

Response to Dr. Michael Sharkey's "Heidegger, Lonergan, and the Notion of Being."

Andrew Barrette  
Southern Illinois University-Carbondale

Thank you, Father Doran, for inviting me to respond to Professor Sharkey's paper, and to all those at Marquette involved in organizing this colloquium.

Not only does Professor Sharkey interpret the major works of two thinkers in his paper, but he provides arguments for why we ought to *prefer* Lonergan's notion of being over Heidegger's. As a matter of method, then, Sharkey asks us to attend, inquire, and reflect on our own activity so that we might make such a decision. This is no small point: if we are to prefer one or the other, we must judge whether we are actually operating one way or the other. In short, we, the readers, will have to wonder at once about Sharkey's interpretation of Heidegger and Lonergan and our own wondering.

On the one hand, Lonergan's notion of being is 'a priori, heuristic, and trans-categorical intention of all, manifest in (and as) inquiry; on the other, Heidegger's notion, Professor Sharkey claims, is 'a priori, *possessive*, trans-categorical intuition of all, still present in inquiry but gone dim.'

To construe Heidegger's notion of being as possessing an undifferentiated totality, 'omnia, plain and simple' seems to reveal the very way (*meth-odus*) of his thought: in our very relation to beings, we cover up our primordial oneness with being (cf. Prof. Sharkey's remarks on Parmenides); in explication, in knowing, according to Heidegger, we 'darken' what was once so clear, namely, being as such. What is more, if we follow Prof. Sharkey's interpretation through, it is clear that, to Heidegger, falling away from an authentic existence is a possibility within the very structure of intentionality *itself* because it is always relatedness to. The very relation covers over the a priori clarity of the possessed notion. The "middle" Heidegger must

turn to *poiesis* and *gelassenheit*, then, in order to step away from the question of beings and remain in thrall to being.

To be sure, Prof. Sharkey has provided a valuable insight for Heidegger interpretation. I would like to ask a few questions, however: first, what oversight caused Heidegger to believe the notion of being was possessive rather than heuristic?—What experience was misinterpreted? Indeed, how might a Lonerganian account for such a viewpoint? And would you say more about the distinction between possessing a notion of being and our notion of being as possessive? Thank you.