

Class 3: Chapter 3

## 1 Concluding the Discussion of Chapter 2

We will begin today with a quick overview of the section on **judgments of value** in chapter 2, and complete the discussion of the major points of that chapter. From judgments of value we move to **apprehension of values in feelings**, the difference between horizontal and vertical liberty, the role of beliefs in development, and the notions of progress and decline.

### *1.1 Judgments of value*

Questions for deliberation and evaluation terminate proximately in judgments of value, and ulteriorly in decision and action. Judgments of value may be either simple ('This is good') or comparative ('This is better'). 37: 'Such judgments are objective or merely subjective inasmuch as they proceed or do not proceed from a self-transcending subject. Their truth or falsity, accordingly, has its **criterion** in the authenticity or the lack of authenticity of the subject's being.' The **meaning** of the judgment of value, however, is not the same thing as its criterion. The meaning has to do with what **objectively** is good or better, or not good or better, while the criterion is the authenticity of the **subject**.

What is the difference between a judgment of value and a judgment of fact? 37: 'They differ in **content**, for one can approve of what does not exist, and one can disapprove if what does. They **do not differ in structure**, inasmuch as in both there is the distinction between criterion and meaning. In both, the **criterion** is the self-transcendence of the **subject**, which, however, is only cognitive in judgments of fact but is heading towards moral self-transcendence in judgments of value. In both, the **meaning** is or claims to be **independent of the subject**: judgments of fact state or purport to state what is or is not so; judgments of value state or purport to state what is or is not truly good or really better.'

Judgments of fact bring to a close a particular case of cognitive self-transcendence, but it is not the case that judgments of value bring to a close any cases of moral self-transcendence. That occurs only in **doing**. The judgment of value makes one proximately capable of moral self-transcendence, but one does not achieve that until one not only knows what is right but does it.

### *1.2 The Apprehension of Values in Feelings*

What bridges the gap between judgments of fact and judgments of value? In the mode of decision-making being discussed in this book, the bridge lies in the apprehension of possible values in feelings. In the earlier mode discussed in *Insight*, the bridge is the grasp that the proposed course of action satisfies the criteria of being intelligent and reasonable. Here we are concerned with the affective mode of decision-making. More often than not the apprehension is an apprehension of *possible* values. I think we have to speak of deliberative insights alive with feeling. The feelings are intentional, and so they are response to intelligently apprehended objects, which means they are connected with insights. But just as an insight in the order of knowledge is only possibly true and must be verified, so in this mode of making decisions the grasp of values in feelings is only possibly on target. Discernment is required. There are **further questions**. It is only when there are **no further questions** and one knows, with the peace of a

good conscience, that there are no further questions does one's judgment of value have something in the moral order analogous to the grasp of the virtually unconditioned in the order of judgments of fact. More radically, people need to cultivate, enlighten, strengthen, refine, and criticize their feelings, so that the apprehension of values in feelings has a chance of being authentic.

### *1.3 Horizontal and Vertical Liberty*

Judgments of value occur in the contexts of personal growth and of personal decline, and related to the question of the contexts of personal growth and decline is the notion of vertical liberty discussed on p. 40. To grasp the notion of vertical liberty, we must first say something about horizon. For vertical liberty is distinguished from horizontal liberty. There is the exercise of liberty in a determinate horizon and from the basis of a corresponding existential stance. Within my current horizon and from my current existential stance, I freely choose each day to pursue determinate interests and goals. But there is also the exercise of liberty that chooses the horizon itself within which I will pursue these interests and goals. I can select a stance and a horizon, and I can do this more or less implicitly, responding to the motives that lead me to ever full authenticity or ignoring those motives and drifting into an ever less authentic selfhood; or I can do it quite explicitly, determining just what it would be worthwhile for me to make of myself and to do for my fellow human beings.

Some choices of new horizons are also conversions. All conversions involve a movement into a new horizon, but not all movements into a new horizon are conversions. Major shifts in intellectual development can involve moving into a new horizon, but do not necessarily involve a conversion. We will see more of this as we proceed.

### *1.4 Beliefs*

These personal matters of growth and development and judgments of value 'attain their proper context, their clarity and refinement, only through [our] historical development and the individual's personal appropriation of [one's] social, cultural, and religious heritage' (40-41). That appropriation occurs through beliefs. Section 7 presents Lonergan's approach to belief, which is much more common than we might sometimes suspect. It occurs in science itself. It can be analyzed into five steps: (1) one person reports what he/she has come to know by experience, understanding, and judgment; (2) I accept in general the value of believing; (3) I make the particular judgment of value that this witness is trustworthy; (4) I decide to believe this witness; (5) I believe.

### *1.5 Progress and Decline (and Redemption)*

After his presentation of the structure of the human good, Lonergan indicates that it is compatible with any stage of technological, economic, political, cultural, religious development. But development is not the only thing that occurs in these realms. There also is decline, and so he concludes the chapter with a sketch of **social** progress and of **social** decline.

53: 'Progress proceeds from originating value, from subjects being their true selves by observing the transcendental precepts, Be attentive, Be intelligent, Be reasonable, Be responsible ...

Progress ... is not some single improvement but a continuous flow of them ... But precepts may be violated' because of egoistic bias, group bias, general bias, and the greater the aberration, the more rapidly it will distort the process of cumulative change and bring to birth a host of social and cultural problems. 55: '... a religion that promotes self-transcendence to the point, not merely of justice, but of self-sacrificing love, with have a redemptive role in human society inasmuch as such love can undo the mischief of decline and restore the cumulative process of progress.' History for L: progress, decline, redemption, all occurring at once.

Also the notions of ideology and alienation, which are introduced in the context of the 'deeper level' of decline, 54-55.

Note that the criterion of progress is found in answering the question, Does this course of action result from, and encourage, human beings being attentive, intelligent, reasonable, responsible.

## 2 Introduction to chapter 3

Theology mediates between a cultural matrix and the significance and role of a religion in that matrix. But a cultural matrix is a function of operative meanings and values, and this mediating task of theology is in the interest of promoting the human good, where the human good is understood in accord with the indications on the structure presented in chapter 2. And the Christian religion at least claims to be founded in God's meanings and God's values.

Chapter 2, in fact, presented an invariant structure of the human good that is compatible with any stage of technological, economic, political, cultural, religious development. Chapter 3 will present invariant elements of meaning – the carriers, elements and functions – but also the variable manners of realizing these invariants – the realms and stages of meaning.

The carriers or embodiments of meaning are treated in sections 1-6, the elements in section 7, the functions in section 8, realms in section 9, and stages in section 10.

## 3 The Carriers (Embodiments) of Meaning

There are five carriers or embodiments of meaning: intersubjectivity, art, symbol, language, and the lives and deeds of persons.

### *3.1 The notion of elemental meaning*

The first three of these (intersubjectivity, art, symbol) are carriers or embodiments of elemental meaning. **Elemental meaning** is meaning that has not yet been conceptualized, named, objectified. It is prior to the distinction of meaning and meant. It is set in a conceptual field only when the intersubjective situation is analyzed, or in art criticism, or in the interpretation of the symbols. In these latter activities language expresses a **conceptualization** of meaning, but **prior** to this there is meaning (1) as a determinant of the interpersonal situation, in the pattern of smiles, facial and bodily movements, pauses, variations of voice, tone, pitch, volume, silence, etc.; (2) in the internal relations of colors, tones, volumes, movements; (3) in the symbol, e.g., the dream. Elemental meaning is a revelation that will perhaps be unfolded by analysis into the

distinct components of meaning (as act) and meant, but that prior to this is experienced as meaningful. One enters into the elemental meaning by **participation**: into the space of the picture, the timing of the music, the order of the words, etc. **Sense in act and the sensible in act** are one. The pattern of our experiencing embodies a meaning that often can never be adequately expressed in subsequent linguistic objectifications.

If Avery Dulles is correct, that God's revelation occurs in symbolic communication, it may be that a large part of revelation occurs as elemental meaning, which is then conceptualized by the recipients and subsequent generations. Thus the importance of memory in religious experience and appropriation, as Augustine was well aware.

### 3.1.1 Intersubjectivity

There is a primordial intersubjectivity, a prior, vital, functional 'we,' that appears in such phenomena as spontaneous mutual aid and in some of the ways in which feelings are communicated. Community of feeling and fellow-feeling are intentional, psychic contagion and emotional identification are vital (see pp 57-59; cf. Girard on contagion). Through primordial intersubjectivity meanings are communicated without any linguistic communication. Lonergan gives the example of a smile, and mentions also facial or bodily movements or pauses, variations of voice in tone, pitch, volume, silence. This prior intersubjectivity embodies meaning in an irreducible way, and intersubjective meaning is both a recognition and a determinant of the interpersonal situation.

### 3.1.2 Art

**See *Topics in Education, chapter 9*.** While intersubjective communication expresses the feeling as it is felt, art requires a certain psychic distance, whereby one gains insight into a commanding sensible form. Art is an exploration of the full range of feeling, enabling our experience to fall into its own proper patterns, and letting there emerge the 'inevitability of form.' It is, then, the **objectification of a purely experiential pattern**. And it is most properly apprehended through **participation**: in the space of the picture, the rhythm of the music, the movement of the dance, etc. If there is a finality to art, it lies in the transformation of the subject, who (63) 'has been liberated from being a replaceable part adjusted to a ready-made world and integrated within it. [He/she] has ceased to be a responsible inquirer investigating some aspect of the universe or seeking a view of the whole. [One] has become just [oneself]: emergent, ecstatic, originating freedom.'

### 3.1.3 Symbols

The discussion of symbols ties back with that of feelings in chapter 2. A symbol is an image of a real or imaginary object that evokes a feeling or is evoked by a feeling. Thus, the symbols that awaken feelings and the feelings that evoke symbols can help us get in touch with, identify, what our affective capacities, dispositions, habits are; and, because of the relation of feelings to values, symbols can help us discover our value orientation. This is the point of psychic conversion: existential self-appropriation through the internal communication afforded or made possible by

symbols – existential because of the link among the three elements of symbols, feelings, and values. Gendlin's focusing.

### 3.1.4 Language as a Carrier of Meaning

A full development of this topic would require that one go into the history of the philosophy of the inner word and its relation to the outer word – Augustine, Aquinas, and Lonergan being the most important figures in this strand of the philosophical (and theological) tradition and Wittgenstein the principal adversary of the entire tradition (as is clear from the opening pages of *Philosophical Investigations*). Heidegger also offers an alternative position, one that in my view is more nuanced than Wittgenstein's. The position of Augustine, Aquinas, and Lonergan is clear from the opening pages of *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas*. We 'utter' our own inner words corresponding to our own questions for intelligence and questions for reflection, and the language that is our own, as it were, is the formulation of those inner words. For details read *Verbum* 13-24, 'The General Nature of the Inner Word.' What is found in Wittgenstein and, I believe, more precisely in Heidegger is the recognition of the public character of language, so that it functions at the first level of consciousness and not only in the formulations of the second. But Lonergan himself saw this clearly and reflects it in a number of instances, including pp. 254-57 in *Method in Theology*. Language can function in both an approximately elemental fashion and in a quite non-elemental way. We will see this when we read *What Is Systematic Theology?*

Positively, language represents a certain **liberation** of meaning from the materials of elemental meaning. Linguistic signs and their corresponding representations (e.g., Helen Keller) are purely conventional, and can be multiplied almost indefinitely. Language continues to develop (and decline). The electronic age has added an entire arsenal of new words to our vocabulary: DOS, email, google (as a verb), etc. Language also enables us to **focus** our conscious intentionality, something that we can see if we reflect on the crucial importance of **formulating our elementally meaningful experiences**. Lonergan mentioned Carl Rogers' techniques of **therapy**, but a similar insight is found in Frankl's logotherapy. Clarifying in language just what the problem is often a first step in moving beyond it. Language enables us to order our world and orient ourselves within it. It molds our developing consciousness. But reciprocally it also structures the world about us. 71: 'Spatial adverbs and adjectives relate places to the place of the speaker. The tenses of verbs relate times to [one's] present. Moods correspond to [one's] intention to wish, to exhort, or command, or declare. Voices make verbs now active and now passive and, at the same time shift subjects to objects to objects to subjects. Grammar almost gives us Aristotle's categories ... while Aristotle's logic and theory of science are deeply rooted in the grammatical function of predication.'

What I would add at this point is that there is also a **negative** function that language can play. Language can get so far away from the elemental meaning that it creates what Eric Voegelin calls a 'second reality,' and then it results in what Habermas calls systematically distorted communication. At that point it has become oppressive rather than liberating, and so there is a real point to Heidegger's call to his readers to shepherd Being through care for language, where language is the house or home of Being.

Next, Lonergan distinguishes ordinary, technical, and literary language.

September 28, 2009  
Class 4

We covered the material on the carriers of meaning last week. The material on symbols caused the greatest difficulty, but I think we have to move on. I have taught entire courses on the material in that short section, and for those who wish more material I would suggest chapter 9 of *Theology and the Dialectics of History*, which Jeremy has placed on reserve.

We will continue to try to give a thorough presentation of chapter 3 today, even if it puts us a bit behind in terms of the syllabus. (Back to last week's lecture, beginning with 'Elements of Meaning.') Ask the class to have last week's outline ready.

Telescoping realms & stages together, omitting some details.

**Ordinary language** shapes our everyday intentionality and our world. Its basis is common sense, the nucleus of habitual insights that enables us to find our way in our everyday world.

**Technical language** develops slowly, as new groups and new ends and tasks and tools call forth new words. First there are the technical words employed by craftspersons or experts or specialists when they talk among themselves. But human intelligence can shift completely away **from commonsense to theoretical development**; inquiry can be pursued for its own sake; logics and methods can be formulated; concern can become primarily explanatory, and scientific vocabularies can be developed.

And **literary language** lies somewhere between the logical apparatus of technical language and the more spontaneous and more transient communication characteristic of everyday life: While we *do* speak prose, it is not the prose of Marcel Proust!

### 3.1.5 Incarnate Meaning

Finally (73): ‘Incarnate meaning combines all or least many of the other carriers of meaning. It can be at once intersubjective, artistic, symbolic, linguistic. It can be the meaning of a person, of his way of life, of his words, or of his deeds. It may be his meaning for just one other person, or for a small group, or for a whole national, or social, or cultural, or religious tradition.’

## 4 Elements of Meaning

Staying with invariant features of meaning, we move to the elements of meaning. The elements of meaning are divided into sources, acts, and terms.

### 4.1 Sources

All conscious acts and all intended objects are sources of meaning: ‘whether in the dream state or on any of the four levels of waking consciousness’ (73). The principal division of sources of meaning is into the transcendental and the categorial. Transcendental sources lie in the dynamism of consciousness itself as it heads for intelligibility, truth, reality, and value. They are invariant and a priori. Categorial sources are the specific determinations reached through experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding. They are variable and a posteriori. The transcendental notions ground questioning. Answers develop categorial determinations.

### 4.2 Acts

Acts of meaning are potential (elemental), formal, full (actual), constitutive/effective (existential/practical), and communicative (BL: instrumental).

#### 4.2.1 Potential acts

All pre-conceptual acts are potential acts of meaning. Meaning is still elemental, and ‘elemental’ may be a more useful term than ‘potential.’ 74: ‘There has not yet occurred the distinction of meaning and meant. Such is the meaning of the smile that acts simply as an intersubjective determinant, the meaning of the work of art prior to its interpretation by a critic, the meaning of

the symbol performing its office of internal communication without help from the therapist. Again, acts of sensing and of understanding of themselves have only potential meaning. As Aristotle put it, the sensible and the sense in act are one and the same. Thus, sounding and hearing are an identity: without ears there can be longitudinal waves in the atmosphere but there cannot be sound. Similarly, data are potentially intelligible, but their intelligibility in act coincides with an intelligence in act.'

Knowledge thus begins as identity. Confrontational theories of knowledge deny this. If it stopped there, idealism would be the correct philosophy. But it does not stop there. Realism is based not in elemental meaning but in judgment.

#### 4.2.2 Formal acts

The distinction of meaning and meant comes with the concept, where it is clear that **I mean this**. Subject and object become distinct. Formal acts of meaning are such acts as conceiving, thinking, considering, defining, supposing, formulating. Here there is a distinction of meaning and meant. The meant is what is conceived, thought, considered, defined, supposed, etc. But if knowing stopped here, relativism would be the correct philosophy. With formal acts of meaning it is not yet clear what the status of the meant is. Is it an object of thought or is it more?

#### 4.2.3 Full acts

This question is answered when one judges. Here the status of the meant is settled.

#### 4.2.4 Constitutive and effective acts

Acts of meaning not only indicate or mediate a world but also constitute, effect a world and oneself. Judgments of value, decisions, actions that bring about a world are acts of meaning that effect or internally constitute reality. We will see a good deal more shortly about constitutive meaning.

#### 4.2.5 Communicative (L: instrumental) acts

Acts such as speaking and writing, where we make available to others our potential, formal, full, constitutive, effective acts of meaning, are communicative acts (a term to be preferred to instrumental).

### 4.3 *Terms of meaning*

A term of meaning is what is meant. Again, terms of meaning, since they are correlative with, isomorphic with, acts of meaning, are potential (elemental), formal, full, and constitutive or effective. 75: 'In potential acts of meaning, meaning and meant are not yet sorted out. In formal acts, the distinction has emerged but the exact status of the term remains indeterminate. In full acts of meaning there occurs the probable or certain determination of the status of the term; one settles whether or not *A* is, or whether or not *A* is *B*. In constitutive acts of meaning one settles one's attitude to *A*, what one will do for *B*, whether one will endeavor to bring about *C*.'



### 4.3.1 Empiricism, idealism, realism

It is here that Lonergan introduces elements of his cognitional theory that are crucial. The discussion begins with the notion of spheres of being, p. 75. The moon is. There is the logarithm of the square root of minus one. Those are both true judgments. But 'is' has a different force or significance in the two cases. 'The moon is' is about real being. 'There is the logarithm of the square root of minus one' is about mathematical being. It may or may not have anything to do with real being. This is spelled out in more detail on 75-76: 'A distinction ... has to be drawn between a sphere of real being and other restricted spheres such as the mathematical, the hypothetical, the logical, and so on. While these spheres differ enormously from one another, they are not simply disparate. The contents of each sphere are rationally affirmed. The affirmation is rational because it proceeds from an act of reflective understanding in which is grasped the virtually unconditioned, that is, a conditioned whose conditions are fulfilled. But the spheres differ so vastly because the conditions to be fulfilled differ. The fulfilling conditions for affirming real being are appropriate data of sense or consciousness, but the fulfilling condition for proposing a hypothesis is a possible relevance to a correct understanding of data, while the fulfilling conditions for correct mathematical statement do not explicitly include even a possible relevance to data. Finally, beyond restricted spheres and the real sphere there is the transcendent sphere of being; transcendent being is the being that, while known by us through grasping the virtually unconditioned, is itself without any conditions whatever; it is formally unconditioned, absolute.'

In discussing full terms of meaning, he calls attention on p. 76 to other cognitional theories. For him the real is what is affirmed in a true judgment. It is the term of true judgment. But for the empiricist, the real is what can be pointed to, exhibited; and the idealist correctly objects that our knowledge is more than such pointing, looking, etc., that it involves our own structuring and constituting activities, but the idealist concludes that we know only what we have so structured and constituted, i.e., our own ideas, and not the real, which is somehow not really knowable. (Hegelian idealism is another thing.)

### 5 Functions of meaning

Still staying with the invariant features of meaning, we turn to the functions of meaning. The functions of meaning are cognitive, effective, constitutive, and communicative.

#### 5.1 Cognitive

Meaning takes us out of the world of immediacy and establishes a world mediated by meaning, that is, by image and symbol and language, and by understanding and judgment. This is the real world in which we live. Again, the role of language in this, bottom of 76 to top of 77.

Mediation includes the **mediation of immediacy** that occurs in transcendental method and in the exploration of feelings in depth psychology. And there is also a **mediated return to immediacy**. Lonergan gives two examples: the joining of lovers in sexual union and the mystic's withdrawal into the cloud of unknowing. But there is, I believe, also a kind of mediated return to immediacy that occurs through self-appropriation: a second immediacy that is the goal of the mediating praxis of transcendental method and psychic analysis.

*in relation to full terms of meaning*

*on the basis of the grasp of a certain type of virtually unconditioned (76)*

## 5.2 *Effective/efficient*

What we make we first intend, and we intend it in acts of meaning, without which the making and the made would not occur. 78: 'The pioneers on this continent found shore and heartland, mountains and plains, but they have covered it with cities, laced it with roads, exploited it with industries, till the world man has made stands between us and nature. The whole of that added, man-made, artificial world is the cumulative, now planned, now chaotic, product of human acts of meaning.'

## 5.3 *Constitutive*

Meanings are intrinsic components of **cultural achievements** (religions and art forms, languages and literatures, sciences, philosophies, histories) and **social institutions** (family, state, law, economy, etc.), which are changed by changing their meaning. 78: 'Religions and art-forms, languages and literatures, sciences, philosophies, histories [i.e., cultural achievements] all are inextricably involved in acts of meaning. What is true of cultural achievements, no less is true of social institutions. The family, the state, the law, the economy are not fixed and immutable entities. They adapt to changing circumstances; they can be reconceived in the light of new ideas; they can be subjected to revolutionary change. But all such change involves change of meaning – a change of idea or concept, a change of judgment or evaluation, a change of the order or request. The state can be changed by rewriting its constitution. More subtly but no less effectively it can be changed by reinterpreting the constitution or, again, by working on men's minds and hearts to change the objects that command their respect, hold their allegiance, fire their loyalty.'

## 5.4 *Communicative*

By communication meaning becomes common meaning and tradition. 78-79: 'What one [person] means is communicated to another intersubjectively, artistically, symbolically, linguistically, incarnately. So individual meaning becomes common meaning. But a rich store of common meaning is not the work of isolated individuals or even of single generations. Common meanings have histories. They originate in single minds. They become common only through successful and widespread communication. They are transmitted to successive generations only through training and education. Slowly and gradually they are clarified, expressed, formulated, defined, only to be enriched and deepened and transformed, and no less often to be impoverished, emptied out, and deformed.'

## 5.5 *Community, existence, history*

It is the communicative function, together with the constitutive, that yields community, personal existence in the sense of *Existenz*, and history.

### 5.5.1 *Community*

First, community. Community is an achievement of common meaning. The depth of community depends on the kinds and degrees of such achievement. 79: 'Common meaning is potential when

there is a common field of experience, and to withdraw from that common field is to get out of touch. Common meaning is formal when there is common understanding, and one withdraws from that common understanding by misunderstanding, by incomprehension, by mutual incomprehension. Common meaning is actual inasmuch as there are common judgments, areas in which all affirm and deny in the same manner; and one withdraws from that common judgment when one disagrees, when one considers true what others hold false and false what they think true. Common meaning is realized by decisions and choices, especially by permanent dedication, in the love that makes families, in the loyalty that makes states, in the faith that makes religions. Community coheres or divides, begins or ends, just where the common field of experience, common understanding, common judgment, common commitments begin and end. So communities are of many kinds: linguistic, religious, cultural, social, political, domestic. They vary in extent, in age, in cohesiveness, in their oppositions to one another.'

### 5.5.2 Existence (*Existenz*)

Within community each person finds out that they have to decide for themselves what they are to make of themselves. It is within this context that Lonergan introduces the issue of authenticity, which is distinguished into major and minor authenticity. The issue is crucial, not only for understanding Lonergan but also for constituting ourselves and for deciding what we are going to do as theologians for the community to which we belong. See 79 (bottom) – 80: 'Such existing ...'

### 5.5.3 History

History is a function in part of the variation, development, and decline of meaning as constitutive of human communities. When Lonergan later will speak of history in terms of 'what is going forward,' a crucial portion of this will have to do with what is going forward in meaning itself.

## 6 Exigences, Realms of Meaning, and Stages of Meaning

### 6.1 Introductory comments

The remainder of the chapter treats the issue of the variations to which these invariant elements of meaning are subject. Meaning varies, as a function of exigences, and the variations can be spoken of in terms of the realms and stages of meaning. 81: 'Different exigences give rise to different modes of conscious and intentional operation, and different modes of such operation give rise to different realms of meaning.' The realms and stages of meaning are connected by the various exigences that give rise to different modes of conscious and intentional operation, and so to different realms and, in the limit, to different stages of meaning. New stages of meaning emerge when a shift to a different realm means as well a shift in the entire manner of negotiating or controlling meaning.

Talk, then, of exigences, realms, and stages gives us something of a heuristics of development and decline in the realization of the invariant elements (carriers, sources, and functions).

History is radically the process of the development and decline of these elements, and correlatively of the communal embodiments of the invariant structure of the human good.

Moving  
away  
from  
invariants

And theology is a praxis transformative of meaning, and through meaning of the concrete realization of the human good. The religion that theology mediates with culture is God's claim to have a say in the aims and purposes, the direction and development, of human lives, societies, cultures, history. Jesus, the Logos, is the incarnate meaning of God. Christian theology mediates the incarnate meaning of God with other meanings, in a cumulative history of the being of meaning and of the good.

### *6.2 The systematic exigence*

There is a systematic exigence that differentiates the realm of common sense from the realm of theory. The two realms regard the same objects, but from very different standpoints. The physicist Eddington knew that there was a large, solid, mahogany brown desk at which he worked. He knew, too, that the desk was a manifold of colorless 'wavicles' so minute that it was mostly empty space. They are not two things but one. Neither knowledge is wrong, each has its grounds and its effects. But they are knowledge in two distinct realms: the realm of things in their relations to us, or of description, or of everyday language; and the realm of internal relations and differences, of functional correlations, of explanation, and of technical language.

The context of theory is different from that of common sense, and the shift to this context entails the bewildering departure from the familiar world of common sense, the departure that Socrates evoked in the Athenians when he asked them for definitions of courage and of justice. Plato and Aristotle represent a dividing line in the history of the West, in the history of meaning in the West, for with them meaning migrates, as it were, from just the everyday realm to the realm of theory.

We are more familiar with theory in the form of modern science, but without Plato and Aristotle and the differentiation of consciousness that emerges in their writings, we would not have the intricate explanatory correlations of our physics, chemistry, and biology.

### *6.3 The critical exigence*

We experience the critical exigence when we ask, What is the relation of these two distinct realms of common sense and theory? 83: 'Is common sense just primitive ignorance to be brushed aside with an acclaim to science as the dawn of intelligence and reason? Or is science of merely pragmatic value, teaching us how to control nature, but failing to reveal what nature is?' These questions troubled Western thinkers for 2000 years, the period of the second stage of meaning, the period of problematic metaphysics, the period of troubled consciousness. Thus Plato asserts at one point that there are two really distinct worlds, and Galileo distinguishes his primary and secondary qualities – a distinction that has affected most modern philosophic explanations of what science is all about. Lonergan would cut to the heart of such disputes by helping us get straight the answers to three questions: What am I doing when I am knowing? Why is doing that knowing? What do I know when I do that? These three questions express his understanding of the critical exigence.

This exigence opens us upon another realm of meaning: the realm of interiority. 83: 'With these questions one turns from the outer realms of common sense and theory to the appropriation of

one's own interiority, one's subjectivity, one's operations, their structure, their norms, their potentialities. Such appropriation, in its technical expression, resembles theory. But in itself it is a heightening of intentional consciousness, an attending not merely to objects but also to the intending subject and [his/her] acts.'

#### *6.4 Stages of Meaning*

These two exigences – systematic and critical – are responsible for three basic stages of meaning in the West. The stages are ideal constructs or models. 85: 'In the first stage conscious and intentional operations follow the mode of common sense. In a second stage besides the mode of common sense there is also the mode of theory, where the theory is controlled by a logic. In a third stage the modes of common sense and theory remain, science asserts its autonomy from philosophy, and there occur philosophies that leave theory to science and take their stand on interiority.'

Again, 93-94: 'In the first stage the world mediated by meaning is just the world of common sense. In the second stage the world mediated by meaning splits into the realm of common sense and the realm of theory. Corresponding to this division and grounding it, there is a differentiation of consciousness. In the first stage the subject, in his pursuit of the common good, also attends, understands, judges. But he does not make a specialty of these activities. He does not formulate a theoretical ideal in terms of knowledge, truth, reality, causality. He does not formulate linguistically a set of norms for the pursuit of that ideal goal. He does not initiate a distinct economic and social and cultural context within which the pursuit of that ideal goal could be carried out by human animals. But in the second stage of meaning the subject continues to operate in the commonsense manner in all his dealings with the particular and concrete, but along with this mode of operation he also has another, the theoretical. In the theoretical mode the good that is pursued is the truth and, while this pursuit is willed, still the pursuit itself consists only in operations on the first three levels of intentional consciousness: it is the specialization of attending, understanding, and judging.'

In the third stage the sciences become autonomous from philosophy. Each has its proper method. And there arises the question of their unification.

#### *6.5 The methodical exigence*

95:

The methodical exigence answers this question. 'Philosophy finds its proper data in intentional consciousness. Its primary function is to promote the self-appropriation that cuts to the root of philosophic differences and incomprehensions. It has further, secondary functions in distinguishing, relating, grounding the several realms of meaning and, no less, in grounding the methods of the sciences and so promoting their unification.'

Through the methodical exigence, then, one returns from interiority, to analyze commonsense procedures and critique them, and to differentiate the sciences and integrate their methods. And a contemporary theology must be done from the basis of interiorly differentiated consciousness, to meet not only cognitional problems but also the problem of the human good. For (99): The autonomous sciences are principles of action. They overflow into applied science, engineering, technology, industrialism. They are 'an acknowledged source of wealth and power, and the

power is not merely material. It is the power of the mass media to write for, speak to, be seen by all [people]. It is the power of an educational system to fashion the nation's youth in the image of the wise [person] or in the image of a fool, in the image of a free [person] or in the image prescribed for the Peoples' Democracies. In the third stage, then, meaning not only differentiates into the realms of common sense, theory, and interiority, but also acquires the universal immediacy of the mass media and the molding power of universal education. Never has adequately differentiated consciousness been more difficult to achieve. Never has the need to speak effectively to undifferentiated consciousness been greater.'

### *6.6 The transcendent exigence*

In addressing such a culture theology will take its stand not only on the self-appropriation of intentional consciousness, but also on a transcendent exigence. 83-84: 'There is to human inquiry an unrestricted demand for intelligibility. There is to human judgment a demand for the unconditioned. There is to human deliberation a criterion that criticizes every finite good. So it is ... that [we] can reach basic fulfilment, peace, joy, only by moving beyond the realms of common sense, theory, and interiority and into the realm in which God is known and loved.'

This exigence and its fulfilment are the subject matter for the next chapter.

Suggestion: for a later nuancing of much of this, read 'Natural Right and Historical Mindedness.'