

Essays in Systematic Theology 54: Lonergan on Imitating the Divine Relations¹

¹ I was privileged to be invited to participate in the Koblenz and Ottawa meetings of the Colloquium on Violence and Religion, as part of an effort to promote dialogue between students of René Girard and students of Bernard Lonergan. In Koblenz, I was part of a panel organized by Sonja Bardelang, which included Gilles Mongeau of Regis College, Toronto, and Mark Miller, then a student at Boston College and now a professor at the University of San Francisco. In Ottawa I was scheduled again to participate in a panel, but at the last minute the other participants were unable to come. I had already written a lengthy paper entitled ‘Imitating the Divine Relations: A Theological Contribution to Mimetic Theory,’ which had been submitted to *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* and which was recently published there (Robert M. Doran, ‘Imitating the Divine Relations: A Theological Contribution to Mimetic Theory,’ *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 23:2, 2005, delayed publication to 2009, 149-86). I offered to present a half-hour summary of this paper in Ottawa, and Kenneth Melchin of St Paul’s University, Ottawa, graciously consented to respond to the paper. Bill Johnsen kindly asked me whether he might publish the paper in *Contagion*, where it subsequently appeared (Robert M. Doran, ‘Summarizing “Imitating the Divine Relations,”’ *Contagion: Journal of Violence, Mimesis, and Culture* 14, 2007, 27-38). The present paper revisits what appeared in *Contagion* and adds what I hope are helpful updates and clarifications that have come to me since then.

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1 A General Note on Lonergan and Girard

Bernard Lonergan and René Girard are both students of human desire. It may be claimed, I believe, that a synthesis of their respective positions would provide the broad outlines of something approximating a heuristic structure for the study of desire. The basic categories of such a heuristic structure would be ‘natural desires,’ ‘elicited desires,’ ‘sensitive-psychic desires,’ and ‘spiritual desires.’ Roughly, we may say that natural desires emerge from the very structure of human reality, as is the case, for instance, with the desire to know; elicited desires are prompted by the cognitive recognition of some object; sensitive-psychic desires are affective responses to an object and are most often mediated, as Girard has taught us, through models; spiritual desires reflect the capacity of human intentional consciousness for self-transcendence in knowing and choosing, so that in pursuing knowledge we want to know what really is so, and in deciding we want to choose what is really and not merely apparently worthwhile. For the most part, Lonergan has elucidated desires that may be termed natural and spiritual, and Girard has elucidated elicited sensitive-psychic desires.

Lonergan has also alerted his readers to interferences in the pursuit of the natural desire for intelligibility, being and truth, and the good, interferences that may arise from elicited, sensitive-psychic desires. Girard not only has provided a set of core insights for understanding these elicited, sensitive-

psychic desires but also offers perhaps the most complete and most accurate theory of these desires yet put forward.²

The distinction between spiritual and sensitive-psychic may be introduced by commenting on the following statement from Lonergan's systematic work on the Trinity:

... 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 will in order to act.³

Lonergan has provided a thorough explanatory account of the second of these 'ways of being conscious,'⁴ a careful analysis of the unfolding of the

2 The distinction 'sensitive-psychic and spiritual' as a diagnostic of Girard and Lonergan is my own, but the use in this context of the added traditional theological differential of 'elicited and natural' I owe to Neil Ormerod, in a lecture that I heard him deliver in April 2010 at Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles.

3 Bernard Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics*, trans. Michael G. Shields, ed. Robert M. Doran and H. Daniel Monsour, vol. 12 in *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007) 139.

4 The principal works are Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, vol. 3 in *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed.

eros of the human spirit as we move by inquiry from data of sense and of consciousness to insight into the data, from insight to conceptualization and formulation of our understanding, from formulation to critical reflection, from critical reflection to a grasp of evidence, from grasp of evidence to judgment of fact, from judgment of fact to deliberation, from deliberation to deliberative insight and judgment of value, and from judgment of value to decision.⁵ This eros is driven by the native desire to know, which represents Lonergan's transposition of the Aristotelian-Thomist 'agent intellect,' and which he extends beyond knowledge to an orientation to the good,⁶ and

Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992) and *Method in Theology*, vol. 14 in *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert M. Doran and John D. Dadasosky (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017).

⁵ Among students of Lonergan, the only step in this process whose dynamics are still subject to some disagreement has to do with the move from deliberation to deliberative insights and judgments of value. I have presented my own view on these matters in '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. (The back issues of *Lonergan Workshop* and of *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* have been uploaded to the website www.lonerganresource.com. This paper may be found in a second spot on the same website, in the e-book 'Essays in Systematic Theology,' Essay 19.)

⁶ See chapter 2 of Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, on the transcendental notion of value.

which he also identifies with Aquinas's natural desire to see God.⁷ All of this is for Lonergan 'nature,' a category which, I suggest as a Catholic theologian, Girardian theory needs to incorporate. Obviously, in the concrete and real order of things there is no such thing as pure human nature. The concrete existential situation of human beings is theologically understood as infected by sin and as standing under the offer of divine elevating and healing grace, which we may either accept or reject. But sin distorts nature, while grace elevates and perfects it, and both the distortions and the elevation are reflected in the realm of desire. A complete theory of desire is impossible without the sort of heuristic of human nature provided by Lonergan.

Among the effects of 'basic sin,' which is nothing but a failure to reject a morally reprehensible course of action or a failure to choose an obligatory course of action, are the myriad combinations of bias that distort the regular and consistent unfolding of the eros of the human spirit for being and the real, for the good, and for God. Girard's mimetic theory provides a powerful analysis of the distortions that arise from what Lonergan calls bias, and Girard has contributed to Lonergan's overall analysis by elucidating the mimetic sensitive-psychic desire involved in bias of all varieties. Lonergan distinguishes individual, group, and dramatic bias, and the general bias of common sense against the ulterior exigencies of attentive, intelligent, reasonable, and responsible intentional operation as these exigencies call for

⁷ See chapter 5 in Bernard Lonergan, *Collection*, vol. 4 in *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988). The chapter is entitled 'The Natural Desire to See God.'

a move to theory, the long-range point of view, and reflection on ultimate issues.⁸ He has called for and promoted through his writings the self-appropriation of one's rational and existential intentional operations. Even before becoming familiar with Girard, I insisted that there is also required a self-appropriation of the vagaries of sensitive-psychic desire.⁹ I now maintain not only that the pneumopathology that drives the biases that Lonergan disengages but also the sensitive pathology that Girardian mimetic theory elucidates are required. Girard's mimetic theory is, I wager, the single most helpful means of fulfilling this second requirement.¹⁰

Girard's basic contribution to Lonergan's project is thus the elucidation of the vagaries of the sensitive-psychic dimensions of desire as these interfere with or even prevent the efforts of the subject to be attentive, intelligent, reasonable, responsible, and loving, or, in a word, self-transcendent. But Lonergan also makes a contribution to Girard. Part of that contribution lies in the distinction I have already summarized between spiritual desire and sensitive-psychic desire, but part of it lies also in the

8 On the varieties of bias, see Lonergan, *Insight*, chapters 6 and 7.

9 For the basic statement, see Robert M. Doran, *Subject and Psyche* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1994). For the theological implications, see Robert M. Doran, *Theology and the Dialectics of History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990, 2001). On self-appropriation as used by Lonergan, see below, pp. 8-9. On adding a psychic dimension, see below pp. 27-28.

10 Details in Robert M. Doran, *The Trinity in History: A Theology of the Divine Missions*, vol. 1: *Missions and Processions* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012.)

distinction between natural desire and elicited desire. An instance of a natural spiritual desire is what Lonergan calls the pure, unrestricted desire to know. It is native to the human being to raise and want answers to questions for intelligibility (what is it?), for truth (is that so?), and for morally responsible action (is this truly good or only apparently good?). Contrasted with such a natural desire would be what is known as elicited desire: desire for something that arises out of perception of what is desired. Girard has shown, conclusively I believe, that such elicited desires are mediated by models, that their structure is triangular, that there is no immediate relation of subject to object in such desires, but that the desire passes through the mediator or model from whom our desires are elicited through the dynamics of mimesis.

Girardian mimetic theory, then, is a theory of elicited sensitive-psychic desire, in particular as such desire is responsible for the distortion and deviation of the operations of the human spirit in search of intelligibility, truth and being, the good, and God. The distortion and deviation of these operations converts them into instruments for the satisfaction of elicited, sensitive-psychic, mimetic desire.

A further clarification that Lonergan provides offers mimetic theory a refinement of the notions of autonomy and spontaneity, specifying a legitimate meaning to these two terms, a meaning that, if it is mimetic in any way, is so in a manner quite different from the acquisitive mimesis whose dynamics Girard has elucidated. In this paper, then, I wish to suggest a fruitful mutual self-mediation between Lonergan and Girard and between the students of each of these important figures, where Girard offers Lonergan a more precise maieutic of the interference of contagious mimetic desire with the unfolding of the natural desire for intelligibility, the true and the real, the

good, and God, and where Lonergan offers Girard a more precise understanding of the meaning of ‘nature,’ a more differentiated understanding of spontaneity and autonomy, and, most basic of all, a theology of the graced imitation of divine goodness.¹¹

2 The Divine Relations and Their Imitations

In the paper that I presented in Ottawa in 2006 (see above, note 1), I turned to a statement that Lonergan makes about graced imitation in his systematics of the Trinity. It is this imitation that I refer to when I speak of a very

11 Mutual self-mediation is instanced wherever the self-understanding of one person or group is a function of communication with another person or group and the self-understanding of the other person or group is a function of the same communication. The category is explained in its individual dynamics by Lonergan in ‘The Mediation of Christ in Prayer,’ in *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1958-1964*, ed. Robert C. Croken, Frederick E. Crowe, and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996) 160-82. Unfortunately, Lonergan does not extend the analysis to group mutual self-mediation, a category that may prove more important than the mutual self-mediation of subjects that he stresses. The community of Lonergan’s students is occasionally marked by some obtuseness to sensitive empirical consciousness, and so suffers at times from tensions whose dynamics Girard could elucidate in a single paragraph. This scotosis, this lack of psychic self-knowledge in some of its most prized figures has prevented Lonergan’s work from having the effect that it could and should have.

different kind of mimesis from that studied by Girard. He talks about an imitation of the divine relations that is rendered possible by the gift of God's grace. That imitation is most often conscious but not known, *vécu* but not *thématique*, implicit and not explicit, in Scholastic terms *exercitus* (exercised in practice) but not *signatus* (reflectively objectified). These terms all reflect Lonergan's distinction between consciousness and knowledge.

Consciousness is simply awareness, the self-presence of the subject, while knowledge is a complex function of three kinds of conscious acts: empirical, intelligent, and rational. Knowledge is the correct understanding of experienced data, while consciousness is simply experience, the presence of the subject to herself when she is engaged in certain activities. Lonergan specifies the acts that constitute knowledge in a shorthand manner as experience, understanding, and judgment. These operations can be applied to conscious acts themselves, and then one undergoes what Lonergan calls self-appropriation: experiencing, understanding, and affirming one's own operations of experiencing, understanding, and affirming. Then what was conscious, *vécu*, *exercitus*, becomes known, *thématique*, *signatus*.¹² The

12 See Lonergan, *Insight*, chapter 11, and *Method in Theology*, chapter 1.

13 See Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 470-73. This work makes available with Latin and English facing pages Lonergan's *De Deo trino: Pars systematica* (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1964), which was a revised version of what he had first published as *Divinarum Personarum conceptio analogica* (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1957, 1959). The hypothesis was proposed earlier by Lonergan in unpublished notes on grace from 1951-52. These notes will be published in vol. 19 of Lonergan's Collected Works, *Early Latin Theology*

distinction enables us to develop a Christian theology of the world's religions that would identify de facto conscious participation in Trinitarian life in those whose religious traditions do not explicitly recognize the triune nature of God. I have developed this basis of a 'world theology' in *The Trinity in History*.

Thomist Trinitarian theology traditionally speaks of four divine relations: paternity, filiation, active spiration, and passive spiration. Lonergan's Trinitarian systematics speaks of created imitations of each of these divine relations. The two divine relations that are most relevant to my concerns are active spiration and passive spiration, but I will present Lonergan's statement in full and will speak briefly about the created imitations also of paternity and filiation. My point is that the interpersonal state of grace establishes imitations of divine life that run directly counter to the relations of mimetic rivalry elucidated by Girard. Later in the paper, I will relate this affirmation back to the claim that I made above regarding Girard's need for an elaboration of the notion of nature.

Lonergan's statement, which has come to be called the 'four-point hypothesis,' was proposed in a systematic work on Trinitarian theology first published in 1957.¹³ The hypothesis begins, '... there are four real divine

(Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011). 2018: (1) I do not understand how two identical footnotes 13 got into the text, and I am not quite sure how to remove them. (2) *Early Latin Theology*, obviously, has been published.

13 See Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 470-73. This work makes available with Latin and English facing pages Lonergan's *De Deo trino: Pars systematica* (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1964), which was

relations, really identical with the divine substance, and therefore there are four very special modes that ground the external *imitation* of the divine substance.¹⁴

As I have indicated, the four divine relations to which Lonergan refers have traditionally been called paternity, filiation, active spiration, and passive spiration. The three divine persons *are* relations: the Father *is* paternity, the Son *is* filiation, and the Holy Spirit *is* passive spiration. In Trinitarian theologies based on Thomas Aquinas's spiritual or psychological analogy (as Lonergan's is), the Father and the Son together *are* the active spiration from which the Holy Spirit, passive spiration, proceeds precisely as the proceeding Love of Father and Son. Thus, active spiration is only conceptually distinct, not really distinct, from the Father and the Son considered together.

The four created imitations of divine being participating in the four divine relations are the following.

a revised version of what he had first published as *Divinarum Personarum conceptio analogica* (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1957, 1959). The hypothesis was proposed earlier by Lonergan in unpublished notes on grace from 1951-52. These notes will be published in vol. 19 of Lonergan's Collected Works, *Early Latin Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011). 2018: (1) I do not understand how two identical footnotes 13 got into the text, and I am not quite sure how to remove them. (2) *Early Latin Theology*, obviously, has been published.

14 Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 471, 473, emphasis added.

First, Lonergan adopts from Aquinas the notion of the ‘secondary act of existence’ of the incarnate Word, in an effort to delineate an ontological constitution whereby the eternal divine Word subsists in both a divine nature and a human nature. In metaphysical terms, the act of existence of the incarnate Word is the divine act of existence. But Jesus is a complete human being, whose human nature has been assumed by the incarnate Word. The person, the one who says ‘I,’ is the eternal Son of God. But that eternal Son of God is present to himself not only with the divine consciousness that is his as Son but also with the human consciousness according to which he is like us in all things but sin. Aquinas attempted to arrive at some remote and hypothetical understanding of this mystery of faith, and in doing so eventually hit upon the notion of a ‘secondary act of existence’ proper to the incarnate Word, according to which he is a complete human being whose entire human nature has been assumed by the divine person of the Word.

Lonergan adds to Aquinas’s Christology the hypothesis that this ontological constituent may be regarded as a created participation in and imitation of divine paternity, of the Father, of the one whom Jesus called ‘Abba.’ The reasoning behind this hypothesis is that the secondary act of existence accruing to the assumed humanity of the Word is the created base of a created *relation* of the assumed humanity to the eternal and uncreated Son, a relation to the Son that shares in the divine relation to the Son, the relation that is the Father. This relation, as a created relation precisely *to the Son*, imitates the eternal relation to the Son that is the Father. It participates in and imitates divine paternity. Thus, Jesus says, ‘Whoever has seen me has seen the Father’ (John 14.9). Again, the divine Word as such does not speak but is spoken. However, the incarnate Word speaks in time, as the divine Father speaks eternally, and he speaks only what he has heard from the

Father (John 8.28). It is the secondary act of existence of the Incarnation that enables the Word to do the works and speak the words of the Father.

While the grace of hypostatic union which Aquinas and Lonergan partly explain through the metaphysical hypothesis of a secondary act of existence may truly be affirmed as the basic created grace on which all others depend, still it is not the particular created imitation of divine life that most concerns us in the present paper. For we want to find something that is available not only to the human being Jesus of Nazareth, but to all of us. The secondary act of existence is unique to the incarnate Son of God. What we are looking for is expressed rather in the second and third participations in divine life contained in Lonergan's four-point hypothesis.

The second element, then, is that the elevation to participation in divine life that has traditionally been called sanctifying grace may fittingly be understood as a created participation in and imitation of the active spiration that *is* the Father and the Son together 'breathing' the Holy Spirit. The gift of God's love establishes a created base of a created relation to the uncreated Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit, Trinitarian Proceeding Love, says Lonergan, dwells in us not as some kind of formal cause, as Karl Rahner maintains,¹⁵ but as the term of a created relation. Because this relation is a relation to the Holy Spirit, it imitates the Father and the Son together actively 'breathing' love in their acknowledgment of each other as infinitely lovable. The reception of the divine favor, of the grace that makes us pleasing to God (*gratia gratum faciens*, in the medieval expression) is the

15 See Karl Rahner, 'Some Implications of the Scholastic Concept of Uncreated Grace,' in *Theological Investigations*, vol. 1, trans. Cornelius Ernst (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1961) 319-46.

reception of our own lovableness in the sight of God, which also enables us to love with the very love of the Father and the Son, and so to ‘breathe’ charity in a manner that is analogous to the way in which the Father and the Son ‘breathe’ the Holy Spirit.

Third, then, the charity that is ‘breathed’ from the reception of our own lovableness in God’s eyes, that is, from what a metaphysical theology calls ‘sanctifying grace,’ is love of the God who breathed into us the gift of love. It is love issuing forth in grateful return for the gift. It is a created participation in and imitation of the passive spiration, the divine Proceeding Love, that is the Holy Spirit. Charity is an infused habit, or perhaps in modern terms an infused circle of operations, that is the created base of a created relation to the uncreated Father and Son, who consequently also dwell in us as the uncreated terms of created relations. Because it is a relation to the Father and the Son, it imitates the Holy Spirit, who *is* an uncreated relation of passive spiration, uncreated Proceeding Love, with respect to the eternal Father and Son who together ‘spirate’ the Spirit of their mutual love. In Christians, this love of God in return is companionship with the incarnate Word, who relates us in transcendent hope to the Father. In those to whom the same gift has been given but without the objectification that comes from Trinitarian belief, we may speak of its manifestations in such dispositions as the love of wisdom and the transcendence that relates us to the ultimate, a transcendence manifest in diverse ways in the various religions of the world.

Fourth, what Thomas and Lonergan call the light of glory is the created condition of the promised vision of God that we already hope for in this life as we yearn to see the Father. When it is finally bestowed upon us, it will be a created participation in and imitation of divine filiation, as the

incarnate Son leads the children of adoption perfectly back to the eternal Father. In this way it is the created base of a created relation to the uncreated Father to whom we are related in hope in this life.

The first and the fourth of these created imitations of the divine relations are not available to human consciousness in this life. The first is peculiar to the incarnate Son of God, Jesus of Nazareth. The fourth will be available to human consciousness in the beatific knowing that is our destiny. With the possible exception of extraordinary mystical gifts, it is available to us now only inchoately in the virtue of hope. What is available to human consciousness in this life are the second and the third of these created imitations of divine life, and it is on these that I focus as I speak of imitations of the divine relations.

Lonergan's four-point systematic-theological hypothesis thus proposes that sanctifying grace is to charity as active spiration is to passive spiration, and so that created habitual grace in its totality has a trinitarian structure, that it participates in and imitates the trinitarian relations of active and passive spiration. In my elaborations of this hypothesis, I have suggested that God's offer of this gift of participation in divine life through created relations to the three divine persons is universal, that is, it is offered to all men and women at every time and place. But I insist as well that it is differentiated, made known, *thématique*, *signatus*, explicit, through the divine revelation recorded in the Jewish and Christian scriptures.

The universal mission of the Holy Spirit, the gift of divine love, is not only intensified but also revealed, made thematic, in the visible mission of the Son, where it plays a constitutive role. A visible mission of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost fulfills the twofold mission of the Son and the Spirit and enables a public acknowledgment that what happened in Jesus was indeed

the revelation of the triune God in history. The mutual interplay of divine and human freedom can now be carried on in explicit recognition of what, prior to the revelation that comes to its fulfilment in the mission of the incarnate Word, necessarily remained *vécu* (lived) but not *thématique* (reflectively objectified), implicit but not recognized, conscious but not known, present *in actu exercito* (in practice) but not *in actu signato* (as signified).

I regard René Girard's thought as a substantial contribution to the theology of the Christian word, and so to the theology of revelation. The visible mission of the incarnate Word is among other things the explicit revelation, through linguistic and incarnate meaning, of what God has always been doing and continues to do in the inner word of the invisible mission of the Holy Spirit. Entailed in that revelation, intrinsic to it, is the solution to the evils consequent on mimetic infection and contagion, namely, the command to 'be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect,' where perfection means 'love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father who is in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust' (Matthew 5.44-45).

One of the ways in which this gift of mutually reciprocal relations to the divine persons can be made available to consciousness is through recollection or memory providing evidence sufficient for the silent, indeed ineffable, judgment of value that assents to being on the receiving end of unqualified love. For Augustine, *memoria*, memory, is, at least according to some interpretations, a state of mind in which the mind (*mens*) finds itself. There is a graced *memoria*, a transformed state in which the mind finds itself, a recollection that functions in an analogy based in grace as the

analogue for the divine Father. I am suggesting that it does so precisely as it provides evidence grasped as sufficient for the judgment of value that assents to the gift of divine love. Whether this is what Augustine meant, however, is secondary. It *is* what I mean!

That assent changes everything in a person's life. The proceeding judgment of value is what Lonergan calls the faith born of religious love, and it establishes a new horizon for everything.¹⁶ It functions in the same analogy as the analogue for the divine Word. From recollection and faith operating together, there proceeds charity, love of the givers of the gift in return. For Christians, that love becomes more and more an explicit relation of companionship with the divine Word made flesh and an explicit relation of hope for the vision of the divine Father. For those who do not have the revelation that makes this explicit, that love is a love of wisdom and a hope that keeps the quest for truth alive against all odds. The Trinitarian structure of active and passive spiration is present in the graced dimensions of all who have received the gift, whether or not it is articulated thematically as Trinitarian on the basis of God's revelation in the incarnate Word. A Christian theology of the world's religions in their positive moments will thus be Trinitarian at the core.

3 Autonomous Spiritual Processions

I wish now to return to the notion of nature, which I believe is an important qualification to be added to what we might call Girardian anthropology. Theological understanding of the divine relations is grounded in an

16 See Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 111-14.

understanding of the divine processions, and for Lonergan as for Aquinas the key to reaching an obscure and analogical understanding of the divine processions lies in what Aquinas calls *emanatio intelligibilis*, intelligible emanation, precisely in the order of nature.

What do Aquinas and Lonergan mean by ‘intelligible emanation?’ If I grasp that there is sufficient evidence to posit a conception as true, the inner assent, the silent ‘yes’ of the judgment of fact that I utter emanates with rational exigency from the grasp of the evidence as sufficient. Again, if I grasp that there is sufficient evidence to affirm something or someone as a genuine value, the silent ‘yes’ of the judgment of value that I utter emanates with existential autonomy from the grasp of the evidence. The judgment of value, moreover, is a word that breathes love (*verbum spirans amorem*), and so from the evidence grasped and the consequent judgment of value together there proceeds or emanates love, at least in the form of responsible decision. Thus, the intelligible emanation of a judgment of value, ‘Yes,’ from a reflective grasp of evidence regarding what is good provides one variant of the so-called ‘psychological analogy’ to enable us to have some very remote and imperfect understanding of what the procession of the Son from the Father might be. And the intelligible emanation of a loving decision from this grasp of evidence and judgment of value operating as a unified principle provides one variant of the psychological analogy for the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son. This particular analogy, unlike the one I suggested above from the structure of grace, is taken from the natural unfolding of the eros of the human spirit for intelligibility, truth and being, and the good. And it manifests precisely what is meant by *emanatio intelligibilis*.

In my own work I have chosen to render *emanatio intelligibilis* as ‘autonomous spiritual procession.’ It is precisely in the notion of autonomy that we will find, I suggest, a contribution to mimetic theory that comes from the clarifications of the notion of nature to be found in Lonergan’s work. Girard speaks of the illusion we entertain regarding the autonomy of our desires. More precisely, he conjoins the two terms ‘spontaneity’ and ‘autonomy,’ so that they mean various aspects of the same thing, aspects that he claims are illusory.¹⁷ I wish to distinguish the two more sharply. It is only what Lonergan calls *processions of act from act in the spiritual realm* that he regards as legitimately autonomous. I wish to add, in conversation with Girard, that the legitimacy of the autonomy results from the fact that these processions in their integrity are not governed by the interdividual field.¹⁸

17 See the opening pages of René Girard, *Deceit, Desire, and the Novel: Self and Other in Literary Structure*, trans. Yvonne Freccero (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1966).

18 See the following remark by 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: ‘... 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.’ Girard’s response (*ibid.*): ‘That is quite right.’ ‘Interdividual’ refers to the same dimension that Lonergan calls ‘primordial intersubjectivity,’ but Girard adds the insistence on the mimetic character of this dimension. On intersubjectivity, see Lonergan, *Insight* 237-42.

That field constitutes what I called above the first way of being conscious. This first way of being conscious includes the sensitive-psychic passive reception of desire and fear within the realm of primordial intersubjectivity, and it can infect the second way of being conscious with all the vagaries of mimetic contagion that Girard elucidates. Autonomy is present in a legitimate way only when the second way of being conscious has not been infected by the first.

This autonomy is also not present in the spiritual emergence of insights from questions, for that is an emergence of act from potency, not of act from act. As such, however, it constitutes what Lonergan would regard as a legitimate spontaneity in the second way of being conscious. Thus he distinguishes spontaneity from autonomy, and assigns to each a meaning that is not subject to Girard's hermeneutic of suspicion.

What, then, is legitimate human autonomy? The eros of the human spirit, in its movement from experience through understanding and judgment to right decision, manifests along the way not only the spontaneous emergence of act from potency as answers suddenly emerge from questions but also careful, self-possessed, assured originations of new acts from previous acts. Included in these are the emergence of inner words of hypothetical conceptualization from insightful grasp of intelligibility, the emergence of judgments of fact from the reflective grasp of the sufficiency of evidence, the emergence of judgments of value from loving grasp of the evidence of goodness, and the emergence of loving acts or responsible decisions from the collaboration of loving grasp and the word of value that it has uttered.

In the emergence of act from potency, the principle is the object; in the emergence of act from act, the principle is the subject. What I am calling

autonomous spiritual processions *are* indeed a function of human desire, but of the natural and spiritual desire that is to be distinguished from the elicited and sensitive-psychic desires whose mimetic structure Girard has elucidated. Especially when those processions entail authentic operations of value judgments and loving decisions, the desire that they express and indeed inchoately fulfill is quite different from the acquisitive mimetic desire that Girard illuminates. My thesis is that there are desires that are best understood as natural participations in divine light and love: the desire for intelligibility, the desire for the truth that is the medium of the knowledge of the real, the desire for the good. These participations always are conscious but frequently are not known for what they are. And even the consistent exercise of the natural desires of which I speak is a function of the grace that I spoke of above.

We may provide more detail concerning what is meant by ‘spiritual’ in contrast to ‘sensitive-psychic.’ In *Insight* Lonergan draws a distinction between the intelligible and the intelligent. Empirical objects are *potentially intelligible*: they can be understood. The unities and laws of things are *formally intelligible*: understanding has grasped unity and law. The existence of these unities and the occurrence of events in accord with the laws are *actually intelligible*: the formal intelligibilities are affirmed to *be*. But the disinterested, detached, unrestricted desire to know is *potentially intelligent*: when its promptings revealed in questions are followed upon, they will lead to understanding. Acts of understanding are known as insights. They grasp unities and laws, and they ground conceptions of the unities and laws. As such, they are *formally intelligent*: understanding has occurred. The further reflective insights that grasp the sufficiency of evidence to pronounce judgment on our understanding, and the judgments that emanate from such

reflective understanding and posit being as known, are *actually intelligent*. Thus, as known to ourselves, we are intelligible, as every other known is, but that intelligibility, unlike the intelligibility of other known realities, is also intelligence and knowing.

Now for Lonergan intelligibility that is also intelligent is precisely what is meant by ‘spiritual,’ and that is the sense in which I am using the word ‘spiritual’ here. Thomas Aquinas’s *emanatio intelligibilis* refers to what Lonergan calls spiritual intelligibility, the intelligibility that is also intelligent, the intelligibility of intelligence, reasonableness, and moral responsibility in act, where ‘act’ is manifest in such operations as insight, conception, grasp of evidence, and judgment.

We proceed now to the meaning of ‘autonomous.’ When a judgment of value proceeds *because of* and *in proportion to* the evidence grasped, and when a loving decision proceeds *because of* and *in proportion to* both the evidence grasped and the judgment of value, the human subject has attained a legitimate form of autonomy. A sound judgment is sound because it proceeds (a) from a grasp of sufficient evidence that I know is sufficient, and (b) in accord with or in proportion to the evidence that has been grasped. A good decision is good because it proceeds (a) from the grasp of evidence and the sound judgment, and (b) in accord with or in proportion to both of these sources together grounding the decision. The relation conveyed by the phrases ‘because of’ and ‘in accord with’ and ‘in proportion to,’ precisely as this relation is known to and acted on by the acting subject, constitutes genuine autonomy. This is what I mean by rendering Thomas’s and Lonergan’s ‘intelligible emanation’ in the language of autonomous spiritual processions. In the expression ‘autonomous spiritual procession,’ the word ‘autonomous’ refers precisely to the ‘because of’ and ‘in accord with’ or ‘in

proportion to' aspect of the procession of word from understanding and of loving decision from understanding and word together, precisely as that aspect is known by the subject to constitute the relation between what grounds the procession and what proceeds from that ground. And this is part of the very notion of human *nature* that, I suggest, Girardian theory needs for its completion.

I distinguish, then, and perhaps in a manner that Girard does not, between 'autonomous' and 'spontaneous.' I find a genuine meaning for both terms, even while acknowledging that Girard has exposed illusions in regard to those meanings. There are in human consciousness processions, even spiritual processions, that are not autonomous but spontaneous. One example of a spontaneous as contrasted with an autonomous spiritual procession is the emergence of an act of understanding from data organized by imagination under the dynamism of inquiry. This procession is distinct from the subsequent autonomous spiritual procession that is the emergence of an objectification or conceptualization from the act of understanding or of a judgment from the reflective grasp of evidence. What is the difference? From reflecting on our own experience, we can, I believe, verify that the emergence of insight from data organized by imagination under the dynamism of inquiry is an instance of what anyone influenced by Aristotle would call the emergence of *act from potency*, whereas the emergence of hypothetical conceptualizations from the insight itself is an emergence of *one act from another act*. Since there is no movement from potency to act in God, who is pure act, what I am calling spontaneous processions will not provide a fitting or suitable analogy for understanding divine processions. The processions in human consciousness that will provide such an analogy must be processions of act from act. Even then, of course, the analogy is

deficient. God is one act, consciously participated in in distinct ways by three divine persons, whereas insight and subsequent conceptualizations or objectifications in human consciousness are distinct acts, as are reflective grasp of the sufficiency of evidence and consequent judgments of fact or of value.

The dimension of spiritual autonomy that provides Lonergan with the appropriate realm in which to locate an analogy for trinitarian processions lies in what he calls existential self-constitution, that is, in the emergence of good decision from an authentic judgment of value based on a reflective grasp of evidence, *precisely with regard to the question, What am I to make of myself?* The evidence grasped by an authentic person is first and foremost evidence regarding existential self-constitution: What would it be good for me to be? The consequent judgment of value is an assent to that grasped ideal. The proceeding love that leads to self-transcendent decision flows from the grasped evidence and consequent judgment. In an analogous manner, the divine Word is a judgment of value resting on *agapē*, Loving Intelligence in act, originatively constituting divine being. Divine Proceeding Love, the Holy Spirit, is spirated from such a dual origin: from Loving Grasp and the divine ‘Yes, this is very good!’ as the two acknowledge each other’s lovableness and breathe the Spirit of Love that unites them.

In this section, we have been presenting a version of the Thomist-Lonerganian psychological analogy from human nature for understanding what Christians profess in faith regarding divine procession: ‘God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God.’ But as we saw in the previous section, Lonergan’s four-point theological hypothesis adds the possibility of constructing an analogy in the supernatural order, one that posits graced

imitations of, participations in, the divine relations themselves. The secondary act of existence of the Incarnate Word participates in divine paternity. The reception of the gift of divine love participates in divine active spiration. The habit of charity – loving God in return – participates in divine passive spiration. The light of glory participates in divine filiation. All four of these created supernatural realities are analogues for divine relations. But they are also more than that. They are imitations-by-participation.

The full analogy in the order of grace would be based on the imitations-by-participation in active and passive spiration. The structure of this analogy is the same as that of the analogy from nature. There is the procession of assent from intelligent grasp of evidence, providing the analogy for the procession of the Son, and there is the procession of acts of love from grasp-and-assent considered as the one principle of love, providing the analogy for the procession of the Holy Spirit. But in the analogy within the supernatural order, the grasp of evidence is explicitly the grasp of a lover who has been loved with an unqualified love, and the assent is loving assent to that gift. The dynamic state of loving with God's love, not our own, and so the gift of loving in an unqualified fashion, governs the entire movement from beginning to end.

4 The Duality of Consciousness and the Dialectic of Desire

Let me recall the important passage from Lonergan's book *The Triune God: Systematics*, which I cited above and to which I now wish to return in a more detailed conversation with Girard: '... 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 will in order to act' (*The Triune God: Systematics* 139). Within both sensitive-psychic and spiritual process, a distinction is to be drawn between the emergence of act from potency and the emergence of act from act. At the level of the spiritual, this becomes the distinction I have drawn between spontaneous and autonomous processions.

The integrity of spiritual process, whether natural or supernatural and whether spontaneous or autonomous, entails fidelity to a natural, transcendental orientation of human spiritual desire to the intelligible, the true and the real, and the good. This transcendental orientation is a natural participation in uncreated light. Within our present context, we should emphasize as well that it is a natural, not elicited, desire in the spiritual order for being, for the true, for the good, for God.

Lonergan consistently emphasizes that there are other desires that would interfere with the unfolding of the transcendental, spiritual, sometimes autonomous, active desire for being and value – with the pure, unrestricted, detached, disinterested desire to know what is and to do what is good, a desire ultimately for union with God. We can approach an understanding of this problem from what Lonergan says about the two ways of being conscious, and we can enlist the invaluable assistance of Girard in doing so.

Discriminating these two dimensions of human self-presence is an extraordinarily sensitive and delicate enterprise. Christian ascetical tradition has often neglected the positive importance of the sensitive-psychic dimension, while psychological theory tends to overlook the spiritual

dimension. The first way of being conscious permeates the second, either in support of the transcendental orientation to the intelligible, the true, the real, and the good, or in conflict with it. Again, and more precisely, the first way of being conscious precedes, accompanies, and overarches the intentional operations that constitute the second way of being conscious. It precedes these operations in the transition from the neural to the psychic, with all the ambiguities of dreaming consciousness and myth, but also with the release of the images that are needed for insight and the symbols that manifest our higher aspirations and beckon us to follow them. It accompanies the operations in the feelings that are the mass and momentum of intentional consciousness. And it overarches these operations in establishing us as lover and beloved, as members of community, as subjects whose consciousness or self-presence is itself interpersonal, not with the interdividuality of the purely psychic but with the communion characteristic of those who are principles of benevolence and beneficence.

Thus, distinguishing the two ways of being conscious and negotiating their relations calls for what Christian spiritual tradition has called discernment. What we undergo rather passively in what we sense and imagine, in our desires and fears, our delights and sorrows, our joys and sadness, affects the entire range of our spiritual orientation as it actually unfolds. Under optimal circumstances, this first way of being conscious bolsters and supports the second way, where 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 will in order to act. But those optimal circumstances are relatively rare. In fact, they are never reached without help from others and ultimately from the grace of God. To the extent that they are not achieved, there is a statistical near-inevitability of distortion

precisely in the spiritual dimensions of human operation. Integrity in those dimensions, and especially in autonomous processions of act from act in human spirituality, is ever precarious, and is always reached by withdrawing from inauthenticity.

Girard has called attention to the extremely precarious nature of human claims to autonomous subjectivity. These precautions are salutary for anyone hoping to resurrect the psychological analogy in Trinitarian theology. Lonergan has called attention to authenticity and inauthenticity in the very realms of understanding, truth, moral development, and religion, the realms that are also appealed to for the analogy. These areas are positively treated when he speaks of intellectual, moral, and religious conversion, but these conversions are required for the consistent integrity of spiritual performance. And in my own writings I have called attention to a distinct dimension of authenticity and conversion that affects primarily the first 'way of being conscious.' I have spoken of psychic conversion. Girard gives us a better purchase on this psychic dimension of desire than do other current or recent explorations; and being very clear with him about the character of false mimesis and deviated transcendence precisely as they affect and distort intellectual, moral, and religious operations will help students of Lonergan and of theology in general to isolate much more clearly just where in consciousness the genuine *imago Dei* really lies.

Thus, I propose (1) that what Girard has written about desire concerns directly the first 'way of being conscious,' that is, the sensitive, psychic dimension of consciousness, but also (2) that this dimension penetrates our spiritual orientation to the intelligible, the true and the real, and good, and that it does so for better or for worse.

I presume that we are all aware of Girard's explication of mimetic or triangular desire, and of his distinction between acquisitive or appropriative mimetic desire and a possible desire, even a form of mimetic desire, that functions in positive ways. I would suggest

- that what Lonergan calls the first way of being conscious is precisely interindividual, in Girard's sense,
- that psychic development entails the negotiation of this interindividual field, a negotiation that (1) would take the subject through something like what C.G. Jung calls individuation, but without the vagaries and confusions of Jungian explications,¹⁹ and (2) would lead beyond individuation to genuine interpersonal relations as one moves consistently into dynamic state of being in love,
- that this negotiation calls upon the operations of the second way of being conscious, that is, upon inquiry, insight, conceptualization, weighing evidence, judging, deliberating, and deciding,
- that inadequate negotiations of the interindividual field can and will distort the second way of being conscious, and
- that authentic negotiation of the same field will allow the second way to flourish in the development of the person.

19 The confusions in Jungian theory are a function of not distinguishing two kinds of opposites: contraries, which can be reconciled with one another, and contradictories, which cannot. Consciousness and the unconscious are contraries, as are the masculine and feminine dimensions of the psyche. Good and evil are contradictories. See chapter 10 in Doran, *Theology and the Dialectics of History* for details.

It seems important to stress that Girard's complex conceptions of mimetic desire presuppose a radical insufficiency in the very being of the desiring individual. There is a radical ontological sickness at the core of internal appropriative mimetic desire. The individual is at some level painfully aware of his or her own emptiness, and it is this awareness that leads one to crave so desperately the fullness of being that supposedly lies in others. The figures onto whom such desire is projected mediate being itself for us. It is via them that we seek to become real, and it is through wanting their very being that we come to imitate them. The wish to absorb the other or to be absorbed by or into the substance of the other implies an insuperable revulsion for one's own being.²⁰ Such metaphysical desire is masochism or pseudo-masochism, a will to self-destruction that manifests itself in attempts to become something or someone other than what one is. The self-sufficiency attributed to the model is, of course, illusory, and so the project to attain it is doomed from the outset. But even if one vaguely perceives the fruitlessness of the quest, one does not give it up, because to do so would mean admitting that the salvation one craves is impossible to achieve. One may even become the tormentor, torturing others as one was oneself tortured, and so masochism is transformed into sadism.

I find a threefold benefit to be gained by Lonergan students from a serious study of Girard's exposure of these dynamics. First, Girard's position shows that there is a much greater complexity than might be

²⁰ These reflections are probably related to Lonergan's insistence that the basic philosophic counterposition is to regard being as a subdivision of the 'already out there now.' But that is material for another paper and cannot be developed here.

obvious to the two ways of being conscious to which Lonergan refers; in particular, much more enters into the first way of being conscious than might be obvious from Lonergan's description of it. The passive reception of what we sense and imagine, of our desires and our fears, our delights and sorrows, our joys and sadness, is not some simple, one-dimensional reality. It is extraordinarily complex, and the mimetic model of desire throws more light on that complexity than any other position of which I am aware.

Second, Girard also shows the interrelations of the two ways of being conscious. For one thing, it is ultimately a spiritual emptiness that leads to the derailments of mimetic desire, an emptiness that recalls Augustine's 'You have made us for yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in you.'²¹ But also, the only resolution of mimetic violence is the complete renunciation of the rivalry to which triangular acquisitive desire leads us, and that renunciation is an intensely spiritual act flowing from a decision that itself proceeds from acknowledging the facts in true judgment. In other words, the resolution of the problems to which acquisitive mimetic desire gives rise takes place through a series of autonomous spiritual processions that are precisely the sort of emanations that Lonergan regards as appropriate for the psychological Trinitarian analogy.

Finally, I regard the vagaries of mimetic desire to which Girard gives us entrance as the principal instances of what Lonergan calls dramatic bias and also of the psychological components of the other forms of bias that

21 Augustine, *Confessions*, book 1, chapter 1. See *The Confessions of St.*

Augustine, trans. John K. Ryan (New York: Doubleday Image, 1960) 44.

Lonergan exposes. These components introduce the blind spot that Lonergan describes so powerfully in his description of dramatic bias.²²

My questions to Girard would be the following. First, his work raises for me the question of the significance precisely for mimetic theory of the natural spiritual desire for intelligibility, truth and being, and the good, and ultimately for God, that Lonergan has clarified. There is a radical ontological desire that itself is not mimetic but that is involved in various ways in all mimetic desire. And so I ask: Is imitative desire brought on by a sense of spiritual inadequacy that is endemic to the human condition? Is the story of imitative desire a story of the successes and failures of mutual self-mediation in the attempt, itself completely legitimate, to find the completion of one's being? Is Girard's mimetic violence, which springs from imitative desire, the fate of mutual self-mediation gone wrong? Is there healthy mutual self-mediation? Do we all suffer from such a radical ontological insufficiency that these double binds are inevitable for all of us? Or is there a mediation that can quiet the sense of spiritual inadequacy and enable human relations to be something other than the violent mimesis that Girard depicts? What is it that enables one to renounce mimetic rivalry completely without using this renunciation as a feigned indifference that is just another way to get what one wants? Is the tendency to compare oneself to others not rooted in an ontological emptiness that only God can fill? Is there a way of negotiating this emptiness that transcends victimization by the triangular situation that necessarily will be involved in the negotiation? What is the source of our

22 Lonergan, *Insight* 215. Girard enables us to link the 'blind spot' with the intersubjectivity that Lonergan discusses later in his treatment of bias. That link is not explicit in Lonergan's account.

fascination with the saints? Think of Ignatius Loyola asking, What would it mean if I were to do in my situation what Francis and Dominic did in theirs? Or again, think of Bernard Lonergan asking, as he must have, What would it mean if I were to do in my situation what Thomas Aquinas did in his? The mimetic quality of the questions is obvious. But in either case it led to something quite other than the tortured quality of internally mediated relations. It led to autonomous spiritual processions of word and love that were in fact created participations in triune life.

These questions can be answered, I believe, by appealing to the transcendental desires of the human spirit, to Lonergan's second way of being conscious. 'All people by nature *desire* to know,' Aristotle says at the very beginning of the *Metaphysics*. This becomes Lonergan's leitmotif throughout *Insight*, where he unpacks the dynamics of the desire to know in mathematics, science, common sense, and philosophy, as well as the devices that we employ to flee understanding when we do not want to face the truth. In his later work he extends this transcendental desire to the notion of the good. Girard insists correctly that almost all learning is based on imitation, and so satisfying the desire to know involves mimetic behavior. But the present question is, Are the desire to know and the transcendental intention of value themselves a function of acquisitive mimesis? Are they acquisitive desires? Or is acquisitiveness a perversion of these desires? *Is* there such a thing as a detached, disinterested desire to know? Girard himself speaks of a true vocation of thought that lies in integrating isolated discoveries into a

rational framework and transforming them into real knowledge.²³ Is that not an indication of what Lonergan calls the desire to know? Is it not an instance of Lonergan's second way of being conscious, where we 'inquire in order to understand, understand in order to utter a word, weigh evidence in order to judge' (*The Triune God: Systematics* 139)? How does fidelity to this vocation differ from acquisitive mimesis? How can it be infected and derailed by acquisitive mimesis? These questions are worth pursuing. And in a further extension of the same set of questions, can Lonergan students ignore how Girard has clarified in an astounding fashion the influence that distorted mimesis has on the realm of the sacred, which in its authenticity pertains primarily to the second way of being conscious, an influence that Girard calls deviated transcendence? Will not these clarifications help us get straight just where the genuine *imago Dei*, and so the genuine *imitatio Dei*, resides?

5 Imago Dei

Where is the *imago* that is also an *imitatio*? We have seen two instances, one in human nature itself and the other in that nature as elevated to participation in the divine relations. Foundationally, the image of God lies in the created participation in active and passive spiration, the share in divine life given to us by God. That participation is, first, the gift of being on the receiving end of love in an unqualified fashion. This gift prompts an existential judgment

23 See René Girard, *Things Hidden since the Foundation of the World*, trans. Stephen Bann and Michael Metteer (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987) 7.

of value, a knowledge born of the gift of love, a word that breathes love in return, the word of faith. That love in return is the charity born of the reception of love and the acknowledgment of that reception, a charity that is inspired by gratitude for the gift given. This process may serve as an analogy for the divine relations of active and passive spiration, relations which encompass the entirety of immanent Trinitarian life.

But this supernatural *imitatio* may itself be understood by analogy with an imitation of God in the very order of nature, an imitation that lies within actively intelligent, actively reasonable, actively deliberative consciousness, that is, in the second way of being conscious that Lonergan specifies. In fact, it has been in the context of the autonomy of the operations performed in this natural unfolding of the transcendental orientation that we have found a fruitful encounter with Girard's mimetic theory. Girard has introduced a necessary hermeneutic of suspicion into the project of self-appropriation initiated by Lonergan, a hermeneutic that is probably the best categorial articulation to date of what my own work anticipated heuristically by speaking of a need for psychic conversion. He has captured the interference of acquisitively mimetic desire with the unfolding of the transcendental orientation. But there *is* an *imago Dei*, and an *imitatio Dei* – 'imago' and 'imitatio' are from the same root – that is natural, that resides in our spiritual nature, where 'nature' is understood in the Aristotelian sense of an immanent principle of movement and of rest. The *imago Dei* or *imitatio Dei* is not the whole of that spiritual nature, for that nature is 'the human spirit as raising and answering questions' and so is potency in the realm of spiritual matters. But there are moments in which that nature precisely as nature imitates the pure act that is God, however remotely: when from understanding as act there proceeds an inner word of conceptualization in

act, when from the grasp of evidence as sufficient there proceeds a judgment whether of fact or of value, and when from a judgment of value there proceeds a good decision or an act of love. That natural image can be used as an analogy from which we may understand the more radical image or imitation that lies in a created participation in the divine relations of active and passive spiration.

Lonergan writes, ‘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.’²⁴ The quotation is applicable equally, of course, to natural and graced states of being. But the dynamic state of being on the receiving end of a love that is without any reservations or qualifications, a love that makes us lovable because it elevates us to participation in divine life, is precisely the gift that the four-point hypothesis construes as a created participation in divine active spiration. From that love received there flows a knowledge born of love that is a silent judgment of value proceeding as act from act. These two together imitate divine active spiration, and what proceeds from this created participation in active spiration is the love in return that relates us to the Father and the Son who gave the love in the first place. The supernatural analogy imitates by participation the entire life of the triune God. It is in fact only by the grace of this created imitation, whether it is known as such or

24 Bernard Lonergan, ‘Christology Today: Methodological Reflections,’ in *A Third Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1985) 93.

not – and most often it is not – that the natural transcendental unfolding of our spiritual aspirations remains authentic.