we *are*. Take that away and we do not even exist. Deny that (or attempt to deny it) and we are denying what we are; we are sinning. Sin, and specifically the "original sin" that perdures in us and bedevils our human condition is, fundamentally, the sin of nonreceptivity. It is denying what we are and wanting to be, desiring to be, or to have, or to take by whatever violent force may be needed, something else. This is precisely what is prohibited at the end of the Decalogue.

Notice how accurately this is unveiling what is happening in the Genesis story. "You will be like God, knowing good and evil," the serpent temptingly and with perverse irony promises in Genesis 3:5. For the culmination of the first creation story in Genesis 1:26 has proclaimed that humankind, male and female, *already is* in the image and likeness of God. Adam and Eve already are *like* God. But they desire more. They want to *be* God. The use of the Hebrew word *chamad* in this Adam-and-Eve story (Genesis 2:9 and 3:6) is telling: it is the same word that is translated as *covet* at the end of the Ten Commandments. "The verb seems usually to express a desire that strongly impels one toward acquiring the object of attraction."²⁷ That is what was going on "when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be *desired* (*chamad*) to make one wise" (Genesis 3:6).

This suggests that original sin, which here and now lives on in us – that is, the *effects* of original sin normally referred to in Catholic theology as *concupiscence* – is the sin-inducing, violence-inducing attitude of *nonreceptivity*: the sinful condition of what Girardians call *acquisitive mimesis*. While ultimately, it is the sin of wanting to be like God, we hide from that reality and play it out by wanting to be like those who have what we want to have, by wanting to have what they

²⁷ Williams, *Bible, Violence, and the Sacred*, 112. Williams cautiously notes that there could be some question about this precise meaning.

successfully want and have – and by being willing to do whatever may be necessary, even to kill, in order to get it. And indeed the next episode in what has been called this “ingenious psychological description of all sin”²⁸ is the story of the first murder: Cain killing his brother Abel. Notice how tellingly appropriate are the words in which the author of Genesis sums up this section of his narrative: “The earth was corrupt and full of lawlessness/violence” (Genesis 6:11). God is going to fix that. But the solution – the divine solution let us not forget – was also violent. For this is the lead into the Noah flood story.

Let me now shift perspective and look at this narrative from a modern, scientific – and thus potentially “phenomenological” – point of view. Our human nature seems to be, in religious terms, relentlessly sinful or, in colloquial terms, all messed up. In other words, according to the story that we are telling, Rousseau’s brilliant and charming story of the natural goodness of the human species is hopelessly optimistic. We are constantly struggling to keep from killing each other. Most of us, when we honestly look into the mirror, seem to be willing and ready to use whatever force may be necessary to get, to be, and to remain “number one.” Are we sinning when we do this, or are we just doing what comes naturally as top dogs in the food chain, perhaps even occupying some unique position there as the “great stories” of Hobbes, Locke, and numerous others have conditioned us to assume? Or, are we human beings actually above, or at least called to be above all that? It is not sufficient, I am arguing, to answer just in traditional religious language; we must also do so in the language of modern science. The Girardian story of human origins, and above all the Girardian understanding of the effects of that story, begins to do that in a sober, but basically optimistic, way.

To focus the question: Are human beings actually being called to be more than just the top dogs in an essentially violent food chain? Is not this what Jesus was attempting to communicate in his call to restore to their senses those who had eyes, but could not see, and ears but could not hear (Jeremiah 5:21; Matthew 13:13–15)? Yes, healing diseases did involve an apparent suspension of the “laws” of nature.

²⁸ Sean Fagan, S.M., “Original Sin,” in *The Modern Catholic Encyclopedia*, rev. exp. ed., Michael Glazier and Monika K. Hellwig (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2004), 597–99, at 598.

But that seemed to be the easy part of Jesus' mission. It is what he used as easily recognizable signs of his call to the hard part of his mission. As Bailie put it:

Softening the human heart or refashioning the human self requires that social and psychological reflexes relied upon and reinforced "since the foundation of the world" [see Mt 13:35] be overridden. So tenacious are these reflexes that they have often enough been thought synonymous with "human nature." Transcending these reflexes, or suppressing their influence, is at least as arduous a feat as manipulating objects in the material order, and vastly more spiritually significant.²⁹

Recall how sadly insightful is Hobbes's story of a humankind in which all are equal because, given the chance, even the weakest can kill the strongest. And note how sadly accurate a description it is of our present worldpolitical situation in which world order and peace so often seem to depend on a power strong enough to impose it by lethal force. Girard's story is similarly revelatory of our self-destructively violent human condition, and of how we manage to survive this by way of the culture-saving scapegoat mechanism. Its dynamic is all too familiar to us. That is, when mutually selfdestructive urges tend to get out of hand, we (1) find a convenient victim; (2) gang up on that victim; (3) discover that this results in a certain amount of peace and harmony; (4) which causes us to sense that there may even be something "sacred," even "divine," in this victim; (5) and then notice that, in the next crisis, this process seems to repeat itself, and again a measure of peace results; (6) so that this process gets repeated again and again, and eventually it is just ritually repeated with surrogate victims (animals instead of humans).

Oversimplified, yes. But after all the fine-tuning, after all the qualifications, we have to admit: it works! But it does involve a deception. It depends on the participants believing in the guilt of the victim. Actually, whether or not the victim is really guilty is irrelevant, as long as one *believes* that the victim is guilty, or *assumes* that the victim is guilty, or assumes that the victim has little or no value except to serve as the needed victim . . . or . . . whatever one believes about the

²⁹ Bailie, *Violence Unveiled*, 216.

victim, we think, we assume, we take it for granted (usually without reflecting much on it) *that this process works*. Deception is integral to the effectiveness. And remember, we are talking about a lifesaving, culture-saving effectiveness. Recall the scene toward the end of the film *The Wizard of Oz*: Once the wizard is unveiled, his power is gone. Such an unveiling is now going on in our human world, and as this unveiling goes forward, the scapegoating mechanisms on which human culture has learned to depend become less and less effective.

One reason why this is happening is that we live in a world – even when secularized – that has been, and remains, deeply affected by the Christian story. The center of that story is, of course, Jesus Christ, a victim. When we tell our Christian story truthfully – and many are still doing that – it is *from the perspective of Jesus Christ the victim!* Do we believe in the guilt of Jesus Christ the victim? Is it irrelevant whether Jesus is guilty or innocent? Can we believe or assume that Jesus Christ is guilty? Or, even regardless of all that, should this have happened to him? Some Girardians make the claim – difficult to prove, of course – that our culture's instinctive identification with the underdog, the persecuted, the oppressed, the abused, is a learned and specifically (though perhaps not exclusively) Christian response. In other words, take away Christianity, and that response is significantly weakened. Conversely, take away that instinctive siding with the victim, and Christianity is eviscerated. Hence the outrage in recent years, when so many church authorities failed to side with the victims of clerical sex abusers.

The effectiveness of the scapegoat mechanism – that is, the channeling of acquisitive, conflictual, self-destructive mimesis onto a convenient victim – depends on the innocence of the victim being veiled. Unveil the victim, identify with the victim, and culture is in crisis. Notice how pervasively this mechanism is to be found in all aspects of human life, from the most serious down to the most trivial. For example, in the Cold War, the Western democracies needed Communism to unite them; but with Communism no longer a threat, the West now seems to be replacing it with radical Islam, which, in turn, “needs” the Americans to gang up against. The Nazis “needed” the Jews. Homophobic people “need” the gays. But it also comes right down to the relatively trivial, like Boston Red Sox baseball fans “needing”

the New York Yankees to "hate," Boston College football fans "needing" Notre Dame to cheer against, etc. This list could go on indefinitely, for we are talking about a deeply fundamental human need. But in all these instances, and in order for the mechanism to have its unifying, culture-forming and culture-preserving effect, it seems to be necessary for the innocence or at least the nonguilt of the scapegoated victim to remain veiled.

ORIGINAL SIN: A "PHENOMENOLOGICAL" VIEW

Before I directly address the "phenomenology" of redemption, which means refocusing attention from the negative to the positive aspects of our subject, it will be helpful to examine some recent attempts to explore the experience of original sin – that is, the experience of its effects in concupiscence – from a modern scientific perspective. Raymund Schwager has done this in a very helpful way, and has suggested that theologians should not wait until they have worked out their understanding of sin and of original sin from a traditional doctrinal perspective, and only then look over to the social and natural sciences to see how they measure up to or challenge their achieved doctrinal positions. Instead, theologians should *from the outset* be trying to understand the findings of the sciences on their own scientific terms so that they are not looking to the sciences only to find out whether or to what extent the scientific findings might agree with their theology. That is neither taking science seriously nor respecting those aspects of truth and reality that only science can uncover. Instead, most theologians need to be more attentive than they usually are to the light that science can shed on religious or doctrinal data. The path to truth is not a one-way street.³⁰

This approach is analogous to the difference between traditional approaches to the scientific study of the religions of the world and the newly developed approach called "comparative theology." Comparative theology includes faith-understanding in its object of study. For example, Christians studying Hinduism do not, as their

³⁰ See Raymund Schwager, S.J., *Banished from Eden: Original Sin and Evolutionary Theory in the Drama of Salvation*, trans. James Williams (Leominster Herefordshire: Gracewing, 2006); ET of *Erbsünde und Heilsdrama: Im Kontext von Evolution, Gentechnologie, und Apokalyptik* (Münster: LIT, 1997).

only methodological approach, bracket out their own faith stance in order to study objectively the contents and practices of some branch of Hinduism. Rather, while beginning with their own Christian faith-understanding, they attempt to study honestly and respectfully the faith-understandings of the other religion in order to see what light that knowledge and experience might cast on their own understanding, indeed their own faith-understanding of Christianity.³¹

One of the findings of modern biology and microbiology, Schwager reminds us, is that all organisms, from the most simple to the most complex, have memory. Whatever happens to an organism remains in a kind of memory bank influencing the later life of that organism. One might question whether this is true of all the most minute of microorganisms – although it does explain why antibiotics, after repeated use, tend to lose their effectiveness – it is clearly one of the characteristics of the higher organisms, especially, as Freud pointed out, of that most complex of organisms, the human being. When, in the context of Girardian mimetic theory, we take this scientific finding as the starting point of an attempt to understand the phenomenology of original sin, some excitingly illuminating results, as Doran, for example, has already begun to point out,³² begin to suggest themselves. In doing this, we are, of course, beginning to tell another “great story.” Let this one, like the others, be judged by the extent to which it helps us understand who and what we are as human beings.

The focal point of this story is the “moment” or, more precisely, the process we call “hominization,” the term that philosophers, theologians and evolutionary thinkers give to the process of “the development of the higher characteristics that are thought to distinguish [humans] from other animals.”³³ Philosophically, it was the process of moving from animal instinct to human reason as the principal source of human action. Theologically, it was the process of becoming a free subject capable of relating to the transcendent. Whether conceived of as a kind of knife-edge event (as most premoderns have thought), or as a long

³¹ I have in mind specifically the work and the influence of Francis X. Clooney, S.J. See his article “Comparative Theology: A Review of Recent Books,” *Theological Studies* 56 (1995): 521-50.

³² See above, the section “Lonergan and Girard on Redemption.”

³³ *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993) s.v. “hominization,” 1252.

process extending over thousands of generations, and perhaps even still going forward (as most scholars now assume), it is the point where, however inarticulately, the now-becoming (or still-becoming) human beings became aware of themselves as capable of acting in a way that transcends animal instinct. From all that we can reconstruct from our prehistoric past as well as from the past few thousand years of recorded history, our forebears usually chose the path of violence, might makes right, survival of the fittest, etc. In other words, both in its origins and in its (still ongoing?) continuation, hominization has been the story, with its endless sad variations, of human beings receiving the gift/offer of self-transcendence and, more often than not, turning it into (usually violent) self-assertion.

Thus, an integral part of our historical and psychosocial memory is a memory of violence. The choices made by our human forebears, choices that first constituted us as human, choices by which we have managed to survive until now and still manage to survive, and that we will probably continue to make as we struggle toward our future, are, characteristically, violent choices. We are conditioned to rely on the violence of the scapegoat mechanism to get what we desire and to save our skins. In that sense, violence is our original sin. However, largely (but not exclusively) through the influence of the Christian ethos of identifying with victims, the scapegoat mechanism is being progressively unveiled, leaving us, increasingly, in crisis.³⁴ Can we be healed of the violence (sacred sacrificial violence, it is called in the Girardian great story) that used to save us, and that now, increasingly unveiled, threatens to destroy us?

Scott Garrels has offered helpful background to the way in which scholars can contribute to a possible positive answer to this question.³⁵ He points out that "the combined efforts of developmental psychology, neurophysiology, and cognitive neuroscience have produced a dramatic

³⁴ This is the meaning of the subtitle "Humanity at the Crossroads," of Gil Bailie's *Violence Unveiled*.

³⁵ Scott R. Garrels, "Imitation, Mirror Neurons, and Mimetic Desire: Convergence between the Mimetic Theory of Rene' Girard and Empirical Research on Imitation," *Contagion: Journal of Violence, Mimesis, and Culture* 12-13 (2006): 47-86.

array of data elucidating the role and mechanisms of imitation." This research, he says,

demonstrates the profound significance of reciprocal imitative phenomena at both neural and behavior levels. Imitation is no longer seen as a mindless act expressing simple mimicry, but rather a fundamental and inherently positive mechanism stimulating the individual mind to develop through its relationship with another mind. The congruence of such reciprocity of minds, along with the ability to delay imitation, is understood as the basis for the emergence of more diverse and complex behaviors and representations, including human language and the development of a theory of mind.³⁶

Garrels goes on to point out that only recently has empirical research begun to support what mimetic scholars have long known about "the primordial role of psychological mimesis in human motivation and social relations," and to "account for and support such reciprocity of experience, even at a level as basic as that of individual neurons."³⁷ I began this part of the article by insisting that theologians in general, and not just the relatively few who have already been bringing science and religion into conversation with each other, need to be attentive to the relevant findings of science. Garrels points out that this also needs to become a two-way street:

The developing fields of developmental psychology and cognitive neuroscience are influenced by and dependent upon disciplines such as anthropology, philosophy, literary analysis, and theology, all of which approach similar or unique questions from differing sources and points of view. Without these other disciplines, neuroscience would not be able to ask the questions that it does, or apply its findings in a meaningful preexisting framework of knowledge. For example, the broader implications relevant to mimetic theory did not originate within the empirical sciences but from literary, anthropological, and historical investigations. At the same time, Girard's entire corpus of work rests on the primacy of human imitative

³⁶ Garrels, "Imitation, Mirror Neurons, and Mimetic Desire," 68.

³⁷ Garrels, "Imitation, Mirror Neurons, and Mimetic Desire," 79.

behavior, the significance of which must be measured against the unfolding and revolutionary research in the fields of developmental psychology and cognitive neuroscience.³⁸

Garrels then concludes his article with the following prognostication, which ends up echoing Lonergan's "Law of the Cross" and presaging Doran's "Nonviolent Cross":

When imitation research is viewed through the lens of mimetic theory, one sees not only the building blocks of relatedness, mindfulness, and meaningfulness but also the mechanisms of distortion, disillusionment, and violence. If a reciprocating feedback loop between mimetic scholars and imitation researchers can be established – and I believe wholeheartedly that is inevitable – the social sciences may begin to better appreciate and understand the incredible nature of human life, culture, and religion, an appreciation that is essential in transforming human culture and relationships through infinitely more imaginative and nonviolent ways of learning.³⁹

This article began by assuming that, to move toward a "phenomenology" of redemption, the disciplinary fields that needed to come into more extensive conversation with each other were theology and the social sciences. We can now see that the natural sciences, most specifically the biological sciences, also need to be included. With that in mind, we are now, finally, able, to approach more directly the main theme and object of this article.

A "PHENOMENOLOGY" OF REDEMPTION: IMITATE THE DESIRE OF JESUS

Whether what we are working toward is a "phenomenology" of atonement, or of salvation, or of redemption, or of conversion/metanoia, or

³⁸ Garrels, "Imitation, Mirror Neurons, and Mimetic Desire," 79-80.

³⁹ Garrels, "Imitation, Mirror Neurons, and Mimetic Desire," 80. Garrels's "faith" – or hope – in such a development seems to be in the process of becoming reality: see the impressive collection of papers in *Mimesis and Science: Empirical Research on Imitation and the Mimetic Theory of Culture and Religion*, ed. Scott R. Garrels (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2011).

simply of "buying into" the kingdom of God/heaven – or perhaps, more modestly, as I will suggest below, simply a theory of sanctification – for my purposes here it is all the same. Whatever terminology we use, redemption means being saved/redeemed *from* something *to* something. So far, I have been attending mostly to what we must be saved from. Now I will try to attend more directly to what, phenomenologically, we are to be saved *to*, or *for which* or *by means of which* we are to be saved. I turn from the negative to the positive. The reader will, of course, notice, perhaps with knowing bemusement, that my account of the negative has been much longer than will be my account of the positive. Yes, it has always been much easier to talk about the bad than about the good.

In beginning to formulate a "phenomenology" of redemption, we are now, thanks to Girard and his followers, more deeply aware that integral to this formulation is the fact that human beings are ineluctably mimetic beings. We become what we are, whether individually or in common and as groups, both by imitating the desires of others and, whether consciously or not, "remembering" everything that has ever happened to us. This is what is happening as babies learn from their parents, children from their teachers, students from their mentors, apprentices from their masters, athletes from their coaches and heroes, fans from their superstars, smaller nations from larger, more powerful nations, and so forth. And, perhaps most sorrowfully of all, this is what victims learn from their abusers. Sexual abusers, almost without exception, seem to have been introduced to abusing by first being abused themselves. Mimetic activity can be a devilish, truly satanic vicious circle. But it can also be – and that is what I now want to emphasize – a truly blessed, divine, and yes, even divinizing circle.

To focus on the central point, the central dynamic, we become what we are, we grow into what we will be, by imitating someone's desire. So, if it is a Christian story that we are trying to tell and by which we are trying to live, the only way to do that is by imitating the desire of Jesus. But first, two comments: The first is to recall in paraphrase what has been attributed to Einstein: "I want to know the thoughts of God; everything else is just dotting the i's and crossing the t's." For if we are actually imitating the desire of Jesus, then all the ways and means by which we do that, ways in which we will be replacing victimizing mechanisms with their opposites, that is, with a

nonacquisitive, nonrivalrous mimesis that does not scapegoat victims but identifies with them, in all these ways and means we will, in fact, be dotting the i's and crossing the t's.

The second comment is to note, with a certain amount of humble embarrassment, that I am aware of now beginning to slide – or should I say “rise”? – from one literary genre to another, from theological exposition and reflection toward (Christian) preaching. In other words, a truly complete treatment of this subject would require that I bring together not only the genres of discourse that characterize theological reflection and the social and natural sciences, as I pointed out at the beginning of this article, but also the genres of preaching and exhortation.⁴⁰ The word “Christian” (a few lines above) is in parenthesis because, although what I am doing is Christian, and specifically Catholic Christian, I will be attempting to do it in a way that is sufficiently open as to make whatever insight I can offer into the “phenomenology” of atonement accessible to all, Christian or not. And, while on this point, it is appropriate to point out that much – indeed quite possibly most – of the effectively redemptive i-dotting and t-crossing now going on in this world is not being done by Christians, or from an explicitly Christian motivation.

So then, aware that what I am trying to do is to reverse our “memorybanked” biological/sociological/cultural conditioning to act, grow, and survive by violence, we come to the question, How – since this is the specifically Christian way to do this – can we imitate the *desire* of Jesus? That would involve, first and foremost, “thinking” as Jesus thought. Is not this precisely what Paul was groping to express in Philippians when he says, indeed pleads: “Make my joy complete!” (Philippians 2:2) or, in colloquial terms: “Make my day!”? Paul then goes on to explain what he means, but in doing so he quickly breaks into song (as he sometimes does when attempting to express the ineffable),⁴¹ quoting the hymn that Christians around him were apparently already singing:

⁴⁰ Remember, from Bernard J. F. Lonergan, S.J., *Method in Theology* (New York: Herder & Herder, 1972), 355-68, that the eighth and last functional specialty, without which the work of theology is not complete, is Communications. And notice, too, how Lonergan and his followers describe the “mechanism” – really the mystery – by which we try to replace victimizing mechanism as the “Law of the Cross” (Doran, “The Nonviolent Cross,” 51; see above under the section “Lonergan and Girard on Redemption”).

⁴¹ See, for example, Romans 8:38-39 and 11:33-36.

Be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.³ Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves.⁴ Let each of you look not to your own interests but to the interests of others. *⁵Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,*

⁶who, though he was in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God
as something to be exploited,

⁷but emptied himself,
taking the form of a slave
being born in human likeness. . . . (Philippians 2:2–7)

Verse 5, here italicized for emphasis, has the key words (they come remarkably close to the wish expressed by Einstein): *the same mind that was in Christ Jesus*. In other words, think like Jesus, so you can desire like Jesus, so you can act like Jesus.

Those who buy into this, admitting, in one way or another, that it all comes down to this, are already moving toward what Lonergan has called moral conversion.⁴² Intellectually, they have achieved a basic understanding, if not of all the details of the problem, then at least of the main route to the solution. One of the meanings of intellectual conversion refers to what is taking place when, historically, culturally, philosophically, socially, politically, et cetera – that is, on the level of their presuppositions, attitudes, and opinions – human beings come to see through the deceptions of the scapegoat mechanism and begin to

⁴² Analogous to the somewhat simplistic, common-sense use of “phenomenology” with which I began this article, my remarks here have grown out of a similarly simplistic understanding of “conversion” as *intellectual* (seeing and understanding things correctly), *moral* (being committed to act and live accordingly), and *religious* (so imbued with love that one can actually live out that commitment). This does not do justice to Lonergan’s description of authentic and full conversion as simultaneously intellectual, moral, and religious (*Method in Theology*, passim, but esp. 237–44), nor to Doran’s exposition “What Does Bernard Lonergan Mean by Conversion?” (<http://www.lonerganresource.com/pdf/lectures/What%20Does%20Bernard%20Lonergan%20Mean%20by%20Conversion.pdf> [posted on June 29, 2011]). Serendipitously, however, as the next few pages will point out, the meaning of conversion toward which I am groping comes close to what Lonergan (and Doran) mean by moral conversion. See also the extensive study of Lonergan on conversion by Walter Conn, *The Desiring Self: Rooting Pastoral Counseling and Spiritual Direction in Self-Transcendence* (New York: Paulist Press, 1998).

demystify its workings. When authentic, this process flows into moral conversion that, in Lonergan's words, "changes the criterion of one's decisions and choices from satisfactions to values."⁴³ For that is when human beings begin to draw in their own lives the logical and practical conclusions of that demystification. This demystification – "unveiling" if you will – may or may not (and in most cases probably does not) include a specifically Christian theological understanding of how and why the Christ-event is a critical turning point in this process. And ironically, but often necessarily, this can also occasion in some individuals a personal distancing from traditional religion, especially when religion has been experienced as simplistic or fundamentalist.⁴⁴ Intellectual and moral conversion alone, however difficult to achieve – if indeed there is such a thing – for in Lonergan's view it usually presupposes a significant amount of religious conversion), can be an empty achievement. For there can be a veritable chasm between thinking rightly and acting rightly. Because, however difficult intellectual and moral conversions might be, they are still relatively accessible for many people, especially educated people of good will who are not afflicted with "organic mendacity" (see below note 45). In other words, many of us, including probably most of those reading this article, are more or less where Paul was when he complained in Romans 7:14–20 about his own, or at least the common human, inability to do the good that one wants to do and avoid the evil that one wants to avoid, or, as the Roman poet Ovid expressed it: "I perceive what is better and approve of it, but I pursue what is worse" (*Metamorph.* 7.19). Paul and Ovid had the same fundamental human insight: knowing the good can still leave one far away from actually doing it. In terms of Lonergan's scheme of conversions, people at that point are simply not (or not yet) *religiously* converted. However strongly Plato and Aristotle (and countless others of the great thinkers on whose shoulders we stand) may have wanted to push us in that direction, knowledge alone is not enough; knowledge does not equal virtue.

⁴³ *Method in Theology*, 240.

⁴⁴ For example, if the image of a fiercely judging and condemning God is what is proposed for belief, then a true Christian, in relation to that kind of a god, has to be an "atheist." This is analogous to the traditional biblical argument against the pagan gods: they simply do not exist. Socrates, remember, was accused of atheism; the early Christians, because they did not offer sacrifice to the gods, were sometimes accused of being irreligious.

Our contemporary first-world attitudes toward the problems of poverty and malnutrition powerfully illustrate this. We actually do have the scientific knowledge and access to the technological expertise needed to eliminate extreme poverty and malnutrition across the world. We can call that, at least in a simplified sense, intellectual conversion. We know basically what the problems are and how they might be solved. We also seem to be morally committed to do that. For apart from self-serving demagogical rhetoric, which carries with it its own refutation, and apart from those afflicted with "organic mendacity,"⁴⁵ practically all the respected and respectable moralizing rhetoric that we can hear on television or read in newspapers and journals of opinion, to say nothing of scientific journals, also seems to flow in that direction. We can call that intellectual-plus-moral conversion. But, as Paul and Ovid sadly point out, we do not do it, we do not act on it, we do not make it real. Scientifically, technologically, it is there to be done, but we are not willing to pay the price, not willing to make the "sacrifices" (using the general, secular meaning of the word⁴⁶) to do it. We are not *religiously* converted. Year by year we receive the reports of international commissions and meetings called to deal with problems of hunger, malnutrition, poverty, and economic and ecological exploitation. Year by year we read how distressingly nugatory are the actual steps taken to solve what is solvable.

Doran's exposition of moral conversion helpfully illustrates this necessary interpenetration of the intellectual, moral, religious, and the psychic when conversion is full and authentic:

Problems that emerge at the more basic levels can often be met only by changes at the higher or more complex levels. Thus, the global maldistribution of vital goods can be offset only by massive technological, economic, and political restructurings at the level of social values. But these are impossible without a transformed set of meanings and values at the level of culture. And only persons of integrity will be willing to pursue these meanings and values and accept their implications for social

⁴⁵ That is, "whenever a man's mind admits only those impressions and feelings which serve his 'interest' or his instinctive attitude" (Doran, "The Nonviolent Cross," 49, quoting from Max Scheler's *Ressentiment*).

⁴⁶ See my chapter, "The Many Meanings of Sacrifice," in *Sacrifice Unveiled*, 1-5.

structures. But personal integrity depends for its consistency on the gift of God's grace [i.e., religious conversion].

From above, then, the gift of God's grace is required for sustained personal authenticity. Persons of integrity are required for the cosmopolitan collaboration that takes responsibility for cultural values. Genuine cultural values, measured by the transcendental intentions of the intelligible, the true, the good, the beautiful, are required for a just social order, and a just social order is required for the equitable distribution of vital goods.

I am proposing then, that Lonergan's category of moral conversion includes conversion to collective responsibility, and that the scale of values enables us to get some idea of what that might require.⁴⁷ In other words, a certain amount of religious conversion, being in love with God and neighbor, whether or not one is conscious of this in religious terms, is not only the initial cause but also the ultimate empowerment that enables one to live by the "Law of the Cross" that can transform the evil effects of "acquisitive mimesis, mimetic rivalry and violence."⁴⁸

This inevitably raises the question: how does one come to religious conversion? I can suggest three ways to begin to respond. First, ask whether we really want to pursue that question. Most of us probably do not. At least not in the sense that would make us ready to pay the price or make the sacrifices that would be necessary for our world to make real progress toward solving these massive human problems. To put it bluntly and in the most challengingly provocative of terms: most of us do not really want to be Christian. For if – following the argument of this article – being a Christian means identifying with the desire of Jesus, identifying with Jesus the victim (which means identifying with victims generally) is something that very few of us really want. Most of those able to read this article live quite comfortably insulated from the experience of victims. We are quite happy to accept intellectually, and even preach enthusiastically, the Christian message as, admittedly, I am trying to do at the end of this article. But actually live it? Actually enter into a Christic identification with victims, as Matthew 25, as the whole preaching and message of Jesus, as the example of so many saints seem to be demanding that we do? We tend to shrink back from that.

⁴⁷ Doran, "What Does Lonergan Mean by Conversion?"

⁴⁸ Doran, "The Nonviolent Cross," 50-51.

A second way to take up this question is to remind ourselves what religious conversion, the conversion that is the central key to the solution, really is. Religious conversion is not something that, in Pelagian fashion, one can earn, or merit, or achieve simply by choosing it, willing it, or desiring it. For religious conversion is, first and foremost, like grace, a gift: the gift of divine love that is indeed offered to all. "In Lonergan's theology, as Frederick Crowe has made very clear, the mission of the Holy Spirit is universal."⁴⁹ But the gift has to be received, lived, nourished, and cherished. For although religious conversion is gift, indeed the both originating and ultimately culminating gift, our acceptance of it is anything but passive. For as Doran puts it:

The basis of distinguishing the varieties of conversion lies in what Lonergan calls the different levels of consciousness: experience, understanding, judgment, decision, love. Intellectual conversion has something to do with understanding and judgment, moral conversion with decision, religious conversion with love, and psychic conversion with the empirical consciousness that penetrates all these other dimensions and that is changed as we move from one level to another.⁵⁰

A third approach this question is to qualify the priority implied – but also warned against by Lonergan himself – by listing the conversions as first intellectual, then moral (and psychic), and finally, culminatingly, religious. Such a prioritizing seems clearly suggested by my own statement, a few pages above, that we can begin to imitate the authentically sanctifying and redeeming desire of Jesus by "first and foremost 'thinking' as Jesus thought." But any necessity of beginning only with knowledge, only with the "intellectual," is directly challenged by the obvious truth of the words of an anonymous referee of an earlier version of this article: "I think that we work our way into thinking like Jesus also, and perhaps primarily, by acting like him." This reminds me of what sometimes happens to college students in the course of engaging in volunteer work, or in the socialservice component of an

⁴⁹ Doran, "What Does Lonergan Mean by Conversion?" – the section "Religious Conversion from and to," 9-13, at 13.

⁵⁰ Doran, "What Does Lonergan Mean by Conversion?" – the section "Religious Conversion from and to," 6.

academic course: they experience conversion, and in some cases end up devoting themselves to a Dorothy-Day-like life of self-giving service. As one professor put it with ironic awe: "They get ruined for life."

CONCLUSION: A THEORY OF SANCTIFICATION?

Do we have, as my title teasingly suggests, a phenomenology of redemption? Certainly not in the full sense of the word. But Girardian mimetic theory, as Doran has methodologically explained, using Lonergan's image of the two blades of a scissors, especially when it is brought into conversation with the social and natural sciences, as Raymond Schwager and Scott Garrells have undertaken, can begin to provide the basis for such a phenomenology. Such approaches spur us on not only to imagine and conceive the need for a phenomenology of redemption but also, in working to meet that need, to identify phenomenologically the practical ways, the i-dottings and t-crossings, in which this – the replacing of victimizing mechanisms with nonrivalous, nonacquisitive, nonviolent mimesis – can be achieved. Doran's thesis is that while "Lonergan provides a heuristic structure for the systematic understanding of the doctrine of redemption, . . . Girard contributes a great deal to filling in the details of that structure."⁵¹ But as Doran and many others ask, how thoroughly do Girard and his followers fill in these details? Certainly not well enough to convince most scholars that mimetic theory is *the* solution. The empirical evidence for such a totalizing solution is lacking. In fact, there may be more empirical evidence for mimesis of behavior than, more narrowly, for a Girardian-type mimesis of desire. For when all is said and done, mimesis of desire is "(1) only one of many elements of evolutionarily stabilized human cognitive-emotional architecture, (2) possibly exaggerated in its centrality and importance by Girard, and yet (3) still promising in its application to theology."⁵²

If, then, the theory of redemption via mimesis of desire sketched out in this article falls short of being a full, empirically verified – or

⁵¹ Doran, "The Nonviolent Cross," 50. See above, the section "Lonergan and Girard on Redemption."

⁵² Professor Wesley Wildman, Boston University School of Theology, personal communication via email, February 10, 2012.

even empirically verifiable – phenomenology of redemption, and therefore does not adequately unveil the fundamental mechanism of salvation, what, then, do we have? A more modest claim of a “theory of sanctification” seems to fit the bill. Such a claim allows me to step back and push this theory and its possible implications toward its theological conclusions to see what openings or problems might ensue.

First, this theory obviously implies at least a groping toward a solution to the problem of religious pluralism. Further, it is a solution that does not require Christocentrism in the customary exclusive and excluding sense of that word. And, still further, it seems to do so by insinuating a certain degree of separation between the fundamental mechanism of salvation and the work of Christ.

In other words, consistent with what I have tried to do in *Sacrifice Unveiled*, that is, unveil something of the “mechanism” of Christian sacrifice, I am here trying to unveil something of the “mechanism” of redemption. For here, as well as there, I try to pursue resolutely the implications of the theological *convenientia* that, ultimately, there is a common-to-all fundamental “mechanism” of salvation by which the universal salvific will of God is actually being realized not only in those who are practicing Christians but also in the countless billions who are not. Can one imagine a “mechanism” of salvation, that is, imagine something at least inchoatively susceptible of empirical verification, that both remains within the trajectory of Christian theology and my own Roman Catholic doctrinal and ecclesial allegiance, and that also begins to explain or at least point toward this mystery? Can one assemble empirical evidence that can support the existence, or at least the possibility of the existence, of such a mechanism?

I close with the same question with which I began: Is there a phenomenology of redemption? Or, to put it more precisely, can one assemble empirical evidence to support at least the possibility of the existence of a universal mechanism of salvation? The faith and love that requires us to hope that all will be saved impels the Christian theologian to reach, and indeed strenuously stretch, toward a positive answer. But for this “theory of sanctification” (as I now more modestly call my “thesis”) to be more than just impractical dreaming or something that a Christian can hope for only in the future end-time when all things are restored in Christ, we have to be able to point

to places where such a mechanism of salvation is actually at work. And we can point to individuals (we call them saints) and communities (among them monasteries⁵³ and a whole panoply of religiously inspired works of mercy and peacemaking). We can point also to secular groups like Amnesty International, Bread for the World, Doctors for the Third World, and various UN-supported programs that are at least beginning to do an effective job of living this ideal and witnessing it to the world. And when that witness – most of which is probably not being done by Christians or by specifically Christian organizations – is effective, it is so because it speaks to us and to the world in the social-scientific terms in which we experience our identity. We do have, therefore, however weakly and inchoatively, but also prophetically, a phenomenology of redemption actually at work in our world.

And who knows? Thinking apocalyptically, without that work and witness, our human world might already have destroyed itself.

⁵³ Notice how this challenges us to rethink Christian asceticism. Traditionally, Christian asceticism has been associated with self-denial, denial of the world, and flight from the world. But if the basic thrust of this article is sound, it will impel us to think of Christian asceticism in a much more positive way. We can no longer think of authentic asceticism in terms of denying the world, especially the human world, but primarily in terms of transforming it.

THEMES OF BERNARD LONERGAN'S
LECTURES DURING AND SHORTLY
AFTER THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL
AND THEIR RELATION TO TODAY'S
NEW EVANGELIZATION

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LET ME SUMMARIZE in one sentence what I take to be the influence of the Second Vatican Council on the intellectual work in which Bernard Lonergan was engaged throughout most of his adult life. The Second Vatican Council did not interrupt nor redirect Lonergan's intellectual concerns, but that world-historic event did give Lonergan a new momentum and, in some cases, a new context for the work in which he was already engaged.

Bringing into the conversation the theme of the new evangelization I make a further statement. As I have reviewed lectures and articles that Fr Lonergan wrote during the years of the Second Vatican Council and shortly thereafter, I am struck by the affinity between his themes and what is being termed "the new evangelization" in the Catholic Church today. As one might expect, what Lonergan brings to the topic is a depth that is often otherwise missing. Thus, it is Bernard Lonergan's contribution to the new evangelization that I wish to offer in this reflection.

PERSONAL REMINISCENCE

First, may I reminisce briefly to tell you of my own introduction to Bernard Lonergan's work, because it relates to my topic on several fronts. I was sent to Rome by my bishop for my seminary training in

theology in September 1964. As I and my classmates arrived in Rome, Pope Paul VI was convening the third session of the Second Vatican Council. I quickly became caught up in the excitement of the new directions upon which the Roman Catholic Church was embarking. I became particularly interested in meeting and conversing with representatives of the other Christian churches who were in Rome. I think of Doctors Thomas Love and James White, professors at Southern Methodist University, of Brothers Roger Schutz and Max Thurian of the ecumenical monastery of Taizé, of Dr. Nikos Nissiotis, an Eastern Orthodox theologian associated with the World Council of Churches. It was Dr. Nissiotis who invited me to participate in the World Council of Churches' summer program for theological students. That I had the privilege of doing in the summer of 1966, mostly with Europeans of various denominations, and with one of whom I am still in contact.

Also upon arriving in Rome I was introduced to the work of Fr. Lonergan, who sadly had to leave Rome to return to Canada because he had become afflicted with cancer. One of my diocesan brothers suggested that I buy a copy of *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, and, further, one evening, as we were walking near the bookstore of the North American College, the same student advised that I then and there buy *De methodo theologiae*, which I did at a cost of 300 lire, or 50 American pennies. I took my colleague's advice and began reading *Insight* for the first time during the summer of 1965, guided by another student a couple of years my senior, the esteemed Terry Tekippe, of blessed memory. Then it was in my second year of theological studies that I read Lonergan's two volumes of *De Deo Trino*, while taking the course on the Trinity taught by Fr François Bourassa.¹ *Insight* and *De Deo Trino* profoundly influenced the entire future direction of my life since then.

I mention this personal introduction to Vatican II and Bernard Lonergan because I find that all three themes relate intimately to the new evangelization, namely, ecumenical interaction, the concern with "understanding what it is to understand" of *Insight* along with the

¹ To get a sense of how effectively Fr Bourassa interprets Lonergan see F. Bourassa, S.J., "Personne et conscience in théologie trinitaire," *Gregorianum* 55(1974): 471-93, 677-720.

subsequent development of transcendental method, and Christianity's central doctrine of the Trinity. This I now hope to clarify.

LONERGAN ON THE COUNCIL ITSELF

Now I turn to Lonergan himself and to some strong and direct statements about Vatican II in his Larkin-Stuart Lectures of 1973. He gave the four lectures the general title, "Revolution in Catholic Theology," and the first lecture references Pope John XXIII's utterly clear intention in convoking a new general council. Pope John XXIII expressed that "[w]hat was desired was advertence to the distinction between the unchanging deposit of faith and the changing modes of its presentation to meet the needs of different times."² Lonergan continues that John XXIII wanted "a new and more vigorous spread of the gospel in the whole world."³ It was a time for a leap forward (in Italian, "un balzo innanzi") in order to proclaim the faith in a way that was accessible to modern society, while, of course, remaining faithful to the transcultural Gospel of Jesus. For this reason, the teaching office of the church is, most of all, pastoral. Could anything sound more like the new evangelization, even though in 1973 the church was still two years away from Pope Paul VI's apostolic exhortation, *Evangelii nuntiandi*?

In Lonergan's terms this "balzo innanzi" is all about an "existential ecclesiology," or "authentic Christian experience" which appreciates that "the individual, the personal, the communitarian, the historical are essential to the Christian religion; and so, it would seem, the individual, the personal, the communitarian, the historical are relevant not just to a part of theology but to the whole of it."⁴ Anyone familiar with Lonergan knows that such an existential ecclesiology takes us to a study of the human subject and the operations of human consciousness. Before moving to that central topic, however, I must comment on Lonergan's not-infrequent remarks on Vatican II's ecumenical and interreligious thrust.

² Bernard J. F. Lonergan, S.J., "A New Pastoral Theology," first of the Larkin-Stuart Lectures in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1965-1980*, vol. 17 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert C. Croken and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 225.

³ "A New Pastoral Theology."

⁴ "A New Pastoral Theology," 231-33.

VATICAN II'S OPENING TO THE ECUMENICAL AND INTERRELIGIOUS

On several occasions shortly after the Second Vatican Council Lonergan highlighted the new outreach of the Roman Catholic Church to Christians of other denominations, as well as to adherents of other religions, and even to atheists. The new cultural situation was one that appreciated cultural variety. The time for conceiving culture in a classical way had come to an end. No longer could any thinking person take the position that there is one and only one true way to develop culture, and, of course, it is my way. Now, since the development of historical scholarship, culture is conceived empirically, and the variety of cultures is both acknowledged and valued.

Well, then, as we move to the study of religion, variety is recognized there too, and, again, valued. So, as Lonergan highlights in his 1968 lecture, "Theology and Man's Future," there are a variety of empirical approaches to religion, in the mode of the new sciences: phenomenology of religion, psychology of religion, sociology of religion, history of religion, philosophy of religion. For Catholics, Vatican II made it not only permissible but even desirable to value these various approaches. Vatican II's Decree on Ecumenism, *Unitatis redintegratio*, and Declaration on Non-Christian Religions, *Nostra aetate*, "requires the theologian to reflect on his religion, not in isolation from all others, but in conjunction with others."⁵ Vatican II acknowledges specifically that God grants all people sufficient grace for their salvation.⁶ An exciting new moment in the history of the Catholic Church had arrived.

Similarly, Lonergan began about this time regularly to acknowledge the contribution of Friedrich Heiler to the interreligious discussion, specifically his delineation of seven areas of commonality in the world's religions.⁷ These communally shared characteristics demonstrate that

⁵ Bernard J. F. Lonergan, S.J., "Theology and Man's Future" in *A Second Collection*, ed. William F. J. Ryan, S.J. and Bernard J. Tyrrell, S.J. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1974), 138.

⁶ See the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen gentium*, nos. 15 and 16, and the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et spes*, no. 22.

⁷ Bernard J. F. Lonergan, S.J., "The Future of Christianity," a 1969 lecture in *A Second Collection*, 149, and *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990; originally published 1972), 109. The seven common characteristics noted by Heiler are "that there is a transcendent reality; that he is immanent in human hearts; that he is

"authentic human living consists in self-transcendence," no matter what one's particular religious affiliation.⁸ Eventually, this sort of recurrent theme in Lonergan's lectures led to his important paper presented at the 1978 Second International Symposium on Belief, "Prolegomena to the Study of the Emerging Religious Consciousness of Our Time."⁹ Now adherents of the various religions can recognize that, on one level, the level of infrastructure, there is "a universalist faith," to use the phrase that Lonergan had coined in a 1969 lecture, "Faith and Beliefs."¹⁰ Infrastructure relates religious experience to what can be more immediate access to meaning: sacred objects and places and rites. However, eventually attention needs to be paid to the careful mediation of meaning, the suprastructure, if transcendence is to be interpreted correctly, and then lived authentically.¹¹

Lonergan concludes that a balanced confluence of infrastructural and suprastructural elements of religion has been achieved primarily in Christianity. Here is what he says in the third of the Larkin-Stuart lectures:

The Christian doctrine of the Incarnation of the Son of God, the eternal Word, binds together both styles of expression: the style of the infrastructure, for Christ was man, and the style of the suprastructure, for Christ was God. At the same time it affirms the dialectic by which the one must decrease that the other increase. As the sacred temple and the holy city of Jerusalem were destroyed, so too Christ suffered in the flesh and died to rise again, to sit at the right hand of the Father, to rule the living and in a heavenly Jerusalem to rule the dead. If it was

supreme beauty, truth, righteousness, goodness; that he is love, mercy, compassion; that the way to him is repentance, self-denial, prayer; that the way is love of one's neighbor, even of one's enemies; that the way is love of God, so that bliss is conceived as knowledge of God, union with him, or dissolution into him."

⁸ "The Future of Christianity," in *A Second Collection*, 152.

⁹ Bernard J. F. Lonergan, "Prolegomena to the Study of the Emerging Religious Consciousness of Our Time," in *A Third Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe, S.J. (New York: Paulist Press, 1985).

¹⁰ Bernard J. F. Lonergan, S.J., "Faith and Beliefs," in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1965-1980*, 32, 43.

¹¹ Bernard J. F. Lonergan, S.J., "Sacralization and Secularization," third Larkin-Stuart Lecture in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1965-1980*, 268-69.

sacralization for Christ according to the flesh to be esteemed, revered, listened to, followed, so it was secularization for the secular power to condemn him to suffering and death. But it was a new and far superior sacralization for him to rise again according to the flesh, to sit at the right hand of the Father, to rule in a kingdom that has no end. Finally, as Christ attained his full stature when he entered into the glory of his Father, so too for Christian hope "coming of age" is not some human perfection attained in this life but being received by Christ in the kingdom of heaven.¹²

This somewhat lengthy quotation from "Sacralization and Secularization" is of great value for my purposes here because it clarifies that the content of the new evangelization, that is to say the expression of the Gospel in this very secular age, must be quite sophisticated. Likewise, it is a reminder that the oft-repeated contemporary desire to be "spiritual" but not "religious" is quite naive. Lonergan puts this both elegantly and bluntly in "The Future of Christianity" where he notes that Gospel living requires both the organizational and the mystical. Each supports the other. The organizational, although often enough beset by human sinfulness, as much as is self-centered individualism, gives faith the needed dimension of community, including the expression of creeds. On the other hand, "[t]he organizational ever needs to be brought to life by the inner spirit," the "gift of God's love."¹³ Ecumenical and interreligious dialogue cannot run away from these challenges into some sort of reductionism or syncretism, and thus along with the new opportunities in these areas initiated by the Second Vatican Council there are also tensions.

THE MAJOR TASK

Dealing with the themes unleashed by the movement called for and endorsed by Pope John XXIII's *aggiornamento* and the constitutions, decrees, and declarations of the Second Vatican Council, Lonergan insisted that what is needed is at once "an assimilation of what is

¹² "Sacralization and Secularization," in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1965-1980*, 269-70.

¹³ "The Future of Christianity," in *A Second Collection*, 157-59, and here at 158.

new" "in continuity with the old" in a "dialectical" conversation that acknowledges progress and decline and redemption.¹⁴ The Catholic Church is at a new moment for preaching the Gospel of Jesus and that new moment calls for a major new appropriation of anthropology that includes a reconsideration of cognitional theory and epistemology and metaphysics.¹⁵ In others words, the new evangelization is not going to happen unless the church's magisterium and theologians and pastors, and lots of other members of the faithful as well, undergo a demanding and thoroughgoing reappropriation of human consciousness.

Lonergan concludes "*Existenz and Aggiornamento*," his 1964 conference to the Jesuits of his Toronto-based community, with the hopeful words: "Our time is a time of profound and far-reaching creativity."¹⁶ Yet, while these words of Lonergan are encouraging, they are not optimistic. To live in Christ Jesus is a huge challenge, as should be evident from the lengthy quotation that I just offered. Here is how Lonergan expresses that sobering truth in "*Existenz and Aggiornamento*:" "The present question rather is what kind of men we have to be if we are to implement the *aggiornamento* that the council decrees, if we are to discuss what future decrees are to be desired, if we are to do so without doing more harm than good, without projecting into the Catholic community and the world any unauthenticity we have imbibed from others or created on our own."¹⁷

Lonergan is similarly wary, just a few months after "*Existenz and Aggiornamento*," on May 12, 1965, in an address that he delivered at Marquette University, which he titled "Dimensions of Meaning." In that address, even as the transcultural relevance of the revelation that God has given us in Christ Jesus is acknowledged, as well as the transcultural relevance of the Bible and the church, Lonergan cautions

¹⁴ Bernard J. F. Lonergan, S.J., "The Scope of Renewal," fourth of the Larkin-Stuart Lectures in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1965-1980*, 293. On progress and decline and redemption see, "Sacralization and Secularization," 269. See also Lonergan's 1975 lecture, "Healing and Creating in History," in *A Third Collection*.

¹⁵ "The Scope of Renewal," in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1965-1980*, 296, and *Method in Theology*, 25.

¹⁶ Bernard J. F. Lonergan, S.J., "*Existenz and Aggiornamento*," in *Collection*, vol. 4 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 231.

¹⁷ "*Existenz and Aggiornamento*," in *Collection*, 229.

his listeners that our appropriation of the Gospel and the Bible in and by the church is not automatically faithful. When it comes to authentic Gospel living and preaching there is never any room for complacency. When we think of our present situation in 2013, how prophetically true are the concluding words of that lecture of May 1965, delivered shortly before the fourth and last session of the Second Vatican Council: "There is bound to be formed a solid right that is determined to live in a world that no longer exists. There is bound to be formed a scattered left, captivated by now this, now that new development, exploring now this and now that new possibility. But what will count is a perhaps not numerous center, big enough to be at home in both the old and the new, painstaking enough to work out one by one the transitions to be made, strong enough to refuse half measures and insist on complete solutions even though it has to wait."¹⁸ Nearly fifty years later you and I are witnesses of the truth of Lonergan's prediction. In fact, each of us must ask ourselves: Where am I in the spectrum of these responses to the challenge of living in Christ Jesus at the present moment? We live in a church that is just as much caught up in the unfortunate culture wars as is any other section of society. Each of us needs to examine his or her conscience to discern whether we are contributing to the "perhaps not numerous center," or to one of the unhelpful alternatives.

CONVERSION

If we are going to stay on the Gospel track in a continually changing cultural context we human beings must commit ourselves to self-transcendence, both individually and communally. Ultimately, self-transcendence is a matter of love, and ultimately love is a matter of falling and being in love with God. In 1969, in "The Future of Christianity," Lonergan summarizes: "I have argued that man exists authentically in the measure that he succeeds in self-transcendence, and I have found that self-transcendence has both its fulfilment and its enduring ground in holiness, in God's gift of his love to us."¹⁹

Conversion, then, is fundamental to religion. It can and ought to ground today's "new and more vigorous spread of the gospel in the

¹⁸ Bernard J. F. Lonergan, "Dimensions of Meaning," in *Collection*, 245.

¹⁹ "The Future of Christianity," in *A Second Collection*, 155.

whole world."²⁰ Similarly, it can and ought to supply theology with its foundation, a "foundation that is concrete, dynamic, personal, communal, and historical."²¹

During the Second Vatican Council, when bishops rejected the drafts of documents that were presented to them by the preparatory commissions, for example, the original text for the dogmatic constitution on the church, *Aeternus Unigeniti Pater*, they often did so by objecting that the drafts were not sufficiently biblical and pastoral, that they were too influenced by Scholasticism. This sort of comment set up the church-wide movement to reject neo-Scholasticism with its deductive approach to doctrine and theology. Lonergan saw this as the final step in what had long been in the making, namely, the need to move to a post-Enlightenment "turn to the subject." Conversion entailed a commitment to the appropriation of human subjectivity. "Human subjects, their attention, their developing understanding, their reflective scrutiny, their responsible deliberations are the objective realities," and ultimately there is love, chiefly other-worldly love.²² It is a move to what Lonergan would come to name, in *Method in Theology*, religious and moral and intellectual conversion.²³

THE APPROPRIATION OF ONE'S SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS

Of the three conversions, it may be most difficult to persuade people of the need for intellectual conversion. Theologians are quite ready to give up Scholasticism, and most did so decades ago. But then it becomes more complicated. The move from starting out with first principles to starting with the human subject and the subject's intentional activity ideally leads to a study of cognitional theory, which leads to epistemology, which leads to metaphysics. How many are ready to enter into, to embrace, that long process? First the questions must be asked and answered painstakingly: What am I doing when I am knowing? And then, why is doing that knowing? And then, what

²⁰ "A New Pastoral Theology," 225.

²¹ Bernard J. F. Lonergan, S. J., "Theology in Its New Context," in *A Second Collection*, 67.

²² Bernard J. F. Lonergan, S. J., "Variations in Fundamental Theology," second of the Larkin-Stuart Lectures in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1965-1980*, 247.

²³ See, for example, *Method in Theology*, 238-43 and 267-69.

do I know when I do it?²⁴ We have arrived at the need to formulate, test, and confirm transcendental method. All of us at this Lonergan Workshop know that this task is the work of a lifetime and leads to the very modest recognition that knowledge of whatever sort is "a self-correcting process of learning."²⁵

Now one may ask: Is all this pertinent to and even required for the new evangelization? I answer that it is, precisely if we are going to know how to negotiate the complicated contemporary culture, and even cultures, in which we find ourselves. I also answer that it is, precisely if we are going to do our best to avoid all those mistakes of which Lonergan warned. And since we will make mistakes, human beings that we are, it becomes all the more urgent to recognize when mistakes have been made and to know how to go about correcting them after they are made. In both cases, religious and moral and intellectual conversion are not just desired. They are demanded.

LONERGAN AND SCHOLASTICISM AND VATICAN II

It is necessary to be clear. Lonergan's concern to move from a classicist approach to religious belief and its study in theology to an appropriation of historical-mindedness predated the call for such a move by the Second Vatican Council. Lonergan was already thoroughly engaged in this process when he published *Insight* in 1957. But in the lectures he delivered during and shortly after Vatican II, Lonergan repeatedly emphasized that neo-Scholasticism, with its classical roots and expressions, was holding back both Catholic faith and theology from dealing with the radically changed and changing modern culture. That brand of Thomism had to go. Historical scholarship and the methods of the natural and human sciences and modern philosophy made this an imperative. Vatican II only brought all this long-overdue shift to the forefront of Catholic awareness.

Yet it must be added that Lonergan did not want to throw out the achievements of Thomas Aquinas. In "The Scope of Renewal," the fourth and last of the Larkin-Stuart Lectures, he comments "that currently

²⁴ *Method in Theology*, 25.

²⁵ *Method in Theology*, 159-60, 209, 303.

something like Thomism is very much needed."²⁶ We can perhaps call Lonergan's articulation of transcendental method Thomism in a new key, a post-Enlightenment key, that begins with cognitional theory but concludes to metaphysical positions that are more often than not comparable to those that Aquinas had articulated.

Much more pertinent to assessing the effects of Vatican II fifty years later is that progress is unclear. As I have already noted, Lonergan was prescient on the problems ahead. So now, sorting out in the present what, for Lonergan, was development, on the one hand, and aberration, on the other, is not an easy task. Already in 1968, in his lecture on "The Subject," Lonergan noted that people of faith and theologians were getting lost even though they were moving within the framework of historical-consciousness. The reason is that the excitement of living in "a world of existential subjects," who objectify "the values that they originate in their creativity and freedom" can just as easily be unauthentic as authentic. Lonergan even called it "a trap."²⁷ It can be a process in which subjects become alienated from their deepest meaning.

What, then, is to be done? Lonergan gives the answer over and over again, but to repeat once more for our purposes I refer to the 1970 Medalist's Address to the American Catholic Philosophical Association. In this presentation entitled "Philosophy and Theology," Lonergan strongly calls again for the embrace of the three key questions: "What precisely is one doing when one is knowing?" "Why is doing that knowing?" "What does one know when one does it?"²⁸ Committing oneself to that transcendental method, however, is not enough. All this must be subsumed under the higher operation of appropriating the love of God that floods one's heart through the gift of the Holy Spirit and moves the Christian to believe, indeed, to call God, Abba.²⁹ Then the attentive, intelligent, reasonable, and responsible follower of Jesus can become an evangelist. For, as Lonergan writes in that same Medalist's Address, "[t]he Gospel is to be preached to all nations, to every class

²⁶ "The Scope of Renewal," in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1965-1980*, 292.

²⁷ "The Subject," in *A Second Collection*, 85.

²⁸ "Philosophy and Theology," in *A Second Collection*, 203 and 207.

²⁹ "Philosophy and Theology," in *A Second Collection*, 204.

of men in every culture."³⁰ Employing transcendental method and working from within the experience of religious conversion, persons of Christian faith can strive carefully to understand the several cultures and welcome those living in the several cultures to embrace the Gospel, each in their own peculiar cultural style.

THE AFTERMATH

In 1981, at the Lonergan Workshop, Lonergan reprised some of his earlier thinking in a presentation entitled "Pope John's Intention."³¹ He concluded that a major breakdown had occurred in the contemporary political democracies and other cultural expressions.³² According to Lonergan, the founders of the modern democracies had acknowledged the role of faith in God in the new human realities they were creating. But now secularists have the upper hand and human autonomy is considered to be absolute.³³ Lonergan estimated that other areas of society were undergoing a similar transposition. The sacred is losing ground to the secular.

What is to be done? In a move reminiscent of the classical three ways of spiritual advancement, Lonergan first calls for repentance, the purgative way. Repentance has both individual and communal instances. From purification one can move on to enlightenment, the illuminative way. Such enlightenment

is brought about through regular and sustained meditation on what it really means to be a Christian, a real meaning to be grasped not through definitions and systems but through the living words and deeds of our Lord, our Lady, and the saints, a meaning to be brought home to me in the measure that I come to realize how much of such meaning I have overlooked, how much I have greeted with selective inattention, how much I have

³⁰ "Philosophy and Theology," in *A Second Collection*, 206.

³¹ "Pope John's Intention," in *A Third Collection*.

³² Lonergan does not specifically name the United States in his remarks. But the language that he uses makes me speculate that American democracy was very much on his mind.

³³ For more on this topic see Bernard J. F. Lonergan, S.J., "The Absence of God in Modern Culture," a 1968 lecture contained in *A Second Collection*.

been unwilling to recognize as a genuine element in Christian living. So gradually we replace shallowness and superficiality, weakness and self-indulgence, with the imagination and the feelings, with the solid knowledge and heartfelt willingness of a true follower of Christ.³⁴

Finally, one may arrive at the unitive way when religious conversion takes over, and one moves "through the processes of purification and enlightenment towards the state of union with God."³⁵ Then we become authentic evangelists of the message and meaning of Jesus. The work is far from completed and continues in me and, I trust, in you too.

³⁴ "The Absence of God in Modern Culture," in *A Second Collection*, 236.

³⁵ "The Absence of God in Modern Culture," in *A Second Collection*, 237.

NEWMAN'S IDEA OF A UNIVERSTIY

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The most influential book ever written in the
English language about universities . . .¹

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN, beatified, that is, named "Blessed," by Pope Benedict XVI in 2010, the last step on the way to canonization as a saint in the Catholic Church, grew up in a middle-class English family. He spoke of his religious upbringing as "Bible religion," that is, the religious reading of the Bible and the imagination of the scenes and lessons found there. As a young man he read some of the freethinkers of the day, such as David Hume and Thomas Paine, and after reading some French verses, perhaps Voltaire's, against the immortality of the soul, he remembered saying to himself something like "How dreadful, but how plausible!"² Nevertheless, at the age of fifteen, under the influence of a Protestant clergyman by the name of Walter Mayers, Newman experienced a deep religious conversion.

When I was fifteen, (in the summer of 1816), a great change of thought took place in me. I fell under the influence of a definite Creed, and received into my intellect impressions of dogma, which, through God's mercy, have never been effaced or obscured.³

¹ George Fallis, *Multiversities, Ideas, and Democracy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 19.

² John Henry Newman, *Apologia pro vita sua* (London: Longmans, uniform edition, 1895), 3.

³ Newman, *Apologia pro vita sua*, 4.

Later, he spoke of this transformation as "the beginning of divine faith" in him and as a conversion to the spiritual life.⁴ Even into his sixties Newman would still say that "I am more sure that God reached into my life and touched me at that young age than that I have hands or feet."⁵

Soon afterward Newman went up to study at Trinity College, Oxford, eventually becoming a fellow of Oriel College and a clergyman in the Anglican Church. He immersed himself in the writings of the early fathers of the church and gained a reputation as a renowned preacher and teacher. He became the central figure in the influential Oxford Movement, an effort to return the established Anglican Church to its roots in ancient Christianity. Eventually, in 1845, after meeting significant opposition and after a sustained period of prayer, he entered the Roman Catholic Church. He was ordained a Catholic priest in Rome in 1847.

In the course of his life Newman was to pen several works deemed classics, among them *The Idea of a University*. Of his writings Martin Svaglic wrote:

Although the reputation of John Henry Newman as one of the great masters of English prose has never been seriously questioned and is perhaps higher today than ever, it is a reputation which has come to rest, for the average cultivated reader, on two above all of his more than forty volumes: on the *Apologia pro vita sua*, in which, to vindicate his good character, he gives a dramatic and poignant account of his journey from Evangelicalism through the Anglo-Catholicism of the Oxford Movement to the Roman Catholic Church; and on *The Idea of a University*, the elegant defense of a liberal education which is perhaps the most timeless of all his books and certainly the one most intellectually accessible to readers of every religious faith and of none.⁶

In the early 1850s, Newman was asked by the Catholic bishops of Ireland to found a Catholic university in Ireland, and it was in that

⁴ *Autobiographical Writings* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1957), 79.

⁵ Newman, *Apologia pro vita sua*, 4.

⁶ Martin Svaglic, editor's introduction, *The Idea of a University* (South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1959), vii.

context that in 1852 he gave a number of lectures that eventually became *The Idea of a University*.⁷ Newman's university itself underwent a number of difficult times, beginning with basic misunderstandings between Newman and the Irish bishops. The latter wanted a narrowly controlled university, more akin to a seminary, whereas Newman, influenced by his experience at Oxford, wanted a university in the full sense of the word.⁸ Nevertheless, Newman's lectures outlasted their original audience and *The Idea of a University* has spoken to audiences ever since. Of this work Frank M. Turner wrote:

No work in the English language has had more influence on the public ideals of higher education. No other book on the character and purposes of universities has received so frequent citation and praise by other academic commentators . . . Like the negotiator who succeeds by being the first person to get his material on the table, Newman against all odds and experience established the framework within which later generations have considered university academic life.⁹

Why has Newman's book been so influential? Certainly Newman did not foresee so many aspects of contemporary higher education, especially the large researched-focused universities with their endless silos of greater and greater specialization oriented toward pragmatic

⁷ See Svaglic, *The Idea of a University*, xiii-xv. In his introduction to the Notre Dame edition, Svaglic gives the history of the various editions of *The Idea* which did not become consolidated into the final version of the Uniform Edition of Newman's works until 1889. See *The Idea of a University*, xiii-xv.

⁸ Recall Newman's remarkable words, "Catholics did not make us Catholic, Oxford did" (Ward's *Life of Newman*, chapter 21). For the history of Newman's university, see Ian Ker, *John Henry Newman: A Biography* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), 376-96.

⁹ Frank M. Turner, introduction to J. H. Newman, *The Idea of a University* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996), 282. See also 292: "No matter how much Newman's description and prescription of university life differ from the contemporary reality, no alternative rhetoric has succeeded in substituting itself for Newman's in the sphere of public discourse on higher education." Elsewhere Turner calls *The Idea* "the most influential work on liberal education in the English language," "A true classic of the western tradition" (262); "almost prophetic" (258); "At their peril those concerned with modern university life – students, faculty, trustees, alumni, and parents – may ignore Newman's volume, but if they read it and think seriously about it, whether in agreement or disagreement, they cannot remain indifferent to what he wrote – unless they are fundamentally indifferent to higher education to begin with" (285-86).

social change. Still, as we will try to bring out in this article, the reason why Newman's book is still considered a classic is that, better than any other modern work on the university, it presents "the idea" of a university at its best, that is, as a living ideal influencing the cooperation of many for its realization. I say "at its best," for unless the university is asymptotically approaching that "best," then, according to Newman, it easily in fact becomes the victim of destructive cultural forces.¹⁰

Now, contrary to a general impression (often propagated by anthologies or selections of great literary works), Newman's objective in *The Idea of a University* was not just to outline the ideal of a university, but he specifically aimed at setting out the ideal of a Catholic university. His "idea" was of a university that of its nature was open to all of reality, including the theological facts to which all the great monotheistic religions of the world testify and to which Catholicism testifies. According to Newman, short of being open to those facts, a university prematurely cuts itself off from the fullness of reality and ceases to provide a genuinely liberal or freeing education.

In this article we will first set out Newman's articulation of the essential idea of a university as providing a liberal education; secondly, we will set out his thesis that such an ideal includes an openness to all the disciplines, that is, a philosophical element which he calls a "science of the sciences;" short of that kind of openness, the university easily contracts in on itself and the separate disciplines either narrow their focus or exercise "totalitarian ambitions" with regard to one another; thirdly, we will highlight Newman's insistence that a genuinely liberal education be open to the question of God and what the great religions of the world contend is the fact of God; fourthly and finally, we will highlight Newman's contention that Catholicism can concretely play an integrating role in the university, not only on the intellectual level, but also on the moral and religious lives of its students.

¹⁰ Edmund Husserl pointed out one such destructive tendency of Western academic life, that is, a certain academicism that substitutes "form" for substance: the proper formatting of footnotes to the neglect of deep and serious content. See Edmund Husserl, *The Crisis of European Science and Transcendental Phenomenology* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1970).

THE IDEA OF A UNIVERSITY: LIBERAL KNOWLEDGE

For Newman, the aim of a university education is a certain "enlargement of mind" that makes a person a refined member of human society. In order to contribute to such an enlargement of mind the university provides an environment, a "circle of disciplines," within which students study, learn, and undergo a significant human development.

In a series of essays from the 1850s, *University Sketches*, Newman gives a wonderful description of the founding of universities, how ancient teachers entered a city, set up tents in a beautiful site and to these places pupils would flock to imbibe wisdom and learning.¹¹ A university, then, answers to a need of our very nature:

Mutual education, in a large sense of the word, is one of the great and incessant occupations of human society, carried on partly with set purpose, and partly not. One generation forms another; and the existing generation is ever acting and reacting upon itself in the persons of its individual members.¹²

The essential principle of the university is the professorial system, that is, the living influence of one person on another, the teacher on the taught. Books are important instruments in the consolidation and communication of knowledge, but the influence of a teacher provides what books never can.

The general principles of any study you may learn by books at home; but the detail, the color, the tone, the air, the life which makes it live in us, you must catch all these from those in whom it lives already.¹³

A university, therefore, implies a center where teachers and students gather, there to engage in the process of intellectual exchange in various fields.¹⁴ The point of this process, "the action of mind upon mind," is not merely the memorization or cataloging of facts in one particular area, nor a smattering of facts in a number of different areas, but rather

¹¹ See John Henry Newman, chapters on the "Site of a University" and "University Life," *University Sketches* (New York: Alba House), 17-43.

¹² Newman, *University Sketches*, 6-7.

¹³ Newman, *University Sketches*, 9.

¹⁴ Newman, *The Idea of a University*, 76.

an "illumination of mind" that is a value in itself and that justifies the greatness of the human process we call education. The aim of a university education is not merely expertise in a particular area or profession, but rather an essential quality that consists

... not merely in the passive reception into the mind of a number of ideas hitherto unknown to it, but in the mind's energetic and simultaneous action upon and towards and among those new ideas, which are rushing in upon it. It is the action of a formative power, reducing to order and meaning the matter of our acquirements; it is making the objects of our knowledge subjectively our own, or to use a familiar word, it is a digestion of what we receive, into the substance of our previous state of thought; and without this no enlargement is said to follow.¹⁵

Newman is aiming at describing a particular quality of mind, a particular widening and deepening that comes with being genuinely educated. He goes on to describe this quality:

There is no enlargement, unless there be a comparison of ideas one with another, as they come before the mind, and a systematizing of them. We feel our minds to be growing and expanding *then*, when we not only learn, but refer what we learn to what we know already.

Beginners in the intellectual life, those who have not achieved this enlargement of mind, tend to be "merely dazzled by phenomena, instead of perceiving things as they are." Their conversation tends to be "unreal," and "there is no greater calamity for a good cause than that they should get hold of it."¹⁶ Newman speaks of those who "can give no better guarantee for the philosophical truth of their principles than their popularity at the moment, and their happy conformity in ethical character to the age which admires them."¹⁷

On the other hand, the beginning of genuine enlargement of mind takes place when the young are impressed with the need for order and system in their thinking. Newman insists on the importance of method

¹⁵ Newman, *The Idea of a University*, 101.

¹⁶ Newman, *The Idea of a University*, xliii.

¹⁷ Newman, *The Idea of a University*, xlvii.

in the intellectual training of the young men who would be frequenting his school.

I hold very strongly that the first step in intellectual training is to impress upon a boy's mind the idea of science, method, order, principle, and system; of rule and exception, of richness and harmony. This is commonly and excellently done by making him begin with Grammar; nor can too great accuracy, or minuteness and subtlety of teaching be used towards him, as his faculties expand, with this simple purpose . . . Let him once gain this habit of method, of starting from fixed points, of making his ground good as he goes, of distinguishing what he knows from what he does not know, and I conceive he will be gradually initiated into the largest and truest philosophical views, and will feel nothing but impatience and disgust at the random theories and imposing sophistries and dashing paradoxes, which carry away half-formed and superficial intellects.¹⁸

Nor is method or system in one area alone sufficient. Newman is well aware of "the bore" whose conversation is limited to his own area of expertise.

Now of all those who furnish their share to rational conversation, a mere adept in his own art is universally admitted to be the worst. The sterility and un-instructiveness of such a person's social hours are quite proverbial.¹⁹

Hence the need in education for the systematic introduction into various areas of study. This process, beginning in the lower years of schooling, should continue in the university. There the enlargement of mind can take place through exposure to a variety of courses and professors.

It is a great point then to enlarge the range of studies which a university professes, even for the sake of the students; and though they cannot pursue every subject which is open to them,

¹⁸ Newman, *The Idea of a University*, xlv.

¹⁹ Newman, *The Idea of a University*, 130.

they will be the gainers by living among those and under those who represent the whole circle . . .²⁰

So there is a "circle" of disciplines taught in the university and the circle itself teaches:

[The student] profits by an intellectual tradition, which is independent of particular teachers, which guides him in his choice of subjects, and duly interprets for him those which he chooses. He apprehends the great outlines of knowledge, the principles on which it rests, the scale of its parts, its lights and shades, its great points and little . . . Hence it is that his education is called "liberal." *A habit of thought is formed which lasts through life, of which the attributes are freedom, equitableness, calmness, moderation, and wisdom.*²¹

Newman's "enlargement of mind" is reminiscent of what Bernard Lonergan in the twentieth century called "intellectual conversion."²² For Lonergan such a transformation of mind is not just a case of learning more or memorizing more or even a simple intellectual development. It is rather a break-through to a whole new level or horizon of awareness. It involves leaving behind imaginative and mythic structures that guided one's previous development and beginning to function on a totally new and properly intellectual level.²³

²⁰ Newman, *The Idea of a University*, 76.

²¹ Newman, *The Idea of a University*, 76 (emphases added).

²² Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 237-41.

²³ The creation of each new science means the break-through from a particular imaginative or mental groove to thinking in theoretical or systematic terms: from "the sun rises in the East and sets in the West" to Copernicus's mental revolution in astronomy. For Lonergan the intellectual conversion that inevitably takes place in truly learning any one field eventually leads to a more general intellectual conversion that finds expression in a philosophy of knowledge, objectivity, and reality. See Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, vol. 3 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992).

PHILOSOPHY, THE SCIENCE OF SCIENCES

For Newman, mental illumination, "the philosophic habit," leads to a philosophy, a "science of sciences," that relates each of the sciences to each other and to the whole that is human knowing. This science of the sciences deals with

... the bearings of one science on another, and the use of each to each, and the location and limitation and adjustment and due appreciation of them all, one with another.²⁴

Without such a "science of the sciences," Newman asserts, the sciences easily engage in imperialistic tendencies, impinging on what is the rightful domain of other disciplines. The omission of any essential science from the circle of sciences causes the other sciences to exceed their bounds and pronounce on subjects beyond their province.²⁵ Such is the tendency of the natural sciences to transgress their boundaries and usurp the province of the human sciences; and such also is the tendency of the natural and human sciences to usurp the boundaries and province of theology. The political economist, for example, has a right to discuss methods of gaining wealth; he has no right to determine that wealth must be single-mindedly sought for its own sake.²⁶ Similarly with medical science: here the danger is that the medical student will not see that bodily health is not the only goal of the human life and that medical science is not the only or the highest science; for the human person, in addition to a physical nature, has a moral and religious one as well.

He has a mind and a soul; and the mind and soul have a legitimate sovereignty over the body, and the sciences relating to them have in consequence the precedence of those sciences which relate to the body.²⁷

The problem is not that a student single-mindedly focused on health or wealth would be "taking error for truth, for what he relied on *was*

²⁴ Newman, *The Idea of a University*, 38.

²⁵ Newman, *The Idea of a University*, 55.

²⁶ Newman, *The Idea of a University*, 67.

²⁷ Newman, *The Idea of a University*, 383.

truth – but in not understanding that there were other truths, and those higher than his own.”²⁸

How does Newman know this? How does he know that the human person has dimensions that transcend the merely physical? He knows it empirically; not as he knows external empirical facts, but through his knowledge of himself, through his knowledge of his own mind and of his own conscience. Admittedly, it is not always easy to have knowledge of these dimensions of the human person. As Newman says in *The Idea*, these truths are as superior to the knowledge derived from the immediate senses as they are vulnerable before the “hard, palpable, material facts” of physical nature:

... the phenomena, which are the basis of morals and Religion ... are the dictates either of Conscience or of Faith. They are faint shadows and tracings, certain indeed, but delicate, fragile, and almost evanescent, which the mind recognizes at one time, not at another, – discerns when it is calm, loses when it is in agitation.²⁹

Years later, in the most philosophical of his works, *The Grammar of Assent*, Newman will make such self-knowledge the key to all philosophical thought. For Newman the ultimate court of appeal for the knowledge of human mentality would be the mind’s own knowledge of itself. As he trenchantly expressed it “in these provinces of inquiry egotism is true modesty.”³⁰ This necessary egotism at the foundation of mental and philosophical science points to the inevitabilities that we necessarily employ in our human operations, whether or not we advert to what we are doing.

I am what I am or I am nothing. I cannot think, reflect, or judge about my being, without starting from the very point which I aim at concluding ... I cannot avoid being sufficient for myself, for I cannot make myself anything else, and to

²⁸ Newman, *The Idea of a University*, 385. See Newman’s famous *Biglietto* speech on the occasion of his becoming a cardinal in 1879: <http://www.newmanreader.org/works/addresses/file2.html>.

²⁹ Newman, *The Idea of a University*, 387.

³⁰ John Henry Newman, *A Grammar of Assent* (London: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1913), 384.

change me is to destroy me. If I do not use myself I have no other self to use . . . What I have to ascertain are the laws under which I live. My first elementary lesson of duty is that of resignation to the laws of nature, whatever they are; my first disobedience is to be impatient at what I am, and to indulge an ambitious aspiration after what I cannot be, to cherish a distrust of my powers, and to desire to change laws which are identical with myself.³¹

In spite of oppositions and conflicts among people on matters philosophical, ethical, and religious, still a serious inquirer

. . . brings together his reasons and relies on them, because they are his own, and this is his primary evidence; and he has a second ground of evidence, in the testimony of those who agree with him. But his best evidence is the former, which is derived from his own thoughts; and it is that which the world has a right to demand of him; and therefore his true sobriety and modesty consists, not in claiming for his conclusions an acceptance or scientific approval which is not to be found anywhere, but in stating what are personally his grounds . . .³²

It is especially the experience of conscience that is central for Newman, and by conscience he means, not a moral sense or regret, but rather a personal dictate, a dictate that implies a Person, the source of moral obligation.³³

THEOLOGY, THE SCIENCE OF GOD

It is here that the notion of theology enters into the essence of Newman's idea of a university. For Newman, theology is an integral part of the whole which is the circle of the sciences, and by theology Newman means, not primarily the doctrines that are specific to Catholicism, but rather those which she shares with the other great religions of the world. Newman's aim is as much as possible to speak "from reason"

³¹ Newman, *The Idea of a University*, 347.

³² Newman, *The Idea of a University*, 385-86.

³³ On conscience, see the Newman's *Grammar of Assent*, *passim*.

and to speak to a "mixed" audience.³⁴ For example, take a full and unrestricted meaning for the word "God" as a fact and you introduce among the subjects of your knowledge "a fact encompassing, closing in upon, absorbing, every other fact conceivable."³⁵ This is an objective fact ascertainable, not just by Catholics, but by others as well.

With us Catholics, as with the first race of Protestants, as with Mohametans, and all Theists, the word contains, as I have already said, a theology in itself.³⁶

At the same time, Newman insists, "I am not assuming that Catholicism is true, while I make myself the champion of theology."³⁷ Theology, in the sense in which Newman takes it, is not Christianity or "acquaintance with the Scriptures;" rather, it is the "science of God" which he explains as follows:

... as in the human frame there is a living principle, acting upon it and through it by means of volition, so, behind the veil of the visible universe, there is an invisible, intelligent Being, acting on and through it, as and when He will. Further, I mean that this invisible Agent is in no sense a soul of the world, after the analogy of human nature, but, on the contrary, is absolutely distinct from the world, as being its Creator, Upholder, Governor, and Sovereign Lord.³⁸

Newman continues to clarify what he means by "God:"

Here we are at once brought into the circle of doctrines which the idea of God embodies. I mean then by the Supreme Being, one who is simply self-dependent, and the only Being who is such; moreover, that He is without beginning or Eternal, and the only Eternal; that in consequence He has lived a whole eternity by Himself; and hence that He is all-sufficient, sufficient for His own blessedness, and all blessed, and ever-blessed. Further, I mean a Being, who, having these

³⁴ See Newman's *The Idea of a University*, 3-4, 137-39, 161-63, etc.

³⁵ Newman, *The Idea of a University*, 19.

³⁶ Newman, *The Idea of a University*, 27.

³⁷ Newman, *The Idea of a University*, 45.

³⁸ Newman, *The Idea of a University*, 46.

prerogatives has the Supreme Good, or, rather, is the Supreme Good, or has all the attributes of Good in infinite intenseness; all wisdom, all truth, all justice, all love, all holiness, all beautifulness; who is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent; ineffably one, absolutely perfect; and such, *that what we do not know and cannot even imagine of Him, is far more wonderful than what we do and can.*

In an article entitled "Newman on Theology and Contemplative Receptivity in the Liberal Arts," Kevin Mongrain has reflected on Newman's meaning here:

In this passage Newman gives a generic-sounding definition of God that does not refer to specifically Jewish or Christian claims. However, his definition is far from being Deistic natural theology. He has crafted this definition with materials he has found in the biblical portrayal of God's revelation of "divine glory." The most important, although unspoken, element of the biblical theology of divine glory that Newman deployed here is the First Commandment. Those who know God's glory know that God is uniquely God, uniquely and superlatively supreme, eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, etc., and so there can be no rivals or alternatives to God. Anything other that is treated as if it were God is an idol. As the last line of the passage cited above states: "... what we do not know and cannot even imagine of [God], is far more wonderful than what we do and can."³⁹

According to Mongrain, Newman is articulating a principle of divine mystery and excess. Theology as the "science of God" turns out to be the science of the surpassing wonder of that which is unknown over that which is known. The object of theology, therefore, is the reality of that which always transcends the limits of what we take to be reality. For Newman, God's love for us always spurs us to cross, and even cross out, the boundary lines of our knowledge, always invites us to move toward

³⁹ Kevin Mongrain, "Newman on Theology and Contemplative Receptivity in the Liberal Arts," *Newman Studies Journal* 4, no. 2 (Fall 2007): 14-15.

a perpetually fascinating yet ever-receding horizon of understanding.⁴⁰ Here is Newman again on the subject matter of theology:

Such is what Theology teaches about God, a doctrine, as the very idea of its subject matter presupposes, so mysterious as in its fullness to *lie beyond any system*, and in particular aspects to be simply external to nature, and to seem in parts even to be irreconcilable with itself, the imagination being unable to embrace what the reason determines. It teaches of a Being infinite, yet personal; all-blessed, yet ever operative; absolutely separate from the creature, yet in every part of the creation at every moment; above all things, yet under everything. It teaches of a Being who, though the highest, yet in the work of creation, conservation, government, retribution, makes Himself, as it were, the minister and servant of all; who, though inhabiting eternity, allows Himself to take an interest, and to have sympathy, in the matters of space and time.⁴¹

Newman is highlighting here two points: first, the subject matter of theology is that which is "so mysterious" that it lies "beyond any system;" second, the subject matter of theology is inherently paradoxical.

Thus for Newman the purpose of theology in a liberal arts curriculum goes far beyond simply balancing the secular curriculum with some vaguely religious ballast. At a minimum, the purpose of theology is to teach the reality and validity of that which escapes exhaustive rational explanation in any system; theology teaches a Truth beyond the system of any set of truths. At a maximum, theology can teach that all things in the world are creatures and not just things; hence human creatures exist to know, worship, and serve the mysterious One who exceeds all, and whose Supreme Goodness works within all to teach human creatures that it is supremely good to always seek the highest wisdom, justice, and holiness always hiding "behind the veil of the visible universe."⁴²

⁴⁰ Mongrain, "Newman on Theology and Contemplative Receptivity," 15.

⁴¹ Newman, *The Idea of a University*, 47-48.

⁴² Mongrain, "Newman on Theology and Contemplative Receptivity," 15.

According to Mongrain, Newman is articulating here not only a view of the mystery of God but also the mystery of creation. But in both cases his understanding of mystery is positive not negative.

Negative mystery is that which the mind cannot know at all; positive mystery is that which the heart cannot know enough. Negative mysteries frustrate the mind and dispirit the heart, but positive mysteries captivate the heart, which in turn perpetually motivates the mind to keep thinking. Theology is about mystery in the positive sense, and Newman believed theology belongs in a liberal arts curriculum because it teaches the validity and necessity of an existential disposition of contemplative receptivity toward the world as a realm of positive mystery where God's Truth dwells as an elusive yet loving providential presence. It is this theological understanding of the world that guarantees the validity and goodness of an open-ended exploratory, contemplative disposition toward reality. Because God is good, loving, and providential, the world God made and dwells within is eminently worthy of reverently diligent study and diligently reverent contemplation.⁴³

Newman therefore is far from holding that theological doctrine is the only truth and all other intellectual disciplines must surrender their own truths to it. Instead Newman's position is that theology, which teaches the positive mystery of God's providential presence, provides the ultimate rationale and motivation for all other intellectual disciplines to pursue their own truths, and to do so without disdaining the ever-greater "theophanous" reality beyond all finite truths.⁴⁴

THE IDEA OF A CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY

What, then, is to protect these "intimations from above?" Only "a local government on earth" which will represent that "seat of government which is in another world."

⁴³ Mongrain, "Newman on Theology and Contemplative Receptivity," 16.

⁴⁴ Mongrain, "Newman on Theology and Contemplative Receptivity," 16.

That great institution, then, the Catholic Church, has been set up by Divine Mercy, as a present, visible antagonist, and the only possible antagonist, to sight and sense.⁴⁵

Here it would seem that, according to Newman, theology in general and Catholic theology in particular demands the presence of the authority of the church. In fact, it would seem that for this reason the church pertains, not just to the integrity of the university, but to its essence.

Where theology is, there she must be; and if a university cannot fulfill its name and office without the recognition of revealed truth, she must be there to see that it is a *bona fide* recognition, sincerely made and consistently acted on.⁴⁶

According to Newman, the Christian revelation upon which theology reflects is a deposit delivered once and for all to the apostles, passed on from generation to generation, in a real sense to be developed in each age, but never to be adulterated or changed. It is to be accepted as God's Word, an incentive to our thought, but not to be changed by our thought.

Certainly, great minds indeed "need elbow-room," and so there is room for the utmost exercise of reason in the Catholic university. But still, revelation is to be accepted as God's Word, an incentive to our thought, but not to be changed by our thought.⁴⁷ The very notion of revelation, which is reflected in Catholic theology, therefore, includes the notion of the church as the authoritative mediator of revelation.

Ecclesiastical authority, not argument, is the supreme rule and the appropriate guide for Catholics in matters of religion.⁴⁸

Hence a direct and active jurisdiction of the church over the university and in it is necessary, lest it should be the rival of the church with the community at large in those theological matters which to the church are exclusively committed.⁴⁹ How in fact the church would exercise this jurisdiction over the Catholic theology of a university Newman never

⁴⁵ Newman, *The Idea of a University*, 388.

⁴⁶ Newman, *The Idea of a University*, 172.

⁴⁷ Newman, *The Idea of a University*, 358.

⁴⁸ Newman, *The Idea of a University*, 8.

⁴⁹ Newman, *The Idea of a University*, 163.

explicitly brings out. It is important to remember that he wanted the Catholic laity to be very prominent in his university. He did not want it to be a seminary. In fact, it was here that his own conception of the elevated intellectual character of a university most differed from the conception of Archbishop Cullen and the Irish bishops in general.

The point, then, is that a truly liberal education will include an openness to theology and to the facts studied in theology, including the question of God as a valid question and the religious experience of the human family. Such an openness will give value to each area of human study, each science, because it will see that area as rooted in the fact of the transcendent. It will also "relativize" each area, as limited by the other sciences and by the transcendent yet immanent fact of God.

In a word, religious truth is not only a portion, but a condition of general knowledge. To blot it out is nothing short, if I may so speak, of unraveling the web of university teaching. It is, according to the Greek proverb, to take the spring out of the year; it is to imitate the preposterous proceeding of those tragedians who represented a drama with the omission of its principle part.⁵⁰

As we noted, for Newman the church bears directly on the integrity of the university, though not directly on its essence. Its essence is liberal knowledge, the philosophic habit or enlargement of mind that relates each of the sciences to each other and to the whole of knowledge. This philosophical habit includes theology, at least as a system of pastoral instruction and moral duty, and the bearing of that theology on the other sciences.⁵¹ Still, that does not make the university a Catholic university.

It is no sufficient security for the Catholicity of a University, even though the whole of Catholic theology should be professed in it, unless the Church breathes her own pure and unearthly spirit into it, and fashions and moulds its organization, and watches over its teaching, and knits together its pupils, and superintends its action.⁵²

⁵⁰ Newman, *The Idea of a University*, 52-53.

⁵¹ Newman, *The Idea of a University*, 139.

⁵² Newman, *The Idea of a University*, 164.

In fact, there is a specific danger for an intellectual culture to make mental refinement the only aim of human life. Mental refinement does indeed contribute a great deal to human existence, and it can contribute to the Christian character. At its best, it focuses the mind beyond the world of the senses.⁵³ It can contribute to the sanctity of the Christian Platonists of ancient Alexandria, such as Origen and Clement, and the personal refinement of Newman's own model, the seventeenth-century Roman saint, Philip Neri.

Nevertheless, such mental refinement of itself – the qualities of a Victorian “gentleman” of the nineteenth century – falls far short of the requirements of a saint.

At this day the “gentleman” is the creation, not of Christianity, but of civilization. But the reason is obvious. The world is content with setting right the surface of things; the Church aims at regenerating the very depths of the heart.⁵⁴

The tendency of mental refinement, the philosophic habit of mind, is to make itself the center of human development and to stop short of moral and religious self-transcendence. Self-reproach, a subtle form of pride, can take the place of genuine heartfelt repentance.⁵⁵ It can become a religion in itself and take the place of genuine religion. It can become the religion of a Julian the Apostate, a religion that swallows up human suffering, evil and death, in a certain refined mental attitude.⁵⁶ Reason as it actually exists, and especially in a non-believing society, tends toward an independence of or an indifference to God.⁵⁷

And so, left to themselves, universities will, in spite of their profession of Catholic truth, work out results more or less prejudicial to Catholic interests. In fact, because universities aim at liberal knowledge, knowledge for its own sake, they have a tendency to impress upon a person a merely philosophical theory of life in place of revelation. Such a merely philosophical theory of life has in fact a

⁵³ Newman, *The Idea of a University*, 141.

⁵⁴ Newman, *The Idea of a University*, 154.

⁵⁵ Newman, *The Idea of a University*, 145-47.

⁵⁶ Newman, *The Idea of a University*, 147ff.

⁵⁷ Newman, *The Idea of a University*, 139.

tendency to reflect merely our own achievement, and by such a measure we will tend to judge all things, including divine revelation.⁵⁸

Hence, more is needed for the Catholic ethos of a university; and this more Newman found supplied by "the college" or small-group principle in a university. Though the *Idea of a University* speaks of the direct presence of the church in the Catholic university, still Newman had not shown in a constructive fashion how this was to be accomplished. In two versions of a projected introduction to the *Idea*, for which a much shorter note was later substituted, he both answered his critics and indicated the nature of his constructive proposals. In these documents he says that while the church uses a university for knowledge, to secure its religious character, and for the morals of its members, she has ever adopted within its precincts the small group environments of seminaries, halls, colleges, and monastic establishments.⁵⁹ In a memorandum drawn up for Archbishop Cullen in 1852, Newman rejects the idea that students should be housed in the building destined for university work, and he goes on to say:

The only way to hinder the disorder incident upon a University in a town is to do what they were forced to do at Oxford and other Universities in the middle ages – to open Inns or Halls, as they were called, which, when endowed, became Colleges.⁶⁰

This obviously is the doctrine which Newman expounds at length in the *University Sketches*: that colleges stand to the university as discipline stands to influence. They give the university its integrity, just as the lectures and the attractive power of great personalities pertain to the essence of the university.⁶¹ Left to itself, "influence" – the function of the professor – runs the grave risk of turning to vanity and anarchy. The professorial system fulfills the strict idea of a university and is sufficient for its being, but it is not sufficient for its well-being.⁶²

⁵⁸ Newman, *The Idea of a University*, 164-67.

⁵⁹ In the Alba House introduction to Newman's *University Sketches*, Michael Tierney highlights this development in Newman; see pp. xxii-xxv.

⁶⁰ Newman, *University Sketches*, xxiv. See Fergal McGrath, *Newman's University: Idea and Reality*, 1951, 169-71.

⁶¹ Newman, *University Sketches*, 172ff.

⁶² Newman, *University Sketches*, 175.

When, then, I say that a great school or university consists in the communication of knowledge, in lectures and hearers, that is, in the professorial system, you must not run away with the notion that I consider personal influence enough for its well-being. It is indeed its essence, but something more is necessary than barely to get on from day to day; for its sure and comfortable existence we must look to law, rule, order; to religion, from which law proceeds; to the collegiate system, in which it is embodied; and to endowments, by which it is protected and perpetuated.⁶³

The corrective which "constitutes the integrity of a university," is the college, which is based upon and necessarily implies, the tutorial system. In Newman's Oxford it was this latter which had been exaggerated. Whereas the besetting sin of the professor is vanity, that of the tutor is idleness or torpor. Newman himself as Tutor of Oriel had done his best to redress the balance and to restore the power of the university over the college and of the professor over the tutor. As Michael Tierney in his introduction to the *University Sketches* says:

Now, while busy in Dublin . . . [Newman's] old view is clarified and intensified by a new perception, that the means chosen by the Church through the ages in order to regulate the university and inform it with Christian discipline, has been in fact the College.⁶⁴

The advantages of the college or small group is to protect us from ourselves.

Regularity, rule, respect for others, the eyes of friends and acquaintances, the absence from temptation, external restraints generally, are of first importance in protecting us against ourselves . . . Faith and morals are in great danger when we leave our own home . . . and the remedy is to form other homes and small communities . . .⁶⁵

⁶³ Newman, *University Sketches*, 70.

⁶⁴ Michael Tierney, introduction to Newman's *University Sketches*, xxii.

⁶⁵ Newman, *University Sketches*, 182.

There is even an intellectual advantage to the college, for there the tutor can check the student's progress and his ability to consolidate and express his knowledge. Smaller groups are also outlets for feelings and in them there can be a healthy sense of competition.⁶⁶ The value of the small group or college is particularly evident in Newman's sermon of 1856, "Intellect, the Instrument of Religious Training." There, a propos of the feast of St. Monica, he speaks of the dangers of a young boy being away from home and new worlds opening up to him. He speaks of the diversity of human faculties, physical, intellectual, moral and the dangers of separating these human faculties which in each person should be united.

The perfection of the intellect is called ability and talent; the perfection of our moral nature is virtue. And it is our great misfortune here, and our trial, that, as things are found in the world, the two are separated, and independent of each other; that, where power of intellect is, there need not be virtue; and that where right, and goodness, and moral greatness are, there need not be talent. It was not so in the beginning.⁶⁷

It is because of this separation of faculties and its dangers that the church established universities. The following quote is a fitting conclusion to Newman's thought on the ethos of a Catholic university.

Here, then, I conceive, is the object of the Holy See and the Catholic Church in setting up Universities; it is to reunite things which were in the beginning joined together by God and have been put asunder by man. Some persons will say that I am thinking of confining, distorting, and stunting the growth of the intellect by ecclesiastical supervision. I have no such thought. Nor have I thought of a compromise, as if religion must give up something, and science something. I wish the intellect to range with the utmost freedom, and religion to enjoy an equal freedom; but what I am stipulating for is, that they should be found in one and the same place, and exemplified in the same persons. I want to destroy that diversity of centers, which puts

⁶⁶ Newman, *University Sketches*, 183.

⁶⁷ J. H. Newman, "Intellect, the Instrument of Religious Training," in *Sermons Preached on Various Occasions* (London: Longmans, Uniform Edition, 1894), 5-6.

everything into confusion by creating a contrariety of influences. I wish the same spots and the same individuals to be at once oracles of philosophy and shrines of devotion. It will not satisfy me, what satisfies so many, to have two independent systems, intellectual and religious, going at once side by side, by a sort of division of labor, and only accidentally brought together. It will not satisfy me, if religion is here, and science there, and young men converse with science all day, and lodge with religion in the evening. It is not touching the evil, to which these remarks have been directed, if young men eat and drink and sleep in one place, and think in another: I want the same roof to contain both the intellectual and moral discipline. Devotion is not a sort of finish given to the sciences; nor is science a sort of feather in the cap, if I may so express myself, an ornament and set-off to devotion. I want the intellectual layman to be religious, and the devout ecclesiastic to be intellectual.⁶⁸

CONCLUSION

Some 125 years after Newman wrote his work, Bernard Lonergan wrote the following about the contemporary university – a marked change from the university of Newman's time:

The correlation between the accelerating explosion of knowledge and socio-cultural change confronts the contemporary university with a grave problem. For the university has ceased to be a storehouse whence traditional wisdom and knowledge are dispensed. It is a center in which ever-increasing knowledge is disseminated to bring about ever-increasing social and cultural change.⁶⁹

Admittedly, the answers John Henry Newman gave in the nineteenth century to questions about the nature of a university cannot be carried over wholecloth to our situation today. Nineteenth-century England and Ireland were quite different from twenty-first century America.

⁶⁸ Newman, "Intellect, the Instrument of Religious Training," 12-13.

⁶⁹ Bernard Lonergan, *A Second Collection* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1974), 135.

Still, many would feel that Newman's *The Idea of a University*, is a classic, and the very notion of a classic is that we never finish reading it. Each age brings its own questions and reaches up to a classic to glean from it some new insight, some new angle, on the fundamental elements of human existence.

Newman's *Idea of a University* holds out the ideal of education as a comprehensive mental development open to all essential areas of human culture and therefore open to the question and the experience of God. On the one hand, such an openness keeps the human mind from turning in on itself and its own products. It keeps the questioning and dynamism of the human spirit open and opposed to any premature closure on its own products. At the same time it is open to what the great religions of the world in their positive moment affirm is involved in the experience of God.

At the same time, Newman refuses to reduce the university to just its content. Even though the fullest dimensions of theology are taught in the university, still the university is not exercising its fullest influence if it is not influencing the concrete moral lives of its students. Even if the essence of the university consists in the teaching of universal knowledge, including theology, for the integrity of the university there is also the need to develop in its students existential dispositions that head them toward goodness and holiness.

MEANING: DIMENSIONS, ONTOLOGIES, AND DIALECTICS

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A MAJOR SHIFT in focus from reality to meaning emerges in Lonergan's later writings. First articulated in his "Dimensions of Meaning," it becomes the title of chapter 3 in *Method in Theology* and underpins all that is to follow in the book.¹ Central there is his articulation of four functions of meaningful human activities: cognitional, efficient, communicative, and constitutive. All the human cognitional activities to be found in *Insight* are now described as meaningful. His remark in "Dimensions of Meaning" that changes in the control of meaning "mark off the great epochs of human history" is surely challenging. Important also is the distinction drawn between the world mediated and the world constituted by meaning.

Scientists like to use the phrase "science says this" or "will show that," rarely explaining what they mean by science. The dictionary meaning of the word "science" is knowledge. In this sense it always implies an agent, the creative scientist as well as a field. Their explanations of the world of nature, from cosmology and physics through evolutionary biology to the neurosciences, are mediated by their meaningful human questions, insights, concepts, verifications, and the related technical languages that they evolve in their papers, researches, books and discussions. That process, "science," is the outcome of those activities in their interactions with the world of nature. For scientists, such linguistic mediation through journals, text books, and conferences is considered largely an irrelevant residue. The world of nature so mediated is for them the one and only real world.

¹ Bernard Lonergan, *Collection* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1967), chap. 16.

Their subjective cognitive mediation of it is irrelevant.

For Lonergan the realm that is constituted by the meaningful human activities that are dismissed by many scientists is the distinctively human world. In its novels, auto/biographies, educational and scientific institutions, media centers, cities and nations with their institutions and histories, rather than in the laws and theories of the natural and biological life sciences, we see our human self-expression as creative originators of meaning. Unlike the world of nature which is there to be researched independently of our human existence, the humanly meaningful world is created by us humans. A fundamental datum for consciousness studies, it would not exist if we, humankind, did not exist. Ignoring its mediating function in science results in a permanent reductionist distortion of the world of nature, the meant, and a dehumanizing of the agency of the creative scientist.

LINGUISTIC MEANING AND CONSCIOUS INTENTIONALITY

Dictionaries such as *The New Oxford American Dictionary* typically define the noun, "meaning" (a fairly recent late Middle English word) as "what is meant by a word – supermarket, [sentence,] text, concept or action." Used as an adjective we find such uses as "He gave me a meaningful look" and "It was as if time had lost all meaning." Notice that it is a second order definition. If one wants to teach someone the definition of the word meaning, one has first of all to teach them the meaning of other definitions. This will involve teaching them an understanding of the sense and referent of the linguistic correlates of those other definitions. In the alphabetical letters of a word, "water," we find a code name for its sense and referent but also for the name of the related concept, object of thought proper. Psychologically, concepts such as water or color, which make up the objects of thought thought by us as subjects, are not subjective. They are common meanings with public referents. Similar considerations apply to meaningful insight-guided actions. New definitions require new linguistic correlates and insights.

Consider from the perspective of the definition, the sense and referent of the following historical linguistic expressions:

1. *What Is life?* (The title on the cover of Schrödinger's book.)
2. *What Is Life? The Physical Aspects of the Living Cell* (Extended title on page 3.²)
3. "The insight that made it all come together: complementary pairing of the bases."³
4. Born on February 4, 1913, in Tuskegee, Alabama, "halfway between the Emancipation Proclamation and the new era of freedom," Rosa Louise McCauley was named for her mother's mother, Rose, and her father's mother, Louisa.⁴
5. South bids four hearts: West leads the king of clubs.⁵
6. "No, she will never come back." (The statement of the older girl minding him to Martin Buber about his absent mother when he was four.)⁶
7. I, John, take you Mary, to be my lawful wedded wife (An actual verbal exchange of vows in a marriage ceremony.)

All of them are for Lonergan "terms of meaning," whose linguistic correlates communicate what someone meant. The first two were authored by Schrödinger, the third articulated by James Watson. The fourth was authored by Jeanne Theoharis, Parks's biographer; the fifth was taken from a discussion of an actual bridge game in a newspaper. The sixth is reported speech by Martin Buber in his book, *Meetings*; the seventh by the parties of a historically recorded wedding.

Differing from abstract dictionary definitions, there is added to the terms of meaning or meant, the meaningful activities and contexts of the meaning creating agents who meant them. Four functions of such meaningful activities can be identified: the learning or cognitional 1-3; the acting or efficient 5; the communicative 6, the self-constitutive 4-7. The relation between the meaningful activities of the agents and their terms is identical with that between the conscious and intentional

² Erwin Schrödinger, *What Is Life?* (London: The Folio Society, 2000).

³ James Watson, *DNA: The Secret of Life* (London: Heinemann, 2003), 53. For Watson it was the image in which his insight grasped the explanation of hereditary transmission.

⁴ Jeanne Theoharis, *The Rebellious Life of Rosa Parks* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2013), 2 (kindle version).

⁵ From "Bridge" by Steve Becker; an actual game analysis in *The Irish Times*, Tuesday, July 5, 2016.

⁶ Martin Buber, *Meetings* (La Salle, IL: Open Court Publishing Co., 1973), 18.

operations of the human subject and their inseparable intentional objects in their world.

In each case in and through the linguistic correlates there can be identified both a sense in the meaningful combination of the words, and a referent in the world. The operations of the meaningful activities of the functions of meaning within the life of an agent can be identified in terms of changes in both their linguistic usages and their correlative relations with the intentional objects, the meant, over a lifetime. This contains a core ontological problem noted by Steven Pinker:

Although the combinatorial aspect of meaning has been worked out (how words or ideas combine into the meanings of sentences and propositions) the *core* of meaning – the simple act of referring to something – remains a puzzle, because it stands strangely apart from any causal connection between the thing referred to and the person referring. Knowledge, too, throws up the paradox that knowers are acquainted with things that have never impinged upon them. Our thoroughgoing perplexity about the enigmas of consciousness, self, will and knowledge, may come from a mismatch between the very nature of these problems and the computational apparatus that natural selection has fitted us with.⁷

Pinker seems to find in this a challenge to the doctrine of the materialist computational theory of mind which he considers to be one of the greatest intellectual advances of recent times.

AGENTS, CAUSAL TRANSFORMERS OF MEANING IN LITERATURE AND THE SCIENCES

Significant is the manner that human history, at the appropriate time, throws up major creators and transformers of languages and their meanings. David Anthony in chapter 4 of his *The Horse, the Wheel, and Language* explores the influences of wool, wheels, wagons, and carts on the vocabulary of the Proto-Indo European language.⁸ Maryanne

⁷ Steven Pinker, *How the Minds Works* (London: Penguin Books, 1998), 564-65.

⁸ David W. Anthony, *The Horse, the Wheel, and Language: How Bronze-Age Riders from the Eurasian Steppes Shaped the Modern World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007).

Wolf in her *Proust and the Squid: The Story and Science of the Reading Brain* explores the major transformation from oral to alphabetical written languages.⁹ There quickly followed the Greek genius through the dramatists, Sophocles and Euripides, Homer and the philosophers, Plato and Aristotle. How is this emergent creativity in the field of meaning making to be explained? An accident? A structural change in the brain? Or from the creative involvement of a core human potential for meaning-making and subsequent meaningful activities of the human mind?

Equally challenging are the more recent creative transformations of language at the genius level of Shakespeare authoring of his plays. To this can be added the forty-seven scholars who, under the direction of the king, produced the King James Bible, and Johnson's nine years of work culminating in his *A Dictionary of the English Language* in 1775. They in turn did not begin their work in a vacuum but built on the cultural situations into which they were born at the time. They are the sort of creative originators of meaning in whose lives the languages of many contemporary nations first began to find its form. It is essential that the phenomenon of the creative agents of transformation are taken into account in a search for an explanation of the phenomena of linguistic meaning. Language use for Chomsky is inherently creative.

How are we to explain Shakespeare's emergent linguistic mastery in the profiles of his great characters: Falstaff, Hamlet, Othello, Iago, Lady Macbeth, Romeo and Juliet, Richard III, The Merchant of Venice? Of his great speeches: "the quality of mercy is not strained," and "to be or not to be, that is the question?" Surely they constitute an emergent transformation of the meaning of the language by the creative mind that cannot be explained neurally. His understanding of the dramatic pattern of experience is something that students of Lonergan should study.¹⁰

Significant in this is the emergence through Shakespeare's creativity of new authoring skills that begin to master the very craft of expressing character linguistically. There emerges higher viewpoints

⁹ Maryanne Wolf, *Proust and the Squid: The Story and Science of the Reading Brain* (Cambridge, UK: Icon Books, 2008).

¹⁰ For a contemporary account of the problem of writing character see Luca Crispi, *Joyce's Creative Process and the Construction of Character in Ulysses: Becoming the Blooms* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2016).

and integrations within the language use, coincidental sequences of the words spoken in conversations in whose aggregate there can be understood the character of the individuals involved. Not alone that, through these emergences and their impact on society both a new national identity and in its universal relevance, a new dramatic identity for humankind emerges. This poses questions about the manner in which such classics causally transform subsequent cultural development and consciousness. There is a real causal connection here not studied by the neurosciences.

Although we have access to the creative products of Shakespeare, we do not have much access to his inseparable hugely elusive creative mental activities. The dark embryo at the heart of poetic composition has puzzled, even mystified many. Sofia Tolstoy, in response to questions about Tolstoy's creative authoring of the meaning of *War and Peace* wrote:

But it is not true, if you will pardon me that he wrote easily. Indeed he experienced the "tortures of creative activity" in a high degree; he wrote with difficulty and slowly, made endless corrections. He doubted his powers; denied his talent, and he often said: "writing is just like childbirth; until the fruit is ripe, it does not come out, and, when it does, it comes out with pain and labor." These are his own words.¹¹

In Tolstoy's mind there was emerging a learning process about a new way of combining words and their meanings in order to capture, in fictional mode, the meaningful narrative of a nation involved in the forging of its soul. The subsequent causal impact of the meaning of his writings on the Russian psyche was quite enormous, posing questions about the mental causation of authoring and the relation between an author and her or his readers. More recently literary biographies have begun to articulate the mental processes involved in the composition of novels and poetry.

¹¹ Sofia Tolstoy, Letter to Semen Afanasevich, reprinted on page 17 of her *Autobiography*.

Transformers of Technical Meaning: The Sciences and Mathematics

No less than the authoring of great works of literature is the authoring of great scientific insights of equal human significance for the explanation of the transformation of meaning and language. For Tolstoy and Shakespeare substitute Newton, Wallace, Darwin, Mendel, Le Maître, Einstein, Schrödinger, Crick, Watson, Jacob. Not only did they study nature, they also evolved a highly technical language through which they wrote meaningfully about it. From the standpoint of the natural sciences, that authoring was of no significance. But those same causal relations involved in that creative meaning making process are foundational from the standpoint of the human sciences. Thus all of those scientists in different ways changed our understanding of the nature of many aspects of our world. But because all their emphasis was on what they meant, on the content or object of the meaning they had composed, they sidelined the process of creative authoring itself. They removed their own agency from the situation. Taken to its extremes there results a dehumanization within the culture of the natural sciences, a reductionism which is currently widespread.

In 1943 Erwin Schrödinger gave a series of lectures in Trinity College, Dublin, which were later published as a book with the title, *What Is Life?* In those lectures and book he argued meaningfully that the hereditary properties of biological life would ultimately be explained by means of a presently unknown molecular code. Mentally, the meaning of that book caused many of the subsequent generation of molecular biologists, including Crick and Watson, to become interested in his question. Not having met the author this raises interesting questions about the temporal causality of the mental and meaning, throwing further light on Pinker's dilemma of the referent.

There followed the quite serendipitous meeting of Crick and Watson in Cambridge and their self-correcting process of research involving many mistakes and wrong turnings. Eventually it led to what Watson called "the insight that brought it all together: the complementary pairing of the bases."¹² Involving his senses and imagination, it was

¹² Students of Lonergan on insight into images or phantasms should study carefully

clearly embodied. When he had assembled in an image the correct imaginative presentation of all aspects of the data and problem for the first time, suddenly it clicked – through the complementary pairing of the bases the two helices could be unzipped and re-zipped.

That intelligible law was not imposed by the insight of his mind on the data but rather received from it. Scientific understanding in this sense is a passive reception of the intelligibilities of the world made present by our senses through appropriate imaginative presentations of the data of the problem. There is an identity in the action of the intelligibility of the image as the agent and its reception by the insight of the mind as patient, receptive. The mind becomes its object in the world; nothing comes between them. His insight grasped the structure of the whole problem and explanation of hereditary transmission through the complementarity of the bases of the two helices.

That and other insights of Watson and Crick into the empirical data now become the author, the conceptualizer of the meaning of the words and images in the paper in the journal *Nature* on April 25, 1953, entitled "Molecular Structure of Nucleic Acids."¹³ The subsequent reading and understanding of that meaning by scientists suitably up to speed on the problem now causes them to understand the meaning of that law. It is in these processes that the question of the ontology and causality of mental acts and their meaningful contents arises.

The vacuum of the phenomenon of the overlooked creative author is now being filled by a range of autobiographies and biographies of the great scientists and literary figures. James Watson wrote an account of his experience of the discovery process involved in cracking the hereditary code of DNA. François Jacob in his *The Statue Within: An Autobiography* describes how great scientists can spend years in a state of darkness, what he calls night science, searching for the insights that will produce the technical meaning of the solutions to the research questions they are pursuing. Mendel spent years conducting his pea plant experiments, involving some 30,000 specimens, before the

the diagram on page 53 of Watson, *DNA: The Secret of Life*. For Watson it was the eventual right image in which his insight grasped the structure of the whole problem and explanation of hereditary transmission. For further leads see John Coulson, "Seeing the Evidence: Learning from Images in the Neurosciences," *Advances in Psychiatric Treatment*, vol. 16 (2010): 82-85.

¹³ Watson, *DNA: The Secret of Life*, 56.

shape of the problem of the relation between the different generations became clear for him. George Le Maître's puzzling over the problem of expansion of space and time in Einstein's equations led him to the insight that it all began with an elementary primal atom. Modern cosmology was born.

We can read Shakespeare's plays, the King James Bible, Johnson's dictionary, the scientific papers of Gregor Mendel, George Le Maître, and others and never advert to the fact that their meanings were all born out of the dark elusive embryonic center of creativity that is at the heart of every human being. Out of it comes the uniquely creative and distinct language use and meaning of different persons, especially across the generations. As well as neural correlates there are also linguistic correlates of meaning.

THE FOUR FUNCTIONS OF MEANINGFUL HUMAN ACTIVITIES

In the chapter on Meaning in *Method in Theology* Lonergan seems to be recasting the *Insight* project of self-appropriation of the dynamic structure of the cognitional into the broader perspective of the four functions of meaning: cognitional, efficient, communicative, and constitutive. The cognitional function as a meaningful living activity finds its authentic expression in lifelong learning. Michelangelo was still learning in his eighties; Crick was reading scientific papers on his deathbed. The efficient function finds its expression in the projects and activities of city planners and developers, architects, engineers, doctors, technological innovators, and educators at all levels, in the world in which we find ourselves involved. If learning is a receptive operation, through the efficient function we become agents acting within the intersubjective, social and political worlds in which we live. We come to inhabit and build up a home, work in a service, technological, political, or media industry. With hindsight it can be identified in the pattern of acting decisions we have made and the projects we have promoted in the world. As the projects struggle and grow, so, with them our being as subjects, agents of the meaningful work becomes. This is a much neglected area in the field of meaning.

The communicative function can be identified in those precious

receptive moments when through a meaningful exchange the mind and heart of another becomes transparent to us through the meaning of their words. There are also experiences of being truly understood by another, I-Thou moments as well as their opposite, encounters of mutual misunderstanding, mistrust, and rejection. Finally there is the constitutive function of meaning which would seem close to Jung's notion of the self as the accumulating goal of psychic development, a sort of integration of the accumulation of the process of individuation.¹⁴

Loneragan claims that such functions also have an ontological dimension: "In so far as meaning is cognitive, what is meant is real. In so far as it is constitutive, it constitutes part of the reality of the one that means: his horizon, his assimilative powers, his knowledge, his values, his character."¹⁵ As with life itself, we live our constitutive meaning forwards, but only understand it backwards, with hindsight if we pay attention.

A helpful phantasm/image opening up the meaning of the functions of meaningful activity is that of a family of four in process.¹⁶ With the birth of each child the communicative function of meaning comes into play: each child has to be initiated into the meaning of the mother tongue of the family. Secondly, as each child grows their distinctive interests and talents will emerge. As time goes by those interests will grow their cognitive meaning. They will become knowledgeable in their zones of interest but perhaps not yet in the knowledge of managing their lives. Eventually they will find that they have to make decisions in their early adulthood about their futures. There will emerge self-

¹⁴ Carl Jung, *Memories, Dreams, and Reflections* (London: Flamingo, 1983, 222, where he writes "During those years, between 1918 and 1920, I began to understand the goal of psychic development is the self. There is no linear evolution; there is only a circumambulation of the self." See also page 249.

¹⁵ Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1971), 356. See also pages 78 and 89 which makes clear that constitutive meaning is exercised at times in the life but also grows with the life (180, 306, 356, and 362). What comes across is a series of pointers to constitutive meaning leaving its fuller articulation to future studies.

¹⁶ *Method in Theology*, 89, on the first stage of meaning. Helpful for imaging out the new horizon is David Whyte's, *The Three Marriages: Reimagining Work, Self, and Relationship* (New York: Riverhead Books, 2009), in which Whyte explores love of work, spouse, family, and self, but leaves out the love of country and to some extent of the transcendent.

constituting choices of careers and spouse. Involved will be greater or lesser elements of communication, of discussion, sounding others about the wisdom of a particular choice.

As this process of engagement in the world of work and family continues, the individuals involved begin to discover that if initially their major decisions in life, their roads taken and not taken as Proggoff calls them, were concerned with jobs and careers and personal relations in their world, in and through them there is emerging into existence their own distinctive selfhood. Both cognitively and efficiently, the self/subject is in the world and the world is in the self. Cumulatively, after the manner of the way the self is forged by the process of individuation, there will emerge the formation and reformation of their constitutive meaning which can be articulated in an autobiography or memoir. Involved in this will be some sense of the meaning and purpose that one assigns to the life so far as a whole.

It is one thing to live out those four functions of meaningful activities in one's personal, social, and historical life. It is quite another to take them as the basis for an expanded exercise in self-appropriation. It has been my experience that for self-appropriation to make progress there has to be an element of writing about these experiences. The challenge is not just to read about it but to do it. Reflections on your responses to the following invitations will clarify the challenge involved:

1. For the cognitional function of meaning recall one book from the past and a second from the recent present whose meaning made a significant impact on you. Write some reflections on their self-transformative effect, on the becoming of one's subjectivity through reading them. What intellectual developments did they evoke? What new language skills and horizons did they open up?
2. For the efficient function of meaning recall one past and a second recent project in the world of work you are involved in. What new meaningful skills for acting in the world emerged? Write some brief reflections on the personal transformations involved in the process.
3. For the communicative function of meaning list one past and one recent occasion on which you felt a deep connection with

another person in a conversation: also of occasions when you were completely misunderstood by the other or vice versa. What new understanding of meaningful communicative skills emerged?

4. For constitutive meaning recall through memory some of the occasions when it began to become clear what your work life was going to be; what your family life was going to be; what your spiritual life was going to be. Recall how in the subsequent decisions you were in a sense defining yourself.
5. Finally, recall how some of the significant decisions you have made either connected or disconnected you with or from important aspects of the broader social and cultural world.

These functions of meaning can be considered personally, socially, culturally, and historically. The 2016 UK Brexit referendum decision is a fundamental national exercise in constitutive meaning making. Through the intersection of the communicative and efficient function of meaning, personal and national history emerges. The major decisions that we make in our lives both shape our life story and connect us with or alienate us from aspects of our social and cultural world and its processes.

THE HUMAN DYNAMIC CORE SEED POTENTIAL OF ALL MEANING-MAKING

Little enough is written on meaning in *Insight* but missing what is there amounts to missing the boat that takes us through all that is to follow. Minimal remarks on meaningful sources, acts, and terms of meaning build up to a short and precise statement: "the notion of being is the core of all meaning."¹⁷ If phrases were scored it would surely come out at the top of the list in relation to the observation that the words we use can conceal as much and more than they reveal. By it Lonergan means human wonder, the dynamic pure desire of the mind to know which can be interpreted as the seed potential which expresses

¹⁷ Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, vol. 3 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 356ff.

itself in what modern science calls by the name curiosity.¹⁸ As science shows us, the curiosity of pure blue skies research is about current known unknowns. It is a form of preconceptual and preverbal interest in unknowns about which we do not yet have a language. Lonergan clearly signals some of the difficulties surrounding its all-pervasive and puzzling nature in *Insight*.

Just as other concepts, the notion of being is represented by instrumental acts that are the name, being, and the verb, to be. By mistaken analogy it is inferred that the notion of being resembles concepts in other aspects. But, in fact, the notion of being is unique; for it is the core of all acts of meaning; and it underpins, penetrates, and goes beyond all other cognitional contents. Hence, it is idle to characterize the notion of being by appealing to ordinary rules or laws of conception. What has to be grasped is its divergence from such rules and laws, and, to descend to detail, a series of questions will be briefly considered.¹⁹

The unusual claim is being made about a core dynamic human potential for meaning making that exists in us all. It is the potential out of which is generated the meanings of all our concepts, languages, and actions.²⁰ *Method in Theology* effectively integrates the notion of being into the notion of value, referring to both as the dynamism of consciousness.

¹⁸ Francis Crick in his *Of Molecules and Men* (New York: Prometheus Books, 2004) is adamant that physics and chemistry are sufficient for the explanation of everything in the biological world, broadly conceived to include the human. The book is a polemical attack on the need for concepts such as vitalism or the *élan vital* to explain growth in biological life. Yet his own personal view in *What Mad Pursuit: A Personal View of Scientific Discovery* (Perseus Books Group, 1988) is an outstanding account of the dynamism of his own scientific curiosity growing his personal meaning and creativity throughout his entire life. It totally contradicts his later book.

¹⁹ *Insight*, 360. In his later essay, "The Analogy of Meaning," Lonergan introduces the terminology of "The Human Potentiality for Meaning," in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1958-1964*, vol. 6 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert C. Croken, Frederick E. Crowe, and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 196-97. This I believe to be a further clarification of what he is trying to conceive.

²⁰ In his *An Autobiography* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970, 3-5) R. G. Collingwood's account of the impact of his frustration at not being able to make any sense of the book in his father's library on Kant's philosophy gets close to the territory of the preconceptual nature of desire.

Being before all values, it cannot be conceptualized in terms of any specific values. We can point back to it in the light of its products, the meanings and values that emerge in a life.

From this perspective with hindsight I can now understand how in 1992 when I found the subtitle of *Lonergan's Quest: A Study of Desire in the Authoring of Insight* I was really trying to understand in him this preconceptual desire that moved him to author *Insight*. It was attempting to show the dynamic notion of being in his life as the core potential out of which the meaning of the whole book *Insight* grew and with it his becoming subjectivity as the author of that meaning. Noticeable in that process was his introduction of new linguistic categories and their meanings.

Countless scientific memoirs implicitly show the same phenomena but only if they are read at this proper depth level which is rare. Einstein concluded his *Autobiographical Notes* with the remark that he had attempted in it to show how his life hung together, opening up the question: What makes a life hold or hang together?²¹ A depth reading of the text shows that two major unsolved problems of physics captured his intense curiosity, the contradictions between Newton and Maxwell and the problem of gravity. Einstein's curiosity, pure desire to know, grew both the new meaning of the language of the solutions to the problems in the world and his own intellectual life.

This should not lead us to conclude as some do that only the lives of celebrities are meaningful. Every human being is constituted the same core potentials for meaning and value, whatever the context in which their life and its meaning making is lived. It is this that bestows a basic dignity and equality on all human beings and directs the four functions of meaning making in their particular lives. Yet despite this growing awareness it seems that in certain respects we can never in this life fully conceptualize the mind's core dynamic conscious desire, potential for meaning making. According to Eckhart, the eye with which God sees us is similar to the eye with which we will see God.

²¹ Albert Einstein: *Philosopher-Scientist*, vol. 7 of The Library of Living Philosophers, ed. Paul A. Schilpp (Evanston, IL: Open Court Publishing Co., 1949), 95.

THE DIALECTICS OF MEANING²²

The Temporal Causality of Meaningful Mental Acts

Owen Flanagan was brought up a Catholic but somewhere between his seventh and eighth year gave up his belief in God and the supernatural and looked elsewhere for an alternative. A major event in Flanagan's life was being introduced in Fordham to the words "Plato posits the Good," which introduced him to the notion of the good life.²³ Writing later, in 2007, just before the financial crash changed our optimistic expansionary or even Utopian world view his dream was to be blessed with happiness, to achieve a happy spirit, eudaimonia. Given his loss of the sense of transcendence and the sacred he writes on his opening page "How could eudaimonia really be in store for a short-lived piece of organic muscle and tissue that happened to be aware of its predicament and wishes to flourish?" Suppose such comes my way, "How does it matter, if when I die I am gone forever?" Right away he has eliminated from humankind what Lonergan means by the notion of value, the human potentiality for meaning and value.

In his opening chapter he outlines six realms of meaning: art, science, technology, ethics, politics, and spirituality, which are to be negotiated. The major dialectical relation for him is between the realms of science and religion, followed by religion and politics. Flanagan comes across as a neo-Darwinian Buddhist who holds that a form of neo-Darwinism, clarified by the neurosciences of Crick and Koch, can provide a framework in which he can, from such a naturalized world view, find meaning in life. Situating it within the naturalized six realms, it will be the pursuit of a form of happiness, well-being, which is to be found in this life and its world. The contrast with Lonergan's foundations in the functions of meaning and the notion of value is stark.

²² This concluding section outlines some of the challenge of clarifying the contrasts between Lonergan's horizon and such works as Owen Flanagan's *The Really Hard Problem: Meaning in a Material World* (Cambridge, MA: A Bradford Book, 2009). See also Marc Beeman on the neural correlates of insight, and Damasio's *The Feeling of What Happens* (London: Heinemann, 1999). The contrasts are greatly illuminating.

²³ Quotes on this page are from pages 185 and 1 of his text, respectively. A key quote on page 45 from *Darwin's Descent of Man* sums up his naturalism. On Christof Koch see pages 89ff.

Interesting is Flanagan's dialogue between science and spirituality with the Dali Lama and Buddhism to which he devotes an entire chapter. At the center of their conversation were the topics of evolution and the immateriality of mind/consciousness, in particular two claims which he expected the Dali Lama to make:

1. Mental properties are *sui generis* immaterial properties.²⁴
2. Humans die, but their consciousness continues; consciousness is subject to karmic laws of rebirth.

On pages 67 and 68 Flanagan quotes from a review of the Dali Lama's book *The Universe in a Single Atom* by George Johnson which suggests that "there are shadows of intelligent design lurking in the text." Despite the Dali Lama's close collaboration with neuroscientists, for him the "immateriality of the mind is hardly ruled out scientifically." For Flanagan,

Regarding mind it is true that immaterial mental properties are not completely ruled out by mind science. But the inference to the best explanation is that there are no such things. The reason has to do with mental causation (see chapter 1). If mental events (for example, intentions to act) are, as they seem, causally efficacious, then the best explanation is that they are neural events (neurophysicalism). Mental transformation of mind by mind is best explained as a form of downward causation by a complex, subjectively controlled psychological economy that allows the mind/brain-in-the-body-in-the-world-with-a-history to adjust, modify, and change itself. One can hold on to the view that some or all mental events are disembodied (that is, immaterial), but only, as I see things, at too high a cost. One will have to embrace some form of epiphenomenalism (the view that mental events lack causal efficacy). In 1890, William James called epiphenomenalism an "unwarranted

²⁴ This dimension of the immateriality of spirit was also an issue in the dialogue between science and spirituality in Deepak Chopra and Leonard Mlodinov in *The War of the Worldviews: Science vs Spirituality* (Rider Books, Random House, 2011), 175ff, 235-37. Fascinating is Mlodinov's account of his recurring dream conversation with his deceased father on page 100.

impertinence" in view of the state of psychology. From where I stand, it still seems so.

Flanagan's notion of mental events and their causality is very far removed from that proposed in the present study.

The Dali Lama seemed comfortable with a sort of minimal neural correlates of consciousness perspective but then had an unfortunate encounter with a Western mind scientist. The Dali Lama remarked to him that many of our subjective experiences like perception are caused by chemical processes in the brain and asked:

"... Can one envision the reversal of this causal process? Can one postulate that pure thought itself could effect a change in the chemical processes in the brain?" I was asking whether conceptually at least, we could allow for the possibility of both upward and downward causation. ... The scientist's response was quite surprising. He said that since all mental states arise from physical states, it is not possible for downward causation to occur. Although, out of politeness, I did not respond at the time, I thought then and still think that there is as yet no scientific basis for such a categorical claim.²⁵

All of the functions of meaningful activity and the human potential for meaning involve elements of upward and downward causality. Clearly choosing a worthwhile book to read is an instance of downward causality. Mastering the content of the book through reading is largely a process involving upward causality, from the linguistic correlates of the text to meaning. The words and their meanings provoke questions. But when one has achieved some level of mastery of a language it enables one to exercise a further downward causality in terms of conversations and actions in one's world. The same upward and downward levels are operative in learning to play bridge. All major scientific research involves a dimension of upward (discovery) and downward (application) causality. The discoveries of science open up all kinds of new ways of operating in and on the world. Flanagan's belief in a certain material version of the mind is just that, a belief. He has never faced up to and thought about the meaningful agency of the human being in authoring

²⁵ Flanagan, *The Really Hard Problem*, 91.

research papers and books and Steven Pinker's dilemma concerning the referent of our thoughts and words which clearly breaks the laws of physics.

The Creative Brain: How Insight Works²⁶

For many years Marc Beeman has been fascinated by the challenge of discovering through its neural correlates a scientific explanation and mastery of human insights, eureka, or Archimedean moments, the human ability to think outside the box. Through uncovering what goes on in the brain when people have such creative moments, he and others hope to discover the power to make all of us more creative. Such Archimedean moments are now widely recognized, but how can you measure them in a neuroscience lab? He and others have come up with their own insights into how to do this by devising a series of puzzles and through their technology "see inside your brain and witness the creative spark as it happened," when you solved the puzzles.

His main technique is to give the participants three words and ask them to find another word which can be tagged onto all of them, creating three new words. Typical word trinities he has used have been: Pine, Crab, Sauce; Cracker, Fly, Fight; Dress, Dial, Flower; Waffle, Lung, Time; Due, Life, Tense. His PhD student Dasha places an EEG cap on a volunteer who is given a number of the triplets in succession. As soon as the question is understood gamma activity increases, and at the moment of insight there is a spike whose location is measured by fMRI scanners.

Participants are asked if the solution came by means of an analysis of possible word combinations by their analytical intelligence, or out of nowhere, by the way of insight. Almost all affirmed that many of their answers came by way of such an insight. On this basis the neuroscientists make a distinction between intelligence – the way of analysis; and creativity – the way of insight in mental processes. The TV commentators concluded that Beeman had found not just how but where the creative spark happens:

²⁶ Horizon, BBC 2 TV, March 13, 2013. Neuroscientists mentioned: Jonathan Spooler (John Hopkins University), Dr Charles Limb and Dr Simone Ritter (Radboud University of Nijmegen), Mark Beeman (Northwestern University), all pioneers of the new science setting out to discover the neural correlates of creativity,

It happens here, the anterior superior temporal gyros we have on either side of the brain. During a flash of insight the left doesn't really react, but the right side does. A slight increase in high energy waves or gamma rays. When individuals problem solve by way of logical analysis the left side temporal gyros become active, when by way of insight, the right side.

Insights, as we know from Lonergan, are always into phantasms, sensory and imaginative presentations, in this case the word triplets that in the first case can be made with the word apple. They cannot bypass our senses and imagination, all of which have their neural correlates. Beeman has done us all a favour by clearly establishing a link between the mental activity of problem solving, the imaginative presentation of the problem in terms of written words, and its brain neural correlates.

What the insight has grasped in this instance is a solution in terms of the required combination of words. But there is another dimension to the meaning of new words, knowing their referent, what we noted previously was for Pinker the core of meaning. That referent in major scientific insights and its linguistic articulation is the intelligible law of the process of hereditary transmission with Watson or the intelligible laws of special and general relativity with Einstein. I suggest that in all probability neuroscience has a possible unsolvable problem when it comes to explaining such dimensions of the insight event. The object of such scientific insights and of its communication through the linguistic correlates of the papers of the scientists presents a much harder problem to neuroscience than Chalmers's so-called hard problem of consciousness.

Damasio and the Ontology of Self

For Damasio consciousness is a form of stepping into the light. Where Flanagan is concerned with the materiality of mental events, Beeman with the neural correlates of eureka experiences, Damasio is concerned with the growth of the self: "How we step into consciousness is precisely the topic of this book. I write about the sense of self and about the transition from innocence and ignorance to knowingness and selfness. My specific goal is to consider the biology circumstances

that permit this critical transition."²⁷ For Lonergan this poses the question: How does the biology relate to the potential and functions of meaningful activities? Major decisions, roads taken, are not just episodic, they establish patterns of meaningful activities that extend over years and years in a lifetime. In this sense I would like to suggest that they exert a very significant process of downward causality right down to the neural level.

Damasio's consciousness quest he tells us began some thirty-two years prior to the publication of his book, *The Feeling of What Happens* raising an interesting question about the emergent meaningful narrative of his own selfhood. He encountered a man who suffered, not from the loss of consciousness that occurs in fainting, but from an impaired consciousness. Called David, he had one of the most severe defects in learning and memory ever recorded. Caused by extensive damage to his temporal lobes he could not learn or remember any new fact at all.

Eventually Damasio came up with an ingenious experiment to test what made him tick. He exposed him to three persons on different occasions and in different situations. One was a classical good cop, the second a bad cop, and the third a neutral, indifferent, neither good nor bad cop. After the encounters he had absolutely no memory of who they were.

Sometime later he asked him to look at three sets of four photographs, each of which included the face of one of the individuals and asked: Whom would you go to if you needed help? Who do you think is your friend in this group? The good guy was chosen 80 percent of the time; the neutral by tossing a coin, the bad cop almost never.

In one sense he was entirely awake in the room, bodily present, but his selfhood was absent without leave. Damasio felt the "razor sharp distinction between a fully conscious mind and a mind deprived of any sense of self." His engagement with the problem of consciousness began. Damasio divides it into two parts: firstly, the problem of understanding how the brain inside the human organism engenders

²⁷ Antonio Damasio, *The Feeling of What Happens: Body, Emotion and the Making of Consciousness* (London: Heinemann, 1999), 3-4, 5, for his original encounter, 43f for his account of David. In *Descartes Error* he narrates the case of Eliot who, because of surgery to remove a tumor near a frontal lobe in his brain, was now incapable of making decisions.

the mental patterns we call, for a lack of a better term, the images of an object. The second problem asks how in parallel, the brain also engenders a sense of self in the act of knowing.

It became Damasio's thesis that David's behavior was totally feeling directed. As a result he set himself the task of discovering how feelings grow selfhood. He drew a distinction between what he calls the core consciousness which provides the organism with a sense of self about one moment – now – and about one place – here, and the autobiographical self and its memory.²⁸

The later Lonergan in *Method in Theology* came to understand the central role of feelings in judgments of value. For Lonergan intermediate between judgments of fact and judgments in value lie apprehensions of value. "Such apprehensions are given in feelings Apprehensions of value occur in a further category of intentional consciousness which greets either the ontic value of a person or the qualitative value of beauty, of understanding, of truth, of noble deeds, of virtuous acts, of great achievements."²⁹ In many of our lifetimes there can be discerned major decisions, roads taken or not taken in the realm of our works, our personal relations, and our beliefs. The human potentiality for meaning and value through those decisions and the subsequent operation of the functions of meaning endow on a human life as a whole an emergent unity of meaning. Damasio invites us to comprehend the intimate lifelong embodiment of that process through its inescapable grounding in its neural and other correlates. What he does not address is the unfolding potentiality for meaning making throughout his own entire lifetime in his quest to understand selfhood.

²⁸ Damasio, *The Feeling of What Happens*, 17-19, 82ff.

²⁹ *Method in Theology*, 37-38.

BEAUTY AND BIBLICAL NARRATIVE: THE CASE OF JEPHTHAH

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WORKS OF ART AS HEURISTIC STRUCTURES

IN A PAPER delivered in 1986 at a symposium on Lonergan's hermeneutics, Sean McEvenue evaluated Lonergan's account of exegesis within the functional specialty of interpretation in a fundamentally positive light. There he viewed Lonergan as an ally of Cleanth Brooks, rejecting the heresy of paraphrase, freeing exegetes from "the need to produce propositional meaning out of biblical texts by reductive interpretation."¹ The move from interpreting biblical texts to formulating doctrines (that is, judgments of fact and of value) rooted in our understanding of these texts cannot occur through any reduction to paraphrase, he argued, for the language of the Tanakh and of the Christian Bible is not theoretical. "The norms which govern writers of the Bible," McEvenue notes, "are norms of tradition, commonsense truth, literary form, aesthetic satisfaction, rhetorical effectiveness."² Since interpretation is separated from doctrines in Lonergan's account of the functional specialties by the operations of history, dialectic and foundations, the move from interpretation to doctrine passes through history and dialectic, by means of which readers develop positions and reverse counterpositions "not directly on the basis of [the biblical text's] propositional meaning, but rather on the evidence for intellectual, ethical,

¹ Sean E. McEvenue, "Theological Doctrines and the Old Testament: Lonergan's Contribution," in *Loneragan's Hermeneutics: Its Development and Application*, ed. S. E. McEvenue and B. F. Meyer (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1989), 153.

² McEvenue, "Theological Doctrines and the Old Testament," 136-37.

and religious conversion in the author."³ As McEvenue puts it, "one accepts the author, or the poem, rather than the 'meaning' of the poem."⁴

Some years later, in a paper delivered at the twenty-sixth Lonergan Workshop in 1999, McEvenue gave voice to some concerns about Lonergan's placement of biblical exegesis within the functional specialty of interpretation. In two rather pointed notes McEvenue maintained that the dialectic that ensues when we encounter biblical texts is essentially different from the dialectic that occurs when we engage non-biblical texts in conversation, for the scriptures of Israel and of the church are "thought to be written by God, and God lacks no conversions."⁵ Dialectical engagement with biblical texts is therefore not the "occasion for correcting counterpositions in the author, but only for conversion in the reader."⁶ This is a point that Lonergan failed to take adequately into account, McEvenue argues, for by including biblical exegesis in his discussion of interpretation as a theological operation, he is "implicitly reducing it to a preparation for history, and even subjecting it to dialectics."⁷ In this second article McEvenue suggests what he had denied in the first: that by including the example of sacred scripture within his account of interpretation, Lonergan may be co-opting exegetes to produce propositional meaning that ultimately becomes the stuff of "biblical theologies." For McEvenue, the biblical exegete's proper task is to communicate to theologians not "theologies" or "messages," but "clues toward experiencing the biblical text" – not propositional, but elemental, meaning.⁸

While I would agree with McEvenue's suggestion that one of the tasks of biblical exegesis is to highlight the sacred texts' elemental meaning, the reality that biblical texts also convey propositional meaning should not be ignored. Τὰ βιβλία, the plural Greek word from which singular terms like "bible," "biblia," and "bibbia" are derived, are a library of writings whose authors have expressed themselves in a wide variety of genres. Anyone who has engaged works like the Letter

³ McEvenue, "Theological Doctrines and the Old Testament," 139; compare with 153.

⁴ McEvenue, "Theological Doctrines and the Old Testament," 139; compare with 153.

⁵ S. E. McEvenue, "Scholarship's Impenetrable Wall," in vol. 16 of the *Lonergan Workshop Journal*, ed. Fred Lawrence (Chestnut Hill, MA: Boston College, 2000), 138n17.

⁶ McEvenue, "Scholarship's Impenetrable Wall," 122n2.

⁷ McEvenue, "Scholarship's Impenetrable Wall," 131.

⁸ McEvenue, "Scholarship's Impenetrable Wall," 129.

to the Hebrews or Paul's Letter to the Romans cannot but conclude that their authors argue from their experience of the Christ-event for particular judgments of fact and value that they hope others will embrace. But when, on the other hand, we encounter one of Jesus' parables, or stories like the binding of Isaac, the narrative form more often than not precludes easy summary, since biblical storytellers hesitate to express themselves in propositions, preferring to display something for us to see, and draw our own conclusions.

McEvenue's reservations about Lonergan's description of the exegetical task are rooted, I believe, in an underdeveloped aspect of Lonergan's work that becomes apparent when we look at his account of judgments of fact and of value in the light of Kant's three Critiques. In his first two Critiques, Kant conceives judgment as that through which human being negotiates what is experienced in the natural world and desired in the moral world. But in his third Critique Kant conceives of judgment as a discrete faculty standing between understanding and reason. Judgments of taste, according to Kant, do not belong to the order of cognition because they are not directed to any concept, but are based in the feelings of pleasure or displeasure associated with an experienced object. The faculty involved in making judgments of taste has, therefore, a more intrinsic connection to desire than to knowledge. To account for this moral aspect of taste, Kant conceives of taste as a *sensus communis*, "a faculty for judging that in its reflection takes account (*a priori*) of everyone else's way of representing in thought, in order as it were [his stress] to hold its judgment up to human reason as a whole" so as not to allow subjective considerations to prejudice one's judgment.⁹ For Kant, a judgment of taste is neither a theoretical nor a practical judgment. Yet when a human being judges the object of its disinterested liking – "the beautiful" – reflection dwells somewhere between understanding and reason.¹⁰ "Beauty" is not a concept, but a symbol that points analogically toward a concept; and the intelligible toward which taste looks when making aesthetic judgments is the morally good. Beauty thus becomes for Kant "the symbol of morality."¹¹

⁹ I. Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, ed. P. Guyer and trans. P. Guyer and E. Matthews (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 173-74 [§40 in standard editions].

¹⁰ Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 96 [§5].

¹¹ Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 225-27 [§59].

and judgments of taste, rooted in the experience of the beautiful, a bridge between judgments of fact and judgments of value, between understanding and reason, truth and goodness.

Perhaps because he, like Thomas, does not number beauty among the transcendentals, Lonergan discusses the aesthetic pattern of experience only briefly within his more expansive accounts of truth and goodness.¹² It is his contemporary, Hans-Georg Gadamer, who makes more explicit use of Kant's analysis of judgments of taste in his own account of the way truth-questions emerge in the experience of a work of art. Kant's conception of aesthetic experience as *representative* of experience generally proves to be the key that allows Gadamer to argue that the way such questions arise when we experience works of art reflects the way questions of truth emerge in all human experience.

Kant describes judgments of taste as grounded in the interplay between "the imagination in its freedom and the understanding in its lawfulness." The imagination serves to stimulate the cognitive faculty "in its free play."¹³ What is important for Gadamer is that it is the imagination that brings the faculties of judgment into play. In the action of being-played, a work of art "speaks to the spectator through its presentation."¹⁴ The being of the spectator is "determined," according to Gadamer, by "being there present," for to be present is to participate.¹⁵ Yet the work of art is also "determined" in its presentation by those who participate in it, whether as performers or spectators. In this way the "play" of a work of art is, like the dynamic involved in human understanding, a reciprocal relationship of the same sort as conversation. On the one hand, the work of art questions its participants, engaging the learning process; on the other, the work of art can itself be challenged.¹⁶

¹² See Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, vol. 3 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 207-209; as well as his *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971), 61-69.

¹³ Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, 167-68 [§35].

¹⁴ H.-G. Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 2nd ed. rev. (New York: Sheed and Ward, 2004), 115.

¹⁵ Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 121.

¹⁶ Compare with the observation of T. S. Eliot that "no poet, no artist of any art has his complete meaning alone . . . what happens when a new work of art is created is some-

A work of art thus has the capacity to stimulate consciousness by means analogous to the way the human mind is stimulated by other persons. That is to say, a work of art structures an experience that women and men react to in the way that they react to any encounter with an "other": they ask questions in order to understand what the other is communicating; once they are satisfied that they have understood, they make judgments about the truth or goodness of what they find in the other; and having made such judgments, they respond, taking decisions for their lives on the basis of the truth and goodness, or the lack of either, discerned therein. What is more, a work of art may structure an experience that is intended to lead to particular insights and courses of action. A work of art – whether a sculpture, a painting, or a story – is, accordingly, a heuristic device that provokes human being to discover something for itself, with the result that its way of being-in-the-world is changed in some way. In this way the beautiful is heuristic of truth and goodness.

Lonergan realized that just "as the proper expression of the elemental meaning is the work of art itself, so too the proper apprehension and appreciation of the work is not any conceptual clarification or judicial weighing of conceptualized evidence. The work of art is an invitation to participate, to try it, to see for oneself."¹⁷ Like other artistic works, biblical narratives, parables, and poetry invite those who enter them to discover for themselves the truth and goodness toward which these texts point. Biblical narratives, parables, and poetry invite insight and the formation of judgments of fact and of value; they do not impose them.

McEvenue is surely correct in understanding the biblical exegete's task to include offering clues toward experiencing the text. Yet is Lonergan wrong in viewing the interpretation even of biblical texts as part of a much broader theological enterprise in which history and dialectic have a critical role?

thing that happens simultaneously to all the works of art which preceded it . . . Whoever has approved this idea of order . . . will not find it preposterous that the past should be altered by the present as much as the present is directed by the past" (T. S. Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent," in *The Sacred Wood: Essays on Poetry and Criticism* [London: Faber and Faber, 1997], 41).

¹⁷ *Method in Theology*, 64. Compare also with *Insight*, 208, on the aesthetic pattern of experience.

McEvenue's fears about reducing the biblical text to a preparation for history were shared by many biblical scholars in the closing decades of the twentieth century, who decried the sort of "excavative"¹⁸ methods exemplified in Wellhausen's *Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels* and in much historical-critical scholarship of the Bible. At their best, historical-critical approaches to biblical texts provide insight into the intellectual, moral, and religious evolution of God's people; but in the hands of less-gifted scholars they become little more than an attempt to debunk biblical stories as *wie es eigentlich nicht gewesen*. In *Method in Theology*, however, Lonergan explains that the single process of developing understanding that he outlines involves a whole series of different functions, and the chief characteristic of what he calls "critical history" is that "this process occurs twice": first with respect to the sources the interpreter is using, and then with respect to the object to which the sources are relevant.¹⁹ In order to understand what a given text is trying to communicate, we must, as Lonergan argued, understand what was "going forward in the community" – or, in other words, as Collingwood observed, we must understand the question to which the text under consideration is an answer.²⁰

In what follows I would like to illustrate how the beautiful is heuristic of truth and goodness – the way in which biblical narrative contributes to the intellectual, moral, and religious development of God's people – using the story of Jephthah in the Book of Judges as a sort of case study. First, at McEvenue's urging, I will point to clues in the text that suggest how the story wants to be experienced by those who enter it. Second, I will examine Origen's and Augustine's engagement with the narrative in order to determine how or whether the story's hopes for its readership have been fulfilled, and how or whether McEvenue's fears about subjecting biblical texts to the operations of history and dialectic are realized.

¹⁸ See the argument of R. Alter in *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (New York: Basic Books, 1981), 14.

¹⁹ *Method in Theology*, 188–89.

²⁰ *Method in Theology*, 188–89. Compare with R. G. Collingwood, *An Autobiography* (London: Oxford University Press, 1939), 30.

ENCOUNTERING THE STORY OF JEPHTHAH

Interpreters of biblical texts have made use of a variety of methods suited to the sort of questions with which they approach the text. If the purpose here is to understand the sort of experience that a biblical story structures for those who enter it, analysis is called for that attends to the way the story guides the perception (αἰσθησις) of its hearers. The tools of narrative analysis, which attends to the way the plot of a story (its structure or μῦθος) unfolds, highlighting what it is the narrative wishes its participants to see, are particularly suited to this task.²¹

Exposition

Participants are introduced to the story of Jephthah through the expositional material provided in Judges 10:6-11:3.²² The first part (10:6-16) provides a more general view of Israel's situation, while the second (10:17-11:3) provides the more immediate background to the story. Those who enter the narrative after having journeyed through the earlier chapters of the book are immediately struck by a sense of *déjà vu*: the narrator's voice in Judges 10:6 echoes the negative evaluation of Israel's behavior already uttered, with some variation, in Judges 2:11; 3:7,12; 4:1; and 6:1. In Judges 13:1 such judgment will be encountered again. The short summary of Othniel's judgeship in Judges 3:7-12 is generally taken as paradigmatic of the judgeships that are described in the following chapters of the book: (1) Israel does evil in YHWH's sight by serving (עָבַד) the Baals and the Asherahs; (2) angered, YHWH gives Israel into the hand of its enemy, whom Israel must serve (עָבַד) for some years; (3) Israel cries out to YHWH; (4)

²¹ For an introduction to the sorts of analytical tools employed by narrative critics, see M. Bal, *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narration* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009); S. B. Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1978); G. Genette, *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method*, trans. J. E. Lewin (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1980); W. Schmid, *Narratology: An Introduction*, trans. A. Starritt (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2010); and J. L. Ska, S.J., "Our Fathers Have Told Us": *Introduction to the Analysis of Hebrew Narratives*, SubBi 13 (Rome: Editrice Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1990).

²² On expositional information provided by the narrator, see esp. M. Sternberg, *Expositional Modes and Temporal Ordering in Fiction* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), and Ska, *Fathers*, 21-25.

YHWH raises up a deliverer (מַשִּׁיעַ) who delivers (שָׁשׂ) Israel, with the result that (5) Israel dwells at peace in the land for a period of time considerably longer than their subjugation had lasted.

The initial situation described in the various stories of the judges is not, however, a "museum of *déjà vu*,"²³ for the pattern is hardly mechanical.²⁴ In the story of Deborah and Barak the first three elements given above are quickly summarized in Judges 4:1-3, but the narrator does not immediately give notice of the sending of a deliverer. Participants in the story are left to conjecture whether a deliverer will be sent, and who it might be. In Judges 6:1-6 it is the third element that the narrator delays reporting, preferring to describe in more detail Israel's suffering under Midian. In Judges 10:6-11:3 few elements of the paradigm are encountered in pure form. Israel's apostasy, reported in Judges 10:6, extends to serving not only the Baals and the Asherahs, but the gods of Aram, Sidon, Moab, Ammon, and Philistia as well. Israel is delivered into the hands of one enemy in the story of Deborah and Barak, but given over to oppression by a number of neighboring peoples in the stories of Ehud, Gideon, and Jephthah. In Judges 10:10 Israel cries out to YHWH as before, but this time YHWH declares his intention to deliver them no more (10:13).

The "cycle" of disobedience-punishment-crying out-deliverance-peace is therefore, in the end, an abstraction. Participants searching for meaning must look for it, not by subsuming the particular under a general law, but in the ways that the narrative departs from, rather than confirms, a pattern. The significance is to be found precisely in such departures. The narrator reports in Judges 10:16 that YHWH could no longer bear Israel's affliction, but no mention is made here or elsewhere in the story of the sending of a deliverer. The question that arises at this point is whether and how YHWH may act on Israel's behalf.

²³ U. Eco, *The Role of the Reader: Explorations in the Semiotics of Texts* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1979), 49-57: for Eco a "closed" text is a "museum of *déjà vu*," whereas an "open" text elicits the inventive skill of the reader in the work of interpretation.

²⁴ On this point see Robert Polzin's study of the play of perspectives found within the Deuteronomistic History, which points to the gradual breakdown of the "cycle": R. Polzin, *Moses and the Deuteronomist: A Literary Study of the Deuteronomistic History (Part I: Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges)*, ISBL (New York: Seabury, 1980), 176-81, 210-12.

The second half of the story's exposition (Judges 10:17-11:3) takes up this question more urgently. Just where participants in the narrative might have expected notice of a divinely appointed savior, the narrator relates that the chiefs (שְׂרִיף) of Gilead gathered to seek someone to be their head (רֹאשׁ) (10:18). Their inquiry differs from the questions that frame the Book of Judges. Where the tribes gather in Judges 1:1 and 20:18 in order to inquire of YHWH which of the tribes should lead them in battle, the chiefs of Gilead seek counsel from one another (10:18): "Who is the man that shall begin to fight the Ammonites? (מִי הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יֵחַל לְהִלָּחֵם בְּבְנֵי עַמּוֹן)." For participants in the narrative, the issue now becomes whether the leader they seek will be YHWH's appointed deliverer, or simply the people's choice.

The introduction in Judges 11:1-3 of Jephthah, son of Gilead, does little to resolve this issue. The narrator describes him as the son of a prostitute (בֶּן אִשָּׁה זֹנִיָּה) – even if an able warrior – thus inviting comparison with the description of Abimelech as the son of a secondary wife (פֶּלֶא) of Jerubbaal/Gideon (8:31). Even though Jephthah differs in one important respect from Abimelech – where the latter takes his brothers' lives, the former suffers at his brothers' hands – his life intersects with that of Abimelech in disquieting ways. Driven from home, Jephthah flees to the land of Tob, where he gathers "empty men" (אֲנָשִׁים רִיקִים) as followers (11:3; cf. 9:4). The sort of men who assisted Abimelech in the murder of his brothers now joins Jephthah in his raids. By alluding to Abimelech's unhappy reign, the narrator raises questions about the sort of leader Jephthah may become.

Through these opening verses, participants have been enabled to see that the pattern or cycle perceived in the course of their journey through the book subsists in variation. The narrative gives rise, not to predictable events, but to questions. YHWH's punishment is thought to lead to conversion; but how genuine is Israel's turning, especially as we see them rely on their own wits rather than on their God's direction to confront the Ammonite threat? Israel's crying out is thought to invite manifestation of their God's mercy; but how will YHWH's compassion translate into action for Israel's deliverance? The narrator's description of the initial situation suggests that neither YHWH nor his people are as predictable as might have been assumed.

The Initial Complication: Dealing with the Ammonite Threat

In Judges 11:4 the narrative passes from expositional summary to a series of five scenes in which the represented action unfolds. In represented actions, Sheldon Sacks observes, characters "about whose fates we are made to care are introduced in unstable relationships which are then further complicated until the complications are finally resolved by the complete removal of the represented instabilities."²⁵

The first scene (11:4-11) introduces the narrative program – the moment in the development of the plot that has variously been called the "complication" by Daniel Marguerat and Yvan Bourquin²⁶ and the "inciting moment" by Jean Louis Ska.²⁷ Here the initial state encountered by participants in the story is disturbed, setting off a series of actions that will result in a new state of affairs. In this first scene the elders entrust Jephthah with a mission to lead the fight against the Ammonites and become head over Gilead. Though the elders initially invite Jephthah simply to be their commander (יָצֵא) in the battle against Ammon, Jephthah is able to take advantage of Gilead's precarious situation to extract a commitment from the elders to make him a tribal leader (שֹׁרֵט) should he emerge victorious militarily. These were the terms the elders had already determined to offer, unbeknownst to Jephthah, in Judges 11:3. When Jephthah returns with the elders from the land of Tob, the people install Jephthah not only as military commander (יָצֵא) but also tribal head (שֹׁרֵט) of Gilead, even before he has been tested in battle (11:11). As he receives his mission, then, participants in the story are faced with a reversal of Jephthah's situation as described in the exposition: the "son of Gilead" who had been driven into exile by his brothers now returns as tribal leader of Gilead. There is poetic justice in this reversal, which serves to arouse the expectation that the action will develop along lines traditionally considered "comic," such that "the final stabilization of relationships [ensures] for each character a fate . . . commensurate

²⁵ S. Sacks, *Fiction and the Shape of Belief: A Study of Henry Fielding, with Glances at Swift, Johnson, and Richardson* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964), 15, 24.

²⁶ D. Marguerat and Y. Bourquin, *How to Read Bible Stories: An Introduction to Narrative Criticism*, trans. J. Bowden (London: SCM Press, 1999), 43-44.

²⁷ Ska, *Fathers*, 25.

with his [or her] moral desert."²⁸ Only by following the story through to its conclusion, however, will its participants be able to discover whether such expectations are in fact fulfilled.

From the negotiations that took place in the first scene between Jephthah and the elders, the narrative passes in the second scene (11:12-28) to Jephthah's negotiations with the king of the Ammonites. Participants who remain at the level of the micro-narrative are at a disadvantage here with respect to the characters, Jephthah and the king of Ammon, who refer to "events" that are not recounted elsewhere in the Book of Judges. What is clear from their discourse is that while both are agreed that Israel came to possess the territory between the Arnon and the Jabbok, the Ammonite king contends that Israel has no legitimate claim on the land, while Jephthah begs to differ.

Participants may, however, seek wider contexts in which to make sense of the disagreement and of Jephthah's negotiating strategy. One such context would be the narratives of Numbers 20:14-21:35 and Deuteronomy 2:1-3:22, which recount how Israel came into possession of the disputed territory. The broad outline of these two narratives is similar: in its journey onward from Kadesh, Israel sought to avoid conflict with the descendants of Esau (Edom) and Lot (Moab and Ammon) because they were kin; but when Israel sought permission from Sihon to pass through his territory, his refusal led to an engagement at Jahaz at which the Amorite king was defeated and his territory appropriated by Israel. There are, however, significant differences between the two accounts. The text of Deuteronomy implies that when Israel requested permission to pass through Edomite territory, permission was given and Israel passed through unmolested.²⁹ In Numbers, however, Edom is adamant in its refusal, leading Israel to take another route around its territory (Numbers 20:14-21). More importantly, Deuteronomy explains the need to avoid confrontation with the descendants of Esau and Lot in theological rather than familial or even practical military terms: YHWH had given land to their descendants just as he had given the land of Canaan to Israel. This theological perspective is lacking in the account in Numbers.

²⁸ Sacks, *Fiction*, 21.

²⁹ See Deuteronomy 2:8: וַנֵּעָבֵר בְּאַחֵי אָדָם, "we passed by/through our brothers."

Jephthah's discourse reflects elements of both accounts; he also adds details of his own. Like the account in Numbers, he states that Edom refused right of passage to Israel, but adds that Moab also refused, leading Israel to take a different route around both lands. When he reminds the Ammonite king that both Israel and Ammon have right to the land they possess, since each has been allotted its land by its god (11:24), Jephthah's reasoning reflects the more theological account found in Deuteronomy.

The king of Ammon may have been surprised to hear his god called Chemosh, for the Hebrew Scriptures represent Chemosh as beloved to Moab rather than to Ammon, who were devoted to Milcom.³⁰ Jephthah's error may have had the effect of demonstrating to the king that Jephthah did not really know what he was talking about, thus undermining his point. Yet Jephthah's discourse, which makes of this scene the longest in the story, appears directed less toward persuading the Ammonite king of the justice of Gilead's cause than toward demonstrating to the audience at home, which includes those who read and hear the story, that he had gone to great lengths to avoid conflict, sending messengers to the king not just once but twice. As the scene concludes with the notice that the king of Ammon did not heed Jephthah's words (11:28), participants are left to wonder whether Jephthah had in fact negotiated as skillfully with Ammon on Gilead's behalf as he had on his own behalf with Gilead's elders.

Resolution of the Initial Problem and Introduction of a Further Complication

The third scene (11:29-33) is the only one without dialogue. In contrast to the slow pace of the previous scene, this scene is recounted by the narrator at a fast clip, largely in summary form. The narrator introduces the scene by reporting that the spirit of YHWH comes upon Jephthah. In the strength of that spirit he passes through Gilead and Transjordanian Manasseh, in all probability to gather troops on his

³⁰ See Numbers 21:29; 1 Kings 11:5-7, 33; 2 Kings 23:13 and Jeremiah 48:7, 13, 46; 49:1, 3 and Zephariah 1:5 (also possibly 2 Samuel 12:30=1 Chr 20:2). Compare also with Leviticus 18:21; 20:2-5; 2 Kings 23:10; and Jeremiah 32:35; there may be a connection between Milcom and the Molech who appears to have been worshipped by at least some in Israel.

way to engage the Ammonites, just as Gideon had gathered an army after the spirit had come upon him (6:34-35). At the center of the scene stands Jephthah's infamous vow – the only discourse that the narrator reports. Finally, again in summary fashion, the narrator recounts that YHWH humbles Ammon before Israel.

Had the narrator followed the pattern laid out in other accounts of the judges, the story might have come to a conclusion here. Where Israel had been given into the hands of its enemies (וַיִּמְכְּרוּם בְּיַד פְּלִשְׁתִּים וּבִיד בְּנֵי עַמּוֹן) (10:7), the Ammonites are now given into Jephthah's hand (וַיִּתְּנֵם יְהוָה בְּיָדוֹ) (11:32). For eighteen years Israel had been pressed hard by the Ammonites (וַתִּצְרַר לְיִשְׂרָאֵל מֵאֲדָם) (10:9); now Ammon is humbled before Israel (וַיִּכְנַעוּ בְּנֵי עַמּוֹן מִפְּנֵי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל) (11:33). Such formulaic expressions conclude the narratives of Ehud, Deborah and Barak, and Gideon (in 3:30; 4:23 and 8:28 respectively). The mission entrusted to Jephthah now appears accomplished: through his actions the initial situation of oppression has been overcome. For Aristotle, such a reversal (περιπέτεια) brings the action of the plot to its resolution (*Poet.*, 1452^a 22–1452^b 13). But the narrator seems less interested in Jephthah's military prowess, recounted only in summary fashion here, than in the pronouncement of his vow, the only part of the scene in which the time of narration approaches equivalence to the narrated time of the story. Jephthah's vow introduces another complicating factor into the drama that trumps interest in resolution of the initial problem.

Why did Jephthah pronounce such a vow?

Participants in the story might locate his inspiration in the example of his forebears whose story Jephthah has just been rehearsing to the Ammonite king. Before battle with the king of Arad, Israel made a vow to YHWH to put Arad and its dependent villages under the ban of destruction (חֵרֵם) in exchange for victory (Numbers 21:2). YHWH had "heeded Israel's voice," and Israel had done to Arad as they had vowed (Numbers 21:3). Were this the inspiration, however, why did Jephthah vow to sacrifice from his own household, rather than from what he captured in battle?

Alternatively, might Jephthah have been moved by the spirit that had just come upon him? Elsewhere in the Book of Judges where the spirit of YHWH (רוּחַ יְהוָה) is given, the contexts usually suggest

that what the spirit gives to the warrior-deliverer is physical strength, rather than wisdom, in order to accomplish the task at hand (cf. 6:34; 13:25; 14:6,19; 15:14). In the case of the model judge, Othniel, however, the gift of the spirit is given not only for strength in battle but also for competence in judgment (3:10).

YHWH's involvement in the deliverance of Israel has been an issue from the beginning of the Jephthah narrative, where there arose the question of how or whether YHWH would respond to Israel's suffering. Participants in the story find an answer in this scene. Though the people did not inquire of YHWH before making Jephthah their leader, and the agreement they entered into was reported to YHWH only subsequently (11:11), YHWH does enable Jephthah's victory over the Ammonites by sending the spirit upon him. Whether Jephthah knows this, however, is unclear. Even men and women who believe that God is present to them in the midst of the challenges they face feel moved at times to bargain with God in the hope of obtaining what they want.

The Consequences of Jephthah's Vow Played Out

To Jephthah's dismay, the one who meets him upon his triumphant return in the fourth scene (11:34-40) is his daughter, his only child (יחידה), of marriageable age but still living in her father's household (בחוליה). Use of the adjective יחידה may allude to Isaac, called Abraham's "only son" (יחיד) by the God who demands his sacrifice (Genesis 22:2). Whether or not such an allusion is intended, the narrator's language in Judges 11:34 is clearly aimed at evoking empathy on the part of participants in the story as the joy of victory evaporates in the face of Jephthah's new predicament. Jephthah's own discourse, however, is subversive of an empathetic response as he reacts to his daughter's appearance by blaming her for his dilemma: "you have surely brought me low," he cries out to her, "and become one of my troublers" (הכרע הכרעתני ואת היית בעברי) (11:35). Participants in the story are left to wonder not only at Jephthah's reaction, but also at his daughter's acquiescence. No voice – neither the daughter's nor her companions', neither the narrator's nor YHWH's – challenges Jephthah's assertion that he "cannot repent" of his vow (ולא אוכל לשוב) (11:35).

The narrative tension is resolved in an anticlimactic fashion as the narrator chooses not to describe the young woman's death, providing instead only a summary (11:39). Her only mourners, the narrator indicates, are "daughters of Israel" of later generations who gather to "remember/recount/lament" (תִּזְכֹּר) her (11:40). No explicit condemnation of Jephthah's deed is offered, whether by the narrator or by an agent in the story. Yet the story's conclusion may offer some guidance as those following the narrative seek to evaluate the father's action.

Denouement

With the death of Jephthah's daughter, the expectation aroused in the first scene of a comic denouement of the action has been overturned. In the last scene of the narrative (12:1-6), the ultimate consequence of Jephthah's leadership is brought into view. In the narrative's introduction Ephraim was mentioned only in a peripheral way, together with Judah and Benjamin, as another victim of Ammonite aggression (10:9). Now Ephraim takes issue with Jephthah's failure to call them up to join in the battle. Jephthah's behavior in dealing with the Ephraimites stands in contrast to Gideon's when he was faced with a similar complaint in Judges 8:1-3, as well as to his own more diplomatic dialogue with the Ammonite king recounted in the second scene. Where Gideon had been able to win over the Ephraimites through flattery, Jephthah provokes them, accusing them of not coming to "deliver" him (וְלֹא הוֹשַׁעְתֶּם אוֹתִי מִיָּדָם) (12:2). The accusation is an odd one to make, since in the Book of Judges the burden of deliverance rests with the leader rather than those called to assist (cf. 3:9,15; 6:14; 13:5). As was the case with the Ammonites, the consequence of Jephthah's failure in diplomacy is another violent conflict. This time, forty-two thousand Ephraimites perish. In the deaths of so many Israelites and in the death of his own daughter, participants in the narrative see the final legacy of Jephthah: though he delivers his people from an external threat, he brings destruction upon his own house, his own people. The narrative concludes in Judges 12:7 without the usual notice (cf. 3:11,30; 5:31; 8:28) that the land had been at peace during the time of Jephthah's leadership, which lasted only six years.

Conclusion

The narrative comes full circle, highlighting the way in which Jephthah, whose origins are in a family at odds with itself, comes to bring division and loss of life to the family of Israel, even to his own home. The story of Jephthah, like the other stories encountered in Judges, raises questions about leadership in Israel. The leaders whose reputations emerge relatively unscathed in the book – Othniel, Ehud, and Deborah, together with the “minor” judges – tend to be those about whom little is said. Those whose characters are probed more deeply are shown up as flawed individuals who usually do more harm than good. Gideon delivers his people from Midianite domination, but ultimately leads the people into idolatry. No good comes from the rule of Abimelech, whose ambition for power brings disaster upon his family and upon the people of Shechem. Even Samson, the most colorful figure of the lot, focuses entirely on his own wants rather than on the needs of his people. Faced with the wreckage their leaders leave behind, the people of Israel are left to wonder whether their lives under foreign domination are any worse than when they are left to themselves.

The story of Jephthah, not unlike the other stories encountered in Judges, appears designed in this way to provoke consciousness of the ways in which the personal weakness and biases of those in positions of responsibility can lead a whole people toward disaster. The story appears intended to cultivate a critical perspective, a kind of hermeneutic of suspicion, toward those who wield power: whether in the family, in the tribe, in the nation, or in the empire. If, as biblical scholars generally hold, the works that make up the Former Prophets were brought together in more or less their present form during the Babylonian exile and the Persian period that followed it, the stories of the judges and the kings would have helped the Jewish people to see that their own national leaders were flawed human beings whose policies led to military defeat and exile, and that life under imperial rulers like Cyrus might actually be an improvement.

The story also raises questions about God, particularly about God's silence. While Barak is assured by Deborah that YHWH is with him, and Gideon is given repeated assurance of divine assistance by YHWH himself, Jephthah receives no such pledge. Nor do the people of

Gilead, who hear the voice of YHWH reject their cry for help. The sense of God's withdrawal provokes leaders and people to courses of action that in the end bring death. Still, in the narrator's interventions telling of YHWH's inability to bear Israel's suffering, as well as of YHWH's gift of the spirit to Jephthah, the narrative gives indications that, in spite of Israel's sense of God's absence, their God does continue to be with them. This too would have provided reassurance to a people seeking to preserve its religious identity after the loss of political autonomy.

ENGAGING THE STORY: TWO EXAMPLES

Origen

While reflecting on Christian martyrdom in his commentary on the Gospel of John (*Comm. Jo.*, 6.276-80), Origen of Alexandria briefly discusses the fate of Jephthah's daughter recounted in the Book of Judges. Though aware that, in the midst of a crisis, Israel's pagan neighbors offered human sacrifice "for the common good," Origen nonetheless considers the young woman's death "mysterious and beyond human nature" (6.278-79). Since the deaths of the martyrs "give an appearance of great cruelty to God to whom such sacrifices are offered," he argues that "we need a generous and perceptive spirit in order to refute the reproaches made against providence" (6.278). Though Christian martyrdom may appear absurd to those uninitiated in the faith, Origen maintains that "it pleased God that we submit to all the most painful tortures" rather than be delivered from pain by denying the truth (6.280). While refraining from passing judgment on Jephthah's act, Origen views the young woman's sacrifice, willingly accepted, in a positive light, as a type of the martyrdom endured by those who willingly embraced death because of their faith in Christ.

How might we account for Origen's apparent unwillingness to criticize Jephthah's taking of his daughter's life? Besides the concern Origen expresses about impugning divine providence, a partial answer may be found in the praise Jephthah is given in the Letter to the Hebrews, the content of which, Eusebius testifies, Origen attributed to the apostle Paul (see Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.*, 6.25.11-14). Like the Book of Sirach, which blesses the memory of the judges, "whose hearts did not

fall into idolatry and did not turn away from the Lord" (Sirach 46:11), Hebrews counts Jephthah among the judges "who through faith defeated kingdoms, effected justice, became mighty in war, and brought foreign armies low" (Hebrews 11:32-34). Even though, in its encomium of those Israelites whose faith in the midst of hardship and suffering was exemplary, the epistle gives praise, not to the daughter whose example Origen finds edifying, but to the father who took her life, respect for the apostolic authority that lay behind the judgment offered in the letter seems to have contributed to Origen's reserve.

Origen's response to the story may also be accounted for by the historical context in which he lived – what was "going forward" in the Christian community of which he was a part. Like the author of Hebrews, Origen lived in times of intermittent persecution of the young Christian community. Perhaps they needed their heroes pure in order to find the inner strength required to remain firm in their faith. Yet their failure to perceive the questions the biblical text poses about the character of the judges illustrates the need for some form of what Kant called "disinterest" in judging a work of art. Prior commitments or "prejudice," though inevitably part of human being, can hinder our ability to hear what another is saying.

Augustine

In contrast to the responses to the story we have seen from Origen, the Letter to the Hebrews, and the Book of Sirach, Augustine of Hippo attends to the text's detail and questions the text with subtlety – in effect entering into argument with Jephthah, whose vow he clearly sees as problematic. Citing Deuteronomy 12:29-31 (which warns Israel not to imitate nations that burn their sons and daughters, thinking to win divine favor) as well as the precedent of Genesis 22, the binding of Isaac, he reasons that Jephthah would have been aware that human sacrifice was forbidden by the law, yet makes the vow anyway (*Quaest. Hept.*, 49.1-2). Augustine suggests that Jephthah would have been more obedient to God's will by not carrying out what he had vowed in violation of God's law, though he would have appeared to be acting merely out of self-interest (*Quaest. Hept.*, 49.15).

Augustine's engagement with the story is similar to contemporary

rabbinic comment preserved in *Midrash Tanchuma*, edited most likely in the fifth century C.E. In *Tanchuma Bechukotai* 5, the death of Jephthah's daughter is attributed to her father's lack of knowledge of Torah (מפני שלא היה בן תורה אבד את בתו). The young woman, by contrast, does know Torah, and confronts her father with the instruction in Leviticus 1:2 that offerings to the Lord be brought "from the herd [of cattle] or from the flock [of sheep or goats]." Nothing, she argues, is said of the possibility of offering a human being. In effect, Augustine makes the argument that *Midrash Tanchuma* imagines for Jephthah's daughter.³¹

Augustine also queries God's role in the episode by pursuing the intertextual connections he perceives between the stories of Jephthah and Gideon (*Quaest. Hept.*, 49.9-10). After the spirit had come upon him, Augustine notes, Gideon had tempted God, asking for a sign to reassure him of God's assistance. Yet even after receiving reassurance and winning the battle, he still led Israel into idolatry through the *ephod* he constructed. Augustine argues that Gideon is praised in the Letter to the Hebrews for his faith and his justice, not for his sin. Like Gideon, Jephthah sins after receiving the spirit, but God's decision to save Israel through him is not changed because of that. The examples of Gideon and Jephthah demonstrate to Augustine that God works not only through the good but also through those who are evil (*Quaest. Hept.*, 49.11). By specifying that God has worked not only through their faith but also in spite of their sin, Augustine makes use of what he discerns in the stories of the judges to reinterpret the assessment of their leadership found in Hebrews 11:32-34, restricting the scope of its praise.

In Augustine's reflections we see how the story of Jephthah and his daughter has engaged the learning process. Journeying through the narrative, Augustine comes to understand and accept Judges' portrait of Jephthah as complex: positive in that he delivered Israel from an external threat, negative in that he brought destruction to his own family and nation. The judgment Augustine makes that Jephthah was wrong to have sacrificed his daughter leads him in turn to re-evalu-

³¹ As did Augustine, *Tanchuma Bechukotai* 5 also cites the example of the binding of Isaac to argue against human sacrifice. Interestingly, neither Augustine nor the rabbinic source cites Numbers 30:2: "When a man makes a vow the Lord . . . he shall not break his word."

ate another biblical text, the Letter to the Hebrews, which offers in his view too generous a valuation of the judges' leadership. The truth he discerns through this process helps him to look to the future with greater confidence. Writing his commentary on the first seven books of the Bible in the last decade of his life, with the church facing, not persecution, but an uncertain future after the sack of Rome, Augustine understands quite well the sinfulness of human being but expresses his faith that God can work through human weakness. In the end he acknowledges that the episode of Jephthah and his daughter remains mysterious. The Book of Judges does not explicitly condemn Jephthah, he observes, but leaves us to examine his action in the light of justice and God's law "so that our own intelligence, in making judgments, might be cultivated" (*ut noster intellectus in iudicando exerceretur*) (*Quaest. Hept.*, 49.7).

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In the summer of 1987, at the inauguration of a new pastoral plan for the Archdiocese of Milan, Cardinal Carlo Maria Martini urged those involved in pastoral ministry in his diocese to learn from the way that "God educates his people" by helping each person, each community of faith, to find the right path.³² Revealing his debt to Lonergan, whose work he came to know later in life, Martini described the divine pedagogy as an invitation to enter into "a process of moral, intellectual and religious self-transcendence that forms the authentic 'I,' the 'I' that 'has been created by means of the Word,' and that even now is an event mediated by the same Word."³³ Augustine's way of engaging biblical narrative illustrates well how the word of God – a word mediated in this case through the artistry of human authors – engages the learning process. Though Augustine does not – could not – engage in the sort of critical history Lonergan speaks of (that is something I have tried to do in attempting to contextualize not only the biblical texts, but Origen's and Augustine's comment on them), he does endeavor to understand the kind of resources someone like Jephthah might have drawn on in

³² C. M. Martini, "Dio educa il suo popolo," in C. M. Martini, *Interiorità e future* (Bologna: Edizioni Dehoniane Bologna, 1988), 405-66, esp. 413-38.

³³ Martini, "Dio educa il suo popolo," 414.

deciding what to do about the mess he had created. And having made his own judgment about what Jephthah should have done, Augustine does not hesitate to confront the text in Hebrews that praises a man he judges to be in the wrong.

This suggests that our engagement with biblical texts does involve a dialectic in which counterpositions may be corrected. Quite often, as our wrestling with the scriptures helps us to become more deeply converted, the counterpositions corrected are our own. But at times the counterpositions are found, *pace* McEvenue, in the scriptures themselves. After journeying through the stories of Judges, Augustine reevaluated the judgment offered in Hebrews in light of his own evaluation of Jephthah's act. Centuries later, moved by atrocities they had witnessed in the conduct of the slave trade, Quakers began to use the Golden Rule to question the largely uncritical acceptance of slavery in the Mosaic Law and in the writings of Paul, where the institution was seen as flawed, but legitimate. Men and women of our day continue to wrestle with seemingly contradictory texts within the Pauline corpus concerning the role of women in the church, attempting to situate the texts historically in order to understand what was "going forward" in the early Christian communities.

That biblical texts do at times stand in tension with one another should come as no surprise, since the Constitution on Divine Revelation, *Dei Verbum*, acknowledges that "God speaks in sacred scripture through [human beings] in a human fashion," making "use of their powers and abilities . . . acting in them and through them" (DV 3.11-12). The books of the Bible are not "written by God" in a straightforward fashion, as McEvenue implies, but like human beings they bear the image and likeness of God. The word of God is mediated through the lives and the words of the biblical authors who, like us, were and are ever on a journey toward deeper religious, moral, and intellectual conversion. While our encounter with the scriptures does offer us the possibility of self-transcendence, the scriptures themselves may be transformed when encountered in faith, experienced in their beauty, understood in wider contexts, and appropriated in lives that are true and good. As with the people of faith who are praised by the author of Hebrews, so too with the sacred scriptures the community of faith produced: "God provided . . . that they would not, without us, be made perfect" (Hebrews 11:40).

REFLECTIONS OF AN HISTORICAL THEOLOGIAN ON FIFTY-YEAR JUBILEES¹

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“YOU SHALL COUNT off seven weeks of years, seven times seven years, so that the period of seven weeks of years gives forty-nine years. Then you shall have the trumpet sounded loud. . . . And you shall hallow the fiftieth year and you shall proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. . . .” (Leviticus 25:8-10). In 2012 there were lots of trumpets blowing for the fiftieth anniversary of Vatican II, which officially opened on October 11, 1962. The anniversary prompted a host of reconsiderations of the meaning of the council and its significance for the future of the church. These new considerations became even more pronounced after the election of Jorge Mario Bergoglio as Pope Francis I in March of 2013. In light of the election of Pope Francis many Catholics began to entertain hopes for the proclamation of liberty throughout the land; others wondered about the continuity of papal policy. In any case, the retrospective views back to Vatican II

¹ The genesis of this essay deserves a note. It was originally written as an informal talk for the Fiftieth Reunion of my Ordination Class from the North American College in Rome, a meeting held in Tampa in December, 2012. I want to express a special note of thanks to the many classmates who gave me valuable comments and reactions to the original talk. Subsequently, I delivered a revised version at the meeting at Boston College in 2013 to celebrate the Fortieth Anniversary of the Lonergan Workshop. The election of Pope Francis in that year produced some adjustments to the original text. Obviously, now more than three years into Francis's pontificate, I would be tempted to make more changes, but that would be to write a new essay. When Regina Knox asked me to allow the 2013 essay to appear in print, I had some initial hesitations. Nonetheless, the long-range forces that were present in the church in 2012-13 are still evident, so I agreed to have a slightly revised form of the essay printed, but whether as a monument to now-outmoded views, or as a piece still fit for provoking discussion, is beyond my power to determine.

and the possibility for new prospects in the pontificate of Pope Francis frame the following considerations, though I concentrate more on the past than on the future.

I'm not going to attempt a review of the history of Vatican II and the various modes of interpretation it has been given.² My modest goal is to offer a few historical and theological reflections for the anniversary of the council, especially in relation to the role of spirituality and mysticism in the church today. These remarks are tentative, meant to provoke discussion, debate, evaluation, and reevaluation. They also reflect my own story, especially the gift of studying in Rome from 1959 to 1963, the years of the preparation of Vatican II and the opening of its first session. These were exciting times, especially at the Gregorian University, where Bernard Lonergan was in his intellectual prime. My classmates and I sat in his lectures for two years as he delivered the earliest versions of his books on Trinity and Christology. I was also fortunate to work with him for a third year, while I prepared my research paper (*Exercitatio*) for the STL degree (*Sacrae Theologiae Licentia*) under his direction. What follows is in part a tribute to Bernard Lonergan. Although I cite him only rarely in what follows, my scholarship, teaching, and writing over more than fifty years has been profoundly influenced by all that I learned from Lonergan.

I began my reflections of December 2012, from the sense that many of the priests and laity of the Jubilee generation of Vatican II have experienced tension, disappointment, even disillusionment with aspects of the life of the church over the five decades since the council. (Everyone who spoke the evening in December when I gave the first version of this essay, and those who later sent me comments on it, testified to this malaise, some in much stronger terms than what I express here.) Many of the Jubilarians were still hanging on to their Catholic affiliation, despite what one friend described as living in the midst of a "toxic church."³ The extent to which this sense of malaise may have changed over the past three years is difficult to say. Still, I think we continue to need to consider ways of trying to deal with "toxic"

² To cite just one example, the essays in James L. Heft and John W. O'Malley, eds., *After Vatican II. Trajectories and Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2012).

³ I owe this phrase to my classmate John Krecji, excommunicated by the bishop of Lincoln, Nebraska, for daring to be a member of the Catholic Progressive group, Call to Action.

public situations, whether these be ecclesiastical or national. From the perspective of malaise in the church, I like to recall two stories (perhaps apocryphal, but certainly *ben trovato*). The Catholic author and polemicist, Hilaire Belloc, was supposedly once asked how he, as an intelligent Englishman, could remain committed to the Catholic Church. He answered that he maintained belief in the church, "because any merely human institution run with such knavish imbecility could not have lasted a fortnight." The other story concerns the early nineteenth-century Archbishop of Paris who was called on the carpet by Napoleon and told that unless he could make the pope abandon his opposition to the Emperor's wishes, Napoleon would destroy the church. The Cardinal allegedly laughed, and, when the Emperor asked why, he said: "My dear Emperor we have been trying to do just that for eighteen centuries without much success."

The disenchantment that affects many in the church today, albeit tempered with Bellocian paradox and/or Gallic wit, is often primarily a feeling, an emotion, a quick reaction to particular acts of knavish imbecility. As Lonergan reminded us, however, we need to be aware of our emotions and feelings, but also to subject them to hard thinking to gain insight and understanding that can lead emotional responses toward intelligent and appropriate courses of action. My own form of such a thought experiment for assessing the situation of the church over the past fifty years is based on a figure I've been reading for many years, Friedrich Baron von Hügel (1852-1925), a great English lay theologian, as well as a friend and sympathizer with a number of the Modernists condemned in 1907 and 1908.⁴ Von Hügel is best known for his 1908 book, the two volumes entitled *The Mystical Element of Religion as Studied in Saint Catherine of Genoa and Her Friends*. Von Hügel's tome remains one of the most important modern works on mysticism, despite its mind-numbing unreadability. In this context I do not wish to discuss his view of mysticism as such, but rather to concentrate on the theory of religion Von Hügel sets out in the second chapter of the work.⁵ Like any broad theory, it is best viewed as a heuristic device,

⁴ Von Hügel's relation to modernism has been much studied. For recent contributions, see the essays in C. J. T. Talar, ed., *Modernists and Mystics* (Washington, DC: Catholic University Press, 2009).

⁵ Friedrich von Hügel, *The Mystical Element of Religion as Studied in Saint Catherine of Genoa and Her Friends*, 2 vols. (London: Dent, 4th impression, 1961), chap. II, The

helpful in some cases but always in need of adjustment and at times perhaps even of rejection. Nonetheless, I've found it a useful way for trying to think about major trends in Catholicism during the half-century since Vatican II.

For Von Hügel all knowledge depends on three aspects of human nature, the sensational, the rational, and what he calls the "ethico-mystical." The great religions exhibit the interaction of three elements based on these aspects.⁶ The first is the historical-institutional element related to sense and memory, what he calls the Petrine element. The second is the analytical-speculative element related to reason, the Pauline dimension, while the third is the intuitive-emotional aspect related to will and action, which he terms the Johannine element. Expressed as "Institutionalism, Intellectualism, and Mysticism," Von Hügel insists on the necessity of a dialectical interaction of the three elements to produce a mature religious person. Each of the three constituents of religion, he says, "tends continually to tempt the soul to retain only *it*, and hence to an impoverishing simplification."⁷ Left to themselves, each element tries to minimize or suppress the others. Von Hügel spells out in some detail the dangers that the dominance of any one element over the other two entails. It is only their harmonious, mutual acceptance and interaction that produces the healthy religion that allows for the development of a mature spiritual person. This process was Von Hügel's main concern: to sketch out how, over the course of a lifetime, what he calls the "simply Individual," that is, "the human person as possibility," can be transformed into "the truly Personal," the mature human being, by the interaction of grace and human effort.⁸

Von Hügel's tripartite model, for all its simplicity, may provide a helpful way for thinking about developments in Catholicism over the past fifty years – or at least it does for me. Two things need underlining. The first, already mentioned, is that Von Hügel's model is integrative: each element always necessarily involves the others. The second is

Three Elements of Religion (1:50-82).

⁶ Von Hügel, *The Mystical Element*, 1:55-57. The extent to which Von Hügel's model may be applicable to religions other than Christianity is debatable.

⁷ Von Hügel, *The Mystical Element*, 1:70.

⁸ Von Hügel, *The Mystical Element*, 1:76. For more on the process of integration, see *The Mystical Element*, 2:382-85.

that Von Hügel's model is an example of Lonergan's critical realism. To the extent to which we can judge that any single element has been allowed to achieve dominance over the other aspects, either in individuals or in institutions, religious maturity is threatened or even obliterated. In Lonergan's terms, such dominance will produce religious inauthenticity, changes that masquerade as developments, but that are actually regressions. I believe that there is considerable evidence to show that Modern Catholicism since the French Revolution has seen an increasing dominance of the Petrine element over the Pauline and Johannine, to use Von Hügel's language, and that the struggle over the meaning of Vatican II is an apt illustration of this ongoing imbalance.

I will start with the Petrine, or institutional aspect, of Catholicism, which, we must note for Von Hügel is not just the papacy or any particular office, but all external authority, including oral and written tradition. Von Hügel rightly sees the institutional element as essential, but he insists that it is always *just* an element. As he put it at the end of his 1904 address on "Official Authority and Living Religion," "official Authority will thus get recognized and treated both by its bearers and its subjects as a part, a normally necessary part, but ever only a part, of the total religious life; as a means, . . . but not as the end or even as one end of that life."⁹ For Von Hügel a merely passive acceptance of external authority is a sure formula for producing spiritual inauthenticity. Progress toward religious maturity involves a living interaction between external authority and the internal intellectual and mystical dimensions of religion – in other words, intellectual and religious conversion. In my judgment, and in the judgment of my classmates who engaged in our discussions in 2012, the past half-century, despite the strong witness given to the rights of conscience at Vatican II, often exemplified a failure of external authority to integrate the external and the internal dimensions of religion. Of course, any generalization is capable of being met with counter-examples, both with regard to individual issues and even in the case of broad movements and trends. I do not have time to consider particular objections here, because what I'm speaking of is a general sense of failure shared by many, certainly by those to whom this talk was initially given.

⁹ Friedrich von Hügel, *Essays and Addresses on the Philosophy of Religion. Second Series* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1926), 23.

In thinking about what has occurred over the past half century since Vatican II, my reflections were stimulated by John O'Malley's book, *What Happened at Vatican II*.¹⁰ O'Malley provides an insightful analysis of the story of the council and its discussions and is especially important for showing just why this council was, indeed, different from previous councils. Now, we thought we knew this, but in recent decades voices arose which assured us that Vatican II was really no different from Vatican I, or from Trent, for that matter. Everything has been always one and the same (*semper idem*, as Cardinal Ottaviani's motto put it). Again, I'm not going to try to analyze the contested readings of Vatican II, because my purpose is personal reminiscence, not building a learned argument in ecclesiology. I do, nevertheless, want to testify to the truth of the conviction that many Catholics have had that something epochal *really* did happen at Vatican II. I would describe this as an *epochal shift*, not a revolution; but also not a mere adjustment or a continuation of business as usual. Yet it is obvious that there are many in the church today who wish that what *did* happen had *not* happened, or who seek to minimize the theological, pastoral, ecumenical, and liturgical significance of Vatican II.

This kind of backlash is scarcely surprising to church historians. It has happened before, for example, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries with the struggle between the reform councils of Constance and Basel and the revived Roman papacy and curia.¹¹ In other words, council versus curia is an old story, one with deeper roots than the conciliar crisis of the fifteenth century.¹² The fourteenth century was not a good era for the church. Pope Boniface VIII (1294-1303) became involved in a struggle with the most powerful monarch in Europe,

¹⁰ John W. O'Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2012).

¹¹ For a view of the importance of Constance in thinking about the current ecclesial situation, see Francis Oakley, "History and the Return of the Repressed in Catholic Modernity: The Dilemma Posed by Constance," in *The Crisis of Authority in Catholic Modernity*, ed. Michael J. Lacey and Francis Oakley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 29-56.

¹² The roots of constitutional conciliarism were first demonstrated by Brian Tierney in *Foundations of Conciliar Theory: The Contribution of the Medieval Canonists from Gratian to the Great Schism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955). For a survey, see Francis Oakley, *The Conciliarist Tradition: Constitutionalism in the Catholic Church 1300-1870* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

Philip IV of France, and lost. Shortly afterward Clement V (1305-14) moved the papacy to Avignon and for seventy years the popes were seen (mostly correctly) as puppets of the French monarchy. Eventually, Gregory XI (1370-78) returned to Rome in 1378, but died soon after. The result was a split election and the beginning of the Great Western Schism which lasted from 1378 to 1415, as various popes contended for recognition. The Council of Constance (1414-18) that finally brought an end to the schism, for all its flaws, was an attempt to save the church and especially the papacy from itself. Not only were the Council Fathers eventually able to settle on one pope, but, more importantly, a consensus emerged that the ongoing work of reform of what was clearly a corrupt church could not be done just top-down. Hence, the most important pronouncements of Constance were the Decrees "Haec Sancta" and "Frequens," which documents, incidentally, you will search for in vain in the pages of *Denzinger*, though they were the major actions of an Ecumenical Council!¹³ "Haec Sancta" declared: "This Council holds its power direct from Christ; everyone, no matter what his rank of office, even if it be papal, is bound to obey it in whatever pertains to faith, to the extirpation of the schism, as well as to the reform of the Church in its head and members." "Frequens" mandated that reforming councils were to meet after at first five, then seven, and finally every ten years to pursue the work of reform. Alas, the new pope Martin V (1417-31), who originally accepted both decrees, once he had securely established his pontificate, made it a priority to undercut and destroy the possibility of further conciliar reform. This reaction was given final approval in the 1460 Bull "Execrabilis" of Pius II, a former conciliarist, who forbade any appeal from pope to council. Rome was not going to yield to any outside reforming pressure. The conciliar option

¹³ Older editions of *Denzinger*, such as *Henrici Denzinger Enchiridion Symbolorum*, 31st ed., ed. Carolus Rahner (Freiburg/Rome: Herder, 1957), the book we used in Rome more than fifty years ago, did not even mention "Haec Sancta" and "Frequens" in their treatment of Constance (Nos. 581-690). The recent Latin-English 43rd edition, *Heinrich Denzinger Enchiridion symbolorum definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum*, ed. Peter Hünermann (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2012), 320-21, does note the existence of these decrees and their acceptance by the popes of the time, but does not include them as official conciliar documents. The decrees are available in the standard collection (with *imprimatur*) of conciliar documents, Josephus Alberigo et al., eds., *Conciliorum Oecumenicorum Decreta* (Bologna: Istituto per le Scienze Religiose, 1973), 408-409, 438-39.

did not totally expire, but later papally convoked councils, like Lateran V (1512-17), were failures. Hope remained alive. Even as late as 1518, after his unsuccessful meeting with Cardinal Cajetan at Augsburg, Martin Luther appealed to the conciliar option to try to maintain his place as a Catholic reformer.¹⁴

The sundering of Western Christianity that followed did eventually lead to the General Council that met sporadically at Trent between 1545 and 1563. Much was accomplished; much was left on the table. The theological differences between Roman Catholicism and the Reformers were made clear. Important reforms of Catholic life and practice were instituted, but the reform of Rome and the curia was left in the hands of the papacy. The relations between the authority of the bishops of Rome and the episcopacy in general, crucial concerns of the council, were not decided – unfinished business that was taken up for the papacy at Vatican I and for the episcopacy at Vatican II.¹⁵ Despite what Francis Oakley has called “the politics of oblivion,” constitutional conciliarism has remained an option in Catholic thought over the following centuries, though waxing and waning with the times.

Institutionally speaking, the generation of those of us who were in Rome during Vatican II has relived something much like the fifteenth century. Pope John XXIII's surprising initiative to summon a council to address the pastoral relations of the church to the modern world caught the curia (far more entrenched than they were in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries) off guard. Their attempts to control the agenda of the council were for the most part unsuccessful. The documents of Vatican II stand and will stand as marking an epoch, as the failed attempts to win back those ultra-Traditionalists who totally reject Vatican II have shown. The deeper issue is how to receive Vatican II – What to make of its documents and their role in the ongoing life of the church. Claiming that some people took the hopes engendered by Vatican II to extremes (and this may be true in some cases), the revived curia under two “restorationist” popes basically treated Vatican II much the way Martin V and his successors did Constance,

¹⁴ On Luther at Augsburg, see Diarmaid McCollough, *The Reformation: A History* (New York: Penguin Books, 2003), 126-27.

¹⁵ On Vatican I and II in relation to Trent's unfinished business, see Robert Bireley, *The Refashioning of Catholicism, 1450-1700* (Washington, DC: Catholic University Press, 1999), 54, 202-203.

that is, they accepted most aspects of its doctrinal teaching, but in many cases sought to blunt, qualify, or deflect the council's impact on the institutional element of the church. The blocking of serious efforts at reform since Vatican II is perhaps most evident in the undercutting of the episcopal collegiality mandated in the decrees on the Episcopal Office (Chap. III of "Lumen Gentium," of November 21, 1964, and "Christus Dominus" of October 28, 1965). Roman decisions diminishing the role of regional and national episcopal conferences, councils, and synods led to a situation in which there were fewer effective channels for communicating reform movements from below, that is, from the clerical and lay groups that are at least in some way representative of the wider range of the People of God. Decisions came to be made more and more top-down – curial mandates about what could no longer be discussed, or what must be obeyed without question.

The collection of Vatican II documents edited by Walter Abbott back in 1966 highlighted the ecumenical nature of the council by having each document introduced by a Catholic theologian and commented upon by a Protestant observer. "Lumen Gentium" ("On the Church") was introduced by the future Cardinal Avery Dulles with observations that he explicitly repudiated a quarter-century later. The commentator was the Methodist theologian and church historian, Albert C. Outler, whose words were prescient, even prophetic:

All of this is to say that the real meaning of "On the Church" has still to be deciphered – and translated into action in the polity and program of the Roman Catholic Church. This now becomes the paramount task in the years ahead. It is certain that the Council intended this Constitution to be the major resource in the renovation and reform of the Catholic Church – and in the further progress of the ecumenical dialogue. It is equally certain that history's verdict on Vatican II will turn largely on how far this intention is realized.¹⁶

With regard to this issue and many others, the winds of change have already begun to blow. Early in his pontificate Pope Francis gave an interview to a dozen Jesuit periodicals, one published in the United

¹⁶ Walter M. Abbott, General Editor, *The Documents of Vatican II* (New York: America Press, 1966), 106.

States by *America*. In the section entitled "Thinking with the Church," the Pope makes it clear that the faithful, considered as a whole, are infallible in matters of belief. Hence he says, "We should not even think, therefore, that 'thinking with the Church' means only thinking with the hierarchy of the Church." The church, as the pope goes on to say, "is a home to all, not a small chapel that can only hold a small number of selected people." In other words, the words of the Nicene Creed, that the church is "one, holy, catholic, and apostolic" – are meant to be taken seriously. The church is "catholic" in the sense of being welcoming to all, seeking to cure all of their sins and failings. One more quotation from this interview is worth noting. Reflecting on recent ecclesiastical rhetoric, Pope Francis said: "If a Christian is a restorationist, a legalist, if he wants everything clear and safe, he will find nothing. Tradition and memory of the past must help us to have the courage to open new avenues to God." Otherwise, "faith becomes 'an ideology among other ideologies.'"¹⁷

Rome's resistance to reform over the past generation, now once again under debate since the election of Francis, has developed in the midst of another, even more decisive, change – one with great promise, but also with challenges and dangers. Sixty years ago we all lived in a comfortably "Western" Catholicism centered in Europe with a strong offshoot in North America. Vatican II itself, however, was a living witness to the emerging globalization of Catholicism. "Global Christianity" and "Global Catholicism" (to cite the titles of two recent books) are no longer future projections. They are already here.¹⁸ Catholics in Latin America, Africa, and Asia already far outnumber those in Europe and North America. In 1910 sixty-four percent of all Catholics lived in Europe; a few years ago it had fallen to twenty-four percent. According to one projection, in 2025 there will be one billion, 362 million Catholics in the world, of whom only 351 million will be in what we call the First World of Europe and North America. No less than 606 million are projected for Latin America, 228 million for Africa,

¹⁷ The entire interview by Anthony Spadaro, "A Big Heart Open to God," originally found in the September 30, 2013, number of *America*, is available online at <http://www.americamagazine.org/popeinterview>.

¹⁸ Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); Ian Linden, *Global Catholicism. Diversity, and Change Since Vatican II* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009).

and 160 million for Asia.¹⁹ The age of the dominance of the European/American white Catholic is already a thing of the past.

A humorous piece in *The Economist* for March 9, 2013, written under the byline "Schumpeter," the magazine's economic columnist, was entitled "Pope, CEO." It begins: "The Roman Catholic church is the world's oldest multinational. It is also, by many measures, its most successful, with 1.2 billion customers, 1 million employees, tens of millions of volunteers, a global distribution network, a universally recognized logo, unrivalled lobbying clout and, auguring well for the future, a successful emerging-markets operation." But, as Schumpeter goes on to point out, all is not well in the relations between the emerging markets and the hidebound central office of the church. The election of Pope Francis certainly marks a significant moment, even perhaps another epochal shift. Nonetheless, unless something is done to re-balance the relation between center and periphery and to re-integrate the external and the internal aspects of religion, mere growth in numbers will be meaningless and perhaps not even long lasting. Again, to cite the Schumpeter: "The church cannot take its success in the global South for granted. It is under pressure from lean start-ups with more vigorous marketing. Its market share in Latin America has declined from 90% in 1910 to 72% today, thanks to the growth of Pentecostalism." It might seem that the language of "market share" is a demeaning way of speaking about religion, but Von Hügel would reply that if one thinks that the external institutional element of religion is the only one that really counts, it is an appropriate, if crass, way of speaking.

Over the course of its long history, the papal-curial complex (something like America's military-industrial complex, but older) has often had to adapt to new circumstances. When an old world-order decayed, collapsed, or outlived its usefulness to Rome, the institution has demonstrated remarkable initiative in linking its future to new political contexts and powers. After Constantine's conversion in 312, institutional Christianity hitched its star to the fortunes of the Christian Roman Empire. When the emperors moved East and fell into theological error from the Western perspective, they became less useful to Rome. Eventually, by the mid-eighth century, Rome turned its back

¹⁹ Figures from Jenkins, *The Next Christendom*, 195.

on the Byzantine Empire and embraced the rising Frankish monarchy, beginning with papal recognition of Pepin's seizure of power in 752 and culminating in Leo III's crowning Charlemagne emperor in 800.

During the next two-and-a-half centuries the alliance between the papacy and the German Emperors was a mainstay of papal political strategy, although strong emperors tended to treat the popes like court chaplains. In the mid-eleventh century, however, when the movement to reform the church and to assert a new understanding of papal power began, reforming popes, especially Gregory VII (d. 1085), turned away from the Emperors and aligned papal interests with national monarchs, though these alliances were fraught with difficulty. My point in this superficial sketch of some major changes in the institutional history of the medieval papacy is to direct attention to the fact that the past fifty years has seen a far more important shift – the greatest demographic, geographical, and perhaps even political change in the history of Catholicism. We are in the midst of a new era. Demographically, the change has already happened, but what difference it will make for the practice of authority in the church is still unknown. Will the emergence of global Catholicism have a real effect on how institutional authority is exercised within the church? How long can Catholicism flourish with the exaggerated and dysfunctional view of the imperial papacy that has emerged over the past two centuries?²⁰ Can a rigidly centralized and often unresponsive decision-making process be effective in the global environment of the twenty-first century?²¹

With regard to Von Hügel's two other essential elements of religion, the intellectual and the mystical, the past fifty years has also been a time of dramatic change. In the case of the intellectual, or Pauline, element we might say, with Charles Dickens, "It was the best of times; it was the worst of times." Borrowing a phrase from the title of one of my friend David Tracy's books, we can say it has been an age of plurality and ambiguity.²² New ways of doing theology have flourished

²⁰ On Pope Benedict's resignation as affording an opportunity to rethink the role of the papacy, see Joseph Komonchok, "Benedict's Act of Humility. Now It's Rome's Turn," *Commonweal*, March 8, 2013, 7-8.

²¹ For reflections on these issues, see the essays in *Governance, Accountability, and the Future of the Catholic Church*, ed. Francis Oakley and Bruce Russett (New York: Continuum, 2004).

²² David Tracy, *Plurality and Ambiguity* (New York: Seabury, 1987).

in the past half-century, but it has been troubling to see how many of these new forms have rapidly collapsed, sometimes under the weight of their own pretensions, and how often new theological options, rightly or wrongly, have been smothered in their cradles. Two large-scale factors helped contribute to the fluid situation of the past fifty years. The first was the collapse of Neothomism at the time of Vatican II. The second factor, one which has troubled Catholicism since the time of the modernist controversy at the beginning of the twentieth century and is still a neuralgic issue, is the debate over the role of historical consciousness in the *intellectus fidei* and the development of doctrine, an aspect of what Bernard Lonergan spoke of as the shift from the classicist worldview to that of historical mindedness.²³

The emergence of Neothomism in the second half of the nineteenth century and its triumph in the 1879 encyclical "Aeterni Patris" of Leo XIII was as much a political event as an intellectual one. As James Hennessy once put it: "*Aeterni Patris* charted the grand design of philosophical renewal that would lead to social and political renewal."²⁴ Thomas's thought certainly possesses remarkable profundity and coherence, but what was revived by Pope Leo and the neothomists was an a-historical reading of Thomas as a philosopher (he was primarily a theologian), a reading that the pope felt would serve as a bulwark to defend Catholicism against the acids of modern philosophy (read Descartes, Kant, Hegel, Bergson, whoever). A key element in this understanding of Thomas was the conviction that real historical development and change could not be admitted into Catholic thinking. Alas, if history is barred from the front door, it has a way of sneaking in at the back, so the anti-historical view of Thomas advanced by the neothomists began to be undermined scarcely a generation after it was created. We should not be surprised that this rickety construct collapsed so rapidly at the time of Vatican II, but rather that it lasted as long as it did. The recovery of the historical meaning of Thomas that began well before the council was part of a wider *ressourcement*

²³ Lonergan spoke of this shift in many places; see especially, "The Transition from the Classicist World View to Historical Mindedness," in *A Second Collection* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1975), 1-10.

²⁴ James Hennessy, "Leo XIII's Thomistic Revival: A Political and Philosophical Event," in *Celebrating the Medieval Heritage: A Colloquy on the Thought of Aquinas and Bonaventur*, ed. David Tracy (*The Journal of Religion* 58, Supplement [1978]), S195.

that decisively changed biblical theology, as well as the way Catholics viewed the patristic and monastic past. The historical contextualization of Thomas has been a good thing for modern attempts to recover what Aquinas really said and meant. Although Thomas's thought remains a bone of contention fought over by Paleo Thomists, Taliban Thomists, Transcendental Thomists, Existential Thomists, Analytical Thomists, Radical Orthodox Thomists, Post-Modern Thomists, and just plain old Thomists, I take it as a real achievement that I have not met anyone recently who is willing to be self-described as a neothomist.

The rise and fall of Neothomism, however, was part of a broader movement characteristic of the intellectual element in Catholicism, that is, the relation of tradition and innovation. As Bernard Lonergan once said of Aquinas, "Though a singularly traditional thinker, Aquinas was also a great innovator."²⁵ The Thomas of Neothomism stood as the guardian of immovable tradition, though paradoxically what was taught as Thomism was often closer to Cajetan, Suarez, and John of St. Thomas, than to Aquinas himself. The collapse of Neothomism signaled that the age-old tension between tradition and innovation once more came to the fore as serious questions long swept under the rug began to be vigorously debated. The precise issues are too numerous to be mentioned here, but their shared focus involved how far we are willing to give history its due. What is authentic theological tradition as distinguished from time-bound formulations that no longer have contemporary meaning? How much innovation can be allowed and on what grounds? Without denying the doctrinal authority enshrined in councils, bishops, and popes, how much freedom of theological discussion and debate is allowable in the pursuit of a deeper understanding of faith (*intellectus fidei*) in the contemporary world? This process has always involved debate and disagreement. Let us remember that Thomas Aquinas himself was condemned by the bishops of Paris and Oxford in 1277 before being canonized by John XXII in 1323.

From the perspective of the relation between the institutional and the intellectual elements of religion in Von Hügel's schema, the past half-century has often shown a dismal record of misunderstanding,

²⁵ Bernard Lonergan, "Aquinas Today: Tradition and Innovation," in Bernard Lonergan, *A Third Collection* (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), 51.

controversy, and condemnation. A significant number of Catholic theologians today, including those who continue to care about their role in the church, spend their lives looking over their shoulders to see who is stalking them, rather than engaging in the kind of open debates that characterized the medieval schools. The recent model of investigating what are considered suspect theological views is a case in point. All too often such investigations begin with clandestine denunciations. Then episcopal committees meet with their chosen theologians, often without any chance for the person under examination to offer explanation, qualification, or defense. Finally, condemnations and corrections are issued about "errors," many with censures attached. Even centuries ago such procedures were questioned. In his defense against the heresy accusations directed against him at Cologne in 1326 Meister Eckhart attacked the common practice of condemning articles excerpted from sermons and writings because the loss of their context often skewed their meaning.²⁶ At the Council of Trent, although the fathers did not have time to vote on the issue of the *Index of Prohibited Books*, in attempting to rein in the obvious injustices of Paul IV's *Index* of 1559, they supported revising the list and inviting those who had been placed on it to be given a safe-conduct to the council so they could explain their views.²⁷ Alas, the sense of an adversarial relation between bishops and theologians seems to have grown rather than diminished over the past half-century.

What about Von Hügel's third element, the mystical? Fifty years ago I doubt most Catholics would have been inclined to think that mysticism and the great mystical writers played an essential role in the church. Much of this doubt and suspicion was the outcome of one of the more disastrous mistakes in the history of Early Modern Catholicism, the condemnations of Quietism at the end of the seventeenth century and the subsequent repression of the mystical element. This repression resulted in the marginalization of the impact theologically serious

²⁶ For a partial translation of Eckhart's Defense, *Meister Eckhart: The Essential Sermons, Commentaries, Treatises, and Defense*, trans. and ed. Edmund Colledge and Bernard McGinn (New York: Paulist Press, 1981), 71-77. For a study, see Bernard McGinn, "Meister Eckhart's Condemnation Reconsidered," *The Thomist* 44 (1980): 390-414.

²⁷ See the discussion in John W. O'Malley, *Trent: What Happened at the Council* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2013), 177-78.

mystics, both male and female, had on Catholicism for almost two-and-a-half centuries. In the 1950s Catholics would have known that there had been mystics in the history of Christianity, and that sometimes they had been useful, as, for example, when Counter-Reformation apologists used Teresa of Avila to show that the graces given by the Holy Spirit were to be found in Catholicism and not in the Reformed denominations. But mystics were "rare birds" (*rarae aves*) – outliers who were hard to understand. Their writings, even those of paragons like Teresa and John of the Cross, were often suspect. Mystical literature was a kind of icing on the cake – something meant only for a cloistered religious elite, separated from the world and the church's real problems.

From this perspective, perhaps no development of the past half-century has been as surprising and promising as the explosion of interest in the mystical element of the Christian tradition and the spread of forms of spiritual practice, such as *lectio divina* and contemplative prayer, to wide audiences. Spiritual hunger for living the inner mystical (that is, "hidden") reality of Christian faith has become more and more powerful in the contemporary church, to the extent that some of those who try to fulfill this need in their lives are sometimes tempted to jettison the rigid and outdated institutional forms of religion and to leave the warring camps of theologians to their own devices while they pursue inner enlightenment.

Von Hügel would not have been sympathetic to that approach. His tripartite model insists that all three elements of religion are necessary, and if their relationship is seriously out of joint, believers have the obligation to strive to bring them back into balance. Spirituality needs theology as much as theology needs spirituality. The mystical element in religion exists with and in the external authority of tradition that will always be expressed in institutional forms, however much these develop and change over the centuries. Mystical theology, conceived of as a way of life and not a classroom exercise, demands serious thinking, but is never just an intellectual endeavor. Many of the great mystical writers of the patristic and medieval periods were as much dogmatic and speculative theologians as they were spiritual teachers and guides – mystical theology as a narrow and discrete academic discipline was a

seventeenth-century innovation, as Michel de Certeau showed.²⁸ One can argue that it was not a healthy development.

My decades spent writing a theological history of the development of Christian mysticism,²⁹ as well as my work with the Paulist Press Series, *The Classics of Western Spirituality*,³⁰ have shown me that one of the great, but common, errors about mysticism is to conceive of it as a kind of purely interior, private, solipsistic religious experience – something proper only for enclosed religious, desert ascetics, or charismatically-gifted weirdoes. To the contrary, the mystical element in Christianity has always been ineluctably ecclesial, taking place in and with the church as the institutional form of the People of God. Mystical consciousness of God's direct presence does, indeed, happen to individuals, but not as isolated monads; rather, it comes to them as members of the Body of Christ.³¹ The mystical element is founded in the grace of baptism and is therefore the calling of every Christian, not a special gift reserved for the few. Deeper rooting in the grace given at baptism and a growing awareness of God's presence in our lives (the core meaning of mysticism) is nourished by reading the Bible, participation in the liturgy, ascetical practice, a life of prayer, spiritual guidance, and many other ecclesial activities. The true test of mystical consciousness is growth in love of God and love of neighbor. To be sure, many mystics have received special gifts and graces – revelations, ascensions, visions, raptures, and a variety of psychosomatic experiences – but these are not the essence of mysticism, as the mystics themselves have always

²⁸ Michel de Certeau, "Mystique" au XVII^e siècle: Le problème du langage 'mystique', in *L'Homme devant Dieu: Mélanges offerts au Père Henri de Lubac*, 3 vols. (Paris: Aubert, 1964), 2:267-91; and more broadly in his *The Mystic Fable. Volume One. The Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).

²⁹ Bernard McGinn, *The Presence of God: A History of Western Christian Mysticism*, 7 vols. (New York: Crossroad-Herder, 1991-). The first volume, *The Foundations of Mysticism*, appeared in 1991; 2016 saw the publication of Vol. VI, Part 1, *Mysticism in the Reformation (1500-1650)*.

³⁰ The Paulist Press Series, *The Classics of Western Spirituality*, comprising texts from the Christian tradition, as well as Jewish and Islamic spiritual and mystical works, put out its first volume in 1978 and has since published 132 more.

³¹ I use the term "mystical consciousness," rather than the more commonly found "mystical experience," with a deliberate appeal to the thought of Bernard Lonergan on consciousness and "mediated immediacy." For more on this, see Bernard McGinn, "Mystical Consciousness: A Modest Proposal," *Spiritus* 8 (2008): 44-63.

taught. A number of them, such as Meister Eckhart and John of the Cross, were suspicious of such charisms, although they knew from the example of St. Paul (2 Corinthians 12:1-4) that such graces existed. Even mystics who were visionaries and ecstasies insisted that their special experiences were peripheral. For example, Julian of Norwich's mystical career began with a series of sixteen remarkable visions of Christ on the cross as she lay dying on May 13, 1373. In her first, or short account, of her teaching, she puts her visions in perspective, saying: "I am not good because of the revelation, but only if I love God better, and so can and so should every person do who sees it and hears it with good will. . . . For I am sure that there are very many who never had revelations or visions, but only the common teachings of Holy Church, who love God better than I."³² In light of the "everyday" character of true mysticism and its centrality for the flourishing of Catholicism, Karl Rahner once said: "the devout Christian of the future will either be a 'mystic,' one who has experienced 'something,' or he will cease to be anything at all."³³

The better understanding of mysticism and its role in the Church of the New Millennium has been prepared for not only by intense academic study of this element of Christianity over the more than a century since Von Hügel's *Mystical Element of Religion*, but also by the emergence of mystical teachers who presented new models of the search for God in the modern era. Some of these figures, like the Carmelite Thérèse of Lisieux (1873-97), seemed initially to be examples of the standard model of the uneducated and submissive ecstatic woman dominant in eighteenth and nineteenth centuries after the Quietist debacle. The publication of the authentic texts of Thérèse's writings, however, have revealed a far deeper and more creative witness to God's working in the life of the church. Other writers of the past century, such as Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (1881-1955) and Thomas Merton (1915-68), have also been important for the revival of mysticism and

³² Julian of Norwich, *Short Text*, Section 6. For an edition of both the Short Text (*A Vision Showed to a Devout Woman*) and the Long Text (*A Revelation of Love*), see Nicholas Watson and Jacqueline Jenkins, *The Writings of Julian of Norwich* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006), 73.

³³ Karl Rahner, "Christian Living Formerly and Today," in *Theological Investigations* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1971), Vol. VII: 15. See Harvey D. Egan, *Karl Rahner. Mystic of Everyday Life* (New York: Crossroad, 1998).

are perhaps also prophetic for things to come in the new millennium.³⁴

Today the mystical element does not always express itself in ecclesial ways. Growing knowledge of other religious traditions has resulted in many people turning to non-Christian spiritual and mystical traditions, predominantly Buddhist, but sometimes Sufi, Kabbalist, or the like, to nourish their inner life. The nineteenth and the twentieth centuries also saw the rise of what can be called "unchurched" mysticism as set forth by those disenchanted with institutional religion. The mantra, "I'm not religious, but I'm deeply spiritual," has its predecessors in the nature mysticism of a Robin Jeffries in the nineteenth century, or the notion of the "oceanic feeling" advanced by the early twentieth-century writer and cultural critic, Romain Rolland. What began with a few figures has now become a cultural trend, one which, however superficially it is often expressed, speaks to the seriousness of the religious craving of people today. The spiritual riches of the Catholic tradition, sometimes almost overwhelmed by institutional ossification and theological quarrels, are often not visible to those who feel they must look elsewhere for inner nourishment. The solution to this problem is not more institutional control or more arid argument, but a deeper and more authentic endeavor to relate all three elements of Catholicism in the search for the elusive balance that has been missing for so long.

I realize that much of what I've said may be old hat to many. What I've tried to do in appealing to Von Hügel is to look at a whole range of issues and problems facing the church today synoptically, not in piecemeal fashion. I am convinced that the best strategy in the current tense situation is to adopt an integrative viewpoint, not necessarily Von Hügel's, but one with equal scope. The real – and really difficult – task that confronts us is to work for deeper and richer cooperation between the diverse trends of the new global Christianity in the years ahead. The fact that this interactive collaboration becomes ever more complex should not be a counsel of defeat, but a call to action.

³⁴ Bernard McGinn, "The Venture of Mysticism in the New Millennium," *New Theology Review* (May 2008): 70-79.

THE HERMENEUTICS OF REFORM AND RENEWAL: ONGOING INTERPRETATION OF THE PERSON AND WORK OF JESUS CHRIST

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RESSOURCEMENT

THE YEARS LEADING up to Vatican Council II were incredibly fruitful for Catholic historical scholarship. Academics such as Henri de Lubac, Yves Congar, and Hugo Rahner ventured into the lush but neglected domains of the church fathers.¹ They busily unearthed, named, compared, and classified. The scholars returned laden from those forays into the writings of the early church. The fruit, roots and seeds of their expeditions nourished and revitalised the “paling” theology which waited expectantly for exposure to the scholarly findings. A “reawakening” of theology took place because the wonder, the élan, the initial empowering sense of mission which characterized the beginning of the Jesus movement were once again tangible. A “refocusing” occurred because theological perspectives and insights whose outlines the attrition of the stream of intervening centuries had seemed to dull, were now identified in the bedrock and became once again clearly perceptible. The raised and surging pulse of the beginning of Christian theology became palpable once more in the theologians’ strenuous but enthusiastic effort to regain rich insights of the past. The writings of a Gregory of Nyssa, edited and with theological commentary, took their places within the shelves of the series *Source Chretiennes*. More widely accessible again, such patristic

¹ “Church fathers”? – the term is accurate when applied to the literary heritage of the early centuries: unfortunately we don’t have many early Christian texts from female authors.

classics as *De vita Moysis* were once more experienced and invigorated the theological health of a generation.

Philology sensed the beauty of the newly "rediscovered" speculative positions; theology sensed the spiritual and academic significance of what was grasped anew, and believers communed in the experience of a faith shared not only among contemporaries, but also with fellow Christians down the centuries.

The convening of the second Vatican council may have come as a surprise, but many of the theological concepts which found their way into its documents, had been meticulously nurtured by historian's hand in the preceding decades.

For example the constitution, *Sacrosanctum concilium*, is not only important as the epicenter of concrete liturgical reform. The document also presents us with a good example of patristic theology enriching theological enterprise. The document rediscovers the centrality of the whole paschal mystery as a key to understanding liturgical praxis but also as the intelligible kernel of a comprehensive liturgical theology. Important here is the rediscovery of certain categories (above all "anamnesis") for the presence of Christ's sacrifice on Calvary; categories which taken in their original patristic sense enable theology to speak of his one sacrifice made present among us. The recovery of a rich understanding of *anamnesis* has been and is very important in ecumenical discussions on the nature of the sacrifice of the mass.²

The document on sacred liturgy is important because it represents a clear example of a document which fuelled a practical reform in the liturgy of the church. But it is also important because the theology which inspired the practical renewal is itself an example of theological *ressourcement* resulting in *aggiornamento*.

Lonergan too may be considered as engaging in this twentieth-century movement of *ressourcement*. For example, his *Verbum* articles cut through the packaging of second-hand Thomism and brought the reader back to the lucidity of Thomas's own thought. While Rahner's

² Here, in the rich understanding anamnesis not only means remembering but also an actual being brought into the presence of the sacrifice of Christ. The notion of participation in the paschal mystery (including a foretaste of heavenly communion with the risen Lord) through interpersonal relationship with the one dying and rising, is not far away. So – in dialog with Liam Bergin's paper at the Workshop – one may argue that, from a patristic point of view, an eschatological promise inheres within true anamnesis.

eye was not only on Thomas but also on Heidegger, and von Balthasar was heavily influenced philosophically by both Thomas Aquinas and Siewerth, Lonergan clearly apprenticed himself to the one master, the Aquinate. Lonergan's attention to the detail in these writings is intense. He amplifies the thought of Thomas with little external auxiliary third-party resonance. Insights gleaned from Thomas's writings would inform his own systematic writings.

AGGIORNAMENTO AND EXISTENZ

Christianity takes its place within a changing world and realizes itself anew within each period. Its theologians are called upon to reflect upon its mysteries and to give answers to the questions which believers, living out their faith in ever new situations, raise. Our Christian hope is one which may and must be explained within each new context, embracing the questions of believers and non-believers alike.³ We realise that not only the church is renewed by the Spirit but also its theology is called upon to give answers in terms which address each situation and epoch.

In the 1965 essay "*Existenz and Aggiornamen*," Lonergan seems to sense the invigoration of renewal and the chance which *aggiornamento* represents:

The word *aggiornamento* has electrified the world, Catholic and non-Catholic, . . . It would be a long and very complex task to list all the ways in which change – *aggiornamento* – is possible and permissible and desirable, and all the other ways in which it is not. . . . There is the modern secularist world with all its riches and all its potentialities. There is the possibility of despoiling the Egyptians. But that possibility will not be realized unless Catholics, religious, priests, exist, and exist not as drifters but creatively and authentically.⁴

While affirming the need for and value of change, Lonergan astutely observes, that the process of *aggiornamento* harbors a certain risk. The pivotal point, the fulcrum for successful progress, is the converted subject: His or her authenticity is the subjective criterion for successful

³ Compare the sentiment in 1 Peter 3:16.

⁴ Bernard Lonergan, *Existenz and Aggiornamento*, in *Collection*, 222-31, here, 228-29.

aggiornamento. Drifting, Lonergan insists, serves no purpose. What is called for is responsible creativity. We are called upon to be ever on the lookout, reading the signs of the times and discerning a responsible way that truly leads us forward.

Lonergan further develops his argument:

Being in Christ Jesus is not tied down to place or time, culture or epoch. It is catholic with the catholicity of the Spirit of the Lord. Neither is it an abstraction that dwells apart from every place and time, every culture and epoch. It is identical with personal living, and personal living is always here and now, in a contemporary world of immediacy, a contemporary world mediated by meaning, a contemporary world not only mediated but also constituted by meaning.⁵

Not only the theologian's authenticity but also the objective situation within which she or he finds herself/himself affects their search for a contemporary and fitting theology. Here not only date but also location is relevant. In this passage Lonergan speaks of "personal living" and this occurs not only at a particular period but in a particular place.

The situation within which we are called upon to be theologians and indeed to act out our theology responsibly is significant: for example, it makes a difference whether we are doing theology in a country in economic recession and struggling with the human costs of austerity measures or in a country with a booming economy. The reflection on social justice issues which emerges is tinted according to the concrete economic atmosphere. Aspects of a country's recent past – in the case of Germany, for example, the persecution of the Jews in the nineteen thirties and nineteen forties continue to influence theological options. Thus in Germany Christian scholars devoted themselves to the difficult task of attempting to compose a "theology after Auschwitz." Furthermore, leading dialog partners with whom one engages have a formative influence on one's theologizing. In recent years Islamic theology has been established as a research option at many German state universities and new academic staff, scholars of Islam have been hired to teach, to supervise postgraduate study, and to carry out their own research. In the broader German society and culture too, the voices

⁵ *Existenz and Aggiornamento*, in *Collection*, 231.

of an educated and articulate Islam are to be heard. The exchange of ideas which nurtures theological reflection progressively includes these new interlocutors. The Christian theologian turns her or his head, listens carefully, reflects soberly, and joins wholeheartedly in the conversation. While Christ is the same forever, the various Christologies which reflect on his saving work are in each case expressions of authentic, responsible correlation between his perennial form and the personal and societal life situation of the theologian.

SOTERIOLOGY – “EAVESDROPPING” ON A GERMAN CONVERSATION

Contextual factors in the Germany of the twenty-first century include current interreligious dialogue with a growing academic population with a background of recent migration (Islam, Alevism, forms of Orthodox Christianity); a Christian ecumenical sensibility which is fitting in the homeland of Martin Luther; the commitment to the texts and contexts of the Hebrew Bible and to interpreting Jesus of Nazareth within the context of Judaism; and theological scholarship which remembers the persecution of Jews in the last century. These are some formative influences on the contextual theology being exercised in Germany.

How do the regionally specific factors which I have just outlined affect the locally emerging Christology, and more particularly, the emerging soteriology? Catholic theology has had to face a reticence within Islamic theology to accept the concept of Christ (or indeed, anyone) vicariously suffering for others. Within Islam, sin is exclusively the responsibility of the one who transgresses against God's will. Islamic voices have reawakened the Kantian reticence to accept the notion of substitution within a moral context. Furthermore, the ecumenical revisiting of the question of the doctrine of justification in the dialogue process, which resulted in the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification by the Lutheran World Federation and the Catholic Church*, 1999, has resulted in much new theological literature on the meaning of the death of Jesus. Additionally, in a land in which Jews were so systematically persecuted in the last century, a particular effort is made to regain the theological meaning of sacrifice and the attendant concept of God present within ancient Israel and

born witness to by the Hebrew Bible.

A recent controversial discussion of the meaning of sacrifice may serve as a specific illustration. Within the context of dialogue with the German-Iranian academic, Navid Kermani, Magnus Striet (professor of fundamental theology at the university of Freiburg in Breisgau) turns to the difficult theological issue of expiation/atonement (*Sühne*). Striet offers an interpretation in which the scene of Calvary is not read as a scene in which Jesus atones for our sins. Rather, on Calvary, by means of the incarnation, God stands by his risk-laden decision to create an order of creation which fosters human freedom.⁶

Striet is not unique in interpreting Calvary in terms of a theology of creation: God becomes human as part of a divine plan for creation. Many of the church fathers, especially those within the Greek tradition, adopted a similar approach. God's plan for the divinisation of the world involves the incarnation of the second person of the Trinity. Christ's death is interpreted not as an isolated event but as part of his life and as a consequence of how he lived his life. The patristic sources present an intricate complex of argumentation.

However, at a second glance, Striet's position is far from traditional and is indeed controversial. In the incarnation, God "makes satisfaction" for a situation which arises out of God's own act of creation. God demands of Himself as Son that which He demands of all human creatures: namely, that they face not only life's joys and wonders, but also, in some cases, the most profound suffering. He makes his point tentatively: God thus "atones" for his risk-laden work of creation and at the same time he offers hope for the future.⁷

⁶ "Gott sühnt in seiner Menschwerdung nicht die Sünde des Menschen, durch welche ein Paradies in einer Geschichte voller Missgunst und Unbarmherzigkeit, unendlicher Gewalt verkehrt worden wäre. Er leistet nicht stellvertretend an der Stelle des Menschen eine Genugtuung für die mangelnde Ehrerbietung. Sondern er wird Mensch, um seinem um des freien Menschen willen riskierten Schöpfungsentschluss treu zu bleiben" (Magnus Striet, "Erlösung durch den Opfertod Jesus?", in M. Striet and J.-H. Tück (ed.), *Erlösung auf Golgota? Der Opfertod Jesu im Streit der Interpretationen* (Freiburg: Herder, 2012), 11-33, here, 22).

⁷ "Wenn deshalb angesichts seiner belasteten Geschichte der Begriff der Sühne überhaupt noch verwandt werden soll, dann ist er – so mein Vorschlag im Anschluss an eine Überlegung von Ottmar Fuchs – radikal anders zu setzen. Gott leistet in der Menschwerdung die Satisfaktion für seine eigene Schöpfungstat, indem er sich als Sohn das zumutete, was er allen Menschen zumutet: Ein Leben, das nicht nur voller Schönheit

Striet's position is only tentatively expressed and is properly understood only against the background of his many writings on theodicy. Yet is an interpretation which he has presented more than once and one which has understandably proven controversial.

Among those who have joined in the new debate within systematic theology on interpreting the cross is the German born and German trained Jan-Heiner Tück of the University of Vienna. Whereas Striet seems to question the suitability of speaking of atonement, Tück draws attention to this concept's place within the biblical and theological tradition. He criticises Striet's preoccupation with the difficulty a number of believers have with the notion of atonement and vicarious substitution. He points instead to the vast number of believers who in the past and at present are relieved not to have to save themselves!⁸

This German discussion is interesting from the point of view of *aggiornamento* and the question of how far the process of accommodation to the sensibilities of the contemporary theological audience should go. In the background is the distinction still widespread within German faculties of Catholic theology in which systematic theology is divided into fundamental theology and dogmatic theology. This distinction explains the explicit obligation which Striet as a professor for fundamental theology underlies to seek the most rationally plausible reading of doctrine which faith permits. Many theologians working within an academic position devoted to dogmatic theology (for example Tück) tend to seek a reinterpretation of the saving death of Jesus which is explicitly concerned to mine the myriad-rich veins of the scriptural and patristic tradition.

Many thinkers make a conscious decision to continue using the classical soteriological terminology. Jürgen Werbick, professor of fundamental theology at the University of Münster, argues that a terminology of sacrifice and a theology of sacrifice should be maintained.⁹

und Lust sein kann, sondern auch ungeheure Abgründe bereithält. Wenn man so will, „sühnt“ Gott sein riskantes Schöpfungswerk, und er gibt zugleich Hoffnung auf Zukunft“ (Striet, „Erlösung durch den Opfertod Jesu?“, 22-23).

⁸ Jan-Heiner Tück, „Am Ort der Verlorenheit. Ein Zugang zur rettenden und erlösenden Kraft des Kreuzes“, in Tück (ed.), *Erlösung auf Golgota? Der Opfertod Jesu im Streit der Interpretationen* (Freiburg: Herder, 2012), 33-58, here, 33-34).

⁹ „Man kann vieles auch anders sagen. Aber die semantischen Felder aufzusuchen, auf denen sich die Anknüpfungen und Transpositionen an Opfer-Terminologie und Op-

We have many terminologies at our disposal and so theoretically speaking, so Werbick, it would be possible to communicate much of the saving action of Christ's dying without this specific vocabulary. He, however, feels that nuances and associated insights would be lost in the process.

He and many other theologians in the German-speaking world therefore decide to revisit the notion of sacrifice and to gather the exegetical and historical material which leads to a fittingly contemporary theology of Golgotha.

Significant is Jürgen Werbick's retrieval of a biblically rooted interpretation of Christ's death on the cross. Werbick's position illustrates the process of *aggiornamento* and is also, in my opinion, in some respects comparable to Lonergan's law of the cross. He draws on recent publications on sacrifice on the part of biblical scholars, preserving, as for contemporary German scholarship particularly import, the authentic tradition of the Hebrew Bible. Werbick uses research carried out by Bernd Janowski on Paul's ritual-metaphorical interpretation of Christ's death and its roots in Israel's theology. He refers to the Letter to the Romans, chapter 3. Here, Christ is represented as "*hilasterion*" in analogy to the lid of the ark of the covenant, upon which the blood of the sacrificed animal victim was spilt in Israel's understanding of its cultic sacrifice in the Temple of Jerusalem. In this scene, according to Janowski, the aspect of God becoming present and granting his blessing is central. Christ as our "*hilasterion*" becomes the hinge from one epoch to the next, from the time of hidden righteousness to the time of revealed divine righteousness.¹⁰ The God whose presence

fer-Dramatisierungen biblisch vollzogen haben und im christlichen Glaubensbewusstsein immer noch vollziehen, bringt – so meine Einschätzung – immer noch Bezüge und Nuancen zum Vorschein, die anders kaum zugänglich wären» Werbick (Werbick, "Erlösung durch Opfer? – Erlösung vom Opfer?," in M. Striet and J.-H. Tück (ed.), *Erlösung auf Golgota? Der Opfertod Jesu im Streit der Interpretationen* (Freiburg: Herder, 2012), 59-81, here 77.

¹⁰ "Nach der kultmetaphorischen Deutung des Todes Jesu bei Paulus wird dieser Tod im Horizont der rettenden Gottesgegenwart expliziert und der Gekreuzigte als *ἱλαστήριον* zum 'Ort' des entscheidenden Epochenwechsels von der verborgenen zur offenbar gewordenen Gerechtigkeit Gottes (Röm. 3, 25f.)." Janowski, *Das Leben für andere hingeben. Alttestamentliche Voraussetzungen für die Deutung des Todes Jesu*, in V. Hampel and R. Weth, R. (ed.), *Für uns gestorben: Sühne - Opfer - Stellvertretung*, Neukirchen-Vluyn (Neukirchener Verlag: 2010), 55-72, here, 69 Janowski.

is revealed, is a God who grants divine blessing and a God who chooses to bring about a situation in which God and humans can be together. The God revealed in the liturgy is a God who gives us the gift of this encounter and the God who opens up possibilities. In an earlier essay the exegete Alfred Marx had published findings which support this line of interpretation: sacrifice is interpreted from the concept of a God who is revealed, accepts the people's hospitality, and who bestows a divine blessing on them.¹¹

How does Werbick use this biblical material? He weaves a new theology of the cross, not in terms of Jesus's substitution in place of the sinner, but in terms of God's opening up a new way, a new means of access, for God's people. God establishes the possibility of our entering into communion with the divine. This happens within love, initiated by the divine love.¹² A certain concept of God emerges. In my opinion, one can identify many similarities between the understanding of God in Werbick's theology of the cross and Lonergan's understanding of the loving God behind Calvary. Lonergan speaks of a law of the cross and Werbick does something similar when he uses the notion of a grammar of the cross.¹³ He considers the grammar of sacrifice taken

¹¹ "Im Opfer offenbart sich Gott. Oder, vom menschlichen Standpunkt her formuliert, in ihm lernt Israel seinen Gott kennen. Und es erkennt ihn auf ganz konkrete Weise als einen Gott der, obwohl transzendent und andersartig, zugleich der Nahe und Menschen-ähnliche ist, der zu seinem Volk herabkommt, sogar mitten unter ihm wohnt und sein Gastfreundschaft annimmt, der aber dennoch der Heilige ist. Und dieser Gott erweist sich ihm als der segnende Gott" (M, Opferlogik im alten Israel, in B. Janowski and B. / Welker, M. (ed.), *Opfer. Theologische und kulturelle Kontexte* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2000, 129-49, here, 146-47).

¹² "Der Sohn erleidet das Äußerste, weil sich nur im Innersten – in seinem Innersten und im Innersten derer, der ihm nachfolgen – die Realität der Gottesteilhabe ereignen kann. Seine Stellvertretung ist keine Ersatzleistung, sondern die Eröffnung des Weges, auf dem die Glaubenden ihm nachfolgen, in die Gottesgemeinschaft hineinverwandelt zu werden. Die Verwandlung geschieht in der Liebe und zur Liebe hin: indem die Glaubenden teilnehmen an der Jesus-Gesinnung und so teilhaben an der Gottesgemeinschaft, die in der Liebe wirklich wird" (Werbick, *Erlösung durch Opfer? – Erlösung vom Opfer?*, in Striet and Tück, *Erlösung auf Golgota?*, 65).

¹³ "So wird der Weg und die Sendung Jesu in der Grammatik der Opfersprache ausgesagt: indem die Kategorien und Selbstverständlichkeiten des Opfers zugleich auf die größere Selbstverständlichkeit der Liebe Gottes hin transponiert werden, wie sie in Jesu Christus erschienen und Wirklichkeit geworden ist; . . . Diese Transposition dehnt die Selbstverständlichkeiten des Opfers bis zum Zerreißen – und kommt doch immer wieder auf sie zurück" (Werbick, "Erlösung durch Opfer? – Erlösung vom Opfer?", in Striet and

up within a higher grammar of love. He views the logic or grammar of sacrifice as "transposed" (we might say "subsumed") within a grammar of divine love¹⁴.

Listening in on the soteriological musings of the German conversation one may discern a theological *aggiornamento* which takes account of its current readership, a *ressourcement* with recourse to the wisdom of the past, and an embodiment of existentially responsible truth professed from the perspective of a particular historical context. We see a similar homage to renewal, tradition, and human authenticity in the soteriology of Bernard Lonergan. Furthermore, Jürgen Werbick's theory of the transposition of the terminology of sacrifice within a theology of divine love is reminiscent of Lonergan's theory of the law of the cross.

Tück, *Erlösung auf Golgota?*, 71).

¹⁴ I agree with the opinion of Marx that the possibility of conceiving a loving God, even within the context of sacrificial theology, is not something which must be set up in opposition to the theology of the Hebrew Bible. Here the distinction between the first impression which the praxis of sacrifice makes and the theology behind this praxis is important: "Aus theologischer Sicht muss man deshalb ganz scharf zwischen den *alttestamentlichen* Opfervorstellungen und der Opferpraxis, wie sie historisch im *alten Israel* in Erscheinung getreten ist, unterscheiden. Diese mögen für uns mit Recht befremdend wirken. Die Opfervorstellungen aber, wie sie von den jahwistischen Theologen entwickelt wurden und im Alten Testament festgehalten sind, entweder ein Bild von Gott, das sehr nahe demjenigen des Gottes des Neuen Testaments ist und es zum Teil ergänzen. Für den christlichen Theologen sind sie daher von bleibender Bedeutung, als unentbehrliches Zeugnis von Gott, der sich dieses Offenbarungsmittels bediente, um sich seinem Volk zu erkennen zu geben" (Marx, "Opferlogik im alten Israel," in Janowski and Welker, *Opfer. Theologische und kulturelle Kontexte*), 147.

OVERCOMING CLASSICISM AND RELATIVISM

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IN HIS HOMILY for the opening of the conclave of cardinals, on April 18, 2005, right before being elected pope, Joseph Ratzinger warned against “the dictatorship of relativism” – a denunciation that was reissued by Pope Francis in his first address to the Diplomatic Corps on March 22, 2013, as he commented that “the tyranny of relativism . . . makes everyone his own criterion and endangers the coexistence of peoples.” For most Christians, a philosophical standpoint that is relativist does not go along with the possibility that biblical revelation might be universally true. Still, responsible theologians cannot remain content with a mere dogmatic repudiation of relativism.¹ Rather, the question to be raised concerns *the way* relativism can be overcome.

In a nutshell, the solution amounts to choosing between what Bernard Lonergan called “the classicist notion of culture” and what he called “the empirical notion of culture,” while avoiding relativism.² In other words, his empirical notion of culture allows us to eschew two extremes, namely classicism and relativism.

My essay will deal with this issue as follows. The first section will explain Lonergan’s rejection of the classicist notion of culture and his understanding of the empirical notion of culture. The second section will show that we can detect classicism in the thought of popes Paul VI and Benedict XVI,³ and it will expose the shortcomings of classicism

¹ Reinforcing a classicist dogmatism amounts to what Hans Küng dubbed “the dictatorship of absolutism.”

² These three positions are sketched by Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 302. Next references will be given to *Method in Theology*, followed by page numbers, within my text.

³ I have not included Pope John Paul II among the classicists. In his book *Sources of Renewal: The Implementation of the Second Vatican Council*, trans. P. S. Falla (San

as it wielded an irresistible influence upon their thought.⁴ The other sections will depict Lonergan's position on discerning continuities and discontinuities in human thinking and especially in theology. In particular, it will examine some of his hermeneutical tenets by means of which he bequeathed us a way of overcoming relativism.

CLASSICISM ACCORDING TO LONERGAN

In the introduction to *Method in Theology*, Lonergan wrote:

The classicist notion of culture was normative: at least *de jure* there was but one culture that was both universal and permanent; to its norms and ideals might aspire the uncultured, whether they were the young or the people or the natives or the barbarians. Besides the classicist, there also is the empirical notion of culture. It is the set of meanings and values that informs a way of life. It may remain unchanged for ages. It may be in process of slow development or rapid dissolution. (*Method in Theology*, xi)

He described the classicist notion of culture as follows:

Classicist culture was stable. It took its stand on what ought to be, and what ought to be is not to be refuted by what is. It legislated with its eye on the substance of things, on the unchanging essence of human living and, while it never doubted either that circumstances alter cases or that circumstances change, still it also was quite sure that essences did not change, that change affected only the accidental details that were of no great account. . . . Classicist culture, by conceiving itself normatively and universally, also had to think of itself as the one and only culture for all time.⁵

Francisco: Harper & Row, 1980), we notice the non-classicist themes of the historical, the subjective, the existential, the church as self-realization, and her presence in the modern world. I don't know if we can find traces of classicism in some of his other writings.

⁴ I have chosen *moderate* cases of classicism, which are less simplistic than the pure classicism of Mgr Marcel Lefebvre and his schismatic group, the Society of St. Pius X.

⁵ Bernard Lonergan, "Belief: Today's Issue," in *A Second Collection*, vol. 13 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert M. Doran and John D. Didosky (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2nd ed., revised and augmented, 2016), 75-85, at 79-80.

Lonergan's stress on the limitations of classicism nevertheless did not prevent him from deeply appreciating humankind's great works, namely the classics. For him, the latter play the all-important role of fostering personal changes and of introducing an individual or group into a tradition of adequate interpretation (see *Method in Theology*, 161-62). So a non-classicist may very well be steeped in the classics.

In fact, classicist culture, which was generally accepted in the West during the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries, is one particular culture. Hence Lonergan's attempt to interpret the notion of culture not in a normative but in an empirical fashion, taking notice of the wealth of data about the cultures of humankind – data coming from history, social anthropology, and sociology. He portrayed it as follows:

The contemporary notion of culture is empirical. A culture is a set of meanings and values informing a common way of life, and there are as many cultures as there are distinct sets of such meanings and values.

However, this manner of conceiving culture is relatively recent. It is a product of empirical human studies. Within less than one hundred years it has replaced an older, classicist view that had flourished for over two millennia. (*Method in Theology*, 301)

Later in the book, he remarked, "What ended classicist assumptions was critical history" (326). That is to say, the very practice of history and of other human studies placed center stage the fact that the meanings of life are ever in flux and past counting. For instance, literary criticism can easily demonstrate how two profoundly Christian tragedians such as Shakespeare and Racine nonetheless evidence world views that stand in contrast to each other. And even the New Testament authors convey meanings that are quite dissimilar in the way they point to equivalent truths.

Lonergan reproached classicism for seeing itself as *the* culture, in contrast to presumably inferior interpretations of human life, none of which, according to classicism, can count as culture. Moreover he listed the assumptions of modern scholastic theology, such as those of Melchior Cano, based on classicism:

Truth is eternal. Principles are immutable. Change is accidental It [Thomism] supposed the existence of a single perennial philosophy that might need to be adapted in this or that accidental detail but in substance remained the repository of human wisdom . . .⁶

Lonergan interpreted the post-Vatican II crisis as the difficulty of passing from a classicist conception to an empirical conception of culture. The former is the trademark of **neo-scholasticism**; the latter allows for a plurality of cultures and recognizes the legitimacy of Christianity being embodied in different contexts. In 1969, commenting on the classicists' resistance when it is suggested they ought to abandon their conception of culture, he remarked: "What is going forward in Catholic circles is a disengagement from the forms of classicist culture and a transposition into the forms of modern culture."⁷ And he humorously added: "This is a matter involved in considerable confusion. The confusion arises mainly because classicist culture made no provision for the possibility of its own demise."⁸

Judging that "the classical mediation of meaning has broken down,"⁹ on the one hand he did not accept the traditional, classicist, retrenchment that was less influential in the late 1960s and that has regained strength in the Catholic Church since that time. On the other hand, he also did not agree with relativism in regard to Christian revelation, as he believed in the capacity that the human spirit has, when aided by the Holy Spirit, of discerning a kernel of truth inside the outer crust constituted by highly varied modes of expressing truth, while fully appreciating the meanings carried by those modes. Consequently, he did not underplay the challenge of discernment for serious theologians:

Our disengagement from classicism and our involvement in modernity must be open-eyed, critical, coherent, sure-footed.

⁶ "The Absence of God in Modern Culture," in *A Second Collection*, 86-98, at 92 and 94; see also 86-87 and 95-96.

⁷ "The Future of Christianity," in *A Second Collection*, 127-39, at 136.

⁸ "The Future of Christianity," in *A Second Collection*, 137.

⁹ Bernard Lonergan, "Dimensions of Meaning," in *Collection*, vol. 4 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 232-45, at 244.

If we are not just to throw out what is good in classicism and replace it with contemporary trash, then we have to take the trouble, and it is enormous, to grasp the strength and the weakness, the power and the limitations, the good points and the shortcomings of both classicism and modernity.¹⁰

THE CLASSICISM OF TWO POPES

Classicism is perceivable, not only over many centuries of Western attitudes, but also quite recently. This section will illustrate the latest instances of classicism by delineating a few characteristics in the thought of two popes. By doing so, let it be noted, my intention is not to dispute their sanctity or their praiseworthy contribution to church life; rather, my disagreement is based on an epistemology of culture.¹¹ Needless to say, given the limits of a single section in an essay like this one, my treatment of their thought will remain far from being exhaustive.

A notable illustration of classicism is the stance taken by Pope Paul VI about contraception. To make sense of it, we must know that the first pope to condemn contraception was Pius XI, in his encyclical *Casti connubii* of 1931. Pius XII and John XXIII reiterated this disapproval, albeit in declarations that carried less weight than an encyclical.¹² The interesting phenomenon that appeared subsequently consists in one of the reasons given by Paul VI after the publication of his encyclical *Humanae vitae*, namely that he felt bound in conscience not to go against the teaching given by three of his predecessors.¹³ Typical of classicism is this sense of a duty not to diverge from traditional

¹⁰ "Belief: Today's Issue," in *A Second Collection*, 84-85.

¹¹ For a summary, with appreciative remarks, of Benedict's encyclicals, see Louis Roy, "Présentation des trois encycliques de Benoît XVI," *Prêtre et Pasteur* 114 (2011): 542-50.

¹² See John T. Noonan, Jr., *Contraception: A History of Its Treatment by the Catholic Theologians and Canonists* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2nd ed., 1986), chaps. 13-14.

¹³ Lonergan disapproved of *Humanae vitae*; see his letter of September 6, 1968 to a priest whose name is not mentioned, in Bernard Lonergan Archive, at 24070DTE060/A2407; see also *Caring about Meaning: Patterns in the Life of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Pierrot Lambert, Charlotte Tansey, and Cathleen Going (Montreal: Thomas More Institute, 1982), 266. This is not to mean that Lonergan favored a disordered use of contraceptives; in the above-mentioned letter, he wrote that his position "permits contraceptives in some cases" (italics mine).

doctrine, even in matters such as sex in marriage, which do not occupy the highest position in the hierarchy of truths.¹⁴

Apposite here is Aquinas's anti-classicist statement, borrowed from Aristotle, that in ethics many general rules apply, not universally, but only "in the majority of cases" (*ut in pluribus*).¹⁵ Unless we stick to the classicist view of culture, we should reject the recommendation that Catholics must never abandon a century-old custom or belief.¹⁶

Similarly, Paul VI did not accept the affirmation, made in 1971 by the Pontifical Biblical Commission, that there are no scriptural objections to ordaining women as priests. For a classicist like that pope, unaware of what Lonergan called "historical-mindedness," Jesus voluntarily excluded women from the priesthood as he "ordained" his male disciples.

Pope Benedict XVI is another instantiation of classicism. In the homily to which I referred at the beginning of my paper, he states: "At the hour in the garden of Gethsemane Jesus transformed our rebellious human will into a will shaped and united to the divine will. He suffered the whole experience of our autonomy – and precisely by delivering our will into the hands of God he gave us true freedom." I cannot but ask, do we receive "true freedom" in a single moment, and can "our rebellious human will" be "shaped and united to the divine will" overnight? Benedict does not raise the question of *how* we can *concretely* cooperate with divine grace so as to become freer. He logically relates big concepts, without paying sufficient attention to the

¹⁴ On the hierarchy of truths, see Second Vatican Council, Decree on Ecumenism (*Unitatis redintegratio*), no. 11, and William Henn, "Hierarchy of Truths," in *The New Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Joseph A. Komonchak, Mary Collins, and Dermot A. Lane (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1988), 464-66.

¹⁵ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 94, a. 4; see II-II, q. 47, a. 3, ad 2, and q. 49, a. 1. See also his *Commentary on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. C. I. Litzinger (Notre Dame, IN: Dumb Ox Books, 1993), Book Two, lecture 2, no. 259: "The teaching on matters of morals even in their general aspects is uncertain and variable. But still more uncertainty is found when we come down to the solution of particular cases."

¹⁶ Incidentally, in my opinion, both John Henry Newman's writings and the Second Vatican Council's documents evince a tension between a certain classicism and a certain historical consciousness. About the lack of dialectic in Newman's reflections on the development of doctrine, see Frederick E. Crowe, *Theology of the Christian Word: A Study in History* (New York: Paulist Press, 1978), 105; see also 90-95.

empirical information that the human studies or the expertise gained in spiritual counseling can provide.

Likewise, in his book *Truth and Tolerance*, despite perspicacious remarks, he offers us a triumphalist *generalization* regarding the prophetic religion of the ancient Jews: "The faith of Israel signifies a continual transcending of the limits of its own culture into the wide-open spaces of truth that is common to all."¹⁷ Within the framework of his apologetic, this idealistic and indiscriminate claim is meant to apply to the faith of Catholics today.

Now, someone who knows Lonergan's thought about conceptualism can detect, in the two instances just mentioned, an absolutizing of an idea, in the first case, "true freedom," and in the second case, the "continual transcending." Such a practice depends upon a fascination for pure concepts, abstracted from the facts of actual history. Any competent historian knows that facts are seldom reducible to complete generalizations, because they depend on several factors that are at play. By contrast, the conceptualist mind discusses concepts, instead of beginning with data and instead of continuing with questions in order to let insights and judgments emerge.¹⁸

Conceptualism is also noticeable in the 2000 Declaration *Dominus Jesus: On the Unicity and Salvific Universality of Jesus Christ and the Church*, signed by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, then Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. In sections 5-7, the overwhelming emphasis is put on *truth* – this word recurs time and time again in these few paragraphs –, without acknowledging the pluralism that characterizes the expressions of *meaning* in different Christian cultures. The importance of truth – which, I agree, any learned and loyal theologian must recognize – is asserted here at the expense of the various approaches to faith in Jesus and at the expense of the various religious experiences. On account of this enormous stress on correct ideas about Christ and the church, the acknowledgement of "new questions" and "new paths of research," in section 3, sounds like mere lip service paid to the role of meaning. In light of these observations

¹⁷ Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *Truth and Tolerance: Christian Belief and World Religions*, trans. Henry Taylor (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2004), 199.

¹⁸ See *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas*, vol. 2 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 39, note 126; see also Index of Concepts and Names, "Scotus."

and of the more detailed criticisms leveled by Charles Hefling, it is difficult not to concur with the latter's judgment that "there is little if anything historically minded about *Dominus Jesus*" and that "*Dominus Jesus* is an excellent specimen of classicism."¹⁹

In his assessment of the Second Vatican Council, Benedict XVI equally shows how much a classicist he is. He submitted this assessment in two all-important speeches, which I will critique, even though they contain keen remarks, which it is profitable to take into consideration. The first speech in question is his Address to the Roman Curia, on December 22, 2005. Speaking of "a hermeneutic of discontinuity and rupture," he denounces some theologians – charitably unnamed – as well as the mass media for having popularized the idea that the council amounted to a break from the Catholic tradition. The "one trend of modern theology" that he rebuts appears to be an extreme interpretation of the council: *utter* discontinuity with respect to the past. I cannot but agree with him that Vatican II was not a case of "discontinuity" in his definition of the term.

In reaction to what he had set apart as the incorrect reading of the council, he puts forward what he calls "the 'hermeneutic of reform,' of renewal in the continuity of the one subject-Church which the Lord has given to us. She is a subject which *increases* in time and develops, yet always remaining *the same*, the one subject of the journeying People of God." I have italicized a couple of words in this quotation, which suggest that by not mentioning phenomena such as decreases and alterations in church history, he exemplifies a classicist and non-dialectical way of thinking.

Nevertheless, he acknowledges that Vatican II involved "some kind of discontinuity," also dubbed "apparent discontinuity," while its continuity consisted in "the continuity of principles." Of course, by situating himself on the plane of what he calls "principles," he has adopted a standpoint that seems irrefutable. Indeed, how could we deny that *at that height of abstraction*, the principles invoked at Vatican II are the same at those invoked during the two thousand years that preceded? Would it be farfetched to discern, in Benedict's

¹⁹ Charles Hefling, "Method and Meaning in *Dominus Jesus*," in *Sic et Non: Encountering Dominus Jesus*, ed. Stephen J. Pope and Charles Hefling (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002), 107-23, at 115; see 114-16.

propensity to move on the level of universal and unqualified concepts, the same kind of excessive generalizations as those in the homily and in his book *Truth and Tolerance*, which I pointed out earlier?

In the next paragraph of his Address to the Roman Curia, he proceeds to equate the relation between discontinuity and continuity with the relation between the contingent and the permanent. He states:

The Church's decisions on contingent matters – for example certain practical forms of liberalism or a free interpretation of the Bible – should necessarily be contingent themselves, precisely because they refer to a specific reality that is changeable in itself. It was necessary to learn to recognize that in these decisions it is only the principles that express the permanent aspect, since they remain as an undercurrent, motivating decisions from within. On the other hand, not so permanent are the practical forms that depend on the historical situation and are therefore subject to change.

Noteworthy in this passage is the suggestion that what may change are only “the practical forms,” whereas “the principles” are permanent. Therefore he feels entitled to dilute the novelty of Vatican II's *Decree on Religious Liberty* (*Dignitatis humanae*), which flatly contradicted Pope Pius IX's condemnation of freedom to practice a religion different from Roman Catholicism in his *Syllabus of Errors* of 1864.²⁰ In effect, Benedict writes that in the *Decree on Religious Freedom* the council “has recovered the deepest patrimony of the Church” – a half-truth indeed, since the examples that he provides of this patrimony go back to the New Testament and the early church, thus glossing over fifteen hundred years of the church's opposing and even violently crushing religious freedom.²¹

²⁰ Amongst the propositions condemned, this one stands out: “Every man is free to embrace and profess that religion which, guided by the light of reason, he shall consider true” (§15). See also similar propositions condemned in §16, 17, 21, 77, 78, and 80.

²¹ See John W. O'Malley's comments on the combination of continuity and discontinuity as construed by Pope Benedict XVI, in “The Hermeneutic of Reform: A Historical Analysis,” *Theological Studies* 73 (2012): 517–46, at 542–46. His assessment of Benedict is more favorable than mine, probably because what he praises is not so much the Pope's view of continuity/discontinuity as his understanding of reform. See also Neil Ormerod, “Vatican II – Continuity or Discontinuity? Toward an Ontology of Meaning,” *Theological Studies* 71 (2010): 609–36, esp. 610–11 and 633–36, in which he criticizes the

The second all-important text by Benedict XVI is his speech on the interpretation of the Second Vatican Council, given on February 14, 2013, as his last annual address to clergy of the diocese of Rome. There he construes the council as having merely wanted "to complete the ecclesiology of Vatican I," which had remained "somewhat one-sided" because of its stress on "the doctrine on the primacy [of the pope]." So, according to Benedict, at Vatican II the council fathers endeavored simply to balance the "doctrine" of the primacy, promulgated by Vatican I, with other elements that characterize the church. So he represents the whole enterprise of Vatican II as basically doctrinal.²²

In this respect, the disparity between Benedicts XVI's view and Lonergan's view is striking.²³ The former opines that Vatican II taught "principles." The latter, prompted by Marie-Dominique Chenu's reflections on the council,²⁴ praises the council fathers for having begun, not with principles, but with the pastoral preaching of the Good News:

For Fr. Chenu one gets into difficulty when one puts the cart before the horse. The words of the Good Shepherd preceded conciliar decrees. But if first one clarifies the meaning of "doctrine" and then sets about explaining the meaning of "pastoral," one tends to reduce "pastoral" to the application of "doctrine" and to reduce the application of "doctrine" to the devices and dodges, the simplifications and elaborations of classical oratory. But what comes first is the word of God. The task of the church is the kerygma, announcing the good news, preaching the gospel. That preaching is pastoral. It is the concrete reality. From it one may abstract doctrines, and theologians may work the doctrines into conceptual systems. But the doctrines and systems, however valuable and true, are

descriptive nature of the categories continuity/discontinuity as used by Benedict.

²² Incidentally, in his book on the council, the future pope John Paul II expressly asserted that the council was pastoral.

²³ Notwithstanding their different outlook, one should not ignore the fact that both Lonergan and Ratzinger shared concerns about relativism. See Gerard Whelan, "Lonergan and the Year of Faith: Addressing Pope Benedict XVI's Concerns about Relativism and Reductionism," in vol. 26 of the *Lonergan Workshop Journal*, ed. Fred Lawrence (Chestnut Hill, MA: Boston College, 2012): 441-68.

²⁴ Lonergan refers to M. D. Chenu, "Un concile 'pastoral'," in *La Parole de Dieu*, vol. II (Paris: Cerf, 1964), 655-72.

but the skeleton of the original message. A word is the word of a person, but doctrine objectifies and depersonalizes. The word of God comes to us through the God-man. The church has to mediate to the world not just a doctrine but the living Christ.²⁵

Like Benedict XVI, the Italian historian Giuseppe Alberigo, in his elaborate comments on Vatican II, speaks of both continuity and discontinuity.²⁶ However, whereas Benedict minimizes discontinuity, Alberigo highlights it. He lists a large amount of significant departures, on the part of that council, from previous Catholic perspectives. Moreover, the council even voiced new principles, for example, concerning religious freedom.²⁷

He enumerates Chenu's "four cornerstones of the Council's theology": "the priority of mystery over institution; the recognition of the irreducible value of the human subject in the structure and dynamics of salvation; the Church's consciousness of its own existence in history; and the recognition of the value of earthly realities." Furthermore, Alberigo cites Cardinal Joseph Bernardin's twofold observation: "In keeping with its affirmation of the imagery of the Church as the People of God, the Council made a major contribution in pointing out the rightful place of the laity in the Church." He adds Otto Hermann Pesch's summary of the council's "permanent results": "liturgical reform, the Church as people of God, friendliness toward humanity, the dialogue with the religions."²⁸

Lastly, Alberigo supplements these facts with the following "crucial points": "the central place of the word of God; the importance

²⁵ "Pope John's Intention," in *A Third Collection: Papers by Bernard J. F. Lonergan, S.J.*, ed. Frederick Crowe (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), 224-38, at 227-28. See also the longer version, "A New Pastoral Theology," in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1965-1980*, in vol. 17 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert C. Croken and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 221-39. For an analysis of Chenu's and Lonergan's respective readings of John XXIII's position, see Maurice Schepers and Paul Philibert, "Blessed John XXIII's Pastoral Council: Keeping the Dream Alive," *Doctrine and Life* 62, no. 7 (Sept. 2012): 11-18.

²⁶ Giuseppe Alberigo, in *History of Vatican II*, ed. Giuseppe Alberigo and Joseph A. Komonchak, vol. V (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, and Peeters: Leuven, 2006), 594.

²⁷ Alberigo, *History of Vatican II*, section aptly entitled "*Dignitatis humanae*: A Creative Solution," 451-57.

²⁸ Alberigo, *History of Vatican II*, 626-27.

of the trinitarian mystery; and the role of the Spirit, the conception of the Church, and the attitude of friendship and participation in human history."²⁹ I would comment that by expressing esteem for Protestants, Jews, members of non-Christian religions, and people of good will, the church at Vatican II moved out of her centuries-long ecclesiocentrism.³⁰

All these lists evince convictions, on the part of the council fathers, that had been scarcely publicized or sometimes totally absent before in Catholic teaching. By putting them across, they were moving out of the classicism in which virtually all of them had been brought up. The majority of those insistences are less a matter of doctrine than a matter of new perspectives, priorities, and accents. And being so, they correspond with John XXIII's intention, which was not to reassert doctrine, but to reformulate it in order to make it more understandable for twentieth-century people.

Another scholar, expert in history of councils, the Jesuit John O'Malley, detailed a good number of Vatican II's reversals that are on the whole the same as those spelled out by Alberigo.³¹ More originally, he observed that, in contrast to previous councils or papal declarations, the highly significant modification lies in the language in which the fundamental Christian message is presented by the council fathers, that is, a rhetorical, epideictic or panegyric language.³²

In sum, for a classicist, shifts of emphasis and language are negligible, whereas, for someone like Lonergan, they illustrate his vindication of theological plurality in the church. In addition, whereas for John XXIII *ressourcement* and *aggiornamento* were equally necessary, Benedict XVI evidently preferred the former.

In the rest of this essay, I will outline some tenets that were paramount for Lonergan: the need for method; self-transcendence; subjectivity and objectivity; the plurality of perspectives; and the

²⁹ Alberigo, *History of Vatican II*, 629; see 628-40, where these points are developed.

³⁰ On the ecclesiology of communion as tending to be ecclesiocentric and consequently as having to be complemented by the ecclesiology of a friendship in interaction with non-Catholics, see John D. Dadosky, "Towards a Fundamental Theological Re-Interpretation of Vatican II," *The Heythrop Journal* 49 (2008): 742-63.

³¹ See John O'Malley, *Tradition and Transition: Historical Perspectives on Vatican II* (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1989), chap. 2: "Vatican II: Historical Perspectives on Its Uniqueness and Interpretation." See also 106-15.

³² John O'Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), Conclusion.

compatibility between historicity and permanence concerning Catholic doctrines. Each of these factors play a role in the overcoming of relativism.

BEYOND THEORY: THE NEED FOR METHOD

A few years after the Second Vatican Council, Lonergan wrote:

Scholastic theology was a monumental achievement. Its influence in the Catholic church has been profound and enduring. Up to Vatican II, which preferred a more biblical turn of speech, it has provided much of the background of pontifical documents and conciliar decrees. Yet today by and large it is abandoned, partly because of the inadequacy of medieval aims, and partly because of the short-comings of the Aristotelian corpus. (*Method in Theology*, 279; see also pages 327 and 329)

It is important to realize that what has to be "abandoned" is the confinement of theology to the realm of theory, with its Aristotelian logic. This requires moving from the theoretical mind to the methodical mind, in a manner that does not do away with the logical competencies of the medieval systematic mind, but rather sublates them by locating them within the larger context formed by what Lonergan called "the generalized empirical method." Thus he observed: "Among high cultures one may distinguish classical and modern by the general type of their controls: the classical thinks of the control as a universal fixed for all time; the modern thinks of the controls as themselves involved in an ongoing process" (29).

In effect, the methodical mind carries out a different control of meaning, exemplified by what one sees in the modern empirical sciences, where the procedures followed issue in results to the extent that original and pertinent questions have been asked – questions that allow data to be seen in a new way and that allow fresh hypotheses to arise. Unlike the theoretical mind, which tends to perfect and refine a static content, this new experimental mind accepts the imperfect, incomplete, and provisional character of knowledge. When this mind is applied to the history of religious ideas, it delves into the particular characteristics of texts, authors, and epochs. It is attentive as much to differences of contexts as to the unity of an evolving dogma.

Needless to say, theory goes hand in hand with classicism, whereas method goes hand in hand with the empirical approaches.

SELF-TRANSCENDENCE

The second paramount tenet that must be adverted to is the fact that, for Lonergan, self-transcendence is the goal of human intentionality (*Method in Theology*, 104-105). The latter is the urge, among human beings, to go beyond the strict limitations of their habitat and to learn how to live in a world mediated by meanings and values. People transcend themselves inasmuch as they ask questions for understanding, which make them discern intelligible patterns in the data perceptually collected; inasmuch as they ask questions for reflection, which make them check the truth of their hypotheses; and inasmuch as they ask questions for deliberation, which make them assess values, courses of actions, and religious commitments.

Lonergan calls this movement a "development from below upwards."³³ One ascends, so to speak, a scale constituted by four levels: perception, understanding, reflection, and deliberation. Hence his four transcendental precepts: "Be attentive, Be intelligent, Be reasonable, Be responsible" (231).

He points out: "The transcendental notions, that is, our questions for intelligence, for reflection, and for deliberation, constitute our capacity for self-transcendence. That capacity becomes an actuality when one falls in love. Then one's being becomes being-in-love" (105). Among the various kinds of love – all situated on the fourth level of human intentionality –, the love of God is supreme. Lonergan is fond of quoting Romans 5:5, "God's love flooding our hearts through the Holy Spirit given to us" (105).

From the religious component of the fourth level of intentionality is launched a "development from above downwards."³⁴ In this movement, thanks to the strength of the highest affective state, one accepts truths gained in education coming from family, companionship, school, media, or a religious tradition, then one manages to understand a good portion

³³ "Healing and Creating in History," in *A Third Collection*, 100-109, at 106.

³⁴ "Healing and Creating in History," in *A Third Collection*, 106.

of what one has received, and finally one forges means of expressing all that has been acquired.

SUBJECTIVITY AND OBJECTIVITY

Regrettably the human subject – perceiver, knower, doer, lover – is intellectually and affectively impaired. However, Lonergan's outlook on objectivity is grounded in the complementary fact that the inquiring human subject, spurred on, consciously or not, both by the Holy Spirit's inspiration and by the knowledge of a liberating divine revelation, spontaneously desires objectivity, as it naturally cares to respect and enhance reality. A sound exercise of subjectivity reaches out toward objectivity. A healthy subjectivity – or, more accurately, a healed subjectivity – heads towards objectivity. "Genuine objectivity is the fruit of authentic subjectivity. It is to be attained only by attaining authentic subjectivity" (*Method in Theology*, 292; see also page 265). The authentic subjectivity of people who transcend themselves is the *sine qua non* condition for coming out into objectivity.

The criteria of objectivity are "subjective" (35, 37, 39, 40), and this means: neither subjectivistic nor objectivistic. Human subjectivity need not be either subjectivistic or objectivistic. Unfortunately, subjectivism and objectivism both imagine the measurement of objectivity in a spatial way, after the model of perception. Thereafter they part company: the former pronounces such (false) objectivity to be impossible, whereas the latter trusts common sense (despite its inadequacy in these matters) and declares such (false) objectivity to be possible.

Hence Lonergan writes:

There is a subjectivity to be blamed because it fails to transcend itself, and there is a subjectivity to be praised because it does transcend itself. There is an objectivity to be repudiated because it is the objectivity of those that fail in self-transcendence, and there is an objectivity to be accepted and respected, and it is that achieved by the self-transcending subject.³⁵

"Subjective," then, is not tantamount to "subjectivistic": subjectivism designates an individual subject's inability to transcend one's cognitive

³⁵ "Horizons," in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1965-1980*, 10-29, at 13.

and affective anticipations, and a failure to grasp and express truth with an unbiased spirit. In contrast, authentic subjectivity enables genuine objectivity.

In *Insight* he underscores our capacity to affirm truth unconditionally and he observes that such unconditionality removes a judgment from the peculiar circumstances of its discovery and verification.

Because the content of the judgment is an absolute, it is withdrawn from relativity to the subject that utters it, the place in which he utters it, the time at which he utters it. Caesar's crossing of the Rubicon was a contingent event occurring at a particular place and time. But a true affirmation of that event is an eternal, immutable, definitive validity. For if it is true that he did cross, then no one whatever at any place or time can truly deny that he did.

Hence it is in virtue of absolute objectivity that our knowing acquires what has been named its publicity. For the same reason that the unconditioned is withdrawn from relativity to its source, it also is accessible not only to the knower that utters it but also to any other knower.³⁶

Later in the same work, Lonergan avers: "there is to any truth an essential detachability from the mind in which it happened to be generated, and an essential communicability."³⁷ In *Method in Theology*, he underlines the fact again: "what is true is of itself not private but public, not something to be confined to the mind that grasps it, but something independent of that mind and so in a sense detachable and communicable" (44-45).³⁸

³⁶ Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, vol. 3 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 402.

³⁷ *Insight*, 729. In 366-71 Lonergan offers a refutation of a speculative form of relativism, whose fundamental mistake is to accept a view of the universe as an explanatory system, which we must grasp as a whole before anything particular can be grounded.

³⁸ For a brief presentation of Lonergan's ideas about meaning and subjectivity, see Louis Roy, *Coherent Christianity: Toward an Articulate Faith* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2017), chap. 13.

THE PLURALITY OF PERSPECTIVES

The fourth paramount tenet is Lonergan's reconciliation of perspectives with the movement toward a universal viewpoint in historiography.

Method in Theology dedicates two chapters to history, which have been prepared by the author's extensive reading of historians' reflections on historical knowledge. Under the heading of "Perspectivism" (214-20), he tells us that historians deal with the particular, whereas scientists (including those in the human sciences) deal with the universal. While maintaining his insistence on objectivity in the field of historiography, he acknowledges the fact that unavoidably historians work according to perspectives, namely specific viewpoints that determine the contexts in which they situate their topics.

On the one hand, perspectivism means that historians can never know everything about their subject matter, because they must be selective regarding their materials. "Inevitably the historian selects what he thinks of moment and omits what he considers unimportant" (215). Consequently one can reach only "incomplete and approximate portrayals of an enormously complex reality" (219). Lonergan reminds us that "as in natural science, so too in critical history the positive content of judgment aspires to be no more than the best available opinion" (191), namely the probable. However, to avoid any collusion with relativism, "perspectivity" could be a better term than "perspectivism."

On the other hand, although historians begin within the bounds of definite perspectives, they are far from being definitively restricted by their angles of vision. Like all disciplines, the discipline of history is dynamic; it is practiced by scholars whose viewpoint is moving and expanding. With training, well-guided research, and experience, they gradually enhance their ability to discover the past and to make it out in ways that are more and more adequate.

Indeed, the capacity for progression and self-correction distinguishes perspectivism from relativism.

Where relativism has lost hope about the attainment of truth, perspectivism stresses the complexity of what the historian is writing about and, as well, the specific difference of historical from mathematical, scientific, and philosophic knowledge. It does not lock historians up in their backgrounds, confine them

to their biases, deny them access to development and openness. But it does point out that historians with different backgrounds will rid themselves of biases, undergo conversions, come to understand the quite different mentalities of other places and times, and even move towards understanding one another, each in his own distinctive fashion. (217)

This passage invites the following remark: Lonergan's recognition of the multiplicity of perspectives is filled with both modesty and hope. Let us notice, in the last quotation, the typically Lonerganian emphasis on the core importance of overcoming biases and going through conversions. This importance flows from his notion of horizon, which he introduces at the beginning of his chapter on dialectic.

In its literal sense the word, horizon, denotes the bounding circle, the line at which earth and sky appear to meet. This line is the limit of one's field of vision. As one moves about, it recedes in front and closes in behind so that, for different standpoints, there are different horizons. . . .

As our field of vision, so too the scope of our knowledge, and the range of our interests are bounded. As fields of vision vary with one's standpoint, so too the scope of one's knowledge and the range of one's interests vary with the period in which one lives, one's social background and milieu, one's education and personal development. So there has arisen a metaphorical or perhaps analogous meaning of the word, horizon. (235-36)

And he rounds out his reflections on horizons with the following definition: "Horizons then are the sweep of our interests and of our knowledge" (237).

Moreover, he states that differences in horizons may be complementary, genetic, or dialectical.

First, it frequently happens that the respective horizons of, say, a worker, a supervisor, a technician, an engineer, or a manager are complementary and in some measure include one another.

Second, other horizons differ genetically: "They are related as successive stages in some process of development. Each later stage presupposes earlier stages, partly to include them, and partly to transform them" (236). Adept historians not only take into consideration

complementary horizons, but above all consider as their main job to ascertain the connections between horizons that are genetically related. Thus Lonergan declares that the historian's task is "to grasp what was going forward in particular groups at particular places and times" (178). By "going forward" he means "process and development but, no less, decline and collapse" (178-79).

Third, dialectic has to do with another kind of difference in horizons, the analysis of which is a much more tricky business than the elucidation of a genesis.

There are fundamental conflicts stemming from an explicit or implicit cognitional theory, an ethical stance, a religious outlook. They profoundly modify one's mentality. They are to be overcome only through an intellectual, moral, religious conversion. The function of dialectic will be to bring such conflicts to light, and to provide a technique that objectifies subjective differences and promotes conversion. (235; see 128-30)

The horizons that are genetically related as well as the horizons that are dialectically conflicting exist, not only among the people studied by historians, but in scholars themselves. Hence the indispensability of personal development on the part of scholars. Lonergan's notion of a universal viewpoint sheds light on this progression. As made clear by the author of a remarkable book devoted to this topic, the universal viewpoint is "a heuristic structure," to wit, an orderly openness to reality. It characterizes a subjectivity in quest of objectivity. "Human knowledge is marked therefore by a double-pronged approach, a pincer movement, a scissors-action, with a lower blade arising from data and an upper blade descending from general anticipations."³⁹ The upper blade is not a static possession, but a distant goal. It consists in an asymptotic movement from a more or less limited standpoint toward universal science and universal history as the totality of the to-be-known. Even if the universal viewpoint may be compared to a bird's-eye view, it definitely does not amount to a God's-eye view! We could rather place it halfway between sensory particularity and divine universality.

³⁹ Ivo Coelho, *Hermeneutics and Method: The "Universal Viewpoint" in Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 3; on the "scissors movement" see *Method in Theology*, 293.

Merely potentially universal at the beginning, step by step at least a portion of our knowledge becomes universal.

Although no interpretation can be context-independent, little by little scholars may try and enter into wider contexts. Grasping the differences between various viewpoints, situating and marshaling the viewpoints broaden our own viewpoint and enhance our ability to diagnose with greater accuracy the fundamentally conflicting human condition. Making headway toward a universal viewpoint requires self-knowledge and knowledge of the other – two kinds of knowledge which increase as they interact. However, whereas *Insight* abundantly treats of the “universal viewpoint,”⁴⁰ *Method in Theology* speaks, only in one passage, of “a comprehensive viewpoint,” which has become the goal of the functional specialty called dialectic, after having been enriched by integrating existential and religious components of human living.⁴¹

To conclude this section, we can say that if for Lonergan cognitional particularity and cognitional universality are compatible, it is because the richer the historians’ erudition becomes, the more capable they become of understanding correctly other perspectives and new sources of knowledge.

HISTORICITY AND PERMANENCE

The fifth and last paramount tenet is Lonergan’s acceptance of what he calls “pluralism.” I interpret his version as being a *moderate* pluralism, in opposition to *radical* pluralism, which is the same as relativism. To understand his proposal for a moderate pluralism, we must pay attention to his treatment of the tension between the historicity and the permanence of doctrines (*Method in Theology*, 319-30).

This tension and its resolution is not solely a religious problem, but, in Lonergan’s thought, a general epistemological fact. Human nature, he explains, comprises two fundamental components: the one a variable, historicity, which accounts for the multiplicity of cultures; the other a constant, natural right, made up of the intentionality of the

⁴⁰ See *Insight*, Index, “Viewpoint, universal.”

⁴¹ See Coelho, *Hermeneutics and Method*, 7 and 200; see also *Method in Theology*, 129, on “a comprehensive viewpoint,” and 288, which mentions “a potential universal viewpoint.”

person. "A contemporary ontology would distinguish two components in concrete human reality: on the one hand, a constant, human nature; on the other hand, a variable, human historicity."⁴² While human historicity causes change, the very capacity for changing resides in something abiding, or transcendental, namely human nature, comprised of the four levels of intentionality, which constitute our openness to the multifold reality of the world.

In the theological field, Lonergan accepts the historicity of dogmas, which is but a particular case within the broader category of human historicity in general. The meanings that theologians come across were fashioned in particular contexts; contexts are multiple; and several of those contexts evolved in the course of discussions that took place prior or posterior to council pronouncements. Nevertheless, he thinks that historians can identify, compare, relate, and contrast the contexts. Sound hermeneutics and dialectic can make sense of their differences and oppositions. It is also possible to determine whether specific modifications have been cumulative or regressive.⁴³ In a lecture on pluralism, Lonergan stresses the validity of a statement in its original context despite its lack of complete meaningfulness in a new context:

It is true that contexts change, and it can happen that a statement that was true in its own context, ceases to be adequate in another context. It remains that it was true in its original context, that sound historical and exegetical procedures can reconstitute the original context with greater or less success and, in the same measure, arrive at an apprehension of the original truth.⁴⁴

⁴² "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness," in *A Third Collection*, 169-83, at 170.

⁴³ As an illustration, see Bernard Lonergan, *The Triune God: Doctrines*, vol. 11 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, trans. from *De Deo Trino: Pars dogmatica* (1964) by Michael G. Shields, and ed. Robert M. Doran and H. Daniel Monsour (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009). This big handbook was composed for his students in Rome in 1964; at that time, obviously he was not in a position to implement his (still only partially formulated) method; and yet that work gives us a sense of how history and dialectic may contribute to theology.

⁴⁴ "Doctrinal Pluralism," in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1965-1980*, 70-104, at 76.

Given this process of ongoing reinterpretation, ought we to think that Christianity's self-understanding can fundamentally transform itself? To answer this question, Lonergan has recourse to a crucial distinction:

There is a notable difference between the fuller understanding of data and the fuller understanding of a truth. When data are more fully understood, there result the emergence of a new theory and the rejection of previous theories. Such is the ongoing process in the empirical sciences. But when a truth is more fully understood, it is still the same truth that is being understood. . . .

Now the dogmas are permanent in their meaning because they are not just data but expressions of truths and, indeed, of truths that, were they not revealed by God, could not be known by man.⁴⁵ (*Method in Theology*, 325)

Furthermore, Lonergan points out that the permanence of dogmas has often been wrongly construed, mostly in the Roman Catholic Church, within the limitations of the classicist frame of mind. "What is opposed to the historicity of the dogmas is, not their permanence, but classicist assumptions and achievements" (326). Consistent with such assumptions, there is just one culture, hence one way of articulating doctrines, and "the unity of faith is a matter of everyone subscribing to the correct formulae" (327). By contrast, he locates "the real root and ground of unity" in the inner word of God, the "being in love with God," as shaped by "the outward encounter with Christian witness," who testifies that "God has spoken through the prophets but in this latest age through his Son" (327, quoting Hebrews 1:1-2).

In this twentieth-century explication of "the real root and ground of unity," we find an echo of a medieval affirmation, that is, the one made by Aquinas, "The act of the believer does not reach its end in a statement, but in a reality. . . . Through them [the statements] we have knowledge of realities."⁴⁶ In Aquinas's view, endorsed by Lonergan, the statements point to the real character of revealed mysteries. In

⁴⁵ Still, the historical theologian begins with data (*Method in Theology*, 186-87 and 201-203); the point of the quoted text is that, for the systematic theologian, "dogmas . . . are not just data" and should not be treated exactly in the way the empirical sciences base on data their merely probable conclusion ("a new theory").

⁴⁶ *Summa Theologiae*, II-II, q. 1, a. 2, ad 2.

this vein, Lonergan writes: "the witness is to the mysteries revealed by God, and, for Catholics, infallibly declared by the church." And as he carefully balances permanence and historicity, he adds: "The meaning of such declarations lies beyond the vicissitudes of human historical process. But the contexts, within which such meaning is grasped, and so the manner in which such meaning is expressed, vary both with cultural differences and with the measure in which human consciousness is differentiated" (327).

What is required, then, is not pure repetition or sheer reassertion of dogmas, but "the transpositions that theological thought has to develop if religion is to retain its identity and yet at the same time find access into the minds and hearts of men of all cultures and classes" (132-33). The permanence of dogmas will be ensured by the conceptual transpositions which belong to the second phase of the theological method that Lonergan proposes. During this never-ending phase, implemented by four functional specialties called foundations, doctrines, systematics, and communications, "the theologian, enlightened by the past, confronts the problems of his own day" (133). To the extent that problems have changed, we need new meanings, expressed in innovative formulations.

Such creative novelties bring about cultural diversity. What Lonergan calls "historical consciousness" (154) or "historical-mindedness"⁴⁷ is the awareness that there has been and there still is cultural diversity throughout history. Hence the phenomenon of pluralism among cultures, philosophies, human studies, and theologies.

To further elucidate the nature of theological pluralism, he distinguishes three sources (326-30 and 271-81). First, we come across countless brands of common sense, that is, local mentalities. Second, aspects of human reality can be apprehended according to several modes, called differentiations of consciousness: common sense, theory (also called science and system), interiority (which gives rise to method), transcendence (or religion), historical scholarship, art. Third, we must take account of the degree to which people are converted.

⁴⁷ "The Transition from a Classicist World-View to Historical-Mindedness," in *A Second Collection*, 3-10. In "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness," at 171, Lonergan tells us that the phrase "historical mindedness" comes from Alan Richardson.

The first two sources are positive, whereas the third is negative. "The real menace to unity of faith does not lie either in the many brands of common sense or the many differentiations of human consciousness. It lies in the absence of intellectual or moral or religious conversion" (330).

Lonergan's method is meant to deal with the intricate components of good or bad pluralism. Needless to say, acquiring and maintaining a differentiated mind and a converted spirit necessitates being actively involved in a never finished personal and communal enterprise.⁴⁸

CONCLUSION

Relativism has been a burning issue over the last few decades. Lonergan's thought provides intellectual tools that enable us both to understand the challenging difficulty of attaining the real and to work our way, patiently, in quest of objectivity, not merely in principle, but in concrete cases.⁴⁹ Facing this difficulty demands that we know the reasons why we must discard two antithetical extremes, namely classicism and relativism; it also entails that we put into practice the generalized empirical method thanks to which we can stretch out toward truth.

⁴⁸ Karl Rahner also wanted to keep together dogma and pluralism; however, at the end of his life, his conceptualism and other factors prevented him from eschewing a relativism for which Lonergan diplomatically rebuked him. On Rahner's epistemology and on its implications for theology, see Louis Roy, *Engaging the Thought of Bernard Lonergan* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2016), 121-41, esp. 134.

⁴⁹ Lack of space prevents me from demonstrating the convergence between Lonergan's plumbing of basic epistemological issues with the ground-breaking treatment offered by Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia: An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge*, trans. Louis Wirth and Edward Shils (San Diego: Harcourt, 2nd ed., 1936).

PASSING THE TORCH: INCORPORATING LONERGAN INTO THE SCHEDULED THEOLOGY CURRICULUM

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Imagine a circle traced on the ground
and in its center a tree sprouting . . .
So think of yourself as a tree
made for love and living only by love . . .
The circle in which this tree's root, your love,
must grow
is true knowledge of yourself,
knowledge that is joined to me,
God,
who like the circle have neither beginning nor end.
You can go round and round in this circle,
finding neither end nor beginning,
yet never leaving the circle.
— Catherine of Siena, *The Dialogue*, 41

THE FACTS OF THE PRESENT ACADEMIC CONTEXTS

MANY OF US here are teachers, perhaps at the undergraduate, graduate, or doctoral levels. We are also convinced that Bernard Lonergan had something to say to our present educational context, and we long to tell others about it. But we work at institutions and in departments where the curriculum is set, and we are brought in to teach that curriculum. Most of us swallow, blink, and set about preparing to teach the class assigned to us in the structured curriculum. The dean has perhaps

never heard of Bernard Lonergan. The faculty knows nothing of his philosophical *turn*, by which the inquirer is challenged to make his or her own cognitional operations the object of inquiry first, before attending to a specific subject matter field. Such is the scene for most of us.

The structured theology curriculum was there before us and meets us as we are welcomed onto a faculty. We are hired to replace a colleague who has taught biblical studies, or an area of systematic theology. Many institutions even have worked out "basic concepts" to be included in specific syllabi. But we are Lonerganians. So what are we to do? Thus these reflections.

We have been hired to teach students *something*. But first and foremost, we have been hired to teach *students*. We know from our study of interiority that unless we form students to be accountable for their own operations, they may never learn the *something* we have been hired to teach. And so, we neglect the subject at our peril whether we introduce them to philosophical movements, theology's place among the natural and social sciences, or the theological identity of the Catholic tradition among the religions of the world. *Who is it doing this study?*

Then there are the demands of ministry in the academy. The theology curriculum was set long before we got there. The title of my assigned course is the *something* I am to teach. How I am evaluated in doing it and how I publish from it will influence my possibility of tenure. So my challenge remains: How do I make sure I don't neglect the subject in my teaching?

THE CRITICAL NEED OF THE FUTURE

We long to give our students a holistic worldview, not that of the materialistic naturalist nor of the detached pietist. The students we inform, make no mistake, we also *form*. We impart not only information about a field, we invite them to share our worldview. If that worldview includes the shift to interiority, then we can challenge them to know how they know. Once they learn how to attend to data, question it adequately, arrive at a judgment carefully, and then discern what to do about it, they are well on their way to analyzing when this did or

did not happen in what they read. They will perceive what is lacking in philosophy, in theology, and in the decisions of history. They will more likely awaken to the crying need of the disciplines to dialogue with each other to arrive at a fuller truth.

We long for critical realists. Whether in medicine, law, or business, we need people with their feet firmly on the ground with the facts, and the know-how to question everything and everyone. They will have a nose for bias: individual, group, general, or dramatic. They will take responsibility for their own decisions, and know they can't project them onto others. Grounded in sound self-knowledge, they will have the common sense to realize that they are in a context of emergence, yet just because we can do something, it just might be that we ought not to do it because it is not the compassionate thing to do.

We long for a deep person of faith, an ecclesial person. Who might this be? It is someone incarnationally grounded and in love with nature and science. It is someone permeated with *we* consciousness rather than *me* consciousness. It is someone who sees singly, with the two eyes of faith and reason, and a wide sacramental worldview that keeps one open to transcendence shining through the everyday. For such an ecclesial person, faith is the very pupil of their eye of reason. Hope springs from the unending possibility of their sacramental worldview. Their humble love astonishes their colleagues as they daily pursue truth and commit themselves to a passionate pursuit of justice. We need such people. The church needs such people. The culture needs such people.

ANSWERING THE NEED THROUGH STUDENT FORMATION IN AN ADEQUATE ANTHROPOLOGY

In a Catholic institution we can speak openly of being grasped by religious love. This has happened to us, or perhaps we wish it would. We can name this as somehow being made one thing with God in and through his Christ, for John's gospel does not mince words about it, Baptism effects it, and Eucharist feeds it. But if our mission takes us to a religious studies department or a state university or college, we will be more guarded. We will talk more from the vantage point of common sense. We will talk about what really happens to people . . . all kinds of

people. They experience mystery in various ways, and it changes them. They can't shake the memory. We are talking human anthropology here, and we are not leaving anything significant out. Religious experience happens.

This opens up the possibility of addressing the human person, you and me, who are going to be engaged in this study, whatever it is. By opening up the subject of human anthropology early in the subject field course, we can introduce the student to interiority, even if it is but a brief introduction. GEM (General Empirical Method) can be presented through the social lens of anthropology, including the real data of religious experience and the change it can effect. Presented as *basic method* for the study of this course in only one class period or two, GEM becomes a reference point for the exploration into the subject matter of the course. The subject has not been neglected, nor have we replaced our subject matter with a full-blown course in Lonergan.

Our goal, no matter what we teach, is to form a critical realist. So what will be the framework for this anthropology? Here I draw on the fine work of Robert M. Doran. I present it refined in the years, over twenty now, that I have taught it and written about it, and will be grateful for your observations on its adequacy or shortcomings. I choose to refer to anthropology *functionally*, defining the dimensions of the human being by operations. Thus, the organism functions physically through operations such as digestion, reproduction, circulation, and respiration. But what about the *soul*?

The soul has all but disappeared in published material. I have chosen to reclaim and redefine it in sync with Augustine, John of the Cross, and others. By *soul* I mean the active *form* of the physical body, its *life force which orchestrates its physical development*. No pop in and pop out soul here. I lean with Aristotle and Aquinas. John of the Cross will refer to upper and lower dimensions of the soul. The lower is sensate, deeply embedded in the physical. Its *functions* are *emotion, imagery, imagination, dream and fantasy*. In psychological jargon, this is the area of the subconscious. The psychic energy operating here is manifested in what Lonergan refers to as *feelings*, sensations drawn from physical experience. "I feel hungry," and so forth. When the psychic energy of the soul sublates into its upper dimension functions, those functions manifest as *attentiveness, inquiry, judgment, and decision*. This upper dimension of the soul is the unique human *spirit*,

manifesting operations distinct from that of the animal due to the capacity for self-reflexive consciousness. Thus we have *organism*, *psyche*, and *spirit* as a comprehensive human anthropology. In the traditional body/soul terminology, the *body* is the *organism* plus the lower *psyche*, and the *soul* is the upper *psyche* plus the *spirit*. The soul is thus a natural phenomena, mortal except for its permeation with the Divine.

Being "grasped by religious love," as Lonergan puts it, means the entire soul of the person is indwelt by God. The implications of John 15 are that Jesus intends to become one thing with us. This means that the God-human relationship impacts the psyche in both its dimensions, the soul as it lives its sensate life in the organism, and the soul as it operates in its higher functions as the human spirit which is open to the realm of transcendence.

Accounting for cognition engages the first level of consciousness, attentive awareness of either sense data or the data of consciousness, the second level of intelligent inquiry, and the third level of judgment of the truth of the data examined by intelligent inquiry. Accounting for the volitional operation will engage a judgment of value that draws from cogitional discernment and leads to choice and full decision. If this anthropology is not modestly comprehensive then we need to search for one that is. The question, "Who is doing this study?" applies to any field whatever, and students are often fascinated by learning *what is going on* when they are learning anything.

THE METHODOLOGICALLY FORMED HUMAN WITH A MISSION

Whatever the course title may be, it is this human student who is doing the study. If it is science, the student will engage this anthropology to seek out the truth through empirical observation and measurement. If the science student is a believer, the scientific inquiry will take place in a context of faith. If the course is theology, the very same anthropology will again operate, while the context of faith, the knowing that is born of religious love, becomes explicit as the very field of the study. GEM can be introduced as the *general empirical method* that ensures the inquirer that there is a good chance that objective reality as truth has

been reached – by an authentic subjectivity. But first the student needs to have an adequate anthropology as a framework for what is going on when he or she is learning *anything*.

A fully formed student is more, however. He or she “lives the truth in love.” (Ephesians 4:15) Eternal life is at work in such a one, and such a love is a *fire*. Attentive not only to GEM, the student is attentive to the love that grips the soul, driving one’s motivation to service and self-sacrifice. In Lonergan’s terms, this love springs from the depths of the soul, from what he calls the *apex*. The lure of love’s goodness is sensed in the *psychic memory*, seducing one to the truth found in the *understanding*, and finally enticing the *will* to move toward the beauty that unifies that goodness and truth. Augustine and Ignatius of Loyola understood the dance. The thinker as a compassionate critical realist is a lover, and it is as a lover that the student will address any field of study whatever. So the steps of real education, one that makes a passing of the torch possible, will come from the learner who is a compassionate critical realist, but a critical realist who is a lover on a mission. That “mission” might be quite ordinary. It might involve conversation, emails, other social communications, human relations, worship, voting, or social action. And yes, it might involve teaching.

How then do we, as educators, go about this *practically*. I suggest several possibilities:

- Introduce the notion of how one’s consciousness functions as early as *fifth* grade. A ten-year-old can be fascinated with how one’s consciousness works and challenged by the understanding that each of us is the “pilot” of our own “guidance system.” Forming the conscience is helped by knowing *how consciousness works*. A ten-year-old can understand attention to data, asking good questions, making careful judgments, and coming to responsible decisions. Keep it simple.
- Review GEM at each grade level, adding more information as is appropriate.
- For undergraduates and above, introduce GEM early in whatever class you teach, explaining that this is *general empirical method* for any study whatsoever.
- For the young adult and masters students I have found it helpful

to assure reading of assigned material by requiring a four-sentence summary that trains the mind in a close reading of the text and analysis. The replies are limited to *one sentence*:

- Purpose: What was the question that prompted the author to write this?
 - Point: How does the author attempt to answer his or her own question?
 - Presuppositions: What is the author taking for granted about you, the reader?
 - Praxis Value: What difference might the author's point make to you, to your parish, to the church, to the culture?
- Challenge your students to use GEM in reading editorials, viewing films, and listening to the news.

Our task as educators is to inform, form, and hopefully transform those we mentor. It is time for us to pass the torch. It is time for us who have had the privilege to be introduced to the theory to engage Lonergan's last functional specialty: we need to find ways to communicate it in every course we teach.

WHY DOES THE EARNEST DESIRE OF
VATICAN II THAT PROVINCIAL COUNCILS
FLOURISH WITH RENEWED STRENGTH,
REMAIN UNSATISFIED?

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IN THEIR DECREE on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church (Christus Dominus, no. 36), the bishops at Vatican II made the following statement about the important role that such things as provincial councils have played in the life of the church. They said:

From the earliest centuries of the church, bishops, while in authority over particular churches, have drawn inspiration from the bond of fraternal love and zeal for the mission to all people which was given to the apostles. Accordingly they have pooled their resources and coordinated their plans to promote the common good and also the good of individual churches. To this end synods, provincial councils and finally plenary councils were established in which the bishops drew up for the different churches a uniform procedure to be followed both in the teaching of the truths of the faith and in the regulation of ecclesiastical discipline. It is the earnest desire of this ecumenical council that the venerable institutions of synods and councils should flourish with renewed strength, so that by this means more suitable and efficacious provision may be made for the increase of faith and for the maintenance of discipline in the different churches as the circumstances of the times require.¹

¹ *Christus Dominus* 36, Tanner 2, page 936.

My first comment is a question: What evidence is there that in the fifty years since the bishops at Vatican II expressed this earnest desire, provincial councils have begun to flourish with renewed strength? Who of us from New England has ever heard that the Archbishop of Boston, exercising his office as Metropolitan, had summoned the bishops of Fall River, Worcester, Springfield, Manchester, Portland, and Burlington, to a meeting of their provincial council? If provincial councils have not been taking place, they can hardly be flourishing with renewed strength.

My second question is: What could have been done to cause provincial councils to flourish with renewed strength? My answer is that this could have been done by restoring to them the important responsibility they have had in the past, of choosing priests for appointment as bishops for the churches of their province. This responsibility was confirmed as belonging to them by the Council of Nicaea in the fourth century and by the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century, and was recognized by Rome as belonging to them here in the United States all through the nineteenth century. Here is the evidence for what I have just affirmed.

Canon 4 of the Council of Nicaea says: "It is by all means desirable that a bishop should be appointed by all the bishops of the province. But if it is difficult because of some pressing necessity or the length of the journey involved, let at least three come together and perform the ordination, but only after the absent bishops have taken part in the vote and given their written consent. But in each province the right of confirming the proceedings belongs to the metropolitan bishop."

It is true that this canon does not use the term "provincial council," but it is clear that the choice of the person to be appointed bishop of the vacant see was made collegially, from the fact that all the bishops of the province must take part in the vote, and give their written consent if they were unable to be present for the ordination.

It is not my intention to attempt to follow the history of provincial councils or of the choosing of persons for appointment as bishops during the twelve centuries between the Council of Nicaea and the Council of Trent. I will remark only that from the beginning of the feudal period of European history until Trent, the ways that bishops were chosen, whether by secular powers or by the papacy, were often deplorable.

The bishops at Trent recognized this problem and took measures to solve it. Their solution is spelled out in Canon 1 of the Decree on Reform enacted in Session 24 of the final period of the council (1545-63). It says:

The holy council exhorts and charges all who have any right under any title from the apostolic see in the appointment of prelates, or assist in the process in any way, that they can do nothing more conducive to the glory of God and the salvation of souls than to have every concern to appoint good shepherds who are fitted to guide the church, and that they take the utmost care to have men advanced whom they know to be endowed with virtue, age, learning and all other qualities required by the sacred canons and by the decrees of this council. Hence the holy council enjoins that in each provincial synod held under the metropolitan's presidency, there should be drawn up a formula of examination or enquiry and information proper to each place and province, as seems most useful and appropriate for that place, to be approved by the holy Roman Pontiff. And when this examination or enquiry about the person to be appointed has finally been completed, it should be drawn up as a public dossier including all the evidence and the profession of faith of the candidate, and sent at once in its entirety to the pope, so that with full knowledge of the matter and information about the person, he may himself make the best provision for the churches.

It is remarkable that the bishops at Trent did not think it appropriate that they should determine a universal standard for the examination of candidates for appointment as bishops, but rather that each provincial council should draw up a formula that would be adapted to its own province. The decree then gave to the provincial councils the responsibility of conducting the examination of candidates according to their formula, and of transmitting the complete dossier to the pope when the council was satisfied that a candidate possessed all the qualities required for his appointment as bishop of a church of their province.

Canon 2 of that Reform Decree shows how heavily the bishops at Trent were relying on provincial councils for the implementation of the needed reforms. It said:

Wherever they have lapsed, provincial councils for the control of conduct, correction of abuses, settling disputes and other matters allowed by the sacred canons, are to be restored. Hence metropolitans should not omit to summon a council in their province, either personally or if legitimately hindered through their senior suffragan bishop, within one year at least from the end of the present council, and then at least every three years.

I shall now pass over three more centuries, to arrive at the contribution that provincial councils made to the life of the Catholic Church in the United States during the nineteenth century. To explain how provincial councils came to make that contribution, I must recall some of the early history of the Catholic Church in America. I owe my knowledge of this history to an essay by Gerald P. Fogarty, S.J., entitled "Episcopal Governance in the American Church."²

In 1783, the Roman Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith appointed Fr John Carroll "superior of the mission" in America. In 1788, his clergy, who, like himself, were ex-Jesuits, elected him, with Roman approval, to be the first Bishop of Baltimore (They were "ex-Jesuits" because their Society had been suppressed in 1773). In 1791 Carroll convened the First Synod of Baltimore, the first diocesan synod to be held in the United States. In 1808 the Holy See created the dioceses of Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Bardstown, Kentucky, and appointed their bishops, with the result that the church in the United States became an ecclesiastical province, with Archbishop Carroll as its metropolitan. Knowing that the Council of Trent had decreed that metropolitans should summon their suffragan bishops to a provincial council every three years, Carroll planned to convene such a council, but was prevented from doing so by the War of 1812 and then by his death in 1815. Carroll was succeeded by another former Jesuit, Leonard Neale, who lived only two years after taking office. The third archbishop, Ambrose Marechal, was a French aristocrat who did not believe in the advantages of a conciliar process of decision-making in the church and did not convene the provincial council that had been planned by Carroll. It was Marechal's successor, James Whitfield, who

² This essay was published in the volume: *Governance, Accountability, and the Future of the Catholic Church*, ed. Francis Oakley and Bruce Russert (New York: Continuum, 2004), 103-18.

summoned the First Provincial Council of Baltimore in 1829, and the second in 1833. After that a provincial council was held every three years until the seventh in 1849. Since during that period all the dioceses in the United States belonged to the province of Baltimore, those councils had authority from canon law to enact legislation binding on the whole Catholic Church in the United States.

The Second Provincial Council issued a decree that prescribed the method by which the bishops would choose the three priests whom they judged best qualified for appointment as bishops, whose names they would send to Rome when one of their dioceses needed a bishop, or a bishop needed a coadjutor who would assist him and become his successor. Gerald Fogarty gave the following description of the method it prescribed for the bishops to follow.

Each bishop was to make a list of three priests he thought apt to be his successor, to be opened at his death by the vicar general, who was to send it to the other bishops of the province. The bishops of the province were then to submit [to Rome] a list of three names, a *terna*, for vacant sees or for coadjutors. In practice, the bishops discussed these lists while they met in their triennial councils.

From 1833, when this was decreed by the Second Provincial Council of Baltimore, until 1916, when the Holy See prescribed a different procedure, whenever a diocese in the United States became vacant or a bishop needed a coadjutor, the bishops of that province would choose the three priests whose names they would send to Rome for that appointment. In making that choice they would give special consideration to the three priests whom the deceased bishop had named as the ones he judged most qualified to be his successor. As time went on, the bishops of the province would possess a list of all the priests who had been so named by its deceased bishops, from which they could choose names for a *terna*. When they met for the triennial meetings of their provincial council, they would discuss the names on that list and bring it up-to-date. If a diocese became vacant within three months of the date set for the next triennial meeting, the *terna* for the vacant see would be chosen by the provincial council.

After the Seventh Provincial Council of Baltimore was held in 1849, and new metropolitan sees had been established, the Catholic Church in the United States was no longer one province, which meant that a meeting of all its bishops would be a plenary council. Three of these were held at Baltimore during that century, in 1852, 1866, and 1884. However, in conformity with the decree of Trent, each metropolitan continued to convene a provincial council every three years, and the bishops of each province continued to perform the function which had been assigned to them by the Second Provincial Council of Baltimore, of drawing up and sending to Rome the *terna* which named the three priests whom they judged best qualified to be appointed for a church of their province that needed a new bishop. During the triennial meetings of their provincial councils, the bishops continued to discuss the suitability of priests of their province for appointment as bishops.

This practice, which was unique to the church in the United States, came to an end in 1916, when the Sacred Consistorial Congregation issued its "Decree on the Selection of Candidates for Bishoprics in the United States."³ The reason given for the change in procedure was that the time it took for the *terna* to arrive in Rome after a diocese in the United States became vacant, caused that diocese to be without a bishop for too long a time. The solution prescribed by this decree was that when Rome was informed that a see in the United States had become vacant, the name to be proposed to the Pope for the vacant see would be chosen in Rome by the Consistorial Congregation. In making this choice it would consult the list of priests judged suitable for episcopal appointment which it would have most recently received from the province to which that diocese belonged.

The decree prescribed that the bishops of each U.S. province were to meet with their metropolitan every two years to draw up a list of priests whom they judged best qualified for appointment as bishops in their province. The list of those approved was to be sent, through the Apostolic Delegate, to the Consistorial Congregation for its use in making its choice of a name to be presented to the Pope for the appointment of a bishop for the vacant diocese.

The decree of 1916 gave no role in this process to the provincial

³ *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 8 (1916), 400-404. English translation in *Canon Law Digest* 1, 194-98.

councils as such, and the practice which had continued in the United States of holding those councils every three years came to an end when the 1917 Code of Canon Law prescribed that a provincial council was to be held in each province at least every twenty years.

The difference between the contribution that provincial councils had made to the life of the church in the United States, and would be likely to have made wherever they had continued to be held every three years, and the contribution they made to the life of their churches when twenty years would elapse between their meetings, could explain the nostalgia with which the bishops at Vatican II spoke of the flourishing of such councils in the past, and of their earnest desire that they should again flourish with renewed strength.

Since the documents of Vatican II do not contain any decision that could have caused provincial councils to flourish with renewed strength, the bishops were evidently looking to the post-conciliar church to satisfy their earnest desire that they do so. In 1972, seven years after the close of the council, the Sacred Council for the Public Affairs of the Church, issued "Norms for the Promotion of Candidates to the Episcopal Ministry in the Latin Church."⁴ This decree substantially applied to the whole Latin Church the norms prescribed in 1916 for the United States and gave to the Apostolic Delegate the responsibility of drawing up the *terna* to be sent to Rome for the appointment of every bishop in the nation to which he was assigned.

It was the revision of the Code of Canon Law ordered by Pope John Paul II that offered the best possibility for satisfying the desire of Vatican II with regard to the flourishing of provincial councils. The possibility of doing this by restoring to the bishops of each province the drawing up of the *terna* for the appointment of bishops in their province was evidently ruled out by Rome's preference that this be done by the apostolic delegate. However, it would have been possible to cause provincial councils to flourish again by having them make a significant contribution to the drawing up of the *terna* by the apostolic delegate when a church in the nation to which he was assigned needed a new bishop. The revised Code of Canon Law promulgated in 1983 could have done this by prescribing that every three years each provincial council should send to the apostolic delegate a list of priests whom

⁴ AAS 64 (1972), 386-91.

it had selected as the most suitable for appointment as bishops, and requiring the papal legate to give special consideration to the list he had more recently received from the province where a new bishop was needed. If such a contribution to the process of choosing bishops had been given to provincial councils by the revised code, it would have been all the more effective by reason of the change the 1983 code made in the membership of those councils. It transformed them into what Pope John Paul II had called "structures of participation,"⁵ by decreeing that they must have a significant number of members who are not bishops.

Canon 443.3 of the 1983 Code prescribes that in addition to the bishops who participate in a provincial council with deliberative vote, the following members of the province who are not bishops must participate in it with consultative vote (that is, the right to take part in the discussion and to express their opinion, but not to vote when an issue is decided).

1. Priests who have been appointed to the office of vicar general or episcopal vicar.
2. The major superiors of religious institutes and societies of apostolic life of men and women with headquarters in the province, in a number determined by the bishops of the province. They are elected by all the major superiors in the province.
3. Rectors of ecclesiastical and other Catholic universities in the province and the deans of faculties of theology and canon law.
4. Some rectors of major seminaries in the province. Their number is determined by the bishops, and they are elected by all the rectors of seminaries in the province.
5. The cathedral chapters, the presbyteral council, and the diocesan pastoral council of each of the particular churches in the province must be invited to provincial councils in such a way that each sends two of its members as representatives; these should be selected in a collegial manner by each of these bodies. (The members of cathedral chapters and presbyteral councils are priests; those of diocesan pastoral councils can be priests, men and women religious, and lay men and women.)

⁵ *Novo Millennio Ineunte* no. 45, *Origins* 30-31 (Jan. 18, 2001), 503.

If the revised Code had decreed that provincial councils should periodically send to the apostolic delegate a list of the priests of their province whom they considered the most suitable for appointment as bishops, the fact that the list sent to the papal legate would be the fruit of a discussion of priests of the province in which not only the bishops, but also the priests, religious superiors, and lay faithful who now belong to those councils had taken part, would have given many highly qualified members of local churches a significant role in the choosing of priests for appointment as their bishops, and would have responded to the desire of Vatican II that provincial councils should flourish with renewed strength.

In fact, however, the contribution that members of a provincial council can make to the process by which a bishop is chosen for a church of their province, is prescribed by the Code of 1983 in its canon 377.2, which reads as follows.

At least every three years, bishops of an ecclesiastical province are in common counsel and in secret to compose a list of presbyters, even including members of institutes of consecrated life, who are more suitable for the episcopate. They are to send it to the Apostolic See, without prejudice to the right of each bishop individually to make known to the Apostolic See the names of presbyters whom he considers worthy of and suited to the episcopal function.

My first comment on this canon is that it excludes the members of the provincial council who are not bishops from participating in the discussion of the priests of their province on which the choice of those most suitable for the episcopate would be based. This canon gives no role to the provincial council; it is only the bishops of the province who, "in common counsel and in secret," are to compose a list of priests whom they judge more suitable for appointment as bishops. My second comment on this canon is that it also prevents the bishops of the province from making a significant contribution to the process by which the Apostolic Delegate chooses three names for the *terna* he must send to Rome for the appointment of a bishop for a church of their province. It does this by prescribing that the bishops are to send their lists to the Apostolic See. The question that remains is whether the list that

was most recently sent to Rome from a province where a new bishop is needed will have any influence on the choice that will be made in Rome of the name to be presented to the Pope for the appointment of a bishop in that province.

Those lists are to be sent to Rome every three years from every province of the Latin Catholic Church. Those from mission territories are sent to the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples; the others go to the Congregation for Bishops. This has the responsibility of examining the *terna* along with the dossier that is sent by the Apostolic Delegate for the appointment of a bishop for a diocese in the nation to which he is assigned. The congregation has to weigh all the factors that would lead to the choice of one name to be proposed to the Pope, who ultimately appoints the bishop for every diocese of the Latin Catholic Church.

This raises the following question. When the Roman Congregation receives a *terna* and its dossier for the appointment of a bishop for a diocese in a particular province, how likely is it that it will examine and weigh not only the *terna* and dossier it received from the Apostolic Delegate, but also the list of priests judged suitable for appointment as bishops that it had most recently received from that province? For the congregation to be able to do that, its staff would have to keep those lists so carefully filed that it could promptly provide to the members of the congregation the list it had most recently received from any specific province of the Latin Catholic Church. If it were not able to do so, the list of suitable priests drawn up by the bishops of the province where a new bishop was needed would have no influence on the choice of the name to be proposed to the Pope for the appointment of a bishop for the vacant diocese.

Canon 377.3 of the 1983 Code prescribes the process by which the Apostolic Delegate is to obtain the information he needs about those suitable for appointment as bishops when he has to draw up the *terna* to be sent to Rome for the appointment of a bishop in the nation to which he is assigned. The canon lists those whose suggestions concerning suitable candidates he must "seek out individually." As one would know from what has just been said, there is no mention of his consulting a list of priests who had been judged suitable for such an appointment by the provincial council of the province where a new bishop was needed.

I shall conclude by offering my answer to the question I used as the title of this paper, why the earnest desire of Vatican II that provincial councils should flourish with renewed strength has not been satisfied. I suggest it is because those who were given the task of revising the Code of Canon chose not to use the opportunity which that revision gave them of decreeing that every three years each provincial council should send to the Apostolic Delegate an updated list of the priests it judged most suitable for appointment as bishops in their province, and that the delegate should give special consideration to that list when preparing the *terna* for the appointment of a bishop for a church in that province. I believe that the observance of such a decree would have resulted in the flourishing of provincial councils with renewed strength, also because the suitability of the priests on the list would have been discussed not only by the bishops of the province, but also by the presidents of Catholic universities, rectors of seminaries, religious superiors, and members of diocesan pastoral councils, whom the 1983 Code has decreed must now be members of provincial councils.

TO REDRESS FORGETTING: 2012 WALMART LABOR ORGANIZING AND A THEOLOGY OF THE AMERICAN WORKPLACE

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TWO 2012 NEWS items from the end of the year frame this study of labor organizing strategy and theology of the workplace analysis: Walmart worker and community activism in North America and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops failure to produce a conference paper on the nation's economic crisis. A closer look at each will help fill out the basis for this offering to the 40th Annual Lonergan Workshop of Boston College, with its 50th Anniversary theme focus on Vatican II reforms and renewal.

When the Christmas shopping season began on Black Friday, November 23, 2012, labor organizers throughout North America successfully demonstrated at 1,000 Walmart stores across the United States of America and Canada¹. One of the main organizing units for this action was the Organization United for Respect at Walmart (OUR Walmart).² It is allied to the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union, a labor union representing 1.3 million workers in the United States and Canada.³

Walmart has a long history of resisting unionization efforts; this coordinated event was no exception. Walmart filed for an injunction against protest efforts with the National Labor Relations Board. The grounds were that the protests, along with related protests over the past weeks, "violated a federal law that bars unions from picketing

¹ S. Greenhouse, "Wal-mart plays down labor protests at its stores," *New York Times*, November 23, 2012.

² <http://forrespect.org/>.

³ <http://www.ufcw.org/about/>.

for more than 30 days when seeking union recognition."⁴ The National Labor Relations Board has yet to make a determination on this request.

Ironically, the protests were not, at least not entirely or explicitly, aimed at seeking union recognition according to the organizers. Something considerably more, if also considerably less, was going on. While union recognition would be nice, the organizers knew that American workers often lack any clear notion of what role labor unions serve. Charles Fishman, author of *The Walmart Effect*, has observed,

Most people don't have any sense of what a union could provide. They don't know people who work in union organized companies or industries, and the unions are promising things that most people don't have any experience hearing about happen from their friends and colleagues. And so it's much more of a commentary on the relevance of unions and their ability to communicate than it is about whether Wal-Mart is a good place to work or not.⁵

Walmart is not just any neighborhood store and is "more than just the earth's largest retailer."⁶ It operates the twenty-fifth largest economy in the world, twice that of Ireland's national economy. Walmart employs 1.4 million people, with the CEO earning 924 times that of the average employee. As one member of the U.S. Senate observed in reference to the United States having the most unequal distribution of wealth and income "of any major country on earth," "One family, the Walton family of Wal-Mart, owns more wealth than the bottom 40 percent of Americans."⁷

By way of domestic comparison, average U.S. executive pay differential estimates range between 185 to 475.⁸ While these multiples

⁴ Greenhouse, "Wal-mart plays down labor protests at its stores."

⁵ L. Wertheimer (November 22, 2012). "Protesters to picket Wal-mart on Black Friday." Retrieved November 22, 2012 from <http://www.npr.org/2012/11/22/165697161/protesters-to-picket-wal-mart-on-black-friday>.

⁶ Statistics of Walmart superstore. Retrieved January 5, 2013 from <http://factspy.net/statistics-of-walmart-superstore>.

⁷ Bernie Sanders, *The Soul of America*. Retrieved January 13, 2013 from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/rep-bernie-sanders/the-soul-of-america_b_2439576.html.

⁸ S. Anderson, C. Collins, S. Klinger, and S. Pizzigati (August 31, 2011). *Executive Excess 2011: 18th Annual Executive Compensation Survey* (Washington, DC: Institute

suggest considerable variance in estimate range, the level of the U.S. multiple simply pales in any comparison with other industrialized nations. The ratio in Britain is 22:1, Germany is 12:1, and Japan – the lowest of industrialized economies – is a scant 11:1.⁹

Coincident with Walmart protest planning in the face of general American forgetfulness about the role and function of organized labor, the U.S. Catholic Conference of Bishops failed to produce any paper or position at all on the current domestic economic crisis in its annual conference. Despite a long history of Catholic teaching on the social question in general and specific support for organized labor in the United States, a conference draft paper failed to gain the two-thirds votes needed for acceptance as a conference statement.¹⁰

Criticism of the draft was widespread and severe, particularly – it was reported – by retired bishops who can speak in conference but are no longer eligible to vote. The draft document lacked evident linkage to prior U.S. Catholic Conference history or documents. It offered little more than general advice focused on individual pietism. Instead of economics or employment issues, the draft took up abortion and the encouragement of family values. Consultation on the draft reportedly lacked any input from economists or other specialists. Gibson observed,

Yet in a sign of the growing generational and ideological split among the bishops, some of the younger and more conservative bishops wanted to kill the statement because they believe the hierarchy should largely restrict their statements to matters of faith. They also view traditional Catholic social teaching

for Policy Studies); Viral Facebook post (October 10, 2011). "Viral facebook post on CEO-worker pay ratio has obscure past." *Tampa Bay Times*; WePartyPatriots, "Chart of the Week: U.S. CEO:Worker Pay Ratio Is 475:1." Retrieved January 5, 2013, from <http://www.dailykos.com/story/2011/10/06/1023469/-CHART-OF-THE-WEEK-U-S-CEO-Worker-Pay-Ratio-is-475-1>.

⁹ Anderson and others, *Executive Excess 2011*, and Viral Facebook post.

¹⁰ J. P. Dolan, *The American Catholic Experience* (South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992); J. P. Dolan, *In Search of a Catholicism and American Freedom: A History of Religion and Culture in Tension* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); D. Gibson (November 13, 2012). "Catholic Bishops Fail to Agree on Statement on the Economy." Retrieved November 13, 2012, from <http://www.religionnews.com/faith/leaders-and-institutions/catholic-bishops-fail-to-agree-on-statement-on-the-economy>.

with suspicion, and say the church should emphasize private charity rather than government action to cure social ills.¹¹

In the end, the conference concluded without analysis, action-principles, or explicit goals in support of the American worker.

While rejection of a poor document may evidence some hope that conference judgment remains sound, the sheer absence of competence to task at this critical time recalls the cultural "forgetting" by Americans referenced in the Walmart efforts. Bishops, no less than the average worker, appear prone to a pattern of knowledge and/or commitment loss in regard to social teachings of the church or the more remote goal of advocacy to authentic employment conditions for the American workforce.

These U.S. bishops, some 270 men, are the legal executives of American Catholicism. As a nation, the United States has the fourth largest Catholic population in the world.¹² The Catholic Church is the largest charitable organization in America, with the U.S. church possibly responsible for 60 percent of "the global institution's wealth."¹³ As a simple example of executive significance, Timothy Dolan, the Cardinal-Archbishop of New York, "is believed to be Manhattan's largest landowner, if one includes the parishes and organisations that come under his jurisdiction."¹⁴ Yet, the church faces severe domestic fiscal challenges: the clerical abuse scandals are estimated to have cost some \$3 billion. Eight of the nation's 196 archdioceses and dioceses have declared bankruptcy. Collections are estimated to have declined by as much as 20 percent. And the future of Catholic education faces severe fiscal and labor force constraints, given the vast loss of religious vocations. Of prior generations, these individuals collectively assured parochial Catholic education a leadership and teaching labor pool highly educated, religiously obedient to superiors (for the most part), and available at hiring rates far below nominal compensation for instructors.¹⁵

¹¹ Gibson, "Catholic Bishops Fail to Agree."

¹² "Earthly Concerns," *The Economist*, August 18, 2012.

¹³ "Earthly Concerns," *The Economist*, August 18, 2012.

¹⁴ "Earthly Concerns," *The Economist*, August 18, 2012.

¹⁵ P. J. McCloskey and J. C. Harris, "Catholic Education, in Need of Salvation." *New York Times* (January 6, 2013).

Against these two news items and background, I will explore cultural cognition as an explanatory variable and analytical tool for the contemporary U.S. political process. I have two goals in mind from the cultural cognition exploration. First, these pages will specify a more robust approach to domestic and international union strategizing. Second, a theology of the workplace analysis will aid Catholics and others in common cause to "remember" Catholic social teachings by deriving principles that can reasonably, yet significantly, move toward more authentic employment relations in the United States.

The hermeneutics of Vatican II reform and renewal, at this 50th Anniversary, should offer practical support to American labor organizers no less than those responsible for church leadership. This theology of the workplace study is intended as one contribution, being firmly grounded in religious teaching, that speaks to the goal of enhanced employment authenticity in the workplace. At stake in the near term is the shape and nature of economic democracy in a nation famous for legitimate achievements in political democracy. The recent presidential elections bear witness to a substantial increase in participative diversity; perhaps the time has come for believers and religious leaders to take up anew a Christian commitment to economic democracy.

METHOD

This is an interdisciplinary theory study intended to aid scholar and practitioner reflection in labor analysis and advocacy by theologizing about authenticity in the workplace. It has four sections with a concluding discussion. First, I begin with a critical review of emerging literature on cultural cognition. The "critical" aspect hopes to strengthen this literature by situating it within an epistemological context of insight-based critical realism. In the second section, an expanded labor organizing model is described, which combines the existing U.S. strategic labor organizing model with comparative employment law components informed by insights from study of Japan's post-World War II employment relations labor law achievements in economic democracy. The third section takes up the historical emergence of the Japanese model is explained to ground a practical basis for basic employment principles shown to be consistent with a theology of the

workplace. The fourth section, a theology of the workplace analysis, describes how emergent employment patterns in different national cultures may be critically assessed and linked to the historical development of teachings on the social question in Roman Catholic encyclicals and documents.

The paper ends with a discussion of how these steps may be applied to cultural cognition in future organizing. In addition, implications for future research are taken up by discussing concrete proposals in legal advocacy, in the hope that comprehensive organizing may be linked with theology of the workplace analysis for the goal of more authentic employment relations.

Cultural Cognition, Insight-based Critical Realism, and Why Individual Values Always Matter

To account for domestic U.S. polarization in public policy risk propensities among the electorate, U.S. legal scholars have taken up study of *cultural cognition* as a concept capable of explaining observed variance in election outcomes.¹⁶ The basic premise is that cultural commitments come prior to factual knowledge in respect to political issues. Kahan wrote, "cultural commitments operate as a kind of heuristic in the rational processing of information on public policy matters."¹⁷ These commitments may include views concerning the role and function of organized labor.¹⁸

For these legal scholars, cultural cognition refers to "the psychological disposition of persons to conform their factual beliefs about the instrumental efficacy (or perversity) of law to their cultural evaluations of the activities subject to regulation."¹⁹ Kahan traced the

¹⁶ D. M. Kahan and D. Braman, "Cultural Cognition and Public Policy," *Yale Law School Faculty Scholarship Series, Paper 103* (2006); D. M. Kahan, J. Gastil, and P. Slovic, *The Cultural Orientation of Mass Political Opinion*, 44, *Political Science, and Politics* (2011), 711.

¹⁷ Kahan and Braman, "Cultural Cognition and Public Policy," 149.

¹⁸ R. Hogler and C. Henle, "The Attack on the Public Sector Unions in the United States: How Regional Culture Influences Legal Policy," *Labor Law Journal*, 62, no. 3 (2011): 136-44.

¹⁹ Hogler and Henle, "The Attack on the Public Sector Unions in the United States," 147.

origins of this approach to a combination of insights from anthropology and social psychology. The work of Mary Douglas and Aaron Wildavsky is central to the former,²⁰ and suggests, "modern sensibilities and perceptions of danger are artifacts of our commitment to distinctive cultural orderings."²¹ Kahan claims that individual orientations can be plotted along a two parameter dichotomy: GRID: egalitarian / hierarchist and GROUP: individualist / solidarist or communitarian.

From the latter field of social psychology, cultural cognition draws upon Festinger's cognitive dissonance research,²² in addition to studies on affect. The implication from this research suggests, "cultural orientations condition individuals' beliefs about risk through a set of in-group/out-group dynamics."²³

Hogler and Henle applied this concept to the contemporary attack on U.S. public sector unions.²⁴ They disaggregated anti-union sentiment into cultural cognition patterns on the four-item cultural cognition scalar, plotting hierarchy/egalitarian against individualism/communitarian variance. The authors noted that right to work activists "depended on political ideas involving free markets, race, individual autonomy, distrust of outsiders, and insularity."²⁵ They traced this cultural cognitional "set" or anticipatory heuristic through the 1980 election of Ronald Reagan to Tea Party and current anti-union state legislature activists, referencing post-Civil War attitudinal regional and reconstruction legacies. They found, in effect, "Right to work metastasized from its origins in the South and spread to its present dimensions by promoting American values to citizens in a competitive economic environment created by differential labor markets."²⁶ Hogler

²⁰ M. Douglas, *Purity and Danger* (Abingdon: Routledge and Keegan Paul, 1966); M. Douglas and A. Wildavsky, *Risk and Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982).

²¹ Kahan and Braman, "Cultural Cognition and Public Policy," 150.

²² L. Festinger, *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1957).

²³ Kahan and Braman, "Cultural Cognition and Public Policy," 153.

²⁴ Hogler and Henle, "The Attack on the Public Sector Unions in the United States," 147.

²⁵ Hogler and Henle, "The Attack on the Public Sector Unions in the United States," 138.

²⁶ Hogler and Henle, "The Attack on the Public Sector Unions in the United States," 139.

and Henle observed, "the result of union decline for most American workers is an ongoing decay of the institutional foundations of economic stability."²⁷

Cultural cognition effects may arise from "ongoing decay" as the authors assert. This is a form of cultural "forgetting," which has a rather amorphous causal origin in the cultural cognition research. Simple human limitations of time and knowledge may be the source of such decay. Or, a people's cognitional heuristic in culture may be proactively sought through complex, extended campaigns designed to influence prevailing cultural norms. We can consider an example of each.

The restrictive horizon of cognitional function due to limited time and knowledge may be present, if not explicit, in the most sympathetic labor union work. Consider a recent piece in support of the Walmart organizing effort.²⁸ Weissmann, at least in the title, blames the American consumer: "Who's Really to Blame for the Wal-Mart Strikes? The American Consumer." He writes that the fault ultimately lies with the consumer for not being willing to pay the slight – on average for all Walmart purchases – additional costs necessary that would permit Walmart employee compensation at a living wage. He concluded that "The problem, though, is that consumers only pay so much attention, and only have so many choices when it comes to where they shop. Those choices are largely dominated by the big box stores."²⁹

Weissmann's conclusion reflects a cultural cognitional *stricture* that is not minor to matters of labor market function. He is correct in respect to the domestic status quo analysis; U.S. consumers do bear the burden of conscious preferencing for higher prices in order to overcome restrictive Walmart pricing. But he is also absolutely wrong from the perspective of a comparative national employment relations analysis. In other national settings, democracies function to free citizens from having to make certain market decisions in the supermarket in order that a greater communal good of order can prevail. Thus, for example, it is now abundantly clear in the United States that employer provision of health care benefits impacts product pricing in ways not found in all

²⁷ Hogler and Henle, "The Attack on the Public Sector Unions in the United States," 137.

²⁸ J. Weissmann, "Who's Really to Blame for the Wal-mart Strikes? The American consumer." *The Atlantic* (November 22, 2012).

²⁹ Weissmann, "Who's Really to Blame for the Wal-mart Strikes?"

other industrialized nations. The cost of a General Motors car carries this expense, while a Toyota import does not. Where health care is nationally assured to all citizens and eligible residents, medical costs are a matter of taxation. They are not, continuing the example, part and parcel of a General Motors collective bargaining agreement with representative labor unions.

The cultural cognition heuristic may, in contrast, be subject to deliberate manipulation over time. The current debate in the United States over gun control following the Newton, Connecticut, murder of school children and teachers provides clear evidence of deliberative, carefully staged efforts to influence the nation's body politic.

Less nominally observed, however, is the fact that the ideological ground of a nation's industrial and employment relations system also requires a basic assent by the three actors that come to define a functioning system: employees, employers, the government, and their respective representative organizations.³⁰ This heuristic is no less subject to manipulation. Fones-Wolf studied the origins and advocacy for corporate power from 1945-60. From the evidence presented, she understandably concluded that for the long time frame of her study, "all major business organizations, including the Chamber of Commerce, the Committee for Economic Development and the National Association of Manufacturers as well as industry-specific bodies like the Iron and Steel Institute, were heavily involved in the campaign to shape America's political culture."³¹

At this level of cultural cognition analysis, it may be useful to deploy insight-based critical realism as a complementary epistemological tool.³² Human insight arises from the tension of inquiry and reflection, as an outcome of cognitional operations involving experience, understanding, judgment, and decision. These operations are naturally manifest in the human subject, but are contextualized by the culture in which

³⁰ J. Dunlop, *Industrial Relations Systems* (New York: Holt, 1958); J. Dunlop, *Industrial Relations Systems*, rev. ed. (Cambridge: Harvard Business School Press, 1993).

³¹ E. A. Fones-Wolf, *Selling Free Enterprise: The Business Assault on Labor and Liberalism, 1945-60*. (Urbana-Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 7 (The Committee for Economic Development and the National Association of Manufacturers).

³² Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, vol. 3 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992).

the subject develops. Human cultures, in turn, have their own path-dependent developmental dynamic. Over the course of human history, the myriad cultural patterns may influence each other in beneficial or negative ways. Insofar as cultural developments are consistent with *the good of order*, then these emergent patterns represent a positive, observable developmental probability within human history.³³ While we will take up the good of order in more detail later, Liddy offers a useful definition of the term; "the concrete intelligible functioning that provides a recurrent set of particular goods for a great number of people at the cost of some particular discipline on the part of individuals."³⁴ Thus, through the use of Lonergan's insight-based critical realism, this relatively new legal construct of cultural cognition can usefully be seen from an individual level to the implications for larger social groups, and even (in theory) the normative assessment of patterns of emergence in culture. As Lonergan wrote, "Insofar as the intelligibility of this universe is statistical, its goodness consists potentially in unordered manifolds, formally in the effective probability of the emergence of order, and actually in the effective emergence."³⁵

As this discussion has tried to show, cultural cognition, and its limitations, is evident in contemporary approaches to labor organizing in the United States. This recognition is not a criticism, rather an acknowledgement of reasonable and correctable bias in light of further comparative cultural analysis. Labor organizing in the United States seeks union recognition and collective bargaining rights: wages and working conditions. But this is only one approach to labor union and employee representational structures. The industrialized world offers a range of different approaches, some rather more advanced than what currently is on offer in the United States.³⁶

³³ Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1973); *Insight*.

³⁴ R. M. Liddy, "Bernard Lonergan on Work," *Third International Symposium on Catholic Social Thought and Management Education*, Goa, 1999, 5.

³⁵ *Insight*, 607.

³⁶ C. T. Tackney, "The Modes of Social Relation in Japanese Management Practice," in *The International Handbook of Organizational Culture and Climate*, ed. C. L. Cooper, S. Cartwright, and P. C. Earley (London: John Wiley & Sons, 2001), 377-90.

In the next section we examine the U.S. comprehensive labor organizing strategy approach, offering two modest structural components for its enhancement. These come from comparative employment relations, specifically Japan's post-World War II struggles by organized labor and the European Union approach to employment security and employee representation in the workplace.

Comprehensive Labor Union Strategizing: A Comparative Employment Law Addition

Walmart picketing and allied actions are widespread, carefully focused protests aimed at making employees, management, and consumers more aware of basic, if critically important, economic democracy issues. These efforts share inspiration with the emerging Union Strategic Corporate Analysis and campaign framework literature.³⁷ Within the history of postwar U.S. employment relations research, this union organizing literature arose after strategic choices by American management in the 1980s brought an end to the long postwar stability in U.S. labor relations.³⁸

The Union Strategic Corporate Analysis intends to offer comprehensive labor organizing tools for the U.S. labor movement. The goal is to assess the various stakeholders involved in any labor issue and target each so that pro-labor outcomes can be more effectively obtained.³⁹ The strategy framework comes from a study of company structure histories and successful union strategies in the United States. This Union Strategic Corporate Analysis approach not only recognizes the strategic changes that have taken place in the role and perception of American management prerogative, but also the impact

³⁷ K. Bronfenbrenner, ed., *Global Unions: Challenging Transnational Capital through Cross-border Campaigns* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2007); T. Juravich, "Beating Global Capital: A Framework and Method for Union Strategic Corporate Research and Campaigns," in Bronfenbrenner, *Global Unions*, 16.

³⁸ T. A. Kochan, H. C. Katz, and R. B. McKersie, *The Transformation of American Industrial Relations* (New York: Basic Books, 1986); T. A. Kochan, H. C. Katz, and R. B. McKersie, (1984). "Strategic Choice and Industrial Relations Theory," *Industrial Relations* 23, no. 1 (1984): 16-39.

³⁹ Bronfenbrenner, *Global Unions*; T. Juravich, "Beating Global Capital"; D. Weil, "A Strategic Choice Framework for Union Decision-making," *Working USA: The Journal of Labor and Society* 8 (2005): 327-47.

of multinational, transnational, or global corporations on labor unions.

Practically, the Union Strategic Corporate Analysis calls for study of the targeted global corporation: identify decision-making processes (stakeholders), then specify the broader system of business relationships (global value chains) and value generation businesses (profit centers), and grasp the business strategies (growth plans). For reasons explained below, the basic model is offered here with an additional level of analysis: the legal employment ecology of the target given enterprise. This ecology concerns the institutionalized extent of employment protection and participation present in practice within the target organization.

Figure 1: Integrated Employment Law Parameters in the Union Strategic Corporate Campaign Analysis

Dispute details	
USCA	Profit center
	Growth plan
	Decision makers
	Key relationships
IR enterprise ecology	IR law (just cause) – CBA
	IR law – LMC
	CBA – LMC
Global IR Organizations and normative institutions	IR at subsidiary/joint venture micro, mezzo macro levels
	IR at HQ micro, mezzo, and macro levels
	IR at global corporate IR
	IR at global national IR
	IR – NGO/INGO
Campaign	Campaign subsidiary level
	Campaign HQs level
	Campaign global level
	Type of campaign
Outcome	

Notes: IR = industrial relations, CBA = collective bargaining agreement, LMC = labor management council. The IR enterprise ecology items are additions to the original model.

This approach is in distinct contrast with traditional union efforts that would aim at improvement of wages and working conditions by taking on only the CEO, management, and primary operations of the company. *Comprehensive campaigns* selectively pressure the specified stakeholders, business relationships, and business units instead of simply picketing the factory.

While domestically comprehensive, comparative employment relations research and reflection indicates one important limitation in this analytical framework, easily pointed out and remediated. The Union Strategic Corporate Analysis organizing framework does not adequately comprehend how exceptional the U.S. labor relations approach is among national employment relations systems throughout the world. Two elements of comparative employment law should be added to the analytical framework, as shown in Figure 1. This step was first suggested by Peter Wad in a co-authored analysis of labor organizing efforts against Toyota in the Philippines;⁴⁰ the additional elements are highlighted. The first concerns the presence or absence of just cause dismissal protections as enshrined in legislation or case law. The second concerns the presence or absence of institutionalized employee participation in aspects of managerial prerogative – whether this is obligated by legislation, as in the European Union, or permitted by administrative guidance that situates such intra-enterprise discourse and dialogue within the framework of collective bargaining agreements, as in Japan.

Neither condition obtains in U.S. employment and industrial relations. But domestic operations of foreign firms may well be constituted with such features, which are factors that should cast foreign firms organically more disposed to labor actions in the United States.⁴¹ Accordingly, both elements should be part of any labor

⁴⁰ P. Wad and C. T. Tackney, "Campaigning for Global Corporative Compliance with Core Labor Rights – The Case of Industrial Conflict at Toyota's Philippine Company," in *International Industrial Relations Research Association, 15th World Congress, Track 2: Voice and Representation*, Sydney (August 2009).

⁴¹ While they should be *organically* predisposed to these forms of employment relations, foreign firms in the United States may be *strategically* inclined to resist their deployment or adaptation to the U.S. employment relations circumstance. Either way, these are potentially potent factors to include in a comprehensive labor organizing strategy analysis.

strategizing in respect to international firms and their subsidiaries operating in the United States.⁴²

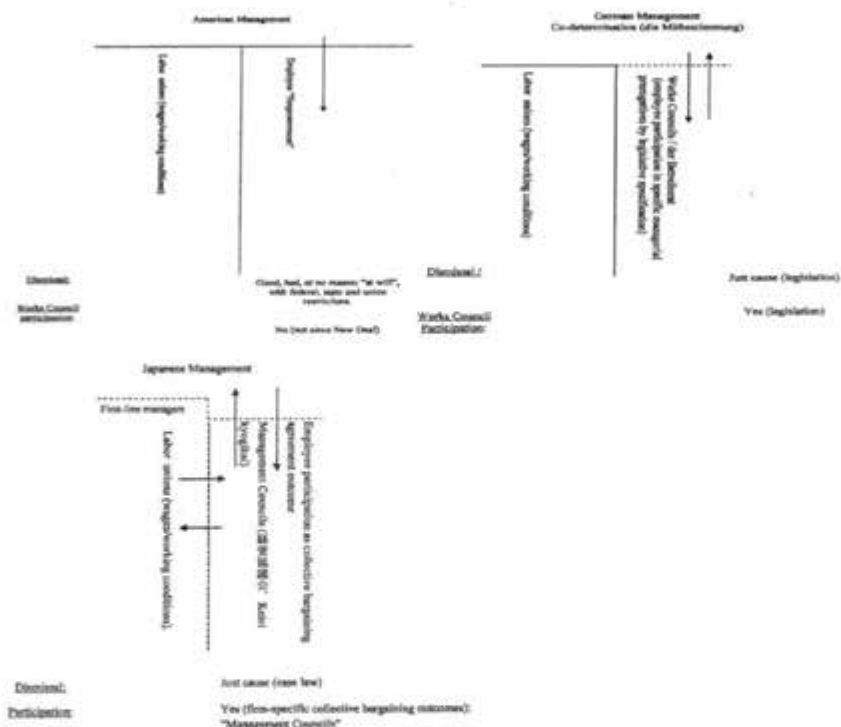
The Historical Emergence of Japan's Employment Relations Ecology

While lifetime employment is a uniquely Japanese approach to employment relations, the underlying legal principles that gave rise to its case law recognition reflect deliberate, adaptive appropriations of European jurisprudence to post-World War II labor disputes.⁴³ If we consider the Japanese enterprise as a corporate legal person with various internal dynamics balancing power, information, and managerial prerogative, a firm-specific "ecology" suggests itself. Presented as an analytic model, comparison with other national labor law systems becomes a real methodological possibility. Employment ecology models of national enterprises in the United States, Germany, and Japan are presented in Figure 2 (a-c).

⁴² We may briefly footnote note here, as it will be relevant to later parts of the paper, that management theorists are also prone to oversight due to issues related to cultural cognition. In Japan, a whole generation of management scholars has taken up, with varied success, the works of Masahiko Aoki and Kazuo Koike, theories that offer "the J-firm" and "white collarization" as substantive accounts for Japan's postwar management success. The J-firm posits that the long-term employment patterns observed in Japan represent an implicit, reciprocal agreement between reasonable employers and grateful employees – essentially firm-intrinsic determinations. Kazuo Koike, in developing his white-collarization construct, incorrectly claimed that the functional equivalent of Japan's enterprise unions are to be seen in European works councils. Both Aoki and Koike explicitly rejected the existence of lifetime employment in Japan; both were wrong in doing so. The truth is simpler, if arguably more interesting, in light of contemporary comparative employment history and research. The comparative history of U.S. and Japanese employment relations indicate there are achievements in the Japan case that the United States has yet to comprehend or usefully emulate. These achievements can help domestic U.S. labor organizing as much as they can help in modern labor study of Catholic social teaching. See M. Aoki, *Information, Incentives, and Bargaining in the Japanese Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988); K. Koike, *Understanding Industrial Relations in Japan* (London: Macmillan, 1988).

⁴³ D. Kettler and C. T. Tackney, "Light from a Dead Sun: The Japanese Lifetime Employment System and Weimar Labor Law," *Comparative Labour Law and Policy* 19, no. 1 (1997); C. T. Tackney and T. Sato, Japan's Supreme Court Discourse and Lifetime Employment: Cultural Cognition and U.S. Labor Relations, in *Academy of Management: Social Issues in Management Division* (Boston, August 2012).

Figure 2 (a - c): Comparative Employment Ecology Models of the Enterprise: United States, Germany, and Japan



In each model, solid lines depict clear demarcation and functional opposition. Dotted lines suggest a functional interrelationship: transparency in power, information, and even personnel. Japan's postwar employment ecology offers an explanatory and comparatively useful model of legally constrained managerial prerogative, combined with crystallized customs from case law decisions, which initially compelled and now continue to assure a degree of employment security that finds few parallels elsewhere in developed nations. To be clear, the Japanese employment security/management participation values set obtains for both regular and repeatedly re-hired term employees in Japanese firms and organi-

zations. This system continues to be recognized and regulated by Japan's courts, including the Supreme Court.⁴⁴

These comparative models manifest comparative employment law and practice as simple synchronic diagrams. But a diachronic perspective embraces their full comparative significance. The Japanese model is historically based on U.S.-style labor legislation that has been interpreted by Japan's courts in terms largely, and boldly, adapted from continental European jurisprudence.⁴⁵ Two parameters of adaptive appropriation are particularly important: just cause for dismissal restrictions and the potentially unlimited degree of employee participation in managerial prerogative through establishment of German-style works councils localized in and defined by enterprise-specific collective bargaining outcomes. In Japanese, these are commonly known as "management councils" (経営協議会, "keikeikyogikai").

Another feature of the Japanese employment ecology is inclusion of first level managerial staff in the firm's enterprise union. Japan's enterprise unions are definitely *not* company unions.⁴⁶ They are instead linked in complex affiliations by locale, region, industry, and peak organizations, which help coordinate wage and working conditions on a national level, focusing on what is known as the Spring Wage Offensive.

In sum, the Japanese employment relations system obliges just cause grounds for dismissal, with the judicial basis of this causal analysis largely in favor of the employee. Then there is the collective bargaining agreement system of enterprise unions and employers undertaking collective bargaining at the enterprise or corporate level with limited regulation by state agencies. In addition, there is the labor-management council system of employers and elected employee representatives, where all issues specified as potentially topical in the collective bargaining agreement can be discussed and negotiated. Top management retains responsibility for enactment of decision outcomes.

Due to the collective bargaining-specific grounding of the management councils, there is considerable variance concerning the

⁴⁴ Tackney and Sato, "Japan's Supreme Court Discourse and Lifetime Employment."

⁴⁵ Kettler and Tackney, "Light from a Dead Sun."

⁴⁶ J. Benson, "A Typology of Japanese Enterprise Unions," *British Journal of Industrial Relations* 34 (1996): 371-86.

extent to which the employee representatives influence or impact specific management decisions.⁴⁷ As we will see, thorough and correct insight into Japan's development of employee participation is essential for an appropriate assessment of employee participation diffusion, its absence, or its strategic/tactical misrepresentation by management in Asia and elsewhere.⁴⁸

Recall that Japan's postwar adaptive appropriations of jurisprudence were all from nations that are Western and Judeo-Christian in religious background: U.S. labor legislation, German and continental European judicial and case law interpretations of the employment agreement and works councils. Japan, however, is a Buddhist nation with a long indigenous Shinto tradition. Initial contact with Christianity through Portuguese traders and Jesuit missionaries was fairly recent in world history, commencing around 1543.

Yet, in a remarkable historical irony, Japanese synchronic benchmarks of just cause dismissal protection and employee participation in the life and manner of the enterprise offer a diachronic emergent pattern of cultural development with profound implications for theology, something that should aid "open-source" Walmart organizing efforts no less than U.S. Roman Catholic bishops in conference.

A Theology of the Workplace

Culture and its emergent patterns throughout history constitute a legitimate domain for theological reflection. Bernard Lonergan, author of the landmark 1973 *Method in Theology*, wrote, "A theology mediates between a cultural matrix and the significance and role of a religion within that matrix."⁴⁹ Further, an empirical notion of culture suggests

⁴⁷ Some 80 percent of unionized firms in Japan have management council functions. Further, about 75 percent of firms with 5,000 or more employees feature management councils – with many of these being unionized firms. Overall, it is possible that the density of employee participation forums in Japan exceeds that of Germany. See Ministry of Labor Policy, Secretariat Survey, *Japan's Current Labor-Management Communications* (*Nihon no roshi comyunikeshion*) (Tokyo: Ministry of Health, Welfare, and Labor, 2010).

⁴⁸ For a review, see the following Markey article, or any of his other excellent works on the topic of employee participation (R. Markey, "The Internationalisation of Representative Employee Participation and Its Impact in the Asia Pacific," *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources* 44, no. 3, (2006): 342-63.

⁴⁹ *Method in Theology*, xi.

it is "the set of meanings and values that informs a way of life. It may remain unchanged for ages. It may be in process of slow development or rapid dissolution."⁵⁰

For centuries, a classical and inherently normative sensibility regarding culture was the dominant paradigm in Western thought. However, this sensibility has been radically changed by the scientific method.⁵¹ The historicity of culture, its myriad manifestations in modern society, bring various religious traditions and disciplines to the attention of all. Religion and theological reflection themselves become subject to the historicity that is the ever ongoing cultural process of human life and living.

This switch in the nature and method of theology, for the religion of Roman Catholicism, has been underway for some time. As Lonergan wrote: "When the classicist notion of culture prevails, theology is conceived as a permanent achievement, and then one discourses on its nature. When culture is conceived empirically, theology is known to be an ongoing process, and then one writes on its method."⁵² In this paper, I would like to take up Roman Catholic social teaching on the "question of the worker" with a view to critically evaluate the institutional parameters that constitute employment relations on a national level. The prior pages have enabled this interdisciplinary study to proceed.

This disciplined assessment of work circumstances based on Catholic social teaching constitutes the domain of a *theology of the workplace*, which can be defined as, "the study of institutional and institutionalized features that variously enable or constrain managerial prerogative and employee participation within worksite, firm, organization, sector, region, or national political economy in light of religious doctrine."⁵³ This formulation of a theology of the

⁵⁰ *Method in Theology*, xi.

⁵¹ Bernard Lonergan, "Healing and Creating in History," in *Microeconomic Dynamics: An Essay in Circulation Analysis*, ed. Frederick G. Lawrence, Patrick H. Byrne, and Charles C. Hefling, Jr. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), 100-109; Bernard Lonergan, "Theology in Its New Context," in *A Second Collection*, ed. W. F. J. Ryan and S. J. Tyrrell (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), 55-67.

⁵² *Method in Theology*, xi.

⁵³ C. T. Tackney, "A Theology of the Workplace: Adaptive Appropriation in Post-World War II Japanese Labor Law and the Roman Catholic Social Question," *Theoforum* 43, no. 1-2 (2013): 115.

workplace analysis should aid derivation of useful and practical norms for achieving more authentic employment circumstances, owing to the encyclical tradition of teaching on the social question from which they will be derived. Religious teaching cannot answer all questions, nor can it necessarily expect assent from all believers, non-believers, or agnostics. Nevertheless, this empirical study should aid the clarification of religious thought on what does constitute, and what *should* constitute, the nature and function of managerial prerogative in modern societies. At a minimum, a theology of the workplace ought to be a source of challenge or pride to managers, regardless of the national setting they function within, as it takes religious tradition principles and specifies their practical deployment.

Roman Catholic teaching on the social question developed over more than a century of reflection since the first encyclical on the subject was written by Pope Leo XIII in 1891.⁵⁴ Early teaching on the social questions tended to reflect a classicist orientation; they looked to the past, such as medieval guilds, to grapple with the exploitation and organizing hopes of workers as the industrial revolution proceeded. More recent documents have brought a range of interdisciplinary insights to bear on the issue of authentic employment relationships; these take up the empirical notion of culture, and boldly envision a different future freed from past historical forces that restrain or limit the potential of human authenticity in the workplace.

A theology of the workplace analysis applies encyclical and other religious teaching to the evaluation of institutional parameters governing employment relations. These parameters may be operative and studied at various comparative levels: national (the United States of America, Germany, and Japan), surpa-national (the European Union labor laws and member nation participation rates), firm-specific (Walmart's wage levels and estimates of a living wage), or other functional constructs (executive compensation levels, by nation).⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Pope Leo XIII, *Rerum novarum* (Vatican City, 1891). Note that encyclical documents are, literally, "circulating letters" (from the Latin). These represent official Roman Catholic teaching dispatched by a pope, intended to be taken seriously by believers, and offered to all individuals of good will. For an unofficial list of encyclical documents that take up the social question, see the Education for Justice webpage offered by the Center for Concern: <https://www.coc.org/>.

⁵⁵ Derivation and specification of the domain appropriate to a theology of the

For purposes of this paper, the comparative institutional parameters of interest are just cause dismissal protections and legal support for formal employee participation in the enterprise (that is, above and beyond wages and working condition issues). The reason for these two parameters being of particular interest is the historical achievement of Japanese labor law in the adaptive appropriation of both principles to essentially U.S. labor legislation.⁵⁶ Reflection on the fact of this historical development prompted the insight regarding the historicity of labor market as a viable domain for theological investigation. Table 1 provides a summary analysis of all encyclical documents that reference these two parameters.

The documents suggest that just cause is a *minimal threshold condition* for the possibility of authentic employment circumstances. There are no evident exceptions for this in Catholic social teaching, as the body of literature is termed). While church respect for unique and important cultural tenants is an operative norm, the exceptional quality of U.S. labor law in respect to "at will" dismissal prerogative is nowhere characterized along such lines. The legal practice is essentially unfair and inappropriate in terms of Catholic social teaching.⁵⁷

workplace analysis is given in Tackney, "Theology of the Workplace."

⁵⁶ Kettler and Tackney, "Light from a Dead Sun."

⁵⁷ Note that this Catholic social teaching position does not diminish the accomplishments of the U.S. workplace in respect to laws restricting various forms of discrimination. Just cause is simply a fundamental institutional foundation for justice in employment circumstances. Too, the specifics of just cause protections are beyond the scope of the present paper. I can note, however, by way of marked contrast to dismissal patterns in the United States, that Japanese courts expect six steps be taken by employers before rationalization dismissals due to continuing economic difficulties in an enterprise may be found to be "just" by the courts.

1. Reduction in executive and managerial compensation.
2. Reductions in work days.
3. Selective closings of plant or sections.
4. Within firm transfers.
5. Given continued financial difficulties, the firm is expected to develop objective criteria for selecting those to be dismissed, with participation in criteria development by management council/union representatives.
6. A good-faith effort to solicit approval from those to be dismissed needs be made.

In a word, Japan's post-World War II case law precedents in labor law hold *management* responsible for economic circumstances obliging rationalization dismissals (Kettler and Tackney (1997); C. T. Tackney, "Ye Shall Know Them by Their Fruits": American Workplace Evangelization and the Continental European Jurisprudence

Table 1: Encyclical Analysis on Just Cause and Employee Participation

Encyclical or Vatican II Document	Year	Author	Nature of Contract	Just Cause	Approach to Employee Participation
<i>Rerum Novarum</i> (RN)	1891	Leo XIII	Living wage, able to support family (P:45)	Natural law basis (P:19)	State need to enact boards or societies to ensure labor contracts do not compel extreme work conditions.
<i>Quadragesimo Anno</i> (QA)	1931	Pius XI	Capital has accrued too much to itself.		First explicit reference to creation of institutions "that embrace either workers alone or workers and employers together" (P:29). Partnership-contract, Sharers in ownership or management (P:65)
<i>Mater et Magistra</i> (MM)	1961	John XXIII	Compensation not strictly a market function, to be determined by laws of justice and equity (P: 18).		Sharing Ownership (P:75, 77); "... employees are justified in wishing to participate in the activity of the industrial concern for which they work (P:91)."
<i>Gaudium et Spes</i> (GS)	1965	Paul VI	The active sharing of all in the administration and profits of these enterprises in ways to be properly determined is to be promoted (P:68).		Worker participation in determining economic and social conditions, in person or through elected delegates (P:68).
<i>Laborem exercens</i> (LE)	1981	John Paul II	"Conviction of the priority of human labour over what in the course of time we have grown accustomed to calling capital" (P: 12).	"Thus, the principle of the priority of labour over capital is a postulate of the order of social morality" (P: 15).	Role of direct and indirect employers distinguished. "respect for the objective rights of the worker-every kind of worker: manual or intellectual, industrial or agricultural, etc.-that must constitute the adequate and fundamental criterion for shaping the whole economy (P:17)"
<i>Caritas in Veritate</i> (CV)	2009	Benedict XVI	Principle of subsidiarity: "a form of assistance to the human person via the autonomy of intermediate bodies (P:57)."		"...business management cannot concern itself only with the interests of the proprietors, but must also assume responsibility for all the other stakeholders who contribute to the life of the business: the workers, the clients, the suppliers of various elements of production, the community of reference (P:40)."

In this respect, the United States, except for the state of Montana, remains a global outlier among the industrialized democracies, perpetuating an "at will" employment doctrine that began in judicial decisions that dealt with master-servant contractual relations.⁵⁸ Montana, curiously, stands as *the* exceptional State of the Union. In 2008, the Montana state legislature passed a law against unfair termination, becoming the first to institutionalize this core parameter of economic democracy according to Catholic social teaching.⁵⁹

Similarly, the U.S. employment relations system lacks any institutional parameter for employee participation in managerial prerogative. While the legislated approach taken by Germany and the European Union may seem functionally inconceivable to the contemporary U.S. body politic, the Japan case offers a learning opportunity for experimentation. Localization of works councils within collective bargaining agreements should appeal to both conservative and liberal points of view in the United States, as entrepreneurial partnership, along with the sharing of risk and reward, remains a strong feature of U.S. culture.

Emergent Probability and Cultural Cognition: The Redress of Cultural Forgetting

The analysis of the labor question throughout the Catholic social teaching literature indicates that church teaching has moved radically beyond initial efforts to nuance industrial revolution era strife between capital and labor. In *Laborem Exercens*, promulgated in 1981 by John Paul II, even the view of what capital is and how we best think about it has profoundly changed.⁶⁰ John Paul wrote for the "Conviction of the priority of human labour over what in the course of time we have

Origins of Japanese Management Practice," *Journal of Management History*, 15 no. 2 (2009a): 178-97.

⁵⁸ J. M. Feinman, "The Development of the Employment At Will Rule," *The American Journal of Legal History* 20, no. 2 (1976):118-35.

⁵⁹ B. D. Roseman, "Just Cause in Montana: Did the Big Sky Fall?" *American Constitutional Society for Law and Policy* (2008); G. N. Solomon, "The Montana Wrongful Discharge from Employment Act, Twenty Years Later." Retrieved January 5, 2013, from <http://www.glennsolomonblog.com/Post.shtml>.

⁶⁰ Pope John Paul II, *Laborem exercens* (Vatican City, 1981).

grown accustomed to calling capital."⁶¹ Given this conviction, he wrote to the necessity of employee participation, wherein labor – not capital – becomes the central, defining feature. Thus,

A labour system can be right, in the sense of being in conformity with the very essence of the issue, and in the sense of being intrinsically true and also morally legitimate, if in its very basis *it overcomes the opposition between labour and capital* through an effort at being shaped in accordance with the principle put forward above: the principle of the substantial and real priority of labour, of the subjectivity of human labour and its effective participation in the whole production process, independently of the nature of the services provided by the worker.⁶²

Laborem Exercens distinguishes between the direct and the indirect employer. The direct employer is the one involved in the explicit employment contract. The indirect employer is no less important, particularly given the call for revision of the "rigid" notions of capitalism that are found throughout the contemporary world. The indirect employer "includes both persons and institutions of various kinds, and also collective labor contracts and the *principles* of conduct which are laid down by these persons and institutions and which determine the whole socioeconomic *system* or are its result. The concept of "indirect employer" thus refers to many different elements."⁶³ This text continued, "When it is a question of establishing an *ethically correct labour policy*, all these influences must be kept in mind. A policy is correct when the objective rights of the worker are fully respected."⁶⁴

What, then, would constitute an authentically human employment relationship in light of Catholic social teaching? There are two levels of response to this question. The first concerns absolutely fundamental principles steadily maintained by church teaching since RN. These include the following:

- A "living wage."
- The right for workers to organize and bargain collectively.

⁶¹ Pope John Paul II, *Laborem exercens*, 12.

⁶² Pope John Paul II, *Laborem exercens*, 13 (italics in original).

⁶³ Pope John Paul II, *Laborem exercens*, 17 (italics in original).

⁶⁴ Pope John Paul II, *Laborem exercens*, 17 (italics in original).

- Proper working conditions.
- The living wage can be further specified to include adequate compensation for the care and sustenance of family, both present and future needs, including health care in circumstances when the government does not provide this.
- A just employment contract, where employers dismiss only for just cause.
- The right of workers to have a continued participatory interest in what is produced, even and particularly beyond their own specific productive contribution.
- This right should progressively extend to workers the opportunity to become true co-owners of the enterprise.

These summary points characterize the foundational, basic elements of an authentic employment relationship according to Catholic social teaching. But a second level of analysis is also asserted. Catholic social teaching now calls for remediation of the historical error that ascribed excessive importance to capital. This requires the careful, arguably progressive, inclusion of the objective rights as well as the proper subjective engagement of the worker in the totality of the employment circumstance. In *Laborem Exercens*, the order of social morality itself is postulated by *the principle of the priority of labour*.⁶⁵ Benedict XVI, extended this teaching legacy, and wrote in 2009 that this calls for a "Profoundly new way of understanding business enterprise."⁶⁶

According to Catholic social teaching, then, authenticity in employment relations involves basic principles, empirically present or absent as institutional parameters in national settings, but there is also an ongoing commitment to recast the human conditions of work for societal improvement. By this twofold criteria the actual functioning of cultural patterns can be theologically assessed, the refinement of norms advocated, and social conditions improved.

Following Lonergan's *Method in Theology*, it falls to the lot of the theologian to take up the redress of forgetting in empirical approaches to culture. The historian is one of eight functional specializations described as essential to the contemporary theological

⁶⁵ Pope John Paul II, *Laborem exercens*, 15.

⁶⁶ Pope Benedict XVI, *Carita in veritate* (Vatican City, 2009), 40.

task and consistent with the structure of human inquiry: research, interpretation, history, dialectic, foundations, doctrines, systematics, and communications.⁶⁷ The particular historical task is to judge and narrate what has occurred.

And it is this historical task that brings the paper full circle to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops failure to speak to the signs of the times in U.S. economics and employment. We know from the specific principles that Catholic social teaching has long advocated, as previously detailed. The research historian can bring the significance of this oversight in sharper focus through consideration of three additional teaching documents. Two are from the very conference itself in 1919 and 1986, the third is from a new catechesis (compilation) of church doctrine. All speak explicitly to the need for institutional parameters that ensure just cause in employment and employee participation in managerial prerogative.

At the end of World War I, the U.S. Catholic bishops issued a February 1919 report addressing the postwar reconstruction of American society.⁶⁸ While taking up the key conditions outlined above for the question of the worker, the document clearly emphasized the need for labor participation in industrial management. The bishops cited a document issued earlier by a group of twenty Quaker employers in Great Britain, which called for labor to gradually receive "greater representation in . . . the "industrial part" of business management — "the control of processes and machinery, nature of product; engagement and dismissal of employees; hours of work, rates of pay, bonuses, and so forth; welfare work; shop discipline; relations with trade unions."⁶⁹

This position has been steadily maintained by the U.S. Bishops Conference throughout the decades. In its landmark 1986 pastoral document, "Economic Justice for All: Pastoral Letter on Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy," the conference called for a new American experiment, which " . . . can create new structures of economic partnership and participation within firms at the regional

⁶⁷ *Method in Theology*.

⁶⁸ U.S. Catholic Bishops (1919). Bishops' program for social reconstruction (https://www.stthomas.edu/media/catholicstudies/center/ryan/Ryan_1919_Program_Social_Reconstruction.pdf).

⁶⁹ U.S. Catholic Bishops, Bishops' program for social reconstruction, 11.

level, for the whole nation, and across borders."⁷⁰ Finally, as members of the church, the Bishops Conference have recourse to the "Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church."⁷¹ "Participation" is term cited fifty times throughout the document. In a discussion of work and the right to participate, the text states, "*The relationship between labour and capital also finds expression when workers participate in ownership, management and profits.* This is an all-too-often overlooked requirement and it should be given greater consideration."⁷² Recognizing the changing nature of the workplace, the Pontifical Council continued,

The new ways that work is organized, where knowledge is of greater account than the mere ownership of the means of production, concretely shows that work, because of its subjective character, entails the right to participate. This awareness must be firmly in place in order to evaluate the proper place of work in the process of production and to find ways of participation that are in line with the subjectivity of work in the distinctive circumstances of different concrete situations.⁷³

DISCUSSION

This theology of the workplace study explored current labor organizing to redress patterns of forgetfulness in American culture. Just cause employee protection and employee participation in managerial prerogative are key institutional parameters necessary for authentic employment. We are witness to a recent, strong effort by organized labor to raise consciousness of citizens to the possible recognition of benefits that might obtain from labor unions. There is a concomitant need for supportive social analysis by all religious leaders consistent

⁷⁰ United States Catholic Bishops, "Economic Justice for All: Pastoral Letter on Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy," http://www.usccb.org/upload/economic_justice_for_all.pdf (1986), ix.

⁷¹ Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, "Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church" (Vatican City, 2004).

⁷² Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, "Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church," 281.

⁷³ Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, "Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church," 281.

with the American history of useful collaboration between labor and church. In *Mater et Magistra*, John XXIII called for Catholic social teaching principles to be put into practice; this study may be one such effort.⁷⁴

The failure of the 2012 U.S. Catholic Conference of Bishops to powerfully speak for respect of the objective rights of American workers over a range of issues, or to particularly support union organizing, just cause dismissal protections, and significant employee voice in managerial prerogative, must raise questions about the leadership available to task. This oversight further undermines already fragile trust in a conference otherwise beset by ongoing crises: clergy abuse issues, fiscal accountability, and domestic criticism arising from Vatican initiated investigation of certain U.S. organizations of religious women.

While it may oversimplify the complex issues faced by the Roman Catholic hierarchy, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops members' role essentially confounds two potentially, but not intrinsically, conflicting missions: a responsibility to and for the church's teaching authority and the ongoing exercise of managerial prerogative in a culture in which Catholic social teaching dismissal restraint and employee participation is very far from the norm. Should silence reign from bishops in their teaching role on the question of the American worker, while unrestricted managerial prerogative come to characterize their executive function in church management of parish, diocese, hospitals and elsewhere, then an effective role as guides to the faith and servants of the faithful would be fatally compromised.

In contrast, an effective "workology of the churchplace" grounded in the institutional parameters detailed here could help to carefully distinguish behavioral patterns appropriate to church managerial prerogative from the teaching function of the hierarchy. For the latter, let the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops at least celebrate Montana, where just cause employment protections have become an institutionalized norm. For the former, support might obtain for a significant expansion of the role of married deacons to improve parochial education, planning and accountability, as suggested by

⁷⁴ Pope John XXIII, *Mater et magistra* (Vatican City, 1961).

McCloskey and Harris.⁷⁵

For the labor organizing effort in the United States and elsewhere, a more nuanced and comprehensive organizing campaign strategy chart has been offered in light of comparative employment relations and labor law studies. These same studies served to advance historical analysis of emergent cultural patterns consistent with the "good of order" – such that the Japanese approach to employment relations offers legally institutionalized parameters entirely consistent with Roman Catholic social teaching on the treatment of the worker.

When comprehensive union organizing campaigns proceed in the United States, what might the Japan case suggest as a useful goal? First, just cause protection against arbitrary dismissal due to managerial prerogative appears to be a necessary, if not sufficient, measure for authenticity in employment relations. Catholic bishops, in support of this institutional parameter, can, as noted earlier, simply celebrate Montana. While U.S. employment has made advances in restraint of managerial abuse in dismissals due to forms of discrimination, just cause protections still remain outside the national norm.

Second, while legislation-based approaches to works councils, like the route taken by Germany and the European Union, appear unthinkable in the current American legislative structure, the Japanese approach offers a worthy and pragmatic alternative. The National Labor Relations Board appears to have sufficient authority, if as yet insufficient vision, to begin to permit experimentation in employee participation schemes as these might be enacted within collective bargaining agreements.⁷⁶ The Dunlop Commission explicitly recommended experimentation in such managerial prerogative participation for the future of the American workplace at a time when the fact of Japan's actualization of this recommendation based

⁷⁵ McCloskey and Harris. My citation of this modest proposal is not intended to overlook or mask the obvious, and obviously problematic, fact of labor market recruitment to the priesthood and hierarchy from only those males committed to celibacy. Yet, even this single step of empowering a present, competent, and presumably willing married diaconate would have obvious benefit and has considerable merit on its own terms.

⁷⁶ Gould, a former chair of the National Relations Labor Board, has written sympathetically of Japan's labor relations system. See W. B. Gould, *Japan's Reshaping of American Labor Law* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1984); W. B. Gould, *Agenda for Reform: The Future of Employment Relationships and the Law* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992).

on similar labor legislation, was not well known.⁷⁷ One consequence of such a step should be an observable drop in CEO compensation differentials. This is due to the voice even tacitly given to employees through works councils or management council representation to management.⁷⁸ Church and labor advocacy of such measures can fruitfully combine to enshrine these practical institutional parameters certain to bring about an end to the extremely disordered level of U.S. executive compensation. This notion can be expressed as a verifiable hypothesis, directing future research:

H1: The presence of employee participation forums has a self-limiting effect on executive compensations levels, such that the excessive levels presently observed in the U.S. will gradually decline as experimentation in employee participation forums is permitted to proceed.

Third, John Paul II, in both *Laborem Exercens* and *Centesimus annus*, may offer grounds for hope in respect to the obvious loss of class solidarity in the U.S. context. The cultural cognition literature may also be supportive for reflection along the lines of future steps. If the strife of prior eras arose from a misapprehension of the real nature of labor-capital opposition, as John Paul II suggests, then perhaps the loss of class solidarity in advanced democratic states, such as the United States, may indicate a deeper appreciation by U.S. citizens of the fundamental nature of their political democracy. The recent presidential election voting outcomes is a sign of this development.

As such, Catholic social teaching emphasis on the primacy of labor and the proprietary, participatory rights of employees to their labor product suggests due process grounds may come to matter in the apportionment and use of surplus value. On the one hand, participation in ownership risk, which certainly resides in management councils, suggests a need to revisit the Dunlop Commission proposals for experimentation in employee representation. To this end, organized

⁷⁷ *The Dunlop Commission on the Future of Worker-Management Relations Final Report*, Federal Papers: Commission on the Future of Worker-Management Relations (1994).

⁷⁸ C. T. Tackney, "Yes, The U.S. Auto Industry Can – If the U.S. Congress and Obama Administration Learn a Lesson from Japan," *Journal of Employee Rights and Responsibility* 21 (2009): 163-64.

labor need not be the only source of encouragement for management participation forums. Firms with management, staff, and shareholders who see the point of experimentation from their own wellspring of U.S. cultural cognition can be agents for change.

A second due process approach to labor organizing legal strategy may be found in court efforts to see excessive executive compensation as an abuse of managerial prerogative. In some respects, this would resemble the clawback legal actions taking place at present. It would be consistent with Japanese court tendencies to overturn dismissals of employees if the subsequent fiscal periods evidence rapid return to profitability. However, the ultimate goal of due process legal actions would be proactive, not reactive. The intent would be to establish guiding precedent within the repertoire of American cultural understanding such that excessive compensation would simply become inappropriate. To some extent, the steady research focus on this subject evidences first steps along these lines.⁷⁹

In the United States, the national cultural heuristic retains a deep appreciation for the need of employee participation in managerial prerogative. John R. Commons, the father of U.S. labor relations and founder of the "Wisconsin School," wrote, "In some concerns . . . even the wage earners, organized or unorganized, have a compelling voice in determining the direction and extent of management."⁸⁰ As hypothesized, direction and extent ought to include legal means to rope in excessive executive compensation. Certainly this notion needs further work, but due process concerns about the manner in which an enterprise functions and how the populace benefits from commerce, should remain an open and vibrant legal topic in advanced post-industrial societies.

Finally, authenticity in employment relations may well obtain in the United States in many specific cases due to a wise and professional management that exercises its prerogative in a manner consistent with personal commitments to either religious or human principles that embody the institutional parameters we have explored: just cause dismissal protection and employee participation in the broad range of

⁷⁹ "AFL-CIO.CEO Pay and the 99%." Retrieved November 26, 2012 from <http://www.aflcio.org/Corporate-Watch/CEO-Pay-and-the-99>.

⁸⁰ J. R. Commons, *The Legal Foundations of Capitalism* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968).

managerial prerogative. As should be clear at this point, the task of a theology of the workplace analysis differs from study of only the direct employer. It is a theological domain designed to assess the effects and role of what *Laborem exercens* terms the "indirect employers" as these are given in national culture. In an empirical approach to theology, the assessment of employment culture is an ongoing process of method, one designed to challenge the status quo in light of religious tradition. As Hauerwas wrote: "The problem is not that the kingdom brought by Christ is too idealistic to be realized. The problem is just the opposite. The kingdom present in Jesus Christ is the ultimate realism that rightly calls into question vague, secular ideals of freedom, equality, and peace."⁸¹

⁸¹ S. Hauerwas, J. Berkman, and M. Cartwright, *The Hauerwas Reader* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001), 389.

LONERGAN ON THE WISDOM
THAT REGARDS ALL THINGS:
INSIGHTS FROM *DE REDEMPTIONE* AND
EARLY WORKS ON THEOLOGICAL METHOD

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... wherever you have a true science that deals with humans empirically, you will also have to cultivate the wisdom that regards *all things*, so that it also includes the changeable, the contingent, the particular, and the *per accidens*.¹

THE INITIAL INSPIRATION behind this paper was a hermeneutical question regarding the role of human wisdom in Lonergan's unpublished manuscript *De Redemptione*,² which he likely completed in spring of 1958, at least the basic draft. The function of wisdom in *De Redemptione* then raised my awareness of the notion of wisdom Lonergan was calling for in his courses and institutes on method in

¹ Bernard Lonergan, *Early Works on Theological Method 2*, vol. 23 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, ed. Robert M. Doran and H. Daniel Monsour and trans. Michael G. Shields (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 463 (emphasis in original). The citation is from Lonergan's lecture notes for the course "De methodo theologiae," at the Gregorian University in the spring of 1962.

² Bernard Lonergan, *De Verbo Incarnato Supplementum de Redemptione*, unpublished (Toronto: Lonergan Research Institute, 2012). The original Latin text and English translation will be published in a forthcoming volume of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan. I rely on the revised English translation (2012) by Michael G. Shields, S.J. for the unpublished material from the Lonergan Research Institute in Toronto. I thank the institute for permission to cite the text. I will refer to the text simply by the Latin title *De Redemptione* so as not to confuse this text with Lonergan's 1958 lecture "The Redemption."

the subsequent decade, a wisdom that regards *all things*. Finally, the foregoing brought to light certain insights I wished to relate to the theme of our workshop.

The paper is divided into four sections. The first section provides a framework for interpreting the role of human wisdom in *De Redemptione*. That framework is historical progress, more specifically the intrinsic principle of progress. In the second section I turn to an interpretation of human wisdom in *De Redemptione*, arguing that wisdom in that text functions, among other things, to ground sound judgments of value. The third section treats the notion of wisdom Lonergan promoted in some of his courses and institutes on method, now published in the three volumes of *Early Works on Theological Method*. Finally I offer some insights on how wisdom, as grounding sound judgments of value, can be applied to the theme of our workshop.

THE INTRINSIC PRINCIPLE OF HISTORICAL PROGRESS

Lonergan's basic question in *De Redemptione* is the following: if to us has been revealed the hidden plan of God's will to gather all creation both in heaven and on earth under one head, Christ (Ephesians 1:9-10), how precisely are *earthly* realities to be brought together? Systematically, this became Lonergan's question of the "historical causality of Christ," the question *De Redemptione* aimed to answer according to a comment Lonergan made to Frederick Crowe in 1972.³ To help him answer that question Lonergan employed a heuristic structure, an upper blade if you will, to interpret "earthly realities," more precisely to interpret historical process. That heuristic structure is the human good, a hierarchy of (1) particular goods, (2) the good of order, and (3) the cultural good. It is an invariant and heuristic structure. But while it maintains its general structure, the human good is dynamic. Changes are always taking place. Cumulative change for the better amounts to historical progress. Cumulative change for the worse amounts to historical regress. One effect Lonergan correlates to the historical causality of Christ is

³ On Crowe's commentary on *De Redemptione*, see Frederick E. Crowe, S.J., *Christ and History: The Christology of Bernard Lonergan from 1935 to 1982* (Ottawa: Novalis, 2005), 99-128. Crowe refers to the text as *De Bono et Malo*, the title of Lonergan's first chapter, since Lonergan never got around to providing a title for the manuscript. On the dating of the text, see Crowe, *Christ and History*, 99-102.

individual sanctification. But another effect, and the main focus of his speculation in *De Redemptione*, is historical progress.

Historical progress is the general context for interpreting the role of human wisdom in *De Redemptione*. But to narrow that context, we can identify a remote and proximate principle of historical progress itself. The remote principle is intellectual development. The proximate principle is what grounds intellectual development, a principle Lonergan identifies as the intrinsic principle of change within human nature: the Aristotelian principle that the mind, by its very nature, is said to be "that which can make and become all things."⁴ In *Insight*, this is the unrestricted desire to know.⁵ In *De Redemptione* it is the "natural desire to understand" that will not be satisfied until we know God through his essence.⁶ Intellectual development depends on the emergence of further insights, but the emergence of further insights depends on the emergence of further questions.⁷ Since questions arise out of the unrestricted desire to know, of utmost importance to intellectual development is giving free rein to this desire.

In *Insight*, the unrestricted desire to know is discussed primarily with respect to an explanation of how human intelligence attains objective knowledge of the true and the real. In other words, factual knowledge. Yet if this desire is truly the intrinsic principle of historical progress, it cannot be interpreted simply as a desire for factual knowledge, and in fact when one comes to chapter 18 of *Insight* ("The Possibility of Ethics") the horizon of this innate desire expands. The

⁴ *De Redemptione*, 12.

⁵ Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, vol. 3 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 394-96; See also *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas*, vol. 2 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 96-97; Bernard Lonergan, *Topics in Education: The Cincinnati Lectures of 1959 on the Philosophy of Education*, vol. 10 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, ed. Robert M. Doran and Frederick E. Crowe (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 49, 88. If the human mind is *potens omnia facere et fieri*, then the object of the intellect is *omnia*, being. So the object of the intellect is not restricted to any genus of things, but to all of being. And so the innate desire to know is unrestricted. Of course, this does not mean that our understanding itself is unrestricted or that it will ever be unrestricted. What Lonergan is affirming is that object of the desire itself is unrestricted.

⁶ *De Redemptione*, 14.

⁷ *Insight*, 483.

unrestricted desire to know "extends its sphere of influence" into the field of deliberate human acts.⁸ So the unrestricted desire to know is not only speculative but practical. This same judgment is implied in *De Redemptione*. The intrinsic principle of progress cannot be limited to the desire for what in *Insight* is named a "speculative" or "factual" insight.⁹ While factual insights are concerned with the knowledge of being, practical insights are concerned with the making of being,¹⁰ and *De Redemptione* is certainly concerned with theological speculation on how the Body of Christ collaborates with God in the making of being. So historical progress also depends on the mind's innate desire to know what *could* be: a desire for practical insights. On the other hand, historical progress does not come about if the innate desire stops at practical insights. The unrestricted desire includes a desire to know what ought to be, in other words an innate desire to judge which practical insights, representing possible courses of action, ought to be implemented. With this we have touched upon the notion of value. Yet the notion of value presupposes a notion of the good. *De Redemptione* is similar to *Insight* in terms of what is meant by the "good." In both texts, "good" and "being" are convertible because both refer to that which is intrinsically intelligible.¹¹ In *Insight*, Lonergan used the term "value" to designate the good as a possible object of rational choice.¹² There is not yet the explicit transcendental notion of value articulated in *Method in Theology*, yet as Robert Doran observes there is still a *notion* of value in *Insight*: the dynamic exigence of rational consciousness for self-consistency between knowing and doing.¹³ Nor in

⁸ *Insight*, 622.

⁹ *Insight*, 633. Lonergan also names this a "direct insight."

¹⁰ *Insight*, 633.

¹¹ In *Insight*, the unity of "being" and "good" through intelligibility is made explicit (668). In *De Redemptione*, it is simply stated that good and being "are convertible terms" (4). The Latin tag *ens et bonum convertuntur* (being and good are convertible) became a standard phrase in the thirteenth century. I would assume Lonergan is following Aquinas here, where the latter affirmed that "good is convertible with being." See Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I, Q. 16, Art. 1. However, at this time in his career Lonergan also followed Aquinas in noting that goodness is the aspect of the desirableness of being. See Aquinas, *Summa*, I, Q. 5, Art. 1 and *De Redemptione*, 6.

¹² *Insight*, 624.

¹³ Robert M. Doran, "Essays in Systematic Theology, 27: The Abiding Significance of the Ethics of *Insight*," 7 (Accessed at <http://www.lonerganresource.com/pdf/>

Insight is there the explicit affirmation that one can make a judgment of value in ethical matters.¹⁴ *De Redemptione* is more explicit on this possibility. In that text Lonergan explains that one way in which we originate evil is a failure of rational freedom. Practical intelligence can conceive and understand a potential good of order. Rational freedom plays the role of "judging them [potential goods of order] in terms of value" (*ad rationem valoris iudicando*) and choosing to bring them into existence.¹⁵ By implication, a failure of rational freedom amounts to either (1) an inauthentic judgment of value, or (2) a failure of willingness to implement a course of action based on an authentic judgment of value. In *De Redemptione* Lonergan correlates rational freedom with the level of the cultural good. It is the cultural good that conceives, chooses, and implements a good of order. So the meaning of "value" is principally associated with the cultural good as originator of value inasmuch as cultural good evaluates goods of order as possible objects of rational choice.

But we need to continue the line of inquiry. There is no historical progress without concrete actions to implement what the mind has imagined, evaluated, and judged as an authentic value, a worthy course of action. It would seem there is a need for an innate desire to decide and act upon the judgment of value. In *De Redemptione*, Lonergan identifies this as the natural desire for moral rectitude, an "obligation of the will to carry out whatever reason commands."¹⁶ By implication, the intrinsic principle of historical progress includes an innate desire

books/1/27%20-%20The%20Abiding%20Significance%20of%20the%20Ethics%20of%20Insight.pdf). See *Insight*, 625.

¹⁴ There is one reference in *Insight* to a judgment of value, but the reference regards the judgment on the value of believing a certain proposition. See *Insight*, 730. However, as Patrick Byrne notes, though Lonergan is not as explicit on this possibility as we might wish, parallels between Lonergan's account of factual reflection and practical reflection suggest that one can posit a reasonable hypothesis that practical reflection can indeed ground a judgment of value. See Patrick H. Byrne, "The Goodness of Being in Lonergan's *Insight*," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 81, no. 1 (2007): 59-60.

¹⁵ *De Redemptione*, 31. The first way in which we fail is a failure of the imagination which prevents a true representation of particular goods. The second way is a failure of intelligence impeding a proper ordering of what imagination has represented to intelligence.

¹⁶ *De Redemptione*, 14.

to carry out what one has judged to be a worthy course of action.¹⁷

In summary, the intrinsic principle of historical progress is the unfolding of an innate desire to know what is, what can be, what ought to be, and to decide and act in accordance with judgments of what ought to be. In *De Redemptione*, innate desires are discussed within the framework of faculty psychology and that framework tends to associate specific desires to specific faculties. For example, the natural desire to understand is a function of the intellect. The desire for moral rectitude is a function of the will. However, in terms of intentionality analysis we can speak of one, fundamental, self-transcending desire of the human spirit.¹⁸

HUMAN WISDOM IN *DE REDEMPTIONE*

In *De Redemptione* Lonergan accords human wisdom a role of utmost value. Wisdom promotes historical progress when it judges well; historical decline when it judges foolishly. Yet there is an interpretive question regarding what type of judgments Lonergan has in mind. What specifically is the role of wisdom within the structure of human knowing and doing grounded in the self-transcending desire of the human spirit?

We begin investigation into this question by considering a few citations from the text. In the structure of the human good, Lonergan explains that the third element "has to do with values, which aims at wisdom and goodness, and this is called cultural good."¹⁹ Constitutive of authentic cultural good is a "human wisdom and goodness that knows with certainty and effectively wills an even better order."²⁰ "Wisdom and goodness are obviously to be preferred to all other goods both by

¹⁷ This "obligation" does not abrogate human freedom. The issue is not whether we are free, but whether there is an effectiveness (an orientation, a willingness) of our freedom to do what we have judged to be right. This relates to the distinction between essential and effective freedom. See *Insight*, 643-47.

¹⁸ See Jeremy D. Wilkins, "Grace and Growth: Aquinas, Lonergan, and the Problematic of Habitual Grace," *Theological Studies* 72 (2011): 726-27.

¹⁹ *De Redemptione*, 24 (*valores respiciat, quod iudicium sapiens et voluntatem bonam reddere intendat, quod bonum culturale nominetur*).

²⁰ *De Redemptione*, 25 (*sapientiam denique atque bonitatem humanam tales volumus quales meliorem semper ordinem certo sciant atque efficaciter velint*).

reason of their intrinsic dignity and because of their consequences."²¹ If we lack neither wisdom nor goodness, all other good things will follow since particular goods increase with the growth of order and "order grows in accordance with the wisdom of those who make judgments and the goodness of those who make decisions."²² These citations are paradigmatic. References to human wisdom are often found in the couplet "wisdom and goodness." In terms of cognitional activity, what role is accorded to *sapientia*?

If one presumes that wisdom is functioning as a speculative rather than a practical habit then perhaps wisdom refers to a habit or principle grounding sound judgments of fact, and all cognitional activity dealing with the practical is subsumed under goodness. One might reach the same interpretation by adhering to the meaning associated with the four "levels" in the mature version of Lonergan's cognitional structure. Based on the meaning of each level one could deduce the respective roles of wisdom and goodness. For instance, the fourth level associated with "decision" involves deliberation on possible courses of action, evaluation, judgment of value, decision, and the carrying out of the decision.²³ As we noted in a previous citation, Lonergan explains that "order grows in accordance with the wisdom of those who make judgments and the goodness of those who make decisions."²⁴ Wisdom would amount to speculative wisdom grounding sound judgments of fact since goodness has to do with "decisions" and therefore subsumes all things practical, including judgments of value. One might therefore interpret that the distinction between judgments of fact and judgments of value are implicit in the very distinction between wisdom and goodness. The difficulty here is that Lonergan did not yet have a clear notion of a "fourth" level within cognitional structure.

To address this question we need to consider more precisely Lonergan's understanding of how the cultural good, while being a created good, is also an *originator* of good. We originate good through concrete actions, and those actions follow upon intentional cognitional

²¹ *De Redemptione*, 25 (*Caeteris vero bonis anteponeudas esse sapientiam atque bonitatem manifestum est tum propter intrinsecam dignitatem tum propter consecretaria*).

²² *De Redemptione*, 26 (*ordo proficiat secundum sapientiam iudicantis et bonitatem eligentis*).

²³ Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972), 9.

²⁴ *De Redemptione*, 26.

activities. In *De Redemptione* those activities are delineated as (1) imagination by which we represent particular goods, (2) inquiry, insight, and conception which sets particular goods in order, and (3) reflection, judgment, and will terminating in decisions regarding that which has been imagined and put in order.²⁵ Shortly after listing these activities, Lonergan explains how we strive to maintain and improve *the cultural good itself*. To this end we need (1) a human imagination well enough developed to represent accurately any particular good, (2) a human intelligence endowed with skills and knowledge by which it can wisely order particular goods, and (3) a human wisdom and goodness that knows with certainty and effectively wills an even better order.²⁶ Comparing these two sets of delineations, Lonergan moves from a generic consideration of originating good to a specific consideration of what it means to be an *authentic* originating good: conceiving, judging, and willing courses of action that are truly good, truly worthy of being chosen. At the level of rational freedom, perhaps this explains his switch from the terminology of "reflection, judgment, and will terminating in decisions" to "human wisdom and goodness that knows with certainty and effectively wills an even better order." The latter implies authentic rational freedom. A plain reading of the text suggests that wisdom "knows with certainty" how particular goods ought to be ordered, and goodness "effectively wills" what wisdom has judged with certainty. In this context wisdom is functioning as practical wisdom grounding a sound judgment on a possible course of action: a judgment of value. Goodness is functioning as the effective willing of what wisdom has judged.

We also have Lonergan's statement that wisdom and goodness are to be preferred to all other goods not only because of their consequences but also because of their intrinsic dignity:

The wiser and better we are, the more perfectly we express within ourselves the image of the triune God: it is the mark of a wise [person] to utter a true word on the basis of evidence clearly grasped, and of a good [person] to love on the basis of goodness truly judged as such.²⁷

²⁵ *De Redemptione*, 25.

²⁶ *De Redemptione*, 25.

²⁷ *De Redemptione*, 25-26.

In Lonergan's early use of the psychological analogy, the "true word" (*verbum verum*) is not simply the procession of an inner word (from an act of understanding) corresponding to the simple word or definition. The true word corresponds to the "perfect inner word," a judgment of value.²⁸ The judgment of value includes the simple word but is expanded to judge that word in terms of its goodness and so is a more perfect apprehension of the truth expressed by that word.²⁹ The intelligible procession of love in the will is *grounded* on this affirmation of value.³⁰ In this context Lonergan's use of the psychological analogy does not suggest that human wisdom functions to ground the utterance of a true word as an expression of what is known factually only *then* to have human goodness judge that the true word is truly good and to be loved as such. His use of the analogy suggests that the "true word" is in fact "goodness truly judged as such," a judgment of value. It follows that human goodness is authentic loving based on this prior judgment of value expressed in a true word.³¹

²⁸ In *The Triune God: Systematics* (1964), "spirating" (*spirans*) is defined as the principle of intellectual emanation inasmuch as that principle is determined by both the act of understanding and the consequent word, *when that word is a judgment of value* (*The Triune God: Systematics*, 181, [emphasis added]). The earlier *Divinarum personarum* (1957) had *iudicium practicum seu iudicium valoris*, "a practical judgment or judgment of value." See also *Verbum*, 152. Lonergan's "early" psychological analogy is that analogy he employs for his own speculation on the meaning of the Trinitarian processions, found principally in *The Triune God: Systematics*. This may be contrasted to his "later" analogy which appears in "Christology Today: Methodological Considerations," in *A Third Collection*, 93-94. In both the earlier and later analogy, the procession of the Word is analogically related to a judgment of value. The only difference between the analogies has to do with the first element in the analogy, that is, the analogical conception of the Father. In the earlier analogy, the Father is understood in terms of *Ipsium Intelligere*. In the later analogy, the Father is identified with *Agapē*. Lonergan affirmed this transition in his use of the analogy in a question and answer session of the 1974 Lonergan Workshop. The recording of this session is available in file 812A0A0E070 at www.bernardlonergan.com; the corresponding transcription is available in file 812A0DTE070.

²⁹ *Verbum*, 109n20. Here Lonergan is quoting Aquinas, *Super I Sententiarum*, d. 27, Q. 2, Art. 1.

³⁰ *Verbum*, 209. As Lonergan notes, without this conception of the inner word, it would be impossible to define the will as a rational appetite. "Natural appetite is blind; sensitive appetite is spontaneous; but rational appetite can be moved only by the good that reason pronounces to be good."

³¹ Besides Lonergan's explicit linking of a "judgment of value" to the true word in

Our interpretation is also supported by material in the seventh article of the first chapter of *De Redemptione* in which Lonergan treats the problem of moral impotence. He explains that darkness of intellect and weakness of will corrupts the cultural good, "preventing wisdom from distinguishing between good and evil, and goodness from rejecting the evil and choosing the good."³² Wisdom is meant to judge correctly. But in this example it is not a judgment regarding factual knowledge. It is a judgment regarding good and evil, a judgment of value.

Finally, we should consider these references to human wisdom within the context of the entire manuscript. There is likely an explicit theological reason for using the terminology of "wisdom and goodness" rather than "reflection, judgment, and will." Lonergan understands every aspect of redemption in history as part of the one unfolding plan of world order conceived by divine wisdom and chosen by divine goodness, and the text is replete with references to divine wisdom and goodness. Redemption in history is a dynamic process, yet it is grounded in the eternal and immutable wisdom and goodness of God.³³ Since it is the function of wisdom to establish order,³⁴ and since the category of order plays heavily in Lonergan's understanding of universal order, world order, and the human good, then perhaps this explains why he overwhelmingly chooses to refer to the source of the created order as "divine wisdom" as opposed, for example, to "divine knowledge." Now in Lonergan's soteriology, following Augustine and Aquinas, God does not redeem us without our cooperation. This applies to individual

The Triune God: Systematics, there is another citation from that text supporting this interpretation: "Let us say that the object of speaker, word, and love is some good. In that case the speaker grasps the sufficiency of the evidence for affirming in a true word the goodness of that object and therefore loving it with right and proper love. Next, because of the evidence grasped, the goodness because of which the object is to be loved is expressed in a true word. Third, because of the evident goodness grasped by the speaker and affirmed in the true word, love is spirated." See *The Triune God: Systematics*, 251.

³² *De Redemptione*, 52 (*ne sapientia bonum a malo secernat, neve bonitas bonum eligat malumque respuat*).

³³ Lonergan's theological position that divine goodness always chooses from what divine wisdom conceives is a firm rejection of voluntarism. He treats that error in his second chapter. As he explains there, voluntarism largely ignores intelligibility and accordingly exaggerates the role of the will (*De Redemptione*, 90).

³⁴ *De Redemptione*, 23, 100. Lonergan is likely appropriating Aquinas's notion of wisdom, though no citation is given in the text. Aquinas states that it is the function of a wise person to order (arrange) and to judge. See Aquinas, *Summa*, I, Q. 1, Art. 6.

salvation but also to human cooperation which promotes historical progress. Human beings are ministerial agents (secondary causes) through whom God works in history to transform the meanings and values of the cultural good. But this transformation also promotes the good of order in human affairs. As such, to stress human collaboration with God in restoring order to that which is disordered there is a certain affinity to explain authentic ministerial human agency in terms of human wisdom and goodness as opposed to the more generic terminology of reflection, judgment, and will.

To summarize the function of wisdom in *De Redemptione* we first need to acknowledge that wisdom functions as a habit or principle grounding sound judgments of fact. This is explicit in at least one section of the text where Lonergan explains that the criterion for sound and certain judgments is a grasp of the sufficiency of the evidence. The context there suggests that the type of judgment in question is a judgment of fact.³⁵ In terms of cognitional structure, this is the epistemological function of wisdom which grounds reflective understanding to pass judgment on the validity of direct understanding and thereby effect the transition from the mental construction to objective knowledge of reality.³⁶ But wisdom as grounding sound judgments of fact is also implicit based on Lonergan's understanding of the role of cultural good in promoting historical progress. The cultural good cannot imagine a new situation if it cannot, in the first place, critique the current situation. Yet the role of wisdom in *De Redemptione* is more expansive than simply grounding sound judgments of fact. Wisdom also functions as a habit or principle grounding sound judgments of value regarding possible orderings within the good of order, where possible ordering amounts to practical insights. Again, this is not to suggest that wisdom functions in *De Redemptione* solely as practical wisdom. Historical progress does not begin when the wisdom of the cultural good aims its sight on what *ought* to be. Wisdom, as the principle of sound judgments of fact, is indispensable. Ethical inquiry into a possible course of action

³⁵ *De Redemptione*, 30. Specifically, Lonergan discusses a failure of judgment based on a lack of wisdom to grasp sufficient evidence, then proceeds to discuss how rational freedom can fail to improve the good of order by judging them (goods of order) in terms of value and choosing to bring them into existence. In this context he is discussing two different failures of judgment, suggesting that the former regards a judgment of fact.

³⁶ *Verbum*, 80.

presupposes judgments about the present situation. In any event, a wise judgment is an authentic judgment, whether a judgment of fact or a judgment of value.

But we are not born with wisdom. Wisdom develops through the accumulation of correct judgments regarding the formulated intelligibility of insights and the intelligent ordering of those insights.³⁷ In *De Redemptione* Lonergan explains that one attains wisdom to the extent to which "through an understanding of what understanding is one grasp at least the broad lines of all things and by them knows their order and mutual interdependence."³⁸ There is a similar comment in the introduction to *Insight*: when we thoroughly understand what it is to understand, not only will we understand "the broad lines of all there is to be understood" but we will also possess a "fixed base, an invariant pattern, opening upon all further developments of understanding."³⁹ The "broad lines" in both texts is not understanding everything about everything. Only God has this knowledge. Understanding the broad lines of all there is to be understood would seem to refer to a basic understanding of the wholeness of being. And if this is had through an understanding of what understanding is, it would seem that intellectual conversion is the condition of the possibility for such knowledge. Yet what is the nature of this "broad" knowledge? If it is not knowing everything about everything, this does not rule out that we can know *about* the wholeness of being, more specifically the *structure* of being. As such, attaining wisdom is not attaining the whole of knowledge but the whole *in* knowledge.⁴⁰ It is knowledge of the structure underlying

³⁷ This suggests that we are trapped in a vicious circle. Wisdom depends on correct insights but the correctness of insights depends on wisdom. How can wisdom develop? When Lonergan was treating the role of wisdom in theological method, he explained that one does not become wise by deducing from one's prior lack of wisdom. Acquiring wisdom is not a deductive process. Wisdom develops from the self-corrective process of learning. One gets an insight, then complements it with another, and so gradually builds up familiarity with a situation or a subject matter. So there is a genesis and development of wisdom, not from some abstract or deductive process, but from the concrete self-corrective process of learning. Bernard Lonergan, *Early Works on Theological Method 1*, vol. 22 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert M. Doran and Robert C. Croken (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2010), 105.

³⁸ *De Redemptione*, 23

³⁹ *Insight*, 22.

⁴⁰ *Insight*, 416. Here Lonergan equates metaphysics to "the whole in knowledge but

the unity of all things known, as well as the heuristic structure in which all things are to be known.⁴¹

In *De Redemptione*, knowing the "broad lines of all things" also leads to the knowledge of how things are ordered in their mutual interdependence. Such knowledge is critical for making sound judgments:

For unless these things are known, human reason, like a ship without a rudder, is blown this way and that and never arrives at sound and certain judgments, since the criterion or motive of judgment is a grasp of the sufficiency of the evidence, and the criterion of sufficiency cannot be based upon individual things taken separately, since all things are mutually bound together in both their being and their goodness.⁴²

We have here explicit reference to the nexus between ordering and judging. Wisdom grasps how things are intelligently related since the criterion of judgment is a grasp of the sufficiency of evidence, and this sufficiency is not had by grasping the intelligibility of things in isolation but as an ordered whole. To reach a sound judgment you need to know the totality of the conditions which condition the judgment and whether or not those conditions are fulfilled. If those conditions are fulfilled, you have what in *Insight* is named a "virtually unconditioned," a conditioned whose conditions happen to be fulfilled.⁴³ Knowing the totality and ordering of conditions amounts to having a "view of the whole." Only God has perfect wisdom, a perfect view of the whole; nevertheless it is the function of the wise person to order and to have some view of the whole relevant to the specific judgment at hand.⁴⁴ Lonergan's notes from his spring 1962 course on method

not to the whole of knowledge." I credit Fred Lawrence with bringing this statement to my attention.

⁴¹ John D. Dadosky, "Lonergan on Wisdom," *Irish Theological Quarterly* 79, no. 1 (2014): 17. I am grateful to Dr. Dadosky for permission to cite his forthcoming article.

⁴² *De Redemptione*, 30

⁴³ *Insight*, 305.

⁴⁴ Along the same lines, this "view of the whole" to make a wise judgment is implied in Lonergan's understanding of the role of *context*. He understood context to be a "remainder concept," *all the rest* relevant to understanding something correctly. See *Early Works on Theological Method* 1, 182.

provide a more precise explanation of what this means by expanding on the nexus between ordering and judging. Aquinas taught that it is characteristic of the wise to order and to judge.⁴⁵ So Lonergan asks the following: what is the necessity for this ordering?⁴⁶ Previously in the course he had explained the nature of judgment in terms of the virtually unconditioned. But in response to this question he observes that his previous explanation treated judgment as if it were an isolated event. *But judgment is not an isolated event.* That is the cardinal point. Every judgment is made within the context of a network of other judgments. Corresponding to this network of judgments is the "interconnection, the interdependence, and the multiple relations of similarity and dissimilarity in things themselves."⁴⁷ Lonergan is referring to the basic isomorphism between the knowing and known. There are mutual connections among judgments within the knower. There are mutual connections among things known. Since there is a correspondence between true judgments and the things themselves, "all judgment presupposes an ordering of all things."⁴⁸ Wisdom simply so called, or general wisdom, orders absolutely all things. God possesses this wisdom perfectly. Humans strive toward this and can be granted certain participations in God's wisdom through revelation. But we develop in general wisdom through the process of growing up, through intellectual conversion, through the self-corrective process of learning, through all that which promotes intellectual development.⁴⁹

To conclude this section and transition to the next, we offer the following summary. Human wisdom, understood according to the ancient Greek ideal, contemplated the necessary, the certain, the universal, the unchangeable, the per se. Wisdom was purely speculative. Prudence, understood as right reason applied to practice,

⁴⁵ See Aquinas, *Summa*, I, Q. 1, Art. 6.

⁴⁶ *Early Works on Theological Method* 2, 457.

⁴⁷ *Early Works on Theological Method* 2, 457.

⁴⁸ *Early Works on Theological Method* 2, 457.

⁴⁹ Yet it is often the case that even with the general wisdom based on broad knowledge or "view of the whole," we are not competent to make certain judgments if grasping the sufficiency of evidence for that judgment requires a particular wisdom, an expertise in a particular field that we have not obtained. So in addition to general wisdom there are particular wisdoms. Particular wisdom also needs to have a view of the whole, an ordering of "all things," but only an ordering of all things within a particular field.

was concerned with what ought to be said or done here and now. And so prudence dealt with the contingent, because the contingent was relegated to the world of human affairs. In *De Redemptione*, the function of wisdom goes beyond the ancient Greek ideal. As best I can judge, it does so in two ways. First, wisdom functions as a habit grounding sound judgments of fact, including contingent facts. To judge a past good of order, or a present good of order for that matter, is a judgment regarding what is by nature contingent, not necessary. Second, wisdom functions as a habit grounding sound judgments of value regarding possible courses of action to change the good of order within human affairs. Again, these judgments regard what is by nature contingent, not necessary. Yet in this second function wisdom deals with contingent matters regarding human action. And so in this case Lonergan has transposed an ancient prudence to a contemporary wisdom. What we have in *De Redemptione*, if our interpretation is correct, is not only an expanded function of wisdom compared to the ancient Greek ideal but an anticipation of an expanded notion of wisdom Lonergan would call for in some of his courses and institutes on theological method.

HUMAN WISDOM IN LONERGAN'S COURSES AND INSTITUTES ON METHOD⁵⁰

In Lonergan's 1959 course "De intellectu et methodo" ("Understanding and Method") there was a rather significant treatment of wisdom. The context for that treatment was the "problem of foundation," the problem of transition from one ordering to another when a solution to a new question or problem cannot be had from the existing system

⁵⁰ Those now in publication are selections that span roughly the period from 1959 through 1968. They have been published in three volumes of the Collected Works. See *Early Works on Theological Method 1*, *Early Works on Theological Method 2*, and *Early Works on Theological Method 3*, vol. 24 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, ed. Robert M. Doran and H. Daniel Monsour and trans. Michael G. Shields (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2013). Volume 22 covers English lectures on method delivered at institutes in 1962 (Regis College, Toronto), 1964 (Georgetown University), and 1968 (Boston College). Volume 23 contains a record of Latin courses on method offered at the Gregorian University between 1959 and 1962, namely "De intellectu et methodo" (Spring 1959), "De systemate et historia" (Fall 1959), and "De methodo theologiae" (Spring 1962). Volume 24 contains principally reconstructions of Lonergan's two 1963 courses "De methodo theologiae" (Spring 1963; Fall and Winter 1963-64).

or ordering.⁵¹ "The problem comes up in a general way when there is the question of transition from one ordering to another as a result of the emergence of new questions while the dogmas remain the same – as happens, if the statement of the First Vatican Council has any meaning."⁵² The goal of Vatican I can only come to pass if new questions continually arise and new answers are given. For this to occur a successive and progressive change in the ordering of answers will certainly be needed.⁵³

That need for transition raises the question of how the transition will be made and by what criteria. Lonergan's solution to the problem is to have a foundation based on wisdom.⁵⁴ He identifies four roles or functions of wisdom. First, wisdom is the principle of order and judgment regarding terms and first principles. Second, wisdom is the principle about the judgment of one's understanding, about the intelligibility between terms. It judges whether or not it is a necessary intelligibility or a contingent intelligibility, and if contingent, whether or not it is in fact true. This is wisdom functioning as the principle of sound judgments of fact. Third, wisdom is the principle of judgment about processes of reasoning, for example, when one uses multiple arguments or sources in the reasoning process. Wisdom judges whether each source or argument can prove on its own, how all are interrelated, and whether all of them together arrive at probability or certitude. Finally, wisdom is the principle of judgment about the ordering of a virtual totality that can be ordered in many ways. In this role, wisdom judges (1) the purpose of the ordering, (2) whether, when, and how the former ordering is to be retained, (3) whether the former ordering should be extended, and (4) whether a new ordering should be introduced.⁵⁵ In summary, Lonergan

⁵¹ *Early Works on Theological Method* 2, 37.

⁵² *Early Works on Theological Method* 2, 37. Lonergan is referring to Vatican I's statement "Therefore let there be growth . . . and all possible progress in understanding, knowledge, and wisdom, in individuals and in everyone, in each person as well as in the whole church, according to the level of their development . . ." See DB 1800, DS 3020, ND 136.

⁵³ *Early Works on Theological Method* 2, 29.

⁵⁴ *Early Works on Theological Method* 2, 57. For an interpretation of Lonergan's solution see Ivo Coelho, *Hermeneutics and Method: The "Universal Viewpoint" in Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 105-108.

⁵⁵ *Early Works on Theological Method* 2, 50-53.

states that wisdom is a *deus ex machina*, a principle of order and judgment, issuing judgments about everything.⁵⁶

Note that the second form of wisdom judges not only necessary intelligibilities but also contingent intelligibilities. Also, the fourth form of wisdom is an example, aside from *De Redemptione*, where Lonergan assigns to wisdom a function of grounding practical judgments regarding the ordering of a totality that can be ordered in many ways: again, a function of wisdom going beyond the ancient Greek ideal that prescinded from contingent realities.

Next we consider Lonergan's course "De methodo theologiae" ("The Method of Theology") which he taught at the Gregorian University in spring 1962, spring 1963, and fall 1963. He gave an institute on "The Method of Theology" at Regis College in the summer of 1962 where much of the material parallels what he taught earlier that spring at the Gregorian. In all of these courses there is a critique of the ancient or classical notion of wisdom. That critique is based on his concern for a theological method that would come to terms with the challenges of modern science and of historical consciousness. The ancient Greek scientific ideal was linked with certainty and had to do with the immobile, the necessary, the universal, and the *per se*. The modern scientific ideal is not about certainty but probability, and it is concerned with the intelligibility of the changeable, the contingent, the particular, and the *per accidens*.⁵⁷ The notes from his fall 1963 course offer one of the better articulations of his response to this challenge, but the basic argument is found in all of these courses. In that 1963 course he observes that theology is said to be analogously a science, "but a proportion is always to something and the question is whether it should be conformed or proportionate to the Greek ideal or to the modern scientific ideal."⁵⁸ He argues that it should be proportionate to the modern ideal, but not in a way that amounts to a wholesale rejection of the ancient Greek ideal. Take for example the Greek ideal that science is about the necessary. That it is *also* about the necessary, Lonergan agrees. But principally it is about that empirical

⁵⁶ *Early Works on Theological Method* 2, 53.

⁵⁷ *Early Works on Theological Method* 2, 417; *Early Works on Theological Method* 1, 88-90; *Early Works on Theological Method* 3, 90-91.

⁵⁸ *Early Works on Theological Method* 3, 90.

intelligibility that can be *de facto* verified. Again, in the Greek ideal science is about the universal. In this case, history cannot be scientific. Lonergan agrees that science is *also* about the universal, but it is not *only* about the universal. Again, in the Greek ideal science is about the unchangeable, the immovable. Lonergan again agrees that science is also about such realities, but there is also to be grasped intelligibility in motion itself. Again, in the Greek ideal science is about what is *per se*. Yet Lonergan notes that statistics discovers intelligibility in what is *per accidens*.⁵⁹ In brief, Lonergan is not rejecting that intelligibility can be grasped in the necessary, the universal, the unchangeable, the *per se*. His point is that the Greek ideal of science fails to grasp other intelligibilities. A modern theology proportionate to the new scientific ideal will be principally about that intelligibility that can be *de facto* verified, and that intelligibility is principally associated with the contingent, the particular, the changeable, the *per accidens*. The modern scientific idea is better suited to Catholic theology because theology is commonly not certain but probable, and the economy of salvation is historical and contingent.

In notes from the spring 1963 course, historical consciousness is described as "the transition from history itself from being implicit to being explicit and thematized element in human awareness."⁶⁰ There are many diverse elements which come together to give us historical consciousness, and it would take us too far afield to summarize all of those elements Lonergan describes. But I will highlight one element. The Greeks and the medievals tended to view human nature as stable, well-known, common to all. Lonergan comments that this *esse naturale* common to all could be applied just as well to someone who brings things about as to someone who is asleep. Besides this *esse naturale*, historical consciousness recognizes the *esse intentionale* of those who intend, through acts of intending, to make the world that is intended. Human history develops through this intentional order and as such history is the work of either prudent or imprudent human beings. And so human history itself is in the field of the particular, the concrete,

⁵⁹ *Early Works on Theological Method* 3, 90-91.

⁶⁰ *Early Works on Theological Method* 3, 88.

the contingent, the *per accidens*.⁶¹ To make judgments about human history is not simply making judgments about what this or that person or group ought to have said or done, but about making judgments about contingent facts. History is therefore "intelligible in the manner of prudence."⁶²

These challenges of modern science and of historical consciousness provide the context for Lonergan's judgment that a new differentiation of science is to be admitted and welcomed as long as it is integrated with traditional doctrine.⁶³ This integration involves two basic questions: *What is it?* and *Is it so?* The answer to the first question provides us a definition of what Lonergan means by the phrase "new differentiation in science." In the spring 1962 course the new differentiation essentially means that there is intelligibility to be grasped not just in the necessary but also the empirical, not just in the unchangeable but also in the changeable, and that the grasp of these intelligibilities is not had in a flash but develops over the course of time.⁶⁴ In the summer 1962 institute he explains that this integration is a matter of "making room" for the modern notion of science.⁶⁵ Stated differently, it is a matter of a "prolongation" of what has been regarded as science in the past, a matter of "enriching" the Greek ideal, not of simply eliminating and replacing it. So again, while Lonergan is calling for a new differentiation in science, he is also calling for integration: a complementing of the old with the new.

The answer to the second question, *Is it so?*, is a more complex problem. In the summer 1962 institute he explains that when we are certain of premises we can be certain of conclusions. "But the fundamental difficulty about making room for the modern notion of science within theology is the problem of certitude. If one were to announce that theology was only probable, one would promptly be in difficulties. And how is one to arrive at certitude when modern science professes merely to be probable . . . One has a very nice problem of

⁶¹ *Early Works on Theological Method* 1, 107; *Early Works on Theological Method* 3, 91.

⁶² *Early Works on Theological Method* 3, 91.

⁶³ *Early Works on Theological Method* 2, 441.

⁶⁴ *Early Works on Theological Method* 2, 441-43.

⁶⁵ *Early Works on Theological Method* 1, 90.

judgment here."⁶⁶ In brief, the fundamental problem regarding making room for a modern notion of science within theology is the problem of judgment, specifically getting a grasp of what is meant by judgment and what is meant by wisdom.⁶⁷ The integration of the new differentiation of science calls for a treatment of wise judgment, and so there is a need to treat the notion of wisdom itself.

This sets the context for Lonergan's critique of the ancient notion of wisdom. In the spring 1962 course he asks the direct question, What is wisdom? After admitting a new differentiation of science, what used to be said about prudence now has to be adapted to being complemented by wisdom. Prudence, or right reasoning concerning what is to be done, has to do with the changeable, the contingent, the particular, and the *per accidens*, but seeks only that truth which is called "practical," namely, that which determines what ought to be said or done here and now. "But wherever you have a true science that deals with humans empirically, you will also have to cultivate the wisdom that regards *all things*, so that it also includes the changeable, the contingent, the particular, and the *per accidens*."⁶⁸ Cultivation of that wisdom is had through recognizing the illative sense in the process of judgment, cultivating particular wisdoms (the wisdom of specialists), and bringing into unity both theological wisdom and these particular wisdoms.⁶⁹ In the summer 1962 institute there was a similar treatment of wisdom. Insofar as the modern achievement of science is to be integrated into the older conception and becomes part of the science to which theology is analogous, there is a need for a transposition of the ancient prudence to a wisdom.⁷⁰ This transposition amounts to a complementing of the ancient ideal of wisdom which was purely speculative (where "speculative" means the universal and necessary) such that wisdom does not regard simply the speculative but *whatever is true*. A similar critique appears in the spring 1963 course. The reconstructed notes for this course include a brief comparison of wisdom and prudence. Lonergan explains that wisdom

⁶⁶ *Early Works on Theological Method* 1, 95.

⁶⁷ *Early Works on Theological Method* 1, 95.

⁶⁸ *Early Works on Theological Method* 2, 463 (emphasis in original).

⁶⁹ *Early Works on Theological Method* 2, 463.

⁷⁰ *Early Works on Theological Method* 1, 107.

has been thought to reside in the speculative domain, prudence in the practical. "But once historical consciousness has arisen, there is a need for wisdom regarding the concrete."⁷¹ Finally, in the 1968 institute on "Transcendental Philosophy and the Study of Religion" at Boston College, he spoke of the implications for our traditional understandings of wisdom and prudence based on the prior judgment of the inadequacy of the Aristotelian notion of science. For centuries Catholic theology had been conceived relative to this notion of science, as a sort of analogy to it. We need not repeat Lonergan's contrast between the Aristotelian notion of science and the modern notion. But of immediate relevance here are two related comments Lonergan makes in the context of contrasting the two notions of science. First, he explains that for Aristotle, theory regards the necessary and practice regards the contingent. Theory is by definition non-practical since it deals with that which cannot be otherwise, and you cannot do anything with what cannot be otherwise. It follows that theory cannot be practical. But modern theory and practice "are two stages in consideration of exactly the same objects, and theory is eminently practical. The ivory tower of necessity just vanishes in the modern context."⁷² Second, there are implications for wisdom and prudence. For Aristotle wisdom is first, concerned with ultimate causes. Prudence concerns contingent affairs of human action. "But man in his historicity, the historical destiny of peoples and nations, our lives and our cities, is not simply a matter of prudence. We need an awful lot of wisdom. We have got to get wisdom and prudence together."⁷³

⁷¹ *Early Works on Theological Method* 3, 63.

⁷² *Early Works on Theological Method* 2, 470.

⁷³ *Early Works on Theological Method* 2, 470. Lonergan's 1965 lecture "Dimensions of Meaning" has a similar critique. He explains that the Greek universe was a split universe: partly necessary and partly contingent. Accordingly, the human mind was divided between science and opinion, theory and practice, wisdom and prudence. But a modern notion of the universe has no such implications: "[P]hilosophy has invaded the field of the concrete, the particular, the contingent, of the existential subject's decisions and of the history of peoples, societies, and cultures; and this entry of philosophy into the realm of the existential and the historical not merely extends the role of philosophic wisdom into concrete living but also, by that very extension, curtails the functions formerly attributed to prudence." See Bernard Lonergan, "Dimensions of Meaning," in *Collection*, vol. 4 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 240.

To summarize the foregoing: A consistent theme in Lonergan's courses and institutes on method is that with the advent of the modern ideal of science and of historical consciousness, a theological method which seeks to integrate the tradition with these modern achievements calls for a new and more comprehensive notion of wisdom. Wherever you have a true science that deals with humans empirically, or deals with the intelligible world as a whole for that matter, you will need a principle of judgment that regards *all things*, all intelligibilities. This is the cardinal point: there are also intelligibilities in the intelligible world that are related to the contingent, the particular, the changeable, and the *per accidens*. A modern theology proportionate to the modern ideal of science calls for a wisdom that grounds sound judgments regarding all of the intelligibilities in the intelligible world, salvation history included, and this suggests an expanded notion of wisdom in contrast to the ancient Greek ideal.

THE WISDOM THAT REGARDS ALL THINGS: RELEVANCE TO THE ONGOING HERMENEUTICS OF REFORM AND RENEWAL

In John O'Malley's historical study of ecclesial reform, he notes that reform involves changing something already in place and so presupposes a certain continuity with the past.⁷⁴ Ecclesial reform is change or development grounded in an intentional order, coming from *within* the church, from a self-consciously undertaken effort to adapt more effectively its mission to the historical situation. According to O'Malley the basic meaning of the term *reformatio*, despite variations in synonyms, is "change for the better."⁷⁵ Yet in regards to Vatican II we are faced with the hermeneutical issue of what qualifies as authentic "change for the better." With Pope Benedict's address to the Roman Curia in 2005 we evidently made a step forward, and in O'Malley's opinion a significant one at that. In his annual Christmas address of that year Benedict took up the issue of the interpretation and reception of Vatican II and proceeded to suggest that the "very nature of true

⁷⁴ John W. O'Malley, S.J. "The Hermeneutic of Reform: An Historical Analysis," *Theological Studies* 73 (2012): 517-46, at 517.

⁷⁵ O'Malley, "The Hermeneutic of Reform," 518.

reform" consists in "a combination of continuity and discontinuity at different levels," a process of "innovation in continuity."⁷⁶ For Pope Benedict, affirming continuity on the level of principles and discontinuity on the level of concrete applications reveals the true nature of reform and grounds the hermeneutics of reform.⁷⁷ The hermeneutics of reform so defined is a higher viewpoint of the rival hermeneutics of continuity and the hermeneutics of discontinuity, and so either of the latter is an inadequate key to interpret the council.⁷⁸

Now for O'Malley, the hermeneutics of reform proposed by Benedict would be difficult to improve upon because it is a description in accord with *ressourcement* as its proponents at the council understood it and it is consistent with how reform has been understood in the West in the past millennium.⁷⁹ By implication, O'Malley is suggesting that with Benedict's definition we have perhaps the best available hermeneutic for the church to wrestle with the question of "change for the better." Or, perhaps he views the definition as more of criterion to judge the depth of reform that has already taken place.

In any event, the categories of continuity and discontinuity in this higher viewpoint are more descriptive than explanatory. Despite my own affinity to this higher viewpoint, I do wonder if at some point it would be helpful to articulate a hermeneutical key in more explanatory categories. A more explanatory framework might be helpful to identify and wrestle with the real issue underlying the debate regarding interpretation and implementation of the council. What is the real issue? I am inclined to agree with Neil Ormerod that the underlying issue is not ultimately a debate over continuity and discontinuity, but of authenticity in regard to ongoing development in relation to God's saving act in Jesus Christ.⁸⁰ With this said, my aim here is rather modest. I wish to relate elements in Lonergan's soteriology and his notion of the wisdom that regards all things to

⁷⁶ The English text is available at http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/speeches/2005/december/documents/hf_ben_xvi_spe_20051222_roman-curia_en.html.

⁷⁷ Joseph A. Komonchak, "Benedict XVI and the Interpretation of Vatican II," *Cristianesimo nella Storia* 28, no. 2 (2007): 323-37, at 331.

⁷⁸ I credit Frederick Lawrence with this observation.

⁷⁹ O'Malley, "The Hermeneutic of Reform," 546.

⁸⁰ Neil Ormerod, "Vatican II – Continuity or Discontinuity? Toward an Ontology of Meaning," *Theological Studies* 71 (2010): 609-39, at 613.

a hermeneutics of reform framed in terms of authenticity, but more specifically ecclesial authenticity regarding judgments of value in service to the ongoing debate over what constitutes authentic reform, authentic "change for the better." I will do so in two steps. First, I will suggest a general principle. Second, I will suggest two foundational elements in Lonergan's soteriology, each of which functions in its own way as a heuristic for authentic judgments of value in harmony with the general principle.

The general principle assumes the possibility and in fact expects growth of ecclesial authenticity in judgments of value. That expectation is itself a sound theological judgment given the more basic judgment that divine providence sees to it that all things are instruments in effecting the divine plan of salvation conceived by divine wisdom. Ultimately the condition of the possibility of growth of ecclesial authenticity is a function of grace, as is the condition of the possibility for individual authenticity. Yet given this presupposition, we can state that a condition of the possibility of growth of ecclesial authenticity specifically in regards to judgments of value depends on the possibility of growth of ecclesial wisdom. This dependency is suggested according to the function of wisdom in *De Redemptione* where wisdom grounds authentic judgments of value, as well as Lonergan's call in his courses and institutes on method to cultivate the wisdom that regards all things, since cultivation of such wisdom is critical to wise judgments in general. In regards to judgments of value, wisdom functioning authentically grounds practical reflection that recognizes and raises further pertinent questions. Now growth of ecclesial wisdom amounts to a cultivation of the wisdom that regards all things. Since the only wisdom that perfectly regards all things is divine wisdom itself, then growth of ecclesial wisdom ultimately amounts to ongoing attunement of ecclesial wisdom to divine wisdom.

Human wisdom can only approximate to this perfection, never reaching it in this life but nevertheless called to contemplate divine wisdom so as to allow divine wisdom, to borrow a statement from *Verbum*, to be "the loved law of all our assents."⁸¹ Lonergan made that statement in the context of explaining that beyond the wisdom we may attain by the natural light of our intellects, which is itself a

⁸¹ *Verbum*, 101.

participation in uncreated Light,⁸² there is a further wisdom attained through the supernatural light of faith when the humble surrender of our own light to the self-revealing Light makes the latter the loved law of all our assents. However, I do not imagine Lonergan would deny that divine wisdom contemplated through the natural light of intellect might also qualify as a "loved law of all our assents." For example, contemplation of the beauty and intelligibility of world order is an imperfect and analogical window into divine wisdom, since the order of this universe is chosen by divine goodness and divine goodness always chooses from the options that divine wisdom has conceived. As such, the uncreated Light of divine wisdom can also be a loved law of all our assents through our understanding, knowing, and loving the intelligibility of world order. This judgment is also implied from Lonergan's comment in *Insight* that the actual order of the universe is a good and value chosen by God for the manifestation of the perfection of God.⁸³ The actual order of this universe grounds the emergence and includes the excellence of every other good within the universe, "so that to will any other good is to will the order of the universe."⁸⁴ But to love a person is to will the good to a person.⁸⁵ Thus to love this or that person, or to love God himself, implies that we love and embrace the order of this universe God has conceived and chosen. In short, authentic loving is informed by a wisdom which embraces the intelligibility of the universe divine wisdom has conceived. Lonergan once said that one who loves rightly wills for each and every thing the good that divine wisdom has ordained and wills it in the measure and manner that divine wisdom has determined. For this reason, "wisdom and charity are so conjoined that wisdom without charity lacks effect, and charity without wisdom falls short of the right order of justice."⁸⁶

To summarize the general principle: Growth of ecclesial wisdom is a condition of the possibility for growth of ecclesial authenticity regarding judgments of value in service to the church's ongoing wrestling

⁸² *Verbum*, 102.

⁸³ *Insight*, 721.

⁸⁴ *Insight*, 721.

⁸⁵ *Insight*, 721; *De Redemptione*, 256; Bernard Lonergan, *De Verbo Incarnato*, 3rd ed. (Rome: Pontifical Gregorian University, 1964), 570.

⁸⁶ *De Verbo Incarnato*, 579-80. For all citations I rely on Charles Hefling's unpublished English translation.

with the question of authentic reform. And the condition of the possibility of growth of ecclesial wisdom itself is ongoing attunement of ecclesial wisdom to divine wisdom which perfectly regards all things. We might say then that the ongoing hermeneutics of reform and renewal within the church are authentic to the degree that there is an ongoing fidelity to attune the church's wisdom to divine wisdom. With this principle divine wisdom, which is meant to be the loved law of all our assents, is rightly situated as the ultimate ground of the true nature of ecclesial reform.

So much for the general principle. Now to the two foundational elements in Lonergan's soteriology which function as heuristics for wrestling with the question of authentic ecclesial reform within the framework of this general principle.

First then let us establish a soteriological context based on *De Redemptione*. In that text Lonergan identifies a twofold end to redemption. The primary end is divine goodness itself. The secondary end is the external glory of God, the order of the universe, and the Body of Christ wherein all things are restored and reconciled in Christ.⁸⁷ Christ loves the secondary end for its own sake, because it is not simply a means but an end in itself chosen by God out of superabundant love for the primary end.⁸⁸ In terms of the historical effects intended by Christ, Christ directly intends to order human life on earth to the future life in heaven. This ordering liberates us from evil to the good such that the total human good is greatly improved. Christ indirectly intends this improvement.⁸⁹ Since the Body of Christ, the church, is a ministerial agent (an instrumental or secondary cause) of Christ's ongoing redemptive mission in history, the church collaborates with God to both prepare its members for a future life in heaven and to promote development of the human good such that the historical situation becomes an ever fuller realization of the reign of God in human affairs. As such the church is a ministerial agent of Christ's ongoing redemptive work in history, the very reason for the church's existence. But since God's initiative to redeem the world involves two divine missions, that of the Spirit and the Son, the church is in

⁸⁷ *De Redemptione*, 253.

⁸⁸ *De Redemptione*, 252.

⁸⁹ *De Redemptione*, 269.

actuality a ministerial agent of the ongoing and conjoined work of the Spirit and the Son in history.

Commensurate with her missionary nature, the church makes judgments of value regarding her structures and missionary activity. Going back to the general principle, the authenticity of those judgments depends in part on the degree to which ecclesial wisdom is attuned to divine wisdom. Our first element from Lonergan's soteriology regards attunement of ecclesial wisdom to divine wisdom revealed in Christ crucified. The systematic understanding of this revealed wisdom is articulated in Lonergan's thesis on the Law of the Cross.⁹⁰ This law expresses the intelligible pattern of the paschal mystery itself, but it takes the form of a "law" given its complete generality in the entire economy of salvation. The three steps or elements in this pattern involve evil to be overcome, loving response that returns good to evil, and God's blessing which brings an even greater good out of evil, in fact a supreme good.⁹¹ Revelation of this divine initiative is a specific case of self-revealing uncreated Light in which the solution to the problem of evil conceived by divine wisdom ought to be a loved law of our assent, a law of utmost value. To the degree we conform to this law we reach perhaps the very apex of human authenticity in a world saturated with sin and the evil consequences of sin.⁹² Given that the church's mission of evangelization is rooted in the revelation of the paschal mystery, authentic evangelization promotes what Robert Doran has called a soteriological differentiation of consciousness, "a conversion of heart and mind that entails refusing to meet evil with evil and instead overcoming evil with more abundant good."⁹³

⁹⁰ *De Verbo Incarnato*, Thesis 17, 552-93.

⁹¹ In *De Verbo Incarnato*, Lonergan explains that the law of the cross is a principle of transformation in which evils are transformed into a supreme good. This supreme good is a new community, the "whole Christ, head and members, in this life as well as in the life to come, in all their concrete determinations and relations." See *De Verbo Incarnato*, 553.

⁹² Robert Doran makes this basic argument in his chapter, "The Community of the Servant of God," in *Theology and the Dialectics of History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 108-135.

⁹³ See Robert M. Doran, "Essays in Systematic Theology 41: 'As the Father Has Sent Me': The Mission of the Church in a Multi-Religious World," 9-10. Accessed at <http://www.lonerganresource.com/pdf/books/1/41%20-%20As%20the%20Father%20Has%20Sent%20Me'%20The%20Mission%20of%20the%20Church%20in%20a%20>

This soteriological differentiation of consciousness amounts to a graced participation in divine wisdom and thus a further approximation of human wisdom to the perfect wisdom that regards all things. In this case, graced human wisdom participates in the divine wisdom that not only orders intelligibles but also orders non-intelligibles. This was a point Lonergan wanted to make in *De Redemptione*. There is a distinction between the order of understanding and the order of wisdom. "Intelligence puts intelligibles in order; wisdom orders not only intelligibles but also non-intelligibles."⁹⁴ Lonergan's point is that while divine wisdom has conceived a world order in which evils are allowed to exist, divine wisdom has also conceived a world order in which good and evil are ordered in such a way that God can bring good out of evil. Human wisdom attuned in this manner to divine wisdom judges evil for what it is and responds to evil in the manner conceived by divine wisdom. That graced participation in divine wisdom would seem to ground what in *Insight* Lonergan calls the "dialectical method of intellect," which consists in grasping that the social surd is neither intelligible nor is to be treated as intelligible.⁹⁵

Given that the church is a ministerial agent of Christ's ongoing redemptive work in history, it would seem that we have in the Law of the Cross a heuristic of utmost value in service to the church's ongoing wrestling with the question of authentic reform. Admittedly, the difficulty here is that as the church wrestles with the hermeneutical issue it is often the case that the church is not simply judging between authentic and inauthentic values. The struggle is often situating a particular value within a scale of values. But the Law of the Cross is not simply one value among others. Given the reason for the church's existence in the first place, this law is of the utmost value.

The second element regards attunement of ecclesial wisdom to divine wisdom where the latter is understood imperfectly and analogically through the intelligibility of universal order. In one immediate intuition, divine wisdom foresees, orders, and commissions all things from the beginning of eternity, including the entire economy of salva-

Multireligious%20World.pdf.

⁹⁴ *De Redemptione*, 95.

⁹⁵ *Insight*, 721.

tion.⁹⁶ For Lonergan, the intelligibility of universal order is understood according to the ongoing process of generalized emergent probability,⁹⁷ a process that takes into account the evolutionary nature of natural and human history. The generalized emergent probability of universal order "conditions and penetrates, corrects and develops, every particular order."⁹⁸ As such, generalized emergent probability of universal order conditions the particular orders of our natural world, of human history, of human communities, of the physical, psychic, and intellectual development of the human person, and of the entire economy of salvation including the church's institutional structures and praxis. Every choice, whether of an individual or of the church, is thus implicitly a choice of universal order as well as a choice of those particular orders, natural or human, that also condition the choice. As such, Lonergan explains that rational self-consciousness cannot consistently "choose the conditioned and reject the condition, choose the part and reject the whole, choose the consequent and reject the antecedent."⁹⁹

When we integrate generalized emergent probability with the theological position that divine wisdom has conceived this universal order, we can judge that divine wisdom has conceived a world order that is inherently open to the emergence of new intelligibilities. As such, the universe conceived by divine wisdom is not static, but dynamic. Not closed, but open. Not finished, but becoming. Since divine wisdom is the law of divine justice,¹⁰⁰ this dynamic, open, and becoming universe is a just universe. As Lonergan explains in chapter 20 of *Insight*, since there are no divine afterthoughts the solution to the problem of evil will be a harmonious continuation of the actual order of this

⁹⁶ *De Redemptione*, 67. As Lonergan states in *Insight*, there are no divine afterthoughts. The existing world order already has the potential for the transformation of evil into good. See *Insight*, 717.

⁹⁷ *Insight*, 628-29. Whereas emergent probability takes into account intelligibilities grasped through classical and statistical methods of investigation, *generalized* emergent probability adds intelligibilities grasped through genetic and dialectical methods of investigation.

⁹⁸ *Insight*, 629.

⁹⁹ *Insight*, 629.

¹⁰⁰ This means that it is impossible for God to will anything that is not in his wisdom (Aquinas, *Summa*, I, Q. 21, Art. 1, ad 2m). This is a rejection of voluntarism and affirmation that divine goodness or divine justice has no higher rule than divine wisdom itself. See *De Redemptione*, 66.

universe, thus a harmonious continuation with generalized emergent probability.¹⁰¹ In *Insight*, this is offered as an element of a heuristic structure of a solution to the problem of evil. In *De Redemptione*, it is *de facto* incorporated into Lonergan's speculation on the meaning of the doctrine of redemption through his use of the best scientific opinions of his day, the best particular wisdoms if you will that he judged as general theological categories vital to a systematic theology of redemption that could speak to the modern world.¹⁰² In this regard, his soteriology does what according to *Method in Theology* a theology is supposed to do: to mediate between a cultural matrix and the significance and role of religion in that matrix.¹⁰³

The church, as a ministerial agent of Christ's ongoing redemptive work in history, is called to collaborate with divine wisdom to promote progress of the human good. Since there are no divine afterthoughts, generalized emergent probability sets the conditions which govern the church's ministerial agency directed toward this end. If the church is to make authentic judgments of value regarding reform in her structures, in her missionary activities, or with respect to the good of order of any culture for that matter, she should make those judgments of value in harmony with the intelligibility of the actual world order divine wisdom has conceived. It is in the interest of the church's mission then to have an ongoing commitment to understand, to know, and to value the conditions of generalized emergent probability that condition every particular order. Those conditions are constitutive of the just order of reality conceived by divine wisdom. This highlights Lonergan's suggestion, in his spring 1962 course on method, of one particular way in which the wisdom that regards all things is to be cultivated: that theological wisdom and particular wisdoms be related to each other and brought into unity.¹⁰⁴ He made the suggestion in

¹⁰¹ *Insight*, 718.

¹⁰² There is no Latin equivalent to "emergent probability" in *De Redemptione*. Nevertheless, the influence of his earlier work on emergent probability in *Insight*, specifically the intelligibility of world order grasped through classical and statistical methods, is clearly evident in Lonergan's second chapter of *De Redemptione* in which he treats the intelligibility of world order under the heading "just order of reality."

¹⁰³ *Method in Theology*, xi.

¹⁰⁴ Theological wisdom and particular wisdoms can be brought into unity because of the unity both metaphysical on the side of the object and the methodological on the part

the context of a course on theological method. But if we apply the general ideal to the church's life and praxis it amounts to a call for interdisciplinary collaboration between the wisdom of the church and the wisdom of the natural and human sciences. Through this collaboration, which amounts to a mutual self-mediation between the church and the contemporary world, ecclesial wisdom becomes more attuned to divine wisdom.

When we transpose this into a heuristic for wrestling with the question of what constitutes authentic reform, we could suggest that authentic ecclesial reform will not involve judgments that value the conditioned and disvalue the conditions, value the part and disvalue the whole, value the consequent and disvalue the antecedent. Indifference, devaluation, or trivialization on the part of the church toward the best particular wisdoms of our day performatively amount to a failure to attune ecclesial wisdom to divine wisdom. This is not to suggest that particular wisdoms are to be accepted without revision. Lonergan expressed a desire for integration, not wholesale acceptance without qualification. Ecclesial wisdom may need to reverse counterpositions in particular wisdoms. Conversely, authentic positions in particular wisdoms may bring to light counterpositions in ecclesial wisdom.

Finally, though growth of ecclesial wisdom is ultimately dependent on God's grace, this does not abrogate the church's need for intellectual integrity that allows and in fact raises relevant questions by giving free rein to the unrestricted desire to know. Wisdom is certainly not cultivated by suppressing this desire. Authenticity involves giving free rein to this desire. This was one of Lonergan's concerns in *Insight*. It was also a central concern in his courses on method, since he took seriously the First Vatican Council's call to growth in understanding, knowledge, and wisdom. If that call is to have any meaning, any seriousness, then new questions should be invited and new answers sought. This is had only when further questions keep arising. Further questions keep arising only if one gives free rein to the unrestricted, self-transcending desire of the human spirit. Grace does not supplant this need, for grace does not abrogate nature but heals and elevates nature. Cultivation of ecclesial wisdom in service to the church's ongoing wrestling with the question of authentic reform calls for an

intellectual integrity that gives free rein to the unrestricted desire of the human spirit.