

## Essays in Systematic Theology 27: The Abiding Significance of the Ethics of *Insight*<sup>1</sup>

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The problem that I wish to address can be specified by adverting to Bernard Lonergan's acknowledgment in his 1973 paper '*Insight Revisited*' that significant developments had taken place in his articulation of the notion of the good between the publication of *Insight* and the completion of *Method in Theology*. There has been something of a tendency among Lonergan students to see this admission as an indication that in Lonergan's later view chapter 2 of *Method* should replace chapter 18 of *Insight*. No matter what Lonergan's position on this question was, I wish to suggest that simply replacing the position of *Insight* with that of *Method* would result in a position on the good and on decision that is just as incomplete as would be the position one would entertain were one to refuse to consider any account other than the one presented in *Insight*. My position is that there is a limited validity to both accounts, and the limit is imposed not by the objective content of the accounts themselves but by the state of the human subject who would employ either method in making a decision.<sup>2</sup>

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1 2011: This paper was presented in 2008 at a conference in Naples. It is scheduled for publication in the proceedings of that conference.

2 My interest focuses on the respective notions of the good in *Insight* and *Method in Theology* and on the suggested structures of rational self-consciousness (*Insight*) or existential responsibility (*Method in Theology*) corresponding to these respective notions. Recently Patrick Byrne has provided a valuable commentary on and critique of the argument of chapter 18 of *Insight* with which I concur, but far from criticizing the identification of the good with the

My paper has three parts. In the first, I summarize conclusions reached in earlier work to the effect that the ethics of chapter 18 of *Insight* presents in philosophic terms the general form of the method of making decisions that St Ignatius Loyola calls the ‘third time of election,’ while the ethics of *Method in Theology* presents in philosophic terms the general form of St Ignatius’s ‘second time.’ Since each ‘time’ has a limited validity, each of Lonergan’s accounts of the good and of decision would also have its proper justification. This will constitute my first argument for the abiding significance of the ethics of *Insight*. A second argument for the continued validity of the approach taken in chapter 18 of *Insight* lies in the fact that the chapter displays the dynamic consciousness that is employed in the psychological Trinitarian analogy found in Lonergan’s work, and especially in *De Deo Trino: Pars systematica* (now available with English facing pages as volume 12 of Lonergan’s Collected Works, *The Triune God: Systematics*). In fact, this early analogy of Lonergan’s may prove to be of assistance in filling some lacunae in *Insight*’s account of the dynamic structure of the relation between knowing and deciding.<sup>3</sup> In the third part, I argue that the notion of existential autonomy presented in *The Triune God: Systematics*, which relies on and in some ways expands the account of dynamic consciousness that is found in chapter 18 of *Insight*, is necessary if Lonergan’s intentionality analysis is to be integrated with René Girard’s ‘interindividual psychology.’ Such an integration

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intelligent and reasonable Byrne’s article strengthens Lonergan’s argument in favor of that identification. I hope to make a limited contribution in the same direction. See Byrne, ‘The Goodness of Being in Lonergan’s *Insight*,’ *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 18 (2007) 43-72.

3 These lacunae are spotted incisively in Byrne’s article mentioned in the previous note.

is important if I am correct in my view that two of the most important intellectual breakthroughs to come from Catholic thinkers in the twentieth century – breakthroughs for culture in general and not simply for the church – are Lonergan’s intentionality analysis and Girard’s mimetic theory. It is significant that these breakthroughs are both studies of desire. Integrating them with each other will provide, I believe, a more complete account of human desire than either of them alone offers. Moreover, the anticipation of that more complete account will bring our reflections full circle, returning us to the theme of discernment with which we began, since Lonergan and Girard together can greatly advance the Catholic tradition’s understanding of what Ignatian language has called the discernment of spirits. The advance is by way of shifting the articulation of our understanding of discernment from description to explanation.

Because the first two sections represent summary statements of positions that I have articulated more fully in other publications, while the third section presents the major field of my present research and thinking,<sup>4</sup> I will devote more attention to the third section than to the first two.

### **1 The Ethics of *Insight* and St Ignatius Loyola’s ‘Third Time of Election’**

In this section I wish to review and summarize work linking Lonergan’s two accounts of ethics with St Ignatius Loyola’s times of election. More precisely, because of time constraints I will limit these considerations to the connection I have suggested between chapter 18 of *Insight* and the third time of election in the

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<sup>4</sup> 2011: That is, in 2008. It has taken over two years to bring this paper to some form of publication.

*Spiritual Exercises* of St Ignatius, barely mentioning a similar connection between chapter 2 of *Method in Theology* and St Ignatius's second time of election.<sup>5</sup>

As I mentioned at the beginning of this paper, Lonergan's acknowledgment in 1973 that significant developments had taken place in his articulation of the notion of the good between the publication of *Insight* and the completion of *Method in Theology* has led some interpreters to suppose that Lonergan wished to replace the approach to ethics in *Insight* with that found in *Method*. My position is that there is a limited validity to both accounts, and the limit is imposed by the state of the human subject making a decision at a given point in his or her life.

Because I have gone into a fair amount of detail on this question in other presentations, I will be very brief here in summarizing my position. A number of years ago it occurred to me that there might be some correspondence between Lonergan's two accounts of the human good and of decision and St Ignatius Loyola's times of election, as proposed in his *Spiritual Exercises*. I first suggested these connections in *Theology and the Dialectics of History*,<sup>6</sup> and have developed them considerably in the past few years. St Ignatius proposes in the *Exercises* three

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5 For the fuller account, see Robert M. Doran, 'Ignatian Themes in the Thought of Bernard Lonergan,' *Toronto Journal of Theology* 22:1 (2006) 39-54; 'Ignatian Themes in the Thought of Bernard Lonergan: Revisiting a Topic That Deserves Further Reflection,' *Lonergan Workshop* 19, ed. Fred Lawrence (Boston College, 2006) 83-106; 'Discernment and Lonergan's Fourth Level of Consciousness,' *Gregorianum* 89:4 (2008) 790-802. [2011: The first two of these papers are reproduced here as Essays 18 and 19. The third will appear on this site below.]

6 Robert M. Doran, *Theology and the Dialectics of History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990, 2001) 57-58, 87-88.

times for making a ‘sound and good election.’<sup>7</sup> Each of these ‘times’ is really a mode of proceeding, and in each case the mode of proceeding depends on the interior state in which one finds oneself when one is faced with having to make a decision. The three modes of proceeding are all valid, but only one of them will be proper or useful at a given time, and what determines the mode one will employ is precisely the interior conditions in which one finds oneself: in Heidegger’s term, one’s *Befindlichkeit*, one’s state of mind.<sup>8</sup> The first time is exemplified in St Paul

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7 *Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola*, trans. Henry Keane, S.J. (London: Burns Oates and Washbourne, 1952) 61.

8 Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, 1962) index, ‘state-of-mind.’ A former student of mine, Ravi Michael Louis, S.J., has argued that the basic *Sorge* is really discernment. This argument appeared in an unpublished paper that he wrote for a course that I taught, ‘The Christian Imagination: Some Operative Symbols.’ This connects with my use in *Theology and the Dialectics of History* of Eric Voegelin’s phrase ‘the search for direction in the movement of life.’ See Eric Voegelin, ‘The Gospel and Culture,’ in *Jesus and Man’s Hope*, ed. Donald G. Miller and Dikran Y. Hadidian, vol. 2 (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, 1971) passim. [2011: Heidegger’s thought has to be submitted to far greater scrutiny than I gave it through years of wrestling with it as if it were a valid and honest philosophical endeavor. Its perhaps inextricable connections with Hitlerism and Nazism have probably rendered the edifice itself material for the dustbin. However, the category of *Befindlichkeit* remains valid, as do many other categories developed or retrieved by Heidegger. The driving force behind the entire construction is, to say the least, suspect, but the work of discerning what can be advanced has barely begun.]

and St Matthew, who were so moved that there was no possibility of doubt as to what they were to do. The second time calls for the discernment of the pulls and counterpulls of affectivity, in the reading of consolations and desolations. In the third time, one is tranquil, and so is free to employ one's intelligence, rationality, and moral existential responsibility, one's 'natural powers,' freely and quietly.

The three times are exhaustive. Either God has so moved one that there are no further questions, or this has not happened. If it has not happened, either one is pulled in various directions affectively, or one is not. If one is, one is in St Ignatius's second time, and one relies on the various suggestions provided for discerning the pulls and counterpulls of affective inclinations in order to determine where they lead and whether they lead to what is truly or only apparently good. If one is not, one is in St Ignatius's third time, and relies on one's native powers of intelligence and reason and on the inner demand for consistency between what one knows and what one does.

That St Ignatius's third time corresponds to *Insight's* account of the good and of decision is confirmed by the two methods the Saint proposes for making an election in the third time. For each of them is a matter of being 'intelligent and reasonable,' which is exactly how Lonergan describes the good as it is presented in *Insight*.<sup>9</sup> In the first method, one weighs, in the light of the service of God, the advantages and disadvantages of the alternatives, precisely to see 'to which side

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9 'In *Insight* the good was the intelligent and reasonable.' Bernard Lonergan, 'Insight Revited,' in *A Second Collection*, ed. William F.J Ryan, S.J., and Bernard J. Tyrrell, S.J. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996) 277.

Byrne's article refers to the list of questions that Lonergan suggests the subject might ask, questions that complement those suggested by St Ignatius in his presentation of the third time.

reason most inclines.’<sup>10</sup> And in the second, one imagines oneself counseling another on the same issues and asks oneself what one would advise the other to do, or one imagines oneself at the point of death or at the day of judgment, and then one asks oneself what one would wish one had done. In either case, one’s decision flows from reasonable judgment based on a grasp of evidence. In the language of *Insight*, ‘the value is the good as the possible object of rational choice.’<sup>11</sup>

I note here especially Lonergan’s use of the word ‘value,’ for while there is no mention of *judgments* of value in *Insight* except in the discussion of belief in chapter 20, still there is in *Insight* a *notion* of value. Section 1.3 of chapter 18 is entitled ‘The Notion of Value,’ and it is clear in reading that section that the phrase means ‘the dynamic exigence of rational consciousness for self-consistency’ between knowing and doing.<sup>12</sup> This is precisely the exigence that governs St Ignatius’s ‘third time of election.’ One questions ‘to which side reason most inclines,’ and once that question has been answered, one experiences a moral exigence to act accordingly. The question, To which side does reason most incline? is answered in what Lonergan in *Insight* calls ‘the practical insight’ (section 2.3) and ‘practical reflection’ (section 2.4), both of which lead to a judgment concerning the reasonable possibility of a certain course of action. The judgment is not called a judgment of value or even a practical judgment, but simply a

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10 *Spiritual Exercises* 63.

11 Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, vol. 3 in *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992) 624.

12 *Ibid.* 625.

judgment.<sup>13</sup> It is such considerations as these that have led me to suggest that chapter 18 of *Insight* be regarded as presenting in philosophical terms the general form of St Ignatius's third time of election. And if that is correct, then we have a first argument for the permanent validity of *Insight*'s account of the good and of human decision.<sup>14</sup>

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13 There is a fascinating study waiting to be done of the development of Lonergan's thought on judgments of value. I do not think that the position on judgments of value that is expressed in *Method in Theology* emerged until about 1967. The expression occurs earlier, of course, but either in the context of the discussion of belief, where one makes 'a judgment on the value of deciding to believe with certitude or with probability that some proposition certainly or probably is true or false' (*Insight* 730), or as a term to describe the same judgment that is spoken of simply as a judgment in chapter 18 of *Insight*. There is an evolution of the latter usage from the 'iudicium practicum seu iudicium valoris' of *Divinarum personarum conceptio analogica* (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1957, 1959) to the simple 'iudicium valoris' of *De Deo trino: Pars systematica* (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1964). See Bernard Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics*, trans. Michael G. Shields, ed. Robert M. Doran and H. Daniel Monsour (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007) 181. See also Byrne, 'The Goodness of Being in Lonergan's *Insight*' 59-60.

14 A related issue concerns the so-called 'fourth level of consciousness.' It is well known that there is no explicit mention of a fourth level in *Insight*. If in fact the account of decision in *Insight* does imply the affirmation of a fourth level, that level would consist *only* of the further element of free choice that *Insight* adds to the cognitional process of experience, understanding, and judgment. The mode of proceeding that is suggested in *Method in Theology*, which I suggest presents

## 2 The Ethics of *Insight* and the Psychological Analogy

My second argument for the permanent validity of the ethical position presented in *Insight* appeals to the role that this position plays in establishing the contours of the psychological analogy for the Trinitarian processions presented in *The Triune God: Systematics*, that is, in Lonergan's two Latin treatises in Trinitarian systematics, *Divinarum personarum* and *De Deo trino: Pars systematica*. More precisely, Lonergan's two accounts of decision provide, respectively, the elements of two distinct but complementary approaches to a psychological analogy for a systematic understanding of Trinitarian processions and relations. But again, time constraints

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in philosophical terms the general form of St Ignatius's second time of election, entails a far more fulsome fourth level, which emerges when and only when one is proceeding according to this mode. The fourth level would include everything from the apprehension of possible values in feelings, through the discernment of these feelings and the judgment of value that concludes the process of discernment, to the decision itself. There remains the further question, however, which I raised in a recent article, as to whether we must dispense with 'level' language entirely and simply talk about sublating and sublated operations and states. See Robert M. Doran, 'Addressing the Four-point Hypothesis,' *Theological Studies* 68 (2007) 680 [see essay 26 in this collection]. I believe too much ink has been spilled over the question of how many levels there are; the spatial metaphor is interfering with the real question of sublating and sublated operations and states.

do not permit me to go into detail on the correlation between *Method's* account of decision and Lonergan's later articulation of the psychological analogy.<sup>15</sup>

In the first psychological analogy found in Lonergan's work, which is the analogy that he has developed most fully, the analogue in the creature is found in those moments of existential self-constitution in which the subject grasps the sufficiency of evidence regarding what it would be good for one to be, utters the judgment of value, 'This is good,' and proceeds to decisions commensurate with that grasp of evidence and judgment of value. The analogy is in the order of existential self-constitution or of what in *The Triune God: Systematics* Lonergan calls 'existential autonomy.' We will investigate the notion of autonomy more in the next section. It is sufficient at present to acknowledge that, from the act of grasping the evidence, there proceeds the act of judging value, and from the two acts together there proceeds the love that embraces the good and carries it out. This is precisely the account of decision presented in *Insight*, even if the wording is different. The analogy consists in the fact that in divine self-constitution, from the Father's grasp of the grounds for affirming the goodness of all that the Father is and knows, there proceeds the eternal Word of the Father saying Yes to it all, a Word that is a judgment of value,<sup>16</sup> and from the Father and the Word together there proceeds the eternal Love that is the Holy Spirit. This theology of God's own self-constitution in knowledge, word, and love is informed by an analogy with

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15 For more on this question, see Doran, 'Ignatian Themes in the Thought of Bernard Lonergan: Revisiting a Topic That Deserves Further Reflection' 96-99. See also Robert M. Doran, 'Being in Love with God: A Source of Analogies for Theological Understanding, *Irish Theological Quarterly* 73 (2008) 227-42 [to be included in this collection soon].

16 See Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 181.

human rational self-consciousness as Lonergan has understood the latter in *Insight*. One's self-appropriation of one's rational self-consciousness in the form in which it is presented in *Insight*, or again as it functions in a commonsense mode in St Ignatius's presentation of the 'third time' of election, thus entails the recognition that those processes, those processions, that mode of making a decision, constitute an *image* of the Trinitarian processions themselves.

While I cannot here go into detail regarding Lonergan's second articulation of the psychological analogy,<sup>17</sup> the analogy is that, as moral integrity in the account in *Method* is a function of generating the judgments of value of a person who is in love in an unqualified way, and as those judgments of value are carried out in decisions that are acts of loving, so the Father is infinite and eternal being-in-love, an *agapē* that generates a Word, the eternal Yes that is the Son, a Word that breathes love, a Yes that grounds the Proceeding Love that is breathed forth as

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

'Now in God the origin is the Father, in the New Testament named *ho Theos*, who is identified with *agapē* (1 John 4:8, 16). Such love expresses itself in its Word, its Logos, its *verbum spirans amorem*, which is a judgment of value. The judgment of value is sincere, and so it grounds the Proceeding Love that is identified with the Holy Spirit.' Bernard Lonergan, 'Christology Today: Methodological Considerations,' in *A Third Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1985) 93.

from *agapē* and from its manifestation in such a Word. While the being-in-love that provides the starting point of the analogy may be any of the three variants of love that Lonergan acknowledges – love in the family, love in the community, and the unrestricted being-in-love that is sanctifying grace – the possibility *is* open for an analogy in the order of grace itself. The dynamic state of being in love in an unqualified way is what theology has traditionally called sanctifying grace, and Lonergan speaks of sanctifying grace as a created participation in and imitation of the active spiration of Father and Word lovingly breathing the Holy Spirit, while the habit of charity that flows from sanctifying grace is a created participation in and imitation of the passive spiration, the divine Proceeding Love, that is the Holy Spirit. This is one way of understanding the relation of *gratia operans* and *gratia cooperans* in the order of habitual grace.

I have argued that it may be quite fruitful in many ways for us to pursue this possibility and to detail as precisely as we can the processions of act from act that would constitute *emanatio intelligibilis* in the order of grace.<sup>18</sup> However, Lonergan is very clear in his agreement with the First Vatican Council that appropriate theological analogies are from what is naturally known, and so while there may be analogies within the supernatural order of the mysteries themselves, and while it may be fruitful in the contemporary theological scene to stress these analogies – I am thinking here especially of furthering the possibilities between students of Lonergan and those of Hans Urs von Balthasar – still even these must be derived from the analogy with naturally known realities. Here is where the first psychological analogy in Lonergan’s work shows its permanent significance. If there are indeed processions of act from act in the supernatural order, these can

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18 See Robert M. Doran, ‘Being in Love with God: A Source of Analogies for Theological Understanding.’

nevertheless be understood only by analogy with processions of act from act in human intelligent, rational, and moral consciousness. The argument can be made that nowhere in the theological literature is there a clearer articulation of what precisely is meant by the *emanatio intelligibilis* that constitutes the psychological analogy than in Lonergan's work. The most significant aspect of that claim for my present purpose is that it is precisely the account of decision presented in *Insight* that provides Lonergan's first psychological analogy from what is naturally known.

This constitutes a second, theological argument for the permanent validity of chapter 18 of *Insight*.

### **3 Existential Autonomy and Interdividuality**

I begin this section with a statement of psychiatrist Jean-Michel Oughourlian, in the dialogical encounter with René Girard published as *Things Hidden since the Foundation of the World*: '... the real human *subject* can only come out of the rule of the Kingdom; apart from this rule, there is never anything but mimetism and the "interdividual." Until this happens, the only subject is the mimetic structure.'<sup>19</sup>

The phrase 'the mimetic structure' refers to the account of acquisitive desire that Girard has been exposing for several decades, in various works of literary criticism, anthropology, psychology, and theological reflection. Very briefly, many of our desires are neither as spontaneous nor as autonomous as we like to believe, but originate rather in the desire of another whom we take as a model or mediator of our own desire. When the desire is acquisitive, that is, when I want what you

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19 Jean-Michel Oughourlian, in René Girard, *Things Hidden since the Foundation of the World* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1987) 199, emphasis in the text. Girard's response (*ibid.*): 'That is quite right.'

have or want because you have or want it, the other becomes the rival, and attention is gradually removed from the object of the respective desires to focus more or less exclusively on the rivalry between the model and the imitator. Acquisitive mimesis has become conflictual mimesis, and conflictual mimesis is contagious within a community, leading eventually to the selection of an arbitrary victim or scapegoat, whose immolation, exclusion, or marginalization from the community restores peace at least temporarily and avoids the danger of escalating violence in the community.

One possible initial heuristic structure for integrating the respective studies of human desire composed by Bernard Lonergan and René Girard may be specified by reference to a quotation from *The Triune God: Systematics*: ‘... we are conscious in two ways: in one way, through our sensibility, we undergo rather passively what we sense and imagine, our desires and fears, our delights and sorrows, our joys and sadness; in another way, through our intellectuality, we are more active when we consciously inquire in order to understand, understand in order to utter a word, weigh evidence in order to judge, deliberate in order to choose, and exercise our will in order to act.’<sup>20</sup>

The first way of being conscious is sensitive or psychic; the second is intelligent, reasonable, and responsible. Both ways of being conscious are also ways of desiring. The first entails a preponderance of ‘undergoing,’ while the second, though it surely involves passivity – ‘intelligere est quoddam pati,’ Lonergan repeats from Aquinas<sup>21</sup> – stresses as well and indeed highlights the self-

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20 Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 139.

21 Lonergan, *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas* 142, quoting Thomas Aquinas, *Super I Sententiarum*, d. 8, q. 3, a. 2 sol., who himself is quoting Aristotle, *De anima*, III, 4, 429a 13-15.

governed and self-possessed unfolding of operations that is indicated by Lonergan's repetition of the phrase 'in order to ...' The first way appears more spontaneous, though if the 'undergoing' is interdividual this may be an illusion. The second shows greater autonomy, but only if it manifests what Oughourlian calls 'the real human subject,' the subject that has transcended the influence of the mimetic, however precariously. For the two ways of being conscious interact, and the relative autonomy of the second way may be compromised by the gradual infiltration of mimetic desire into the performance of spiritual operations. A clear instance of how this may happen is illustrated by expanding on a comment in Max Scheler's essay on *ressentiment*, an essay which may justly be interpreted, I believe, as foreshadowing Girard's work, in that Girard adds the crucial piece regarding mimesis. Scheler writes,

Beyond all conscious lying and falsifying, there is a deeper 'organic mendacity.' Here the falsification is not formed in consciousness but at the same stage of the mental process as the impressions and value feelings themselves: *on the road* of experience into consciousness. There is 'organic mendacity' whenever a man's mind admits only those impressions and feelings which serve his 'interest' or his instinctive attitude. Already in the process of mental reproduction and recollection, the contents of his experience are modified in this direction. He who is 'mendacious' has no need to lie! In his case, the automatic process of forming recollections, impressions, and feelings is involuntarily slanted, so that conscious falsification becomes unnecessary.<sup>22</sup>

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22 Max Scheler, *Ressentiment*, trans. William W. Holdheim (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1961) 77-78.

The expansion on this comment that I have in mind would stress that the very processions of act from act at the levels of intelligence, reason, and decision – the emergence of a word from insight, the emanation of a judgment from reflective grasp, the procession of a decision from the preceding acts – have already been derailed by an earlier distortion that reaches into the organic interdividuality of the less than ‘real human subject’ and occasions a deviation in the emergence of act from the potentiality of underlying manifolds all along the line. The distortion of the emergence of act from potency gives rise to a distortion also in the emergence of act from act.<sup>23</sup>

The first way of being conscious and of desiring is more (though not exclusively) characterized by the emergence of act from potency, and the second more (though not exclusively) by the emergence of act from act, by *emanatio intelligibilis*, intelligible emanation, or what I prefer to call autonomous spiritual procession. Girard specializes in clarifying the first of these ways of being conscious, emphasizing its intersubjective or ‘interdividual’ character, while Lonergan has explored the second perhaps more acutely and thoroughly (to say nothing of more accurately) than any other thinker.

Precisely because of the interplay between these two dimensions of interiority and desire, Girard regards as illusory most of our attempts to describe our acts, including our intentional operations, as either spontaneous or autonomous. In the first book-length presentation of his theory of mimetic desire, *Mensonge romantique et vérité romanesque*, translated into English as *Deceit, Desire and the Novel*, he speaks of the illusion that our desires are spontaneous

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23 Questions raised by Fred Lawrence prompted this articulation, which needs further development.

inclinations toward attractive objects.<sup>24</sup> But the same illusion is spoken of there as the ‘illusion of autonomy.’<sup>25</sup> As an illusion of spontaneity, the desire is imagined to be ‘deeply rooted in the object and in this object alone.’<sup>26</sup> As an illusion of autonomy, it is thought to be ‘rooted in the subject.’ In fact the two delineations of the illusion cover over the same fact, namely, that the desire has been mediated by another and is contaminated by mimetic contagion.

In a recent paper delivered at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, I proposed some considerations to enable us to make our way through these complex relations. I will repeat these suggestions here in summary fashion.<sup>27</sup>

First, Lonergan speaks of the need for a fourfold differentiation of consciousness required if we are to replace classicism with an acceptable *Weltanschauung* for our time, in which ‘the workings of common sense, science, scholarship, intentionality analysis, and the life of prayer have been integrated.’<sup>28</sup> But as I have attempted to argue from the beginning of my own work, ‘intentionality analysis’ is one dimension of ‘interiority analysis,’ but not the only

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24 René Girard, *Deceit, Desire and the Novel: Self and Other in Literary*

*Structure*, trans. Yvonne Freccero (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1976) 12.

25 Ibid. 16.

26 Ibid. 12.

27 [2011: The paper to which I refer, ‘Spontaneity, Autonomy, and Cultural Critique: A Meeting Point for Lonergan and Girard,’ will appear here as Essay 28.]

28 Bernard Lonergan, ‘Doctrinal Pluralism,’ in *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1965-1980*, vol. 17 in *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert C. Croken and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004) 85-86.

one. There is also the sensitive-psychological dimension, the conjugate intelligibilities that, if Girard is correct, reside largely in the intersubjective roots of Lonergan's first 'way of being conscious.' But in this context the word 'autonomy' can take on an added significance, beyond the salutary hermeneutic of suspicion that Girard exercises with regard to our illusions. There is a discussion of existential autonomy that appears in Lonergan's presentation of his analogy for the Trinitarian processions, and again it is rooted in the rational exigence for self-consistency between knowing and doing that constitutes the notion of value in the ethics of *Insight*.

Lonergan reaches a clear specification of the proper Trinitarian analogy through a series of disjunctions. The disjunctions, he says, will provide a set of criteria by which we may discern whether any given analogy is appropriate or not. The first six of these disjunctions may be treated very briefly.

In the first disjunction Lonergan establishes that we must move from the appropriation of some concrete mode of procession in human consciousness, rather than from an abstract definition of procession; in the second that any knowledge of divine procession must be analogical; in the third that the analogy must be systematic, that is, capable of resolving every other theoretical question in Trinitarian theology; in the fourth that the analogy must be from what is naturally known; the fifth establishes that it must be from a specific nature, not from metaphysical common notions as in natural theology; and the sixth that that nature must be spiritual.

The seventh disjunction brings us closer to the notion of autonomy. The seventh disjunction is between those spiritual processions in which act proceeds from potency and those in which act proceeds from act. Since in God there is only act, only the latter processions in human consciousness will provide an appropriate analogy. 'The analogy ... must be selected from the conscious originating of a real,

natural, and conscious act, from a real, natural, and conscious act, within intellectual consciousness itself and by virtue of intellectual consciousness itself.<sup>29</sup> Such are the procession of conceptual syntheses from direct understanding, the procession of judgments of fact and of value from the grasp of sufficient grounds, and the procession of decisions from reflective grasp and the inner word of judgment that follows upon it.

The eighth disjunction is between an *appropriation* of the dynamics of intellectual consciousness and a more distant metaphysical statement of cognitional fact. Only appropriation can enable us to distinguish the autonomous intellectual procession of act from act under the power of transcendental laws from the spontaneous intellectual procession of act from potency and from the spontaneous sensitive processions of act from both potency and act in accord with the laws specific to continuations of prehuman processes such as those manifested in primordial human intersubjectivity. Note that Lonergan has here introduced his own meaning for the words ‘spontaneous’ and ‘autonomous.’ By ‘autonomous intellectual procession of act from act’ he is referring to a consciousness that is under rule or law only inasmuch as it is constituted by its own transcendental desire, to which there are attached what he came to call the transcendental precepts. But by fidelity to these precepts such a consciousness ‘rules itself inasmuch as under God’s agency it determines itself to its own acts in accordance with the exigencies’ of intelligence, rationality, and existential responsibility.<sup>30</sup>

This, I propose, is the autonomy of what Oughourlian called the ‘real human subject.’ It does proceed from an intellectual spontaneity, namely, the conscious transcendental notion of being that is the native desire to know and the conscious

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29 Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 175.

30 Ibid.

transcendental notion of value that extends that native desire by force of a further question, a question in the existential order. But that spontaneity becomes preceptive, and this is what converts the spontaneity into a genuine autonomy: not only *do* we raise questions, we must raise them; not only *do* we doubt, we must doubt; not only *do* we deliberate, we must deliberate. We must raise questions lest we pass judgment on what we do not understand; we must raise doubts lest we adhere to a false appearance of truth; we must deliberate lest we rush headlong to our own destruction.<sup>31</sup> And it is in fidelity to the *must*, to the exigency into which the spontaneity has been transformed, that there emerges the only genuine autonomy of which the human subject is capable. That autonomy governs only some of the processions that occur in intelligent, rational, responsible consciousness, those processions in which act proceeds not from potency but from act. Such is the case with the autonomy of freedom whenever we choose *because* we ourselves judge and *because* our choice is in accordance with our judgment; such is the case with the autonomy of rationality whenever we judge *because* we grasp the evidence and *because* our judgment is in accord with the grasped evidence; such is the case with the autonomy of clarity whenever we define *because* we grasp the intelligible in the sensible and *because* our definition is in accord with grasped intelligibility.<sup>32</sup> And it is only in the procession of act from act, and not in the procession of act from potency as in the emergence of insight from questions, that the proper analogy is found for understanding, however remotely, the Trinitarian processions: ‘as is the case when a word arises by virtue of consciousness as determined by the act of understanding, and a choice arises by

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31 Ibid. 177.

32 Ibid. emphasis added.

virtue of consciousness as determined by the act of judgment (that is, by a compound word).<sup>33</sup>

The ninth disjunction is tripartite, for such autonomy can be manifested in the realm of practical intelligence and rationality, in the realm of speculative intelligence and rationality, and in the realm of existential self-determination through rational judgment and responsible choice. ‘When one asks about the triune God, one is not considering God as creator or as agent, and so one is prescind-ing from practical autonomy. Nor is one considering God insofar as God understands and judges and loves all things, and so one is prescind-ing from speculative matters. But one is considering God inasmuch as God is in himself eternally constituted as triune, and so one takes one’s analogy from the processions that are in accordance with the exercise of existential autonomy,’ the autonomy in which one decides to operate in accord with the norms inherent in the unfolding of attentiveness, intelligence, rationality, and moral responsibility.<sup>34</sup> That alone is the genuine autonomy of the ‘real human subject,’ and while it is an autonomy that has transcended the mimetic structure of the interindividual and thus emerged into genuine subjectivity, it has not transcended every form of subordination or of imitation. Rather, ‘the autonomy of human consciousness is indeed subordinate, not to every object whatsoever [and, we must add, not to every mimetic structure whatsoever], but to the infinite subject in whose image it has been made and whom it is bound to imitate.’<sup>35</sup> Even more precisely, of course, we must emphasize that the autonomy of human consciousness has been made in the image and likeness not of one but of three infinite subjects of the one divine consciousness, and its

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33 Ibid.

34 Ibid. 179.

35 Ibid. 215.

genuine autonomy consists precisely in its fidelity to that image, issuing a word *because* it has understood something and moving to loving decision *because* that decision is in accord with the true value judgment that is its *verbum spirans amorem*. In such fidelity there *is* imitation, but it is the imitation built into the image of the triune God, the imitation of the divine relations themselves.

In the final analysis, then, the abiding significance of the ethics of *Insight* is found in the fact that it is a clear articulation of precisely what constitutes the imitation of the Trinitarian relations that constitute us even in our human nature as images of God. By fidelity to the transcendental precepts, we move from mimetic contagion to an imitation of God that converts the deviated transcendence of mimetic rivalry and its false religion into the genuine transcendence of being in love with God.