

Class 6

We saw last week that chapter 5 proposes the structure of the mediation between a cultural matrix (meanings and values) and a religion, and we saw how Lonergan begins the chapter by simply listing 8 tasks, 8 sets of operations: research, interpretation, history, dialectic, foundations, doctrines, systematics, and communications. Theology is a collaborative process from data to results, and these sets of operations include everything that occurs in that process. They are successive stages in the process.

He did not yet articulate the grounds of the division, and that is where we begin today. Actually, we did get into it a bit with the question of whether acknowledging a fifth level would mean adding two more functional specialties. I think what L says about conversion would be part of a response to that question.

And we did see something of the grounds of the division in our first class.

Here the process continues, since further data are provided for a future theology to do research, interpretation, history, etc., on us.

Also, it is because of communications that the situation becomes as much a source as the tradition, and that theology is a mutual self-mediation.

3 Grounds of the division

How was this division derived? Two principles were involved.

3.1 Two phases

The first principle is that (133) 'theological operations occur in two basic phases. If one is to harken to the word, one must also bear witness to it. If one engages in *lectio divina*, there come to mind *quaestiones*. If one assimilates tradition, one learns that one should pass it on. If one encounters the past, one also has to take one's stand toward the future. In brief, there is a theology *in oratione obliqua* that tells what Paul and John, Augustine and Aquinas, and anyone else had to say about various questions. But there is also a theology *in oratione recta* in which the theologian, enlightened by the past, confronts the problems of [his or her] own day.' Theology is not just studying history, but also making history.

3.2 Four sets of objectives in each phase

The second principle is that intentional consciousness unfolds on four distinct levels of conscious and intentional operations, each with its own proper achievement and end.

In everyday experience the four levels function in a global fashion, seeking the composite result of the ends of all four levels. Functional or operational specialization occurs when (134) **'the ends proper to particular levels ... become the objective sought by operations on all four levels.'** 134: 'So the textual critic will select the method (level of decision) that he feels will lead to the discovery (level of understanding) of what one reasonably affirms (level of judgment) was written in the original text (level of experience). The textual critic, then, **operates on all four levels**, but his **goal** is the end proper to the first level, namely, to ascertain the data. The interpreter, however, pursues a different **goal**. He wishes to understand the text, and so selects a different method. Moreover, he cannot confine his operations to the second level, understanding, and to the fourth, a selective decision. He must apprehend the text accurately before he can hope to understand it, and so he has to operate on the first level; and he has to judge whether or not his understanding is correct, for otherwise he will fail to distinguish between understanding and misunderstanding.' Etc. for all of the ensuing sets of operations.

So four levels yield four ends, and two phases yield eight functionally related specialties. **See the spelling out of the entire structure, bottom of 134 to top of 136. In the course of reading this, we will see the role assigned to conversion, and can use what he says to answer the question about whether a fifth level requires more functional specialties.**

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