

CONTENTS

Acknowledgements.....	1
Chapter One: The Trinity and Religious Diversity	6
Bernard Lonergan	6
Religious Diversity.....	12
Systematic Theological Understanding	26
<i>Theological Framework</i>	29
Contributions	33
Parameters of Study	38
Outline	40
Chapter Two: Potential and Possibilities	43
Trinitarian Approaches to Religious Diversity	44
<i>Gavin D’Costa: The Trinity and the Encounter of Religions</i>	44
<i>S. Mark Heim: A Trinitarian Theology of Religious Ends.....</i>	54
<i>Jacques Dupuis: A Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism.....</i>	64
Lonergan and the Meeting of Religions.....	75
Conclusion.....	89
Chapter Three: Lonergan’s Two Trinitarian Analogies.....	92
Lonergan’s Early Trinitarian Thought.....	94
De Deo Trino: pars systematica.....	96
<i>Methodological Questions</i>	96
<i>The Basic Problem</i>	98
<i>Intellectual Emanation</i>	99
<i>The Divine Relations</i>	104
<i>The Divine Persons</i>	105
<i>The Divine Missions</i>	109
The Later Lonergan’s Trinitarian Thought.....	118
<i>Human Development from Above Downward</i>	119
<i>A New Analogy</i>	126
<i>The Divine Missions</i>	132
Conclusion.....	147

Chapter Four: Religions.....	152
Philosophy of Religion: the Question of God, Religious Studies (and Theology).....	153
Lonergan's Model of Religion.....	163
<i>God's Love: Gift and Openness</i>	164
<i>The Sufficiency of Grace</i>	169
<i>Inner and Outer Dimensions</i>	173
<i>Universalist Faith</i>	179
<i>The Distinctiveness of Christianity</i>	181
Lonergan and the Encounter of World Religions.....	184
<i>Robley Edward Whitson</i>	186
Convergence.....	188
Theology.....	189
History and revelation.....	191
<i>Friedrich Heiler</i>	193
<i>Wilfred Cantwell Smith</i>	195
<i>Raimundo Panikkar</i>	199
Conclusion.....	203
 Chapter Five: The 'Trinification' of History.....	 208
God for Us.....	208
The Divine Missions.....	214
Uniqueness and Complementarity.....	220
Theology of the Holy Spirit.....	226
History and Freedom.....	231
'Trinified' History.....	249
Dialogue, Mediation and Otherness.....	252
Theology and Meaning in an Evolving Church and World.....	270
Conclusion.....	278
 Conclusion: Lonergan's Contributions.....	 280
 Bibliography.....	 297

**THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF BERNARD J.F. LONERGAN TO A
SYSTEMATIC UNDERSTANDING OF RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY**

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation offers an extended engagement with Bernard J.F. Lonergan's trinitarian theology as it pertains to a systematic understanding of religious diversity. Renewed interest in trinitarian doctrine as the central Christian mystery with practical implications for theology and praxis as well as the key reality and concept in a coherent and ordered understanding of the Christian faith connects this doctrine with many areas of theology. In the current context of pluralism as fact, trinitarian theology provides the heuristic and hermeneutic to understand and appropriate the meaning of religious diversity in the life of the Church.

This dissertation is a systematic approach to the question of religious diversity. Thus, it presumes and affirms conciliar dogma (the Nicea-Constantinopolitan Creed) and theological doctrines (the psychological analogy for the Trinity). The 'unified field structure' proposed by Robert M. Doran, which is comprised of Lonergan's four-point hypothesis coupled with a theory of history, serves as the theological framework and foundation toward an understanding of religious diversity that is open to and anticipates new developments that are bound to occur through the ongoing conversations between the world's religions.

I argue that a Lonerganian-trinitarian approach will result in a new set of questions elicited by the context of religious diversity different from the current debates circumscribed by Christocentric, ecclesiological and soteriological concerns. Such an approach will result in a shift in discourse from causality to that of meaning and a concomitant movement from the metaphysical language and categories of a theoretical theology to the language and categories of a methodical theology derived from intentionality analysis.

Lonergan's trinitarian thought and analysis of human development from above downward that are explored in this dissertation are two significant areas that remain underexploited and which, I believe, have great potential for any theological enterprise. Relevant to this topic is the experience, appropriation and meaning of the religious Other and the difference upon which diversity is predicated. The implications of this study are better described as anticipations and possibilities in future directions that Christian theology and praxis may in positively evaluating religious diversity.

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I was able to affirm Lonergan's analysis of human development from above because of the community of love into which I was lucky enough to be born. From a very early age my mother, Vivien, exposed us to various cultures and religions and taught us to delight in diversity. She also introduced us to the Holy Spirit in prayer. My father, Romero, taught us the value of friendships and the importance of existential freedom. My sister, Daphne, has been my constant and consistent champion, and for that I am very grateful. Thankfully, she and her husband Peter have had enough children to satisfy my mother's desire for grandchildren. Zachary, Spencer, Olivia and Banana remind me that there is more to life than academics and that theology has to do with real life.

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The medieval Dominican mystic Meister Eckhart wrote: "If the only prayer you said in your whole life was, 'thank you,' that would suffice." This is my prayer.

CHAPTER ONE: THE TRINITY AND RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY

I believe that we are fast approaching the day when it will not be possible to attempt a Christian systematic theology except in serious conversation with the other great ways. But that conviction needs the further test of an explicitly and lengthy systematic theological work.¹
-David Tracy

Religious diversity is one of the most pertinent issues facing religions today. How does a religious tradition understand the simultaneous presence of multiple religious traditions and what could this understanding and reality mean? The present study is an extended engagement with Bernard Lonergan's contributions to a Christian theological understanding of religious diversity, to answer the aforementioned question.

I/Bernard Lonergan

Bernard Lonergan is arguably the most significant Canadian theologian of the past century. His rigorous methodological thought spans a wide spectrum of theological and philosophical subjects. Lonergan is best remembered for his theory of human consciousnesses, method and interiority found in his two seminal works *Insight* and *Method in Theology*. However, his historical scholarship on the thought of Thomas Aquinas is also considered to be some of the finest of the 20th century as is his innovative and complex economic theory. Lonergan's thought reflects a shift away from the metaphysical categories derived from a theoretical theology toward what he termed a

¹ David Tracy, *Dialogue with the Other, the inter-religious dialogue* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990) xi.

“methodical theology” grounded in conscious operations and subjective, existential states. Throughout his writings the themes of conscious intentionality and cognitional theory, epistemology and metaphysics, history and historicity, and method and conversion recur and are nuanced and developed.

Of Lonergan’s massive corpus of writings, some of his earlier works have yet to be translated from the Latin. Recently, the second part of Lonergan’s major theological treatise on the Trinity, *De Deo Trino: pars systematica*, has been published in English as *The Triune God: Systematics*.² Just as the first part of the same treatise, *De Deo Trino: pars dogmatica*, published English in 1976 as *On the Way to Nicea*, has become a classic text for understanding the historical development of doctrine in general and of trinitarian doctrine in particular, the second part has great potential to leave its mark on a systematic understanding of the Triune God. The systematic understanding of God as dynamically conscious, of the divine relations and processions according to the psychological analogy, of the relationship between the immanent and economic Trinity, of the relations of the processions to human history, all stand to benefit from Lonergan’s thorough and original trinitarian theory. His later writings focus on the centrality of love and its communication and experience in history and the movement toward the “methodical theology” he sought. Lonergan’s trinitarian systematics has significant and fecund ramifications for Christian theology and praxis. I wish to explore these ramifications for a Christian theological understanding of religious diversity.

Interest in trinitarian theology has steadily increased in the last century since Hegel. During this time, trinitarian thought has not solely concentrated on theoretical

² Bernard J.F. Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics*, vol. 12 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, trans. Michael G. Shields, ed. Robert M. Doran and H. Daniel Monsour (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007).

speculation on God's eternal, inner being (unlike some Neo-Scholastic tracts) but on God as a Trinity of persons related to and disclosed in history. There is today a re-discovery of trinitarian doctrine and theology and of the central role the Trinity plays in all aspects of Christian life.³ Lonergan's original yet rigorously systematic thought has much to contribute to contemporary reflections on the Trinity and its significance in the life of the Church and in (salvation) history.

Lonergan's thought on the encounter of the world's religions is new terrain yet to be explored. Some scholars have paid attention to Lonergan's generalized empirical method and analysis of human development from below upward as it relates to the existential dimensions of the dialogical process. In contrast, this study explores Lonergan's theory of human development from above downward, a less exploited movement than the usual one from below upward⁴ but one that holds many possibilities for a theological understanding of religious diversity. The above downward movement is indispensable for appreciating the psychological analogy for the Trinity that Lonergan enunciated later in his career

³ Some recent influential Trinitarian works include Leonardo Boff, *Trinity and Society*, trans. Paul Burns (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1998); Joseph Bracken, *The Triune God* (Washington D.C.: University Press of America, 1985); Gavin D'Costa, *Sexing the Trinity* (London: SCM Press, 2000); Ralph Del Colle, *Christ and the Spirit: Spirit-Christology in Trinitarian Perspective* (New York/ Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994); Michael Downey, *Altogether Gift: A Trinitarian Spirituality* (Dublin: Dominican Publications, 2000); Colin E. Gunton, *Father, Son & Holy Spirit: Toward a Fully Trinitarian Theology* (London/ New York: T & T Clark 2003); Stanley J. Grenz, *Rediscovering the Triune God: The Trinity in Contemporary Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004); William J. Hill, *The Three-Personed God: The Trinity as a Mystery of Salvation* (Washington D.C.: University Press of America, 1982); Anne Hunt, *The Trinity and the Paschal Mystery: A Recent Development in Catholic Theology* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1997); Elizabeth A. Johnson, *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse* (New York: Crossroad, 1992); Walter Kasper, *The God of Jesus Christ* (New York: Crossroad, 1984); Anthony Kelly, *The Trinity of Love: A Theology of the Christian God* (Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1989); Catherine Mowry LaCugna, *God For Us: The Trinity and Christian Life* (San Francisco: Harper, 1992); James Mackey, *The Christian Experience of God as Trinity* (London: SCM Press, 1983); Jurgen Moltmann, *The Trinity and the Kingdom: The Doctrine of God* (New York: Paulist Press, 1989); Ted Peter, *God as Trinity: Relationality and Temporality in Divine Life* (Louisville: Westminster/ John Knox Press, 1993); Karl Rahner, *The Trinity* (New York: Seabury Press, 1974).

⁴ Frederick E. Crowe, S.J., *Lonergan* (London: Geoffery Chapman, 1992) 107-108.

While Lonergan's interest in the encounter of the world's religions came late in his career and occupied a more marginal role than did, for example, economics, after the publication of *Method in Theology*, he did broach the topic and his thought offers fruitful and as yet underdeveloped possibilities for ongoing insights on religious diversity that functions both heuristically and has a theological content.⁵ If Lonergan had not been so busy with other pressing themes in the last decade of his life he may not only have explicated the movement from above downward in more detail, but equally, he may have also explored religious pluralism as well. As Frederick Crowe calls Christology "one of the great might-have beens in the late Bernard Lonergan's unfinished business" I am inclined to count Lonergan's contributions to a theology of religious diversity another possibility.⁶

In one of Lonergan's earlier versions of *De Deo Trino* he comments that today's scholars resemble 12th century compilers more than 13th century theologians in their task that anticipates something new in the history of Christian constitutive meaning.⁷ This study seeks to anticipate the "something new": by foregrounding the theological meaning of religious diversity and its appropriation (i.e. what religious otherness or difference as a theological category discloses about God, humankind, history) into Christian consciousness. Lonergan's theory of human development from above downward coupled with his trinitarian theory offer a heuristic toward the progressive discovery of otherness and its appropriation, an 'upper blade' that functions to organize the insights

⁵ Robert M. Doran. *What Is Systematic Theology?* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005) 68.

⁶ Frederick E. Crowe, S.J., *The Christology of Bernard Lonergan from 1935- 1982* (Ottawa: Novalis, 2005) 11. Of course, I realize that Lonergan made an explicit choice between working on Christology and economics and not religious pluralism.

⁷ Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* 146.

gained through dialogical encounter so as to evaluate and integrate them into Christian theology.

Lonergan's method takes otherness and the difference upon which it is predicated seriously: the otherness of God, of faith communities and even of the subject. Otherness reveals that theological discourses about God, other communities of faith and one's self-understanding (including one's own religious tradition) are never closed, complete, total or all-encompassing. Difference reveals that there is always "more" to the story.⁸

Through dialogue with our neighbours we not only learn about our neighbour but also about God and ourselves. We form our identities as Christians and recognize that our identities are always under construction through our relationships with God and people of other faiths; evolving relationships that are constantly transforming in response to what is different. The foundation for such evolving relationships may be found in Lonergan's generalized empirical method and his notion of mutual self-mediation. While there is a great deal of literature on "difference" and "otherness" from philosophical and theoretical⁹ perspectives little has been offered from a systematic theological perspective.

There is no doubt that the relationships between the religions of the world are a major concern not only of the Christian Church but for many religious faiths as well. After the establishment of the Secretariat for Non-Christians in 1964 (re-named the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue in 1988) and the Vatican II documents, *Decree on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions*, *Dogmatic Constitution*

⁸ Henrique Pinto, "The *More* Which Exceeds Us: Foucault, Roman Catholicism and Inter-Faith Dialogue," in *Michel Foucault and Theology*, ed. James Bernauer and Jeremy Carrette (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2004) 201.

⁹ For example, Jacques Derrida, *Writing and Difference*, trans. Alan Bass (London: Routledge, 1978); Michel de Certeau, *Heterologies :Discourse on the Other*, trans. Brian Massumi (Manchester : Manchester University Press, 1986) ; Emmanuel Levinas, *Time and the Other*, trans. Richard A. Cohen (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1987).

on the Church, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church, in addition to such post-conciliar documents as *Dialogue and Proclamation* (1988), we can affirm that dialogue and relationship with other religions is a constitutive element of the Roman Catholic Church's mission in the world today.¹⁰ This sentiment is supported by many Christian communions as evidenced in the 1971 establishment of the sub-unit on inter-religious relations and dialogue by the World Council of Churches. The myriad of dialogues at local, national and international levels illustrate the growing attention paid to interfaith relations.

This area of theological reflection, only in its nascent stages, requires much more work and demands serious attention on the part of Christians. After a troubling history of interactions with peoples of other faiths, the contemporary "context of otherness" makes serious demands on Christian theology and praxis. In the wake of Michel de Certeau's project of "heterology," Michael Barnes describes the phenomenon of the "returning other" as "other persons, other stories, other experiences, which once marginalised to the borders of the known and familiar, manage somehow to insinuate themselves back into the centre of critical reflection. Its significance as far as a Christian theology of religions is concerned, is to effect a certain pragmatic recovery of forms of otherness from the past which continue to affect the present."¹¹ In the encounter of religions today the "returning other" is the non-Christian, the non-European, the non-Western.

Barnes considers that unlike some reflections of the past, a fruitful theology of religious pluralism today will not focus upon "religion" only but on "the [religious]

¹⁰ Edward Cardinal Cassidy, *Ecumenism and Interreligious Dialogue* (Mahwah: Paulist Press, 2005)

¹¹ Michael Barnes, *Theology and the Dialogue of Religions* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 2002) 26.

other” as it strives to understand “the meaning of the providential mystery of otherness for the life of the Church and for its practice of faith.”¹² Bernard Lonergan’s thought provides the tools for such an understanding rooted in the doctrine of the Trinity. Moreover, Lonergan’s thought could serve as a framework for a systematic understanding of diversity as a theological category in general and more specifically toward an understanding of what the simultaneous presence of multiple religions may mean for Christian theology and praxis.

II/Religious Diversity¹³

Our contemporary era has been described variously but consistently by the prefix “post”—postmodern, postchristian, postreligious, postcolonial, postindustrial, postideological, postmoral, postanalytic, postliterate, postauthorial, postpersonal, poststructuralist, postliberal, and even posthuman. Terrence Tilley calls this the era of the “post-age” stamp. The “post-age” stamp displays the complex and sometimes ironic desire to define the current era by recollecting the past which it is supposedly beyond, “both denying and affirming the present power of the past.”¹⁴ The variety of “post-ages” that attempt to describe the contemporary lived reality reveals one of its central and most

¹² Barnes, *Theology and the Dialogue of Religions* 15.

¹³ I use the term “diversity” as opposed to pluralism lest my position (or Lonergan’s) be confused with the pluralist theological option which will be discussed in more detail later in this section. Pluralism reduces the variety of religious beliefs to one hidden truth, denigrating the importance of difference. Diversity seems to take difference seriously, to wrestle with the issues it elicits and to respect the inexhaustibility of divine and human religious meaning.

¹⁴ Terrence W. Tilley, *Postmodern Theologies: The Challenge of Religious Diversity* (Eugene OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 1995) vi.

significant features: “Plurality is a fact.”¹⁵ Reality itself is plural and diverse and thus accounts of it ought to be as well. While David Tracy affirms the fact of plurality or diversity he quickly draws a distinction between the facticity of this affirmation and the subsequent task of its evaluation.

The plurality of religious traditions, that is the simultaneous presence of many religions, is not a new fact, but understanding, evaluating and responsibly engaging with this reality takes on new meanings and directions in the “post-age.” From its beginnings, the Christian Church has had important and complex relationships in the religious-cultural milieu in which it existed: the Jewish community out of which it was born and the Greco-Roman culture in which it grew. These relationships were variously marked by exclusion and persecution, but also continuity and inculturation as well as a growing sense of uniqueness and privilege as Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire. Once firmly ensconced in the religious, social, cultural and political fabric of Europe, the Christian Church believed itself to be the sole conduit of grace and salvation and engendered the confident declaration, “Outside the Church, no salvation.”

With the expansion of European imperialism into the Americas, Africa and Asia beginning at the end of the 15th century, Christendom faced a new challenge: the world was much more expansive than previously imagined and the majority of its inhabitants were not members of the Church. In light of the teaching “Outside the Church, no salvation,” theories abounded to reconcile the salvific love of God with the fact that most of humanity throughout history and until that time had neither heard nor accepted the Gospel of Christ. One theory held that those on the road to salvation secretly and

¹⁵ David Tracy, “Christianity in the Wider Context: Demands and Transformations,” *Religion and Intellectual Life* 4 (1987) 8.

unknowingly desired baptism and were, therefore, implicitly members of the Church. Another was that the possibility of salvation would be offered to non-Christians by accepting Jesus immediately before their deaths in a supernatural death-bed intervention. Or else the opportunity to accept the Gospel would be afforded at the final judgement. All these theories shared the common belief that membership in the body of Christ was necessary for salvation and that the content of non-Christian faiths was somehow deficient and therefore, inferior. Christian missiology, theology and praxis developed from within this mindset. It was informed by European colonialism that repressed, often violently and irreparably, other cultures (non-European) and other religions (non-Christian). The intolerance of otherness and the difference upon which it is predicated lasted well into the last days of official colonialism in the 20th century, and its effects are still evident today.

For theologians today, however, it is impossible to reflect on religion or history without adverting to the plurality of religious traditions, regardless of how this fact may be evaluated. Christians exist alongside their religiously different neighbours. Religious believers can choose whether to be tolerant of one another, to have conversations, to co-exist not only peacefully but even in friendship. Conversely, believers can ignore one another and live indifferently toward the other, seize upon the insecurity of difference and the unknown, and approach the other in repressive violence.¹⁶ Robley E. Whitson poses a very simple but pertinent question to religious believers and to Christians in particular:

¹⁶ Religious beliefs have historically been implicated in derision and strife: the Crusades, the Wars of Religions following the Protestant Reformation, the Hindu-Muslim conflict on the Indian subcontinent, the conflict in Northern Ireland, the Muslim-Jewish aggression in Palestine, to name a few.

“are systems of religion *closed* or *open* to each other?” Is Christianity open to other religions or not?¹⁷

If religions are not open to one another, then the choices Christians face would seem to be either indifference or conflict. In both cases the possibility of positive relationships is precluded. If religions are open to one another, then there is great possibility. In the current situation, each religion has to determine if it is open to other religions, what openness means, and the degree and limits of openness. The question arises, Openness to what? Religions must determine whether they are open to difference, to otherness, to that which may seem radically different and how they appropriate these facts in the “context of otherness” in which we live.

Diversity, plurality, otherness, and related terms and concepts are predicated upon a basic notion that difference exists. In general, writes M. Shawn Copeland, two dominant understandings of difference are currently operative. The first is a common sense approach where “[D]ifference insinuates not merely variance, but deviation, division, discrepancy, discord, incongruity, incompatibility, inconsistency, anomaly, contrariety, aberration and misunderstanding.”¹⁸ An alternate understanding is hard-won but rewarding where “difference carries forward the struggle for life in its uniqueness, variation and fullness; difference is a celebrative option for life in all its integrity, in all its distinctiveness.”¹⁹ The former understanding results in a markedly negative evaluation of diversity or plurality as something to be overcome in favour of some kind

¹⁷ Robley E. Whitson, *The Coming Convergence of World Religions* (New York/Toronto: Newman Press, 1971) 12.

¹⁸ M. Shawn Copeland, “Difference as a Category in Critical Theologies for the Liberation of Women,” in *Feminist Theology in Different Contexts*, ed. Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza and M. Shawn Copeland (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1996) 143.

¹⁹ Copeland, “Difference as a Category in Critical Theologies for the Liberation of Women” 143.

of unity (read uniformity). The latter “challenges us to overcome the societal conditioning that would have us ignore our differences or treat them with suspicion or contempt, arrogance or conceit. Difference instigates a new pedagogy by which to educate ourselves critically about ourselves, about ‘other’ and different women [men, religions, cultures], about our inter-relations.”²⁰

As important as difference is, it should not be reified or reduced into a category that functions like Aristotle’s *hyle* or Lonergan’s empirical residue as it does for some postmodern theorists of difference and otherness such as Jacques Derrida.²¹ Such a function, writes Fred Lawrence, “stands outside the context of intelligibility,” and thus, a contingency without a cause.²² Difference is the condition of possibility for dialectical and dialogical encounter as well as interdependence and mutuality among peoples, cultures and religions. Difference need not function as a barrier to relationality, “an unbridgeable and absolute chasm”²³ or as a concept that reduces otherness to the same, where “[U]nder the banner of difference, the ‘same’ secretly rules.”²⁴ Difference is not absolute outside of the context of intelligibility but relational and relative, meaningful and intelligible.²⁵

According to James Wiggins, there is creativity in the construction of differences and in their reconciliation through mutual understanding. Difference “invites...thinking and negotiating”²⁶ about, between and with those who are different, those other than

²⁰ Copeland, “Difference as a Category in Critical Theologies for the Liberation of Women” 146.

²¹ Frederick Lawrence, “The Fragility of Consciousness: Lonergan and the Postmodern Concern for the Other,” *Theological Studies* 54 (1993) 82.

²² Lawrence, “The Fragility of Consciousness: Lonergan and the Postmodern Concern for the Other” 82.

²³ James B. Wiggins, *In Praise of Religious Diversity* (New York: Routledge, 1996) 13.

²⁴ Tracy, “Christianity in the Wider Context: Demands and Transformations” 12.

²⁵ Wiggins, *In Praise of Religious Diversity* 14. Wiggins comments upon terminology following Jonathan Z. Smith who believes that “difference” is relational and relative while “other” is absolute.

²⁶ Wiggins, *In Praise of Religious Diversity* 14.

one's self. It is through "conversation" that differences are neither reified nor reduced into absolute chasms and their relational and relative identity can be navigated and negotiated while simultaneously respecting the differences and resultant diversity in conversation participants. Tracy describes conversation as a strategy for appropriating and adjudicating difference:

In the to-and-fro movement of the game of conversation where the question or subject matter is allowed to 'take over,' we learn to abjure our constant temptation to control all reality by reducing all difference to the 'same' (viz., what 'we' already believe). In that same to-and-fro movement of conversation, we learn to allow the other, the different to become other *for us*—i.e., as a genuine *possible* mode-of-being-in-the-world, *as* other, *as* different and *as* possible, thus as a similarity-in-difference...²⁷

It is through the conversation that the participants give themselves to the other as different, and new possibilities arise: the recognition of the other as a possible mode-of-being-in-the-world as different and as indicative of an alternate way of being-in-the-world for oneself.

Following Tracy, Paul Mojzes posits the "what and how" of frank and open conversation:

Conversation...is a game where we learn to give in to the movement required by questions worth exploring...Conversation is a game with some hard rules: say only what you mean; say it as accurately as you can; listen to and respect what the other says, however different or other; be willing to correct or defend your opinions if challenged by the conversation partner; be willing to argue if necessary, to confront if demanded, to endure necessary conflict, to change your mind if the evidence suggests it...They are merely variations of the transcendental imperative elegantly articulated by Bernard Lonergan: "Be attentive, be intelligent, be responsible, be loving, and if necessary, change."²⁸

The rules of conversation encourage the establishment of authentic community that struggles "to understand common and different experiences; to interrogate those

²⁷ Tracy, "Christianity in the Wider Context: Demands and Transformations" 18.

²⁸ Paul Mojzes, "The What and How of Dialogue," in *Interreligious Dialogue: Voices from a New Frontier*, ed. M. Darrol Bryant and Frank Flinn (New York: Paragon House, 1989) 19.

differences, commonalties and different experiences rigorously; to reach common judgments; to realize and sustain interdependent commitment. As community in difference is a hard-won achievement, so too is difference in community.”²⁹

My own treatment of the reality of plurality thus far betrays my predilection to evaluate it positively, while being careful not to reify or reduce it as impenetrable or unintelligible. Indeed, I find the two basic principles of pluralism enumerated by Tracy convincing: first, reality is plural and thus accounts of reality must to be plural as well; second, “pluralism is a responsible and fruitful option because it allows for (indeed demands) that we develop better ways as selves, as communities of inquirers, as societies, as cultures, as an inchoately global culture to allow for more possibilities to enrich our personal and communal lives.”³⁰ The “more possibilities” to which Tracy refers are the “positive realities lurking in plurality” and “an appreciation of them on their own basic terms.”³¹ Through the conversation, the realities “lurking in plurality” are disclosed and even more possibilities emerge. The “post-age” era attempts to “think the unthought of modernity”³² to reveal what has not been and is not adverted to, the absent present of history, through the “returning other”. As Tracy states:

The others and the different—both those from other cultures and those others not accounted for by the grand narrative of the dominant culture—return with full force to unmask the social evolutionary narrative of modernity as ultimately an alibi-story, not a plausible reading of our human history together. Part of that return of otherness...is the return of biblical Judaism and Christianity to undo the complacencies of modernity, including modern theology.³³

²⁹ Copeland, “Difference as a Category in Critical Theologies for the Liberation of Women” 149.

³⁰ Tracy, “Christianity in the Wider Context: Demands and Transformations,” 9.

³¹ Tracy, “Christianity in the Wider Context: Demands and Transformations,” 12.

³² Tilley, *Postmodern Theologies* 108, also Raymond Panikkar, “Metatheology or Diacritical Theology as Fundamental Theology” in *Concilium 46: The Development of Fundamental Theology*, ed. Johannes B. Metz. (New York: Paulist Press 1969) 44.

³³ David Tracy, “Theology and the Many Faces of Postmodernity,” in *Theology Today* 51 (1994) 108.

For Western Christianity, other religious traditions are the absent present of its history. Christian Church and Christian theology have a historical tendency to construct the religiously other not through sustained conversations with them in the endeavour to understand them on their own terms, but as a “projected other”: “a projection of our present fears, hopes and desires” or as the contrasting image, idea, personality, experience of the Western self-imagination.³⁴ The stories of religiously others have been either excluded or else subsumed into the grand meta-narrative of Western culture. Such a position is no longer tenable in the contemporary context in which we live. As Stephen Schloesser argues, “In the postcolonial era [in which we live], the imaginations of both former colonizers and colonized would have to be adjusted, constantly measuring their mutual projections against factual givens.”³⁵

The “post-age” culture, posits Peter C. Phan, is marked by a tension between “centrifugal” and “centripetal” movements. The centrifugal movement involves celebration of diversity, plurality, difference and otherness which “are not seen as curses to human flourishing to be exorcised or as threats to human unity to be suppressed. Rather, they are to be vigorously promoted and joyously celebrated as natural endowments necessary for genuine peace and justice. Plurality and diversity are perceived to be the essential safeguards preventing life-affirming unity from degenerating into deadening uniformity, or worse, into an instrument for the powerful to homogenize those who are different and to deny them their basic right to be who and what they are.”³⁶

In contrast, the centripetal movement toward universal unity through the extension of

³⁴ Tracy, *Dialogue with the Other, the inter-religious dialogue* 49, 4.

³⁵ Stephen Schloesser, “Against Forgetting: Memory, History, Vatican II” in *Vatican II, Did Anything Happen?* ed. David G. Schultenover (New York: Continuum, 2007) 102.

³⁶ Peter C. Phan, *Being Religious Interreligiously, Asian Perspectives on Interfaith Dialogue* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2004) xviii.

modernity is evidenced in the phenomenon of globalisation, the notion of the ‘global village,’ the adoption of a single neo-capitalist system throughout the world. In addition, there is a sense of compression of space and time through phenomena such as the internet, media, various new technologies, easy travel, the consumption of western goods and values.³⁷ Christianity confronts the reality of religious diversity in the midst of this tension.

The current context for the encounter of the world’s religions presents several challenges to Church and theology. Phan organizes them into the cultural, socio-political and finally religious. Culturally there exists the tension between the Eurocentricity of Christianity and its catholic/universal character and further between the universal Church and the local churches. Socio-politically Phan queries “how can the church preach Jesus’ teaching on God’s preferential love for the poor and the marginalized and act in solidarity with those crushed by the forces of globalization?”³⁸ Or, how does the Church contribute to shaping the reign of God in the world? Lastly, the religious question for Phan is “how can the church not only respect but incorporate into its own life and worship the teachings and practices of other religions in order to be enriched and transformed by them?”³⁹ Phan presents the challenge that the fact of religious and cultural plurality poses as a *kairos* moment for the constitutive meaning of Christianity.

The question posed by Whitson over 30 years ago remains pertinent today: is Christianity inherently open or closed to other religions? Why or why not? The question presages current attempts to evaluate religious diversity theologically. Today the question may be posed in more existential language: is Christianity “open to new

³⁷ Phan, *Being Religious Interreligiously* xix.

³⁸ Phan, *Being Religious Interreligiously* xix.

³⁹ Phan, *Being Religious Interreligiously* xix.

experiences, new disclosures, new interpretations of the ordinary, in a word, new possibilities?”⁴⁰ Can the Church and theology navigate the complexities of diversity without slipping into a repressive tolerance or reducing the other to the same?

Today Christians are re-examining their attitudes, past and present, toward persons and communities of other faiths. The combined effects of the emergence of a world church; the orientations of Vatican Council II; ecumenism; liberation and feminist hermeneutics; postmodern and postcolonial concerns; global communications; cross-cultural exchanges; truth and reconciliation movements; a refusal on the part of the subaltern to have its story subsumed in a single grand narrative; and the realization that fundamentalism is destructive and intolerance leads to violence has elicited much of this re-thinking. Unlike previous attitudes current reflections upon religious diversity are non-aggressive, egalitarian, and dialogical in approach. Thus, there is a de-centering of European-Christianity, and there are (re)presentations of the religious Other due to a sensitivity to historical and current configurations of power relationships weary of cultural and religious domination. This new situation is marked by the massive social, cultural, political and religious changes that began in the mid-20th century. Basically Christianity is no longer in the same position of power and privilege it once was, whether in the Western world or anywhere else. A more humble approach on the part of Christianity is inescapable. Such an approach to other religious communities must be through the experience of mutual encounter that is both respectful of particular identities and convictions and open to relationship and community.

Only recently did two Christian axiomatic claims regarding the universal salvific will of God and salvation through Jesus Christ become the subject of serious theological

⁴⁰ Tracy, “Christianity in the Wider Context: Demands and Transformations” 14.

interest. Twentieth century theologians such as Barth, Congar, DeLubac, Daniélou and Rahner sought to schematize the role of other religions, their relationship to Jesus Christ and Christianity, and subsequently, their place in (salvation) history. Since that time, theological debates around the simultaneous presence of many religious faiths have been circumscribed by issues of Christology and ecclesiology as they relate to questions of soteriology. Consequently significant concerns have arisen around the issues of common religious ground and the public nature of truth in response to a narrowly Christian world-view regarding God, the human subject and history (see the work of John Hick⁴¹, for example). Approaches to religious pluralism have resulted in three principal, generalized typologies⁴²: the exclusivist typology that holds an ecclesiocentric paradigm for salvation with Jesus Christ as the exclusive and constitutive way of salvation; the inclusivist typology that holds Jesus Christ as the constitutive but not exclusive way (with differing views on the role of the Church in the explication of divine grace); and, the pluralist typology that holds Jesus Christ as either normative but not constitutive of salvation or else as one of many saving figures. These typologies or a combination thereof permit theologians to speak of Christocentric, theocentric, regnocentric, pneumatocentric theories of salvation. These descriptive approaches are framed by models that order Christianity within the wider history of religions such as the replacement, fulfillment, mutuality, and acceptance models.⁴³

In treating these four operative models, Paul Knitter makes a distinction between total and partial replacement models. Total replacement holds that all non-Christian

⁴¹ See John Hick, *The Metaphor of God Incarnate: Christology in a Pluralistic Age* (Louisville: Westminster/ John Knox Press, 1993).

⁴² J. Peter Schineller, S.J., "Christ and Church: A Spectrum of Views," *Theological Studies* 37 (1976) 545-66.

⁴³ Paul F. Knitter, *Introducing Theologies of Religions* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002).

faiths are deficient and Christianity must take their place; salvation is through grace and faith in Jesus Christ alone as definitively revealed in the Christian bible.⁴⁴ The partial replacement model maintains general revelation in non-Christian religions, but the ontological necessity of Christ for salvation which is equally disclosed by him. Salvation is available to non-Christians through various strategies such as the doctrine of the elect that holds that God knows who would have accepted Jesus Christ as saviour though they never had contact with the Gospel or the ‘universalist’ solution that posits that since Christ died for all, non-Christians may be saved after death (but not due to their own religious tradition).⁴⁵

The fulfilment model represents the belief that “other religions are of value, that God is to be found in them, that Christians need to dialogue with them and not just preach to them.”⁴⁶ While this model holds God’s presence in other religions, it also claims God’s special presence in Jesus Christ.

The mutuality model emphasizes God’s universal love and is shaped by three principle questions.⁴⁷ First, how can Christians engage in more authentic dialogue? Second, how can a level playing field for dialogue be created? This second question is not promoting the idea that all religions are the same but that each dialogue partner has an equal right to speak and be heard. Third, how can dialogue be sustained through a clearer understanding of the uniqueness of Jesus Christ. This question reflects the concern that the uniqueness and differences of all religious claims are important and to be respected.

⁴⁴ Knitter, *Introducing Theologies of Religions* 23-25.

⁴⁵ Knitter, *Introducing Theologies of Religions* 33-48.

⁴⁶ Knitter, *Introducing Theologies of Religions* 63.

⁴⁷ Knitter, *Introducing Theologies of Religions* 109-112.

The last model enumerated by Knitter is the acceptance model that holds all religious traditions are different and that difference must be accepted. These differences “can be interrelated, connected and brought into unifying relationships, but never to the point where you lose diversity.”⁴⁸ Religious differences are incommensurable; religions reflect different routes and even a plurality of salvations.

Various approaches to religious pluralism have developed since the Second Vatican Council when the language of “Outside the Church, no salvation” disappeared from official teaching regarding non-Christians, and Roman Catholic Christians were charged with establishing sustained positive relationships with non-Christians through encounter and dialogue.⁴⁹ These theological approaches to diversity have proven useful thus far but no longer suffice because they circumscribe discussions around the double foci of Christology and soteriology and, as such, are unable to integrate much of the data gleaned throughout the past 40 years of dialogue between the major religious traditions of world. Equally problematic is their inability to integrate the growing body of literature on difference, diversity and identity. The models outlined by Knitter are extremely helpful in describing and ordering the simultaneous presence of many religions from a Christian perspective. While they are necessary to an explanatory account of religious diversity, they are not in themselves sufficient. The shortcomings and limitations of some of these approaches anticipate possible ways forward through a more systematic treatment of religious diversity.

Recently, theologians such as Jacques Dupuis, Gavin D’Costa, and S. Mark Heim following the lead of Raimundo Panikkar, have attempted to transcend the limitations of

⁴⁸ Knitter, *Introducing Theologies of Religions* 173.

⁴⁹ *Nostra Aetate* 5.

these paradigms in a trinitarian approach to religious pluralism that retrieves the place of the Trinity and the role of the Holy Spirit in Christian theologizing. However, they do so in a combination of the operative paradigms, perspectives and models of religion. For example, Dupuis calls for a “pluralistic inclusivism” or “inclusive pluralism.”⁵⁰ I question whether these paradigms and their derivative language are useful any longer. Asian theologians involved in interfaith dialogue and praxis maintain that these paradigms “do not make sense” in the inter-religious context of the Indian sub-continent.⁵¹ Felix Wilfred claims that these theological discussions are “a debate of Western factions” that cannot be transposed easily to other cultural contexts.⁵² A document produced at the 1989 Annual Meeting of the Indian Theological Association scathingly highlights the limitations of approaches that issue “from a monoreligiocultural society and a mere academic and speculative point of view.”⁵³ The Indian theologians suggest that Christians, from their faith perspective, strive to “understand the purpose and meaning of the wonderful religious variety around us and its role and function in the attainment of salvation.”⁵⁴

In spite of a retrieval of trinitarian doctrine in Christian theology and praxis, surprisingly little has been developed in its relation to other religions. It could be argued that while theologians like Dupuis or D’Costa outline a schema for a trinitarian understanding of religious diversity, they “do not offer a full-scale Trinitarian

⁵⁰ Jacques Dupuis, *Christianity and the Religions, From Confrontation to Dialogue*, trans. Phillip Berryman (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2001) 255.

⁵¹ Aloysius Pieris, “An Asian Paradigm: Interreligious Dialogue and Theology of Religions,” *Month* (26) 130.

⁵² Felix Wilfred, “Some Tentative Reflections on the Language of Christian Uniqueness: An Indian Perspective,” *Pro Dialogo Bulletin* 85/86 (1) 57.

⁵³ “Towards an Indian Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism,” quoted in Jacques Dupuis, *Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2002) 199.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

programme.”⁵⁵ I believe that the trinitarian theory of Bernard Lonergan offers not only a structural element for this kind of approach to religious diversity, but also the theological content such an enterprise requires: a trinitarian core found in his four-point hypothesis.

III/Systematic Theological Understanding

The question of ‘other religions’ has taken on new meaning and significance in the years following the Second Vatican Council and cannot remain an addendum to already established theological constructions. David Tracy suggests “[T]he question of the ‘other religions’ can no longer be left until the end of a Christian systematic theology but should enter at the very beginning.”⁵⁶ The task of constructing a Christian systematic theology that includes, from its inception and at least heuristically or anticipatorily, a consideration of other religions requires a reconsideration of systematic theology toward an ordered presentation of the mysteries of faith and history.

What has been termed the “rule of faith” by the Christian Tradition is not the propositional formulation of the tenets of faith as much as “the contents of faith” presented “as an ordered understanding of God’s dealing with humanity” and all of creation.⁵⁷ Phan outlines several contemporary strategies toward the presentation of a coherent unity of Christian faith: condensed creeds, hierarchy of truths, narrative theology, correlation method, transcendental theology, and practical theology. These various strategies aim at achieving the understanding of the unity of Christian faith

⁵⁵ Veli-Matti Karkkainen, *Trinity and Religious Pluralism* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2004) 7.

⁵⁶ Tracy, “Christianity in the Wider Context: Demands and Transformations” 8.

⁵⁷ Phan, *Being Religious Interreligiously* 24.

promoted by the document *Dei Filius* of Vatican I. *Dei Filius* teaches that this understanding may be achieved through analogies between the mysteries of faith and natural things; by connecting the mysteries with each other; and in connecting the mysteries with the ultimate end.⁵⁸

God's dealings with humanity are triune as revealed by God in salvation history. Every doctrine, writes Karl Rahner, that has to do with humanity and salvation must be connected to the Trinity doctrinally and in reality. Rahner's now infamous *grundaxiom*, "The 'economic' Trinity is the 'immanent' Trinity and the 'immanent' Trinity is the 'economic' Trinity,"⁵⁹ seizes upon the fact that the Triune God disclosed in salvation history reveals the divine self as God is eternally, as a Trinity of persons.

In the task of constructing any systematic theology, and especially one that takes into account the reality of other religions "at the very beginning," the doctrine of the Trinity naturally and rightly plays a decisive role as *the* Christian doctrine of God. In the words of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*:

The mystery of the Most Holy Trinity is the central mystery of Christian faith and life. It is the mystery of God in himself. It is therefore the source of all the other mysteries of faith, the light that enlightens them. It is the most fundamental and essential teaching in the "hierarchy of truths of faith." The whole history of salvation is identical with the history of the way and the means by which the one true God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, reveals himself to men "and reconciles and unites with himself those who turn away from sin."⁶⁰

The central mystery of the Christian faith, the Trinity, is a doctrine⁶¹ found latently in the Gospel accounts that express the message and meaning of Jesus Christ; in more developed and explicit conciliar statements and dogmatic definitions, especially the

⁵⁸ *Dei Filius*, Denzinger 3016.

⁵⁹ Karl Rahner, *The Trinity*, trans. Joseph Donceel (New York: Seabury Press, 1974) 22.

⁶⁰ *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1995) no. 234.

⁶¹ On what constitutes doctrines see Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1971) 295-297.

Nicene-Constantinople Creed; and in theological doctrines that “put order and coherence” to the tradition “and have been received as either entering into or explicating the meaning constitutive of the community.”⁶² The psychological analogy enunciated by Thomas Aquinas in the 13th century is an example of a ‘theological doctrine’ regarding the Trinity.

Doctrines are affirmations that reflect a “religious community’s confession of the mysteries so hidden in God that man⁶³ could not know them if they had not been revealed by God”⁶⁴ and are constitutive in the meaning of the community. “Systematics aims at an understanding of the religious realities affirmed by doctrines.”⁶⁵ Thus, every Christian assents in faith to the articles of the Nicene-Constantinople Creed, but not every Christian understands what those articles mean and how they may be related to moral, pastoral, liturgical and historical issues. Systematics aims at understanding the facts and values expressed in doctrines.

Phan argues that “the doctrine of the Trinity can function as the architectonic principle with which to build the cathedral of faith, or to vary the metaphor, as the thread to weave all the Christian doctrines into a patterned tapestry.”⁶⁶ I share Phan’s belief that the Trinity can serve as the “architectonic principle” to construct a contemporary systematic theology that attempts a coherent understanding of the mysteries of faith. Indeed several theologians would agree; however, a twofold question arises: what

⁶² Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* 28. On why the psychological analogy for understanding the Trinity may be considered a ‘theological doctrine’ see 28-40.

⁶³ In this study, citations that use exclusive language have not been amended (these will be found primarily in Lonergan’s work and Crowe’s earlier work). In addition, for clarity and consistency I will refer to the persons of the Trinity by the traditional names of Father, Son/Word and Holy Spirit and masculine pronouns for the first two persons of the Trinity and the feminine for the Third.

⁶⁴ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 349.

⁶⁵ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 349.

⁶⁶ Phan, *Being Religious Interreligiously* 24.

understanding of the Trinity is most accurate and even then, is this understanding enough?

Theological Framework

Robert Doran proposes a “unified field structure” that has as its “architectonic principle” the doctrine of the Trinity understood through the psychological analogy enunciated by Bernard Lonergan. Doran describes the unified field structure:

The unified field structure would not be some finished system but an open heuristic set of conceptions that embraces the field of issues presently to be accounted for and presently foreseeable in that discipline or functional speciality of theology whose task it is to give a synthetic understanding of the realities that are and ought to be providing the meaning constitutive of the community called church.⁶⁷

The unified field structure would not only be a summation of the current “dogmatic-theological” context that takes into account historical developments thus far but also a heuristic for “an intelligent, faith-filled anticipation of where theology must go.”⁶⁸ This is precisely what certain approaches to religious pluralism before and after Vatican II were unable to do, that is, to deal with the issues, challenges and problems that emerge from new insights garnered from the dialogical encounters of different religions. In part, this is due to the lack of an historically conscious systematics, a point that Lonergan laboured over and Doran’s proposal addresses.

The four-point hypothesis found in Lonergan’s systematics on the Trinity provides understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity. Following Lonergan, Doran writes

The hypothesis differentiates the theorem of the supernatural into a set of connections between the four divine relations—what the tradition calls paternity, filiation, active spiration, and passive spiration—and created supernatural

⁶⁷ Doran, *What is Systematic Theology?* 62.

⁶⁸ Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* 63.

participations in those relations. Thus, (1) the secondary act of existence of the Incarnation, the assumed humanity of the Incarnate Word, is a created participation in paternity... In the immanent Trinitarian relations, the Word does not speak; the Word is spoken by the Father. But the Incarnate Word speaks. However, he speaks only what he has heard from the Father. Again, (2) sanctifying grace as the dynamic state of being in love is a created participation in the active spiration *by* the Father and the Son *of* the Holy Spirit, so that as the Father and the Son together breathe the Holy Spirit as uncreated term, sanctifying grace as created participation in the active spiration of Father and Son—that active spiration that is really identical with paternity and filiation taken together as one principle—‘breathes’ some created participation in the same Holy Spirit. (3) The habit of charity is that created participation in the third person of the Blessed Trinity. And (4) the light of glory that is the consequent created contingent condition of the beatific vision is a created participation in the Sonship of the divine Word. And so the hypothesis enables a synthetic understanding of the four mysteries of the Trinity, the Incarnation, grace, and the last things... There is in Lonergan’s hypothesis a coordination of the divine processions with the processions of word and love in authentic human performance, a coordination that, in Lonergan’s beautiful words, almost brings God too close to us.⁶⁹

Lonergan’s four-point hypothesis provides the “core categories to which all other categories must be referred”⁷⁰ but is not, according to Doran, enough for the construction of a contemporary systematics. The other constitutive ingredient is a theory of history.⁷¹

To be sure, the four-point hypothesis certainly provides a theological element in the unified field structure, but cannot account for and organize all special theological categories that depend on some theory of history, without falsely reducing those categories into the four-point hypothesis. Doran writes:

⁶⁹ Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* 65.

⁷⁰ Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* 70.

⁷¹ Doran determines that the four-point hypothesis on its own is not enough to constitute a unified field structure through a test that maps the five sets of special theological categories mentioned by Lonergan in *Method in Theology*. They are the categories that emerge from “studies of religious interiority: historical, phenomenological, psychological, sociological” that enable the theologian to enter into the experience of others and to express those experiences. The second set of categories relate to subjects in community historically rooted in being-in-love and the function of such a history in promoting the reign of God. A third set takes into account the movement from our loving to the source of love. A fourth set differentiates between authenticity and inauthenticity. The last set of categories that needs to be accounted for by a unified field structure “regards progress, decline, and redemption.” According to Doran only the third set can be adequately mapped onto the four-point hypothesis without remainder; therefore, a theory of history is required to map the other four sets without “remainder” lest they be artificially reduced to fit. See Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* 72-74.

The four-point hypothesis does not itself tell us anything about what the Incarnation and the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit have to do with historical progress and decline, whereas creation, revelation, redemption, the church, the sacraments, and Christian praxis cannot be understood apart from historical progress or decline.⁷²

The four-point hypothesis has to do with the divine missions, which according to Lonergan are the divine relations joined to a created, external term. Thus, they are precisely located in creation and history. Lonergan's theory of history based on his cognitional theory, epistemology and metaphysics as well as the scale of values developed by Doran⁷³ provide the grounding for a theory of history.

The development of Lonergan's thought on history into an even more expansive explanatory theological theory of history by Doran is based on interrelations of values. These values are religious, personal, cultural, social, and vital and are located in the recurrent emanation of the word of authentic value judgments and acts of love in human consciousness (personal value) due to the grace of mission of the Holy Spirit (religious value). Religious value the source of history-making, of progress through schemes of recurrence in realms of cultural, social and vital values, and wherever genuine and authentic progress takes place, the Holy Spirit is present.⁷⁴

According to Doran, a unified field structure would function in theology in a manner analogous to the periodic table in chemistry; it would "mediate the relation of every less comprehensive conception in the whole of systematics."⁷⁵ The unified field structure would be open to further development through systematic syntheses and

⁷² Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* 74.

⁷³ Robert M. Doran, *Theology and the Dialectics of History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990) 88-90.

⁷⁴ Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* 77.

⁷⁵ Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* 67.

transposition “in the light of new questions and exigencies”⁷⁶ while simultaneously preserving its permanent achievements of the past. Doran states:

Eventually, every system will give rise to questions that cannot be answered on the basis of the resources provided by that system. Every system is an open system, that is, one in which it is anticipated that questions will arise from within the system itself that the system is not able to answer, that will demand the move to a higher viewpoint perhaps a paradigm shift, before satisfactory hypotheses can be provided. Any system that claims not to be open in this way is an idol.⁷⁷

The unified field structure provides the necessary heuristic for Christian systematic theology to approach the question of religious diversity in history. Unlike approaches that are unable to take into account new questions and anticipate further developments outside of special theological categories, Doran’s suggestion facilitates the mediation of general and special categories in order to “weave...into a patterned tapestry”⁷⁸ trinitarian doctrine, the mysteries of faith and historical sequences and structures.

Lonergan’s notion of systematics assumes the “general form of a theology of history.”⁷⁹ The theological core provided by the four-point hypothesis is inherently related to history through Lonergan’s notion of the divine missions. Doran’s development of the four-point hypothesis moves it out of theoretical and metaphysical categories to those derived from intentionality analysis, interiorly and religiously differentiated consciousness. This development provides a contemporary heuristic structure and theological content based on Lonergan’s thought. The central axis around which both structure and content revolve is summed up by Doran:

The combination of the four-point hypothesis with the theory of history thus

⁷⁶ Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* 67.

⁷⁷ Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* 71-72.

⁷⁸ Phan, *Being Religious Interreligiously* 24. Phan uses the metaphor of a tapestry to refer to the coherent patterns that the mysteries of faith can be organized into around the doctrine of the Trinity, but Phan makes no reference to the role that history, or that which lies outside of the specifically theological, plays.

⁷⁹ Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* 75-76.

enables us to relate Trinitarian theology, and even the theology of the immanent Trinity, directly to the process not only of individual sanctification but also of human historical unfolding. The discernment of the mission of the Holy Spirit thus becomes the most important ingredient in humankind's taking responsibility for the guidance of history.⁸⁰

Lonergan's four-point hypothesis coupled with a theory of history developed into a unified field structure for building contemporary systematic theologies provides the "architectonic principle" needed to address many of the concerns and questions as well as anticipations that theologies of religious pluralism raise. Phan's suggestion that the Trinity be placed at the center of a systematic understanding of religious diversity is fleshed out in precise and technical detail in Lonergan's hypothesis and its development by Doran. The various strategies that Phan enumerates toward a coherent understanding of the interrelationships of the Christian faith with the contemporary situation (the simple creed, hierarchy of truths, narrative theology, correlation method, transcendental theology and liberation hermeneutics and method) are subsumed into the unified field structure.

IV/Contributions

This study is principally concerned with Lonergan's contributions to a Christian systematic understanding of the diversity of religious traditions. In terms of both heuristic and content, I believe that Lonergan's contribution lies fundamentally in his analogies for understanding the Trinity and the interrelated analyses of human development upon which they are based. Central to this study is the role of the Trinity in Christian theologizing, the re-integration of the mission of the Spirit with that of the Word, and the transposition of trinitarian meaning into the existential-relational

⁸⁰ Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* 77.

dimensions of religious diversity. Lonergan's thought in these areas helps Christian theology to move beyond the experience of otherness toward understanding, evaluating and living in responsible relationality with the Other.

Although the implications of applying Lonergan's thought to the challenge and opportunity of religious diversity are numerous, the practical implications for Christian living include: a transformed sense of Christian identity and praxis; the construction of a systematic theology better able to understand what God-for-us means in the historical context in which we live; and lastly, the promotion of a community of diverse communities of faith rooted in mutual responsibility and friendship.

Lonergan's extensive writings on the Trinity are weighty and original. His theology of the divine missions posits first the universal mission of the Holy Spirit, the gift of God's love outpoured, and then the complementary mission of the Son within the context of the single divine economy. His analysis of human consciousness facilitates an organized and orderly understanding of what these missions consist of and how they unfold in human history. Lonergan's markedly trinitarian approach to religious diversity stands in contrast to theologies within an inclusivist paradigm that become mired in a Christological "impasse" because of a methodological option that places the Spirit within the context of the mission of the Son and subsequently at the service of the Christian Church. Likewise, a Lonerganian approach speaks to the shortcomings of the pluralist paradigm. Pluralist discourse moves away from trinitarian discourse to affirm the unicity of God's undifferentiated essence: God is always beyond, including beyond what God reveals in history. Hence, the economic Trinity is not the eternal Divinity that is both outside of and unknowable in history. Religious differences "mask" the fundamental

commonality of religions. Lonergan's theology of religion necessitates reflection on differences as important and constitutive of religious identity and meaning. A truly trinitarian approach to religious diversity will not necessary overcome the perceived impasses or solve outstanding questions raised within the inclusivist or pluralist paradigms; instead, it will re-orient theological discussions and a whole new series of questions will be raised.

The new questions raised will be the result of a trinitarian understanding of history. According to Frederick Crowe, reflection on the twofold universal mission of the Spirit and the Son begs the questions: "What is God doing in the divine economy...? What was God doing in past ages? What is God doing now?" and calls for some "total view of history."⁸¹ Crowe, following Lonergan's definition of the divine missions, rightly asserts that the missions of both the Spirit and the Son are intensely historical, whether experienced and known through the data of sense or the data of consciousness. He posits two views of history elicited by reflection on religious diversity. The first considers the simultaneous presence of many religions and the other looks for sequences in meaning and value in the particularities of various religions. Both views of history question how human history is constituted and how human freedom and responsibility are exercised in light of the divine missions.

Encounters can be dialectical or dialogical. In dialectical encounters the subject is challenged by the position of another; in dialogical encounters the subject and the other

⁸¹ Frederick E. Crowe, S.J., "Lonergan's Universalist View of Religion," *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 12 (1994) 174.

move toward friendship.⁸² Recent conversations between Lonergan and Continental (“post-age”) thinkers have illustrated points of divergence and disagreement, and also common concerns and mutual clarifications. Since encounter and dialogue are only possible because of otherness and difference, some consideration on this subject is due. Lonergan’s invitation to self-appropriation encourages responsible engagement with otherness and his openness to alterity is based upon his generalized empirical method with its accompanying transcendental precepts. Not only are subjects to be attentive to the experience of otherness but also to the processing of otherness through the transcendental method. Otherness is not “already out there now” but something that requires critical reflection. Lonergan’s transcendental precepts—be attentive, intelligent, reasonable and responsible— that accompany his four successive levels of human intentionality have their fulfilment in being-in-love. This is the point at which subjects are able to be beings for others, positioned not only by their own self-presence but by the presence of the Triune God in history and in others. Encounter with otherness is identity-forming insofar as there is authentic mutual revelation and reception. Here Lonergan’s notion of mutual self-mediation, as expressed by Doran, is key to dialogical encounter: “One reveals one’s self-discovery and commitment to another, and receives the self-revelation of the other. One opens oneself to be influenced at the depth of one’s being, and others open themselves to be influenced by us.”⁸³

⁸² Michele Saracino, “Subject for the Other: Lonergan and Levinas on being human in postmodernity,” in *In Deference to the Other, Lonergan and Contemporary Continental Thought*, ed. Jim Kanaris and Mark J. Doorley (Albany: SUNY Press, 2004) 67.

⁸³ Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* 56.

Because of the missions of the Spirit and Son, Christians can “*expect* to find meanings and values”⁸⁴ outside of a narrow conception of Christian history precisely in what Christians consider “other”: non-Christian faith communities. Any attempts to domesticate otherness may be tantamount to extinguishing the Spirit. The painful history in which Christianity is implicated as a lead player has its political, economic, cultural and social dimensions. Its theological shortcoming is an underdeveloped theology of the Spirit: “Failure on the part of the church to recognize the varieties of grace in history, the fact of the gift of the Holy Spirit beyond the boundaries of church affiliation, has resulted in some of the most conspicuous mistakes in the mission of the church throughout the course of Christian history. These mistakes continue into our own day.”⁸⁵ The situation today is a complicated navigation through issues of self-identity and the Other; the known and mystery; uniqueness and complementarity; the past, present and future.

Barnes suitably remarks:

The Church speaks of what it knows in faith- that God has raised Jesus from the dead and thereby transformed the whole of creation. What the Church does not know is the total reality of what always remains other and utterly mysterious. Christians must, therefore, acknowledge this possibility: that God may act in the world in ways in which the Church does not know. Anything less would be to risk putting an arbitrary limit on the action of God; the Christian experience of the grace of God, of God acting freely and generously to create a people for himself, demands an openness to the Spirit at work in the world of the other. From the point of view of the practise of faith, the crucial question is how Christians are to keep faithful witness, hoping for resolution, while yet knowing that the future lies always in the hands of God alone, and in God’s providential care.⁸⁶

⁸⁴ Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* 56.

⁸⁵ Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* 199.

⁸⁶ Barnes, *Theology and the Dialogue of Religions* 28.

V/Parameters of the Study

Employing Lonergan's eight-fold division in theological method this work is situated within the functional specialty "systematics." This functional specialty is preceded by "doctrines" and followed by "communications." This study begins with the doctrine of the Trinity as it is understood by the Augustinian-Thomist psychological analogy and enunciated and developed by Lonergan. Trinitarian doctrine is the starting point for *systematic* reflection. The initial task is to understand the doctrine and then ascertain how this doctrine and reality is woven into the historical reality of the simultaneous presence of many religions. To borrow Phan's metaphor: how their meanings in history form a "patterned tapestry."

The study is concerned with what it means to confess a Triune God in the historical situation of the encounter of the world's religious traditions. It aims at a deeper understanding of the Christian doctrine of the Triune God that is concomitant with a deeper understanding of the very theological situation in which we live, namely, religious diversity. It contributes toward a contemporary articulation of a "hypothetical, imperfect, analogical, obscure, and gradually developing understanding of the mysteries of faith"⁸⁷ in order to inform the belief and praxis of the Church about religious diversity. The hermeneutical movement is from an understanding of the trinitarian doctrine that serves as the lens through which to view religious diversity and then returns to a reflection upon the Trinity informed by a transformed and transformative theological understanding of the contemporary situation.

⁸⁷ Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* 7.

Perhaps the parameters of the study are more clearly enunciated by what it does not encompass. This study is not a theology of dialogue in the sense of an explicit exploration of the process and goal of interfaith encounters or current dialogues. It does not address a particular dialogue (i.e. Christian- Jewish or Christian-Hindu) and the processual issues it may raise. For example, how to openly and honestly exchange and share amongst religious traditions or else strategies to encourage mutuality and common action or how to communicate across religious, cultural and linguistic divides are not the focus of this study. I speak from a Christian perspective and do not pretend to speak for or in conjunction with any other religion's understanding of religious diversity. Certainly, the task of understanding religious diversity from any faith perspective is furthered by sustained encounters and dialogues.

Secondly, this study is not a comparative theology or comparative study of religions. It will not address specific theological or philosophical discussions between two or more religious groups. While many aspects of Lonergan's thought can contribute to such a venture, I believe that a strength of Lonergan's heuristic is that it refrains from speaking for the Other or from too easily drawing equivalencies between two or more religions in an "already-out-there" understanding of religious meaning. Moreover, I consider that Lonergan's hermeneutics for comparative theology is not best suited to the functional specialty "systematics" but belongs within the first four functional specialities enunciated in *Method in Theology* (research, history, interpretation and dialectic).

Lastly, while this study reflects the ongoing developments in theologies of religious pluralism, it is not intended to address the questions and lacunae raised by the aforementioned paradigms and models, in particular questions around soteriology and the

uniqueness of Christian revelation. Without a doubt, some of these questions and concerns will be indirectly or implicitly addressed and clarified, but I believe Lonergan's Trinity-based heuristic and content will re-orient discussions regarding religious diversity once the distinct but equal roles of the Spirit and the Son in history have been engaged.

This study is concerned with anchoring the doctrine of the Trinity at the center of the Christian understanding of religious diversity and the theological appropriation of otherness. It seeks both to understand the meaning of religious diversity from a Christian perspective and then to orient Christian approaches to religious diversity and interfaith dialogue. Returning to Whitson's question: Is Christianity open to other religions and if so, what does it mean for Christian identity, praxis and theology?

VI/Outline

The remainder of the study is developed over four more chapters. The next chapter is divided into two parts. The first explores the thought of three theologians whose influential work explicitly treats the interrelationship between the Trinity and religious diversity. The second part surveys the work of interpreters of Lonergan's thought on the topic of interfaith encounter. While the purpose of this chapter is primarily a survey of the contemporary theological discussions to which this study contributes, it contains a brief evaluative element aimed at determining the areas to which Lonergan's trinitarian thought contributes.

The third chapter treats Lonergan's trinitarian theology directly. Lonergan proposes two psychological analogies for understanding the Trinity. The first, developed

early in his career and enunciated in *De Deo Trino: pars systematica* can be called the “natural-cognitional”⁸⁸ analogy while the other analogy found in his later writings⁸⁹ the “supernatural-affective” analogy. The natural-cognitional analogy corresponds to Lonergan’s analysis of human development from below upward while the supernatural-affective analogy corresponds to the concomitant movement in human development from above downward. Both analogies make significant and permanent contributions to a theology of religious diversity today.

Chapter Four is divided into three sections. The first explores Lonergan’s philosophy of religion and its relationship to theology. Here the concerns are principally methodological and heuristic. The second section is an account of Lonergan’s model of religion. Since Lonergan did not explicitly endeavour to answer the question “what is religion?” this section will be an expository presentation of his later writings on the topic. The last section examines the sources Lonergan employed in his scant treatment of the reality of religious diversity. Such an examination facilitates not only an understanding of Lonergan’s model of religion but perhaps more importantly suggests further directions for the development of Lonergan’s thought toward a Christian understanding of religious diversity.

Chapter Five fleshes out some of the implications that Lonergan’s trinitarian understanding of religious diversity has for Christian identity, theology, and praxis. It relies heavily on the work of two significant interpreters of Lonergan’s thought that will have appeared numerous throughout the study; namely Frederick E. Crowe and Robert

⁸⁸ The apt natural/supernatural distinction and terminology are taken from Robert M. Doran, “The Starting Point of Systematic Theology,” *Theological Studies* 67 (2006) 750- 776.

⁸⁹ Lonergan’s later writings or “the Later Lonergan” refers to the period following Lonergan’s functional specialty breakthrough in 1965, resulting in the publication of *Method in Theology* in 1974, until his death.

M. Doran. This last chapter attempts to weave the various threads gleaned from the previous chapters into a “patterned tapestry.” They include the divine missions, a theology of the Holy Spirit, history, freedom and responsibility, dialogue, mediation, and otherness. These will be some of the foremost issues and questions that result from a paradigm shift in a Lonerganian approach to diversity and plurality. Far from offering a conclusion to the story, these are the directions that the “more” to the story may take.

CHAPTER TWO: POTENTIAL AND POSSIBILITIES

The new question is to find a way to formulate a Christian theological question on religious pluralism in such a manner that a genuinely new answer may be forthcoming without abandoning Christian identity. The 'answer' is unlikely to be, as some suggest, from a 'christocentric' to a 'theocentric' position. This Christian response seems more a postponement of the issue rather than an adequate response to it.⁹⁰
- David Tracy

This chapter is an exploration of two sets of discussions related both to the context of the present study and that to which it intends to contribute; namely, trinitarian theology, theories of religious diversity and Lonergan scholarship. This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section relates directly to contemporary trinitarian theologies of religious diversity. It will investigate the creative, innovative and astute work of three important scholars. The second section relates to the development of Lonergan's thought as it pertains to the encounter of world religions. The scholarship examined in this section revolves around Lonergan's general empirical method and its accompanying analysis of human development from 'below upward.'

⁹⁰ David Tracy, *Dialogue with the Other, the inter-religious dialogue* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990).

I/ Trinitarian Approaches to Religious Diversity

This first section is an appraisal of the thought of three influential theologians whose approach to understanding and evaluating religious diversity is decidedly trinitarian. Each of these theologians— Gavin D’Costa, S. Mark Heim and Jacques Dupuis— offer interesting insights and perspectives. They certainly all agree that trinitarian theology is the best way forward in understanding religious diversity and as a positive aspect of history while simultaneously remaining firmly rooted within the Christian tradition. D’Costa, Heim and Dupuis also seek to transcend the limitations of rigid construals of exclusivism, inclusivism and pluralism. Nevertheless, these three theologians also differ significantly in their hermeneutics, methodologies, emphases and agendas; for example, D’Costa espouses an ecclesiocentric perspective through which he evaluates religious plurality while Heim’s social Trinity paradigm emphasises diversity in God coupled with respect for human freedom. Dupuis’ thought represents the most significant and comprehensive understanding of a Christian approach to religious diversity with particular import for Christian theologies of revelation and grace.

Gavin D’Costa: The Trinity and the Encounter of Religions

Writing from England’s Bristol University, Roman Catholic theologian Gavin D’Costa offers a sharp and incisive critique of the pluralist approach to a theology of religions. He contends that as a construction of Enlightenment modernity, pluralism

grants a certain equality to all religions while concurrently denying them any public truth.⁹¹ D’Costa enumerates the salient features of the pluralist position:

all religions (with qualifications) lead to the same divine reality; there is no privileged self-manifestation of the divine; and finally religious harmony will follow if tradition-specific (exclusivist) approaches which allegedly claim monopoly over the truth are abandoned in favour of pluralist approaches which recognize that all religions display truth in differing ways.⁹²

D’Costa argues that the pluralist position is logically inconsistent as it claims that if different religious parties abandon their tradition-specificity for a common, neutral position, religious harmony shall ensue. However, such a movement would not only be the end of actual religious traditions but their replacement with some form of “liberal modernity.”⁹³ Religious difference and diversity would be eradicated in favour of “the ‘gods’ of modernity: unitarian, deistic or agnostic.”⁹⁴ Thus, D’Costa concludes that pluralism is liberal modernity’s crypto-exclusivism.

Between the pluralism described by D’Costa and the exclusivism he characterizes as “holding that only one single revelation is true or one single religion is true and all other revelations or religions are false”⁹⁵ is the inclusivist position that tries to “have it both ways.”⁹⁶ Inclusivists are

...committed to claiming that one revelation or religion...is the only true and definitive one, but that truth, and therefore salvation, can be found in various, though incomplete, forms within other religions and within their different structures. It is always the case that such different and sometimes rival claims are judged by the criteria arising from the one true revelation or religion, and in fact true rival claims must conform to the true revelation or religion.⁹⁷

⁹¹ Gavin D’Costa, *The Meeting of Religions and the Trinity* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2000) 2.

⁹² D’Costa, *The Meeting of Religions* 19.

⁹³ D’Costa, *The Meeting of Religions* 20.

⁹⁴ D’Costa, *The Meeting of Religions* 20.

⁹⁵ D’Costa, *The Meeting of Religions* 20.

⁹⁶ D’Costa, *The Meeting of Religions* 21.

⁹⁷ D’Costa, *The Meeting of Religions* 21.

D’Costa argues that like pluralism, inclusivism is crypto-exclusivism in three ways. First, because inclusivists believe that their religious tradition contains the truth regarding “ontological, epistemological, and ethical claims.”⁹⁸ Next, inclusivists, like exclusivists, “hold to the inseparability of ontology, epistemology, and ethics such that truth cannot be separated from [its] mediator.”⁹⁹ Last, inclusivists resemble exclusivists since both recognize and defend their “tradition-specific” position against rival positions.¹⁰⁰ Hence, according to D’Costa the crux of the distinction between inclusivists and exclusivists lies fundamentally in “one very important point: inclusivists seek to affirm religions other than Christianity as the means to salvation.”¹⁰¹

In response to the perceived inadequacies of the three dominant theological perspectives of exclusivism, inclusivism and pluralism, D’Costa proposes a “Roman Catholic Trinitarian orientation in relation to other religions.”¹⁰² D’Costa writes:

Within a Roman Catholic Trinitarian orientation, the other is always interesting in their difference and may be the possible face of God, or the face of violence, greed, and death. Furthermore, the other may teach Christians to know and worship their own Trinitarian God more truthfully and richly. Trinitarian theology provides the context for a critical, reverent, and open engagement with otherness, without any predicable outcome.¹⁰³

D’Costa contends that a trinitarian approach to other religions is “defensible” and “faithful” within the tradition as well as creative and innovative in response to the “reality of other religions.”¹⁰⁴ This approach both meets contemporary demands for “openness,

⁹⁸ D’Costa, *The Meeting of Religions* 22.

⁹⁹ D’Costa, *The Meeting of Religions* 22. D’Costa rightly points out that the separation of truth from its mediation would tend toward pluralism.

¹⁰⁰ D’Costa, *The Meeting of Religions* 22.

¹⁰¹ D’Costa, *The Meeting of Religions* 22.

¹⁰² D’Costa, *The Meeting of Religions* 99.

¹⁰³ D’Costa, *The Meeting of Religions* 9.

¹⁰⁴ D’Costa, *The Meeting of Religions* 99.

tolerance and equality”¹⁰⁵ and critically appreciates otherness and the previously unknown, being open to revision and development. A trinitarian approach to other religions hinges upon a doctrine of God of which D’Costa writes:

I believe that the Trinitarian doctrine of God facilitates an authentically Christian response to the world religions because it takes the particularities of history entirely seriously. This is so because the doctrine seeks to affirm that God has disclosed himself in the contingencies and particularity of the person Jesus. But the Trinity also affirms, by means of the two other persons, that God is constantly revealing himself through history by means of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit in this activity serves to deepen and universalize our understanding of God in Christ, a process that is never complete until the parousia.¹⁰⁶

Thus, D’Costa affirms the revelation of the Son and the Holy Spirit in history, but also assigns an ancillary role to the Holy Spirit that serves the universalisation of a Christ-centered understanding of God. This process of universalisation comes to completion in the culmination of history in the second coming of Jesus Christ.

D’Costa’s theology of religious diversity is situated and articulated within a Christian horizon, without, he claims, being closed to the histories and narratives of religious others. He offers five theses to explicate his Christ-centered trinitarian approach to other religious traditions. They are:

THESIS ONE: A Trinitarian Christology guards against exclusivism and pluralism by dialectically relating the universal to the particular.

THESIS TWO: Pneumatology allows the particularity of Christ to be related to the universal activity of God in the history of humankind.

THESIS THREE: A Christocentric trinitarianism discloses loving relationship as the proper mode of being. Hence love of neighbor (which includes Hindus, Buddhists, and others) is an imperative for all Christians.

THESIS FOUR: The normativity of Christ involves the normativity of crucified self-giving love. Praxis and dialogue.

THESIS FIVE: The church stands under the judgment of the Holy Spirit, and if the Holy Spirit is active in the world religions, then the world religions are vital to Christian faithfulness.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ D’Costa, *The Meeting of Religions* 99.

¹⁰⁶ Gavin D’Costa, “Christ, the Trinity and Religious Plurality,” in *Christian Uniqueness Reconsidered*, ed. Gavin D’Costa (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1990) 17.

Thesis One guards against the total identification of Jesus Christ with God the Father or else their non-identification with one another. Jesus Christ is “wholly God but never the whole of God.”¹⁰⁸ According to D’Costa, the historical self-manifestation of God in the particularity of the Jesus Christ event is normative of God’s self-revelation in history. The second thesis relates the Jesus Christ event to the entirety of human history through the Holy Spirit. Thus, potentially all history becomes the arena in which God’s self-revelation in Jesus Christ is mediated through the universal activity of the Holy Spirit. Thesis Three affirms that the love of neighbour is coextensive with the love of God. Thesis Four illustrates the ethical dimension of Christian discipleship in the practice of self-giving love. The last thesis stands as a warning that the Christian Church need be attentive to the presence of the Holy Spirit found in the religions of the world if the Church is to be attentive to the same Spirit under whose judgment it stands. To be closed-off from the presence of the Holy Spirit outside of the visible confines of the Church is to “wilfully” be closed to truth.¹⁰⁹

D’Costa makes several pneumatological observations regarding the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit outside of the visible confines of the Christian Church.¹¹⁰ First, the claim that the Spirit is present and active outside of the Church is an “intra-ecclesial” claim related to the practise of ecclesial discernment. Such a claim may lead to new forms of practise and articulations of the Christian tradition, but it never replaces Christological claims regarding the redeeming love of Jesus Christ.¹¹¹ Second, since all

¹⁰⁷ D’Costa, “Christ, the Trinity and Religious Plurality” 19- 22.

¹⁰⁸ D’Costa, “Christ, the Trinity and Religious Plurality” 18.

¹⁰⁹ D’Costa, “Christ, the Trinity and Religious Plurality” 23.

¹¹⁰ These are based principally upon an interpretation of the Paraclete passages of the Fourth Gospel.

¹¹¹ D’Costa, *The Meeting of Religions* 128.

creation, all history, are taken into and participate in the new creation inaugurated by Jesus' resurrection there is no "other" or "extra" revelation apart from the trinitarian self-disclosure of God in the revelation of Jesus Christ; the work of the Holy Spirit "will serve to make Christ more known fully to Christians—(and the world?)."¹¹² Third, the Christian community looks to what is Christ-like in other religious people and traditions through an "ecclesial act of discernment."¹¹³ In observing what is Christ-like in other religions and religious believers, Christians learn to live their call to holiness. Next, D'Costa maintains that the presence of the Spirit in the world means that because of the presence of the Holy Spirit elements of truth in the world, recognized as such, not only challenge the world but are catalysts to (re)presenting the Gospel in new and differing circumstances. Fifth, the presence and action of the Spirit outside the church is both "*judgment* upon the church and a sign of *promise* to the church."¹¹⁴ It is a judgment of that calls the Church to ever more authentic exercise of Christian discipleship and a source of promise that in relationships with non-Christians the Church grows in its relationship with God. Therefore, an openness to relational involvement with other religions is "deeply ecclesiological and Trinitarian,"¹¹⁵ with significant implications for the Church and its approach to inculturation and mission.

D'Costa is careful not to separate the work of the Spirit and the Son lest his assertion that the Spirit is present and active outside of the Church be interpreted as supporting the notion of two separate and independent economies of salvation. The confirmation of the presence of the Spirit in other religions is equally an affirmation of

¹¹² D'Costa, *The Meeting of Religions* 129.

¹¹³ D'Costa, *The Meeting of Religions* 129.

¹¹⁴ D'Costa, *The Meeting of Religions* 130.

¹¹⁵ D'Costa, *The Meeting of Religions* 131.

the simultaneous presence of the Son and the Father “if relations and perichoresis are taken seriously.”¹¹⁶ Furthermore, taking the trinitarian relations and perichoresis seriously entails considering the relationship of the Church and the Kingdom to the Trinity in the economy of salvation. From a tradition-specific Christian perspective, not to include consideration of the relationship between the Trinity, the Kingdom and the Church as concomitant with human history in a theology of religious diversity would reflect a lack of openness precisely because D’Costa takes openness to mean “taking history seriously.”¹¹⁷

D’Costa’s trinitarian approach to world religions requires what he terms “narrative spaces” within Christian theology and praxis. Such spaces provide open loci for “attentiveness to God through our neighbour” because there is no reason to “exclude the work of the Spirit from any tradition.”¹¹⁸ These are spaces in which “narratives of oppression” may be told and heard and may result in “repentance, reformation, and transformation” on the part of Christians for their historical complicity in the oppression of the religious other.¹¹⁹ In such spaces Christians can be transformed through listening to the narratives of holiness of the diverse traditions. Narrative spaces further serve as loci for the specifically Christian task of “indigenization,” a process through which “elements rightly valued within other traditions are affirmed and employed within a new narrative structure, one that tells of a Trinitarian God.”¹²⁰

¹¹⁶ D’Costa, *The Meeting of Religions* 164.

¹¹⁷ D’Costa, *The Meeting of Religions* 138.

¹¹⁸ D’Costa, “Christ, the Trinity and Religious Plurality” 24.

¹¹⁹ D’Costa, “Christ, the Trinity and Religious Plurality” 24.

¹²⁰ D’Costa, “Christ, the Trinity and Religious Plurality” 26.

D’Costa’s tests his trinitarian orientation to other religions in the practice of inter-religious prayer¹²¹ through which persons of different traditions come together to participate in a prayer that can be collectively claimed as their own. D’Costa characterizes this enterprise as “loving risk” and “an abandonment of control in an ambiguous act of love and trust,” an authentic instance of gift, covenant and communion with the Triune God.¹²² Inter-religious prayer does not ignore real differences between religions, but through them seeks to share God’s gifts with one another and to promote and deepen loving relationships with God and one another.

D’Costa maintains that the Second Vatican Council remains silent on the question of whether other religious traditions are vehicles of salvation *per se*, and that the ensuing debates centre around the question of the relationship between nature and grace. Those theologians that argue for a close relationship between nature and grace affirm the possibility that non-Christian religions are a means of salvation while those who contrast nature with grace interpret the Vatican II documents as affirming the opposite. D’Costa places John Paul II in the latter category. It comes as no surprise then that D’Costa reads the Vatican documents as

...prohibiting any unqualified positive affirmation of other religions as salvific structures, or as containing divine revelation. This is all held, while holding at the same time, without contradiction, that supernatural grace is operative in other religions and that in those religions there is much that is true, good, and holy, and much to be admired and learned by the church.¹²³

¹²¹ Inter-religious prayer as opposed to multi-religious prayer: Multi-religious prayer is when each faith community individually makes a contribution toward a service in which participants respectfully witness one another at prayer in their own tradition. The prayer convoked by John Paul II at Assisi in 1986 is an example. Inter-religious prayer is when members of different faith communities come together to prepare and participate in a common unitary prayer that each participant may claim as his/her own. The danger of inter-religious prayer is that what is distinctive and particular in individual religious traditions may be ignored or suppressed in favour of harmony and inclusivity. Such prayer cannot really be claimed by any tradition and may have, for purposes of general agreement, a ‘lowest common denominator’ principle.

¹²² D’Costa, *The Meeting of Religions* 150.

¹²³ D’Costa, *The Meeting of Religions* 105.

Exactly how it is possible to hold these two seemingly contrary positions simultaneously remains unclear. D’Costa’s own position is in continuity with his reading of the Vatican documents (conciliar and post-conciliar). These documents are his major theological sources; thus, some of the more theologically nuanced debates and conversations around religious diversity that are not within the purview of these documents are not addressed.

In his recent evaluation of contemporary trinitarian theologies of religious pluralism Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen praises D’Costa’s approach for exposing the presuppositions of pluralism in connection to liberal modernity’s agenda; for taking the roles of the three persons of the Trinity seriously without either conflating them into one (unitarianism) or separating them into three (tritheism); and lastly, for affirming the central and constructive role of the Church in a trinitarian programmatic instead of portraying it as an obstacle to interfaith dialogue and relationships.¹²⁴ On the other hand, Kärkkäinen offers two perceptive critiques: firstly, notwithstanding that all theological reflection occurs within a given horizon, is D’Costa’s approach not too “tradition-specific”?¹²⁵ D’Costa’s position relies heavily upon an interpretation of the Paraclete passages of the Fourth Gospel and Vatican II documents, supplemented with the post-conciliar teachings of John Paul II. Kärkkäinen rightly asks whether this is methodologically too narrow in view of the absence of conversations with the Pauline corpus, non-Magisterial sources, and the wider community of Christian theologians.

Secondly, D’Costa’s “tradition-specific” approach may be ultimately too ecclesiocentric. D’Costa posits that the role of the Spirit in the Church is analogous to

¹²⁴ Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, *Trinity and Religious Pluralism* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2004) 75-76.

¹²⁵ Kärkkäinen, *Trinity and Religious Pluralism* 76-79.

her role outside of the Church: to help people follow Christ more closely.¹²⁶ Thus, either the “replacement” or “fulfilment” model of religious pluralism is operative. Religions may be valuable in themselves but are also incomplete without reference to Christ and are oriented (consciously or not) toward Christ, if their adherents are on the road to salvation. Such a position questions the purpose of dialogue; Kärkkäinen in describing D’Costa’s position writes: “Other religions are not salvific as such, but other religions are important for the Christian church in that they help the church to penetrate into the divine mystery.”¹²⁷ Is there mutuality in such dialogue? Or does the religious Other function solely to benefit Christian theology and praxis? Moreover, since, according to D’Costa all dialogue supports a constitutive Christology, no criteria outside of Christianity exist to affirm what is valuable in non-Christian religions. This deductive approach to dialogue questions whether Christians have anything new to discover and learn from non-Christian religions.

D’Costa’s methodological oversights are compounded by a lack of explicit trinitarian theory or model. How does he conceive the trinitarian processions and persons? D’Costa seems to assign an ancillary role to the mission of the Holy Spirit that functions to universalize the particular meaning of Christ. D’Costa is silent on whether the Spirit brings her own eternal meaning into the economy of salvation. Does the Spirit communicate something unique and significant? Does D’Costa favour a social or psychological analogy or something else altogether? He rightly affirms the presence of the Spirit in other religions, and therefore, the presence of the Son and the Father because of the perichoresis or mutual indwelling; surprisingly, D’Costa goes on to claim that the

¹²⁶ D’Costa, *The Meeting of the Religions* 115.

¹²⁷ Kärkkäinen, *Trinity and Religious Pluralism* 72.

presence of the Triune God in other religions also implies the presence of the Church.¹²⁸

Some consideration of the immanent Trinity is necessary in order to substantiate such claims. Indeed these are complex questions, and perhaps outside of the scope of his work; however, they merit attention if one is to place the Christian doctrine of God at the center of one's understanding of religious diversity.

S. Mark Heim: A Trinitarian Theology of Religious Ends

Like Gavin D'Costa, American Baptist theologian S. Mark Heim places the Trinity at the center of his theological project to take religious diversity seriously. Heim believes that for Christians the resources to address questions raised by religious plurality are to be found in the doctrine of the Trinity. He says,

I am hardly alone in regarding the Trinity as the key that opens Christianity's theological interpretation of other religious traditions and its capacity to respect and learn from them.¹²⁹

Heim begins his explorations asking whether it is possible to honour one's own "faith and confession" while also honouring "truth, virtue, and integrity in believers of other religious traditions, and in the substance of those traditions themselves."¹³⁰ Heim is not interested in exploring the truth, virtue and substance of religious traditions that are similar or potentially convergent but that which is different. "[T]he religion has validity not despite its difference from Christianity but *because* of its difference."¹³¹ According to Heim differences between religious traditions are often "decisively important" and as

¹²⁸ Kärkkäinen, *Trinity and Religious Pluralism* 70.

¹²⁹ S. Mark Heim, *The Depth of the Riches, A Trinitarian Theology of Religious Ends* (Cambridge: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2001) 9.

¹³⁰ Heim, *The Depth of Riches* 1.

¹³¹ Heim, *The Depth of Riches* 2.

such an affirmation of differences is an affirmation of their uniqueness, significance and beliefs.¹³²

Heim argues as a “convinced inclusivist”¹³³ that the terms “pluralist,” “inclusivist” and “exclusivist” deal selectively with a single aspect of religious diversity; namely, salvation defined as communion with God and others in Christ. Heim re-orientes the conversation around religious ends “affirming that other religious traditions truthfully hold out religious ends which their adherents might realize as alternatives to communion with God in Christ. These are not salvation, the end Christians long for. But they are real.”¹³⁴ He goes on to define religious ends as a “set of practices, images, stories, and concepts” which provides matter for a life pattern, contains elements constitutive of final fulfilment and are exclusive of other alternatives. In the encounter of religious traditions a “grammar of diversity” that holds multiple options for religious fulfilment is necessary. These options are

...a specific and ultimate religious fulfillment, an ‘inclusivist’ way by which others may converge toward that fulfillment (even while initially unaware that they do so), achievement of religious fulfillments that are concretely quite different from the ultimate one, and a state without religious fulfillment at all.¹³⁵

This grammar recognizes the “significance of our religious choices and development,”¹³⁶ acknowledges that some traditions are on paths that aim at a fulfilment other than salvation,¹³⁷ and admits the possibility that “a single religious ultimate might [...] also encompass a variety of religious ends.”¹³⁸ Heim draws four broad types of religious ends following this grammar of diversity. They are, salvation as communion with God

¹³² Heim, *The Depth of Riches* 5.

¹³³ Heim, *The Depth of Riches* 7.

¹³⁴ Heim, *The Depth of Riches* 7.

¹³⁵ Heim, *The Depth of Riches* 7.

¹³⁶ Heim, *The Depth of Riches* 25- 26.

¹³⁷ Heim, *The Depth of Riches* 44.

¹³⁸ Heim, *The Depth of Riches* 34.

through Christ; alternative religious ends reflecting the distinctive human fulfillment of various religions; non-religious ends in which created reality is chosen over God; and negation of creation or annihilation.¹³⁹

At the center of Heim's proposal is a creative and insightful trinitarian theology. He critically appropriates Raimon Panikkar's three spiritualities of human religions.¹⁴⁰ The first spirituality, "iconolatry," is characterized as religious practice that directs and inspires believers and seeks to transform the self and the world through concrete action.¹⁴¹ The second spirituality, "personalism," reflects the intimate personal relationship with the divine through loving devotion. Such a spirituality emphasizes experiences of joy and ecstasy as well as worship.¹⁴² The last spirituality is that of "mysticism." This is the path of unitive knowledge dependent upon the forgetfulness of self and the desire for unity with the divine.¹⁴³ Each of these spiritualities has a negative side: the first is idolatry, the second anthropomorphism of the divine and the last, indifference to the created world.

According to Panikkar, these three spiritualities of human religions correspond to each of the persons of the Trinity: Father (iconolatry), Son (personalism) and Spirit (mysticism) and reflect their personal and relational presence. The uniqueness of Christianity is the integration of these three spiritualities. Nevertheless, Heim succinctly states, "Christianity is not wrong to think of the triune God and the Christ it worships as

¹³⁹ Heim, *The Depth of Riches* 272-73. Heim maintains that these broad types of religious ends reflect the diversity of beliefs held within Christian thought throughout the ages, whether in the Scriptures, in Eastern, Roman Catholic, or Protestant traditions, in medieval theological writings such as those of Thomas Aquinas or Albert the Great but also the literature of Dante's *Divine Comedy*.

¹⁴⁰ Raimon Panikkar, *The Trinity and the Religious Experience of Man: Icon-Person-Mystery* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1973) Panikkar will be discussed in a later chapter in relation to his influence on the possible directions Lonergan's thought regarding religious diversity may take.

¹⁴¹ Heim, *The Depth of Riches* 148.

¹⁴² Heim, *The Depth of Riches* 148.

¹⁴³ Heim, *The Depth of Riches* 148- 49.

the fulfillment and culmination of all religion. But it is wrong to think that Christianity has any privileged relation to them.”¹⁴⁴ The implication of this assertion for Christians is the result of what is termed the “christic principle;” that is, particular expressions of Christianity are in constant need of “radical expansion and supplementation” achieved through relationships with other faith traditions in order to better understand and live the trinitarian faith it confesses.¹⁴⁵

Ostensibly Heim agrees with many aspects of Panikkar’s influential thought; however, they differ significantly in Panikkar’s correlation of the three spiritualities with the persons of the Trinity. Following the lead of the collaborative work of Ninian Smart and Steven Konstantine, Heim suggests understanding these three spiritualities as “dimensions” of God and not as personal appropriations. As advocates of a social model of the Trinity, Smart and Konstantine outline three shared dimensions of God resulting from God’s triunity but not belonging to “one person as opposed to another.”¹⁴⁶ The first is the “infinity of divine life as it circulates through three persons;” the second is the plurality of the three persons of the Trinity as three distinct centers of consciousness; and the third, the common will or collective “I” by which God acts “with perfect unity of purpose.”¹⁴⁷ These three shared dimensions correspond to three dimensions of unity within the Trinity, the first being a non-relational, impersonal unity of divine process, the second regarding interpersonal relations of the distinct persons within the Trinity (*ad*

¹⁴⁴ Heim, *The Depth of Riches* 149.

¹⁴⁵ Heim, *The Depth of Riches* 150.

¹⁴⁶ Heim, *The Depth of Riches* 157. See Ninian Smart and Steven Konstantine, *Christian Systematic Theology in a World Context* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991).

¹⁴⁷ Heim, *The Depth of Riches* 157.

intra), and the third the unity of a single centre of consciousness arising from the single-mindedness of the three distinct centres in their relations without (*ad extra*).¹⁴⁸

Konstantine and Smart argue that the Triune God practices a “threefold *kenosis*” in creation.¹⁴⁹ Firstly, God contracts God’s self in restricting divine omnipotence thus securing a stable but impersonal basis for creation’s freedom. Next, God permits individuals the freedom to constitute themselves (through existential choices). Finally, God comes under the conditions of the first two contractions in entering human history as the Son Incarnate. God’s self-contraction permits the space required for creation’s freedom as well as God’s self-communication in history.

While Konstantine and Smart believe that the religious traditions of the world apprehend different dimensions of the Trinity, it is the “process” and “not the divine ‘I’ that is apprehended.”¹⁵⁰ This situation may give rise to multiple religious experiences but lead to a single religious end. Although Heim prefers the trinitarian model of Konstantine and Smart that emphasises the dimensions of God and less the distinct persons, their properties and interrelations, he acknowledges Pannikar’s separation of and distinction between religious spiritualities correlated to the three divine persons as supporting his contention that religious traditions are parallel paths that could result in diverse religious ends since they are eternally separate and distinct from one another.¹⁵¹

For Heim, the trinitarian thought of Panikkar and of Konstantine and Smart provides a “general Christian framework for understanding religious diversity”¹⁵² while the thought of John Zizioulas regarding the nature and substance of the Triune God

¹⁴⁸ Heim, *The Depth of Riches* 157-58.

¹⁴⁹ Heim, *The Depth of Riches* 163.

¹⁵⁰ Heim, *The Depth of Riches* 164.

¹⁵¹ Heim, *The Depth of Riches* 165.

¹⁵² Heim, *The Depth of Riches* 167.

provides the basis to “affirm the reality of these religious ends and to distinguish them from salvation.”¹⁵³ For Zizioulas God’s nature is communion constituted by co-equal, co-eternal persons in “asymmetrical”¹⁵⁴ relation. In God neither person nor communion has priority since “to be and to be in relation are the same thing for the divine life.”¹⁵⁵ Two significant considerations arise from the notion of God’s nature as a communion of persons. The first relates to the contributions that trinitarian theology make to redressing the general absence of “categories for ontological difference” that pervades Western thought and resulting in the devaluation of variation, relation, diversity and difference as “external, accidental, ultimately less real.”¹⁵⁶ The second implication relates to discussions around nature and grace and their relationship. Thus, unlike some Greek philosophies that hold the world is eternal and divine or else not eternal, not divine and bad, Christianity affirmed early in its history that the world was both different from God but also good. Created humanity could be drawn into the life of the Trinity by participating in those divine properties that are communicable. As people are drawn into the divine life, their own relationships should resemble those of the Trinity “where asymmetry coexists with equality.”¹⁵⁷

Because God’s nature is “communion-in-difference” humanity also participates in the divine life in a similar relationship of “communion-in-difference.” This relationship is complex and the variety of possible religious ends is a reflection of the complexity of the divine relations both *ad intra* and in the case of creation, *ad extra*. Diverse religious

¹⁵³ Heim, *The Depth of Riches* 168. See Jean Zizioulas, *Being and Communion: studies in personhood and the church* (Crestwood: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1985).

¹⁵⁴ Heim, *The Depth of Riches*, 203. By asymmetrical Heim means that the divine persons will never become identical- though fully one and totally mutual- what one person does out of her own personhood is not something the others necessarily also do.

¹⁵⁵ Heim, *The Depth of Riches* 174.

¹⁵⁶ Heim, *The Depth of Riches* 174-75.

¹⁵⁷ Heim, *The Depth of Riches* 176.

ends reflect the realization of a specific relationship with God.¹⁵⁸ One such end is certainly salvation but regardless of the type of relation, each is grounded in God's asymmetrical complexity. Heim offers three examples of dimensions of relationship drawn from human experience. They are, the impersonal relation that may be functional or biological (e.g. a blood transfusion); the personal relation of human agency (e.g. words, aesthetics, expressions); and the relation of communion, of encountering a person and sharing in the life of the other (e.g. empathy, feeling response).¹⁵⁹

For Heim, the complexity of the Triune God, the dimensions of relation and the human freedom to choose both a religious path and end speak to the real possibility of multiple religious ends from a Christian perspective. From this trinitarian perspective, other religions and their variety of ends are not merely stepping stones either to Christianity or to Christian salvation. On the contrary, Christianity aims at one relation in a “constellation” of relations with the divine and derivatively with one another. While Christianity may look to communion as integrative of the dimensions of God toward a fullness of relationality, it is Heim's contention that some religious traditions may be rooted in an enduring relationship with one or another dimension of the divine life—distinct and irreducible in its chosen particularity.

Heim postulates salvation as communion with God through Christ that potentially unites a diversity of persons and enables participation in all dimensions of the Triune life as the “ultimate” religious end. Nevertheless, he does not posit a universalist theory of salvation as he is weary of any eschatological theory that might suggest predetermination or else one that would ignore the human potential for and reality of self-determination.

¹⁵⁸ Heim, *The Depth of Riches* 179.

¹⁵⁹ Heim, *The Depth of Riches* 184.

Heim says, “God allows each of us to become what we wish to become...to freely form our most profound desires.”¹⁶⁰ God contracts God’s self precisely in favour of allowing humankind the space for free decision. God desires that human desires are realized, and God meets these desires in the fullest manner possible, but is always open to an ever fuller nexus of relations in communion—and every religious end could potentially fit into the wider communion in the divine plan for salvation.¹⁶¹ Thus, Heim poses the question:

Are religions providential only as avenues that lead to salvation and finally give way to it, or are they providential in offering an eternal pluralism of religious ends? They are providential in both. They are certainly providential as penultimate paths toward salvation and as *possible* eternal alternatives.¹⁶²

Heim reaches no definitive conclusion except that a diversity of religious ends is a possibility from a Christian trinitarian perspective. This possibility holds salvation as communion with God through Christ as one, and ultimate, religious end. However, such an end does not exclude the possibility of alternative religious ends as the fulfilment of other religious traditions that relate to one or other dimension of the Triune life.

Alternatively, non-religious human ends cling to created realities and to human fulfilment and result in isolation from God, or lastly, a total rejection of all creation and relationships resulting in annihilation.

Heim’s taxonomy of religious ends based on a grammar of diversity honours the distinctiveness of each tradition and respect for their unique claims. Heim himself is tentative about his conclusions regarding religious ends, but is clear that the Trinity opens up new avenues of exploration for the Christian encounter with other religious traditions.

¹⁶⁰ Heim, *The Depth of Riches* 263.

¹⁶¹ Heim, *The Depth of Riches* 253. Heim outlines a “principle of plenitude” which privileges the character of God as personal communion-in-difference rather than static essence; that sees creation coupled with freedom as an image of the Creator; that is characterized by salvation as persons in communion with God and each other through Christ; and that allows God’s purpose for creation to be worked out in various ways.

¹⁶² Heim, *The Depth of Riches* 268.

Such avenues are multiple. First, Heim's approach serves as a creative and intriguing heuristic, a "theological map," that respects the integrity of other religious traditions and focuses on the positive of those traditions while taking present and eschatological alternative paths seriously.¹⁶³ Second, as an integral aspect of a "theological curriculum" Christians learn that other religions assist in a deeper understanding of the Trinity. Third, Heim's proposal affirms that religious diversity has a positive meaning in the divine providential plan. Next, a theology of religious ends encourages relationships between faith traditions that are respectful, reciprocal, dialogical, based upon the mutual recognition of truth claims and legitimacy of beliefs and practices. Lastly, Heim's trinitarian theology of religious ends decisively affects and calls for a new theology of Christian mission and evangelisation.

Heim's creative approach to religious diversity through an exploration of a trinitarian theology of religious ends may in a final analysis seem too speculative (an examination of theo-philosophical possibilities of the unknowable future), or quasi-universalist (the possibility of salvation for all religious ends as an ultimate fulfilment of penultimate religious choices) or even crypto-inclusivist (in the hierarchy of salvation, with communion through Jesus Christ its apex). Such a speculative exercise has ramifications for understanding the relation between religion and history. Paul Knitter queries "[C]an many salvations save our world?"¹⁶⁴ If both means and ends of religions are different and plural, what is the point of dialogue? Are differences absolute, permanent, irreducible, unintelligible? If they are, and religious paths exist on parallel planes, then is communication and relationship across religious boundaries possible? Do

¹⁶³ Heim, *The Depth of Riches* 291.

¹⁶⁴ Paul Knitter, *Introducing Theologies of Religions* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2002) 229.

religions continue on their chosen parallel paths into eternity? Is what may be providential in history (a diversity of religions) providential in the same way and the same form at the end of history? These questions reveal another related set of questions relating to Heim's doctrine of God.

Heim undoubtedly places an understanding of God as Triune at the center of his theological enterprise. His social analogy for understanding the Trinity raises many questions, some germane to the topic of religious diversity. Heim rightly affirms the asymmetry and diversity of the trinitarian persons and the varied dimensions of the Triune life. Unfortunately, in the process he marginalises the unity of the Triune God. This is problematic in light of the conciliar development of trinitarian doctrine that sought to affirm the oneness of the Father, Son and Spirit.¹⁶⁵ Knitter suggests that Heim's assertion that there is enduring diversity in God and amongst religions is

...only the first half of the circle of Christian belief in God as triune; the other half swings back to oneness: the three divine persons, Christians also affirm, have something in common that enables them to relate to each other, enhance each other, achieve ever greater unity among themselves. Belief in the Trinity, therefore, would seem to call Christians to affirm not only, as Heim urges, real diversity among the religions but also the real possibility of common ground—a common ground that recognizes different paths, but not different goals.¹⁶⁶

Heim's preferred model that emphasizes eternal distinction, difference and communion-in-relation, also downplays personhood and the personal attributes (appropriations) of the divine Three. Heim prefers to speak of "dimensions" of God. Thus, is personal relationship possible with one of the divine Three? If not, what does this mean for personal prayer and trinitarian-structured doxology? Are religious believers drawn into the divine life through personal invitation and encounter into the

¹⁶⁵ Kärkkäinen, *Trinity and Religious Pluralism* 146.

¹⁶⁶ Knitter, *Introducing Theologies of Religions* 231.

personal eternal relationships or into an a-personal “communicable property” derived from a “divine dimension”?

Affirming enduring diversity within the Trinity, as Heim does, raises the question whether diversity in God necessarily results in a diversity of religious ends. Heim is concerned with protecting human freedom to choose both a religious means and a religious end but he fails to adequately address how God’s self-communication in history may affect human choices and decisions. Heim seems to place divine and human freedom in competition or opposition. Moreover, a diversity of religious ends stands in contrast to the biblical eschatological notion of gathering all peoples under God or the recapitulation of all creation under Christ. Heim’s proposal is unable to include the divine as an active, significant and important ingredient in shaping human persons and human history.

Jacques Dupuis: A Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism

Perhaps the most lucid and comprehensive body of literature regarding Christianity and religious diversity is that of the late Jacques Dupuis. A mere glance at the table of contents of his major works¹⁶⁷ on the topic reveals the breadth and depth of his knowledge as well as the nuanced considerations of the major issues of contemporary theological debates. They include theological treatment of a range of “historical” or “positive” issues as well as the “synthetic” and “speculative.”¹⁶⁸ Like the previous expositions, the following account of Dupuis’ work is but a general description of the principal orientations of his thought as they relate to methodology and trinitarian theory.

¹⁶⁷ I am referring to *Jesus at the Encounter of World Religions* (1991), *Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism* (1997), *Christianity and the Religions of the World*, (2002).

¹⁶⁸ Jacques Dupuis, S.J., *Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002) 20.

Dupuis privileges an “inductive method” in which the starting point for theological reflection is the concrete situation and questions that arise from a particular context.¹⁶⁹ For Dupuis, having spent over 30 years in the multi-faith context of India, “pluralism is, in the first place, a starting point for theological reflection, not an object of such a reflection.”¹⁷⁰ The movement is from lived faith to theological reflection as a “second act.”¹⁷¹ He contrasts this method to two others. The more traditional “dogmatic method” begins with dogmatic statements, retrospectively verifying them with biblical citations and then discerning their meaning from their conclusions.¹⁷² Developments in the dogmatic method result from ever more precise definitions of the terms of the articulations. The other method is the “genetic/historic-evolutive” that returns to biblical and Patristic sources and views historical development in a linear fashion. Dupuis cites three shortcomings of this method: little room for plurality, speculative deductions are drawn from what is considered the more fundamental data (of the past) and contextualizing the mystery of Jesus Christ (for the present) is marginal.¹⁷³ Specifically regarding the encounter of world religions Dupuis states:

One begins with a praxis of interreligious dialogue among the various traditions—lived, on either side, in one’s own faith, as is fitting—and theological conclusions concerning the relationship of these traditions follow as ‘second act.’¹⁷⁴

Dupuis’ inductive method emphasises a starting point for interreligious dialogue in the living encounter of religions but does not exclude “deductive” aspects. The deductive

¹⁶⁹ Jacques Dupuis, S.J., *Who Do You Say That I Am: introduction to Christology* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1994) 7. See also, *Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism* 13- 20.

¹⁷⁰ Terrence Merrigan, “Jacques Dupuis and the Redefinition of Inclusivism,” in *In Many and Diverse Ways: In Honor of Jacques Dupuis* (New York: Orbis Books, 2003) 66.

¹⁷¹ Dupuis, *Toward a Christian Theology* 1-20 , 293, Dupuis acknowledges his debt to the liberation hermeneutics and method.

¹⁷² Dupuis, *Who Do You Say That I Am* 5.

¹⁷³ Dupuis, *Who Do You Say That I Am* 6-7.

¹⁷⁴ Jacques Dupuis, S.J., *Jesus Christ at the Encounter of World Religions*, trans., Robert R. Barr, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991) 5.

aspect is evident in the fact that each party in the encounter is rooted in a particular tradition that makes unique and different theological claims prior to and after the encounter. Hence, encounter does not take place in a space void of value and meaning as if one's faith can be "bracketed."¹⁷⁵

Dupuis is careful to respect the limitations of dialogue and interfaith relationships:

It is one thing, by virtue of the interreligious dialogue practiced on the level of the spirit, to enter as far as possible into another's experience and perspective and to share, insofar as one can, the worldview of that other. It is another thing entirely to share the faith commitment and the coexistence thereupon ensuing of two seemingly contradictory faiths in the furthest depths of oneself. It is something else again to pretend to construct a universal theology that would transcend Christian theology and lay claim to universality.¹⁷⁶

Thus, unlike the aspirations of some exclusivists or pluralists, Dupuis believes that the purpose of interfaith dialogue is to enter into relationships and share in the experience and worldview of dialogue partners. The idea of constructing a "universal theology" that either encapsulates the essence of religious faith that lies behind its different, particular expressions (i.e. pluralism) or imposes a Christian worldview and its claims on the reality of religious diversity (i.e. exclusivism/crypto-exclusivism) is both illusive and ill-fated. The encounter of worldviews related to different faiths is the context through which the horizon of theological discourse is broadened and the opportunity to discover more about the divine and one's own religious tradition presents itself.¹⁷⁷

According to Dupuis Christianity today, unlike any other time in its history, enters into dialogue and relationship with various religions from a new perspective:

The new perspective is no longer limited to the problem of 'salvation' for members

¹⁷⁵ Dupuis, *Jesus Christ at the Encounter of World Religions* 6.

¹⁷⁶ Dupuis, *Jesus Christ at the Encounter of World Religions* 7.

¹⁷⁷ Dupuis, *Toward a Christian Theology* 18.

of the other religious traditions or even to the role of those traditions in the salvation of their members. It searches more deeply, in the light of Christian faith, for the meaning in God's design for humankind of the plurality of living faiths, for the meaning of God's design for humankind of the plurality of living faiths and religious traditions with which we are surrounded.¹⁷⁸

The teachings of the Second Vatican Council (1963-1965) explicitly confirmed what the Roman Catholic Church had previously implicitly held, that there is salvific grace outside the visible and historical confines of the Christian Church.¹⁷⁹ The question of whether non-Christians can be saved has effectively been closed by the Council. Instead, new questions regarding the understanding of the meanings and values of the plurality of religious faiths have arisen. A further set of questions relates to the "the root cause of pluralism itself, for its significance in God's own plan for humankind"¹⁸⁰

Dupuis' evaluation of the reality of religious plurality is decidedly positive. His evaluation contrasts approaches to religious diversity in which differences are considered obstacles to be overcome toward identifying the essence of religious faith or else as "accidents" of history that will work themselves out in time, because the essential commonality of religions tends to a future historical convergence into a single, "true" religious expression. In recognising the reality of religious diversity Dupuis queries, "is the plurality of religious traditions today simply a fact of life to be reckoned with, or a positive factor to be welcomed as a gift of God? Or again: Are we dealing with pluralism of fact (*de facto*) or of principle (*de iure*)?"¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁸ Dupuis, *Toward a Christian Theology* 10.

¹⁷⁹ Francis A. Sullivan, S.J. provides a detailed exposition on the doctrinal development of the Roman Catholic teaching on the salvation of non-Christians in *Salvation Outside the Church: Tracing the History of the Catholic Response* (Mahwah, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1992). For a brief sketch of the same historical development see Ovey Mohammed, S.J., "Catholicism in Dialogue with World Religions: The Value of Self-Denial," *Toronto Journal of Theology* 20 (Spring 2004).

¹⁸⁰ Dupuis, *Toward a Christian Theology* 11.

¹⁸¹ Jacques Dupuis, "Trinitarian Christology as a Model for a Theology of Religious Pluralism," in *The Myriad Christ: plurality and the quest for unity in contemporary Christology*, ed. T. Merrigan and J. Haers (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2000) 96.

Pluralism of principle (*de iure*) holds that religious pluralism can be attributed to God's salvific plan for humanity and as such has its own '*raison d'être*' that is not oriented toward the effacement of religious diversity in history. Pluralism of principle illustrates and witnesses to "the superabundant generosity with which God has manifested himself to humankind in manifold ways and to the pluriform responses which in diverse cultures human beings have given to the divine self disclosure."¹⁸² Thus, Dupuis asks: what are the causes of pluralism? What significance could religious pluralism have in the divine plan? What are the possibilities of convergence, mutual enrichment, and respect for differences?¹⁸³

Dupuis' assertion that "the superabundant generosity with which God has manifested himself in manifold ways" resonates with the Christian understanding of God as Triune. Trinitarian doctrine teaches that God reveals God's self as God truly is in human history and that God is a Trinity of persons traditionally named Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The doctrine holds that the Son and Spirit are sent by the Father to carry out the divine plan for salvation. The roles of the Son and the Spirit in this plan are distinct, equal and in relationship, neither one is subordinate to the other. While asserting the unique role of the Holy Spirit in salvation, Dupuis does not give short shrift to the mission of the Son in the historical event of the Incarnation, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ that is at the heart of the Christian kerygma. As Dupuis says:

It follows that a theology of religious pluralism elaborated on the foundation of the Trinitarian economy will have to combine and to hold in constructive tension the central character of the punctual historical event of Jesus Christ and the universal action and dynamic influence of the Spirit of God. It will thus be able to account for God's self-manifestation and self-gift in human cultures and religious traditions outside the orbit of influence of the Christian message without, for that matter,

¹⁸² Dupuis, *Toward a Christian Theology* 386.

¹⁸³ Dupuis, *Toward a Christian Theology* 11.

construing Christology and pneumatology into two distinct economies of divine-human relationships for Christians and for the members of other traditions, respectively.¹⁸⁴

Dupuis' trinitarian approach does not assign salvific relationality with the divine in non-Christian religions solely to work of the Holy Spirit without reference to the Son. In fact, a central concern of Dupuis is to structure all divine revelation and salvation along trinitarian lines.

Dupuis claims that from a Christian perspective a trinitarian approach to religious pluralism is at the same time Christocentric, pneumatocentric and theocentric. This claim raises several pertinent issues in theologies of religious diversity which Dupuis creatively explores. The first is the Christological issue. Dupuis is criticised for holding a "high Christology," that lacks a consideration of the historical Jesus.¹⁸⁵ Dupuis admits to taking this methodological option of a descending Christology, maintaining that an account of the uniqueness and universality of the Jesus Christ event in the order of salvation necessitates such an approach and does not violate the personal identity of Jesus Christ as the only-begotten of the Father. He also argues that such an approach does not contradict the variety of New Testament Christologies and is, in fact, drawn from the substantial agreement amongst them.

A second important issue remains that of the integration of the missions of the second person (Logos/ Word) and third person (Spirit) of the Trinity in various revelatory events in history. According to Dupuis, God's self-communication is always trinitarian in

¹⁸⁴ Jacques Dupuis, *Christianity and the Religions: from Confrontation to Dialogue*, trans. Phillip Berryman (Maryknoll: New York, 2002) 96.

¹⁸⁵ Jacques Dupuis, "'The Truth Will Make You Free': The Theology of Religious Pluralism Revisited" in *Louvain Studies* 24 (Fall, 1999) 214. Dupuis refers to methodological criticism raised by Roger Haight in an interesting article that addresses many issues that others have raised about his work. This article clarifies his position on a myriad of subjects.

structure. In the spirit of Karl Rahner's *grundaxiom*¹⁸⁶ Dupuis states "the order of personal origins intrinsic to the communion of divine life necessarily extends to the sphere of God's self-communication in history."¹⁸⁷ God's interventions on behalf of God's people are the work of God's Word and every person who is opened up to and possessed by the divine is so because of the work of God's Spirit.¹⁸⁸ God's self-communication outside of the Christian dispensation is as trinitarian in structure as is God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ. The Father sends the Word and the Spirit, revealed in the lives of people and in concrete historical events to the benefit of humankind. Any movement toward the divine on the part of humankind is a secondary response to God's prior initiative.

...the foundation of a religious pluralism of principle is the mystery of the plural communication of God to humankind in history- the Economic Trinity, which governs the one, but plural economy of salvation ... The reason is that God has in every event and from the beginning been searching for men and women throughout their history, even before they could even think of searching for him: "*Tu ne me cherchais pas si je ne t'avais pas déjà trouvé*" ...¹⁸⁹

Dupuis argues that the paschal mystery of Christ's death and resurrection is the "cause" of salvation.¹⁹⁰ The uniqueness of the Jesus Christ event is constitutive and relational and neither absolute nor relative. By "constitutive" Dupuis means that the paschal mystery has a universal significance in God's saving plan for humanity as an enduring bond between God and humanity and as a "privileged channel" through which God shares the divine life with humankind.¹⁹¹ By "relational" Dupuis draws attention to the fact that while the Jesus Christ event has special significance in God's salvific plan,

¹⁸⁶ Karl Rahner, *The Trinity*, trans. Joseph Donceel (New York: The Seabury Press, 1974) 22. The "economic" Trinity is the "immanent" Trinity and vice versa.

¹⁸⁷ Dupuis, *Toward a Christian Theology* 242.

¹⁸⁸ Dupuis, *Toward a Christian Theology* 243- 245.

¹⁸⁹ Dupuis, "The Truth Will Make You Free" 259.

¹⁹⁰ Dupuis, "The Truth Will Make You Free" 283.

¹⁹¹ Dupuis, "The Truth Will Make You Free" 305.

there is reciprocity with other paths proposed by various religions.¹⁹² Dupuis distinguishes between the *Logos ensarkos* and the *Logos asarkos*; the former referring to the universal sacrament of God's saving action in history and the latter to the expression of God's "superabundant graciousness and absolute freedom."¹⁹³ The historical reality of Jesus Christ cannot exhaust God's mystery and saving power and in this sense the revelation of the divine in Jesus Christ remains "limited" or "finite."¹⁹⁴ Likewise, the action of the Logos cannot be "constrained by the particularity of the incarnational event" and "similarly the universal influence of the Spirit cannot be limited to his effusion upon the world by the glorified humanity of the risen Christ."¹⁹⁵

Another pertinent issue is the re-appropriation and re-integration of the Holy Spirit in Western Christian theologizing. In the theological evaluation of other religions the Christian approach must take pneumatology seriously. Such an approach

...will consist in discovering in their [human] religious life the active presence and enlivening influence of the Holy Spirit. This approach is founded on the Christian belief that the world in which all men live their life is a world already redeemed because the historical mystery of Christ which culminated in Pentecost has brought about a new creation. The eschatological effusion of the Spirit which has resulted from Christ's glorification is not limited to the boundaries of the Christian Church; it extends to the whole universe. The Holy Spirit is actually enlivening the entire cosmos and transforming all things.¹⁹⁶

In this early Dupuis quote, the effusion of the Spirit is not limited to redemption mediated through the Jesus Christ event, though he does connect it causally with the glorification of Christ. In later work, Dupuis refers to the contributions of "Spirit-Christology" that

¹⁹² Dupuis, "The Truth Will Make You Free" 305.

¹⁹³ Dupuis, "Trinitarian Christology as Model" 91.

¹⁹⁴ Dupuis, "The Truth Will Make You Free" 235. Dupuis amends the terms he used in *Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism* in reference to the revelation of the divine in Jesus Christ following unease expressed by Terrence Merrigan of the terms "incomplete" and "relative" that Dupuis uses in *Toward a Christian Theology* 298.

¹⁹⁵ Dupuis, "Trinitarian Christology as Model" 92.

¹⁹⁶ Jacques (James) Dupuis, "The Cosmic Influence of the Holy Spirit and the Gospel Message," in *Jesus Christ and His Spirit* (Bangalore: Theological Publications in India, 1977) 183.

“make it clear that the Spirit of God is universally present and active, before and after the Christ event. The Christ event both derives from the working of the Spirit in the world and gives rise to it.”¹⁹⁷ Dupuis warns that an over identification of the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of the risen Christ may circumscribe and limit the activity of the Spirit to that of the communication of the meaning of risen Christ and the Church. Instead, Dupuis contextualizes the historical Jesus Christ event within the historically unbounded activity of the Spirit.

A last implication of the affirmation of the trinitarian presence in human history concerns the Christian understanding of other “saving figures,” “sacred writings” and “religious paths” that are the products of secondary responses to God’s invitation to share in God’s own life.¹⁹⁸ How is the professed “uniqueness” of Jesus Christ to be understood in a world permeated by trinitarian grace? Is there an authentic word communicated by God outside of the Judeo-Christian dispensation? How is the experience of the divine recorded in non-Christian texts to be understood? What role does Christianity play in a context that affirms *de iure* pluralism? Can a particular religion substantiate claims to have universal significance? These questions illustrate the complex nexus of grace/revelation/salvation and history which reflection on religious diversity occasions.

This brief exposition of Dupuis’ work and his constructive reading of the rich reality of religious plurality opens new and wide perspectives for Christian theological reflection. Dupuis names his own perspective “inclusive-pluralism” or “pluralist-inclusivism,” a paradigm that holds in creative tension the insights and concerns of both pluralism and inclusivism. Dupuis argues that “inclusive pluralism...upholds both the

¹⁹⁷ Dupuis, *Christianity and the World Religions* 178.

¹⁹⁸ Dupuis, *Toward a Christian Theology* 305.

universal constitutive character of the Christ even in the order of salvation and the positive saving significance of the religious traditions within the single manifold plan of God for humankind.”¹⁹⁹ Within such a paradigm various models for understanding religious plurality must reflect mutual complementarity not oppositional contradiction.²⁰⁰ Dupuis’ distinction between paradigm and model is helpful in understanding the breadth of his proposal. A paradigm is a principle for understanding, an overall hermeneutical key for interpreting reality; a model is descriptive and draws attention to some aspect(s) of reality.²⁰¹ For example, a Christocentric model need not be opposed to a pneumatocentric one since for Christians to be Christocentric means being pneumatocentric and vice versa. Or again, a regnocentric model is not contradictory to an ecclesiocentric or soteriocentric model though the first highlights the place of the Kingdom of God in history, the second the role of the Church and the last the meaning of salvation. The only models that would be excluded from the “inclusive pluralist” paradigm would be those that pertain to the exclusivist paradigm. Dupuis’ paradigm requires a shift in Christian discourse from an “either-or” mindset that logically entails contradiction and exclusion to an “and-and” or “both-and” mode that reflects mutuality and complementarity.²⁰²

Dupuis’ “inclusive pluralist” paradigm for understanding religious pluralism reflects the most significant body of work on religious diversity in Roman Catholic theology in recent years. His work is trinitarian in approach as it includes detailed historical reflection on the Christian understandings of the missions of the Son and the

¹⁹⁹ Dupuis, *Christianity and the Religions* 255.

²⁰⁰ Dupuis, *Toward a Christian Theology* 181.

²⁰¹ Dupuis, *Toward a Christian Theology* 181. See also, *Christianity and the World Religions* 90.

²⁰² Dupuis, *Toward a Christian Theology* 198.

Spirit. While Dupuis is weary of theologies that either separate or subordinate the mission of one of the persons of the Trinity to another, he may yet “betray subordinationist traits”²⁰³ in his assertion of the inclusive presence of Christ in various religions and the “normativity” though “relativity” of Jesus Christ in salvation. Although other religions have enduring value as they reveal God’s self-communication in the Holy Spirit, they are “stepping-stones” that have a Christological confession as their goal or completion.²⁰⁴ As Dupuis states “Christ, not the Spirit, is at the center as the way to God;”²⁰⁵ anything the Spirit speaks must be contextualized in relation to the disclosure of the Son. Such a stance could be interpreted as a more nuanced and respectful “fulfillment theory.” Nevertheless, Dupuis’ magisterial work, more than any other contemporary trinitarian approach to religious diversity, avoids the “unhappy outcomes” of many other approaches.²⁰⁶ It refrains from putting limits on what God may be doing in history, in the divine economy, including other religions. Next, Dupuis avoids an ecclesiocentrism that would have the Church “more important than Christ and his vision of the Reign of God.”²⁰⁷ Last, Dupuis’ approach facilitates and encourages dialogue amongst the religions of the world.

²⁰³ Kärkkäinen, *Trinity and Religious Pluralism* 63.

²⁰⁴ Knitter, *Introducing Theologies of Religions* 89.

²⁰⁵ Dupuis, *Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism* 197.

²⁰⁶ Knitter, *Introducing Theologies of Religions* 89.

²⁰⁷ Knitter, *Introducing Theologies of Religions* 89.

II/ Lonergan and the Meeting of Religions

A significant application of Bernard Lonergan's thought to the "wider ecumenism" of the world's religions is found in the work of Vernon Gregson.²⁰⁸ He suggests that Lonergan's analysis of the multiple levels of human consciousness can serve as the meeting point for various dialogues between religious, scientific, secular and historical consciousnesses.²⁰⁹ For Gregson inter-religious dialogue entails taking "seriously the religious horizon of the other, including person to person encounter, shared religious experience in worship and prayer, the examination of sacred literature, the study of the history of traditions and cooperation in educational, social and political arenas."²¹⁰

Following Lonergan, Gregson distinguishes between consciousness as awareness and attending.²¹¹ Consciousness as awareness is the self-presence in the intentional operations that make objects present to subjects; the factor "over and above the object or content of certain acts;"²¹² the common integral component in one's awareness (of colour, or sound, or heat); the distinct levels of experiencing, understanding, judging and deciding. Consciousness as attending refers to attending to the subjective operations that renders the operating subject present to himself or herself. Lonergan's four levels of conscious intentionality provide both the operational structure of human knowing and doing as well as the structure for reflecting upon the operations of human knowing and doing. What Lonergan terms *transcendental method* is the experience of experiencing,

²⁰⁸ Vernon Gregson, *Lonergan, Spirituality, and the Meeting of Religions*. (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1985) and "The Dialogue of Religions and the Religious-Secular Dialogue: the Foundational Perspective of Bernard Lonergan," *Ecumenical Studies* 18 (1981).

²⁰⁹ Gregson, *Lonergan, Spirituality* xv.

²¹⁰ Gregson, *Lonergan, Spirituality* 1.

²¹¹ Bernard J.F. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1972) 8-10.

²¹² Gregson, *Lonergan, Spirituality* 39.

understanding, judging and deciding; understanding the unity and relations of the experienced experiencing, understanding, judging and deciding; affirming the reality of experienced and understood experiencing, understanding, judging and deciding; and deciding to operate in accord with the norms immanent in the relatedness of one's experienced, understood, and affirmed experiencing, understanding, judging and deciding.²¹³

According to Gregson, Lonergan's principle contribution to the meeting of the religions is in a reinterpreted foundations of Christian theology. "Foundations" refers to the fifth of Lonergan's eight functional specialties in theological method that both objectifies the event known as "conversion" and provides a framework for understanding the meaning and effectiveness of the subsequent three functional specialties: doctrines, systematics, and communications. Thus, the two principal foci of Gregson's work:

The first is the call for the recovery (and the therapeutic method for the recovery) of the theologian's own subjectivity. That subjectivity is religious, ethical, psychic and intellectual. The second focus is the delineation of the task of refounding Christian theological self-understanding, not in doctrine but in reflection on the transformed praxis which is Christian subjectivity. In a word, Lonergan calls for both the Christian theologian's and the Christian community's self-transcendence to be reflected on as foundational.²¹⁴

The double foci occasioned by interfaith encounter of the recovery of the theologian's own subjectivity (also termed "therapy for the theologian" or "therapeutic recovery" by Gregson) and of the "transformed praxis which is Christian subjectivity" relate respectively to the "renewed Christian self-understanding preliminary to dialogue" and to "the common understanding of religious existence, the human person and the secular"²¹⁵ that develops as a result of interreligious dialogue. In both instances conversion is the

²¹³ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 14-15.

²¹⁴ Gregson, *Lonergan, Spirituality* 2.

²¹⁵ Gregson, *Lonergan, Spirituality* 9.

key notion that denotes not only a self-actualized conscious subject aware of his or her own intentional and volitional operations but as the content of further thematized theological reflection.

Lonergan outlines three types of conversion, the last of which serves as a bridge between Gregson's therapeutic recovery of the theologian and a re-interpretation of foundational theology. The first is intellectual conversion, the clarification and elimination of myths about reality, objectivity, and human knowledge.²¹⁶ Intellectual conversion relates principally to the first three levels of cognitional operations. Next, moral conversion is the transformation of one's criteria for making decisions from *satisfactions* to *values*. This is the existential moment when the subject not only knows the good but chooses it as well. Lastly, religious conversion is being grasped by "Ultimate concern" and becomes the foundational principle of all subsequent acts. The religiously differentiated consciousness is *aware* of the highest of operations of intentionality and consciousness.²¹⁷ According to Gregson it is possible to experience this religious experience as pure experience (as in a state of mystical consciousness) but it is also possible to move beyond the experience to understanding and judgment; hence, from an experience of the experience to conscious and intentional reflection on it.

A therapeutic recovery is necessary for the theologian embarking upon interreligious encounters and dialogues because it facilitates the self-awareness needed in order that the encounter of religious believers be open, honest and potentially fruitful. Therapeutic recovery is based upon Lonergan's four levels of intentionality and

²¹⁶ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 238.

²¹⁷ Gregson uses the term "being drawn to the ultimate" but I prefer "grasped" because it clarifies that such a state is the gift of God's loving initiative that takes hold of people, not merely people in search of God, even in a treatment of Lonergan's theory of human development from below upwards.

consciousness and its related transcendental method. The first three levels of Lonergan's intentionality analysis constitute cognitional theory as

...a self-structuring process of experiencing the data of sense and of consciousness; of attempting to gain insight into the data and to formulate those insights; and of verifying or falsifying the correctness of our understanding on the basis of evidence.²¹⁸

In experiencing, understanding and judging the data of sense and consciousness questions of cognitional theory (what do I do when I know?), epistemology (why is doing that knowing?), and metaphysics (what do I know when I do it?) are addressed so that judgments of fact can be made. The fourth level, deciding, reflects a movement beyond the cognitional-epistemological to the existential level as the desire for truth reveals what is valuable: questions shift from *Is it so?* to *Is it worthwhile?* *Is it good?* The movement from experiencing to understanding to judging to deciding reflects the upward movement in Lonergan's analysis of human development.

Gregson's therapeutic recovery of the theologian based on Lonergan's theoretical analysis of human knowing and choosing highlights certain features central to Gregson's notion of interfaith encounter. Firstly, interfaith encounter takes place between people who are moulded and shaped by their cultures and histories and who struggle, often under the threat of bias,²¹⁹ to understand those cultures and histories. This insight is of decisive importance for Christians and non-Christians alike who struggle to come to terms with histories and cultures implicated in the complex nexus of colonial and neo-colonial relationships of power. This struggle to understand, reconcile and heal the past

²¹⁸ Gregson, *Lonergan, Spirituality* 10.

²¹⁹ I am speaking of Lonergan's notion of "group bias" that seeks fulfilment of satisfaction and not value, causes alienation, promotes group aggrandizement, justifies its egotistical ways, blames the "misfortune of other groups due to their depravity," and justifies and rationalizes behaviour that blinds the group to reality. See Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 54.

contributes to present history-making by religious believers. As Gregson says, a personal possession of one's conscious operations is

...to become aware of oneself as an historical being, as a being who not only lives in, but who makes history. It is also to become aware of others as co-makers of the multi-faceted dimensions of culture and to have access with them- always historically conditioned access- to the concrete and dialectical unfolding of man.²²⁰

Thus, persons involved in interfaith encounter must be aware of their own beliefs, cultures and histories as well as the differences of those properly and rightly belonging to others. This requirement enables the sharing data in the event of encounter and advertence to the possibilities that such an encounter has for a shared future.

Another facet of Gregson's notion of interfaith encounter is that people of different faiths have something significant to share. For example, particular beliefs, theologies, rituals, conceptions of God, religious narratives, thematized religious experiences, mystical traditions, or else more practical faith-perspective responses to pertinent social and political issues become the data that participants in religious encounter share. These data shared by believers in encounter become data for reflection and give rise to insights significant not only in the encounter-event itself but for subsequent reflection, post-event. New data or data understood differently by different parties, attended to, understood and judged, give rise to new insights and to new options to choose from. Gregson further asks how these insights that become new knowledge rise to consciousness and challenge the subjects of encounter at the intellectual, religious and moral levels.²²¹

A third feature of Gregson's notion of interfaith encounter is that it is a transformative process. Since the four levels of intentionality and consciousness are

²²⁰ Gregson, *Lonergan, Spirituality* 27.

²²¹ Gregson, *Lonergan, Spirituality* 31.

intimately related and the higher levels depend upon the preceding, then the data shared in the event of encounter are the data that lead to a transformation in knowing and choosing, of notions of truth and value. Interfaith encounter expands the horizon of the participants as the desire for truth moves beyond the cognitional to the existential and the encounter results not only in an addition to the “common stock”²²² of knowledge but also, through the appropriation of the preceding levels and the subjective operations involved, in previously unknown options becoming potential choices. Therefore, previously narrower notions not only of truth but of value are expanded. Gregson writes:

Each level subsumes the previous levels, which are prerequisites for its own operation. To choose the good, one must know that it is good. To know and affirm that it is good, one must understand the experience one is concerned with. To understand the experience one must attend to it. Each level makes an essential contribution.²²³

The new range of options that result from interfaith encounter affirms an important aspect of the first feature listed, namely, that human subjects co-constitute history in choosing and in the performance of subjective choices in history.²²⁴

Judgments of fact result from the cognitively self-transcending subject while judgments of value result from the volitionally self-transcending subject; moral self-transcendence occurs when the subject not only judges but chooses, when knowledge becomes transformative praxis. The unlimited desire to know and to choose the good and the valuable is a fourth aspect of Gregson’s notion of interfaith encounter gleaned from Lonergan’s thought. For both Lonergan and Gregson it is the intellectual and existential

²²² Joseph A. Komonchak, “The Social Mediation of the Self,” in *Foundations in Ecclesiology*, ed. Fred Lawrence (Boston: Lonergan Workshop Journal, 1995) 106.

²²³ Gregson, *Lonergan, Spirituality* 38.

²²⁴ Gregson, *Lonergan, Spirituality* 42. In choosing the good and constituting history subjects become “originating value.” Of course, the desire for what is chosen is often contrasted with its actual concrete performance in history.

desire for God that manifests itself in the unrestricted questioning that moves subjects up the cognitional-volitional ladder (from experience to understanding to judgment to choosing) and it is only in a state of being-in-love (with God and others) that unrestricted questioning is fulfilled.²²⁵ A state of being-in-love is the result of knowing the Good, the True, the Beautiful, even if only imperfectly and choosing it because it is known to be good, true, beautiful and affirming it to be so because one understands one's experience of it. This dynamic state of being-in-love colours all further experiences, understandings, judgments and choices and orients a person toward Ultimate Mystery. It is an existential moment when the subject decides whether to place his/her life into the hands of a veiled mystery and to transform one's self and one's world in returning love for evil.

Lonergan makes an important distinction between "faith" and "belief"²²⁶ in which he distinguishes between the religious experience of being grasped by Ultimate concern and the objectification of religious experience symbolically expressed in the world of religious meaning: creeds, rituals, images, etc. Faith is the knowledge born of religious love that serves as the infrastructure of religious beliefs while belief is the outer word and suprastructure.²²⁷ For Gregson this means that dialogue can take place at two distinct levels; the first around faith and religious experience and the second around traditions and beliefs. Since religious experience is not unique to Christians, the trans-cultural reality, named God's grace by Christians, is the basis for categories that can be applied to interfaith encounter; these are in addition to more general categories that result from a theoretical analysis of human knowing. Gregson writes

...special cross-cultural categories based on interiority analysis can help the

²²⁵ Gregson, *Lonergan, Spirituality* 45.

²²⁶ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 123.

²²⁷ The relationship between "infrastructure" and "suprastructure" will be dealt with in depth in chapter 4.

adherent of a religious tradition locate within his experience what is referred to by his beliefs and can help him relate his religious experience to his other human experience. It can also provide a base and a heuristic for understanding others' religious experience as well as their beliefs.²²⁸

For Gregson the fully converted subject is never confined to any one limited horizon but remains open to conversion over and over again. Furthermore, the "visibility" of conversion evidenced outside one's own religious tradition compels a religiously converted person to be attentive to what is going on outside one's own tradition lest one act arbitrarily and unreasonably (ignoring the precepts to be attentive, intelligent, reasonable and responsible) thereby refusing ongoing conversion.²²⁹ For Lonergan, and subsequently Gregson, it is the objectification of the event of conversion that provides the foundations for "the identification and selection of the framework in which doctrines, systematics, and communications will have meaning and effectiveness."²³⁰ With regard to theologies of interfaith dialogue and/or religious pluralism the objectification of the event of conversion will result in evolving theologies that strive to integrate the new insights gleaned from interreligious encounter.

Gregson is not the only interpreter of Lonergan to place Lonergan's notion of religious experience at the center of a Lonerganian interreligious enterprise. Denise Lardner Carmody's approach shares many commonalities with that of Gregson. Carmody markedly emphasizes the gift of the love of God that is worthy of a response on the part of human persons. This state of being-in-love

²²⁸ Gregson, *Lonergan, Spirituality* 65-66.

²²⁹ Gregson, *Lonergan, Spirituality* 81.

²³⁰ Carla Mae Streeter, "Foundations", Lonergan Website Glossary, ed. Carla Mae Streeter, http://www.lonergan.on.ca/glossary/glossary_e-1.htm, accessed September 1, 2005.

results in a new horizon that “resets our values and alters our knowing”²³¹

Through the self-appropriation of our own interiority, our own conscious and intentional operations, the realization of God’s love produces in us a dynamic state of being-in-love and it is this religious experience that is at the core of the religious traditions of the world.²³² Like Gregson and others,²³³ Carmody indicates that Lonergan’s distinction between faith as knowledge born of religious love and as the inner word that seizes the human heart, and beliefs as historically conditioned and expressed in the outer word, reflects the process by which religious experience is carried from interiority out into the world mediated by meaning thus making interreligious exchange possible.

In *The Structure of Religious Knowing: Encountering the Sacred in Eliade and Lonergan*, John Dadosky develops Lonergan’s thought regarding a possible convergence of religions concurring that the “starting point for the foundations of religious convergence may lie in the cross-cultural comparison of religious-mystical experience.”²³⁴ Dadosky goes on to state that, “We can surmise that for Lonergan the foundations for a convergence of religions lay in focusing on an infrastructure or fundamental experience, which he interprets as being-in-love in an unrestricted manner.”²³⁵ The convergence of which Dadosky speaks neither ignores differences nor

²³¹ Denise Lardner Carmody, “The Desire for Transcendence: Religious Conversion,” in *The Desires of the Human Heart*, ed. Vernon Gregson (New York: Paulist Press, 1988) 61.

²³² Carmody, “The Desire for Transcendence” 63, 65.

²³³ William P. Loewe also makes use of this same distinction in his article “Lonergan and the Law of the Cross: A Universalist View of Salvation,” *Anglican Theological Journal* 59 (1977): 162- 175. Fred Crowe also cites the distinction in warning that religion is not only institutional/ superstructural but is also about religious experience. See Fredrick E. Crowe “Lonergan’s Universalist View of Religion,” *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 12 (1994): 147-79.

²³⁴ John D. Dadosky, *The Structure of Religious Knowing: Encountering the Sacred in Eliade and Lonergan*. (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2004) 144.

²³⁵ Dadosky, *The Structure of Religious Knowing* 145.

seeks a meta-religion but preserves the “integrity and identity of specific religions while simultaneously establishing a new way of relating religiously to a plurality of religions.”²³⁶ In the convergence of religions, persons committed to their tradition seek to establish authentic community with those of other traditions.

Dadosky’s application of Lonergan’s thought to the experience of the Sacred includes several important characteristics pertinent to discussions around interfaith encounters and dialogues. First, differentiations of consciousness and their related realms of meaning are important for their heuristic value and to understand the context of diversity. The differentiations of consciousness beginning with common sense are followed by theory, interiority and religious. Common sense refers to the concrete world of people and places and their relation to us; it can be primitive in the lack of distinction between image and thing or else specialized in the technical sense. Common sense gives way to theory when questions arise within the common sense context which it is unable to answer, and a new context for both new kinds of questions and answers is needed.²³⁷ Theoretically differentiated consciousness seeks explanations of relationships, differences, congruencies, functions and interactions. Theoretically differentiated consciousness gives rise to interiorly differentiated consciousness which takes into account human intentionality.²³⁸ This is the point when one becomes aware of one’s own operations, their structure, norms and potentials.²³⁹ Lastly, religiously differentiated

²³⁶ Dadosky, *The Structure of Religious Knowing* 145.

²³⁷ Lonergan refers to this as “systematic exigence.” See *Method in Theology* 83.

²³⁸ Critical exigence asks the questions: What am I doing when I am knowing? Why is doing that knowing? What do I know when I do it? See Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 83.

²³⁹ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 95.

consciousness takes into account relation to divinity in both the language and silence of prayer.²⁴⁰

A second important feature in Dadosky's work is the inclusion of Robert Doran's notion of "psychic conversion" in addition to intellectual, moral and religious conversions. Psychic conversion is the liberation of the subject from the oppression of psychological wounds and complexes through the transformation of the Freudian censor from a repressive to a constructive agent in development that liberates the subject to select data and search for images needed for insight.²⁴¹ Thus, the subject is freer to attend to wide ranging data and move toward a new horizon beyond the limits imposed by a previous one. In the "post-age" era, the acute awareness of histories of imperialism, triumphalism, racism, sexism and exploitation and the concomitant feelings of anger, resentment, inequality, exclusion, injustice and hurt requires healing and reconciliation. Interfaith and inter-cultural dialogues are profoundly affected by these histories and feelings and psychic conversion could play a central role in the healing and reconciliation needed to further and sustain conversations. Psychic conversion enables subjects to access the symbolic meaning and systems of one's own religious traditions and perhaps even delve into those of others.

A significant feature of Dadosky's work is in his reflection on religious experience and the experience of God's love. Not unlike Lonergan and Crowe (as we shall see in chapters 4 and 5), Dadosky maintains that what is experienced in a mystical-

²⁴⁰ Dadosky, *The Structure of Religious Knowing* 54. Akin to systematic and critical exigence, transcendental exigence gives rise to religiously differentiated consciousness.

²⁴¹ Dadosky, *The Structure of Religious Knowing* 56- 57. See also Robert Doran, "Psychic Conversion and Lonergan's Hermeneutics," in *Lonergan's Hermeneutics*, ed. Sean McEventue and Ben Myer (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1989).

religious experience is not God in God's self but the gift of God's love.²⁴² This is similar to unmediated experience that is "elemental" in the sense that there has not yet arisen a distinction between the subject and object. There is no clear apprehension of the object though there is experienced an "elemental meaning" in the experience. The experience is meaningful but is yet to be objectified, thematized, understood. Dadosky writes, "Subsequent reflection upon the experience of elemental meaning allows for an approximate objectification of the content of the experience, and this usually occurs through symbols."²⁴³ This distinction is akin to the differentiation between faith and beliefs; however, it is a more nuanced understanding of the reception of meaning in religious experience. In addition, it is in the arena of the symbolic that the feelings associated with unmediated religious experience are evoked or else evoke feelings. The surplus of symbolic meaning reveals openness to transcendence and to its variety of expressions.

Dadosky's treatment of Lonergan's hermeneutical framework takes into consideration the wide variety of possible interpretations corresponding to operations, patterns of experience and differentiations of consciousness. In the interpretation of a text, for example, the interpreter offers a secondary expression of a primary expression (i.e. the text under consideration). The interpreter must consider the author, the author's culture and the audience being addressed by the author. Moreover, the evaluation of the interpreter depends upon the interpreter's own self-appropriation and openness to insight

²⁴² Dadosky, *The Structure of Religious Knowing* 73.

²⁴³ Dadosky, *The Structure of Religious Knowing* 74.

and, therefore, subjective authenticity.²⁴⁴ This hermeneutical framework assists in the comparison of various religious texts.

William Johnston enumerates at least three significant contributions that Lonergan's thought has made to the comparative theology venture. First, Johnston believes the turn to interiority reflects a world culture that includes all religions (in contrast to a classical culture that focused on certain outer manifestations considered 'normative'). Next, the shift to interiority, intimately linked to mystical experience coupled with an historical notion of culture, facilitates reflection upon unmediated/ mystical experience and its mediation through worlds of meaning. Johnston compares his own notion of mysticism with that of Lonergan's religious conversion but locates the difference in that conversion entails "a repudiation of some elements of the past" while mystical experience does not.²⁴⁵ In fact, Lonergan's notion of sublation and the distinction between genetic and dialectical development may illustrate more of a similarity than Johnston thinks; nevertheless, they both agree that reflection on conversion could be the "foundation and basis for a theology of the future."²⁴⁶ Johnston also re-frames the transcendental precepts in the vocabulary of Eastern mysticism: being attentive means listening to one's true self; being intelligent is the movement toward the moment of illumination; being reasonable is the affirmation that either "being is" or "being is not"; being responsible is the movement toward self-transcendence; and all of these lead to being in love.²⁴⁷

²⁴⁴ Dadosky, *The Structure of Religious Knowing* 56 and also Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 160.

²⁴⁵ William Johnston, *The Inner Eye of Love* (New York, NY: Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc., 1978) 66.

²⁴⁶ Johnston, *The Inner Eye of Love* 66.

²⁴⁷ Johnston, *The Inner Eye of Love* 59.

Johnston and fellow comparative theologian John Keenan²⁴⁸ also cite Lonergan's sense of the mediation of meaning as very helpful to comparative theology. According to Lonergan, Jesus Christ is the mediator of meaning for Christians but not for non-Christians. This is *the* fundamental differentiation of meaning for Christians and non-Christians. Other differentiations exist and adjudicating differences is an important aspect of interfaith encounter. Are differences fundamentally and dialectically opposed? Are they perspectival and historical? Are they genetically related? Lonergan's realms of meaning and insights into the contextual nature of meaning, especially those related to the reception of mystical meaning and the immediacy of these experiences that are "both prior to and transcendent of the genesis of acts of verbal understanding and enunciation," service the enterprise of comparative theologies.²⁴⁹

The interpreters of Lonergan's thought whose work was briefly sketched in this section share commonalities around the subjective pole of Lonergan's thought; in particular, the upward movement in the analysis of human development that includes self- appropriation, religious experience and conversion, the thematization/mediation of experiences of immediacy, the cross-cultural turn to the world of interiority, and the potential re-interpretation of foundations of theologies. The aspects of these interpreters' works that have been highlighted seem less concerned with the concomitant movement of human development from above downward, the world mediated by meaning, and the objective pole of Lonergan's thought.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁸ John P. Keenan, *The Meaning of Christ: A Mahayana Theology* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1989).

²⁴⁹ Keenan, *The Meaning of Christ* 76.

²⁵⁰ In a 2005 seminar at the LRI, Reid Locklin criticizes Gregson via Joseph Komanchak suggesting that "undue emphasis on interior experience tends to neglect the objective social conditions that precede and constitute any exercise of subjectivity; in consequence, such an emphasis does not adequately treat subjects as they concretely exist, namely, in community and history." See Reid Locklin, *Toward an Interreligious Theology of Church: Revisiting Bernard Lonergan's Contribution to the 'Dialogue of Religions'*, Lonergan

A fulsome treatment of Lonergan's contributions to an understanding of religious diversity benefits from a treatment of both movements in his analysis of human development, from below upward and from above downward. In fact, the movement from above downward is vital for understanding the later Lonergan's psychological analogy which makes an enormous contribution to an understanding of religious diversity.

Conclusion

This chapter has set the parameters for further discussions in this study of Bernard Lonergan's contributions to a trinitarian understanding religious diversity. The first section regarding contemporary approaches to religious diversity revealed substantial agreement that the dominant distinctions between inclusivist, exclusivist and pluralist paradigms for understanding religious diversity no longer suffice as they run the danger of circumscribing discussions and disregarding new data and insights. D'Costa, Heim and Dupuis wish to establish an understanding that appreciates difference and diversity from a tradition-specific position that eschews any attempt at a 'universal,' all encompassing theology.

In order to achieve their aims D'Costa, Heim and Dupuis places the doctrine of the Trinity at the center of their attempts to understand religious diversity. Each presents

Research Institute Seminar 2005, Regis College, Toronto and Joseph Komonchak, *Foundations in Ecclesiology, Lonergan Workshop Journal*, sup. Vol. 11, ed. Fred Lawrence (Chesnut Hill, MA: Boston College, 1995). Locklin refers to a 1981 article in which Gregson claims that Lonergan's primary and exclusive contribution to interreligious dialogue consists in Lonergan's cognitional analysis and spiritual conversion. See Vernon Gregson, "The Dialogue of Religions and the Religious-Secular Dialogue: the Foundational Perspective of Bernard Lonergan," *Ecumenical Studies* 18 (1981). In my reading of Gregson's later work, he seems to be aware of the historical and social nature of the constitution of the subject, though he continues to concentrate on Lonergan's theory of human knowing and choosing from the subjective, existential pole.

creative, innovative and extensive trinitarian theologies of religious diversity. However, Dupuis and D'Costa lack a technical and detailed systematic exposition of their understanding of the Trinity. Their trinitarian thought remains at the historico-dogmatic plane and does not move to a full-scale systematics. Heim, on the other hand, offers interesting speculative musings on the Trinity but falls short of enunciating the doctrine found in Scripture and developed and affirmed at the Councils of Nicea and Constantinople. The strength of each proposal (that of D'Costa, Heim and Dupuis) is the challenge it poses to Christian theological thinking and as an illustration of the potential that the trinitarian tradition has for both theology and praxis.

The second section illustrates the ways in which interpreters of Lonergan's thought have applied his analysis of human development upwards (from experience to understanding to judgment to decision) to the encounter of religions and to furthering of dialogue. Central to these considerations is the function of subjectivity, self-awareness and mutual understanding in dialogical encounters. Equally, the role of moral, intellectual and religious conversion in the performance and constitution of subjectivity, history and consciousness both existentially and communally is crucial to these discussions. The thematization of conversion provides the frame in which subsequent theological reflection occurs. Lonergan's distinction between faith and belief or infrastructure and suprastructure is helpful in identifying the experience of God's love and the dynamic state of being-in-love and its mediation in community and history. The insights of the scholars presented in this section will be advanced by reflection on Lonergan's technical and precise trinitarian thought: the gift of God's love; the dynamic

state of being-in-love; the divine missions and interiority analysis; and history and meaning.

The next chapter will examine Bernard Lonergan's thought directly: his analysis of human development from above downward, his trinitarian theory and its relation to history. Lonergan's trinitarian thought not only addresses concerns and questions raised by contemporary theologies of religious diversity but also contributes unique and original insights to these discussions.

CHAPTER THREE: LONERGAN'S TWO TRINITARIAN ANALOGIES

*The Father laughs at the Son and the Son laughs at the Father,
and the laughter brings forth pleasure and the pleasure brings forth joy,
and the joy brings forth love.²⁵¹
- Meister Eckhart*

Bernard Lonergan proposes two psychological analogies for understanding the Trinity. The first, developed early in his career and enunciated in his lengthy treatise *De Deo Trino* can be called the “natural-cognitional”²⁵² analogy while the other analogy found in his later writings²⁵³ the “supernatural-affective” analogy. The natural-cognitional analogy corresponds to Lonergan’s analysis of human development from below upward while the supernatural-affective analogy corresponds to the concomitant movement in human development from above downward. Although the analogies differ significantly, they are in continuity with, and connected to, one another.²⁵⁴ While the earlier Lonergan seems more concerned with cognitional theory and the restoration of systematic reflection in theology, he is far from closed off to the affective and existential

²⁵¹ Quoted in Timothy Radcliffe, OP, *The Seven Last Words of Christ* (London: Burns & Oates, 2004) 20.

²⁵² The apt natural/supernatural distinction and terminology is from Robert M. Doran, “The Starting Point of Systematic Theology,” *Theological Studies* 67 (2006) 750- 776.

²⁵³ Lonergan’s later writings or “the Later Lonergan” refers to the period following Lonergan’s functional specialty breakthrough in 1965, resulting in the publication of *Method in Theology* in 1972, until his death in 1984.

²⁵⁴ The exact nature of their connection and continuity in Lonergan’s thought is beyond the scope of this study. For interesting discussions on the development, and unity or disruption between the early and later stages of Lonergan’s writings on the Trinity and analysis on human development see Frederick E. Crowe, S.J., “An Exploration of Lonergan’s New Notion of Value,” and “Bernard Lonergan’s Thought on Ultimate Reality and Meaning,” in *Appropriating the Lonergan Idea*, ed. Michael Vertin (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006) 51- 106 and Doran, “The Starting Point of Systematic Theology.”

dimensions that mark his later writings.²⁵⁵ Likewise, the later Lonergan's attention to the affective and existential reflects an "enlargement"²⁵⁶ of his earlier cognitional-epistemological analysis and not its marginalization or replacement. Without a doubt, Lonergan's trinitarian thought shifts from the earlier metaphysical and theoretical to the language and categories of method and interiority that characterize the mature Lonergan. Both earlier and later analogies are concerned with the fundamental challenge of systematic trinitarian thought to understand the meaning of the consubstantial unity of the three-personed God. Both analogies are significant in their potential contribution toward a theological, systematic understanding of religious diversity. However, commenting on the potential fecundity of the psychological analogy of the Trinity for today's significant issues Robert Doran laments: "Its implications, which have yet to be explored, will link the psychological analogy in immensely fruitful ways to a number of contemporary concerns in Trinitarian theology. But first that analogy must be once again understood; the basic reason it has been passed by is that it has not been understood."²⁵⁷

Following a brief contextualization of the early Lonergan's trinitarian theory, this chapter is divided into two more sections. The first section explores Lonergan's natural-cognitional psychological analogy and is further subdivided roughly according to Lonergan's own divisions in *De Deo Trino: pars systematica*. The second section treats

²⁵⁵ Jim Kanaris, *Bernard Lonergan's Philosophy of Religion* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002) 98. Kanaris cites Lonergan's 1943 article "Finality, Love and Marriage" as an early example of Lonergan's "intellectual odyssey about the way in which love, in its various aspects in world process, ascends toward the beatific vision (*visio Dei*)..." 68.

²⁵⁶ Charles C. Hefling Jr., "The Meaning of God Incarnate According to Friedrich Schleiermacher; or, Whether Lonergan is Appropriately Regarded as 'A Schleiermacher for Our Time,' and Why Not," *Lonergan Workshop* vol. 7, ed. Fred Lawrence (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988) 111.

²⁵⁷ Robert Doran, S.J. *What Is Systematic Theology?* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005) 37. Doran maintains that the reason it has not been understood very well is because of the lack of understanding of how act proceeds from act in human consciousness and how different acts of understanding ground inner words; see also Doran, "The Starting Point of Systematic Theology" 757.

Lonergan's supernatural-affective psychological analogy and is grouped around the significant shifts and emphases in his later thought.

I/ Lonergan's Early Trinitarian Thought

Lonergan's trinitarian treatise published in Latin in 1964 is the fruit of his course on the Trinity that he taught first at Montreal's Collège de l'Immaculée-Conception in 1945, then at Regis College, Toronto, in 1949-1950 and five subsequent times at the Gregorian University in Rome between the years 1954- 1963.²⁵⁸ The treatise, entitled *De Deo Trino*, is divided into two parts: the first designated the *pars analytica* in the 1961 stand-alone edition, and later the *pars dogmatica* in the 1964 double edition, is an historical treatment of the development of trinitarian doctrine up to and including Augustine's proposal of a psychological analogy. The second part, entitled the *pars systematica*, is a systematic understanding of the doctrine. Lonergan's trinitarian theology is momentous not only for its explanatory value and original insights but also as the context in which he thought out two of his more famous works, *Insight* (1957) and *Method in Theology* (1974). *Insight* relates directly to Lonergan's work in trinitarian theory, especially in his notion of human consciousness, acts of understanding, cognitional theory and openness to the good.²⁵⁹ During the period 1954-1963 Lonergan offered summer courses on method in theology, and his breakthrough that resulted in the

²⁵⁸ Conn O'Donovan, "Translator's Introduction" to Bernard Lonergan, *On the Way to Nicea*, trans. Conn O'Donovan (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1976) xvi.

²⁵⁹ Quentin Quesnell, "Grace," in *Desires of the Human Heart*, ed. Vernon Gregson (New York: Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1988) 171-173. According to Quesnell, although Lonergan never uses the word "grace" in the chapter, chapter 20 of *Insight* was written with grace in mind, grounding it philosophically in human consciousness. This is significant because for Lonergan grace is God's (Trinitarian) entry into human experience.

division of theological method into eight functional specialties came shortly thereafter in 1965.²⁶⁰ The division of *De Deo Trino* into historical and systematic parts reflects the analytic and synthetic manner of human thinking, the way of discovery (*via inventionis*) and the way of teaching (*via doctrinae*), corresponding to the theological distinction between faith and understanding. This division is pivotal in the later and more nuanced distinctions Lonergan makes between the first four functional specialties (research, interpretation, history and dialectic) and the general categories that theology shares with other disciplines, and the last four functional specialties (foundations, doctrines, systematics and communications) that are particular to theology and the special categories.²⁶¹ Thus, Lonergan's trinitarian treatise, though written in the language of late neo-scholasticism, should not be relegated to the margins of his corpus of work as a mere repetition of manual style course notes of pre-Vatican II dogmatic theology. It is evident that his groundbreaking contributions in *Insight* and *Method* are intimately related to questions he was dealing with in his teaching of and work on the Trinity (as well as Christology²⁶²). The developments in Lonergan's thought after the publication of *Insight* and *Method* contribute to a more fulsome understanding of what he is proposing, sometimes latently and in classical theological language, in *De Deo Trino*. Lonergan's systematic treatment benefits from his theoretical and methodical insights enabling him

²⁶⁰ O'Donovan, "Translator's Introduction" xxiv.

²⁶¹ O'Donovan, "Translator's Introduction" xix. On general and special categories see Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 281-293.

²⁶² Lonergan first taught courses on the Trinity in Montreal in 1946 and then again in Toronto in 1949-50 during which time his articles "The concept of *Verbum* in the Writings of St. Thomas Aquinas," *Theological Studies* 7 (1946) 349-92; 8 (1947) 35-79, 404-444; 10 (1949) 3-40, 359-93 appeared and as he prepared *Insight* (O'Donovan xv). Lonergan again taught the Trinity at the Gregorian in Rome five times from 1954-1963. In both Toronto and Rome Lonergan also taught courses in Christology alternately with the Trinity course; see Frederick E. Crowe, *Christ and History* (Ottawa: Novalis, 2005) 51-86. By the 1964 publication of the double volume of *De Deo Trino* Lonergan distinguishes systematic theology from other branches in theology in its aim and method and contrasts these with those of dogmatic theology as reflected in the division of the treatise into a first part corresponding to dogmatics and a second part to systematics, O'Donovan "Translator's Introduction" xvii.

to develop a trinitarian theology that transposes conciliar (Nicene-Constantinople²⁶³) meanings of trinitarian dogma into a contemporary context, making it accessible and meaningful for the Church today.

II/ De Deo Trino: pars systematica

Methodological Questions

In the first chapter of the *pars systematica* Lonergan states that the aim of systematic theology is not to “increase certitude” or “establish fact”²⁶⁴ but “to communicate and promote an imperfect yet most fruitful understanding” of the mysteries of faith by “employing those reasons that probe the root of revealed truth and enable us to understand how it is true.”²⁶⁵ The theological understanding that is the aim of systematics depends upon a previous assent of faith to the facts established in doctrines. As Lonergan later explains in *Method in Theology*, doctrines express as clearly and distinctly as possible judgments of fact and of value of the Christian community’s

²⁶³ Lonergan’s includes the *filioque* addition made unilaterally by the Latin Church that reflected common liturgical practice, local conciliar teachings and theological opinions of the Western churches since the 6th century. Without debating the fact that the “unadulterated” Creed of Nicene-Constantinople is the only true *ecumenical* confession of faith, two things should be said; first, historically, it was taken as part of the confession of faith by St. Thomas Aquinas upon whom Lonergan is dependent and secondly, theologically, even without the addition of the *filioque* the understanding of the procession from the Father is precisely as the Father of the Son. See Gerald O’Collins, “The Holy Trinity: The State of the Questions,” in *Trinity*, ed. Gerald O’Collins et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999) 1-25 and also Dietrich Ritschl, “The History of the Filioque Controversy,” *Concilium*, vol. 128, ed. Hans Kung and Jurgen Moltmann, (New York: Seabury Press, 1979) 3-13.

²⁶⁴ Bernard J. F. Lonergan, S.J., *Method in Theology* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1972) 336. I am using a quote from *Method* thus employing his later words that explain an earlier idea more clearly.

²⁶⁵ Bernard J.F. Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics*, vol. 12 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, trans. Michael G. Shields, ed. Robert M. Doran and H. Daniel Monsour (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007) 11. In *Method in Theology* Lonergan gives a similar description of “systematics” as concerned with promoting an understanding of the realities of faith affirmed in the previous specialty “doctrines,” see *Method* 335. Doran points out there is little change in the function of systematics proposed in *De Deo Trino* and *Method in Theology* in Robert Doran, “The First Chapter of *De Deo Trino*, *Pars Systematica*: The Issues,” *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 18 (2000) 29.

“confession of the mysteries so hidden in God that man could not know them if they had not been revealed by God.”²⁶⁶ Lonergan distinguishes between doctrines and systematics:

Doctrines aims at a clear and distinct affirmation of religious realities: its principal concern is the truth of such an affirmation; its concern to understand is limited to the clarity and distinctness of its affirmation. On the other hand, systematics aims at an understanding of the religious realities affirmed by doctrines.²⁶⁷

Lonergan goes on to state that such theological understanding is “bound to be imperfect, merely analogous, commonly no more than probable”²⁶⁸ but nevertheless highly fecund in the ongoing development of understanding the mysteries of faith.²⁶⁹

The first chapter of *De Deo Trino, pars systematica*, comprises about twenty per cent of the entire treatise and explores the function of systematics, the investigation of theological understanding, and the methodological procedure of systematics.²⁷⁰

Lonergan contrasts the dogmatic way of proceeding with that of the systematic way. The former traces trinitarian doctrine as it unfolded historically. This unfolding begins with the missions of the Son and the Holy Spirit, and moves through the more technical stage of conciliar definitions to reflection on the consubstantiality of the three persons and on their personal properties. From there it proceeds to the recognition that the personal properties are relative and that the relations are those of origin. It concludes with the proposal of a psychological analogy. The systematic way presupposes the achievements described in the dogmatic way. Lonergan’s systematics is a precise and orderly understanding beginning with the divine processions, and successively the divine

²⁶⁶ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 349.

²⁶⁷ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 349.

²⁶⁸ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 349.

²⁶⁹ Robert Doran, “The Truth of Theological Understanding in *Divinarum Personarum* and *De Deo Trino, pars systematica*,” *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 20 (2002) 37.

²⁷⁰ Doran, “The First Chapter of *De Deo Trino, Pars Systematica*...” 39.

relations, the persons considered in themselves, the persons in relation to one another, and the divine missions.²⁷¹

The Basic Problem

Lonergan's treatise on the Trinity has as its goal an understanding of a "basic theorem" that "God is conscious in a dynamic way."²⁷² In some sense, the entire treatise is a process of clarification of this theorem: "parts of a scaffolding, helpful in designing a coherent pattern."²⁷³ Central to this enterprise is the meaning of the dogmatically defined "consubstantiality" of the three persons of the Trinity. It presents what Lonergan terms the "fundamental Trinitarian problem"²⁷⁴ resulting from the church's dogmatic statements which he states in three propositions:

(1) the Son is both *a se*, from himself, and not *a se*, not from himself; (2) the Holy Spirit is both *a se*, from himself, and not *a se*, not from himself; (3) the way in which the Son is not *a se*, not from himself is different from the way in which the Holy Spirit is not *a se*, not from himself.²⁷⁵

The problem is fairly simple. With regard to the first two propositions, the Son and the Holy Spirit are *a se*, for each is God and God is *a se*; but as stated in the Nicene-Constantinople Creed, the Son is also begotten of the Father and the Holy Spirit proceeds

²⁷¹ Robert Doran contrasts the first chapter of the 1964 edition with the 1957 of *De Deo Trino* demonstrating that Lonergan's concern with the relationship between dogmatics, systematics and historical process are marginalized "precisely as an issue for doctrines and systematics." See Doran, "The First Chapter of *De Deo Trino*, *Pars Systematica*" 47 and "*Intelligentia Fidei in De Deo Trino*, *pars systematica*: A commentary on the First Three Sections of Chapter One," *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 19 (2001) 35 where Doran compares Lonergan's threefold movement of analytic, synthetic and historical in *Divinarum Personarum* with the twofold movement of dogmatic and systematic in *De Deo Trino*.

²⁷² Quentin Quesnell, "Three Persons—One God," in *The Desires of the Human Heart*, ed. Vernon Gregson, (New York: Paulist Press, 1988) 151. See also Robert Doran, "The Truth of Theological Understanding in *Divinarum Personarum* and *De Deo Trino*, *pars systematica*" 49 for a similar opinion of the methodological unfolding of *De Deo Trino*.

²⁷³ Quentin Quesnell, "Three Persons—One God" 151.

²⁷⁴ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 127. On the "fundamental problem" and Lonergan's method see Robert Doran, "The Truth of Theological Understanding" 79- 80.

²⁷⁵ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 127.

from the Father and the Son,²⁷⁶ and so both are also not *a se*. Regarding the third proposition, the Son and the Holy Spirit are not *a se* differently as the former is “begotten” through generation while the latter “proceeds” through spiration. And thus the task for systematics is to determine how the Son and the Holy Spirit are each *a se* and not *a se* and further how the Son’s non-aseity differs from the Holy Spirit’s non-aseity.

Intellectual Emanation

Lonergan addresses the “fundamental Trinitarian problem” with the notion of intellectual emanation which “is the conscious origin of a real, natural, and conscious act from a real, natural, and conscious act, both within intellectual consciousness and also by virtue of intellectual consciousness itself as determined²⁷⁷ by the prior act.”²⁷⁸ Following Aquinas²⁷⁹ Lonergan maintains that when one understands there proceeds a conception of the reality understood from the understanding of the reality (and not from the object); secondly, love proceeds from knowledge;²⁸⁰ and lastly, the more perfect the procession, the deeper the connection and unity between source and what proceeds from/by it. These three dimensions of intellectual emanation may be verified in attentiveness to human intellectual experience. Intellectual emanation as the analogue to divine internal procession rests upon Lonergan’s understanding of the dynamism of human intellectual consciousness that inquires so as to understand, that in understanding is oriented to

²⁷⁶ See note 10.

²⁷⁷ According to Doran “determined” is better understood as “defined”. Robert Doran, *Lonergan’s Systematics of the Trinity 2004* (Unpublished course notes, Toronto: Regis College) Lecture 1, 3.

²⁷⁸ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 141.

²⁷⁹ See Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, 1. 27. 1, 3.

²⁸⁰ Later Lonergan will emphasize the reverse saying that first one finds oneself in love and then seeks to find out why and what one loves.

expressing what is understood in a word, that weighs evidence in order to make a judgment, that takes counsel so as to decide and finally that wills in order to act.²⁸¹

Having set the analogy for understanding the consubstantial triunity of God in processions derived from intellectual emanation, in technical and precise terms, Lonergan reviews various possible conceptions and types of processions,²⁸² excluding all but one:

The divine processions, which are processions according to the mode of a *processio operati*, are understood in some measure on the basis of a likeness to intellectual emanation; and there does not seem to be another analogy for forming a systematic conception of a divine precession.²⁸³

Lonergan's phrase "according to the mode of a *processio operati*" reflects the reality of analogical thinking as mediate and imperfect. In human consciousness there is not an adequate systematic or technical understanding of divine processions. The divine processions are "like" but not the "same as" human intellectual emanation. Analogically speaking, while there is similarity there is always greater dissimilarity. Nevertheless, the conception of the mode of procession characterizes an unknown (divine) nature by a likeness with that of a known (human) nature. The distinction of "according to the mode of a *processio operati*" provides the necessary systematic translation of divine procession of which the analogy of intelligible emanation consists.²⁸⁴

What is known in human nature is that human understanding occurs at various levels in various contexts.²⁸⁵ For example when puzzling something out, there is the act of insight by which we grasp the solution or meaning or functioning of a thing and make a related judgment as to the facticity of our internally formulated hypothesis. In a

²⁸¹ Doran, *Lonergan's Systematics of the Trinity* 2004, 1, 3.

²⁸² Lonergan excludes "processio operationis" as this reflects act from potency as in the act of understanding from inquiry and "processio operati" as this is act from act and in God there is but one act.

²⁸³ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 145.

²⁸⁴ Doran, "The Truth of Theological Understanding" 63.

²⁸⁵ Quesnell, "Three Persons—One God" 158- 159.

subsequent insight we conceive of a course of action that could be taken, followed by an awareness of what the situation actually calls for. A last insight occurs at the existential level of self-constituting decision making. In the decision to undertake (or not) the required course of action one is making of one's self the person one wishes to be. If the situation demands one act generously, and one acts accordingly, then one becomes a generous person. Quentin Quesnell draws attention to the fact that the act of understanding is not always the same as what issues from it.²⁸⁶ First, there is a "gap" between act and possession of results, in adverting to what was understood and turning it into a permanent possession. Second, there is a "gap" between grasping the evidence for the facticity of something and affirming our own responsibility for it. Last, there is a "gap" in being aware of what ought to be done and actually doing it— between seeing the good to be done and accomplishing it. In God these "gaps" that we perceive in human consciousness are closed, because of the perfect issuing and thus identity between what proceeds and that from which it proceeds (i.e. the Son from the Father and the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son).²⁸⁷

Lonergan's notion of the procession "according to the mode of a *processio operati*" is significant for understanding the divine processions because unlike other conceptions of processions within intellectual emanation, it infers neither movement from potency to act or causality/production nor non-identity between source and term of procession, but instead a single act entailing a procession of act from act where the acts are distinct not absolutely but relatively. Lonergan describes this procession:

A procession according to the mode of a *processio operati* [is] an internal procession in which the originating act and the originated act are really distinct, not

²⁸⁶ Quesnell, "Three Persons—One God" 159- 160.

²⁸⁷ Quesnell, "Three Persons—One God" 162.

however on the basis of absolute existence, but only on the basis of relative existence.²⁸⁸

The principal act and the proceeding acts are internal and distinct relatively through relations of origin. The proceeding acts are interdependent and relative within one, single act of understanding and not three independent, absolute acts. In human experience it is not the case that an insight is “perfectly, exactly and comprehensively”²⁸⁹ expressed in a concept or that a decision embraces exactly what was judged to be of value. In God, however, the concept does express perfectly, exactly and comprehensively the insight (God’s self-understanding) and a decision does express exactly what was judged to be of value (God’s self-affirmation). In this sense what issues forth in the processions is exactly and perfectly alike in content as its principle, “absolutely the same content, but the content is in a different relative situation.”²⁹⁰

The distinct and relative relations that constitute the one dynamic and conscious act that is God are conceived on the analogy of the intelligent emanation of the inner word from the act of understanding, and of the procession of love from understanding and word. The analogy drawn from an analysis of human interiority fosters an understanding of but two processions, and no more:

But we take the trinitarian analogy from the fact that we experience in ourselves two processions, the first of which is within the intellect, while the second is from intellect toward will. In the first procession, we judge because and according as we grasp the sufficiency of evidence. And in the second, we choose because and according as we judge.²⁹¹

Though not produced, or caused by something else as in human intentional consciousness, divine intellectual emanation is analogous to what is discernible in human

²⁸⁸ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 149.

²⁸⁹ Quesnell, “Three Persons—One God” 161.

²⁹⁰ Quesnell, “Three Persons—One God” 161.

²⁹¹ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 221.

intellectual emanation: to judge the good because it proceeds from a grasp of evidence and to choose the good because in the judgment the good is so affirmed. Thus, the analogy reflects not only the cognitional-epistemological dimension of human knowing but its affective dimension as well.²⁹²

The emanation of the Word and of Love in the single act of divine understating is distinguished doctrinally in the language of “generation” and “procession” respectively. According to Lonergan, the generation of the Word and the spiration of Love are distinguished psychologically in the unfolding of the two moments of knowing and loving. Thus Lonergan states:

The divine emanation of the Word is the origin of one living from a conjoined living principle with a resulting likeness of nature, for God’s intentional act of existence is the same as God’s natural act of existence; so, although all other true words are likenesses only with respect to an intentional act of existence, the Word of God, from the very fact that it is likeness in intentional act of existence, necessarily also is likeness in natural act of existence.²⁹³

The natural act of existence of a being is the act of existence by which something is and the intentional act of existence is the act of existence of that being as known.²⁹⁴ These are but a single act in God. Nothing is ‘added’ to God in the divine emanation; instead, it is a movement of the dynamism of consciousness within consciousness itself. The emanation of Love, while originating in God’s natural act of existence, “does not lead to the formation of a likeness of a thing but to constituting an impulse toward or adhesion to the thing itself for its own sake.”²⁹⁵ The perfect issuance reflects the perfect unity of consciousness. Lonergan states:

For intellectual consciousness is related to something in such a way that, first, it

²⁹² Anne Hunt, *Trinity, Nexus of the Mysteries of Christian Faith* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2005) 22.

²⁹³ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 203.

²⁹⁴ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 197.

²⁹⁵ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 203.

understands it, next, from that understanding it utters a true word concerning it, third, from that understanding and word it spirates love for it, and fourth, by virtue of that very love it is borne toward what is loved.²⁹⁶

These four moments in the unfolding of dynamic consciousness not only distinguish between the generation of the Word and the emanation of Love but also serve as the foundation for understanding the four divine relations within God.

The Divine Relations

In his treatment of the divine relations, Lonergan asserts that the four real relations are totally identical to the processions and are subsistent; that only three of the relations are distinct from one another; and that the real divine relations are identical with the divine substance but simultaneously conceptually distinct from the same substance.

The four relations are paternity, filiation, active spiration and passive spiration.²⁹⁷

Paternity is the relation of the one who generates to the one generated or in terms of intellectual consciousness the procession of the word from the grasp of intelligibility and the necessity to speak it from the one who grasps. Filiation is the relation of the one generated to the one who generates or the relation of the word to the speaker of the word. Active spiration is the relation of the spirator (the Father and the Son as one principle) to spirated, the procession of love as from the grasp and affirmation of the goodness of what is loved. Passive spiration is the relation of the spirated to the spirator, to the spirating principle of love, a relation that follows from the procession of love. Lonergan asserts

²⁹⁶ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 199.

²⁹⁷ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics*, Chapter 3, Assertion 4, 235-237.

that “the processions are conceptually distinct, but really identical with, the relations.”²⁹⁸ Since there is no motion in the processions (i.e. in God) they are but relations of origin.

In God these four relations are subsistent but only three—paternity, filiation and passive spiration— are distinct (not just conceptually but really) on the basis of mutual opposition. For example, with regard to paternity, the Father is the term to which the Son is related or conversely with regard to filiation the Son is the term to which the Father is related. These are not mere conceptual distinctions of a relation of the same to the same²⁹⁹ such that a real relation would not exist. The three real divine relations of opposition, though conceptually distinct from the divine essence, are equally identical with it, since it is only the concept of the relations that is distinct from the concept of divine essence. Though there is triunity in God, God is neither increased nor diminished in being three because both individually and together they possess the “whole divine reality.”³⁰⁰ The divine substance neither generates nor is generated, and neither spirates nor is spirated, and so does not imply any relation of opposition whatsoever.

The Divine Persons

After considering the divine processions and relations, Lonergan goes on to consider the divine persons. The persons are treated in themselves before they are considered in their relations to one another. Lonergan asserts that Christians name the persons of the Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit by definition, because of metaphysical constitution, by reason of consciousness as well as by reason of relations amongst

²⁹⁸ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 237.

²⁹⁹ Unlike Hiem’s appropriation of Smart and Konstantine where God’s trinity reflects “dimensions” of a single reality, like different facets of rock crystal. See chapter 2.

³⁰⁰ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 293.

themselves and in relation to humankind.³⁰¹ Thus, God is three distinct persons; God is not one person with three distinct modes of self-expression and God is made known to humanity as God really is.

Unlike creatures, who are distinguished by virtue of individuated substance, the divine persons are consubstantial,³⁰² of a single divine substance or essence, distinguished by virtue of direct relation of essence or subsistent relations of opposition. In the three persons the divine substance is always shared in the manner of hypostasis; that is, the divine ‘content’ is had differently but entirely in each of the three persons and in a manner appropriate to the relation that determines the person.³⁰³ Lonergan writes:

Although there are three persons, it does not at all follow that there are three essences; for when essence is predicated directly of person, it is not essence as essence that is predicated but essence is predicated as a hypostasis. But in God a hypostasis is distinct by reason of a relation, and therefore the three persons and three hypostases are, not three essences, but three that are subsistent by essence and distinct by their proper relations.³⁰⁴

Communication between the persons within the Trinity is made possible by the “incommunicability”³⁰⁵ of the three as persons really distinct by relations of opposition and different from each other in spite of their common essence and essential act.

The common essence and distinct personhood of the three are reflected in the manner in which they are given attributes. These are: “essential” or “common” attributes that characterize God by reason of essence and hence are attributed to each person (e.g. truth or holiness); second, “proper” or “notional” attributes that result from the distinction of the four real relations and can be predicated of one or two but not of all three of the

³⁰¹ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 313.

³⁰² That is whatever is predicated of the Father can be predicated of the Son and the Spirit except that s/he is Father.

³⁰³ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics*, assertion 10, 363.

³⁰⁴ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 345.

³⁰⁵ “Incommunicability” refers to the fact that the persons can never collapse one into another or form a nebulous unity but are eternally distinct hypostases.

persons (e.g. image or gift); and last, “appropriated” attributes which are essential attributes that have a similarity to the proper/notional attributes but are better known to humanity as appropriated or attributed to one of the three persons but without excluding the other two (e.g. saviour for Son or sanctifier for Holy Spirit).³⁰⁶ These distinctions are important in discussions regarding the two divine missions of the Son and the Spirit and the Christian understanding of revelation and salvation.

When considering the divine persons in relation to one another, Lonergan’s theory of consciousness as the subject’s self-awareness plays a crucial role in understanding trinitarian relationality. As Lonergan says in his twelfth assertion:

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit through one real consciousness are three subjects conscious both of themselves and of each of the others, as well as of their own act both notional and essential.³⁰⁷

God’s consciousness is understood in terms of “essential act,” as pure and infinite act itself. The three persons understand, know and will both themselves (i.e. their self-constitution) and all that is not God (i.e. everything else that exists) and as such there is both understanding, willing and loving that is conscious and the conscious act of understanding, knowing and willing. Each of the persons of the Trinity possesses self-awareness and an awareness of his/her act; moreover, since there is no distinction in God between relations and substance (i.e. God’s substance is relational by nature) there is likewise no distinction between the conscious subject and the act by which the subject is conscious as there is in human subjects. The persons of the Trinity share the one divine consciousness since they are only distinct by virtue of relational, not absolute, opposition. Absolute opposition would imply three distinct and separate centers of consciousness.

³⁰⁶ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 351-363.

³⁰⁷ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 377.

The intrinsic relationality of the Trinity is revealed in the manner in which each person distinctly shares the single divine consciousness which entails being conscious of oneself and of the others to whom one is related.³⁰⁸

The persons of the Trinity “dwell within one another both ontologically and psychologically.”³⁰⁹ This indwelling is theologically named “circumincession” or “co-inherence” in the West and “perichoresis” in the East. Following Aquinas, Lonergan outlines several reasons derived from the psychological analogy for ontological and psychological mutual indwelling. Firstly, by virtue of divine essence whereby each of the persons is the divine essence and not really distinct from it; thus, each is in the other in his/her essence, from within the consciousness of the other two. Secondly, through subsistent relations whereby each origin and term of relation is given meaning and existence by virtue of the relation:

Paternity is the intellectually conscious ordering from grasped evidence to the Word to be spoken and to the Word spoken; and this paternity is the Father himself. Filiation is likewise the intellectually conscious ordering of the Word spoken to the grasp of infinite evidence from which it is spoken; and this filiation is the Son himself. Passive spiration, finally, is the intellectually conscious ordering to the infinite good grasped by intellect and affirmed in an eminently true judgment; and this passive spiration is the Holy Spirit himself.³¹⁰

Lastly, by virtue of relations of origin each is within the reality and consciousness of the others:

[T]he Father is God understanding as the principle of the Word, and the Word is God affirming as proceeding from the Father, and the Spirit is God loving as proceeding from the Father and the Son. Therefore, each person is in another inasmuch as that person is being and understanding, and so in the Father; inasmuch as it is true and affirming, and therefore in the Son; and inasmuch as it is good and loving, and therefore in the Spirit.³¹¹

³⁰⁸ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 387.

³⁰⁹ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 413.

³¹⁰ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 417.

³¹¹ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 419.

The mutuality of the trinitarian relations, understood systematically on the basis of the psychological analogy, will prove important for understanding the divine missions and for a model of human community without tending toward the tritheism to which social models of the Trinity are often vulnerable.³¹²

The Divine Missions

Perhaps the most profound and creative insights of Lonergan's trinitarian theory come at the end of his treatise in the sixth and final chapter: *The Divine Missions*. This chapter represents approximately twenty percent of the entire work containing eleven of the thirty-two questions and nearly one quarter of all the theses treated. The chapter explores the Christian understanding of the Trinity as God-for-us and humankind as us-for-God through an understanding of the missions as the processions linked to a created external term.

Lonergan maintains that any contingent truth predicated of the divine persons either commonly or individually has its constitution in divine perfection but an external term as its consequent condition.³¹³ As Lonergan explains, "what is truly predicated" refers to what has been either explicitly or implicitly revealed, and what is "contingent" refers to what could or could not be. Since God is constituted by simple perfection and divine intellectual emanation is both necessary and internal to the triune God, what is predicated contingently in relation to the divine persons has no correspondence of truth

³¹² See Brian Letfow, "Anti Social Trinitarianism," in *The Trinity*, ed. Stephen T. Davis, Daniel Kendall, S.J. and Gerald O'Collins, S.J. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000) 203- 249.

³¹³ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 439.

without an external term (i.e. outside of God). The relation between divine persons and created external terms lies in the divine missions.

Nothing other than a divine relation of origin is required to constitute a mission of one of the divine persons, though as contingent and temporal it necessarily entails an external term. Whatever may be predicated contingently of one or other of the divine persons adds nothing “real and intrinsic... to a divine person as divine”³¹⁴ because of the fact that a truth predicated contingently of the divine persons has no correspondence in reality without an external term. Frederick Crowe maintains that the “principle of adequation requires an ontological counterpart to every truth, a contingent truth requires a contingent ontological counterpart, and so the existence of an appropriate contingent reality is required for a contingent truth about God”: God is independent of all creatures and is constituted as what God is eternally, hence, the contingent reality will be a consequent condition.³¹⁵ For example, “God creates” is a true statement only if there is creation (which is always external to God since within God there is no act of creation). Thus, Lonergan distinguishes between what may be added to the infinite, namely nothing, and that which is constituted by the infinite, namely the finite. The analogy is found in divinity itself and not in created realities:

For just as God knows that contingent things exist through his own knowledge, and not through an external term, which is nevertheless required, and just as God wills that contingent things exist through his own volition, and not through an external term, which is nevertheless required, and just as God makes contingent things exist through his own omnipotence and not through an external term, which is nevertheless required, so also the [incarnate] Son *is* all that he is through his own proper divine act of existence and not through an external term, which is nevertheless absolutely required, and the Holy Spirit is sent through that which the Holy Spirit is and not through an external term, which is nevertheless absolutely

³¹⁴ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 457.

³¹⁵ F. E. Crowe, SJ, *The Doctrine of the Most Holy Trinity* (Course Notes 1965-1966, Regis College, Willowdale, 1970) 163.

required.³¹⁶

Neither the Son nor the Spirit is constituted by their self-communication or by their decision to disclose themselves in history but by their eternal self-constituting conscious act.

The external term of the mission of the Word is the *esse secundarium* of the assumed humanity of the hypostatic union of Jesus Christ while the material external term of the mission of the Holy Spirit is “sanctifying grace, issuing in the habit of charity,”³¹⁷ in the union of grace between persons. The Son is both God and human through his divine act of existence: “[T]his contingent truth as contingent has its correspondence of truth through a secondary act of existence by which the nonsubsistent nature is assumed.”³¹⁸ The Holy Spirit is both gift and given to the just and this contingent truth as contingent has its correspondence “through sanctifying grace whereby a subsistent nature is rendered holy and pleasing to God; and since both uncreated gift and the created holiness exceed the proportion of this nature, sanctifying grace also exceeds the proportion of nature.”³¹⁹ Because of the four divine relations which are identical with the divine substance, Lonergan posits four special modes that root “the external imitation of the divine substance.” These four supernatural realities linked to material, external terms through the divine missions form the four point hypothesis:

It would not be inappropriate, therefore, to say that the secondary act of existence of the incarnation is a created participation of paternity, and so has a special relation to the Son; that sanctifying grace is a participation of active spiration, and so has a special relation to the Holy Spirit; that the habit of charity is a participation of passive spiration, and so has a special relation to the Father and the Son; and that the light of glory is a participation of sonship, and so in a most perfect way brings

³¹⁶ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 459.

³¹⁷ Doran, “*Intelligentia Fidei*” 55.

³¹⁸ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 417.

³¹⁹ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 471.

the children of adoption back to the Father.³²⁰

According to this hypothesis the “sendings of the Son and the Spirit open to us the relationships which the persons [of the Trinity] have with one another and invite [us] to share those relationships.”³²¹ Through the created communications of the divine nature there occurs the possibility of attaining God as God is in God’s self,³²² most perfectly for humanity in the beatific vision made possible through Jesus Christ and our participation in his sonship. Human participation in the divine life is through the missions which open to us the eternal processions that constitute God. Humankind is invited to share, participate in, and appropriate the divine life—what theology has traditionally called “theosis,” “divinization” and “deification” or to use Crowe’s more appropriate trinitarian neologism, “trinification.”³²³

The missions of the Son and the Spirit and their relationship are decisive in any understanding of the Triune God’s relationship to history and, specifically, to religious diversity in history. History is the arena for divine revelation through the sendings of the Son and the Spirit. Any systematic understanding of the relationship between the Trinity and religious diversity presupposes an understanding of the doctrine itself before it can be related to other mysteries of faith (such as the Jesus Christ event and salvation or the Church and the mediation of divine meaning outside of its historical confines). This

³²⁰ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 473.

³²¹ Quesnell, “Three Persons—One God” 155.

³²² This is the first thesis found in Lonergan’s *De Ente supernaturali*. See Robert Doran, “Consciousness and Grace,” *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 11 (1993) 52. See also Quesnell, “Grace” 173-179 for a translation and treatment of the five theses.

³²³ Crowe, *The Doctrine of the Most Holy Trinity* 178. Crowe uses this neologism to describe the deification of humans and their world but since God is Triune feels that “Trinification” is actually more accurate.

equally requires theological reflection on how God works in world history.³²⁴ In addition, a theory of history is equally required. The Holy Spirit is conceived of as the notional love sent by the Father and the Son, conceptually distinct from the essential love which is the divine essence, yet really the same as the divine essence understood as including a relation of origin.³²⁵ It is according to this love that the Spirator (Father and Son) not only love themselves but humankind as well. Lonergan distinguishes between the mission of the Spirit as actively and passively constituted: actively when the Holy Spirit is herself sent and by which the essential love (of the three) is ordered to communicating the infinite good and, thus, given to the just person; and passively in the giving of the Holy Spirit as the Gift given. Lonergan distinguishes the uncreated gift that is the Holy Spirit from the finite gifts of inspiration and teaching. Hence, while the uncreated gift of love exceeds the power of any human ability and as such is absolutely supernatural there is found a correspondence in divine inspiration and teaching found in the created order.³²⁶

Question 28 of the treatise examines the relationship of the two divine missions to one another both in terms of constitution and consequence. Lonergan claims that the Son is sent so that the Father might love humankind as he loves his own Son and that the Spirit is sent because the Father does, indeed, love humankind as he loves his own Son:

The special divine love is that according to which the just are loved as ordered to the divine good. But since God does everything in accord with the order of his justice, this special love itself supposes a special reason. And this special reason cannot be other than God's own Son, who is both mediator and redeemer.³²⁷

³²⁴ Quesnell says in order to talk about salvation, forgiveness, and even Jesus Christ one must talk about the workings of the divine persons in the world; see Quesnell, "Three Persons—One God" 154.

³²⁵ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 473-475.

³²⁶ The is the second thesis of *De Ente Supernaturali*, Quesnell, "Grace" 174-175.

³²⁷ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 481.

The later Lonergan will reverse the chronological ordering of the missions asserting the sending of the Holy Spirit before that of the Son with significant ramifications for understanding the divine economy.³²⁸

In discussing the formality of the divine missions Lonergan makes several important clarifications. Firstly, the missions are incorporeal and should not be conceived in anthropomorphic terms (such as the movement from one place to another). Secondly, the missions of the Son and the Spirit initiate a whole new series of operations: the Son gathers up all creation and reconciles it to God while the Spirit presides over this new dispensation/relationship/reality.³²⁹ Lonergan insightfully clarifies that Son and Spirit have a specific relationship to their unique operations. The Son, as he has taken on human nature, performs works proper to this fact; on the other hand, the Holy Spirit has only the divine nature and does no work that the Father and Son do not likewise do, but does confirm the new relations inaugurated by the Son.³³⁰ Next, while Lonergan affirms the distinct operations of the missions, he also affirms the singularity and totality of the end of both missions as directed to “the heavenly city for the glory of the Father.”³³¹ Interestingly, Lonergan further claims that the end of the missions is not attained without human co-operation precisely because at the heart of the missions is the initiation, strengthening and maintenance of the new interpersonal relationships with humankind

³²⁸ A little later in the same chapter Lonergan writes: “Also, though each mission has the same ultimate end, which is the heavenly city for the glory of the father, the first mission is that of the Son for the reconciliation of all human persons to God the Father, and the *consequent* mission of the Spirit is to each one of the just, who have been reconciled.” (my italics) *The Triune God: Systematics* 491.

³²⁹ See Bernard J.F. Lonergan, “Pantôn Anakephalaiôsis: A Theory of Human Solidarity...,” *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 9:2 (1991) 139- 72 for an example of early Lonergan’s Christology and theory of history or the more recent and fulsome study on the same topic by Frederick E. Crowe, S.J., *Christ and History: The Christology of Bernard Lonergan from 1935- 1982* (Ottawa: Novalis, 2005).

³³⁰ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 485.

³³¹ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 491.

that make trinitification possible; these are established by the Son and governed by the Spirit.³³² Lonergan states:

The end of a divine mission is not attained without the cooperation of human beings: ‘He who created you without you will not justify you without you.’ Hence, in order to understand a divine mission, one must consider not only the works proper to the person sent but also the personal relations that that person initiates or strengthens in order that the end of the mission may be attained through the cooperation of others.³³³

The human attempt to love as God loves and to possess God as God is in God’s self is absolutely supernatural even though it is the result of self-transcending, conscious, deliberate and good actions on the part of human persons.³³⁴ The invitation to interpersonal relationship with the Triune God lies at the heart of the divine missions.

The ultimate end of the missions is the divine good itself communicated immediately in the beatific vision while the proximate end, which is historical, is the good of order constituted by 1) a certain number of persons 2) cognitive and appetitive habits 3) many coordinated operations among persons 4) succession and series of particular goods 5) interpersonal relationships which has a certain priority over the other four.³³⁵ Examples of the proximate good of order are the Kingdom of God, the economy of salvation and the Church.

Though the Son and Spirit are sent with specific missions, the “cooperation among the divine persons is so perfect that there is one simple common operation of the Three.”³³⁶ The divine persons produce all created things in common — *opera Trinitatis ad extra sunt inseparabilia* — thus, understanding, truth and love are produced in all

³³² Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 487.

³³³ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 485.

³³⁴ This corresponds with the third thesis of *De Ente supernaturali*; see note 69.

³³⁵ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 493.

³³⁶ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 497.

created things in common and have non-causal dimensions; instead, there is a “network of trinitarian relations” where each of the persons is present in the world together though each in his/her own way.³³⁷ Therefore, creation cannot be solely attributed to the Father any more than salvation uniquely to the Son. Regarding the “network of trinitarian relations” Lonergan writes:

Now, it is appropriate that the divine persons are sent to constitute and develop this good of order. For although the other goods of order externally imitate that supreme good of order that we observe in the Holy Trinity, nevertheless it was appropriate that the economy of salvation, which is ordered to participation in divine beatitude itself, should not only imitate the order of the Holy Trinity but also in some manner participate in that order.³³⁸

In the development of the good of order the divine persons, through the gift of God’s love that makes persons pleasing to God, possess and dwell in the just. More than merely an imitation of the trinitarian good of order, but through this imitation, there is also a *participation* in the divine life itself. There is mutual indwelling in those whom Christ loves and knows and who believe and live for Christ, who himself unites “the members of his body...with God the Father.”³³⁹ It is through keeping Christ’s commandment to love one another as Christ loves that those who know and love him shall attain unity (of the good of order). The mutual indwelling of the divine persons and the just extends beyond the spatial and temporal to include the panoply of the communion of saints.

The last of eighteen assertions in *De Deo Trino* reads: “Although the indwelling of the divine persons exist more in acts and is better known in acts, still it is constituted through the state of grace.”³⁴⁰ Lonergan’s concept of a “state of grace” refers to many

³³⁷ Crowe, *The Doctrine of the Most Holy Trinity* 173-74.

³³⁸ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 497.

³³⁹ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 511.

³⁴⁰ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 517.

subjects in “a divine-human interpersonal situation.”³⁴¹ The indwelling is certainly more evident in act than in potency since knowledge and love are more authentic and verifiable in act. But it is God’s grace that makes the state of grace disclosed in acts of loving possible. Because of the magnitude of the situation of grace, it is not dissolved by non-recurrent singular acts that are contrary to truth and love, though such acts are certainly discontinuous. Lonergan’s assertion reflects his concern with concrete human living and Christian responsibility and its relation to the distinction between “sanctifying grace” and the “habit of charity.”

Grace, according to Lonergan in *De Deo Trino*, has three dimensions: first, a personal favour toward another; second, a gift given by the former to the latter; and last, the gratitude felt by the latter. In terms of divine grace Lonergan writes:

Therefore, with regard to divine grace we similarly distinguish (1) that the Father loves and gives to the just by the Holy Spirit because of his incarnate Son, (2) that there follows upon this love and giving sanctifying grace, which is an absolutely supernatural entitative habit received in the essence of the soul, and (3) that from this habit there flow, naturally as it were, virtues and gifts whereby the lower part of the soul is subordinated to reason and reason is subordinated to God, whereupon there results that inner rectitude and justice by which the just are readily moved by God towards eternal life, to which they are oriented.³⁴²

The state of grace is intensely trinitarian and historical (i.e. a created participation of what is external to God) as it requires the Father who loves; the Son who loves the Father; the Holy Spirit by whom the Father loves and gives; the just whom because of the Son the Father loves by the Holy Spirit and to whom the Father gives the Holy Spirit and who are consequently endowed with sanctifying grace, whence flow all subsequent virtues and gifts.

³⁴¹ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 513; see note 119.

³⁴² Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 515.

The exploration of the divine missions and the state of grace that ends Lonergan's trinitarian treatise provides the context and starting point for his later supernatural-affective psychological analogy. Lonergan's technical and detailed treatment of such issues as emanation, procession and act, consciousness and mutual indwelling, and relations and missions are permanent achievements that make his later trinitarian insights possible. The challenge remains a transposition of the meaning of Lonergan's insights expressed in the technical language of theoretical, metaphysical theology into the language of methodical theology and its categories derived from interiority analysis.

III/ The Later Lonergan's Trinitarian Thought

Lonergan's *De Deo Trino* is his most lengthy and complete systematic treatment of the Trinity. It contains the natural-cognitive psychological analogy while in his later writings he develops a supernatural-affective psychological analogy. The new analogy, proposed by the later Lonergan in an array of articles and lectures, begins where the earlier analogy ended: namely, with the trinitarian missions and as such presupposes much of his earlier trinitarian thought. Both analogies attempt an imperfect understanding of God in probing the root of revelation; they are both concerned with the meaning of consubstantiality; they both highlight the importance of method and in particular the goal and aim of systematics in theology; they both develop an analysis of the dynamism of human interiority, the earlier from below upward and the later from above downward; they are concerned not only with God-for-us but equally us-for-God. Nevertheless, there is a notable difference in Lonergan's movement from metaphysical to

interiority categories and the replacement of “the predilection for the Thomist natural desire to see God” evident in *De Deo Trino* with “St. Paul’s letter to the Romans, and the passage [that] speaks of God’s love flooding our hearts through the Holy Spirit who is given to us.”³⁴³ Hence the movement for the new psychological analogy is no longer the procession from knowledge to love as in the natural-cognitive analogy but begins with love: “Love is simply not the end of spiritual procession...Love propels the entire set of autonomous spiritual processions.”³⁴⁴ Feelings as the conscious apprehension of value and subsequent judgment of value play a central role in the later analogy, “[W]ithout retracting his earlier account of the good as intelligible, Lonergan treats it as a distinct notion, apprehended in the first instant not by insight but by feeling.”³⁴⁵ The remainder of this chapter shall focus on three substantial developments in Lonergan’s later trinitarian thought: the analysis of human development from above downward; the implications of this analysis for a new psychological analogy for the Trinity; and the consequences of these for an understanding of the divine missions and humanity’s imitation and participation in the inner life of God.

Human Development from Above Downward

Lonergan’s analysis of human development from below upward is well known; he distinguishes four dynamically and integrally related levels of intentionality and consciousness: the empirical, intellectual, rational and responsible.³⁴⁶ The empirical level

³⁴³ Frederick E. Crowe, “An Exploration of Lonergan’s New Notion of Value,” in *Appropriating the Lonergan Idea*, ed. Michael Vertin (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2006) 52. In the article Crowe examines a sampling of Lonergan’s writings from 1968-1972 in an attempt to trace and name the transition in Lonergan’s thought.

³⁴⁴ Doran, “The Starting Point of Systematic Theology” 759

³⁴⁵ Hefling, “The Meaning of God Incarnate” 111.

³⁴⁶ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 9.

is that of experience (data of sense and consciousness) when one senses, perceives, imagines, etc. The intellectual level consists of inquiry into the data of sense and of consciousness: insight, thinking and formulation. The rational level is that of judgment when one marshals evidence in order to pass judgment upon the accuracy of one's understanding. The level of responsibility is when one decides to act in accordance with one's judgment of fact.

The first three levels of Lonergan's intentionality analysis constitute his theory of human knowing as

...a self-structuring process of experiencing the data of sense and of consciousness; of attempting to gain insight into the data and to formulate those insights; and of verifying or falsifying the correctness of our understanding on the basis of evidence.³⁴⁷

In experiencing, understanding and judging the data of sense and consciousness, questions of cognitional theory (what do I do when I know?), epistemology (why is doing that knowing?), and metaphysics (what do I know when I do it?) are addressed so that judgments of fact can be made. The fourth level, deciding, reflects a movement beyond the cognitional-epistemological level to the existential level as the desire for truth reveals what is valuable: questions shift from, Is it so? to Is it worthwhile? Is it good? The movement from experiencing to understanding to judging to deciding reflects the ordinary movement of human development from below upward.

The concomitant movement from above downward does not contradict or displace the analysis from below upward. The later Lonergan does not replace the movement from below upward with the reverse movement but insists that while the former is more

³⁴⁷ Vernon Gregson. *Lonergan, Spirituality, and the Meeting of Religions*. (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, inc., 1985) 10.

“common,” human development from above downward is more “important.”³⁴⁸ From above downward, “unrestricted being in love” is the starting point or “first principle”³⁴⁹ for subsequent knowing and choosing because it is existentially gripping of one’s whole heart, mind, soul and strength. For Lonergan, unrestricted being in love is self-surrendering love without “limits or qualifications or conditions or reservations.”³⁵⁰ In the way that the intentional operations from below upward and unrestricted questioning achieve and reveal “cognitive and performative self-transcendence,”³⁵¹ being in love in an unrestricted manner is the fulfillment of intentional operations.

The dynamic state of being in love is discernible in the experience of human living. Lonergan enumerates three kinds of being in love:

Man’s insertion into a community and history includes an invitation for him to accept the transformation of falling in love: the transformation of domestic love between husband and wife; the transformation of human love for one’s neighbour; the transformation of divine love that comes when God’s love floods our inmost heart through the Holy Spirit he has given us (*Rom. 5:5*).³⁵²

The love of family and concern for the common good are underpinned by the love of God that floods our hearts. Lonergan states the following about the “first principle” in human development from above downward:

The structure of individual development is twofold. The chronologically prior phase is from above downward. Children are born into a cradling environment of love. By a long and slow process of socialization, acculturation, education they are transferred from their initial world of immediacy into the local variety of the world mediated by meaning and motivated by values. Basically this process rests on trust

³⁴⁸ Bernard J.F. Lonergan, “Christology Today: Methodological Reflections,” in *A Third Collection, Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan, S.J.*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1985) 79.

³⁴⁹ Bernard J.F. Lonergan, “Response of the Jesuit,” in *A Second Collection, papers by J.F. Lonergan, S.J.*, ed. William F.J. Ryan S.J. and Bernard Tyrrell, S.J. (Toronto University of Toronto Press, 1974, 1996) 173; “The Future of Christianity” 153.

³⁵⁰ Lonergan, “Faith and Beliefs,” in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1965- 1980*, volume 17 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert C. Croken and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004) 38.

³⁵¹ Lonergan, “Faith and Beliefs” 37.

³⁵² Lonergan, “Christology Today, Methodological Reflections” 77.

and belief. But as it proceeds more and more there develops the capacity to raise questions and to be satisfied or dissatisfied with answers. Such is the spontaneous and fundamental process of teaching and learning common to all. It is at once intelligent and reasonable and responsible.³⁵³

Human development from above downward is evident in the manner in which children are reared and socialized in a learning process that rests on trust and belief and develops through asking and answering questions about what has been handed down to them.

Initially, children ask their parents questions and trust that the answers they give are true.

Later, they are able to ask and answer their own questions independently. Lonergan writes:

[T]he handing on of development... works from above downward; it begins in the affectivity of the infant, the child, the son, the pupil, the follower. On affectivity rests the apprehension of values; on the apprehension of values rests belief; on belief follows the growth in understanding of one who has found a genuine teacher and has been initiated into the study of the masters of the past. Then, to confirm one's growth in understanding, comes experience made mature and perceptive by one's developed understanding and with experiential confirmation the inverse process may set in.³⁵⁴

The movement from above downward consists in the apprehension of values and in beliefs as well as growth in understanding followed by its elucidation in experience before the "inverse process" from below upward sets in. Regarding human development from above downward Crowe writes, "it may start with a heritage of values and judgments and proceed through to a more mature experience. As values may be created, so also may they be handed on; as judgment may result from weighing evidence, so also may they be accepted in trust; as understanding may puzzle over what is observed, so it may puzzle over what is believed to be true."³⁵⁵

³⁵³ Lonergan, "Theology and Praxis" 196- 197

³⁵⁴ Lonergan, "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness" 181

³⁵⁵ Frederick E. Crowe, *Old Things and New: A Strategy for Education* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985) 24.

The movements from above and below are complementary and even concomitant because of the notion of sublation that Lonergan borrows from Karl Rahner to mean “that what sublates goes beyond what is sublated, introduces something new and distinct, puts everything on a new basis, *yet far from interfering with the sublated or destroying it, on the contrary needs it, includes it, preserves all its proper features and properties, and carries them forward to a fuller realization within a richer context.*”³⁵⁶ The state of being-in-love sublates all levels of intentional operations³⁵⁷ as this is the fulfillment of the capacity of human development from below upward: experience is carried forward to fuller realization in meaning and value. The notion of sublation excludes considering an analysis of human development from above downward as merely the reverse movement through the levels of intentional consciousness from being-in-love through decision, judgment, understanding and experience. The reason is twofold, firstly, being-in-love is itself an experience of the religious kind that can be carried forward consciously in human living through the cognitional-epistemological operations. Secondly, judgment asks the question, Is it so? There is no content as such at this level as there is at the previous level of understanding, that is, a likeness of what is known to be through cognitional operations. The gift of God’s love is freely given out of the divine initiative and as such both precedes the human experience of it and is not the result of the ordinary process of knowing and choosing. It remains unobjectified. Thus, Lonergan writes:

The fulfilment that is being in love with God is not the product of our knowledge and choice. It is God’s gift. So far from resulting from our knowledge and choice, it dismantles and abolishes the horizon in which our knowing and choosing went on, and it sets up a new horizon in which the love of God will transvalue our values and the eyes of that love will transform our knowing.³⁵⁸

³⁵⁶ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 241, my italics.

³⁵⁷ Lonergan, “Aquinas Today” 51.

³⁵⁸ Lonergan, “Faith and Beliefs” 39.

The gift of God's love results in an experience of it that abolishes the prior horizon in which we knew and chose but not the cognitional-epistemological process by which we know and choose. It sublates all previous levels of consciousness effectively enlarging them through "the relational disposition [in humans] to receive that [gift of God's] love."³⁵⁹

The appropriation of the experience of the gift of God's love results in a new horizon in which religious experience can be brought into a "richer context" and "fuller realization" when one is attentive to the experience and the experience of like experiences, when one understands the experience and one's understanding of the understanding, and when one makes choices because one is in love unrestrictedly and understands why one makes such choices. This is the movement from an orientation, vector, and feeling to their objectification through the conscious and intentional operations that make both the gift of God's love and our experience of it present to ourselves.³⁶⁰ The gift itself cannot be brought to a fuller realization in the same way that ordinary experience can be carried forward to understanding and from understanding to judgment, and then to decision because it is simultaneously the fulfilment of the capacity of all these "prior" operations *and* its starting point and first principle. The experience of gift of God's love is the transformative principle that guides all subsequent knowing and choosing. Lonergan captures the nuance between the gift and the experience and appropriation of it in the language of "religious conversion."

³⁵⁹ Robert M. Doran, "Consciousness and Grace," *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 11 (1993) 63.

³⁶⁰ Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Christology Today: Methodological Reflections," in *A Third Collection* ed. Frederick E. Crowe (New York: Paulist Press, 1985) 91.

Lonergan enumerates three types of conversion: intellectual, moral and religious. Intellectual conversion involves an awareness of one's conscious operations and processes that recognizes that knowing is not merely taking a look, but a compound of experience, understanding, judging and deciding and further that the world in which we live is constituted by acts of meaning.³⁶¹ Moral conversion entails changing "the criterion for one's decisions and choices from satisfactions to values."³⁶² Finally, Lonergan describes religious conversion as the following:

Religious conversion is being grasped by ultimate concern. It is other-worldly falling in love. It is total and permanent self-surrender without conditions, qualifications, reservations. But it is such a surrender, not as an act, but as a dynamic state that is prior to and principle of subsequent acts. It is revealed in retrospect as an under-tow of existential consciousness, as a fated acceptance of a vocation to holiness, as perhaps an increasing simplicity and passivity in prayer. It is interpreted differently in the context of different religious traditions. For Christians it is God's love flooding our hearts through the Holy Spirit given to us. It is the gift of grace...³⁶³

Religious conversion, then, is not only the gift itself but in some sense the sublation of the gift of God's love into a particular horizon, and vice versa. It is the gift given (active spiration) joined to a created external term. Christians describe this experience as "God's love flooding our hearts through the Holy Spirit given us." The sublation of the gift of God's love in religious conversion does not destroy the gift but brings its meaning into human interiority. Similarly, the gift does not destroy one's horizon but re-orient it and brings it closer to fulfilment. With regard to the sublation and conversion from above downward Lonergan writes:

Though religious conversion sublates moral, and moral conversion sublates intellectual, one is not to infer that intellectual comes first and then moral and finally religious. On the contrary, from a causal viewpoint, one would say first

³⁶¹ http://www.lonergan.on.ca/glossary/glossary_c-d.htm#conversion

³⁶² Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 240.

³⁶³ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 240- 241.

there is God's gift of his love. Next, the eye of this love reveals values in their splendour, while the strength of this love brings about their realization, and that is moral conversion. Finally, among the values discerned by the eye of love is the value of believing the truths taught by the religious tradition, and in such a tradition and belief are the seeds of intellectual conversion. For the word, spoken and heard, proceeds from and penetrates to all four levels of intentional consciousness. Its content is not just a content of experience but a content of experience and understanding and judging and deciding.³⁶⁴

Within the dynamism of the unfolding of consciousness from above downward religious conversion is the "dynamic state that is prior to and principle of subsequent acts" that sets new criteria for choosing from mere satisfaction to real value and potentially an awareness of one's conscious operations and their processing as meaningful and valuable. The gift of God's love is always given by God and, although the total fulfilment of self-transcendence, is neither the result of human activity or choice akin to a fourth level operation nor some kind of objectified knowledge. The gift of God's love is not the ultimate matter toward which the intellect tends as much as what "informs the intellect doing the reflecting."³⁶⁵ It "remains within subjectivity as a vector, an undertow, a fateful call to a dreaded holiness"³⁶⁶ that affects any subsequent conversions and processing of conscious operations; in fact, it enlarges consciousness beyond any enlargement humanly attainable. It reveals values that can be realized through moral conversion as well as the value of belief toward intellectual conversion.

A New Analogy

In *Method in Theology* Lonergan asserts: "So it is that in religious matters love precedes knowledge and, as that love is God's gift, the very beginning of faith is due to

³⁶⁴ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 243.

³⁶⁵ Kanaris, *Bernard Lonergan's Philosophy of Religion* 89.

³⁶⁶ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 113 also "Faith and Beliefs" 39.

God's grace."³⁶⁷ Being in love with God is the human response to God's gift of self, which precedes and is unlike any other object of knowledge or choice. Subsequent to the experience of God's love given is the existential deliberation whether to love the unknown and unknowable source of love in return. Yet according to the earlier psychological analogy of *De Deo Trino*, love follows knowledge. The later Lonergan urges:

One might accord metaphysical necessity to such adages as *ignoti nulla cupido* and *nihil amatum nisi praecognitum*. But while they assert the priority of knowledge as one ascends from the lower to the higher, they tend to overlook the inverse priority by which the higher sublates the lower... And surely the priority of the lower sets no rule that God must observe when he floods our inmost hearts with his love through the Holy Spirit he has given us (Rom. 5:5).³⁶⁸

The priority of love in human development from above downward is unlike the successive levels of intentionality analysis from below upward because it cannot be objectified and known in the same way. In a favourite example, Lonergan speaks of the experience of two people falling in love before consciously adverting to their love: before they *know* it the two are in love, spending time together in deep friendship, showing mutual concern and generosity. However, they would be unable to pin-point the exact moment when or reason why they 'fell in love.' Conscious reflection on the dynamism of their relationship comes after their lived reality is adverted to through the mutual avowal that makes mutual self-donation possible. This avowal does not mark the moment or reason the two are in love. The meaning and value of being in love unrestrictedly is first a reality to be experienced before it is known through the cognitional-epistemological dynamic. "The reception of the love of another person for

³⁶⁷ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 123.

³⁶⁸ Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Mission and the Spirit" in *A Third Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (New York: Paulist Press, 1985) 31.

us,” writes Doran, “changes us in such a way as to enable us to perform operations and experience states which previously were not within our capacity ... The love of another person for us is somehow constitutive of us.”³⁶⁹

Being in love with God is the result of pure gift that pulls us out of ourselves and into the “love of God above all in whom we love our neighbour as ourselves.”³⁷⁰ Hence, the gift of God’s love breaks into human history with both individual and social-communal ramifications as God’s love given is the basis of our loving God, our neighbours and ourselves. Though the fulfilment of the capacity of religious self-transcendence, “enabling us to perform operations and experience states which previously were not within our capacity” it is not apprehended through the ordinary upward movement of conscious intentionality of cognitive or performative self-transcendence. Instead, the love of God is grasped in the realm of value.³⁷¹ It can become the root of “habitual conscious living” that grows, develops, becomes spontaneous and conscious in everyday living.³⁷²

Lonergan offers the following explanation on the relationship between love and knowledge and the new notion of value in the supernatural-affective analogy saying,

But how can loving generate knowledge? There is the celebrated *pensée* of Blaise Pascal: *Le Coeur a ses raisons que la raison ne connaît pas*, The heart has its reasons which reason does not know. Let me indicate what precisely this statement would mean in terms of the analysis of human consciousness already presented.

First, by the heart is meant the subject in love, the subject attaining performative self-transcendence on the fourth level of waking consciousness.

³⁶⁹ Doran, “Consciousness and Grace” 75.

³⁷⁰ Bernard J.F. Lonergan, “Theology and Praxis” in *A Third Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (New York: Paulist Press, 1985) 208.

³⁷¹ Crowe, “An Exploration of Lonergan’s New Notion of Value” 68.

³⁷² Bernard J.F. Lonergan, “The Mediation of Christ in Prayer,” in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1958- 1964*, volume 6 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996) 179.

Secondly, by reason is meant the subject on the first three levels of waking consciousness, the subject as attaining cognitional self-transcendence through experiencing, understanding, and judging .

Thirdly, by the reasons known to the heart and unknown to reason are meant the subject's responses to values—vital, social, cultural, personal—as distinct from his desires for pleasures and his fears of pain.

Fourthly, while values attract and disvalues repel us spontaneously, still it is when we are in love, and in the measure that we are in love, that we discern values and disvalues clearly, finely, delicately, fully, and that we respond to them firmly and powerfully. There is, then, a knowledge that is born of love. It is a knowledge that consists in one's response to the values and disvalues and, more specifically, in the development, strength, fullness, refinement of one's responding.³⁷³

The subject in love achieves religious self-transcendence by virtue of being in love.

Cognitive and performative self-transcendence are achieved through the ordinary process of human development from below upward. The subject in love responds to values, and the cognitive and performative self-transcendence that develops consequently consists of the knowledge of and decision to act in accordance with the values to which one has responded. But the question arises: In the analysis of human development from above downward, what criterion is there for making such judgments of value? For Lonergan being in love in an unrestricted manner is “self-justifying”³⁷⁴ as the “real criterion by which all else is to be judged; and consequently one has only to experience it in oneself or witness it in others, to find in it its own justification.”³⁷⁵ Thus, “[O]n affectivity rests the apprehension of values.”³⁷⁶

³⁷³ Lonergan, “Faith and Beliefs” 42-43.

³⁷⁴ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 123: “Only God can give that gift, and the gift itself is self-justifying.”

³⁷⁵ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 283-284.

³⁷⁶ Lonergan, “Natural Right and Historical Mindedness” 181.

Apprehension of value is the affective “knowing of the heart” that involves a response to, and the discernment and recognition of value.³⁷⁷ In the dynamism from above downward, feelings as apprehensive responses to values play an analogous role to responses to what are cognitively intended and apprehended as worthwhile in the movement from below upward. Thus, Lonergan states “[B]esides the factual knowledge reached by experiencing, understanding, and verifying, there is another kind of knowledge reached through the discernment of value and the judgments of value of a person in love.”³⁷⁸ As conscious, apprehensive-intentional responses to values, feelings relate subjects to objects and are “‘privileged data’ as they occur in consciousness, and any account of their nature can and indeed must be verified in the data of consciousness.”³⁷⁹ While feelings enable a grasp of value, Lonergan clearly asserts that a subsequent judgment of value is required in the dynamic unfolding of the movement from above downward. The ‘apprehension of value’ “is something of a go-between judgments of fact and of value.” In judgments of value “what is apprehended as good is truly known to be so or only apparently so,” confirming “whether our apprehensions of value are of the truly good or that merely perceived as such.”³⁸⁰ Feelings as conscious, apprehensions of value make possible judgments of value make known the good and worthwhile; however, action is further required in order to do the good and worthwhile. The gap between knowing and doing the good is a perennial challenge for humans and it is precisely here that the affective dimension of the subject in love plays such an important role in the dynamism of consciousness:

³⁷⁷ Bernard J. Tyrrell, S.J., “Feelings as Apprehensive-Intentional Responses to Values,” in *Lonergan Workshop* vol. 7, ed. Fred Lawrence (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988) 336.

³⁷⁸ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 115

³⁷⁹ Tyrrell, “Feelings as Apprehensive-Intentional Responses to Values” 333.

³⁸⁰ Kanaris, *Bernard Lonergan’s Philosophy of Religion* 110.

Judgments of value and responsible decision cannot move into action without the current of affectivity to support them. It is feelings that give, as Lonergan has it, the ‘mass, momentum, drive, power’ to our knowing and our deciding.³⁸¹

The “current of affectivity” is that “dynamic vector, a mysterious undertow, a fateful call to a dreaded holiness.”³⁸²

Drawing upon the experience of the subject in love in an unrestricted manner, Lonergan formulates his supernatural-affective psychological analogy for understanding the Trinity and the processions therein:

The psychological analogy, then, 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 judgments are carried out in decisions that are acts of loving. Such is the analogy found in the creature.³⁸³

God the Father, who is agapic love, expresses such love in the Word which is a judgment of value, a judgment of total sincerity grounded in the proceeding love that is the Holy Spirit. Employing the language and categories of a methodical theology derived from interiority, Lonergan writes:

There are then two processions that may be conceived in God; they are not unconscious processes but intellectually, rationally, morally conscious as are judgments of value based on the evidence perceived by a lover, and the acts of loving grounded on judgments of value. The two processions ground four real relations of which three are really distinct from one another; and these three are not just relations as relations, and so modes of being, but also subsistent, and so not just paternity and filiation but also Father and Son. Finally, Father and Son and Spirit are eternal; their consciousness is not in time but timeless; their subjectivity is not becoming but ever itself; and each in his own distinct manner is subject of the infinite act that God is, the Father as originating love, the Son as judgment of value expressing that love, and the Spirit as originated loving.³⁸⁴

³⁸¹ Glen Hughes and Sebastian Moore, “*Hamlet* and the Affective Roots of Decision,” in *Lonergan Workshop* vol. 7, ed. Fred Lawrence (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988) 180.

³⁸² Lonergan, “The Response of a Jesuit as Priest and Apostle in the Modern World,” in *A Second Collection* ed. William F.J. Ryan S.J. and Bernard J. Tyrrell, S.J. (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1996) 173.

³⁸³ Lonergan, “Christology Today” 93.

³⁸⁴ Lonergan, “Christology Today” 93-94.

The new analogy incorporates insights from the previous natural-cognitional psychological analogy regarding God as dynamically conscious, the number of processions, their grounding of four real relations of which only three are really distinct from one another and also subsistent modes of being; hence, these relations are actually the three persons of the Trinity. In the transposition from metaphysical categories to the interiority categories of a methodical approach there are also marked differences in the two analogies. God is no longer conceived of as the Father as understanding and principle of the Word; the Word as affirmation of that understanding; and the Spirit as the love of that self-understanding.³⁸⁵ Instead, the new starting point is the experience of love and the analogy is drawn from the analysis of human development from above downward. Thus, the Father is originating love, the Son the judgment of value that expresses that love and the Spirit the originated love.

The later Lonergan's psychological analogy certainly differs from his earlier understanding, but is made possible precisely because of his insights in the development of the natural-cognitional psychological analogy. Lonergan's four point hypothesis, which appears in the last chapter of *De Deo Trino*, provides the basis for an extremely rich and promising understanding of the divine missions and humankind's participation in the Triune life of God, and is supplemented and developed in the later analogy.

The Divine Missions

Based on Lonergan's later writings regarding human development from above downward coupled with his distinction between the way of discovery (*ordo inventionis*) and the way of teaching (*ordo doctrinae* or *disciplinae*), Crowe draws out the

³⁸⁵ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 419.

implications of this distinction for an understanding of the order of the trinitarian missions. His suggestion is an interpretation of what is often latent in Lonergan's later work; Crowe is terribly convincing.

In order to understand Lonergan's later thought regarding the Trinity, Crowe draws our attention to several articles that support Crowe's 1985 thesis³⁸⁶ regarding the ontological ordering of the missions of the Spirit and the Son. Lonergan's 1953 article "Theology and Understanding" distinguishes between the way of discovery and teaching: "the *causa cognoscendi* is also *prior quoad nos*, and so it is first in the *via* or *ordo inventionis*; but the *causa essendi* is *prior quoad se*, and so it is first in the *ordo doctrinae* or *disciplinae*."³⁸⁷ Thus, the distinction between what is first for us (*quoad nos*) in the cognitional order of discovery and what is first in itself (*quoad se*) in the ontological order provides the basis of Crowe's principle that contrary to what might be first for us, what is first in our eyes is actually last in itself, and what is last in our eyes is first in itself.³⁸⁸ Applied to the trinitarian missions Crowe states:

We have simply to reverse the order in which commonly we think of the Son and Spirit in the world. Commonly we think of God first sending the Son, and of the Spirit being sent in that context, to bring to completion the work of the Son. The thesis says that, on the contrary, God first sent the Spirit, and then sent the Son in the context of the Spirit's mission, to bring to completion— perhaps not precisely the work of the Spirit, but the work which God conceived as one work to be executed in the two steps of the twofold mission of the Spirit and then the Son.³⁸⁹

Crowe maintains that while Lonergan may not explicitly order the missions in such a fashion, the methodological principle coupled with Lonergan's stress on the priority of

³⁸⁶ Frederick E. Crowe, "Son of God, Holy Spirit, and World Religions," in *Appropriating the Lonergan Idea*, ed. Michael Vertin (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006) 324- 343.

³⁸⁷ Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Theology and Understanding," in *Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993) 120. Lonergan derives this idea from Aristotle via Aquinas; see note 4 of Crowe, "Son of God, Holy Spirit, and World Religions" 327.

³⁸⁸ Crowe, "Son of God, Holy Spirit, and World Religions" 327.

³⁸⁹ Crowe, "Son of God, Holy Spirit, and World Religions" 325. A more fulsome treatment of Crowe's interpretation of Lonergan on world religions follows in chapter 5.

love support Crowe's thesis regarding the ontological ordering of the divine missions. In addition, Lonergan's own enumeration of the missions in his later writings indicates that his preferred sequence is the mission of the Spirit, followed by that of the Son and then by union with the Father.³⁹⁰

According to Lonergan there is a threefold self-giving of God as love to humankind in history: "the gift of the Holy Spirit to those that love (*Rom. 5:5*), the gift of the divine Word made flesh and dwelling amongst us (*John 1:14*), the final gift of union with the Father who is originating love (*1 John 4:8, 16*)."³⁹¹ The sequential unfolding of God's self-giving love—love given, love declared and love consummated—corresponds to the human, experiential dimension of trinitarian character. In God's love given there is the inner and immediate experience of the Holy Spirit that while "invisible...does not mean without data or manifestation in experience."³⁹² Love declared has its human, technical counterpart in the outer experience of the Son incarnate that was immediate for those who saw and heard Jesus Christ but is vicariously mediated to the Christian community today through history. The inner and outer experiences complement one another and are incomplete on their own and so need to be correlated as both are "data or manifestations of God-with-us."³⁹³ The experience of ultimate mystery which in the present life is the absence of the experience of the Father illustrates the "not-yet" and "to-be" of the temporary state that lacks, needs, longs and hopes for the final gift of union

³⁹⁰ For example Lonergan says, "...we too can place the meaning and significance of the visible universe as bringing to birth the elect—the recipients to whom God gives himself in love, in the threefold giving that is the gift of the Holy Spirit to those that love (*Rom. 5:5*), the gift of the divine Word made flesh and dwelling amongst us (*John 1:14*), the final gift of union with the Father who is originating love (*1 John 4:8, 16*)" in "Aquinas Today" 53 and also "Mission and the Spirit" 31-33.

³⁹¹ Lonergan, "Aquinas Today" 53. See also "Mission and the Spirit" on vertical finality 26-28.

³⁹² Frederick Crowe, S.J. "Rethinking God-With-Us: Categories From Lonergan," *Science et Esprit*, XLI/2 (1989) 173.

³⁹³ Crowe, "Rethinking God-With-Us" 176.

with the Father in the beatific vision. The experience of mystery and the absence of experience of the Father reveal that the missions of the Spirit and the Son cannot substitute for the consummation of divine self-giving love in the beatific vision.³⁹⁴

The gift of God's love "is not objectified in knowledge, but remains within subjectivity as a dynamic vector, a mysterious undertow, a fateful call to dreaded holiness."³⁹⁵ The gift of love "takes over the ground and root of the fourth and highest level of man's waking consciousness" and is conscience, while it is responsible for deliberation, decision, action and though it may be broadened, deepened, heightened, but it may never be superseded, and it is oriented toward its fulfilment in the avowal of love.³⁹⁶ In an illustration drawn from human experience Lonergan writes:

If a man and a woman were to love each other yet never avow their love, there would be lacking to their love an interpersonal component, a mutual presence of self-donation. Without that interpersonal component, their love would not have the opportunity to grow.³⁹⁷

Thus, a couple can experience love for one another and be in love without naming or speaking their situation; however, their love would not develop and grow without consciously adverting to their reality through the mutual avowal of their love. If love is to be fulfilled it must grow and develop. If it does not grow and develop the relationship is effectively over. Likewise, God sends the Spirit as the first and foundational gift of love and then avows the divine love in the Incarnation of the Son. This is God's public "yes" to loving humanity. In the Incarnation the initial gift of love given that is the Holy Spirit is developed and grown through another divine-human interpersonal component

³⁹⁴ Crowe, "Rethinking God-With-Us" 176- 177.

³⁹⁵ Lonergan, "The Response of a Jesuit" 173.

³⁹⁶ Lonergan, "The Response of a Jesuit" 173.

³⁹⁷ Lonergan, "Faith and Beliefs." See also, "The Response of a Jesuit" 174.

that looks to its final fulfilment in the union with the originator of the gift of divine love, God the Father.

The visible mission of the Son in the Incarnation, like the analysis of human development below upward, mounts the successive levels of consciousness from experiencing to understanding, to judgment and then to decision while the mission of the Spirit descends from above through religious conversion to moral conversion and through moral and religious conversion to intellectual conversion.³⁹⁸ The missions of the Spirit and the Son are intimately related and interdependent, as the former remains but an orientation to a mystery in need of interpretation without a visible proper object of being-in-love. Conversely, without the mission of the Spirit, the Word as the proper object of being-in-love enters human history but is not received.³⁹⁹ For Lonergan, the self-communication of the Son and the Spirit have both cognitive and constitutive functions; cognitive in disclosing in whom we are to believe and constitutive in transforming the inner gift of love into human community and fellowship. Simultaneously, there is a redemptive function that promotes the Reign of God “as charity that dissolves the hostility and the divisions of past injustice and present hatred” toward deliverance and salvation.⁴⁰⁰ Although Lonergan does associate the gift of the Spirit with inner experience and that of the Son with the outer word, he also maintains—against any notion that the mission of the Spirit remains “invisible” and so “unhistorical”—that the mission of both the Spirit and the Son are historical realities, visible in human history, and with real historical effects and meanings. After all, his definition of the missions as

³⁹⁸ Lonergan, “Mission and the Spirit” 32.

³⁹⁹ Lonergan, “Mission and the Spirit” 32.

⁴⁰⁰ Lonergan, “Mission and the Spirit” 31.

the relations joined to a created external term requires that not only the mission of the Son but also that of the Spirit have its external term (in history).

The fundamental religious experience that communicates God's inner word of love to humankind that is the Holy Spirit does not imply that the gift of the Son is absent and that the Spirit fills a "void" that the historical revelation associated with the Incarnation is unable to fill. On the contrary, not only does God address all humanity with an inner word in the "secrecy of our hearts" but God also announces the divine intention in history, through prophets, in the Messiah, through the apostles.⁴⁰¹ The Word is not only present in the history of the Incarnation but globally in the history of love objectified. Any word of truth in history reveals the mission of the Son as well as that of the Holy Spirit in order to understand its significance. Likewise, the giving of the Holy Spirit is the giving of the Father and Son together. The religious experience of the inner word is complemented by an external word that interprets the experience as well as a longing for the consummation of the experience. The works of the Trinity *ad extra* are inseparable.

For Lonergan, regardless of the analogy, the divine missions are always the processions links to a created external term. They are for the benefit of creation and add nothing to God *ad intra*. Thus Doran writes

...a mission is for a purpose, and the divine missions are for the purpose of establishing and confirming interpersonal relations, first between God and us, and then among ourselves; and interpersonal relations are also the core element in the structure of the human good that is coincident with the immanent intelligibility of history. Thus understanding the divine missions entails understanding the history that the Word was sent to redeem from the alternating cycles of progress and decline and that the Holy Spirit is sent to renew with the outpouring of self-sacrificing love.⁴⁰²

⁴⁰¹ Lonergan, "Faith and Beliefs" 47.

⁴⁰² Robert M. Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005) 71.

These interpersonal relations form the nucleus and structure of the human good revealed in the intelligibility of historical process. The gift of God's love throughout history is not limited to a single time or place, but is to be found throughout the religions and cultures of the world where redeeming and self-sacrificing love are present. The manner of reception and thematization of the experience of God's love vary according to time and place. Lonergan's historical view of culture, in contrast to the classicist views dominant in Lonergan's own time and still in force today, recognizes the diverse manners in which sets of meanings and values have informed human ways of living in the past and in the present.⁴⁰³ According to Lonergan, it is through the mediation of meaning through community and culture that divine revelation breaks into history and what would otherwise be unknown, but for God's self-disclosure, becomes known through gift and its experience mediated through history.⁴⁰⁴

Lonergan's theory of history is well known as the process of progress, decline and redemption. Progress refers to what "proceeds from originating value, from subjects being their true selves by observing the transcendental precepts:"⁴⁰⁵ being attentive to experience, intelligent in understanding, reasonable in judgment and responsible in decision. This entails being attentive to patterns in history, grasping possibilities, rejecting some courses of action and acknowledging others, and making choices based on both short-term and long-term costs to the benefit of one's self, one's community and

⁴⁰³ See Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Transition from a Classicist World-View to Historical-Mindedness," in *A Second Collection*, ed. William F.J. Ryan, S.J. and Bernard J. Tyrrell, S.J. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996) 1- 9 and "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness" in *A Third Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (New York: Paulist Press, 1985) 170.

⁴⁰⁴ Lonergan, "Christology Today: Methodological Reflections" 79.

⁴⁰⁵ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 53.

others as well.⁴⁰⁶ Progress infers change which “of itself makes it likely that new possibilities will have arisen and old possibilities will have advanced in probability.”⁴⁰⁷ Decline, on the other hand, is the result of alienation, a disregard for the transcendental precepts and more specifically bias that is an aborted process of inquiry, “a flight from understanding.” Lonergan enumerates four types of bias: dramatic, individual, group, and general. Dramatic bias operates at the level of “elementary passions” and results in a withdrawal from interpersonal living and subsequently a lack of insights that accrue from being in community. Individual bias is egoism that places self-interest and self-satisfaction at the center of one’s inquiry, judgment and decision. Similarly, group bias is self-interest at a group level. Here groups are deluded in believing that the self-interest of the group is really the good of order. Lastly, general bias is pervasive and insidious and, unlike the previous biases that result in shorter cycles of decline, generates longer cycles of decline and greater challenges for their reversal. General bias is the domination of common sense and extending “its legitimate concern for the concrete and the immediately practical into disregard of larger issues and indifference to long-term results.”⁴⁰⁸ General bias prevents the integration of new ideas into a higher viewpoint, cumulatively eroding at the social situation. The result is disastrous as social achievement and surd become confused, criteria for truth and the exercise of authority lost, and uncritical intelligence privileges common sense and prevents theoretical insight.

Lonergan offers two complementary manners in which decline is reversed and progress is promoted, each linked to the mission of the Son and the Spirit. The first is

⁴⁰⁶ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 53.

⁴⁰⁷ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 53.

⁴⁰⁸ Bernard Lonergan, *Insight, a study of human understanding* (London: Longmans, Green and Co Ltd, 1964) 226.

redemption. Redemption reveals the divine hatred of sin expressed by God in the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.⁴⁰⁹ The analogue to the redemptive mission of the Son is the creative vector in history that is development from below upward, from experience to understanding, to judgment to decision. The striving from below upward is creative in upwardly sublating conscious acts in which each subsequent act includes but also transforms the previous: a new situation is created in continuity with the previous. The second manner of reversal is the religious conversion occasioned by the gift of love. This healing vector in history flows from above downward and can be imagined as a “cascade, in which the overflow from each higher plateau fills the pool below, until there is continuous flow from top to bottom.”⁴¹⁰ A new situation is created in the transformed vision, understanding and field of data that results from being-in-love.

Loneragan writes:

There is then the transformation of falling in love... the divine love that orientates man in his cosmos and expresses itself in his worship. Where hatred only sees evil, love reveals values. At once it commands commitment and joyfully carries it out, no matter what the sacrifice involved. Where hatred reinforces bias, love dissolves it, whether it be the bias of unconscious motivation, the bias of individual or group egoism, or the bias of omniscient, short-sighted common sense. Where hatred plods around in ever narrower vicious circles, love breaks the bonds of psychological and social determinisms with the conviction of faith and the power of hope.⁴¹¹

The communication of God’s love in history contributes something new, valuable and meaningful to human living that transforms evil into good.⁴¹² This love is a “core

⁴⁰⁹ Crowe, *Christ and History* 86- 87.

⁴¹⁰ Maurice Schepers, OP, “Human Development: From Below Upward and From Above Downward,” *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 7:2 (1989) 141-42.

⁴¹¹ Lonergan, “Healing and Creating in History” in *A Third Collection, Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan, S.J.* ed Frederick E. Crowe, S.J. (Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1985) 106.

⁴¹² Frederick E. Crowe, S.J., *Loneragan* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1992) 97 and also *Christ and History* 215.

element in the structure of the human good that is coincident with the innate intelligibility of history.”⁴¹³

The inclusion and location of the human person in community and history is for Lonergan “an invitation for him to accept the transformation of falling in love.”⁴¹⁴ Through the gift of God’s grace, personal and collective history becomes the site of intersection between God-for-us and us-for-God. Grace is the transformative invitation to be-in-love and the consequent occasion for response to that invitation. Drawing on Augustine, Lonergan names the dual dimensions of grace operative and cooperative. Operative grace refers to “the replacement of the heart of stone by a heart of flesh, a replacement beyond the horizon of the heart of stone;” cooperative grace is that “heart of flesh becoming effective in good works through human freedom.”⁴¹⁵ These correspond respectively to what the theological tradition calls sanctifying grace and the habit of charity which are themselves created participations in the active and passive spiration of the Holy Spirit respectively. In continuity with the last chapter of *De Deo Trino*, the later Lonergan maintains his original insight that the state or situation of grace refers to many subjects together and so has a collective and not individualist sense.

In the second to last assertion of the last chapter of *De Deo Trino* Lonergan makes a very interesting and potentially extremely fruitful suggestion regarding the Trinity and the created participation in and imitation of the divine life. In what is referred to as “the four-point hypothesis” Lonergan states:

[T]here are four real divine relations, really identical with the divine substance, and therefore there are four very special modes that ground the external imitation of the divine substance. Next, there are four absolutely supernatural realities that are

⁴¹³ Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* 71.

⁴¹⁴ Lonergan, “Christology Today: Methodological Reflections” 76- 77.

⁴¹⁵ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 241.

never found uninformed, namely, the secondary act of existence of the incarnation, sanctifying grace, the habit of charity and the light of glory. It would not be inappropriate, therefore, to say that the secondary act of existence of the incarnation is a created participation of paternity, and so has a special relation to the Son; that sanctifying grace is a participation of active spiration, and so has a special relation to the Holy Spirit; that the habit of charity is a participation of passive spiration, and so has a special relation to the Father and the Son; and that the light of glory is a participation of sonship, and so in a most perfect way brings the children of adoption back to the Father.⁴¹⁶

Thus, the secondary act of existence of the incarnation of the Word in Jesus the God-man is a created participation in the divine relation of paternity; sanctifying grace is a created participation in active spiration; the habit of charity is a created participation in passive spiration; the light of glory is a created participation of the children of God in the divine sonship. Since the secondary act of existence of the incarnation of the Son is an event of the past and the light of glory something of the future, it is sanctifying grace and the habit of charity that have immediate significance for the present. It is only through the created participations in the active and passive spirations that the meaning of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is mediated from the past to the present through history and the future event of the created participation of the children of God in the divine sonship at the beatific vision is proleptically present and yet hoped for. It is through the relations of active and passive spiration that the Triune life of God is available for the imitation of and participation in by humanity.

Lonergan himself did comparatively little to explicitly develop and draw out the full implications of the four-point hypothesis. In fact, the later Lonergan's trinitarian formulations in the language and categories derived from intentionality analysis are frequently expressed in "three-points" and not four as in *De Deo Trino*. However, from the 1957 "forerunner" to the later editions of *De Deo Trino, Divinarum personarum*,

⁴¹⁶ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 471, 473.

through its many editions and amendments by Lonergan himself, the “four-point” hypothesis remains.⁴¹⁷ The later Lonergan’s trinitarian thought concentrates upon the experience of the three persons of the Trinity, Father, Son and Spirit, *ad extra*. There is nothing to suggest that Lonergan discarded his *ad intra* insights, including his distinction between active and passive spirations. In fact, his rather nebulous language of “the gift of God’s love,” “the dynamic state of being in love,” “knowledge born of religious love,” “acts of loving,” and “judgment of value” encourage a technical refinement in which the four-point hypothesis can be expressed in a methodical theology. The larger critical issue for the interpretation of Lonergan’s thought is whether in his concern for intentionality analysis and a corresponding methodical theology, Lonergan abandoned some of the insights gleaned from his more “metaphysical theology.” If not, then what is the relationship between the two: how can Lonergan’s four-point hypothesis be transposed from a metaphysical theology to a methodical theology with its categories of interiority?⁴¹⁸

Robert Doran is convinced that any discussion of “being in love” and the “gift of God’s love” in terms of a methodical theology requires both an enlargement of the “levels” of consciousness particularly pertinent in the analysis of human development from above downward as well as the integration of the medieval metaphysical insight distinguishing sanctifying grace from the habit of charity. To this effect Doran has undertaken the arduous but fruitful task of working out a transposition of the four-point hypothesis found in Lonergan’s metaphysical, natural-cognitive psychological analogy into the categories of interiority found in the later Lonergan’s supernatural-affective

⁴¹⁷ Robert M. Doran, S.J., “Addressing the Four-Point Hypothesis,” *Theological Studies* 68 (2007) 677.

⁴¹⁸ Christaan Jacobs-Vandegeer, “Sanctifying Grace in a ‘Methodical Theology,’” *Theological Studies* 68 (2007) 52.

analogy. In his development of the four-point hypothesis from this new perspective, Doran, in his 2005 *What Is Systematic Theology?*, enumerates three points regarding the new analogy, human consciousness and the imitation of and participation in the divine life:

- (1) The conscious reflection on the entitative habit [of the soul] is found in a *given* grasp of the evidence, at a most elemental level, and, at the same level, in a *given* affirmation of value proceeding or emanating from that grasp (a *given* “yes,” where “given” signifies “gift,” that is, faith as the knowledge or horizon born of religious love, that is, born of the gift of God’s love.)
- (2) Both the grasp and the proceeding affirmation are grounded in a *given* being-in-love that participates in and imitates the *notionaliter diligere* of Father and Son in active spiration, and that is experienced by us in an extremely elemental and tacit fashion.
- (3) The grasp and the affirmation together ground and are the principle for a proceeding habit of charity that shows itself in self-transcendent schemes of recurrence in human living, a habit that participates in and imitates the *amor procedens* that is the Holy Spirit.⁴¹⁹

Doran’s three points underscore the insights of the psychological analogy for speaking about the divine relations *ad intra* and the technical, methodical dimension of the analogy found in the analysis of human interior analysis from above downward. Although he will nuance and clarify the technicalities of his position, his concern remains to articulate conscious created participations in the life of a dynamically conscious Triune God that initially communicates divine love in the *notionaliter diligere* of the Father and Son.

The later Lonergan nuances the analogue for the psychological analogy previously drawn from nature alone as it becomes instead “graced nature” since it is the gift of God’s love that makes possible that which cannot be achieved by nature alone. Doran points out that the very transculturality of the gift of God’s love apprehended and manifested differently but authentically in the religions of the world further supports the

⁴¹⁹ Doran, “The Starting Point of Systematic Theology” 759- 760.

contention that the gift cannot be conditioned by human knowledge or apprehension.⁴²⁰

In this sense, the gift of God's love sublates the previous cognitional-epistemological-decisional operations and states of human interiority. In the communication of God's love is born a new horizon out of which all subsequent knowing and choosing takes place.

Doran posits that the "tacit apprehension of transcendent value [...] that is grounded tacitly in being-in-love, can be differentiated into an elemental grasp of evidence and an elemental proceeding word of an affirmation of value."⁴²¹ The elemental grasp involves the "knowing of the heart"⁴²² that once discerned can be affirmed as known value through judgment. The differentiated apprehension of transcendent value is analogous to and participates in the active spiration of the Father and Son as "the grasp of evidence and proceeding affirmation of one who is in love with a love that participates in God's own love."⁴²³ Lastly, Doran suggests that the decision to love in return is in some way a function of the habit of charity as a love that proceeds from the grasp and affirmation of the apprehension of transcendent value. Thus, the operative grace that is "the replacement of the heart of stone by a heart of flesh, a replacement beyond the horizon of the heart of stone" is operative in its giving while the cooperative grace is the "heart of flesh becoming effective in good works through human freedom."⁴²⁴

In a recent clarification⁴²⁵ of his transposition of the four-point hypothesis into the categories of human interiority and intentionality analysis, Doran elucidates his position

⁴²⁰ Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* 107.

⁴²¹ Doran, "The Starting Point" 762.

⁴²² Tyrrell, "Feelings as Apprehensive-Intentional Responses to Values" 336.

⁴²³ Doran, "The Starting Point" 762.

⁴²⁴ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 241. See also Doran, "The Starting Point" 763.

⁴²⁵ Doran, "Addressing the Four-Point Hypothesis"

with greater concern for the “unity of consciousness”⁴²⁶ while equally maintaining his convictions regarding the importance of the four-point hypothesis and its distinction between active and passive spiration as well as the need for an enlargement of current notions of consciousness to account for the full range of interiority. Quoting from one of his recent lectures, Doran writes:

What, though, is this radical enrichment of the unity of consciousness? In what does it consist? [...] I wish to suggest a movement from the gift of God’s love to a knowledge and orientation (let us call it a horizon) born of that love, and a movement from the gift and the horizon together to acts of loving that coalesce into a habit of charity. In traditional terms, the gift of God’s love is sanctifying grace, the horizon born of that love consists of faith and hope, and the disposition that proceeds from the gift and the horizon together constitutes charity. The gift of God’s love and the horizon born of it are the created graced analogue of active spiration, and so of Father and Son together, and the habit of charity that proceeds from them is the created graced analogue of passive spiration, and so of the Holy Spirit.⁴²⁷

What Lonergan refers to as the dynamic state of being in love, what metaphysical, theoretical theology named sanctifying grace, is a state having to do with the unity of consciousness in the categories of interiority and methodical theology. According to Doran the “unity of consciousness...reflects an entitative habit radicated in the essence of the soul, in central form, and manifested in diverse acts of faith, hope, and love, as well as in other operations and states.”⁴²⁸ Doran suggests a “movement from the gift of God’s love to a knowledge and orientation” or “horizon” born of that love. This horizon

⁴²⁶ According to Doran the “unity of consciousness...reflects an entitative habit radicated in the essence of the soul, in central form, and manifested in diverse acts of faith, hope, and love, as well as in other operations and states.” Doran, “Addressing the Four-Point Hypothesis” 678.

⁴²⁷ Doran, “Addressing the Four-Point Hypothesis” 678-679. This marks a development in Doran’s thought and enunciation of the four point hypothesis into the categories of interiority. Previously he claimed “Being in love in an unqualified way is, of course, a created participation in the passive spiration that in God is the Holy Spirit. It is the habit of charity. In us it flows, not from our knowledge, but proximately from the entitative habit of sanctifying grace, and remotely from the active spiration in God that is the Father and Word as one principle of the Holy Spirit.” *What Is Systematic Theology?* 106. More recently, following an article by Jacobs-Vandegeer, Doran specifies that what Lonergan calls the dynamic state of being in love corresponds to “sanctifying grace.”

⁴²⁸ Doran, “Addressing the Four-Point Hypothesis” 678.

consists of faith and hope. The gift of God's love and the subsequent horizon together result in the created participation in the active spiration of the Father and Son (*notionaliter diligere*); namely, sanctifying grace. The gift and horizon together constitute the grounds for loving acts that combine into the habit of charity. This is the created graced analogue, the created participation in the passive spiration that is the Holy Spirit (*amor procedens*). Thus, Doran concludes, "From the gift of God's love to faith and hope, and from these together to love; from the Father to the Word, and from the Father and Word together to the proceeding Love that is the Holy Spirit."⁴²⁹

Conclusion

Lonergan's contributions to a Christian systematic understanding of religious diversity lie principally in his trinitarian thought. A fulsome appreciation of his thought comes only after first exploring his treatise *The Triune God: Systematics* where he develops the natural-cognitive psychological analogy and then his later related works where he explores the new supernatural-affective psychological analogy. Several insights found in *The Triune God: Systematics* significant for the present study are worth noting. First, Lonergan's organization of the theological tasks involved in an exploration of the Trinity clarifies the aim of systematics as a synthetic understanding distinct from the historical and analytical. Next, Lonergan's notion of intellectual emanation for understanding divine procession reveals a Triune God who is dynamically conscious. Further, Lonergan's key distinction for the analogy for understanding the divine processions as a procession according to the mode of a *processio operati*, making it something like—but not the same as—human intellectual emanation, facilitates an

⁴²⁹ Doran, "Addressing the Four-Point Hypothesis" 679.

understanding that realizes the limits of analogy as mediate and imperfect. Fourth, Lonergan's notion of consciousness as self-awareness reflects both the operational structure of the human mind and human development, and further serves as the analogy for understanding the processions and relations between the dynamically conscious, inherently relational, persons of the Trinity. Lonergan's hypothesis regarding the four trinitarian relations coupled with his definition of the missions opens wide the possibility of understanding a relationship with God that considers both God-for-us and us-for-God.

The later Lonergan's trinitarian thought is marked by a new psychological analogy for understanding the "fundamental Trinitarian problem" of the consubstantial triunity of persons drawn from an analysis of human development from above downward. It begins with love and proceeds to knowledge through the grasp and affirmation of transcendent value. Methodologically, the aim and function of Lonergan's systematic understanding of the Trinity corresponds with his earlier thought, although his breakthrough regarding functional specialties and theological method in *Method in Theology* provides a more detailed and lucid account of systematic theological method than his earlier work.

Lonergan's insistence on the priority and importance of human development from above downward is a substantial and significant advance in his thought, especially as it relates to an analogy for understanding the Trinity. While the earlier and later psychological analogies differ, they are neither incompatible nor contradictory. In fact, they are complementary in that the earlier natural-cognitional analogy is drawn from an analogy of human development from below upward correlated to emanations in the act of understanding from knowledge to love. The supernatural-affective psychological

analogy is drawn from the rarer but perhaps more important analysis of human understanding from above downward that corresponds to the grasp and affirmation of transcendent value of a subject in love. Lonergan provides a rationale from human experience for the development from above downward, evident when a person finds himself or herself in love and then moves on to discover the source of this love, consciously adverting and reflecting upon it after the fact of being in love.

The reversal of knowledge and love in the supernatural psychological analogy to love followed by knowledge has implications for understanding the divine missions in three areas pertinent to the present study. They are, firstly, the ontological ordering of the missions; secondly, the scope of the first and foundational gift of God's love to humanity; and lastly, the potential for human participation in the divine life. The distinction between the *quoad se* of trinitarian processions and relations (*ad intra*) and the *quoad nos* of the missions revealed, experienced and effective in human history (*ad extra*) like the insight of a procession according to the mode of a *processio operati* quells any tendency to anthropomorphise the Trinity and subject God to time and causality. Thus, *quoad se*, the relations are simultaneous and eternal in the emanation of Word and Love (in either psychological analogy) and should be understood as eternal conscious dynamism even as the historical unfolding of the missions necessitates a chronological ordering. In the earlier analogy the mission of the Son is followed by that of the Spirit; the later Lonergan asserts the mission of the Spirit as that first and foundational gift followed by the objectification of that gift in the mission of the Son. Thus, the cognitive experience of the missions of the Trinity *quoad nos* unfolds historically. Nevertheless, the later Lonergan affirms his earlier belief that the missions of the Spirit and the Son have the

same ultimate end: the “heavenly city for the glory of the Father.” However, in the later analogy, instead of first sending the Son for humanity’s reconciliation with God the Father and consequently the Spirit to each one who is reconciled, the Spirit is sent because the Father loves humanity and the Son as the avowal of that love that reconciles.⁴³⁰

The potential of Lonergan’s trinitarian thought for a systematic theological understanding of religious diversity is far reaching. His central insight gleaned from Romans 5:5 that the first and foundational gift of God to humanity is the gift of God’s love, the Holy Spirit, coupled with his development of the Augustinian-Thomist psychological analogy expand the parameters which currently circumscribe discussions and debates around religious diversity. Christian systematic theological discussions on the topic of religious plurality and the Trinity should have the trinitarian doctrine of God as the starting point and hermeneutical lens for reflection upon the manifold ways in which God is present and active in the world. The perennial issues of salvation and revelation would not be discussed in isolation from their properly trinitarian context. Moreover, debates regarding the relationship between the Jesus Christ event and the mediation of salvation and grace would find a suitable complement in pneumatological considerations. Lonergan’s definition of the divine missions and the four-point hypothesis is perhaps the most lucid technical expression of what Rahner’s *grundaxiom* that the immanent Trinity is the economic Trinity and vice versa means. Lonergan’s definition of a mission, the four-point hypothesis and theory of history, furthered recently

⁴³⁰ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 491: “Also, though each mission has the same ultimate end, which is the heavenly city for the glory of the father, the first mission is that of the Son for the reconciliation of all human persons to God the Father, and the *consequent* mission of the Spirit is to each one of the just, who have been reconciled.”

in the work of Doran, offers a heuristic toward understanding how God, humanity and history intersect. It explores not only what God-for-us means but equally how the human response means us-for God.

The subsequent chapter shall explore Lonergan's understanding of the simultaneous presence of multiple religious traditions in the context of his later trinitarian thought. Since Lonergan did not delve into the topic of religious diversity in great detail, a second section shall review some of the sources that informed Lonergan's point of view and that give direction to any future developments.

CHAPTER FOUR: RELIGIONS

Knowing the triune God is inseparable from participating in a particular community and its practices—a participation which is the work of God's Holy Spirit.⁴³¹
- James J. Buckley and David S. Yeago

In examining Bernard Lonergan's contributions toward a Christian systematic theological understanding of religious diversity, the question of what Lonergan might mean by religion arises. The broad term "religion" in Lonergan's work can be differentiated into several distinct categories: philosophy of religion, model of religion and theology (of religion). The category philosophy of religion is constituted by two distinct sub-categories; the first, the question or philosophy of God and the second, religious studies or the history of religions. The later Lonergan writes:

Philosophy of religion reveals how basic thinking relates itself to the various branches of religious studies. Thereby it offers theology an analogous model of the way it can relate itself to religious studies, how it can profit from them, and how it can teach its own students what they will need to understand...⁴³²

The "basic thinking" is the question or philosophy of God while the philosophy of religion is "geared more toward the methodological questions of analysing the religious phenomenon."⁴³³ The model of religion Lonergan offers is a descriptive and explanatory

⁴³¹ James J. Buckley and David S. Yeago, "Introduction," in *Knowing the Triune God: The Work of the Spirit in the Practices of the Church*, ed. James J. Buckley and David S. Yeago (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001) 1.

⁴³² Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Philosophy and Theology," in *A Second Collection* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996) 204.

⁴³³ Jim Kanaris, *Bernard Lonergan's Philosophy of Religion* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002) 118.

construct or ideal type that takes into account the various data, differentiations and gleanings from the philosophy of religion.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first explores Lonergan's philosophy of religion and its relationship to theology. Here the concerns are principally methodological and heuristic. The second section is an account of Lonergan's model of religion. Since Lonergan did not explicitly endeavour to answer the question "what is religion?" this section will be expository of his later writings on the topic. The last section examines the sources Lonergan employed in his scant treatment of the reality of religious diversity. Such an examination facilitates not only an understanding of Lonergan's model of religion but perhaps more importantly suggests further directions for the development of Lonergan's thought toward a Christian understanding of religious diversity.

I/Philosophy of Religion: the Question of God, Religious Studies (and Theology)

Lonergan has much to contribute to contemporary understandings of religion, especially in the postmodern context within which encounters of religions take place. According to Elizabeth Morelli, Lonergan's philosophy of religion is made possible through the shift to empirical method and a starting point that is no longer metaphysical but the data of intentionality and consciousness, an approach that is no longer rigorously logical but dynamically methodological.⁴³⁴ For Lonergan concepts do not emerge from a closed, totalizing and all-encompassing system that tries to systematize even that which

⁴³⁴ Elizabeth A. Morelli, "Post-Hegelian Elements in Lonergan's Philosophy of Religion," *Method: Journal Lonergan Studies* 12 (1994) 216.

falls outside of it in the movement from one incomplete partialization to the next.

Method is open to all relevant data and takes into account existential acts. Unlike an approach of dialectical necessity⁴³⁵ Lonergan's method demands that "new" data gleaned from all sources, even extra-Christian ones and inter-faith encounters, be attended to and appropriated in some way, even if this means a period of silent listening in the struggle to understand.

Jim Kanaris makes a similar observation in identifying Lonergan's method as the "foundational" element in his philosophy of religion.⁴³⁶ It is foundational not only in regard to cognitional theory but more importantly in regard to "that to which cognitional theory invites us: discovery for oneself how one's experience, understanding, judging, and deciding is constituted. Consequent to that is the equally long and arduous task of bringing that self-understanding to expression."⁴³⁷ Kanaris posits that the two dominant and often opposed streams in the philosophy of religion today, the Anglo-analytic and the Continental (postmodern), can be well served by Lonergan who "maintains both approaches in his system of thinking."⁴³⁸ Philosophers of the Anglo-analytic tradition concerned with logical proofs for God's existence and the problem of evil and eschewing calling upon "experience" to support justifications for truth or falsehood can benefit from Lonergan's epistemological and cognitional theoretical analysis, the logical consistency and coherence of his thought, and his focus on God as the religious "object."⁴³⁹ The Continental thinkers may appreciate the "structural functionality of Lonergan's

⁴³⁵ Morelli, "Post-Hegelian Elements" 221.

⁴³⁶ Jim Kanaris, "Lonergan and Contemporary Philosophy of Religion" in *Explorations in Contemporary Continental Philosophy of Religion*, ed. Deane-Peter Baker and Patrick Maxwell (Amsterdam: Rodpoli, 2003) 65- 80. Foundationalism for Kanaris means that knowledge requires some theoretical grounds for its justification.

⁴³⁷ Kanaris, "Lonergan and Contemporary Philosophy of Religion" 68.

⁴³⁸ Kanaris, "Lonergan and Contemporary Philosophy of Religion" 70.

⁴³⁹ Kanaris, "Lonergan and Contemporary Philosophy of Religion" 66, 69.

philosophy,” his emphases on the existential and praxiological, his press toward the ethical, responsiveness to the Other, and focus on religion and the human subject.⁴⁴⁰

Kanaris claims that Lonergan’s thought can serve as a heuristic to identify the differences and complementarities of philosophical differentiations.

Kanaris argues that Lonergan’s philosophy of religion is constituted in his philosophy of God and philosophy of religious studies. According to John Dadosky, in *Insight* Lonergan presupposes a fundamental orientation that enables some intimation of the unplumbed depths of being. This orientation, coupled with an unrestricted desire to know, results in the logical possibility of God as an unrestricted act of understanding that “grasps everything about everything.”⁴⁴¹ While Lonergan does not appeal to anything outside of the subject that could also produce an intimation of the unplumbed depths until a later chapter of *Insight*, it is not really until *Method in Theology* that he takes into account the “fuller subject’s religious horizon by addressing: the nature and significance of religious experience, the mediation of religious experience through traditions and symbolism, the transformative effects of such religious experience, and the subject’s affirmative response to such transformations.”⁴⁴² Hence, both *Insight* and *Method* assert that the question of God arises from conscious intentionality; but it is not until *Method in Theology* that the “gift of God’s love” is clearly affirmed as the fulfillment of conscious intentionality. Furthermore, Lonergan postulates that not only is religious expression the

⁴⁴⁰ Kanaris, “Lonergan and Contemporary Philosophy of Religion” 69.

⁴⁴¹ John D. Dadosky, *The Structure of Religious Knowing: Encountering the Sacred in Eliade and Lonergan*. (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2004) 28-29.

⁴⁴² Dadosky, *The Structure of Religious Knowing* 29.

objectification of the gift of God's love, but also a privileged locus that has specific meaning as the outer word of God.⁴⁴³

Based on Lonergan's cognitional analysis, three categories of the question of God arise: attempts to understand that imply intelligibility of the universe; statements/judgments of fact dependent upon a grasp of the fulfillment of the conditions of making such statements; and deliberations of value and that which gives final meaning to value.⁴⁴⁴ According to Denise L. Carmody, God is neither the name nor the term of the question but its ground and source⁴⁴⁵ in the same way that the gift of God's love is not the term of religious self-transcendence but the ground which transforms the subject and makes self-transcendence possible. At the same time, partial acts of understanding and instances of making sense and meaning reflect the possibility of something else that is both complete and unrestricted. What is known through experience, understanding and judgment is an increment in our knowledge of being, which is the "unrestricted objective of our knowing, the concrete universe, the totality of all that is."⁴⁴⁶ The range of possibilities of knowing, the unrestricted desire to know coupled with its conditional and provisional nature, discloses the possibility that there might exist unconditioned being. Likewise, a grasp of the virtually unconditioned,⁴⁴⁷ the moment when evidence for making a judgment is sufficient and no further questions either arise or need be answered

⁴⁴³ Dadosky, *The Structure of Religious Knowing* 31. Dadosky is referring to Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1972) 119.

⁴⁴⁴ Vernon Gregson, *Lonergan, Spirituality, and the Meeting of Religions* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, inc., 1985) 47 or as Denise Carmody puts it questions of God that emerge from inquiry about fruitful inquiry, reflection upon reflection, and deliberation upon the value of deliberation. See "The Desire for Transcendence: Religious Conversion," in *The Desires of the Human Heart*, ed. Vernon Gregson (New York: Paulist Press, 1988) 57.

⁴⁴⁵ Carmody, "The Desire for Transcendence: Religious Conversion" 58.

⁴⁴⁶ Dadosky, *The Structure of Religious Knowing* 108.

⁴⁴⁷ See "Realism", Lonergan Website Glossary, http://www.lonergan.on.ca/glossary/glossary_e-l.htm, accessed September 1, 2005.

in order to make the judgment, reveals the possibility of a formally unconditioned as the condition for existence of the virtually unconditioned.⁴⁴⁸

The other dimension of Lonergan's philosophy of religion is his philosophy of religious studies. A philosophy of religious studies is the philosophical-methodological concern regarding the methods by which religious experience and its contents are studied. Religious studies describes religious symbols and their cross cultural equivalencies, it attempts to understand the empirical context of data in asking questions for intelligence and then makes interpretive judgments.⁴⁴⁹ Scholars of religious studies/historians of religion are concerned with the historical, cultural and sociological issues related to a particular religion and with critically accounting for their own methodological processes.⁴⁵⁰ According to Lonergan:

Religious studies takes as its field all religions. Its main thrust is the history of religions, that is, the research that assembles and catalogues the relevant data, the interpretation that grasps their morphology, the history that locates them in place and time, studies their genesis, development, distribution, interaction.⁴⁵¹

The field of religious studies centers on the first four of Lonergan's eight functional specialties: research, interpretation, history and dialectic but does not proceed to the last four in the absence of religious commitment.

In contrast to a philosophy of religious studies is theology which mediates between religion and the role of that religion in its cultural matrix.⁴⁵² Theology is concerned not only with questions for intelligence but also with questions of existence

⁴⁴⁸ Dadosky, *The Structure of Religious Knowing* 109- 110.

⁴⁴⁹ Dadosky, *The Structure of Religious Knowing* 34- 37.

⁴⁵⁰ Denise Lardner Carmody and John Tully Carmody. "Lonergan and the Comparative Study of Religion," *Religious Studies and Theology, Commemorative Issue: Bernard Lonergan, sj.* 5/2 (May 1985) 36.

⁴⁵¹ Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "The Ongoing Genesis of Methods" in *A Third Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe, S.J. (New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1985) 162.

⁴⁵² Bernard J.F. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1972) xi.

and value.⁴⁵³ It proceeds from a faith commitment and is concerned not only with the first four functional specialties but also the remaining four: foundations, doctrines, systematics and communications. Carmody and Carmody name the scholar of religious studies and the theologian the “listening historian” and the “confessing theologian” respectively.⁴⁵⁴ Scholars of religion are concerned with descriptive accounts of symbols and symbolic systems while theologians attempt to explain what the symbols mean and what they imply.⁴⁵⁵ The descriptive accounts often point to the manner of apprehension of value and meaning through their religious expressions. Theology attempts to get behind the religious expressions “to discern whether there is any real fire behind the smoke of symbols employed in this or that religion. Religious studies finally envisage the totality of religions down the ages and over the expanse of the globe.”⁴⁵⁶ The relationship between religious studies and theology is an important one that must be held in complementary tension and neither separated nor conflated:

Theology and religious studies need each other. Without theology religious studies may indeed discern when and where different religious symbols are equivalent; but they are borrowing techniques of theologians if they attempt to say what the equivalent symbols literally mean and what they literally imply. Conversely, without religious studies theologians are unacquainted with the religions of mankind; they may as theologians have a good grasp of the history of their own religion; but they are borrowing the techniques of the historian of religions, when they attempt to compare and relate other religions with their own.⁴⁵⁷

Theologians rely on the insights of scholars of religions to compare and relate their own traditions with others and borrow their scholarly methodologies. Likewise, scholars of religious studies/historians of religion rely on explanations of theologians in order to

⁴⁵³ Dadosky, *The Structure of Religious Knowing* 36.

⁴⁵⁴ Carmody and Carmody, “Lonergan and the Comparative Study of Religion” 30.

⁴⁵⁵ Dadosky, *The Structure of Religious Knowing* 34.

⁴⁵⁶ Lonergan, “Ongoing Genesis of Methods” 161.

⁴⁵⁷ Lonergan, “Ongoing Genesis of Methods” 164.

ascertain symbolic meaning and compare religious traditions through their descriptive accounts.

Lonergan's hermeneutical framework takes into account the wide variety of possible interpretations corresponding to varied operations, patterns of experience and differentiations of consciousness. In the interpretation of a text (past or present), the interpreter offers a secondary articulation of a primary expression (the text/symbol/image under consideration). For example, the interpreter must consider the author, the author's culture and the audience being addressed by the author. Moreover, the subsequent evaluation of the interpreter depends upon the interpreter's own self- appropriation of subjective operations and openness to insight and, therefore, subjective authenticity.⁴⁵⁸ An awareness of subjective positionality coupled with receptivity to insight gleaned from the text is necessary if an interpreter is not merely to one-sidedly construct the other but permit otherness to speak out of the surplus meaning that an open textual interpretation may invite.

When genuinely different and conflicting truth claims arise in the study of religions and comparative theologies the question of whether these claims can be truly understood, evaluated and adjudicated becomes problematic if one is to apply Lonergan's own thought to the issue. Timothy Stinnett argues that according to Lonergan religious conversion is the condition of possibility for discerning truth from falsity with regard to the human condition and transcendent being and is determined by the data and intelligence of a particular religion. Thus, it would be impossible for someone from one religious tradition to make a reasonable judgment upon an aspect of a different religion

⁴⁵⁸ Dadosky, *The Structure of Religious Knowing* 56. See also, Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 160 and Sean McEventue and Ben Meyer, "Introduction" to *Lonergan's Hermeneutics* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1989).

without sharing a similar religious experience, horizon and context out of which such judgments arise.⁴⁵⁹ For example, a Muslim would have to attain the religious horizon of a Buddhist to evaluate the Buddhist understanding of the human condition and make a reasonable theological judgment.⁴⁶⁰ Yet one is a Buddhist or a Muslim precisely because of one's location within the particular horizon of that particular tradition. Carmody and Carmody argue that without judgment there can be no true grasp of meaning.⁴⁶¹ Stinnett further claims that every tradition holds their position to be true and others to be counter-positions in the absence of genuine conversion.⁴⁶² What Stinnett seems to do is essentialize and oppose the various horizons of committed religious people. The problematic may be better framed as David Burrell does, not as opposing horizons out of which absolute truth statements arise but as religious "[C]onvictions that there is a sense to it all; not that *we* can make sense of it all."⁴⁶³ It is not the veracity or falsity of beliefs that are evaluated but the cross-cultural structural elements such as those found in an analysis of human intentionality, the unfolding of historical sequences (progress and decline), and how values and meanings are carried forth in various expressions.

Burrell proposes that an historical approach to understanding what was going forward in the past in a religious tradition reflects the possibility of entering into the horizon of another time and place. This is evidenced when scholars study a religious figure of the past from his/her own religious tradition. In a shared struggle to understand,

⁴⁵⁹ Timothy R. Stinnett, "Lonergan's 'Critical Realism' and Religious Pluralism," *Thomist* 56 (1992) 107, 110.

⁴⁶⁰ Frederick E. Crowe, S.J., "Son of God, Holy Spirit, and World Religions" in *Appropriating the Lonergan Idea*, ed. Michael Vertin (Washington D.C. The Catholic University of America Press, 1989) 324-325 refers to a similar critique made by Brian Hebblethwaite in *The Problems of Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980): "Lonergan's insistence on the role of religious conversion ... renders theological judgments undiscussable across the borders of the different world religions." 19.

⁴⁶¹ Carmody and Carmody, "Lonergan and the Comparative Study of Religion" 30.

⁴⁶² Stinnett, "Lonergan's 'Critical Realism' and Religious Pluralism" 108.

⁴⁶³ David B. Burrell, *Faith and Freedom* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004) 245.

the interpreter tries to understand, appropriate and critically assess the questions with which the historical figure grappled and to which he or she attempted to respond.⁴⁶⁴ In another work, *Faith and Freedom*, Burrell expands his idea of appropriating the past of one's own tradition through the thought of an historical figure in examining the thought of historical figures from the three Abrahamic religions.⁴⁶⁵ Hence, one can stand within a particular faith tradition, at a given time in history, and at the same time understand what was going forward at another time and place at descriptive and explanatory levels. The descriptive dimension narrates the story of what was going forward in the past. The explanatory is necessary in order to discern and evaluate the meaning and relations in historical stages and sequences and correlate them to contemporary issues.

A second of Stinnett's critical reflections is that if knowledge of God is made known by God's love flooding the human heart then "human reason cannot attain knowledge of it solely by the resources of experience, understanding, and judgment."⁴⁶⁶ In that case, judgment is exercised without reasonableness thus exposing circularity in Lonergan's analysis of knowing and its application to a philosophy of God. Stinnett clearly fails to take the later Lonergan's analysis of human development from above downward into account: knowledge of God is unlike any other kind of knowledge and religious judgments of value rest on the apprehension of value. In the downward movement 'reasonableness' relates to the affective-existential dynamic before the concomitant cognitive-epistemological movement from below upward. All religious believers love an "unknown" God.

⁴⁶⁴ David B. Burrell, "Lonergan and Philosophy of Religion," *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 4/1 (1986) 3.

⁴⁶⁵ Burrell, *Faith and Freedom*.

⁴⁶⁶ Burrell, *Faith and Freedom* 108-109.

There is no doubt that there is difficulty in making judgments of fact, let alone of value, upon one's understanding of another's symbolic system, religious meaning and concept of God. In the postmodern era two false solutions to this difficulty emerge: firstly, to refuse dialogue and therefore relationship with otherness; and secondly, to withhold judgment in the course of dialogical encounters. In today's world the former hardly seems realistic: we live in societies of difference and diversity and to live we must exist in social relationships. We do not exist on parallel paths that never intersect. So can judgment be withheld in the name of authenticity or impartiality or respect for otherness? Kanaris acknowledges the complicatedness of making cross- religious, cross-cultural judgments but identifies the refusal to make them as a fundamental problem of some Continental philosophies of religion. He writes:

What system provides the impartial viewpoint from which to judge if and when the true judgments of one differentiation are smothering those of another? ...none can, at least not without the agents of such a system demanding that the concerns of those functioning according to the dictates of one pattern and differentiation shift to their own.⁴⁶⁷

Lonergan's philosophy of religion demands that data gleaned in the phenomenological study and encounter of religions be taken into account; subsequently, rendering judgments of fact and value reflect an attempt to understand the symbolic systems and religious commitment of religious others. He states

...the more that the field of religious studies moves from the style of natural science to that of profounder historical study, the more it endeavours to understand the element of total religious commitment that characterizes religion, the more it is concerned to promote the cooperation of religions...⁴⁶⁸

⁴⁶⁷ Kanaris, "Lonergan and Contemporary Philosophy of Religion" 77.

⁴⁶⁸ Lonergan, "Ongoing Genesis of Methods" 163.

Philosophy of religion and theology share the struggle to understand religious commitment in order to know better how to constitute the world mediated by religious value and meaning.

II/ Lonergan's Model of Religion

In contrast to Lonergan's philosophy of religion, its differentiation into a philosophy of God and of religious studies and their relationship to theology, is his model of religion. Unlike the "philosophy of" as a discipline that determines basic relations, basic correlations and basic orientations⁴⁶⁹ Lonergan defines models as an ideal-type:

For models purport to be, not descriptions of reality, not hypotheses about reality, But simply interlocking sets of terms and relations. Such sets, in fact, turn out to be useful in guiding investigations, in framing hypotheses, and in writing descriptions... Again, when one possesses models, the task of framing an hypothesis is reduced to the simpler matter of tailoring a model to suit a given object or area. Finally, the utility of the model may arise when it comes to describing a known reality. For known realities can be exceedingly complicated, and an adequate language to describe them hard to come by. So the formulation of models and their general acceptance as models can facilitate enormously both description and communication.⁴⁷⁰

Lonergan offers rich interlocking sets of terms and relations significant for a theological understanding of religions centering on religious experience and a systematic distinction between inner and outer dimensions of religion. He employs descriptive language from the Christian tradition to "graft his own explanatory model" of religion.⁴⁷¹

⁴⁶⁹ Lonergan "Openness and Religious Experience" in *Collection*, vol. 4 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993)185.

⁴⁷⁰ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 284-285.

⁴⁷¹ Kanaris, *Bernard Lonergan's Philosophy of Religion* 109.

God's Love: Gift and Openness

Lonergan's trinitarian thought proposes a pneumatology in which the Spirit is God's love given as the first and foundational divine gift to all humanity. All subsequent divine initiatives in history, including the chronologically ensuing mission of the Son in the Incarnation, take place within the context of the one divine plan revealed in the economy of salvation that begins with and is in continuity with this first and foundational gift. Lonergan's analysis of human development from above downward postulates human openness and response to the gift of God's love revealed in particular differentiations such as the love of family, the love of neighbour and the love of God. These are imitations and participations in the divine life through the Holy Spirit. Lonergan's definition of the divine missions as the processions linked to created, contingent external terms requires both the active and passive spirations to be so joined. According to the four-point hypothesis⁴⁷² sanctifying grace is a created participation in active spiration and the habit of charity a created participation in passive spiration. The gift of God's love floods our hearts and results in our being beings-in-love. As Robert Doran writes in his development of the four-point hypothesis:

I wish to suggest a movement from the gift of God's love to a knowledge and orientation (let us call it a horizon) born of that love, and a movement from the gift and the horizon together to acts of loving that coalesce into a habit of charity. In traditional terms, the gift of God's love is sanctifying grace, the horizon born of that love consists of faith and hope, and the disposition that proceeds from the gift and the horizon together constitutes charity. The gift of God's love and the horizon born of it are the created graced analogue of active spiration, and so of Father and Son together, and the habit of charity that proceeds from them is the created graced analogue of passive spiration, and so of the Holy Spirit.⁴⁷³

⁴⁷² Bernard J.F. Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics*, vol. 12 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert M. Doran and H. Daniel Monsour (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007) 471, 473.

⁴⁷³ Robert M. Doran, S.J., "Addressing the Four-Point Hypothesis," *Theological Studies* 68 (2007) 678-679. This marks a development in Doran's thought and enunciation of the four point hypothesis into the

Being in love in an unrestricted manner is a created participation in the active spiration that is the Father and the Son in God. It is sanctifying grace. It flows from divine knowledge and love and not from human love. The gift of God's love and the horizon born of it that together constitute sanctifying grace ground the acts of loving that cumulatively coalesce into an ever more firmly rooted habit of charity. Therefore, sanctifying grace is the created graced analogue of the active spiration of the Father and Son while the habit of charity is the graced created analogue for the passive spiration that is the Holy Spirit.

The operative grace that is "the replacement of the heart of stone by a heart of flesh" is *operative in its giving* while the cooperative grace is the "heart of flesh becoming effective in good works through human freedom."⁴⁷⁴ Neither gift nor apprehension and response is conditioned or circumscribed by any particular culture or religion thus illustrating the universality of both the gift and the natural human capacity to receive and respond to it. This reality is evidenced in the myriad of responses found in the history of the world's religion. The ability to receive and respond to the gift of God's love illustrates the open-ended dynamism of human consciousness to grasp divine value and meaning.

Lonergan maintains a threefold differentiation of openness: as fact that is the pure desire to know; as achievement as "the self in its self-appropriation and self-realization";

categories of interiority. Previously he claimed "Being in love in an unqualified way is, of course, a created participation in the passive spiration that in God is the Holy Spirit. It is the habit of charity. In us it flows, not from our knowledge, but proximately from the entitative habit of sanctifying grace, and remotely from the active spiration in God that is the Father and Word as one principle of the Holy Spirit." *What Is Systematic Theology?* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005) 106. More recently, following an article by Jacobs-Vandeguer, Doran maintains that what Lonergan calls the dynamic state of being in love corresponds to "sanctifying grace."

⁴⁷⁴ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 241; see Doran, "The Starting Point Systematic Theology," *Theological Studies* 67 (2006) 763.

and as gift as “the self entering into personal relationship with God.”⁴⁷⁵ Openness in the third sense is an “effect of divine grace,” it is God’s gift that renders possible entering into relationship with God. This gift transforms subjective horizons as the healing vector in human history that could potentially direct it.⁴⁷⁶ In the movement of human development from below upward enlargements of horizon are certainly possible and natural; however, in the dynamic movement from above downward grace effects an openness beyond healing in history oriented toward its term in the light of glory. Thus, the gift of God’s grace is directed to a created participation in the relation of filiation.

Lonergan writes:

But there is also an ultimate enlargement, beyond the resources of every finite consciousness, where there enters into clear view God as unknown, when the subject knows God face to face, knows as he is known. This ultimate enlargement alone approximates to the possibility of openness defined by the pure desire; as well, it is an openness as a gift, as an effect of grace and, indeed, of grace not as merely *sanans* but as *elevans*, as *lumen gloriae*.⁴⁷⁷

The gift of God’s love that floods the human heart and makes the apprehension and judgment of value from above downward possible is the “first principle” that “sets up a new horizon within which the love of God transvalues our values and the eyes of love transform our knowledge.”⁴⁷⁸ God’s transvaluation of human knowledge and values begins with the universal mission of the Holy Spirit and is publicly declared in the Incarnation. These missions give direction to a history that awaits fulfilment in the final consummation of God’s love at the beatific vision.

⁴⁷⁵ Lonergan, “Openness and Religious Experience” 186-187.

⁴⁷⁶ Lonergan, “Openness and Religious Experience” 186.

⁴⁷⁷ Lonergan, “Openness and Religious Experience” 187.

⁴⁷⁸ Bernard J.F. Lonergan, “Response of the Jesuit,” in *A Second Collection, papers by J.F. Lonergan, S.J.*, ed. William F.J. Ryan S.J. and Bernard Tyrrell, S.J. (Toronto University of Toronto Press, 1974, 1996) 172.

Lonergan's trinitarian pneumatology is further elucidated in his technical exploration of the human dimension of the trinitarian character. Lonergan has this to say about the gift of God's love and its reception and response in human interiority and living:

And on the highest level of grace, there is a heightening or elevating transformation of the rational level's antecedent spontaneity, so that the truth through which God rules man's autonomy is the truth God reveals beyond reason's reach, and the good which is motive is the divine goodness that is motive of infused charity. Finally, these three levels are realized in one subject; as the higher perfects the lower, so the lower disposes to the higher; and it is in this disposition of natural spontaneity to reinforce reason, of reason to reinforce grace- for all three come from and return to God...⁴⁷⁹

The gift of God's love does not destroy the dynamism of conscious intentionality but transforms it in cooperation with it. Thus, "the higher perfects the lower" levels of experience, understanding and judgment while these three levels are similarly disposed to being perfected by the higher level: grace and reason mutually reinforce one another. Each subsequent level sublates the lower and the entire dynamic process is oriented by and toward the gift of God's love given in the Holy Spirit, declared in the Incarnation of the Word and to be consummated in the beatific vision.

The psychological analogy for understanding the Trinity, discerned in the creature through an analysis of human development from above downward begins with the experience of the gift of God's love. Thus ensues the dynamic state of being in love.

Lonergan says:

The psychological analogy, then, has its starting point in that higher synthesis of the intellectual, rational, and moral consciousness that is the dynamic state of being in love. Such love manifests itself in its judgments of value. And judgments are carried out in decisions that are acts of loving. Such is the analogy found in the creature.⁴⁸⁰

⁴⁷⁹ Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Finality, Love, Marriage" in *Collection*, vol. 4 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993) 30.

The analogy is not circumscribed by any single religious tradition or community but hinges upon the gratuitousness of God's self-giving and the open-ended dynamism of human consciousness and intentionality to receive love as its "proper fulfilment."⁴⁸¹ Hence, Lonergan states, "every religion is involved in value judgments."⁴⁸²

According to Lonergan, grace works powerfully as a vector in history, inclusive of and not limited to the Judeo-Christian historical trajectory. Though the terminology is markedly Western, Christian and theological, it is possible that Lonergan's trinitarian-pneumatology could be transposed and translated across cultures and religions toward mutual understandings regarding the divine activity in history. For example, the technical Christian theological term "grace" has already been transposed by Lonergan into the "gift of God's love." By way of the supernatural-affective psychological analogy, Lonergan asserts the priority of love over knowledge and relates it to the universality of the gift of God's loving grace:

It may be objected that *nihil amatum nisi praecognitum*. But while that is true of other human love, it does not seem to be true of the love with which God floods our inmost hearts through the Holy Spirit given to us. That grace is the finding that grounds our seeking God through natural reason and through positive religion. That grace is the touchstone by which we judge whether it is really God that natural reason or positive religion preaches. That grace would be the grace sufficient for salvation that God offers all men, that underpins what is good in all the religions of mankind, that explains how those that never heard the gospel can be saved. That grace is what enables the simple faithful to pray to their heavenly Father in secret even though their religious apprehensions are faulty. That grace is what replaces doctrine as the *unum necessarium* in religions generally. That grace indicates the theological justification of Catholic dialogue with Christians, with non-Christians, and even with atheists, who may love God in their hearts without

⁴⁸⁰ Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Christology Today, Methodological Reflections" in *A Third Collection* ed. Frederick E. Crowe, S.J. (Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1985) 93.

⁴⁸¹ Lonergan, "Response of a Jesuit" 171.

⁴⁸² Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon," *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 16/2 (1998) 132.

knowing him with their heads.⁴⁸³

As suggested by the later Lonergan's ordering of the divine missions, the gift of God's love, the Holy Spirit given as God's first and foundational gift of self to all humanity, is universal in scope. Further, the love revealed in humankind's participation in and imitation of this gift—in a dynamically transformed horizon and in acts of loving—can be found throughout the religious traditions of humankind, and beyond religion in human history, in intersubjective situations throughout various cultures. This is the “theological justification” for the dialogue of Christian Catholics with religious Others.

The Sufficiency of Grace

Lonergan is clear in his assertion that the gift of God's love is not only given to Christians. Moreover, receiving and responding to God's love is also universal in scope. He writes: “I would not have you think that being in love with God is to be found only among Christians. God gives all men sufficient grace for salvation. Nor is his grace without fruit...”⁴⁸⁴ Lonergan asserts both operative grace (the dynamic state of being in love) and cooperative grace (being in love bearing fruit in action) outside of the historical confines of the Christian tradition. Love is assigned a central place in Lonergan's theology of grace and in his soteriology.⁴⁸⁵ Love and grace, operative or co-operative, are terms that denote and describe facets of the single reality of the gift of God's self-giving in the mission of the Holy Spirit:

⁴⁸³ Bernard J.F. Lonergan, “Doctrinal Pluralism” in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1965- 1980*, vol. 17 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert C. Croken and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004) 83.

⁴⁸⁴ Bernard J.F. Lonergan, “Theology and Man's Future” in *A Second Collection*, ed. William F.J. Ryan S.J. and Bernard J. Tyrrell, S.J. (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1996) 146.

⁴⁸⁵ Frederick E. Crowe, S.J., *Christ and History* (Ottawa: Novalis, 2005) 211- 212.

But it is difficult to suppose that grace would be sufficient if it fell short of the gift of loving God above all and loving one's neighbour as oneself. So I am inclined to interpret the religions of mankind, in their positive moment, as the fruit of the gift of the Spirit, though diversified by the many degrees of social and cultural development, and distorted by man's infidelity to the self-transcendence to which he aspires.⁴⁸⁶

While Lonergan asserts the singularity of the gift of God's love in the Holy Spirit he equally affirms that the fruits of this same gift are varied and diverse due negatively to sinfulness, the human propensity to ignore the transcendental precepts, and positively to socio-historical realities and cultural variances, which, in turn, are significant factors in religious diversity. The key question for Lonergan is not whether God's grace is given to all people but once given whether it "operates as the seed that falls on rocks or amidst thorns or by the wayside or on good ground to bring forth fruit thirty or sixty or a hundred fold."⁴⁸⁷

The later Lonergan's writings on other religions clearly reflect the orientations of the Second Vatican Council regarding non-Christian religions. The question of whether there is "salvation outside of the Church" is effectively closed by the Council's affirmative response and thus Lonergan does not focus on this question. The formulation of the teaching "outside the church, no salvation" had disastrous effects for the relationships between Catholic Christians, other Christians and non-Christians in the past and had fallen into abeyance by the mid-twentieth century as exemplified in the Leonard Feeney affair in Boston. Feeney contended that "no salvation outside of the Roman Catholic Church" was a defined dogma of faith that must be taken literally. In a 1949 letter of the Holy Office to the Archbishop of Boston that addressed Feeney's false

⁴⁸⁶ Lonergan, "Response of a Jesuit" 174.

⁴⁸⁷ Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Theology and Man's Future," in *A Second Collection*, ed. William F.J. Ryan S.J. and Bernard J. Tyrrell, S.J. (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1996) 139.

teaching, Church authorities affirmed that this statement could no longer be taken literally and that salvation was possible for anyone whose interior disposition oriented them toward a situation of grace.⁴⁸⁸ In fact, such a disposition is only due to the transformative gift of God's love.

The expression "outside the church, no salvation" totally disappears from the official literature of the Second Vatican Council which instead affirms that God offers the possibility of salvation to all through the paschal mystery. Bernard Sesboüé describes⁴⁸⁹ some of the orientations of Vatican II regarding salvation and non-Christians: the Church no longer sees herself in opposition to "others" whether other Christians, or other religions or even atheists and secularists. Secondly, the traditionally small and exclusive number of "the elect," often tempered by technical exceptions,⁴⁹⁰ is significantly enlarged after the Council. Furthermore, salvation is not treated individualistically but from a wide historical perspective with the manifold religious traditions of the world contextualized within this perspective. Lastly, non-Christians may be in some way ordered toward the Church and the Gospel, but are saved because they are part of humanity.

From a perspective in clear continuity with the teachings of Vatican II Lonergan offers the simple theological rationale that since God desires all people to be saved then

⁴⁸⁸ Francis A. Sullivan, S.J., *Salvation Outside the Church?* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1992) 136- 139. The letter distinguishes between the necessity of divine precept and means of belonging to the Catholic Church for salvation. Some means are intrinsically necessary (repentance, faith, etc.) and others are by positive divine decree that enter into obtaining the effect of the necessary means. Since the letter was written during the pontificate of Pius XII, it would seem to clarify the pope's position held in the encyclicals *Humani generis* and *Mystici corporis* to which Feeney appealed and which he criticized.

⁴⁸⁹ Bernard Sesboüé, *Hors de l'Église pas de salut* (Paris : Desclée de Brouwer, 2004) 241-244.

⁴⁹⁰ For example, the distinction between baptism *in voto* and *in re* to account for the salvation of those who were not baptized and therefore not members of the Church but whose salvation was assured, such as Moses or Abraham. Or else, the distinction between those who wilfully rejected the Gospel and those who were "invincibly ignorant" of it.

all are given “sufficient grace” to be saved.⁴⁹¹ The means is God’s gratuitous gift of self, the love that is the Holy Spirit, coupled with the dynamism of human interiority to receive and respond to this gift. This Trinitarian event begins with the mission of the Holy Spirit, and is met in human interiority and living: in deciding whether or not to return God’s love with love of God and neighbour. At a particular moment in history, the love of God is revealed publicly on the cross and in the paschal mystery. As stated in the Vatican II constitution *Gaudium et Spes* regarding salvation outside the Church:

All this holds true not only for Christians, but for all men of good will in whose hearts grace works in an unseen way. For, since Christ died for all men, and since the ultimate vocation of man is in fact one, and divine, we ought to believe that the Holy Spirit in a manner known only to God offers to every man the possibility of being associated with this paschal mystery.⁴⁹²

The Council clearly asserts the workings of grace outside of the Christian dispensation, in ways recognized and not. Further, salvation is a Trinitarian event inasmuch as it is associated with the paschal mystery: the Jesus Christ event (his birth, life and ministry, death and resurrection) has a universal significance; the Holy Spirit has a decisive part to play in the event; and the ultimate human destiny is objectified in the Jesus Christ event. For the sake of humanity the Holy Spirit is God’s love given that establishes relationships with God and one another; the Word sent is the declaration of God’s love that ratifies these relationships; and the ultimate, longed for destiny is the consummation of loving relationships in the beatific vision.

⁴⁹¹ Bernard J.F. Lonergan, “The Future of Christianity” in *A Second Collection*, ed. William F.J. Ryan S.J. and Bernard J. Tyrrell, S.J. (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1996) 155 and “Response of a Jesuit” 174.

⁴⁹² *Gaudium et Spes* 22.

Inner and Outer Dimensions

The gift of the Holy Spirit is given gratuitously by God; it does not depend on historical pre-conditions, cognitional apprehension or existential choosing. This is the transculturality of God's love breaking into history; it is given before it can be thematized and objectified. Lonergan distinguishes between the universal gift of the Holy Spirit and its various thematizations and objectifications in the religious traditions of the world, naming the former the infrastructural element of religion and the latter the suprastructural dimension.

The gift of God's love and the experience of it in consciousness fundamentally pertain to the infrastructure of religion.⁴⁹³ Lonergan is fond of repeating the classical Christian formulation of religious experience as "the gift of God's love flooding our hearts" (Roman 5:5). This experience is immediate and unarticulated in discursive reasoning and is the common element and origin of authentic religions.⁴⁹⁴ The source of this experience is God's love given. The infrastructure common to religions is the dynamic state of being-in-love in an unrestricted fashion, consciously but without an object.

Suprastructure, on the other hand, pertains to the objectification, thematization and formulation of religious experience, however imperfect and incomplete. Even the classical Christian description of the experience of God's love flooding our hearts is an example of suprastructure as religious experience thematized and objectified through

⁴⁹³ Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Prolegomena to the Study of the Emerging Religious Consciousness of Our Time" in *A Third Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe, S.J. (Mahwah: Paulist Press) 70.

⁴⁹⁴ Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Philosophy of God" in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1965- 1980*, vol. 17 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert C. Croken and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), questions and responses following the paper 178.

metaphor. The suprastructure of a religion reflects the dynamism of human consciousness to apprehend and discern what is valuable, to name what is meaningful in the experience, and to bring forth value and meaning in human living through decision. In terms of the later Lonergan's psychological analogy, to apprehend the love of God is met in an affirmation of a judgment of value and further in a commitment to live according to the meaning of that love in the concrete unrestricted loving of God and neighbour.

Suprastructure has to do with the important social, cultural and historical dimensions of religious traditions. Lonergan writes,

The Spirit is given to many, and the many form a community. The community endures over generations, spreads over different nations, adapts to cultural changes. It acquires a history of its origins, its development, its successes and failures, its happy strokes and its mistakes. Though God's grace is given to all, still the experience of resting in God ordinarily needs a religious tradition for it to be encouraged, fostered, interpreted, guided, developed.⁴⁹⁵

The suprastructure provides the context in which the gift of the Spirit is received, interpreted, fostered, developed, and adapted, sometimes with success and at other times less so. The suprastructure is necessary for the experience of being in love to move out of the world of immediate experience into the world mediated by meaning while at the same time drawing religious believers back into the fundamental and immediate experience of being in love.

Infrastructure and suprastructure mutually condition one another. The gift of God's love is not pre-conditioned by either history or culture but is freely and gratuitously given as God desires. However, the manner in which the gift is received, understood and formulated is conditioned by the socio-historical and cultural

⁴⁹⁵ Lonergan, "Theology and Man's Future" 146.

particularities in which it is received. Thus, while suprastructure does not determine the content of religious experience, it does affect the manner and fashion by which it is received, experienced, understood, interpreted, judged and lived. Religious experience affects suprastructure since its root adds something new and otherwise unattainable through human conscious intentionality that becomes the occasion for subsequent and ongoing reflection and thematization. Hence, Lonergan distinguishes between the “infrastructure of insights as discoveries or of feelings as felt” and the “suprastructure of insights as formulated in hypotheses or of feelings as integrated in conscious living.”⁴⁹⁶ Through infrastructure and suprastructure, religious traditions attempt to constitute a religious consciousness in which the suprastructural elements make possible an authentic interpretation, expression and development of its infrastructure.

The distinction between infrastructure and suprastructure in religions can serve as the background for Lonergan’s co-relative differentiations between the inner and outer words of faith and belief. The inner word of God’s love that occurs at the infrastructural level is immediate and personal but not solitary, private⁴⁹⁷ or unhistorical because “the dynamic state of being in love has the character of response.”⁴⁹⁸ God’s self-communication enters into history, community and religious expression through response. Lonergan states:

Then not only the inner word that is God’s gift of his love but also the outer word of the religious tradition comes from God. God’s gift of his love is matched by his command to love unrestrictedly, with all one’s heart and all one’s soul and all one’s mind and all one’s strength. The narrative of religious origins is the narrative of God’s encounter with his people. Religious effort towards authenticity through

⁴⁹⁶ Lonergan, “Prolegomena” 59.

⁴⁹⁷ Bernard J.F. Lonergan, “Faith and Beliefs,” in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1965- 1980*, vol. 17 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert C. Croken and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004) 47.

⁴⁹⁸ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 119.

prayer and penance and religious love of all men shown in good deeds become an apostolate, for ‘...you will recognize them by their fruits’ (Mt. 7, 20). Finally, the word of religious expression is not just the objectification of the gift of God’s love; in a privileged area it also is specific meaning, the word of God himself.⁴⁹⁹

The suprastructural dimension of a religious tradition is rooted in the inner experience of the gift of God’s love and is its attempted objectification. In the character of decisional response that mediates the immediate experience of the divine into the world mediated by meaning, the objectification is complemented and facilitated by elements of the outer word of God. Thus Lonergan writes:

Besides completing our personal self-transcendence in the secrecy of our hearts, God would also address his people as a people, announce to them his intentions, send to them his prophets, his Messiah, his apostles. In that case religious beliefs would be objectifications not only of internal experience but also of the externally uttered word of God.⁵⁰⁰

Thus, the outer word is not merely the human attempt at the objectification of the divine inner word; inner and outer words are both divine utterances, the former immediately in consciousness and the latter mediated through community and history.

There is a clear relation of infrastructure/inner word and the gift of God’s love given in the Holy Spirit with a similarly close association of suprastructure/outer word and the gift of God’s love declared in the Word. In the two sets of infrastructure/inner word/Holy Spirit and suprastructure/outer word/Incarnation is an intimate alliance founded upon the unity of purpose and complementarity of the two divine missions. Lonergan defines faith as “the knowledge born of religious love.”⁵⁰¹ God’s love flooding the human heart makes the apprehension of transcendent value possible that “consists in the fulfillment of our unrestricted thrust to self-transcendence, in our actuated orientation

⁴⁹⁹ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 119.

⁵⁰⁰ Lonergan, “Faith and Beliefs” 47.

⁵⁰¹ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 115.

towards the mystery of love and awe.”⁵⁰² Religious knowledge is not attained in the usual way of coming to know through a compound of experiencing, understanding, and judging but “through the discernment of value and the judgments of value of a person in love.”⁵⁰³ In the appropriation of religious values through the existential and decisional response to grace, all other values— vital, social, cultural, personal— are transformed as “expressions of God’s love in the world.”⁵⁰⁴ This is the movement of human development from above downward. The ensuing objectification of the question of God toward knowing the source of the religious experience is not first formulated as a philosophical question such as, “Is there a God?” but initially, “Will I love in return?” “Will I live out the gift of love?” followed by “With whom am I in love?”

Religious belief is the acceptance of the faith affirmed in judgments of value and objectified in judgments of fact proposed by a religious tradition. The gift of God’s love while intimate and personal is given in community and “the many can recognize in one another a common orientation in their living and feeling...From common communion with God, there springs a religious community.”⁵⁰⁵ A religious community expresses its faith in various ways, develops traditions over time and responds to God’s invitation to love. In Christian terms, God’s outer word is given in the command to love God and neighbour with one’s whole soul, mind and strength as exemplified in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Lonergan’s distinction between faith and belief is significant for an understanding of religious diversity and the encounter of religions:

...by distinguishing faith and belief we have secured a basis both for ecumenical encounter and for an encounter between all religions with a basis in religious

⁵⁰² Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 115.

⁵⁰³ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 115.

⁵⁰⁴ Kanaris, *Bernard Lonergan’s Philosophy of Religion* 110.

⁵⁰⁵ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 118.

experience. For in the measure that experience is genuine, it is orientated to the mystery of love and awe; it has the power of unrestricted love to reveal and uphold all that is truly good; it remains the bond that unites the religious community, that directs their common judgments, that purifies their beliefs. Beliefs do differ, but behind this difference there is a deeper unity. For beliefs result from judgments of value, and the judgments of value relevant for religious belief come from faith, the eye of religious love, an eye that can discern God's self-disclosures.⁵⁰⁶

The inner and outer dimensions of religious traditions are a common structural element though the expressions and formulations of religious beliefs differ. There is a shared common origin in religious experience which makes the recognition of God's self-disclosures in history possible. Differences in the objectification of religious experience expressed in religious beliefs are neither insignificant nor something to be overcome.⁵⁰⁷

The outer dimension also reveals God's entry into the world of human meaning through expressions of religious meaning and religious values variously carried into the world mediated by meaning through intersubjectivity, art, symbols, deeds, and word.⁵⁰⁸

The outer word, like its interior counterpart, has "a constitutive role to play" in religious traditions. As Crowe writes in reference to Lonergan's example of two people in love, "love that is not avowed 'has not reached the point of self-surrender and self-donation': this holds true for the love of man and woman and it holds true 'in its own way for the love of God and man.'" ⁵⁰⁹ Lonergan himself writes: "God's gift of his love has its proper counterpart in the revelation events in which God discloses to a particular

⁵⁰⁶ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 119.

⁵⁰⁷ M. Shawn Copeland, "Difference as a Category in Critical Theologies for the Liberation of Women" in *Feminist Theology in Different Contexts*, ed. Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza and M. Shawn Copeland (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1996) 143. According to Copeland, the "common sense" understanding of difference is often deviation, discord, incompatibility instead of variation, integrity, uniqueness and fullness.

⁵⁰⁸ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 112.

⁵⁰⁹ Frederick E. Crowe, *Theology of the Christian Word* (New York, NY, Ramsey NJ, Toronto: Paulist Press, 1978) 140; with quotes from Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 113.

people or to all mankind the completeness of his love for them.”⁵¹⁰ The outer word is God’s self-donation publicly avowed in community and history.

Universalist Faith

In the article “Faith and Beliefs” Lonergan writes:

By universalist faith, then, I would understand the transvaluation of values that results from God’s gift of his love. Just as the gift of that love, so too the consequent transvaluation of values is, in some sense, a constant. It does not presuppose any specific set of historical conditions. It can be bestowed on the members of any culture at any stage in its development. The values that are transvalued may vary, but the process of transvaluation has its constant ground in God’s gift of his love.⁵¹¹

The gift of God’s love is universal—it lies behind the suprastructure of all religious beliefs. It is constitutive of the grace that is sufficient for the salvation of all and results in the faith that is the common origin of all religions. The gift also results in the transvaluation of values as the vector and undertow that orients humankind to God through love given and being in love, opening “one’s eyes to values and disvalues that otherwise would not be attempted.”⁵¹² As vector and undertow, the gift of God’s love is not once and for all, but constantly given. An important aspect of Lonergan’s universalist notion of faith reflects his trinitarian thought regarding the universality and gratuity of the gift of the Holy Spirit given to all people at any time in their history irrespective of the stage of development and without condition.

A second aspect of universalist faith reflects Lonergan’s anthropology of the dynamism of the human spirit’s openness to receive God’s gift, to be transformed by it and to respond to it. Faith as that *knowledge* born of religious love sets up new kinds of

⁵¹⁰ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 283.

⁵¹¹ Lonergan, “Faith and Beliefs” 43.

⁵¹² Lonergan, “Faith and Beliefs” 46.

questions for intelligence, deliberation and decision: Shall I love in return? Whom shall I love? How shall I love? Crowe comments on these “two complementary forces” of universalist faith saying:

On one side there is the gift of God’s love, the effect of which, prior to all images and reflection, is orientation to mystery, the response to which is adoration. On the other side there is the spontaneous intentionality of the human spirit, starting from experience, asking endless questions, and seeking a good beyond criticism, intentionality therefore as human capacity for religion, reaching up toward the love of God.⁵¹³

The knowledge of the heart that is the proper counterpart of human intentionality comes from outside of the subject through God’s own self-disclosure in the gift of divine love. God’s love is the source and origin of universalist faith as well as the goal toward which it tends and strives.

A third aspect of universalist faith is to be found in its goal: resting in God.⁵¹⁴ Religious traditions encourage and interpret this objective through fostering and developing the gift of God’s grace. This is possible through the imitation of and participation in the divine relations of the Triune God. In the process of reaching the goal through good will and good performance, knowing the good and doing it, there is also the reality of falling short of the goal and ideal of a religious tradition—“a gap between the ideal and the real, between religion as it strives to be and religion as it is in fact.”⁵¹⁵ This gap reveals the reality of human imperfection and simultaneously the desire to rest in God. Equally, the gap illustrates the fact that finding final and complete rest is a future reality of the beatific vision, when God’s self-giving is complete and God is known to us in the same way that we are known to God.

⁵¹³ Frederick E. Crowe, “Lonergan’s Universalist View of Religion,” *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 12 (1994) 155.

⁵¹⁴ Lonergan, “Theology and Man’s Future” 146-147.

⁵¹⁵ Lonergan, “Theology and Man’s Future” 147.

The Distinctiveness of Christianity

According to Lonergan what distinguishes Christianity from other religions is not the ‘possession’ of grace but its mediation through Jesus Christ. He writes

...what is true of religions generally is not true of the Christian religion. For it knows God not only through the grace in its heart but also through the revelation of God’s love in Christ Jesus and the witness to that revelation down through the ages to the church. Christian love of God is not just a state of mind and heart; essential to it is the intersubjective, interpersonal component in which God reveals his love and asks ours in return.⁵¹⁶

While God’s love is mediated through the mission of the Holy Spirit in all of the world’s religions, Christians know God through not only that mission but the mission of the Word as the objectified and avowed gift of God’s love. For Christians, answers to the questions “Whom shall I love” and/or “How shall I love” can be found in the revelation of God’s love given concretely, tangibly and historically in the Incarnation of the Word. Jesus Christ is the objectified ‘Whom’ and his life, death, resurrection, ministry and teaching point to the ‘How.’

Lonergan compares and contrasts the “obscurity and anonymity” of the gift of the Spirit that “blows where it wills” and “can be everywhere at once” with the gift of the Son.⁵¹⁷ The mission of the Word includes removing the obscurity and anonymity of the Holy Spirit, but is “circumscribed spatially and temporally.” The Word objectifies and thematizes the gift of God’s love given in the Holy Spirit through the communication of linguistic and incarnate meaning. Linguistic communication liberates meaning through conventional signs that can be differentiated and refined as in the case of literature and

⁵¹⁶ Lonergan, “Doctrinal Pluralism” 83.

⁵¹⁷ Lonergan, “Response of a Jesuit” 174-175.

poetry or else it can be quite common and technical.⁵¹⁸ The proclamation of the Good News by Jesus, later recorded in the Christian Scripture, is an example of the linguistic communication of the meaning of God's love. Incarnate meaning refers to the meaning that combines many other carriers of meaning⁵¹⁹ in a person, in one's way of life, in one's words and deeds, in the work of art one makes of oneself. The incarnate meaning of the Word is found in the life, suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Thus, Lonergan writes:

Christianity involves not only the inward gift of being in love with God but also the outward expression of God's love in Christ Jesus dying and rising again. In the paschal mystery the love that is given inwardly is focused and inflamed, and that focusing unites Christians not only with Christ but with one another.⁵²⁰

The interior gift of God's love flooding the human heart and the outward expression and declaration of that love in the missions of the Spirit and the Son respectively constitute the basis of the Christian Church, its union with God, and the communion amongst its members.

The meaning communicated in the Incarnation of the Son is constitutive of Christianity. The meaning of God's love given in the gift of the Holy Spirit and apprehended and affirmed in the sending of the Son grows and develops through the suprastructural elements of Christianity.

In the Christian, accordingly, God's gift of his love is a love that is in Christ Jesus. From this fact flow the social, historical, doctrinal aspects of Christianity. For the gift of God's love... is not so private as to be solitary. It is given to many through Christ Jesus that they may be one in him. They need one another to come to understand the gift that has been given them, to think out what it implies and involves, to support one another in their effort to live Christian lives... The need of teaching and preaching, of rituals and common worship, is the need to be members

⁵¹⁸ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 70, 72.

⁵¹⁹ Lonergan lists intersubjective, artistic, symbolic and linguistic as other carriers of meaning. See Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 57-76.

⁵²⁰ Lonergan, "Philosophy of God and Theology" 170.

of one another, to share with one another what is deepest in ourselves, to be recalled from our waywardness, to be encouraged in our good intentions.⁵²¹

The Christian component of religious experience is the “intersubjective event” of “encounter with Christ historically mediated by the body of which he is head.”⁵²² What is mediated is an affective encounter with Christ who suffered, died and rose to transform the human heart. But the affective dimension that in Christianity links Christians to Christ is not unique to Christianity, for to understand religion is to “understand a region of feeling” and “to understand the ongoing social process which both engenders and informs feeling.”⁵²³ The affective dimension common to all religions is the fruit of the Holy Spirit that replaces the human heart of stone with a heart of flesh; thus, Christians can only cry out “Jesus Christ is Lord” by the power of the Spirit.

As the outer expression of the gift of God’s love that communicates the divine meaning of that love in history, Jesus Christ uniquely constitutes the very suprastructure of Christianity. Though the outer expression of divine meaning in the Jesus Christ event constitutes Christianity alone, the inner experience of divine love is the shared infrastructure common to religions. As such, adherents of non-Christian religions may recognize the meaning of Christianity and the Jesus Christ event and designate it in the interiority language of being in love. Regarding other religions’ view of Christianity Lonergan states:

Its suprastructure, however, is already extant in the account of Christian origins: God sending his only Son for our salvation through death and resurrection and the sending of the Spirit...The distinctiveness of Christianity lies in this suprastructure. To it the adherents of non-Christian religions may wish to ascribe the

⁵²¹ Lonergan, “The Future of Christianity” 156-157.

⁵²² Charles C. Hefling, Jr. “The Meaning of God Incarnate According to Friederich Schleiermacher; or, Whether Lonergan is Appropriately Regarded as ‘A Schleiermacher for Our Time’ and Why Not” in *Lonergan Workshop*, vol. 7 ed. Fred Lawrence (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988) 145.

⁵²³ Hefling, “The Meaning of God Incarnate” 120.

characterization of religious experience as being in love.⁵²⁴

III/Lonergan and the Encounter of World Religions

Lonergan offers a heuristic toward a systematic understanding of religious diversity. He is not a scholar of religions or a comparative religionist and as a good methodologist he looks to the work of other scholars in the field to support and verify the hypotheses that can be drawn from his model of religion. Lonergan makes numerous references to four scholars in particular for their specific contributions to certain areas of understandings of religious diversity; they are, Robley Edward Whitson, Friedrich Heiler, Wilfred Cantwell Smith and Raimundo Panikkar.⁵²⁵ In substantial agreement with these scholars, Lonergan recognizes the importance of the encounter of the world's religions as well as the new contexts in which these encounters take place. This requires a change of approach and attitude on the part of the Christian Church. Furthermore, all agree that there are great possibilities in these encounters toward an enriched sense of self-identity,

⁵²⁴ Lonergan, "Prolegomena" 71

⁵²⁵ For example Lonergan refers to Whitson in "Prolegomena to the Study of the Emerging Religious Consciousness of Our Time" 65-70, "The Ongoing Genesis of Methods" 159, 165 in *A Third Collection*; "Philosophy and Religious Phenomenon" 401 in *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1965-1980*; Friedrich Heiler in "Theology and Man's Future" 146, "The Future of Christianity" 149-156 in *A Second Collection*, "Religious Experience" 127 "Lectures on Religious Studies and Theology: Preface" 114, "Ongoing Genesis of Methods" 163, "A Post-Hegelian Philosophy of Religion" 217 in *A Third Collection*, "Faith and Beliefs" 40, 45, "Self-Transcendence: Intellectual, Moral Religious" in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1965-1980, Method in Theology* 109-110; Wilfred Cantwell Smith in "Religious Experience" 122-123, "A Post-Hegelian Philosophy of Religion" 216 in *A Third Collection*, "Faith and Beliefs" 30-32, 42-43, "Philosophy of God and Theology: Lecture 1" 175-176 in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1965-1980*; Raimundo Panikkar in "Prolegomena to an Emerging Religious Consciousness of Our Time" 67-70, 73 "Ongoing Genesis of Methods" 159, 165, "A Post-Hegelian Philosophy of Religion" 217, 223 in *A Third Collection*, "Variations in Fundamental Theology" 253-255, "Self-Transcendence: Intellectual Moral and Religious" 329-330 in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1965-1980*. In addition Lonergan mentions other scholars with whose work he is familiar such as William Johnston, Charles Davis, Ernst Benz and William Censer; however, Lonergan's references to them are fleeting and general.

relational identity and the constitution of a new type of inter-religious society. The following section explores the thought of those scholars referred to by Lonergan and the ideas espoused by him in order to both understand Lonergan's own point of view as well as to give direction to the development of his thought as it bears upon the study of religious diversity.

Lonergan heartily agrees with Whitson's contention that in the convergence of the religions of the world each religion in its own authenticity has an even greater significance as it cultivates relationships with others.⁵²⁶ Whitson, Smith and Panikkar—each in his own nuanced manner—distinguish between (to borrow Lonergan's language) the common religious experience/faith/infrastructural dimensions and their thematizations into beliefs/suprastructural elements found in the religions of the world. In the encounter of the world's religions, this distinction takes on new and deeper significance as it permits the adherent of a particular religion to be authentic, and to be known to live his/her faith authentically by the adherents of other religions, who themselves examine their own authenticity in innovative ways in the light of mutual encounter. There is both disagreement and friendship amongst interfaith conversation participants whose identities evolve toward greater authenticity in relation to one another.⁵²⁷ As Lonergan demonstrates, the aforementioned scholars of religion posit areas of unity between the religious traditions of the world. These areas of unity “draw attention away from what is outward towards what is inner and vital in religion.”⁵²⁸ Of theological consequence is Lonergan's conviction that the areas of unity amongst religions as enumerated by Heiler are related to the gift of God's love as

⁵²⁶ Lonergan, “Prolegomena” 66-68.

⁵²⁷ Lonergan, “Ongoing Genesis” 159.

⁵²⁸ Lonergan, “The Future of Christianity” 149.

operative/sanctifying grace in history. For a comparative religionist like Smith as much as for a theologian like Lonergan, questions of religious commitment and involvement are paramount and may be theologically correlated to cooperative grace/the habit of charity.

A further area of interest for Lonergan is the relationship between the religions of the world and history. In the history of religions Lonergan posits a “preparation for the cooperation of religions” as evidenced in dialogue and friendship. The situation of cooperation, dialogue and convergence amongst the religions of the world “invites the methodologist to explore the foundations for an interdisciplinary approach to religious studies and theology.”⁵²⁹ Thus, the encounter of the world’s religions is not something extrinsic to Christian theology but constitutive of the manner in which history and theology are to be theologically understood and constructed.

Robley Edward Whitson

Substantial and frequent references to Whitson’s 1971 book *The Coming Convergence of World Religions* appear in several of Lonergan’s articles regarding the ideas of a world community of religions, religious experience, and the universalist view of religion.⁵³⁰ Whitson adverts to the transitional context of Western Christian theology moving from the perspective of a “classicist” view of culture to an “empirical” view (again to use Lonergan’s terminology). The former conceives of culture as universally normative, static, and immutable; it is concerned with assimilating ideas and virtues and

⁵²⁹ Bernard J.F. Lonergan, “Lectures on Religious Studies and Theology: Preface,” in *A Third Collection* ed. Frederick E. Crowe, S.J. (Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1985) 114.

⁵³⁰ See for example Lonergan, “Prolegomena ” 65-70, notes 21, 22; “Ongoing Genesis of Methods” 159, note 7; “Philosophy and Religious Phenomenon” 401, notes 10,11.

the transmission of values; its discourse is on the nature of things— the properties they possess and the laws they obey.⁵³¹ The latter views culture as “a set of meanings and values that informs a way of life;”⁵³² and there are as many cultures as there are sets of values and meanings which “may remain unchanged for ages” or else be “in a process of slow development or rapid dissolution.”⁵³³ Within the empirical conception of culture theology is “known to be an ongoing process” and not merely discourse on the nature of past achievements.⁵³⁴ From within this transitional space Christianity and the Western culture in which it has grown is confronted with other religions and cultures that challenge Western Christianity’s claims to universality and normativity. Whitson indicts Christianity for not taking other religious traditions seriously because of a classicist view of culture.⁵³⁵

In the present situation, sensitive to the reality of religious diversity, the fundamental question that Whitson raises is, “are systems of religion *closed* or *open* to each other?” and specifically, is Christianity open or closed to religious others? In order to respond to this query, Christians must reflect on their relationships with religious others in an attempt “to give meaning to the relationship of the new religious situation with the new civilization, and ... to find ways to articulate the creative relationships among religions.”⁵³⁶ Whitson contends that in this process Christians, along with religious others, will be able to enunciate a contemporary self-identity and speak together in meaningful ways.

⁵³¹ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 301.

⁵³² Lonergan, *Method in Theology* xi, 301.

⁵³³ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* xi.

⁵³⁴ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* xi.

⁵³⁵ Robley Edward Whitson, *The Coming Convergence of World Religions* (New York/Toronto: Newman Press, 1971) 12.

⁵³⁶ Whitson, *The Coming Convergence of World Religions* 16.

Convergence

As the title of his work suggests, Whitson postulates convergence as a “processual understanding of reality”⁵³⁷ in which individuals or groups of individuals form a unity in interrelationships that exclude uniformity, conformity and isolation from one another.

Convergence is an evolving process that sublates what goes before it and, akin to Lonergan’s understanding, does not destroy what precedes it but moves it forward, into a fuller realization. Thus, the convergence of the world’s religions is an evolving process that does not destroy the individual identities of each religious tradition but unites them toward something more than each can be singly. Whitson writes,

As with general cultural convergence, religious convergence is unitive but diversified. It excludes reduction and substitution as emerging from the unitive process, expecting, rather, some form of unitive pluralism. Religious convergence is not syncretism: it does not consist in a selection of similarities, reducing the many to one on the presumption that they are nothing more than relatively minor variations of the same reality. Religious convergence is not imperialism: it does not consist in the emergence of any one tradition as simply dominant and absorbing the other, allowing at most a residue of minor variant forms.⁵³⁸

Whitson goes on to suggest that the “something more” in the convergence of religions has to do with meaning:

They have a *further meaning together* which we had not even suspected. It is not that we will discover that all along they were really the same. On the contrary, we must expect to find that their differences, so often accentuated oppositively to insure separation, are actually meaningful together, contribute to each other and constitute the new unity out of their diversity.⁵³⁹

Hence, religious convergence for Christians entails a rejection of syncretism, which is an expression of reductive pluralism, and of the imperialism of exclusivism. Christians

⁵³⁷ Whitson, *The Coming Convergence of World Religions* 26.

⁵³⁸ Whitson, *The Coming Convergence of World Religions* 52.

⁵³⁹ Whitson, *The Coming Convergence of World Religions* 52-53.

move beyond religious tolerance and theological evaluations of the religious other to consider the potential meaning and value of the simultaneous presence of multiple religious traditions.

Theology

In the situation of convergence the task of theology is to systematically analyze the possible meaning and value of the simultaneous presence of distinct and multiple religious traditions from the perspective of one of those religious traditions. Each tradition draws from its own heritage in order to reflect creatively upon its own religious experience and to share that reflection with religious others. The act of sharing creates a new experience and mutually enriches the heritage of each tradition.

Whitson distinguishes between two theological categories which he names the *logos* and the *theos*. In the *logos* category theological knowing is the attempt to analyze and communicate religious experience while the *theos* category is “the structural element in theology in which concrete conceptualizations of the ultimacy in religious relationships are attempted.”⁵⁴⁰ These conceptualizations differ, often radically, from one another. Whitson’s distinction is similar to Lonergan’s distinction between the infrastructural and suprastructural elements of religions; however, Whitson’s *logos* category could be further clarified by Lonergan’s distinction between an awareness of experience and knowledge of it.⁵⁴¹ Like Lonergan, Whitson maintains that religious experience cannot be fully apprehended and conceptualized as it remains a mysterious

⁵⁴⁰ Whitson, *The Coming Convergence of World Religions* 70.

⁵⁴¹ For a treatment on Lonergan’s distinction see Vernon Gregson, *Lonergan, Spirituality, and the Meeting of Religions*. (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, inc., 1985) 61.

vector and undertow that “we can attempt to understand ...or explain...but this can never ‘explain it away.’”⁵⁴²

The *theos* category examines the structural elements in the conceptualization of the relationships which result from various experiences. Theology attempts to articulate the relationships between the Sacred, humankind and the world from within a particular religious tradition. For the religious believer the relationship is doubly circumscribed: firstly, in relating the content of one’s entire life to the experience of the Sacred; and secondly, in the definitiveness of the mysteriousness of the Sacred perceived in relationships.⁵⁴³ Hence, Whitson’s description of the theologian and his/her task: “The theologizer is an experiencer, not simply a reporter, analyzer, or theorizer, and hence he expects to contribute to the ongoing formation of the tradition of his own commitment.”⁵⁴⁴ The ongoing formation of a tradition through the sharing of experiences entails changes in the manner of their communication as well as in an evolving understanding and reinterpretation of past and present experiences, effectively precluding any closed system.

In the context of the simultaneous presence of multiple religious traditions and their convergence Whitson describes the repercussions of this reality for theology:

The complementarity of simultaneous multiplicity, therefore, is a necessary and objective instrument of theology insofar as the complexity of the religious process is recognized and theologizing remains integral to it. Complementarity is the key to any attempt to extend the range of any one religious tradition to meet and integrate with another. Only this instrument is able to accept the authenticity of diversity and allow the production of new meaning within each of the significance of the integration. As seen through complementarity, religious pluralism ceases to be divisive and becomes the paradoxical basis of a new unity.⁵⁴⁵

⁵⁴² Whitson, *The Coming Convergence of World Religions* 109.

⁵⁴³ Whitson, *The Coming Convergence of World Religions* 112.

⁵⁴⁴ Whitson, *The Coming Convergence of World Religions* 112.

⁵⁴⁵ Whitson, *The Coming Convergence of World Religions* 126.

History and revelation

According to Whitson “[T]he Western tendency to bind together theology and revelation is far too restrictive.”⁵⁴⁶ Instead, Whitson suggests a more complex inter-relationship between revelation, history and theology in affirming the need to relate a religious content that is revelational in character to the world around us and consequently something of transhistoric significance that is meaningful and in continuity with all that is significant in history. Whitson argues

...if revelation is not limited to that point of history [a chosen moment of specific experience] but involves as well the process of experiencing-what-continues-to-happen, then theology will have a different form and content, to relate the dynamics of an on-going transhistoric-historic experiencing.⁵⁴⁷

Whitson does not reject the importance of the genesis-moment-experience at the historical root of a religious tradition as central, seminal and directional; however, he is concerned that theological reflection on revelation not be confined to the past, dismissive of the present or disinterested in the future. He goes on to write:

The present must be accepted as genuinely *new* ...and we must seek to recognize integral genetic development in a continuum of past-present-future, in which the integrity of each allows us to penetrate ever more deeply the significance of each as processual.⁵⁴⁸

The challenge for theology is to reflect on the possible meaning and value of the historical process as revelational.

According to Whitson the contradistinction between “revelational” and “non-revelational” religious traditions is false. Instead, he says, “[T]here are simply different

⁵⁴⁶ Whitson, *The Coming Convergence of World Religions* 130.

⁵⁴⁷ Whitson, *The Coming Convergence of World Religions* 143.

⁵⁴⁸ Whitson, *The Coming Convergence of World Religions* 145. Whitson correctly argues that the inability to reflect theologically upon the past-present-future continuum has led to the devising of “theological gadgets” that is an unconscious attempt to subvert a narrow and inadequate notion of revelation. Thus, in order to account for the salvation of adherents of “non-revelational” religious traditions there is posited the possibility of baptism *in voto* or else anonymous Christianity. See notes 57-59.

kinds of revelational traditions.”⁵⁴⁹ Differences are the result of “the variety of authentic historic *situations* in which men experience and share” and should not be posited on the sole basis of content and its derivative oppositions of true/false, fullness of time/primitive, complete/partial, etc. Hence, Whitson concludes:

[T]he *historic* character of the actual revelational process as pluralistic in scope cannot be defined in terms of single chronological sequences or isolated historic moments. Thus, not only must the three sequences of Judaic, Christian and Islamic revelational chronology be related to each other ... but the recognition of revelation-in-historic-process calls for the acceptance of parallel and overlapping chronological history whose full evaluation depends on the kind of meaning achieved in the coming convergence. Put simply, to close a canon of sacred scriptures at a certain point with a certain content only defines one dimension of the revelational process, a dimension certainly authentic in itself but having a further authenticity in convergence with others.⁵⁵⁰

In recognizing the revelational process, Whitson maintains Christians “must also recognize the inevitability of many differing moments of response corresponding to the dynamics of a fully historic Christ.”⁵⁵¹

In the process of convergence one does not abandon one’s religious tradition for another or else a new ‘pluralist’ construction. Convergence brings religious traditions out of isolation and into contact and interaction with one another in order to discover the significance of being-in-relationship with one another. Such a process entails standing within a commitment-specific horizon in order to “discover, understand and communicate what can be experienced and known of Reality.”⁵⁵²

⁵⁴⁹ Whitson, *The Coming Convergence of World Religions* 154.

⁵⁵⁰ Whitson, *The Coming Convergence of World Religions* 159.

⁵⁵¹ Whitson, *The Coming Convergence of World Religions* 184.

⁵⁵² Whitson, *The Coming Convergence of World Religions* 177.

Loneragan frequently refers to Heiler's article "The History of Religions as a Preparation for the Co-operation of Religions" to support his belief that what is inner and vital in the religious traditions of the world is the result of the universal gift of God's love that floods the human heart. Heiler is concerned with addressing the historian Arnold Toynbee's contention that the three Abrahamic faiths tend toward "exclusivism and intolerance."⁵⁵³ Heiler certainly laments the attitude on the part of Christians that "look upon intolerance as a necessity and glory of Christian doctrine." He goes on to describe his own context: "The reigning tendency of current Protestantism, the so-called dialectical theology, denies every revelation of God outside the Christian Bible and looks upon non-Christian religions as mere attempts at self-apotheosis which are under the judgment of God."⁵⁵⁴ Garnered from his own experience of interfaith encounter and as a scholar of the world's religions, Heiler is convinced of the spiritual and theological wealth of all religious traditions for which he cultivated great esteem. Moreover, scientific inquiry has discovered a relationship amongst religions. Certain and specific differences notwithstanding, Heiler highlights seven principle areas of unity amongst the "higher religions."⁵⁵⁵ Lonergan relates these areas of unity to the gift of God's love.

The first area of unity enumerated by Heiler, and echoed by Lonergan, is that religious believers affirm the reality of a transcendent, holy, divine Other. Second, the transcendent reality is immanent in human hearts. Third, the same reality is the highest

⁵⁵³ Friedrich Heiler, "The History of Religions as a Preparation for the Co-operation of Religions," in *The History of Religions*, ed. Mircea Eliade and Joseph Kitagawa (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1969) 134.

⁵⁵⁴ Heiler, "The History of Religions as a Preparation" 136.

⁵⁵⁵ Heiler, "The History of Religions as a Preparation" 140-146.

truth, goodness, beauty, righteousness and as such the ultimate goal and fulfilment of all human longing and striving. Next, the Divine is ultimate love which “reveals itself to men and in men.”⁵⁵⁶ Fifth, Heiler claims that the way to God is universally the way of sacrifice and renunciation as well as of personal and communal prayer. Sixth, all religions teach the centrality of the love of God and neighbour:

Love is God’s doing. It flows not from the small heart of man but from the eternal love of God. But as love flows forth from the heart of God, so it flows back to him again; the neighbour to whom man renders love is God himself in human disclosure.⁵⁵⁷

Lastly, Heiler affirms that “[L]ove is the most superior way to God.”⁵⁵⁸ These last two clearly resonate with Lonergan’s own view of the movement of God’s love given and returned.

The consequence of taking love seriously for the religions of the world is that barriers of division and hostility fall away. Drawing from Schleiermacher,⁵⁵⁹ Heiler maintains that any “antipathy against the variety of religions” must necessarily come to an end since the areas of unity, principally those related to love, reflect the “work of the world spirit.”⁵⁶⁰ Thus, religious diversity itself is a divine gift; no one religion should seek domination over the others. Quoting Rabindranath Tagore, Heiler writes:

The attempt to make their own religion the ruling one everywhere and for all time is natural to men who incline toward a sectarianism. Therefore they do not want to hear that God is magnanimous in the dispensing of His love, or that His dealings with men are not limited to one blind alley which comes to a sudden halt at one point in history. If ever such a catastrophe should break in upon mankind that one religion should swamp everything, then God would have to provide a second

⁵⁵⁶ Heiler, “The History of Religions as a Preparation” 143.

⁵⁵⁷ Heiler, “The History of Religions as a Preparation” 150.

⁵⁵⁸ Heiler, “The History of Religions as a Preparation” 151.

⁵⁵⁹ While Heiler relies on Schleiermacher and is a Schleiermachian, Lonergan is not. See Charles C. Hefling, Jr. “The Meaning of God Incarnate According to Friederich Schleiermacher; or, Whether Lonergan is Appropriately Regarded as ‘A Schleiermacher for Our Time’ and Why Not,” and also Kanaris, *Bernard Lonergan’s Philosophy of Religion* 111-113.

⁵⁶⁰ Heiler, “The History of Religions as a Preparation” 155.

Noah's ark to save his creatures from spiritual destruction.⁵⁶¹

For Heiler, the fullness of the Divine is "revealed in the immeasurable diversity of nature and the spiritual life."⁵⁶² In spite of the principal areas of unity among the religions, Heiler, akin to Whitson and Lonergan, does not suggest the emergence of a single world religion but affirms the uniqueness that "each religion shall continue to unfold its individuality...through friendship and common co-operation among the religions we develop mankind more and more."⁵⁶³

Wilfred Cantwell Smith

Wilfred Cantwell Smith contends that the observable outer dimensions of religions that have been recorded by scholars of religion give rise to more important and difficult questions regarding inner religious commitment. In the January 1968 public lecture given by Smith at the University of Toronto that piqued Lonergan's interest, Smith presents his position regarding the need to understand inner religious faith, and the commitment it elicits, as a characteristic quality of human life across the centuries and throughout cultures that is prior to external observable forms of religion. He states:

To live religiously is not merely to live in the presence of certain symbols, but to be involved with them or through them in a quite special way—a way that may lead far beyond the symbols, that may demand the totality of a person's response, and may affect his relation not only to them but to everything else: to himself, to his neighbour, and to the stars. It is that special involvement that pleads to be elucidated.⁵⁶⁴

⁵⁶¹ Heiler, "The History of Religions as a Preparation" 156.

⁵⁶² Heiler, "The History of Religions as a Preparation" 156.

⁵⁶³ Heiler, "The History of Religions as a Preparation" 158.

⁵⁶⁴ Wilfred Cantwell Smith, "Faith and Belief, as seen by a Comparative Religionist" (Public lecture given at the University of Toronto, January 9, 1968) Kelly Library, University of St. Michael's College, Toronto, 2.

According to Smith, faith is the “quality whereby a person becomes religiously involved in or though the data of his tradition.”⁵⁶⁵ At the same time, faith gives meaning to that tradition as well as to life and the universe. Faith precedes, transcends and sustains the tradition. Further, faith is neither neutral nor inert but “to know faith authentically is to become oneself involved, to know it in personal committed fashion in one or other of its varied forms [religious traditions].”⁵⁶⁶ A religious tradition reflects “a potential pattern for personal involvement, which becomes religious as it expresses and/or elicits men’s faith.”⁵⁶⁷ One’s tradition is that privileged route to know faith. Like Lonergan, Smith uses faith in a wider, “theologically truer sense” to describe the reality and experience of that mysterious vector and undertow that elicits human response. Unlike Lonergan, Smith does not hazard an explanation of what the content of faith might be (i.e. knowledge born of religious love). In this sense Smith remains on the phenomenological, descriptive level.

Though a scholar of religion, Smith’s insights on religion, faith and beliefs are strikingly similar and complementary to those of Lonergan. For example, Smith writes, “religious beliefs differ radically, while religious faith appears to have been, not constant, certainly, yet more approximative to constancy.”⁵⁶⁸ Smith maintains that beliefs are ideas held in an attempt to render “transcendence into ostensible terms.”⁵⁶⁹ Thus, belief introduces an element beyond itself as its potential meaning lies in the realm of the relationship between self and Other. Beliefs induce and nurture faith giving it “shape and

⁵⁶⁵ Smith, “Faith and Belief, as seen by a Comparative Religionist” 2.

⁵⁶⁶ Smith, “Faith and Belief, as seen by a Comparative Religionist” 7.

⁵⁶⁷ Smith, “Faith and Belief, as seen by a Comparative Religionist” 5.

⁵⁶⁸ Smith, “Faith and Belief, as seen by a Comparative Religionist” 11.

⁵⁶⁹ Smith, “Faith and Belief, as seen by a Comparative Religionist” 12.

force and depth and richness.”⁵⁷⁰ Religious beliefs that coalesce into systems express faith in various ways. These systems address different questions, are centered on distinct themes, and operate in specific modes. Hence, religions are not merely and fundamentally the ‘same thing’ apprehended and packaged differently because even in the commonality of the faith experience, its many facets may be variously attended to, apprehended and interpreted.

Smith claims that for Christianity “belief,” particularly as expressed in the various creeds, has played a central role, especially as “a formal qualification of membership.”⁵⁷¹ In his assessment of the three stages of the historical development of the relationship between faith and belief in Christianity, Smith cautions against an over-emphasis on belief. In the first stage belief was the intellectualization/conceptualization of faith when discussions centered around the content of beliefs and its relation to faith experience. The discussions of the second stage no longer centered around faith but on the various conceptualizations of faith, or the beliefs worked out in the previous stage. In the third stage belief disintegrates as an effective expression and evocation of faith. In this last and current stage, beliefs have become divorced from religious experience; revelation is seen in terms of propositions and not inter-personal communication. From within this context Smith attempts to re-translate the adage *credo ut intelligam* from the commonly accepted “I believe in order to understand” to “I become involved, in order that I may understand.”⁵⁷² Smith believes that the latter captures the true meaning of the adage and complements his own notion of the relationship between faith and belief.

⁵⁷⁰ Smith, “Faith and Belief, as seen by a Comparative Religionist” 26.

⁵⁷¹ Smith, “Faith and Belief, as seen by a Comparative Religionist” 15, 36.

⁵⁷² Smith, “Faith and Belief, as seen by a Comparative Religionist” 38.

Smith postulates that faith is (1) the commitment that “the life of the mind is worthwhile and reliable”; (2) “the striving to render [the universe] intelligible is valid or obligatory or rewarding or properly human” and (3) the “love of wisdom.”⁵⁷³ Smith’s terse commentary on faith as commitment is further illuminated in his belief that the opposite of faith is not disbelief or questioning but nihilism. Smith describes the despair of faithlessness as the inability

...to find either the world around one, or one’s own life, significant; an absence of mutuality, in that one cannot respond either to the universe or to one’s neighbour knowing that one will be responded to; an almost total dependence upon immediate events coupled with a sense that immediate events cannot really or for long be depended upon; a sense of lostness. The current terms for this are alienation, loss of identity, uncommittedness.⁵⁷⁴

Such alienation renders one incapable of entering the adult world mediated by meaning, trapping one in one’s own world of immediacy, unable to respond to the other, to share experiences and to enter into relationships; moral conversion is lacking as one cannot discern what is worthwhile and valuable.

Smith concludes his lecture outlining the possible fecundity his proposal could have for the future of the religions of the world

...looking beyond just the West, the new perspective could enable a comparative historian to understand Christian truth seriously within the larger context of man’s total religious development. It could also be crucial, in this realm, for Christian capacity to come to terms with other communities, whose beliefs are various but of whose faith it would then be not only logically but theologically possible that it too be true; that it too be a divine gift, that it too alone justify. Indeed ‘salvation by faith’ might move from having become a sectarian dogma (which it was not, originally) to becoming a world-wide empirical observation—and indeed one whose meaning and whose validity might be investigated by modern intellectual methods.⁵⁷⁵

⁵⁷³ Smith, “Faith and Belief, as seen by a Comparative Religionist” 21.

⁵⁷⁴ Smith, “Faith and Belief, as seen by a Comparative Religionist” 13.

⁵⁷⁵ Smith, “Faith and Belief, as seen by a Comparative Religionist” 39.

Like Lonergan, Whitson, and Hieler, Smith highlights the necessity of Christians to be in relationship with other faith communities thus moving beyond sectarianism toward discovering together the meaning of religious commitment.

Raimundo Panikkar

Panikkar, writing on fundamental theology, maintains that it either purports to be a pre-theological or philosophical justification for the content upon which theology elaborates or else “claims to be a disclosure of the very basis of theological self-understanding.”⁵⁷⁶ Panikkar is concerned with this latter aspect of fundamental theology and its assumptions and presuppositions. He distinguishes between the two by defining theological assumptions as those bases that can be known outside of theology specifically.⁵⁷⁷ An assumption is assumed for any number of reasons as “a principle which [is] set at the basis of a thinking process in a more or less explicit way.”⁵⁷⁸ Presuppositions are based upon those assumptions and accepted uncritically and unreflectively, often universalized, considered always valid and for all without distinction. The practical lack of distinction between theological assumptions and Western presuppositions has precipitated a crisis in theology in a post-colonial world.

Within one particular culture and world-view, common presuppositions may be more or less shared; however, the contemporary situation is quite different with its empirical notion of culture and multiplicity of world-views. Presuppositions that were in the past implicitly accepted as theological principles are exposed and made known for

⁵⁷⁶ Raymond Panikkar, “Metatheology or Diacritical Theology as Fundamental Theology” in *Concilium 46: The Development of Fundamental Theology*, ed. Johannes B. Metz (New York: Paulist Press 1969) 44.

⁵⁷⁷ Panikkar seems to be after a foundational theoretical justification that knowledge requires. This can be found in Lonergan’s cognitional-epistemological theory which is cross-disciplinary.

⁵⁷⁸ Panikkar, “Metatheology or Diacritical Theology” 45.

their uncritical and unreflective nature precisely through the meeting of religions, cultures and world-views. It is through the encounter with the other that one's presuppositions are exposed:

Only others can help me find out my presuppositions and the underlying principles of my science. Stated simply, 'das Ungedachte', the unthought, can be disclosed only by him who does not 'think' like me; he helps me to discover the unthought magma out of which my thinking crystallizes, and I, on my part, can do him the same service.⁵⁷⁹

Once exposed, a presupposition cannot continue as the starting point for further reflection. Hence, a decision must be made whether to maintain this "supposition" as a principle or else reject or amend it.

According to Panikkar the contemporary situation poses a challenge to Christianity's claim that its message is universal in scope:

Any message directed to the whole of mankind today which takes a part for the whole, or which ignores the variety of peoples, cultures and religions, is bound to be discarded from the very outset. The Christian faith will either accept this challenge or declare its particular allegiance to a single culture and thus renounce its claim of being the carrier of a universally acceptable message, which does not destroy any positive value.⁵⁸⁰

Panikkar goes on to say that it is not enough to merely extrapolate sets of propositions that are meaningful in one cultural context to another. Such thoughtless extrapolation renders the propositions unintelligible, irrelevant and meaningless. A fundamental theology for a world Church must necessarily take the cultures and religions of the world seriously if the claim that the message of Jesus Christ has significance for the world is to be taken equally seriously.

Panikkar suggests that fundamental theology is not at the beginning of the theological enterprise but at its term: "It is not that the Christian faith is based on those

⁵⁷⁹ Panikkar, "Metatheology or Diacritical Theology" 55.

⁵⁸⁰ Panikkar, "Metatheology or Diacritical Theology" 46.

foundations, but rather that the effort at understanding a Christian fact leads us to discover some of the conditions of its intelligibility under some given circumstances.”⁵⁸¹ Thus, fundamental theology is that activity “which critically examines its [theology’s] assumptions and is always ready to question its own presuppositions;” it is an “effort at intelligibility of the actual theological situation in any given context.”⁵⁸² To accomplish this task in the world today means decentring theology from around its Western European axis and incorporating the wide and varied perspectives and experiences that are alive both in the Church and in the world. To this effect Panikkar writes:

The role of fundamental theology, therefore, is to also work out the intelligibility of theology outside the culture and even the religion where that theology until now grew and prospered. In a paradoxical form I would say that if fundamental theology today is to fulfill its role, it cannot be only that of clarifying its own tradition, but it must leave house and kin and wander outside into a *terra incognita*, through a promised land. And here lies the immense difficulty. Fundamental theology is an Exodus theology. But it is not at all a question of courage; it is also a query about its feasibility. Is it possible to be rooted in an alien or perhaps even non-existent soil? Is it possible to jump, as it were, over one’s own shadow? We should take very seriously the differences among peoples, cultures and religions, for in no other way can the gulf between them be bridged.⁵⁸³

Hence fundamental theology occupies a liminal space rooted in its own tradition but striving toward that which lies outside of it. To accomplish its task, fundamental theology must travel back and forth between the familiar and the unknown in order to build mutually enriching and even necessary relationships. A bridge that spans the chasm between different cultures and religions must necessarily be rooted on both sides of the chasm if it is to be a way of communication and travel.

Similar sentiments are echoed by Charles Davis in a 1974 piece in which Lonergan showed “great interest.”⁵⁸⁴ Davis’ main concern is the methodological

⁵⁸¹ Panikkar, “Metatheology or Diacritical Theology” 47.

⁵⁸² Panikkar, “Metatheology or Diacritical Theology” 48.

⁵⁸³ Panikkar, “Metatheology or Diacritical Theology” 51.

relationship between the distinct disciplines of religious studies and theology and he asserts that theology cannot be accomplished from a narrow confessional perspective that ignores new data garnered from other disciplines and other religious traditions. In fact, to ignore new data flies in the face of academic inquiry and the reality of historical development. Thus, Davis states that “to avoid internal inconsistency theology is being compelled to go outside of the limits of a single tradition in gathering its data and to look beyond a single community as the community of reference for its work.”⁵⁸⁵ Any attempt at foundational thinking such as the theological thinking Davis suggests lays bare the structures of human consciousness and moves beyond the categories specific to theology; beyond foundations, doctrines, systematics and communications to include research, interpretation, history and dialectics.

Following the 1973 meeting of the Research Group on the Philosophy and the Study of Religion at Varna, Bulgaria, Panikkar’s view of the diachronical situation of theology is repeated and complemented in several of the group’s findings enunciated by him. He outlines seven points of agreement amongst the participants: that humans are non-achieved in the sense of becoming something which they are yet not; that religion is a set of practises or doctrines which an adherent believes will lead to liberation/salvation/fulfilment/freedom/wholeness/completeness; that new belief systems are authentic alternatives to traditional religion; that all human enterprises reflect a struggle for fullness; that encounter between the religions of the world is “imperative” for our time; that “no religion, ideology, culture or tradition can reasonably claim to exhaust the

⁵⁸⁴ Bernard J.F. Lonergan, “Religious Studies and Theology” in *A Third Collection* ed. Frederick E. Crowe, S.J. (Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1985) 113.

⁵⁸⁵ Charles Davis, “The reconvergence of theology and religious studies” in *Studies in Religion/ Sciences Religieuses* 4 (1974/1975) 208.

universal range of human experience;” and finally “[W]hat is the case for one section of humankind may not be the case for another...statements about religion have to take into account particular human situations and cannot be universalized by uncritical extrapolation.”⁵⁸⁶ Lonergan refers to the “remarkable consensus achieved”⁵⁸⁷ at the Varna meeting where Panikkar made clear that the encounter of various religious traditions does not aim at a uniform set of beliefs and practices but instead “attempts to reach a mutual fecundation and to allow a corrective criticism among the religious traditions of the world without diluting the unique contribution of each tradition.”⁵⁸⁸

Conclusion

This chapter has been divided into three sections: the first dealing with Lonergan’s philosophy of religion and its relationship to theology; the second an exposition of Lonergan’s heuristic model of religion from a markedly Christian perspective; and the last an exploration of Lonergan’s sources regarding world religions. This last section aims to fill in Lonergan’s heuristic with lower blade data as well as contribute to an upper blade that functions to organize future developments in the area of religious diversity that would be consistent with his thought.

Lonergan’s method is significant for the philosophy of religion because it is open to new and relevant data and it has an existential dimension that invites self-discovery and self-appropriation. His method meets the demands of contemporary philosophy of religion in its logical and ethical dimensions. According to Lonergan’s method, the

⁵⁸⁶ Raimundo Panikkar, “Have ‘Religions’ the Monopoly on *Religion*,” *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* vol. XI (1974) 515-516.

⁵⁸⁷ Lonergan, “Prolegomena to an Emerging Religious Consciousness of our Time” 67.

⁵⁸⁸ Panikkar “Have Religions” 517.

question of God, with which philosophy of religion is fundamentally concerned, implies the intelligibility of the universe, judgments and statements regarding facticity, and deliberation that gives meaning to value.

Loneragan's method is equally pertinent to religious studies as this discipline is concerned with the methods by which religious expressions and their contents are studied. Studying and relating religious symbols and expressions and their cross-cultural and religious equivalencies reflect the first four of Lonergan's functional specialties: research, history, interpretation and dialectic. Theology, on the other hand, also includes the last four: foundations, doctrines, systematics and communications. Theology inquires into the meaning of religious symbols and expressions in order to mediate between a religion and the role of that religion in its cultural matrix. Unlike religious studies, theology proceeds from a religious commitment.

Whether philosophy of religion, religious studies, or theology, Lonergan asserts that any knowledge of God, even initial philosophical questions regarding God, comes from God's self-disclosure and can never be solely the product of the human desire to know and achieve transcendence. Further, Lonergan's methodical differentiations between the various disciplines that broach the question of God, religion and theology enable various approaches to understanding religious diversity to be distinguished. This is of paramount importance as the aim of one approach is quite different from that of another. Thus, a systematic understanding of religious diversity arises from the perspective of a faith commitment that includes doctrines; its task and aim are different from that of religious studies, which is descriptive and does not presume any religious involvement since it is primarily concerned with an account of methodological

procedures. Simultaneously, Lonergan's distinctions do not separate these various disciplines beyond mutual enrichment and communication but affirm their complementarity and interdependence.

Lonergan's model of religion is a heuristic expressed in markedly Christian theological language. The later Lonergan's understanding of the divine missions coupled with his analysis of human development from above downward account for the apprehension and judgment of value as common to all religious commitment and traditions. The gift of God's love given in the Holy Spirit is a universal and initial gift that is not conditioned by any specific cultural or historical stage of development but given freely through the divine initiative.

The gift of God's love met in the human apprehension and judgment of value reveal the relation of saving grace to love and its universal character. In clear continuity with Vatican II Lonergan is able to assert that God gifts all humanity with sufficient grace since it is God's desire that all be saved. The reception and response to God's love develops in community and in history toward the final consummation of God's love in the beatific vision. All those who accept and respond to God's love do so through the unfolding of conscious intentionality from above downward and participate in the inner life of God through the distinct modalities of active and passive spiration.

The inner dimension of religions has, in Lonergan's opinion, a common source in the mission of the Holy Spirit. This dimension corresponds to infrastructure and faith which is subsequently objectified and thematized in the outer dimension of suprastructure and belief. Suprastructure is the context in which the gift of God's love is apprehended and judgments of value and decisions are made. At the same time, belief draws the

believer back into the immediate religious experience from the world mediated by meaning. While the inner dimension is common to the world religions in both content and structure, only the structural element is common at the suprastructural level since for Christianity it is uniquely constituted by the public declaration of God's love in the meaning of the life, ministry, death and resurrection of Christ Jesus. It is in this public declaration that the meaning of God's love given in the Holy Spirit is made explicitly known.

The last section examined the various scholars of religion and theologians upon whom Lonergan relied, eliciting many insights that flesh out, augment and direct Lonergan's thought on religious diversity. The context for doing theology and for living religiously is no longer a static and classical notion of culture but one that is historical and transitional. In a post-colonial era, theology can no longer be centered around Western-Christian notions of its own normativity and universality. Thus, Christian theology must critically examine its positionality, world-view and presuppositions and reflect upon its foundational and structural elements if it is to speak meaningfully. Moreover, Christian theology needs to be attentive to the data disclosed in the encounter of different religions and cultures even though this entails occupying a fragile liminal space that moves between the known and the unknown, the familiar and the strange.

In this situation of religious and cultural diversity as fact, religions need ask themselves if they are inherently open to one another or not. Within a processual understanding of reality the possible convergence of world religions may result in a unity in diversity: each religious identity is preserved but has a greater significance together than each does alone. What is achieved in the convergence of religions is a community

of religious communities that includes a variety of unique and different individual identities.

Based on his trinitarian theology, particularly the ontological ordering and experience of the divine missions through an analysis of human development, Lonergan postulates that the areas of unity in the world's religions can be attributed to the gift of God's love given in the particularities of history. If this is the case, then not only are religions challenged to form communities of friendship and cooperation, but equally to reflect on the ways in which God communicates God's self, the divine meaning in the world. Hence, revelation may not be limited to a particular moment in the history of a particular religion but could be a process of "revelation-in-historic-process."

Developing Lonergan's thought toward an understanding of religious diversity requires not only an examination of the Trinity and of his philosophy and model of religion but equally how these are related to some view of "revelation-in-historic-process." Such has been a major contribution of Frederick Crowe whose work on this subject will be examined in the following chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE: THE 'TRINIFICATION' OF HISTORY

No other method exists for acquiring knowledge about the human heart than the study of history coupled with experience of life, in a way that the two throw light upon each other.⁵⁸⁹
- Simone Weil

Having already examined Lonergan's psychological analogies for the Trinity and model of religion in depth, it is important to assess some of the implications that they have for Christian theology and praxis in the context of a religiously diverse world. The gleanings from previous chapters raise such pertinent issues as the divine missions, a theology of the Holy Spirit, history, freedom and responsibility, dialogue, mediation and otherness and how this nexus of issues relate to Christian theology and praxis. These are some of the principal issues that result from a Lonerganian approach to diversity. This chapter outlines these issues, not to provide any neat conclusions but to suggest possible directions in and anticipations of the areas that require further considerations in the ongoing consideration of religious diversity.

I/ God for us

Frederick Crowe, one of Lonergan's earliest and most influential interpreters, fleshes out the systematic implications of Lonergan's thought in several areas germane to this study on a Christian understanding of religious diversity. They are, methodological

⁵⁸⁹ Simone Weil, *The Need for Roots, Prelude to a Declaration of Duties towards Mankind*, trans. Arthur Wills (London and New York: Routledge, 2002).

issues in Trinitarian studies, the uniqueness and complementarity of the divine missions, pneumatology, interiority, history and meaning. Akin to Lonergan, Crowe postulates that the functional specialty ‘systematics’ begins from the *prius quoad se* in contrast to the *prius quoad nos* proper to ‘history’. Hence, systematics presupposes and starts from already affirmed doctrines and seeks to understand them analogically and in relation to one another. Systematics should not be confused with a catechetical repetition of the content of doctrine updated in novel and more easily comprehensible language. Instead, systematics is the “return route” that begins from the achievements of the past:

The return route is not superfluous, for we come back with a vastly increased understanding of the whole field, and this understanding is fertile and operative in a thousand more ways that are closed to those merely following historical development.⁵⁹⁰

Crowe’s systematic treatment begins with God understood according to the psychological analogy, proceeds to distinguishing the relation of the three co-equal persons and concludes with the missions. Like Lonergan’s treatise on the Trinity, Crowe’s also has as its goal an understanding of a “basic theorem” that “God is conscious in a dynamic way.”⁵⁹¹ Consciousness is that internal experience of oneself and one’s operations, which are both intentional insofar as they make objects present and conscious insofar as they make the subject present to the subject.⁵⁹² For example: when I see I am conscious of my seeing (the object is made present) and myself seeing (the subject made present to himself or herself). The Triune God’s understanding, judging and loving are conscious

⁵⁹⁰ F. E. Crowe, SJ, *The Doctrine of the Most Holy Trinity* (Course Notes 1965-1966, Regis College, Willowdale, 1970) 141.

⁵⁹¹ Quentin Quesnell, “Three Persons—One God,” in *The Desires of the Human Heart*, ed. Vernon Gregson, (New York: Paulist Press, 1988) 151.

⁵⁹² Bernard J. F. Lonergan, “Christology Today: Methodological Reflections,” in *A Third Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (New York: Paulist Press, 1985) 91.

as consciousness is concomitant to the one psychological activity by which all three persons are present to one another and aware of their mutual self-presence.

Crowe also emphasizes Lonergan's insight regarding divine personhood and intersubjectivity.

It is to be noticed then that the divine subject is a subject only by intersubjectivity. He is distinct from the other persons in God only by relation to them, by being turned toward them; his being is being-towards-another.⁵⁹³

The being and activity proper to the Father is to generate the Son in uttering the Word and the Word's activity-passivity is implied in the uttered Word proceeding from the one who utters it and breathing forth love because of it. The divine three share life, and communicate the fullness of being which is the divine nature as a single act. Crowe clearly asserts that unlike creaturely intersubjectivity, the divine relations are the divine substance, not something in the divine substance or added to it. Hence, there is no real distinction between the persons in God and deity, there is no distinction between paternity and the Father, or filiation and the Word or spiration and the Spirit. Personhood is constituted by relational intersubjectivity.

Another of Crowe's significant gleanings from Lonergan's trinitarian thought has to do with the intersection of the divine and human. Specifically, that theological reflection on God is not an esoteric, intellectual exercise for its own sake, without ramifications for human self-understanding and living. Just as Lonergan's analysis of human development does not ultimately remain solely within interiority but finds its expression in the decisional and praxical dimension of human living, Trinitarian reflection is equally a reflection on responsible human living. Crowe writes:

But we should be very suspicious of an understanding of God that did not seem to

⁵⁹³ Crowe, *The Doctrine of the Most Holy Trinity* 158.

make any difference in our understanding of the world or in the conduct of our Christian lives.⁵⁹⁴

Crowe posits that the Trinity determines the structures of a “trinified”⁵⁹⁵ world, while humanity determines the “concrete, historical working out” of the divine persons’ entry into the world in which we live.⁵⁹⁶ Since God is independent of creation as God is constituted by infinite perfection and no other constitutive factor, contingent created reality is a consequent condition: “Proper contingent truths predicated of a divine person add to the subsistent relation only a relation of reason in the divine Person, but imply an appropriate created term outside God that is really related to the divine subsistent relation.”⁵⁹⁷ For example, to say God creates is only true if there is a creation. Thus, there is a real relation on the part of the creature but only a relation of reason on God’s part. A real relation on God’s part would imply a certain determination of God by creation and impinge on God’s transcendence and freedom; God would change as creation changes. Neil Ormerod links the principle of contingent predication not only to Lonergan’s analysis of the Incarnation but also to the development of the four-point hypothesis maintaining that the real relation between a created reality and one of the divine persons must be understood in the same fashion as contingent predication postulates the real relation between God and creation.⁵⁹⁸ The four subsistent relations of paternity, filiation, active and passive spiration are identical with the divine

⁵⁹⁴ Crowe, *The Doctrine of the Most Holy Trinity* 162.

⁵⁹⁵ Crowe, *The Doctrine of the Most Holy Trinity* 178. Crowe combines the familiar terms “deification,” which describes how creation is made divine, and “Trinity” into the apt neologism “Trinification.” Crowe feels that since God is Triune, the process of humanity and their world being taken up into God is more accurately a “Tinification.”

⁵⁹⁶ Crowe, *The Doctrine of the Most Holy Trinity* 162.

⁵⁹⁷ Bernard J.F. Lonergan, *The Ontological and Psychological Constitution of Christ*, vol. 7 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, trans. Michael G. Shields, ed. Frederick E. Crowe, S.J. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002) 97.

⁵⁹⁸ Neil J. Ormerod, “Two Points or Four?—Rahner and Lonergan on Trinity, Incarnation, Grace, and Beatific Vision,” *Theological Studies* 68 (2007) 672.

essence/nature. Hence, only the appropriate external, contingent term is required to posit created participations in the divine life. Ormerod concludes:

Thus the mystery of created participations of the divine nature is an extension of the mystery of creation itself. Created participations of the divine nature ‘extend’ the relationship between Creator and creature by drawing the creature into the inner divine relations. The appropriate created term thus ‘stands for’ each possible term of the relation; since there are four terms, one for each of the four subsistent relations, there are four created participations of the divine nature.⁵⁹⁹

Creation is a relation of dependence and not merely a relation to God but a relation to God as “*God* is related to God. That is what supernatural being is—assimilation to divine being as relational...to relations that are themselves identical with divine being.”⁶⁰⁰ This is the theological, methodological and structural basis of Crowe’s conviction of the “trinitification” of the world.

Crowe repeats Lonergan’s four-point hypothesis that there are four trinitarian relations in God that can be imitated *ad extra*. Thus, the grace of union is a created participation of paternity and has a special relation to the Son; sanctifying grace is a participation of the active spiration and so has a special relation to the Holy Spirit; the habit of charity is a created participation of the passive spiration and so has a special relation to the Father and Son as the one principle of the Holy Spirit; and the light of glory is a created participation of filiation and thus has a special relation to the Father.⁶⁰¹ According to Crowe, all but the last can be verified objectively in historical data and the data of consciousness known through salvation history. The last, the light of glory, is the result of a process of elimination but remains a probability in the hypothesis. Crowe furthers Lonergan’s four point hypothesis regarding the created participation in and

⁵⁹⁹ Ormerod, “Two Points or Four?” 673.

⁶⁰⁰ Charles C. Hefling, “On the (Economic) Trinity: An Argument in Conversation with Robert Doran,” *Theological Studies* 68 (2007) 657.

⁶⁰¹ Crowe, *The Doctrine of the Most Holy Trinity* 170.

imitation of the Trinity in asking the question, if there are six trinitarian relations discovered in the hypothesis (paternity and active spiration in the Father, filiation and active spiration in the Holy Spirit, passive spiration in the Spirit toward the father and passive spiration in him toward the Son) then is there some ground to ask if there are six corresponding graces, and perhaps more to be discovered in the beatific vision and in theological distinctions?⁶⁰² My point here is not necessarily to address Crowe's query but instead, to highlight the potential minefield that Lonergan's four-point hypothesis has for the development of theologies of grace. The potential networks of grace available for human imitation and participation challenge any individualistic and privatized notions of grace, far beyond the individual Christian and beyond Christianity itself.

Crowe maintains that in the natural universe, God's participation in it is as one and is absolute; in the supernatural universe God's participation is trinitarian and relational. The present universe is a unity of the two, humanity is not only open to grace but needs the trinitarian grace that "God actually chose to give."⁶⁰³ Human potency is toward becoming God through the imitation of and participation in God's very being, toward being, truth and goodness. Created in God's image, humankind strives for full understanding, complete truth and perfect love. The social dimension of the *imago dei*, which is in fact the *imago Trinitas*, is illustrated in the fact that infinite understanding, truth and love form a perfect community that in humans remain accidents in a substance, person and subject. Nevertheless, a society of persons is necessary, though in different ways and for different reasons, both to God and humankind.⁶⁰⁴

⁶⁰² Crowe, *The Doctrine of the Most Holy Trinity* 171.

⁶⁰³ Crowe, *The Doctrine of the Most Holy Trinity* 179.

⁶⁰⁴ Crowe, *The Doctrine of the Most Holy Trinity* 179.

II/The Divine Missions

The God who is love is revealed in God's self-giving in history. This gift is met in the receptivity and response that enriches human consciousness, a new orientation out of which loving acts that tend toward participating in God's inner Trinitarian life arise.⁶⁰⁵

Crowe describes this conscious dynamism where the divine and created intersect:

Thus we are in the grips of two complementary forces. On the one side there is the gift of God's love, the effect of which, prior to all images and reflection, is orientation to mystery, the response to which is adoration. On the other side there is the spontaneous intentionality of the human spirit, starting from experience, asking endless questions, and seeking a good beyond criticism, intentionality therefore as human capacity for religion, reaching up toward the love of God.⁶⁰⁶

The two complementary forces which Crowe consistently and repeatedly returns to throughout his work elucidates the relationship between the gift of God's love and "its proper counterpart in the revelation events in which God discloses to a particular people or to all mankind the completeness of his love for them."⁶⁰⁷ Crowe examines the trinitarian order itself, the two missions in the single divine, historical plan. Crowe makes two significant contributions to the development of Lonergan's extensive reflections on history. The first relates to the notion of human historicity as an "existential" history that "living tradition which formed us and thereby brought us to the point where we began forming ourselves."⁶⁰⁸ The second pertains to historical consciousness that "refers to oneself as responsible for the *making* of history," the subjective responsibility for one's own life as well as the world in which we live. Both of

⁶⁰⁵ Robert M. Doran, S.J. "Addressing the Four-Point Hypothesis," *Theological Studies* 68 (2007) 678-679.

⁶⁰⁶ Crowe, Frederick E. "Lonergan's Universalist View of Religion," *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 12 (1994) 155.

⁶⁰⁷ Bernard J.F. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1972) 283.

⁶⁰⁸ Donna Teevan, *Lonergan, Hermeneutics, & Theological Method* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2005) 166-167.

these dimensions of history are derived from categories of human interiority and meaning. The import of these will become clearer as Crowe's approach to understanding religious diversity is further examined later in this chapter.

In reflecting on the later Lonergan's preferred sequence of the Trinitarian self-communications, that of the Spirit, the Son and then the Father, Crowe turns to an early Lonergan article⁶⁰⁹ in which he refers to the Aristotelian principle regarding the relation between the ontological and chronological order of things. Crowe writes, "[T]he principle is that what is first in our eyes is not first in itself; on the contrary, what is first in our eyes is last in itself, and what is last in our eyes is first in itself."⁶¹⁰ This is the same principle that enables Lonergan to distinguish between what is *prius quoad nos* and *prius quoad se* in systematic theology. Sacred Scripture speaks of what is first in our eyes and so Christians are not surprisingly accustomed to thinking of the Son as being sent into the world first and then the Spirit in continuity with the mission of the Son. After reflection on these two missions the early Christian community came to an understanding of the persons of the Trinity in themselves and later in relation to one another. This historical unfolding reflects the human cognitional sequence but not the ontological ordering of the two missions of the Trinity. Reflection on the ontological ordering of the missions is not superfluous speculation as the missions are the divine relations joined to a created, external term and so there is a movement from reflection on the human experience of God to reflection on God's very self. In applying the Aristotelian-Lonerganian principle to the two divine missions, Crowe writes:

⁶⁰⁹ Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Theology and Understanding," in *Collection*, vol. 4 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993) 120-121.

⁶¹⁰ Crowe, "Son of God, Holy Spirit and World Religions" 327 and also "Rethinking God-With-Us: Categories from Lonergan," *Science et Esprit* XLI/2 (1989) 173.

We have simply to reverse the order in which commonly we think of the Son and Spirit in the world. Commonly we think of God first sending the Son, and of the Spirit being sent in that context, to bring to completion the work of the Son. The thesis says that, on the contrary, God first sent the Spirit, and then sent the Son in the context of the Spirit's mission, to bring to completion- perhaps not precisely the work of the Spirit's mission, but the work which God conceived as one work to be executed in the two steps of the twofold mission of the Spirit and then the Son.⁶¹¹

Crowe offers a vivid example of the distinction between the chronological and ontological order found in the divine activity in human history in the person of Adam who is chronologically prior in creation to Jesus Christ, and who although follows Adam historically in creation is its center and crown.⁶¹²

For Christians, the cognitional order of the divine missions is known as it unfolds historically with the experience of the Son followed by a particular awareness of the Holy Spirit. The historical unfolding corresponds to the dogmatic way. It begins with the missions of the Son and the Holy Spirit, and moves through the more technical stage of conciliar definitions to reflection on the consubstantiality of the three persons and on their personal properties. From there it proceeds to the recognition that the personal properties are relative and that the relations are those of origin. It concludes with the proposal of a psychological analogy. In contrast, the systematic way presupposes the achievements described in the dogmatic way and in Lonergan's treatment it is a precise and orderly understanding beginning with the divine processions, and successively the divine relations, the persons considered in themselves, the persons in relation to one another, and the divine missions.⁶¹³ This is the "return route" that includes a "vastly

⁶¹¹ Crowe, "Son of God, Holy Spirit and World Religions" 325.

⁶¹² Crowe, "Son of God, Holy Spirit and Word Religions" 327.

⁶¹³ Robert Doran points out in contrasting the 1964 edition with the 1957 edition of the First Chapter of *De Deo Trino* that Lonergan's concern with the relationship between dogmatics, systematics and historical process is marginalized "precisely as an issue for doctrines and systematics." See Doran, "The First Chapter of *De Deo Trino*, *Pars Systematica*: The Issues," *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 18 (2000) 47 and "Intelligentia Fidei in *De Deo Trino*, *pars systematica*: A commentary on the First Three Sections

increased understanding of the whole field...fertile and operative” in many more ways than could be achieved in the dogmatic-historical.⁶¹⁴ Crowe’s “reversal” of the way Christians commonly think of the Son and Spirit in the world is, in fact, only a reversal in the human cognitional order and closer to the actual order. The reversal is conceivable only because of the achievements of the historical way that culminated in the psychological analogy and, in particular, the refined and developed analogy of the later Lonergan.

According to Lonergan there is a threefold self-giving of God as love to humankind in history: “the gift of the Holy Spirit to those that love (*Rom. 5:5*), the gift of the divine Word made flesh and dwelling amongst us (*John 1:14*), the final gift of union with the Father who is originating love (*1 John 4:8, 16*).”⁶¹⁵ These three historical steps “center on the divine initiative of love: love given, love declared, love consummated; in the sequence: Spirit, Son, and Father.”⁶¹⁶ In continuity with Augustine and Aquinas, it is the *domun dei*, the first and foundational divine gift and third person of the Trinity, who is “the source and ground of all”⁶¹⁷ the subsequent gifts of God’s self in the declaration and consummation of love. With regard to the timing of God’s self-giving, Crowe says:

The God who falls in Love with all of us, and hastens to give the Holy Spirit, is the God who is in a hurry. But the same God is strangely slow to declare that Love for us, to send the Word in human form and manifest the divine Love. There is the enormously long *praeparatio evangelica*.⁶¹⁸

of Chapter One,” *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 19 (2001) 35 where Doran compares Lonergan’s threefold movement of analytic, synthetic and historical in *Divinarum Personarum* with the twofold movement of dogmatic and systematic in *De Deo Trino*.

⁶¹⁴ Crowe, *The Doctrine of the Most Holy Trinity* 141.

⁶¹⁵ Bernard J.F. Lonergan, “Aquinas Today: Tradition and Innovation,” in *A Third Collection* ed. Frederick E. Crowe (New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1985) 53. See Bernard J.F. Lonergan, “Mission and the Spirit,” in *A Third Collection* ed. Frederick E. Crowe (New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1985) on vertical finality 26-28.

⁶¹⁶ Crowe, “Rethinking God-With-Us” 173.

⁶¹⁷ Crowe, “Rethinking God-With-Us” 172.

⁶¹⁸ Crowe, “Son of God, Holy Spirit and World Religions” 340.

In Lonergan's analogous example of a couple in love, a couple may "fall" in love but take a long time to "declare" or "avow" their love and further to "consummate" that love; the "falling" is the gift of the divine self in the Holy Spirit, the "declaring" is the public self-giving of the Son, and the "consummation" the final self-giving of the Father.

Crowe enumerates a corresponding threefold experiential dimension of the trinitarian character and its ramifications for constructing a balanced theology of the divine missions toward a "trinified" understanding of history. The first is the outer experience of the presence of the Son, the gift of God's love declared. In its historicity this experience was immediate for those who saw and heard Jesus Christ but is mediated through history, and more explicitly and intentionally through the Church, and is vicarious for us today. This experience needs the complement of the experience of the Holy Spirit; in itself the outer experience of the word can neither be received nor be salvific. The inner experience of the Holy Spirit; God's love given, while invisible "does not mean present without manifestation in experience."⁶¹⁹ The mission of the Spirit is equal to that of the Son and both are "manifestations of God-with-us."⁶²⁰ Narrow focus on the experience of the mission of the Son comes at the expense of being attentive to the immediate experience of the Holy Spirit. In such a scenario the Church runs the risk of becoming too juridical, tied to a notion of its past, and unable to adequately read the signs of the times in the present. The last interior-experiential dimension of the Trinitarian character is the experience of the mystery of mysteries, better described in apophatic language as the experience of the absence of experience, that reflects the reality of the "not yet" and "to be" of the final consummation of the gift of God's love in the union

⁶¹⁹ Crowe, "Rethinking God-With-Us" 176.

⁶²⁰ Crowe, "Rethinking God-With-Us" 176.

with the Father. As long as we are separated from the Father the feeling of absence, longing, need, etc., remains in spite of the real and historical experience of the missions of the Son and the Holy Spirit. Once more, Crowe warns that the unique concentration on the divine self-communication of the Son obscures the personal role of the Father in a theology of God-with-us—a tendency compounded by the fact that unlike the data of sense of the outer experience of the Son and the data of consciousness of the inner experience of the Holy Spirit, there is no data on God the Father (excepted that which is vicariously communicated by the Son and Spirit) that bring us into the realm of the infinite.⁶²¹

The created participation in the divine relations number four, while the existential experience of the Triune God correspond to the number of persons in God, namely three, and human-divine relationship is made possible through the two divine missions of the Word and Spirit. The missions are created participations in the divine relations aimed at not only relationship with God, but relating to God as the divine persons in God relate to one another. The two missions differ in their *ad extra* dynamism. The Spirit and Word are *sent* for the purposes “of establishing and confirming interpersonal relations, first between God and us, and then among ourselves.”⁶²² The Son and Spirit have a specific relationship to their unique operations in the world. The Son, as he has taken on human nature, performs works proper to this fact; on the other hand, the Holy Spirit has only the divine nature and does no work that

⁶²¹ Crowe, “Rethinking God-With-Us” 182.

⁶²² Robert Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005) 71.

the Father and Son do not likewise do.⁶²³ The twofold divine mission aims at drawing humanity into the immediacy of the beatific vision, “the heavenly city for the glory of the Father;”⁶²⁴ therefore, the self-giving of the Father is not a sending but the term, fulfilment and consummation of the sending of the Spirit and Word.

III/ Uniqueness and Complementarity

Both of the divine missions, though ordered to the same end, has its own distinctive role and function neither of which is the “same” nor “superfluous.”⁶²⁵ Each mission brings with it new meaning into the world and since meaning is constitutive of both the human and divine, the world is affected by the missions of the Spirit and Son. In the philosophical “turn to the subject” enunciated and clarified by Lonergan, Crowe replaces causality with meaning as the basic category for understanding God-with-us. As such, he places the data of sense and the data of consciousness on an equal footing. Causality as a basic category for understanding the divine missions would place the Jesus Christ event externally manifest in history at the center of a theology of God-for-us. Instead, Crowe suggests a trinitarian approach:

We have to situate the Word-with-us in the totality of the economic Trinity; that is, the Spirit, too, is with us as God, as one of the Trinity, bringing with him the meaning he has in eternity and taking on the meaning of the earthly economy as it is directed by God’s infinite wisdom. The Father, too, is with us in hope, as God, as one of the Trinity, bringing with him the meaning he has in eternity and taking on the meaning of the earthly economy as it is directed by divine wisdom.⁶²⁶

⁶²³ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics*, vol. 12 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, trans. Michael G. Shields, ed. Robert M. Doran and H. Daniel Monsour (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007) 485.

⁶²⁴ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 491.

⁶²⁵ Frederick E. Crowe, S.J., “Son and Spirit: Tension in the Divine Missions?,” in *Appropriating the Lonergan Idea*, ed. Michael Vertin (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006) 303.

⁶²⁶ Frederick E. Crowe, S.J. *Christ and History* (Ottawa: Novalis, 2005) 172-173.

In tracing Lonergan's Christology Crowe sees a movement away from the metaphysical causality popular in pre-Vatican II neo-scholasticism (evident in the early Lonergan) to the later Lonergan's aim of Christology to give meaning to the Jesus Christ event, to make Christ present through the meaning he gave himself, and to make this meaning grow in the world.⁶²⁷ Likewise, in the self-communication of the Spirit, the Spirit brings with her the meaning she has in eternity. This is a complexification of the understanding of the divine missions that not only invite humanity into relationship with God and as God relates to God (*ad intra*) but does so by communicating the eternal divine meaning historically. In the divine economy salvation is the work of the entire Trinity and each of the persons of the Trinity brings into the earthly economy the meaning s/he has in eternity.

Peter Beer characterizes Crowe's contribution in moving Trinitarian theology beyond the impasse of causality toward meaning as a central and important aspect in Crowe's development of Trinitarian thought because it is "the meaning brought by Understanding, Truth and Love [that] make the created world what it truly is."⁶²⁸ Each of the persons of the Trinity mediates and controls meaning in human living: the Father as ultimate and complete meaning, the Son as the fullness of truth and order, and the Spirit as the first and foundational gift. Beer writes:

The Word was to become incarnate because he articulates, expresses, institutionalizes divine understanding. Love grounds all other particular gifts, and is given that we may be possessed by God.⁶²⁹

⁶²⁷ Crowe, *Christ and History* 176.

⁶²⁸ Peter Beer, "Meaning in Relation to the Trinity," in *Trinification of the World: A Festschrift in Honour of Frederick E. Crowe in Celebrating his 60th Birthday* ed. Thomas A Dunne and Jean-Marc Laporte (Toronto: Regis College Press, 1978) 9.

⁶²⁹ Beer, "Meaning in Relation to the Trinity" 11.

Each of the persons of the Trinity wishes to share his/her particular meaning with humanity so that through the missions of the Spirit and the Word we may participate in the inner life of the Triune God.

Crowe admits that Lonergan did not treat revelation in depth, “but it is clearly at the basis of his theology that God once in a while said something doctrinal, not only about creation but about the divine being too.”⁶³⁰ God’s self-communication to humanity according to Lonergan “is a matter of meaning” and would be nothing without it.⁶³¹ Thus, “[R]evelation is God’s entering into the world of human meaning.”⁶³² Doran writes:

God’s entrance into the world of human meaning is God’s effecting transformations in that already given intelligibility of ‘world’ that is correlative to our horizons—effecting transformations through the cognitive, constitutive, communicative, and effective functions of God’s own meaning, of God’s original meaningfulness, and ultimately of God’s incarnate meaning, God’s incarnate Logos, God’s incarnate Word, the Son of the eternal Father, crucified, dead, and risen from the dead.⁶³³

Culture and community are the vehicles and context in which elemental meaning is received and common meaning is achieved and continues to be communicated, developed and shared. The ‘state’ of the community “affects the receptivity of both individuals and groups to the entrance of God’s meaning into the world of human meaning through God’s symbolic self-communication or revelation.”⁶³⁴

⁶³⁰ Crowe, “Rethinking God-With-Us” 170. See also Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* 137.

⁶³¹ Bernard J.F. Lonergan, “Time and Meaning,” in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1958-1964*, vol. 6 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed Robert C. Croken, Frederick E. Crowe, and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996) 104-105.

⁶³² Bernard J.F. Lonergan, “The Analogy of Meaning,” in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1958-1964*, vol. 6 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed Robert C. Croken, Frederick E. Crowe, and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996) 205-206.

⁶³³ Doran, *What is Systematic Theology?* 137.

⁶³⁴ Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* 138.

Crowe's apt insistence on the unique, distinct and non-superfluous meaning that both of the divine missions brings means that Christians can no longer hold any kind of "Christomonism" or "practical binatariansim" as they are historically wont. The former refers to an unbalanced Christocentrism often associated with "ecclesial juridicism and theological rationalism;"⁶³⁵ an emphasis on the institutional dimension of Church and an under-appreciation of the charismatic character. Yves Congar maintains that following the Second Vatican Council measures are being taken to redress this problem particularly acute in Western Christianity.⁶³⁶ Gerald O'Collins cites the problem of Christomonism as one of the twelve most significant issues facing trinitarian theology today. O'Collins attributes this tendency to a particular (mis)interpretation of the Latin Church's addition of the *filioque* to the Nicene-Constantinopolitan positing that the problematic lies in an understanding of the Holy Spirit to be the Spirit of Christ instead of the Spirit of God.⁶³⁷ This subordinationist tendency is what Eastern Christianity fears and is in disagreement with; not that the Spirit is the Spirit of the Father, who is the Father by virtue of the eternal generation of the Son. Binatarians acknowledge only two divine persons and practical binatarians may not deny the three persons doctrinally but act as if the third person of the Trinity does not really matter.⁶³⁸ According to Catherine Mowry LaCugna, this practical denial and lack of reflection upon the Spirit marks a defeat of Trinitarian theology.⁶³⁹ O'Collins lists practical binatrianism as yet another significant issue facing

⁶³⁵ Ralph Del Colle, *Christ and the Spirit* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994) 9.

⁶³⁶ Yves Congar, *The Word and the Spirit*, trans. David Smith (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1986) 117.

⁶³⁷ Gerlad O'Collins, "The Holy Trinity: The State of the Questions," in *Trinity*, ed. Gerald O'Collins et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999) 1-25.

⁶³⁸ Crowe, "Son of God, Holy Spirit and World Religions" 331.

⁶³⁹ Catherine Mowry LaCugna, *God For Us, the Trinity and Christian Life*, Part I "The Emergence and Defeat of the Doctrine of the Trinity" 21-209 (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1993).

Trinitarian theology today.⁶⁴⁰ Eastern Catholic theologian, Petro Bilaniuk echoes this sentiment when he states:

Christianity has a long way to go to develop an adequate theology of the Holy Spirit as the co-equal, co-essential and co-adorable Person of the Most Holy Trinity. May I suggest starting with a deep appreciation of the Holy Spirit as a Divine Person, with all that the concept of 'person' entails?⁶⁴¹

In asserting the distinct meaning that the Spirit brings into the world, Crowe addresses the challenges of Christomonism and practical binatarianism. He maintains that Christians may continue to speak of the visible mission of the Son and the invisible mission of the Spirit; however, with “a new understanding of the one as sent into the world we meet through outer, objective data and the other as sent into the world of interior, subjective data.”⁶⁴² The challenge then becomes to attend to interiority and to validate the data of consciousness as really real, as legitimate and as valuable as the data of sense. In responding to this challenge James Pambrun posits that interiority becomes a “reflexive and critical moment;” reflexive insofar as it is an experience of an immediate experience and critical insofar as there occurs the recognition that the experience is a structured pattern and the data for this pattern are found in an analysis of consciousness.⁶⁴³

Crowe offers a new image to redress the imbalances resulting from Christomonism and practical binatarianism:

Our religion cannot be Christocentric in quite the same way it was in the past, but we are troubled by the various efforts to conceive a new center. May I suggest that we discard the image itself of a center, and think rather of an ellipse with two foci.

⁶⁴⁰ O'Collins, “The Holy Trinity: The State of the Questions” 1-25.

⁶⁴¹ Petro Bilaniuk, *Theology and the Economy of the Holy Spirit: an Eastern approach* (Rome: Dharmaram Publications, 1980) 41.

⁶⁴² Crowe, “Son and Spirit: Tensions in the Divine Missions?” 307.

⁶⁴³ James R. Pambrun, “Revelation and Interiority: The Contribution of Frederick E. Crowe, S.J.,” *Theological Studies* 67 (2006) 327.

A circle...is a special form of an ellipse, one in which the two foci coincide. Does that provide an image of our previous history in regard to Son and Spirit? ...The Spirit, instead of being allowed to be himself, functioning as a focus in Christian life, was brought into coincidence with the Son and so into a measure of oblivion...In the image of an ellipse the two foci of Son and Spirit are distinct and complementary. Of course, our God is triune, and eventually we must find a place for the Father, but at least we have a first approximation on the way to a complete integration of the three persons in the work of redemption.⁶⁴⁴

Toward the integral conception of the complementary missions of the Spirit and the Son, Crowe contrasts “the indefinite adaptability which the historicity of man requires”⁶⁴⁵ and is furnished by the Spirit with the Son’s “very historicity to which, in the completeness of his *kenosis*, he has subjected himself” that prevents him “from becoming an immediate model for the whole human race in all its variety.”⁶⁴⁶ In the historical *kenosis* of the Son of God, he is subject to social and cultural conditions, to the limitations of time and place, to language and mores; Jesus’ very Jewishness reveals the totality of the divine *kenosis* and his particular historical positionality. Crowe writes:

If the Son underwent a historical *kenosis*, the Spirit did not. If the Son had to speak in Aramaic, the Spirit speaks wordlessly in the universal language of interiority. If the Son lived only a few years in a small nation, the Spirit of the Lord fills the entire space-time universe. Have we demanded too much of the Son and by that very fact done irreverence to the Spirit the Father gave us?⁶⁴⁷

Crowe further suggests that toward the integration of the complementary roles of the Spirit and the Son in the one divine plan is the need to (re)construct Christologies that would draw from pneumatology as a significant and foundational resource and not consider it an ancillary corollary. The methodological option to reflect on the role of the Spirit alongside and even prior to a consideration of the identity of Jesus is to be found in

⁶⁴⁴ Crowe, “Son and Spirit: Tensions in the Divine Missions?” 304.

⁶⁴⁵ Crowe, “Son and Spirit: Tensions in the Divine Missions?” 305.

⁶⁴⁶ Crowe, “Son and Spirit: Tensions in the Divine Missions?” 308.

⁶⁴⁷ Frederick E. Crowe, S.J., “A Threefold *Kenosis* of the Son of God,” in *Appropriating the Lonergan Idea*, ed. Michael Vertin (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006) 323.

Scripture. For instance, in the Annunciation, at the baptism of Christ, when he is led into the desert, or in his return to Galilee the Spirit is not only present but plays a pivotal role. In addition, Crowe asserts that the re-conceptualization of the integral missions of the Word and Spirit and the consequent methodological exigencies will not only adjust the re-conceptualization of this relationship *ad extra* and *ad intra* but also their relationship to the Father and his role in history.⁶⁴⁸

IV/ Theology of the Holy Spirit

Crowe laments the “huge gap” in the work of theologians who discourse on the world’s religions without mention of the Holy Spirit.⁶⁴⁹ This grave oversight supports Crowe’s contention that the mission of the Spirit is often overlooked in Christian theology; that the role of the Spirit is considered less ‘real’; that the distinct meaning the Spirit brings into the world is subordinated or “brought into coincidence with the Son and so into a measure of oblivion.”⁶⁵⁰ The problem is twofold: doctrinally, there is the failure to see the Spirit as infinitely conscious and distinct in the Godhead, freely able to enter into personal relationships with humankind, and who is worthy of praise. Secondly, for systematic theology, when the significance of the Spirit is overlooked the potential construction a theology of religious diversity becomes exceedingly difficult because of an overwhelming Christocentric approach that focuses on historical, empirical data. Consequently, pneumatologies are frequently subsumed under or ancillary to

⁶⁴⁸ Crowe, “Rethinking God with Us” 187.

⁶⁴⁹ Crowe, *Christ and History* 217. For example, Karl Rahner’s influential notion of the “anonymous Christian” has no developed pneumatology.

⁶⁵⁰ Crowe, “Son and Spirit: Tensions in the Divine Missions?” 304.

Christologies. This reveals a neglect and marginalization of the data of consciousness as theological data. When such an approach does have recourse to a theology of the Holy Spirit, it is as a stop gap measure for questions raised by Christologies lacking a trinitarian dimension. The Christocentric paradigm is unable to address many issues raised in the course of interfaith discussions. A trinitarian context in which to understand religious diversity may or may not answer the questions arising from a Christocentric paradigm, but certainly an entirely new and different set of questions would arise.

Crowe's methodological principle results in the reversal of the way in which Christians order and conceive of the two divine missions. His thesis postulates the sending of the Spirit first and then the sending of the Son in continuity with the mission of the Spirit in order to bring to further completion the one divine plan executed in two distinct phases. Crowe goes on to explain the significance that the ontological ordering of the missions has for a Christian approach to non-Christian religions:

The corollary to this thesis will define a consequent approach to the world religions from the Christian side. It supposes that their positive moment is the fruit of the Spirit present among them, but that this partial moment calls for its completion: the need of world religions to hear the gospel message is the same need still that the world had when God sent the Son to be the truth and life (Jn 14:6). With that supposition in mind we will try to determine anew our relation, attitude, and approach to the world religions.⁶⁵¹

Thus Crowe asserts that the corollary to the thesis is from a Christian perspective and that the positive features⁶⁵² of the world's religions have their source in the gift of the Holy Spirit. According to the four-point hypothesis, being in love in an unqualified way is a created participation in the active spiration that is the Father and Son breathing forth the Holy Spirit (sanctifying grace). In religious believers it flows not from their knowledge

⁶⁵¹ Crowe, "Son of God, Holy Spirit, and World Religions" 325-326.

⁶⁵² Crowe does not spell out what he means by "positive moment" but Vatican II may hint at some of these as truth, goodness, and holiness discernible in the world's religions.

but from divine knowledge and love and is the ground of acts of loving (rooted in the habit of charity). Crowe equally asserts the need for the gift of God's love given to be completed by the complementary gift of the Son. Nevertheless, the fact that the same Spirit can be discerned in the positive moments of the world's religions reorients the Christian "relation, attitude, and approach" to the religiously other.

Crowe asks, "How will our understanding of non-Christians as gifted with the Spirit affect our general attitude and relation to them?"⁶⁵³ Since Christians have no active role in the giving of the Spirit, as this is a divine initiative, Christians need not concern themselves with questions of who should receive the gift of the Spirit and why. Thus, Christians need to examine their own attitudes and behaviours toward the religious Other and possibly even make "agonizing reappraisals"⁶⁵⁴ regarding other religions, religiously other people and the Christian understanding of them.

In questioning the Christian approach to the religious other, Crowe's insights encompass a theological consideration of the role of the Spirit in the world's religions. The "common orientation to the mystery of love and awe through the indwelling Holy Spirit"⁶⁵⁵ reflects the unity of God's gift given to many; could it be "the same Spirit who long ago made no distinction between Jews and Gentiles might be expected to be independent of our division of Christians and non-Christians?"⁶⁵⁶ One of the important fruits of the gift of the Holy Spirit experienced by the early Church was to break down barriers between Jewish and Gentile Christians. Crowe refers to the universal presence of the Holy Spirit that is given indiscriminately by God as "the one Pentecost...alive and

⁶⁵³ Crowe, "Son of God, Holy Spirit, and World Religions" 333.

⁶⁵⁴ Crowe, "Son of God, Holy Spirit, and World Religions" 334.

⁶⁵⁵ Crowe, "Son of God, Holy Spirit, and World Religions" 335.

⁶⁵⁶ Frederick E. Crowe, S.J., "The Spirit and 'I' at Prayer," in *Developing the Lonergan Legacy*, ed. Michael Vertin (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004) 294-295.

well and ongoing throughout the world.”⁶⁵⁷ Since there are no barriers to God’s love, Christians and non-Christians participate in the Triune life *together* through the mission of the Holy Spirit

Crowe’s corollary to the ontological ordering of the divine missions further highlights the requirement to place the data of sense and the data of consciousness on equal footing.⁶⁵⁸ The subjugation of the mission of the Spirit to that of the Son reflects a correlated tendency to subject the data of consciousness to the data of sense. The data of sense are considered empirical and historical, like the mission of the Son, while the data of consciousness are considered less so, and so less real. The lack of attentiveness to the data of consciousness has repercussions for the manner in which the gift of the Holy Spirit is apprehended and responded to, the ways in which religious believers respond to one another, and recognize the divine giftedness of the religious other. Crowe writes:

It is our interior life in the Spirit that assures our authenticity, and it is only through study of that interior life, shared with others in whom also the Spirit is present, that we can discern what he is saying.⁶⁵⁹

The presence of the Spirit in the lives of religious believers requires an attentiveness to the interior life to discern the promptings of the Spirit and, thusly, encourage mutual authenticity through dialogue and relationship.

Attentiveness to the interior operations of human consciousness makes the search for wisdom possible, and consequently, the search for the source of wisdom and the opportunity to make wise judgments and decisions. Crowe writes of wisdom as a gift of the Spirit:

But you need wisdom even in order to search for wisdom: if you are not wise, you

⁶⁵⁷ Crowe, “Son of God, Holy Spirit, and the World Religions” 332.

⁶⁵⁸ Crowe, “Son and Spirit: Tension in the Divine Missions?” 304.

⁶⁵⁹ Crowe, “Son and Spirit: Tension in the Divine Missions?” 312.

will not know you are not wise, you will not know your need to search for wisdom, you are certainly in no condition at all to carry out the search. And it is useless to appeal to the wisdom of authority, for the unwise will interpret authority unwisely.⁶⁶⁰

Here there seems to be a parallel with Lonergan's view on the gift of God's grace as operative and co-operative; however, in Crowe's example, it would be operative wisdom and co-operative wisdom. Fundamentally the point is the same: search for wisdom begins with the gift of divine Wisdom just as the fact of being loved by God and the decision to love God and others begins with the gift of God's love. The apprehension of the gift of God's love makes it possible to make a judgment and subsequently a decision in continuity or disjunction with that judgment.

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit discerned in attentiveness to the interior life does not mean "manifestations in experience"⁶⁶¹ without "external manifestations."⁶⁶² The Acts of the Apostles describes these external manifestations as tongues of fire. The manifestations of the gift of the Holy Spirit are apparent to Crowe in the positive moments of the religions of the world, in religiously converted believers and in religious traditions that live their faith authentically, in intersubjective encounters, in the diffusion of friendship and in the promotion of the good of order constituted by the missions of the Spirit and the Son.

⁶⁶⁰ Frederick E. Crowe, S.J., "Rhyme and Reason: On Lonergan's Foundations for Works of the Spirit," in *Developing the Lonergan Legacy* ed. Michael Vertin (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004) 318.

⁶⁶¹ Crowe, "Rethinking God-With-Us" 176.

⁶⁶² Crowe, "Son of God, Holy Spirit, and World Religions" 331.

V/ History and Freedom

In “Rethinking God-With-Us: Categories from Lonergan” Crowe employs Lonergan’s notion of religious consciousness to a rethinking of the Triune God’s relation to world religions. The underlying assumption of the article is that “God speaks” in history as much as “God saves.”⁶⁶³ God’s word addressed to humanity, always for humanity’s sake, does not only reveal something about being human but equally reveals something about God.

Crowe affirms the doctrine that the economic Trinity is the essential (immanent) Trinity: the eternal Three are the Three among us. Crowe writes,

If they are not the three among us, then these three are three others and we are not talking about God-with-us; but if it is the eternal Three who are God-with-us, then we may proceed to speak of their way of being with us...⁶⁶⁴

Beyond Rahner’s *Grundaxiom* that the economic Trinity is the immanent Trinity and vice versa, Crowe affirms that the Trinity not only reveals something about divinity to humankind, but reveals divinity as relationality and invites humanity to participate in those relations. Since humanity is able to relate to God and as God relates to God’s self, then we can say something about how God is with us and about divine being too. This is the Trinitarian character of God that corresponds to the human experiential dimension of love: in the experience of the gift of the Holy Spirit to those who love (love given), as the gift of the divine word dwelling among us (love declared) and as final gift of union with the Father who is originating love (love consummated).⁶⁶⁵ The experience of the divine

⁶⁶³ Crowe, “Rethinking God-With-Us” 170.

⁶⁶⁴ Crowe, “Rethinking God-With-Us” 169.

⁶⁶⁵ Crowe, “Rethinking God-With-Us” 173.

threefold self-giving occurs in the context of history and community. Citing Lonergan Crowe writes:

God's gift of his love has its proper counterpart in the revelation events in which God discloses to a particular people or to all mankind the completeness of his love for them. For being-in-love is properly itself, not in the isolated individual, but only in a plurality of persons that disclose their love to one another.⁶⁶⁶

Crowe locates an integration of these two aspects of the Trinity (economic and immanent) in Lonergan's theory of human development that moves downward from value—the apprehension and judgment of value and the decision to live in accordance with value— and in the concomitant movement upward from experience to understanding to value and to decision. As Doran suggests the movement unfolds

...from the gift of God's love to a knowledge and orientation (let us call it a horizon) born of that love, and a movement from the gift and horizon together to acts of loving that coalesce into a habit of charity...The gift of God's love and the horizon born of it are the created graced analogue of active spiration, and so of the Father and Son together, and the habit of charity that proceeds from them is the created graced analogue of passive spiration, and so of the Holy Spirit. From the gift of God's love to faith and hope, and from these together to love; from the Father to the Word and from Father and Word together to the proceeding Love that is the Holy Spirit.⁶⁶⁷

The experience of being in love and loving unrestrictedly are participations in and imitations of the eternal divine relational processions and not human knowledge.

Similarly, in the dynamic movement of human development from above downward, the community fosters and interprets religious experience over and again and hands on the values it discerns through the generations. Individuals in the community are formed in and by the network of relationships of trust that eventually require an appropriation, rejection or modification of that which has been handed down in their own subjective self-constitution. Through communal intersubjectivity “many can recognize in

⁶⁶⁶ Crowe, “Rethinking God-With-Us” 173, see also Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 283.

⁶⁶⁷ Robert M. Doran, S.J., “Addressing the Four-Point Hypothesis” *Theological Studies* 68 (2007) 679.

one another a common orientation in their living and feeling...From common communion with God, there springs a religious community.”⁶⁶⁸

Crowe supports the contention that theological encounter, dialogue, comparison, and convergence of the world’s religions are possible due to the common source of religious experience, the gift of God’s love. The interior experience of God’s grace is always interpreted through one’s own world mediated by meaning—one’s culture, language, symbol system, experiences, etc. The experience is remembered, recreated and developed through authentic religious practise. Quoting Lonergan, John Dadosky writes, “One could say that operative/cooperative grace is the ground for all religious commitment: ‘There is, I believe, a common root to all religious commitment. It is God’s grace that makes religion become alive, effective, enduring, transforming.’”⁶⁶⁹ This gift is prior to religious symbols and imagery and orients human subjects as a “vector, and undertow, and a fateful call to a dreaded holiness.”⁶⁷⁰ It is a transformative gift given in history. On the other hand, the intentionality of the human spirit that asks unlimited questions and seeks understanding reveals “the human capacity for religion, reaching up toward the love of God.”⁶⁷¹ Thus, not only is the gift of God’s love universal but so is the human capacity to receive and reflect upon it.

The universalist position Crowe attributes to Lonergan is simple enough: God desires everyone to be saved (1Tim 2:4) and so everyone is gifted with sufficient grace. Lonergan’s bi-directional theory of grace and human development includes love and self-

⁶⁶⁸ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 118.

⁶⁶⁹ John D. Dadosky, *The Structure of Religious Knowing: Encountering the Sacred in Eliade and Lonergan*. (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2004) 132.

⁶⁷⁰ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 113.

⁶⁷¹ Crowe, “Lonergan’s Universalist View” 155.

transcendence realized in love.⁶⁷² Crowe, following Lonergan, asserts that the necessity and sufficiency of grace for salvation is the gift of God's love given which constitutes an element in all the religions of humankind that is at once profound and holy.⁶⁷³ In "The Response of a Jesuit as a Priest and Apostle in the Modern World" Lonergan illustrates his transposition of the classical and theoretical language and categories of grace to a methodical language of interiority in his query if "grace" would be sufficient for salvation if one did not "love" one's neighbour.⁶⁷⁴

A universalist view of religion challenges Christian universalising and totalising claims that it is or shall become the religion of all humanity as the unique "conduit" of grace in history. Crowe rejects the popular opinion of many 20th century theologians that in and through Jesus Christ Christians possess a 'superior' and 'special' grace and, therefore, are especially possessed and loved by God in contradistinction to members of other religions traditions. In fact, Crowe maintains that no religion really has knowledge of God because "we love an Unknown and need to find out what or whom we love."⁶⁷⁵

Questions that explore what or whom we love express exteriorly interior longing.

Likewise, religious traditions articulate the individual and collective need to express interior religious experience exteriorly through images, concepts and judgments.

Concomitant to a community's need to express for itself shared experiences of God's love, there occurs a public divine word that accompanies God's love (like the couple that declares their love for one another). Crowe cites two passages from Lonergan's *Method*

⁶⁷² Crowe, "Lonergan's Universalist View" 159.

⁶⁷³ Crowe, "Lonergan's Universalist View" 159.

⁶⁷⁴ Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "The Response of a Jesuit as Priest and Apostle in the Modern World," in *A Second Collection* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996) 165- 188.

⁶⁷⁵ Crowe, "Lonergan's Universalist View" 165. God is not the object of knowledge in the same way as contingent and sensible things are.

in *Theology* in this regard: “There is a personal entrance of God himself into history, a communication of God to his people, the advent of God’s word into the world of religious expression;”⁶⁷⁶ and “God’s gift of his love has its proper counterpart in the revelation events in which God discloses to a particular people or to all mankind the completeness of his love for them.”⁶⁷⁷ The question remains, however, has God only spoken once for all humankind to hear or has God spoken various words in the various religious traditions of the world that accompany the interior experience of divine love?

Crowe offers two possible directions that Lonergan’s universalist view of religion and its relation to world religions may take. First, an understanding of religious diversity within a “trinified” view of history, one that is structured by the self-giving of the Trinity and taken up into the inner life of the Triune God, raises an entirely new set of questions that marginalizes some of the issues that have bogged down Christian approaches to religious diversity and consequently inter-religious dialogues in the past. Crowe enumerates some of these questions, all of which have to do with history:

What is God doing in the divine economy of the twofold mission, an economy that extends over all ages? What was God doing in past ages? What is God doing now? What can we discern of the possibilities the future holds and of the actualities God’s intentions may have already determined for us? Some total view of history seems called for: What does Lonergan contribute under that heading?⁶⁷⁸

Crowe outlines two approaches to the series of questions he poses derived from Lonergan’s thought that contribute to his central concern regarding “some total view of history.”⁶⁷⁹ Crowe calls the first approach “synchronic.” It is based on Lonergan’s

⁶⁷⁶ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 119.

⁶⁷⁷ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 283.

⁶⁷⁸ Crowe, *Christ and History* 218. See also “Lonergan’s Universalist View of Religion” 174.

⁶⁷⁹ Crowe admits that the data Lonergan leaves us for such an exploration are “scattered” throughout his writings on the economy of salvation and the mission of Christian history. See “Lonergan’s Universalist View” 176.

structure of history: progress, decline and redemption which are simultaneously present in varying degrees at any given moment: “though emphases may vary in different sequences, we are always progressing in some way, always in some degree declining, and equally always being redeemed.”⁶⁸⁰ With regard to religious diversity, the synchronic aspect of a total view of history perceives

...the simultaneous presence among us of the many religions, each with its fidelity to the Spirit present in them (progress), each with its infidelity to the promptings of the Spirit (decline), and each being led to the ultimate end of all creation (redemption).⁶⁸¹

This first approach has to do with the authenticity or inauthenticity of the various religions, according to their own self-understanding and criteria, to the promptings of the Holy Spirit and their relationship with God. The second approach has to do with the relationship of the religions to one another and to the events of history.

The second approach to “some total view of history” is a “diachronic” view of history that refers to the structure of historical sequences: “sequences in meaning and expression, in social institutions and culture, in all that pertains to human living, and this, whether it be question of progress or question of decline.”⁶⁸² In the diachronic scenario

God has seen fit to allow—and promote—the simultaneous existence of many religions, has God a ‘plan’ also for the sequences in the various roles of the various religions? Are some transient, and others meant to endure to the end, if there is to be an end? What is the rationale of the appearance at a particular time in the Judaic religion, when Augustus was Roman Emperor, of the birth of Jesus of Nazareth? Was the appearance of Jesus ‘timed’ not only in relation to Augustus but also in relation to the stage of development reached by the world religions?⁶⁸³

Crowe bifurcates the diachronic view of history. The first prong relates to timing or what Lonergan termed ‘convenientia’ in his Latin Christology and theology of Incarnation.

⁶⁸⁰ Crowe, *Christ and History* 219.

⁶⁸¹ Crowe, *Christ and History* 219.

⁶⁸² Crowe, “Lonergan’s Universalist View of Religion” 175.

⁶⁸³ Crowe, *Christ and History* 219 and “Lonergan’s Universalist View of Religion” 176.

Crowe extends the field to include reflection on relating “the role of the Holy Spirit to the order of universal history...what is the ‘convenientia’ of the interior gift of the Spirit to God’s people? How should we conceive of the overarching order of a universe when we give equal attention to the presence of Son and to the presence of the Spirit?”⁶⁸⁴ The second prong asks a similar question in a more universal context: is there timing in the appearance of Jesus of Nazareth or the Buddha, or Mohammed that is related to the stages of development of various religions and of the shared history of these religions? If so, what could it mean? In the exploration of such questions the roles of both the Son and the Spirit manifest in history must be given due consideration.⁶⁸⁵

If the first direction of Lonergan’s universalist view of religion relates to the divine initiative the second direction has to do with contingency and freedom. For Lonergan there is no contingent decision on God’s part without a created counterpart.⁶⁸⁶ This is significant in thinking about the future and the role human decision plays in its constitution since “God has no will for tomorrow, or anything else that is not.”⁶⁸⁷ Here I quote Crowe at length to illustrate the relationship of contingency with religious diversity in history:

If God’s ‘plan’ is already in place for us, that is, in the ‘already’ of our ‘now,’ then to that extent we are no longer free. And if God has a determinate ‘plan’ in place for Christianity and the world religions, then we will let be what must be. But suppose God has no such plan, suppose that God loves a slow-learning people enough to allow them long ages to learn what they have to learn, suppose that the destiny of the world religions is contingent on what we all learn and do—say, on Christians being authentically Christian, Hindus being authentically Hindu, and so on—then responsibility returns to us with a vengeance, and the answer to the

⁶⁸⁴ Crowe, *Christ and History* 220.

⁶⁸⁵ Crowe, “Lonergan’s Universalist View of Religion” 177. Crowe suggests that a Christian theology centered on the double foci of Spirit and Son, not just the Son, needs to be worked out. See also “Son and Spirit: Tension in the Divine Missions?” 304.

⁶⁸⁶ For example it is true to say that God creates only if the universe exists.

⁶⁸⁷ Crowe, “Lonergan’s Universalist View of Religion” 178.

question of the final relationship of Christianity and the world religions is that there is no answer yet.⁶⁸⁸

The authenticity of each religion and what they learn from one another affects “the destiny of the world religions” and so the destiny of the world is contingent upon the “actual realization of future possibilities” in the present.⁶⁸⁹ If the divine interaction with human history were determinate in the form of a set plan, then not only would humankind not be free, but it would have no responsibility in the unfolding and construction of history. On the other hand, if there is no determinate plan for human history then the making of the world and the direction history takes includes human responsibility. In fact, “[T]here does not seem to be an overarching plan or blueprint for history” writes Donna Teevan, “[T]he goal of historical process is simply whatever becomes determinate in the process itself.”⁶⁹⁰ Following Lonergan, Crowe “invite[s] us to shift from reflecting on history to attending to how history is intrinsic to our theological efforts to understand and thematize, that is, to objectify the stages and transitions in our understanding of the Word of God...historicity is an expression of our sense of agency. It is a moment integral to an act of self-understanding that has transformed the hermeneutical form of our theological questions.”⁶⁹¹

In his systematics on the Trinity Lonergan highlights the necessary cooperation between human beings and the Triune God in history stating “‘He who created you without you will not justify you without you.’” Crowe’s development of Lonergan’s universalist view of religion in the areas of grace and history, re-orientes Christocentric-soteriological discussions. Lonergan and Crowe accept the position enunciated in the

⁶⁸⁸ Crowe, “Lonergan’s Universalist View of Religion” 178.

⁶⁸⁹ Teevan, *Lonergan, Hermeneutics, & Theological Method* 151.

⁶⁹⁰ Teevan, *Lonergan, Hermeneutics, & Theological Method* 151.

⁶⁹¹ Pambrun, “Revelation and Interiority” 325.

19th century and accepted in the 20th that God wills all to be saved and thus all receive sufficient grace but raise new sets of questions different from the traditional set related to soteriology and exemplified by the three positions of exclusivism, inclusivism and pluralism. All three of these positions revolve around a single Christocentric focus and the central related concern of what is constitutive of salvation. Crowe clearly illustrates and develops Lonergan's universalist view of religion that has to do not only with the universal mission of the Holy Spirit but the universal dimension of the mission of the Son as well.

According to William Loewe it is Lonergan's "law of the cross" that "opens onto a universalist view which brings into focus the redemptive significance of world religions."⁶⁹² For Lonergan, the "law of the cross" provides a model for theologizing as it lays the foundation for soteriology, explicates the meaning of satisfaction, and illustrates that wisdom and goodness overcome evil, converting and transforming it, though not in an oppressive or violent exercise of power.⁶⁹³ Loewe believes that Lonergan's thought regarding the "law of the cross" makes three significant contributions to the Christian approach to other religions.

First, it can be affirmed that other religions "may fulfill Lonergan's heuristic of redemption."⁶⁹⁴ This is revealed in posing the questions: What would be the result of perfect and universal commitment to the principles of self-transcendence? How is history affected when people are not attentive, intelligent, reasonable and responsible? How can this cycle be broken? Next, the uniqueness of Christianity lies in its "originating event

⁶⁹² William P. Loewe, "Lonergan and the Law of the Cross: A Universalist View of Salvation," *Anglican Theological Journal* 59 (1977) 163.

⁶⁹³ Loewe, "Lonergan and the Law of the Cross" 163.

⁶⁹⁴ Loewe, "Lonergan and the Law of the Cross" 174.

and symbolic explication.”⁶⁹⁵ The event is Jesus Christ and the incarnate meaning is the outer word which mediates the experience of conversion.⁶⁹⁶ The meaning of this event is controlled by the preaching and praxis of the first Christian communities and gleaned through an examination of Scripture. Lastly, the solution to the problem of evil will be one which from a Christian perspective is the “law of the cross,” but may be found in the religious symbols of the world’s religious traditions. Loewe states, “To the extent that their constitutive mysteries carry the meaning of the “law of the cross” other world religions, precisely in their specific identities, also embody the dynamic of God’s redemptive process.”⁶⁹⁷

Jose Luis Salazar explores Lonergan’s universalist notion of religion focussing on Lonergan’s thought on vertical finality.⁶⁹⁸ From this point of view each religion has its own functioning schemes and systematized culture and history, there is no dialectical necessity in their development but there may be verifiable possibilities.⁶⁹⁹ Vertical finality is concerned with concrete pluralism and interactions as “the innate directed dynamism of being developing from any lower level of appetite and process to any higher level.”⁷⁰⁰ Lonergan’s concept of vertical finality is not preoccupied with the end of the process but with the dynamism of the *relationship* to the end. Thus, God’s plan made known in the missions of the Spirit and the Son becomes probable when grace

⁶⁹⁵ Loewe, “Lonergan and the Law of the Cross” 174.

⁶⁹⁶ See Dadosky, *The Structure of Religious Knowing* 32 on the “already existent” superstructure given in the outer word.

⁶⁹⁷ Loewe, “Lonergan and the Law of the Cross” 174.

⁶⁹⁸ Jose Luis Salazar, *Human Authenticity in Religious Diversity* (STL Thesis, Weston Jesuit School of Theology, 2000).

⁶⁹⁹ Salazar, *Human Authenticity in Religious Diversity* 58-59.

⁷⁰⁰ See “Finality”, Lonergan Website Glossary, http://www.lonergan.on.ca/glossary/glossary_e-1.htm, accessed September 5, 2005.

becomes “present, operative and apprehended in human conscious living.”⁷⁰¹ Nothing is closed or determinative for what might be God’s plan, there is no pre-determined superstructure or closed historical manifestation of God’s love. While the outpouring of divine love depends solely upon the ongoing divine self-communication its disclosure has much to do with human culture, community and history.

In “A Religion as Particular and Universal: Response to Lonergan’s ‘Prolegomena’” John Robertson argues that Christianity is not the only world religion to intend universality. Claiming Jesus Christ as constitutive of salvation today is a discourse that says humanity can neither know God except through Jesus Christ nor intimate the meaning of its own existence apart from Jesus Christ. Therefore, Christianity becomes the condition for authentic relationship with God.⁷⁰² Robertson poses the basic question: how can Jesus Christ be constitutive of relationship with God and salvation when most of the world has never heard of him? He locates the significance of Jesus in the preaching and sacramental life of the Church that verbalizes, dramatizes, conceptualizes, and celebrates the universal and omnipresent possibility of human salvation and makes explicit what may otherwise remain implicit and unthematized.⁷⁰³ Robertson also asserts that the Christian Church is not the only suprastructural expression that makes this same possibility explicit. Thus, in its own unique and important fashion, Christianity expresses humanity’s authentic religious

⁷⁰¹ Salazar, *Human Authenticity in Religious Diversity* 77.

⁷⁰² John Robertson, Jr. “A Religion as Universal and Particular: Response to Lonergan’s ‘Prolegomena,’” *Sciences Religieuses* (Winter) 17.

⁷⁰³ Robertson, “A Religion as Universal and Particular” 18.

experience but it does not solely constitute it. Jesus Christ “*represents*, rather than *constitutes*, humankind’s authentic possibility.”⁷⁰⁴

While soteriology has been a central concern in Christian theologies of interfaith dialogue and religious pluralism, revelation remains a key concept that needs to be developed both toward an approach to dialogue and an understanding of diversity through the encounter of religious traditions. Neither Lonergan nor Crowe can be classified a “pluralist” as they both believe there is something unique and necessary about the historical mediation of divine love through Jesus Christ, but grace is also mediated interiorly through the Holy Spirit, in religious experience and conversion, in the process of human meaning-making in community, in the structures and sequences found in a total view of history.⁷⁰⁵

If, as R.E. Whitson suggests, a comprehensive viewpoint that respects complementary differences is achievable then the notion of revelation “will have to be extended from the narrower notion in the Western religious traditions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam to include non-Western traditions.”⁷⁰⁶ Here Crowe’s contributions to a theology of revelation and interiority, of the movement from the world of immediacy to the world mediated by meaning, of operative and co-operative grace in their experiential and historical dimensions are extremely significant. At the heart of the issue is whether or not Christian theology can affirm the revelation of God in both interiority and in the outward expressions of religious meaning in non-Christian religions.

⁷⁰⁴ Robertson, “A Religion as Universal and Particular” 18.

⁷⁰⁵ John Dool, *Revelation and Meaning: The Contributions of Bernard J.F. Lonergan to a Theology of Revelation*, (PhD dissertation for the University of St. Michael’s College, Toronto, 1994) 162.

⁷⁰⁶ Dadosky, *The Structure of Religious Knowing* 41 referring to Whitson.

Loneragan emphasizes the priority of God's revelation in communal religious history over the private and individual.⁷⁰⁷ God's self-communication is not only in the experience of the individual but in the narrative of history which itself fosters the recognition of religious experience. In entering human history God enters the world of human meaning and adds something new to human existence. Revelatory meaning is structured by community and carried forward into history precisely through common meaning that is potential in a shared field of experience, formal in common understanding and actual in common affirmations.⁷⁰⁸

History is a source of knowledge about God: "God speaks through the events of history as really and truly as he does through the word of prophet or page of scripture."⁷⁰⁹ This opinion of Scripture and the Fathers is echoed in Crowe's description of the Thomist theory of history: "God writes history by control of events just as men write human language by control of pen, and the resulting 'language' of history expresses God's meaning, is God's word to us."⁷¹⁰ Thus, history is the instrument (language with both structure and content), not merely the arena (book in which to write), by which God communicates divine meaning. Crowe writes

...the very realities of creation, seen as a whole and therefore necessarily incorporating the totality of history, are God's 'word' to us in some basic and primary sense. Then, all prophecy, all our traditions in doctrine, all our scriptures, are successive attempts, feeble and stammering but ever so precious, to understand, conceive, formulate, and express the inexhaustible meaning of this primary word.⁷¹¹

⁷⁰⁷ Dool, *Revelation and Meaning* 58, 127.

⁷⁰⁸ Dool, *Revelation and Meaning* 162.

⁷⁰⁹ Crowe, *Theology of the Christian Word: A Study in History* (New York: Paulist Press, 1978) 109.

⁷¹⁰ Crowe, *Theology of the Christian Word* 111.

⁷¹¹ Crowe, *Theology of the Christian Word* 120.

The “primary word” is the “expression of religious meaning or of religious value.”⁷¹²

The divine expression of religious meaning and value is found in the twofold divine missions of the Son and Spirit. These utterances of divine meaning are in some sense unfathomable and can be interpreted differently by different peoples at different times, always striving to understand the one reality. In the religions of the world, the outer word is not incidental but constitutive of religious meaning and value since love must be avowed in order to reach the point of self-donation and surrender. Likewise, the inner word has an equally constitutive role to play if the outer word is to be interpreted correctly. For example, Jesus Christ as the outer word that expresses God’s loving self-surrender and self-donation for the sake of humankind may be objectively efficacious; however, without the subjective complement of the Holy Spirit that expresses God’s love given, the Jesus Christ event is unfathomable, unable to be correctly interpreted, and then no one would be able to say “Jesus is Lord.”

History, according to Crowe, is God’s word and an authentic interpretation of it is both essential and secondary. Interpretations include art, sacred texts, the paradigmatic lives of holy men and women, and mystical prayer in addition to situations of intersubjective grace and love. These examples are not limited to the historical trajectory of the Judeo-Christian dispensation. As early as the second century of Christianity Justin Martyr spoke about the “differentiated participation of the Logos: all people share in him, but while others have received from him partially, we to whom the Logos revealed himself in his incarnation have been blessed with his complete manifestation.”⁷¹³ All the various kinds of authentic religious knowledge are not the products of human reason but

⁷¹² Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 112.

⁷¹³ Jacques Dupuis, S.J., *Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002) 59.

participations in the eternal Word through the Holy Spirit, however partial and incomplete. For Justin goodness and truth could be affirmed outside of the Judeo-Christian historical trajectory, particularly evident in Greek philosophy. Justin's ancient theory of the "seeds of the Word" (*logos spermatikos*)⁷¹⁴ present outside of the Church is echoed centuries later in the Second Vatican Council's affirmation that there exists holiness⁷¹⁵ and "truth and grace...as a secret presence of God"⁷¹⁶ in non-Christian religions. With regard to religious diversity, several questions arise: If grace, truth and holiness have to do with the Triune God's self-giving, how do Christians understand their presence outside of the Judeo-Christian dispensation? Is the secret presence of God only the presence of the inner word, the Holy Spirit? Is this presence related to the outer word, the Son, as well?

Crowe offers a systematic explanation of the complementary presence of the inner and outer word in history that includes their mutual presence in the sequences and structure of history, including the history of religions. Crowe writes:

That the word which history is, the word that reaches its fullness in Jesus, the word spoken in human language that is God's alone, this word is translated into human language through the pondering and reflection of prophet, evangelist, sacred writer, Jesus himself. As the history is God's word, so any authentic interpretation given by God's agents and with his assistance is also God's word in that secondary but very essential sense described. But the guarantee of authentic interpretation, the source of divine assistance at least to prophet and evangelist, is the Holy Spirit present interiorly, distributing his gifts to each individual at will (1 Cor. 12:11), and likewise distributing the charism of prophecy or inspiration.⁷¹⁷

God's outer word as history requires the inner word for the proper interpretation of the divine meaning in the structures and sequences of history. "If God speaks through the

⁷¹⁴ *Ad Gentes* 11.

⁷¹⁵ *Notra Aetate* 2.

⁷¹⁶ *Ad Gentes* 9.

⁷¹⁷ Crowe, *Theology of the Christian Word* 141.

events of history in his primary word from the beginning of creation, and if such a word, both cosmically and historically, encompasses the meaning of the full sweep of history in its concrete events,” Pambrun writes echoing Crowe, “then what is called for is a corresponding act of interpretation that accompanies *from the beginning* the initiative and expression of this duality of God’s action.”⁷¹⁸

Following Lonergan’s psychological analogy and the ancient Trinitarian adage that the works of the Trinity *ad extra* are inseparable (*opera Trinitatis ad extra sunt inseparabilia*),⁷¹⁹ Crowe demonstrates that the positive moments of the religions of the world as the products of the Holy Spirit must also have a relation to the Son and the Father. The seeds of the Word cannot be present and efficacious in history without the complement of the Holy Spirit to inspire and interpret. Lastly, the secret presence of God cannot refer to an undifferentiated theocentricism that ignores the relational triunity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It is the mission of the Holy Spirit that reveals the unified plan which has final union with the Father as its goal and in which the double, complementary and non-superfluous missions of both the Son and Spirit are influenced by and direct history.

Being in love in an unqualified way is a created participation in the active spiration that in God is the Father and the Son breathing forth the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the first and foundational divine gift to humankind that continues to be given presently; it is neither limited to the Christian dispensation nor to a particular moment in time (such as the creation, the Incarnation, the resurrection, or an ecumenical council). It is possible then to affirm not only that the grace evident in other religions is the product

⁷¹⁸ Pambrun, “Revelation and Interiority” 340.

⁷¹⁹ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics*: “cooperation among the divine persons is so perfect that there is one simple common operation of the Three” 497.

of the gift of the Holy Spirit, but other elements such as truth and holiness are in some way related to the Word and Father. Grace, truth and holiness in history are created participations in the Triune life of God. The Holy Spirit given is breathed forth by the Father and Son together who are wholly present in the gift. The outer dimensions of religions are not merely the various human thematizations and objectifications of the experience of the Holy Spirit, but include a relation to the Word and ultimately to the Father as well. Just as the early Church affirmed that the Father did not have two sons, that the second person of the Trinity was begotten and the third person spirated, the pre-existent, cosmic Logos does not have the same meaning as the Spirit in history. Each person maintains his/her eternal meaning and function in history through the complementarity and unity of purpose (to establish and confirm divine-human and intersubjective relationships) of their missions.

Crowe's approach to understanding history and religious diversity is markedly trinitarian as it is the starting point for his theologizing. In contrast to theologies that posit the universal presence of the Holy Spirit in order to fill a perceived void resulting from the limited *ephapax* of the Son or else that the Son is the sole criterion for salvation, Crowe carefully reflects upon the unity of purpose of the missions of the Son and Spirit.

The mission of one does not replace, marginalize or negate the other:

If the Son is Saviour, what need have we of more?... If the Spirit is the gift of God to all his children, and a sufficient gift for salvation, what need have we of the Son? But the proper form of the question does not start with either one or the other, to ask then about a second sending; instead it tries to conceive God's plan as he himself must be presumed to have conceived it, primarily in its unity. Then the two sendings are joined in the unity of a response to a single need, and the two forms of God's word in the unity of one communication.⁷²⁰

⁷²⁰ Crowe, *Theology of the Christian Word* 142.

Thus, God's self-communication is accomplished in the twofold mission of the Son and Spirit as God's word that is history. From this starting point the traditional questions regarding salvation and revelation are reoriented and no longer circumscribed by Christocentric (Christomonist) and ecclesiocentric concerns. The Trinity is not the stop-gap for the lacunae that the Christological, soteriological and ecclesiological approaches cannot address but the proper context for situating attempts to understand religious diversity either from one of these three perspectives or else from a completely different one.

Lonergan's trinitarian theology, the supernatural-affective psychological analogy, the divine missions, his theory of human development from above downward coupled with his theory of history, could provide a comprehensive viewpoint that seriously considers the potentially rich theological meaning of the simultaneous presence of the multiple religious traditions of the world. Several observations may be made: God's self-communication is loving relationality because God is eternally loving relationality; the gift of God's love knows no bounds; revelation is the event of God's self-communication and is trinitarian in structure; Jesus Christ *and* the Holy Spirit have universal significance and meaning; salvation is possible outside of membership in the Christian community; humankind has a natural capacity to receive God's grace; humanity can co-constitute its history in the freedom of God's love. These observations have implications for the Christian understanding of the reality of the plurality of religious traditions and of their meaning in the unfolding and manufacturing of history.

VI/ “Trinified” History

Crowe asserts that “the Spirit was long before given incognito, and continues to be given, even to those who have never heard of the Son or the gospel.”⁷²¹ It has taken some time for Christians to appreciate the Spirit’s universal presence due to the distinction between the cognitional order of discovery and the ontological order; nevertheless, “the one Pentecost is alive and well and ongoing throughout the world.”⁷²² The universal gift of God’s love that is the Holy Spirit and its *continued presence* are decisive for further gleanings on Lonergan’s contributions to an understanding of religious diversity.

As the network of questions and concerns for Christians becomes less concerned with the Christological, soteriological and ecclesiological issues, an appropriate and active response to the reality of religious diversity “in virtue of our own gift of the Spirit”⁷²³ becomes more central. How does the reality of the gift of the Holy Spirit given universally to all peoples and specifically to Christians affect the Christian attitude and relationship to the religious Other? As Crowe challenges: “is it not time to let the gospel disturb our peace once more, time to transcend our own little world, so much smaller than God’s, to think of the whole great family of God united with us in the bond of the Spirit, that Spirit who will in God’s time enable them to say with us that Jesus is Lord (1Cor 12:3)?”⁷²⁴

⁷²¹ Crowe, “Son and Spirit: Tension in the Divine Missions” 312.

⁷²² Crowe, “Son of God, Holy Spirit, and World Religions” 332.

⁷²³ Crowe, “Son of God, Holy Spirit, and World Religions” 333.

⁷²⁴ Crowe, “Son of God, Holy Spirit, and World Religions” 343.

Crowe places a great deal of responsibility on the part of humanity in the trinitification of the world precisely because of the universal and ongoing gift of the Holy Spirit in history: “The pattern is clear; it is toward assignment to men of a larger degree of participation in the divine management of the world; and fuller participation by men means a greater involvement of the multitudes.”⁷²⁵ Moreover, just as the mission of the Holy Spirit has real historical effects in human history, so too does the human response affect the mission of the Holy Spirit. There is a certain parallel in the growth of Jesus Christ from child to adult as a result of his historical condition and in the “adaptation of the Spirit’s role in our lives, an adjustment in the variety of the gifts of the Spirit, according to our response.”⁷²⁶ This illustrates the mutuality of the gift of the Spirit that adapts itself in its ongoing giving to the concrete responses and needs of the historical situation.

What then could the mission of the Holy Spirit, human responsibility and the unfolding of history mean theologically? Does this meaning also affect a systematic understanding of religious diversity? In answering the first question, the insights of Robert Doran are most valuable for a technical, systematic explanation that draws together and develops Lonergan’s four-point hypothesis and theory of history. Here I quote Doran at length:

The recurrent intelligent emanation of the word of authentic value judgments and of acts of love in human consciousness (personal value) is due to the grace of the mission of the Holy Spirit (religious value) and is also the source of the making of history, of historical progress through schemes of recurrence in the realms of cultural, social and vital values. But the mission of the Holy Spirit *is* the eternal procession of the Holy Spirit linked to a created, contingent external term that is

⁷²⁵ Frederick E. Crowe, S.J., “The Responsibility of the Theologian and the Learning Church,” in *Appropriating the Lonergan Idea* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2006) 189.

⁷²⁶ Frederick E. Crowe, S.J., “‘The Spirit and I’ at Prayer,” in *Developing the Lonergan Legacy*, ed. Michael Vertin (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004) 300.

the consequent condition of the procession being also a mission, or of the proceeding Holy Spirit also being sent. Thus, the intelligent emanation in God of the Holy Spirit, the eternal procession in God of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son, joined to the created, contingent, consequent external terms that are sanctifying grace and the habit of charity, as well as to the operative movements that are known as *auxilium divinum* or actual grace—the eternal intelligent emanation of the Spirit in God from the Father and the Son as also their Gift in history—is the ultimate condition of possibility of any consistent or recurrent intelligent emanation of authentic judgments of value and schemes of recurrence rooted in acts of love in human beings. This collaboration of intelligent processions, divine and human, is the condition of the possibility of the consequent authentic performance of the normative source of meaning in history. And if such personal value conditions the possibility of functioning schemes of recurrence in the realms of cultural, and then social, and then vital values, if that normative source, functioning communally, is the origin of progress in history, then the mission of the Holy Spirit, which is identical with the eternal procession of the Spirit linked to the created, contingent, consequent term of charity, and so the Spirit as Gift from the Father and the Son, is the very source of progress in history.⁷²⁷

Doran asserts that wherever there is genuine progress the Spirit is both present and active.

Thus the relationship of the Trinity and the missions to history is not only for individual sanctification but has to do with the unfolding of history and social situations of grace.

This position is consistent with the final chapter, assertion 18 of *De Deo Trino*⁷²⁸ in which Lonergan maintains that the state of grace is not individualistic like the “habit of grace” which is received in the soul of the just, but, in Doran’s words, a “social situation, as an intercommunion of the three divine subjects, one of them being the incarnate Word of God, with all those who have said yes to the offer of a created participation in divine life and as the consequent intercommunion of these subjects with one another in the

⁷²⁷ Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* 204-205.

⁷²⁸ Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics* 517: “Sixth, a further distinction is to be made between the habit of grace and the state or situation of grace. The habit of grace is a physical accident received in the soul of the just. But the state or situation of grace refers to many distinct subjects together. Thus, to constitute the state of grace there are required (1) the Father who loves, (2) the Son because of whom the Father loves, (3) the Holy Spirit by whom the Father loves and gives, and (4) the just, whom because of the Son, the Father loves by the Holy Spirit, and to whom the Father gives by the Holy Spirit, and who consequently are endowed with sanctifying grace, whence flow the virtues and gifts, and who are thereby just and upright and ready to receive and elicit acts ordered towards eternal life.”

incarnate Word.”⁷²⁹ In this way “the discernment of the mission of the Holy Spirit in all its concrete details [is] the most important ingredient in humankind’s taking responsibility for the guidance of history.”⁷³⁰

VII/ Dialogue, Mediation and Otherness

The encounter of the religions of the world understood from a Christian perspective within a trinitarian view of history has significant implications; two such implications to which Lonergan makes direct and specific contributions are in the areas of dialogue and mediation. A further and related implication lies in the potential contribution of Lonergan’s thought to postmodern concerns around diversity and the processing of otherness.

In his reflection on dialogue, dialectic and inter-religious encounter Lonergan writes

...besides the dialectic that is concerned with human subjects as objects, there is the dialectic in which human subjects are concerned with themselves and with one another. In that case dialectic becomes dialogue. It is particularly relevant when persons are authentic and know one another to be authentic yet belong to different traditions and so find themselves in basic disagreement. It may be illustrated by the ecumenical movement among Christians and by the universalist movement set forth in R.E. Whitson..., by Raymond Panikkar...and by William Johnston...⁷³¹

Lonergan places “dialogue” under the wider heading of dialectic and describes it as the mutual concern between persons in conversation who are authentically themselves and known to be authentically themselves by dialogue partners and yet hold quite different

⁷²⁹ Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* 205.

⁷³⁰ Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* 205.

⁷³¹ Bernard J.F. Lonergan, “Ongoing Genesis of Methods,” *A Third Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe, S.J. (Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1985) 159.

beliefs that are even in “basic disagreement.” This is certainly an apt description of inter-religious dialogue that does not aim at proselytising or conversion but fostering the authentic religious commitment of dialogue partners. Hence a Jew may be known to be a good and faithful Jew by his or her Christian and Muslim dialogue partners and vice versa; and each is respected and lauded for their religious commitment and existential authenticity, which provides the basis for sustained and advanced relationships.

Dialectic that moves from a consideration of subjects as objects to subjects as subjects and their relationships to one another as subjects is a movement toward dialogue. Dialectic functions to anticipate further understanding in the intelligibility of the unfolding of linked but opposing principles of change. Dialectic, according to Lonergan, “brings conflicts to light” and provides “a technique that objectifies subjective differences and promotes conversion.”⁷³² The aim of dialectic is a “comprehensive viewpoint” that seeks some single base or some single set of related bases from which it can proceed to an understanding of the character, the oppositions, and the relations of the many viewpoints.”⁷³³ The comprehensive viewpoint does not seek to systematize everything into a universalized whole but to shed light on three kinds of differences: those that are irreducible; those that are complementary and can be brought into a larger whole; and those differences that are genetically related in a process of development while at the same time eliminating “superfluous oppositions.”⁷³⁴

In the encounter of the world’s religions each religion is drawn out of itself in the dialectical process toward a more comprehensive, unrestricted viewpoint that takes the whole of reality into consideration. It is a movement out of one’s limited field of vision

⁷³² Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 235.

⁷³³ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 129.

⁷³⁴ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 129-130.

toward one more expansive. Lonergan characterizes the limited field of vision as “my world”: “My world is centered on me, and as I move out from that center in a series of concentric circles, my concern steadily decreases.”⁷³⁵ The lack of any real concern for anything except that which lies within my immediate world reflects not only a lack of moral conversion due to the inability to see beyond one’s self, but equally a lack of intellectual conversion that disregards what is real. Lonergan writes:

Is the real to be identified with the universe of being, or is it settled by my autobiography? For the real for me may well be my *welt*—my autobiography—and then the not-real is what I’m not concerned about. But the pure desire to know can also become a dominant *Sorge*,⁷³⁶ and then, though there will not be a complete elimination of merely personal concern, still this world of one’s concern will move into coincidence with the universe of being.⁷³⁷

Religious communities cannot be holed-up in their own autobiographical world if the demands of the real coupled with the pure desire to know are to be met. As “the pure desire to know” Lonergan’s transcendental notion of being includes not only the content of what is already known but all that remains to be known.⁷³⁸ Concern with the universe of being does not eliminate the concern of the individual religion, though it may relativize it and situate it within the larger context of reality. The tension between “my world” and the universe of being is resolved in dialectic’s threefold concern for i) the concrete (subject and his/her way of being-in-the-world); ii) the contradictory (residing in the subject not any propositions); iii) change that is the result of the tension.⁷³⁹ Thus, claims David Tracy the “other” is appreciated as an alternate “*possible* mode-of-being-in-

⁷³⁵ Bernard J.F. Lonergan, *Understanding and Being: the Halifax Lectures on Insight*, vol. 5 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Elizabeth Morelli and Mark D. Morelli et al. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990) 182.

⁷³⁶ Lonergan, *Understanding and Being* 182. *Sorge* is the concern of *Dasein* as being-in-the world.

⁷³⁷ Lonergan, *Understanding and Being* 183.

⁷³⁸ Bernard J.F. Lonergan, *Insight* (London: Longmans, Green and Co Ltd, 1958) 348.

⁷³⁹ Lonergan, *Understanding and Being* 185.

the-world; not only possible for this different other, but possible to be sure in a different way, for oneself.”⁷⁴⁰

“Horizon” for Lonergan refers to “the sweep of our interests and knowledge” and its scope is conditioned by “the period in which one lives, one’s social background and milieu, one’s education and personal development.”⁷⁴¹ One’s horizon serves as a “boundary of what one cares about, of what one can apprehend as a possible value.” One’s horizon is both one’s starting point and boundary marker, source of ongoing knowledge and concern, and natural limitation of capacities. Differences in horizon are complementary, genetic or dialectical.⁷⁴² Complementary differences complement one another, and need one another for communal functioning. Genetic differences reflect successive stages in some process of development. Dialectical differences in horizon reflect opposed horizons arising from the presence or absence of intellectual, moral or religious conversion. Doran further differentiates Lonergan’s notion of dialectical differences into the dialectics of contraries which are “reconcilable in a higher synthesis” and contradictories which “exclude one another.”⁷⁴³ For example, the dialectic of subject and community are contraries while the dialectic of position and counterposition are contradictories (i.e. true and false, yes and no).

Expanding one’s horizon and bridging or reconciling differences in horizons may be the product of conversion (intellectual, moral or religious) but equally “a matter of further learning and development in a manner analogous to organic growth” with an

⁷⁴⁰ David Tracy, “Christianity in the Wider Context: Demands and Transformations,” *Religion and Intellectual Life* 4 (1987) 15.

⁷⁴¹ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 236-327.

⁷⁴² Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 236.

⁷⁴³ Doran, *Theology and the Dialectics of History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001) 10.

“interpersonal dimension.”⁷⁴⁴ It is possible to expand one’s horizon without repudiating that original horizon and to the benefit of the interpersonal. According to Lonergan

...there are two main components in a person’s horizon. There is the main stem: what we know and what we value. There are extensions through the persons we know and care for, since knowing them and caring for them involve us in what they know and care for...Moreover, such extensions may be mutual, and then the horizon of each is an extension of the horizon of the other...Development in the main stem increases the depth and range of the consequent horizon; and this increase leads to a development in the extensions, since our knowing others and our concern for them involve some sharing in the objects they know and care for. Moreover, inasmuch as among such objects there will be persons that know and care for their own circle, there will result a mediation of involvement at a second remove. Finally, developing horizons open the way to reciprocity on the part of those with whom one has become involved.⁷⁴⁵

The expansion of one’s world from the self-centered to concern for the other is not the destruction of one’s horizon but the extension of its range and depth. Differences in horizon are not insurmountable obstacles to mutuality, reciprocity and relationality. Different religious horizons may be either genetic or complementary, in which cases these differences can be bridged. While dialectical differences can only be overcome through conversion, the dialectics of contraries are reconcilable in a higher synthesis. It is possible to situate the differences in horizons of the religions of the world not in irreconcilable opposition to one another but as genetic, complementary and contrary differences reconcilable in some higher synthesis, some greater whole.

Lonergan claims that “[b]eyond dialectic there is dialogue. Dialectic describes concrete process in which intelligence and obtuseness, reasonableness and silliness, responsibility and sin, love and hatred commingle and conflict.” Dialogue, he goes on to say, transposes

⁷⁴⁴ Teevan, *Lonergan, Hermeneutics, & Theological Method* 154.

⁷⁴⁵ Bernard J. F. Lonergan, “Pope John’s Intention,” in *A Third Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe, S.J. (Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1985) 234-235.

...issues from a conflict of statements to an encounter of persons. For every person is an embodiment of natural right. Every person can reveal to any other his natural propensity to seek understanding, to judge reasonably, to evaluate fairly, to be open to friendship. While the dialectic of history coldly relates our conflicts, dialogue adds the principle that prompts us to cure them, the natural right that is the inmost core of our being.⁷⁴⁶

“Natural right” refers to a self-awareness, self-understanding and self-knowledge that seeks to “grasp the similarities and differences of common sense, science and history, to grasp the foundations of these three in interiority which also founds natural right and, beyond knowledge of knowledge, to give also knowledge of affectivity in its threefold manifestation of love in the family, loyalty in the community, and faith in God.”⁷⁴⁷

Hence, in the movement toward dialogue, the dialectical element “grasps” similarities and differences and ascertains whether these are genetic, complementary or dialectical (contradictory or contrary) and whether they are the result of a lack of intellectual, moral or religious conversion. Dialogue does not occur between ideologies and beliefs but between self-aware subjects open to friendships; dialogue entails an intersubjective dimension that dialectic lacks and is made possible and furthered by modes of loving. These modes are created participations in and imitations of the uncreated gift of God’s love, the Holy Spirit. Far from negating differences, dialogue presupposes them; they are neither a block to friendship nor an obstacle to intersubjectivity but relationally ordered within some greater whole, a universe of being beyond one’s smaller, autobiographical, world.

In the religiously diverse world in which we live, pluralism *de facto* is easily established. Even the most superficial survey reveals pluralism and diversity as a fact of

⁷⁴⁶ Bernard J. F. Lonergan, “Natural Right and Historical Mindedness,” in *A Third Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe, S.J. (Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1985) 182.

⁷⁴⁷ Lonergan, “Natural Right and Historical Mindedness” 179.

human existence not just limited to the religious sphere. Today there is an acute awareness of cultural, political, linguistic, sexual, ethnic, and social diversity. Such diversity means real differences and a need to remain open to one another, to those who are different and to difference itself. Therefore the question of the theological meaning of diversity arises; i.e. is diversity a block to God's plan and so something to be overcome toward unity? Or is diversity rooted in the gift of the Triune God? Does diversity necessarily preclude unity or educe a different sense of unity? Crowe answers the similar question, "why a pluralist world?" by answering what he deems a parallel question: "why dialogue?"⁷⁴⁸ In the process Crowe highlights several significant insights from Lonergan that help to elucidate the theological meaning of diversity in general and religious diversity specifically. They are judgments from knowing; the fragility but value of dialogical relationships; intersubjectivity and mediation.

Drawing on Lonergan's analysis of human knowing, Crowe asserts that the human mind must make judgments of fact if it is to reach any truth and that the process of truth-making requires dialogue. The concrete unfolding of linked but opposed principles as a heuristic movement from the not yet known toward knowing is contrasted to deductive reasoning that proceeds from known premises. The necessity of dialogue in the dialectical process is evidenced in the need for various opinions on a subject to be addressed before reaching the virtually unconditioned, the point at which no more evidence is required and a judgment of fact can be made; it is a matter of being reasonable. "[W]e judge safely in the long run when we judge together, and that accords perfectly with the nature of judgment...If judgment were a matter of looking, one good

⁷⁴⁸ Crowe, "The Responsibility of the Theologian and the Learning Church" 176.

look would suffice.”⁷⁴⁹ It is through dialogue that judgments are reasonably rendered in the dialectical process that makes learning and knowing more than deductions from known premises and that reach beyond “my world.”

Dialogical processes also reflect Lonergan’s helpful distinction between the unthematized and the objectified in his theory of intersubjectivity. In intersubjective encounter there is a movement from lived experience to a reflection on the lived experience. Referring to Lonergan’s theory of intersubjectivity Crowe says,

Thus he describes the sequence beginning from a prior ‘we’ that is not made thematic but is simply lived, a sequence in which we move through encounter with others and the resultant categories of ‘I’ and ‘you,’ and so arrive at the formally thematized ‘we’ of the everyday adult world.⁷⁵⁰

Crowe goes on to cite the relationship of mother and child as an example of the unthematized that moves toward thematization as the child grows to adulthood.

Likewise, religious diversity is a lived reality in which the ‘we’ of being committed religious people may not be adverted to—each religion may exist in a parallel fashion or like distant solitudes—and through dialogue the various religious differentiations and their possible meanings become categorized and thematic through the recognition of the ‘you,’ ‘I’ and ‘we’ relationship.

Dialogue involves subjects, encounter, learning and an expansion beyond one’s always limited horizon. As Raimundo Panikkar and David Tracy suggest, that which has not been adverted to, has yet to be thought of or conceived, eventually becomes a possibility through encounter and dialogue. Likewise, through relationships with the other prejudices and presuppositions that are unthematized but operative are revealed and

⁷⁴⁹ Crowe, “The Responsibility of the Theologian and the Learning Church” 182-183.

⁷⁵⁰ Crowe, “The Spirit and I’ at Prayer” 299.

objectified. In contrast to any facile, mechanical and inevitable notion of dialogue that might be associated with an Hegelian understanding of dialectic, Crowe writes:

The results of dialogue will not be automatic; we cannot change ourselves or others in a mechanical way; there are no free rides on some logical automobile. We are content for a start, with making conversation on a topic. We grope toward a finish line, only to find that someone has moved the finish line a little farther ahead.⁷⁵¹

For Crowe, dialogue is a fragile, slow and unending process involving subjects in encounter. It begins simply, by making conversation, and constantly extends ‘a little farther ahead’ never reaching a final destination. There is always more to the story.

Dialogical relationships are both progressive and inherently open-ended.

Lonergan and Crowe’s thought highlights dialogical encounter not merely as the exchange of ideas, doctrines or convictions but fundamentally of subjects and their worlds of meaning (which includes ideas, doctrines and convictions). In fact, the foundation of dialogue is relationship. Under the wide heading of dialogical relationship Lonergan makes a considerable contribution to the contemporary concern for mutuality in interfaith encounter in his tripartite notion of “mediation.” These are mutual mediation, self-mediation and mutual self-mediation. “Mutual mediation” refers to the functional whole constituted by mutually mediating parts where different centers of immediacy are mediated through other centers; immediate sources, origins and bases spread through their mediation in consequences, effects, radiation and expression.⁷⁵²

Lonergan gives the example of a watch where the balance wheel (immediate source)

⁷⁵¹ Frederick E. Crowe, S.J., “Rhyme and Reason: On Lonergan’s Foundations for Works of the Spirit,” in *Developing the Lonergan Legacy*, ed. Michael Vertin (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004) 331.

⁷⁵² Bernard J.F. Lonergan, S.J., “The Mediation of Christ in Prayer,” in *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1958-1964*, vol. 6 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert C. Croken, Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996)162-165.

controls itself as well as all the other moving parts including the mainspring, which in turn is responsible for moving all the other parts including the balance wheel.

“Self-mediation” refers to something that gives rise to parts within itself in which successive stages reflect a process of specialization and differentiation; higher sets of functions emerge and sustain themselves on that higher level.⁷⁵³ There can be an upward displacement, an inward displacement or a transposition of the center. Self-mediation is apparent in the organic growth of specialization in a species (e.g. natural selection). In the realm of consciousness, self-mediation is evidenced in the existential moment when the subject “find[s] out for oneself what one can make of oneself, when one decides for oneself what one is to be, when one lives in fidelity to one’s self-discovery and decision.”⁷⁵⁴ Self-mediation is instantiated in human community when an individual constitutes himself or herself as autonomous in and through the community. As beings in intersubjective relationships, individual subjects are able to constitute themselves in specific ways. As an aggregate of human persons the existential moment of a community that mediates itself in its history occurs in the decision to revise its received self-understanding and thusly the reality of the community itself:

The community is constituted by its common sense, its common meaning, its common commitment, its common apprehension of what the community is and what being a member of the community implies... The community reveals itself to itself by its living, by the way it meets its problems, by its revision of its common sense, its common meaning, its common commitment, by the way things work out in development and breakdown, by growth and disintegration.⁷⁵⁵

⁷⁵³ Lonergan, “The Mediation of Christ in Prayer” 167-169.

⁷⁵⁴ Lonergan, “The Mediation of Christ in Prayer” 172.

⁷⁵⁵ Lonergan, “The Mediation of Christ in Prayer” 172-173.

In addition to self-mediation which is autonomous and to mutual mediation which is a functional whole, there is “mutual self-mediation.” Mutual self-mediation risks trust in the *revelation* and *reception* of one’s existential interiority.

One’s self-discovery and self-commitment is one’s own secret. It is not a natural property that you can predicate of all the individuals in a class. It is an idea conceived, gestated, born, within one. It is known by others if and when one chooses to reveal it, and revealing it is an act of confidence, of intimacy, of letting down one’s defenses, of entrusting oneself to another... We are open to the influence of others, and others are open to influence from us.⁷⁵⁶

A key distinction between self-mediation and mutual self-mediation is revelation and reciprocity. They give specific meaning to ‘encounter’ that is more than either meeting or colliding; it is the ‘*dévoilement*’ or the ‘unveiling’ of one’s self in the face of the Other. When encounter with the religious Other reveals “new possibilities of what may be, and challenges us to realize them” there is self-mediation; “when the encounter and resulting growth are reciprocal” then there is mutual self-mediation.⁷⁵⁷ Hence, “self-mediation occurs as mutual self-mediation” when “we attain our sense of selves through others’ sense of us” writes Fred Lawrence.⁷⁵⁸ It is through revelation and reciprocity in dialogical relationships that the meanings and values that are at the core of religious being and commitment are communicated and developed subjectively and in the religious Other.

Mutual self-mediation in dialogical relationship has weighty implications and fecund possibilities for Christianity’s encounter with the other religions of the world as “a heuristic for articulating the relationship of the Church with other religions [and]

⁷⁵⁶ Lonergan, “The Mediation of Christ in Prayer” 174-175.

⁷⁵⁷ Crowe, “‘The Spirit and I’ at Prayer” 300.

⁷⁵⁸ Fred Lawrence, “Lonergan’s Postmodern Subject, Neither Substance nor Cartesian Ego,” in *In Deference* ed. Jim Kanaris and Mark Doorley (Albany: Suny Press, 2004) 115.

cultures.”⁷⁵⁹ Mutual self-mediation between Christianity and other religions has to do with the universal mission of the Holy Spirit, the first and foundational gift of God to humanity. In articulating its relationship with the religious other through dialogical encounter the Christian Church will discern its own place in (salvation) history and hopefully assist other religions in discovering theirs and vice versa.

Mutual self-mediation recognizes that Christianity is not the only carrier of grace and authenticity in the contemporary cultural matrix.⁷⁶⁰ The contemporary cultural matrix is comprised of numerous and diverse cultures and religions. It is within this diverse situation that Christianity discerns its meaning and constructs its identity. The meanings and values that constitute the Christian self-understanding are not only self-mediated in the historical trajectory of the Judeo-Christian dispensation and Western culture but necessarily through the mutual self-mediation between Christianity and other religions and non-Western cultures. Christian constitutive meaning today cannot be discerned and articulated apart from its relationship with other religions.

The articulation of the relationship of Christianity and the religious Other is not only significant theoretically or subjectively for Christian self-understanding but has real effects in history. Namely, in the move toward authenticity that propels the Church to “grow beyond immature, fearful, culturally relative, or undifferentiated stances”⁷⁶¹ through dialogical encounter and relationship with other religions, the Church positions itself to be an agent in the building up of the Reign of God. Doran writes:

Moreover, the work of God’s grace in our contemporary situation includes this movement to interiorly differentiated consciousness as an agent of a world-cultural

⁷⁵⁹ John Dadosky, “The Church and the Other: Mediation and Friendship in Post-Vatican II Roman Catholic Ecclesiology,” *Pacifica* 18 (2005) 316.

⁷⁶⁰ Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* 198-199.

⁷⁶¹ Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* 199.

network of alternative communities. We must look to the dialogue of world religions as a principal arena for the cross-cultural generation of world-cultural values. And religion, to be authentic, must be concerned not only with personal transformation but also with cultural and social change, again in accord with the structure of the scale of values.⁷⁶²

Through relationships with religious others the possibility of living Christian faith authentically may result not only in personal transformation but also cultural and social change. Certainly, not just any change, but progress measured according to a scale of values⁷⁶³ in order to evaluate and direct its ongoing evolution. In the mutually self-mediating relationships between the religions of the world “the cross-cultural generation of world-cultural values” are grown and disseminated. Grace is not linked exclusively to one or other individual religious tradition but in the network of inter-religious relationality.

Living according to the assertion that the mission of the Holy Spirit is universal and affects human history, especially through the expansion of horizon that is religious conversion and the acts of loving that flow from the dynamic state of being in love, has enormous implications for Christianity, for dialogue partners and for cultural and socio-political transformation. “Failure on the part of the church to recognize the varieties of grace in history, the fact of the gift of the Holy Spirit beyond the boundaries of church affiliation, has resulted in some of the most conspicuous mistakes in the mission of the church throughout the course of Christian history. These mistakes continue into our own day.”⁷⁶⁴ For example, Church collaboration with and involvement in European colonial

⁷⁶² Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* 193.

⁷⁶³ There are five levels in the scale of values: vital, social, cultural, and personal which correspond respectively to the four levels of consciousness, and the fifth level in the scale of values is religious and corresponds to a fifth level of consciousness relating to the dimension of love. See Robert M Doran, *Theology and the Dialectics of History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990) 88-90, 30-31.

⁷⁶⁴ Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* 199.

policies which were violent, oppressive, and unjust resulted in the subhuman treatment of religiously others and in the quest to ‘civilize’ the non-European, non-Christian. The collusion of Christianity with colonial and imperial power remains a source of suspicion and an obstacle to open and friendly relations with many of the major religious traditions of the world. In spite of the great strides made since Vatican II, reticence to enter into dialogical relations is evidenced in the Christian encounter with Jews, Muslims and Hindus who are suspicious that conversion is the actual goal of these encounters.⁷⁶⁵

Stephen Schloesser claims that pre-Vatican II constructions of the religious other reflected liberal imperialist and Orientalist ideologies: “Western representations of the ‘East’ were not so much about what indigenous people were in themselves as the obverse of the West’s self imagination—‘its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience.’”⁷⁶⁶

Schloesser describes the European Christian construction of the Jewish other:

Jews were frightening precisely because they represented the ambiguous—and thus dangerous—margins between the Christian self and its ‘Other.’ Protestants, for all their differences, were still identifiably part of the Christian self. Conversely, Muslims represented the Orientalist ‘Other’ of both Christianity and the geographical ‘West.’ Jews, however, resided in liminal margins—they were the ancestors of Christianity, they resided within the West, and they even resided within city walls.⁷⁶⁷

While the Muslim represented a far-off Other both religiously and geographically, the Jews of Europe occupied an uncomfortably close liminal space. In order to move beyond Orientalism and the violence against the liminal Other (most catastrophically exemplified in the Jewish Shoah) different identities must be taken seriously on their own terms, and

⁷⁶⁵ For an example of a Jewish opinion on the improved but still problematic and shaky state of Roman Catholic-Jewish relations see Ricardo Di Segni, “Issues Facing Christian Jewish Dialogue” in *Jews and Catholics together: Celebrating the legacy of Nostra Aetate*, ed. Michael Attridge (Ottawa: Novalis, 2007) 122-130.

⁷⁶⁶ Stephen Schloesser, “Against Forgetting: Memory, History, Vatican II,” in *Vatican II, Did Anything Happen?* ed. David G. Schultenover (New York: Continuum, 2007) 102.

⁷⁶⁷ Schloesser, “Against Forgetting” 108.

mutual projections and constructions of the other must be measured against “factual givens.”⁷⁶⁸ Thus, attention must be paid to the history and language that, as Tracy writes, “allows the other to claim our attention as other, not as a projection of our present fears, hopes and desires.”⁷⁶⁹ According to Schloesser, Vatican II ushered in a radically new era of the Church’s understanding of its relationship to the world, to other religions (non-Christian) and to other cultures (non-European). In fact, the cold war and decolonization were the two most significant factors affecting the historical context of the Council. Continued reflection on decolonization and neo-imperialism inform interfaith conversation today.

Within the functional specialty of systematic theology, self-mediation is the Church’s understanding of itself as “distinct from the Other” while mutual self-mediation is the Church’s understanding of itself as “related to the Other.”⁷⁷⁰ Though Lonergan did not address the issue directly, the postmodern concern for the Other and otherness is an aspect of interfaith relations to which Lonergan’s thought can make significant contributions. According to Michele Saracino, Lonergan’s method invites the subject to “responsibly engage other peoples and cultures” in three ways.⁷⁷¹ First, the human person is “open and shaped by dialectical encounter with the Other, specifically through various patterns of experience.” Second, Lonergan’s theory emphasises the importance of culture and historical location in processing subjective experience; differences and cultural diversity are evidenced in his notion of the transcultural. Third, an analysis of conversion requires a theory of interiority and subjective deconstruction positing an

⁷⁶⁸ Schloesser, “Against Forgetting” 102.

⁷⁶⁹ David Tracy, *Dialogue with the Other, the inter-religious dialogue* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990) 4.

⁷⁷⁰ Dadosky, “The Church and the Other” 315.

⁷⁷¹ Michele Saracino, “Subject for Others, Lonergan and Levinas on Being Human in Postmodernity,” in *In Deference to the Other* ed. Jim Kanaris and Mark Doorley (Albany: Suny Press, 2004) 67.

openness and attentiveness to that which is other. What Lonergan claims for the individual subject is equally applicable for an aggregate of subjects that share religious meaning.

The interpersonal encounter that is at the root of relationships with Others moves from dialectic to dialogue in confronting the feelings evoked by the Other, in being attentive to the experience of encounter that “opens us to the possibility of conversion for God and others,”⁷⁷² in the evaluation of the experience of interpersonal encounter within larger patterns of experience such as the religious and cultural. In short, Lonergan’s method invites the subject not merely to consider the experience of the Other but equally the subjective processing of that experience; thus, not to one-sidedly construct who the Other is, but to be attentive to the ways in which otherness is constructed and to do so responsibly. The construction of the Other is unavoidable if one is to enter into conversations and relationships because these require judgments of fact and value which are dependent upon the formation of an image or concept of an intelligently processed experience of the Other. The dynamic process that moves from dialectic to dialogue is the movement from conflict to friendship: from the conflict of statements to interpersonal encounter, from the strange and unknown to the familiar yet different, from object to subject.

In the face of difference and alterity there is the constant danger to characterize other religions and cultures as beyond understanding. The danger is that other cultures are neglected, fictionalized, ignored,⁷⁷³ imagined and treated as “specimens in a modern

⁷⁷² Saracino, “Subject for Others” 68.

⁷⁷³ Saracino, “Subject for Others” 70.

zoo.”⁷⁷⁴ Sadly this has characterized the Western-Christian approach to other religions and cultures in the past. The past approach was from the perspective of a classicist view of culture that sought to impose its own self-understanding as normative for all. Today there is a generally acknowledged shift to what Lonergan terms “historical mindedness.” A new danger in the postmodern situation is the refusal to make judgments of fact or value in inter-cultural and inter-religious encounters. Such refusals preclude the possibility of appropriating the experience of the Other and make learning something from the Other impossible since what is experienced remains unthematized. Thus, judgments and decision must be made in the context of diversity and in the face of otherness, that which is different. Without these elements otherness is domesticated as a supposedly already known in one’s own world of meaning or ignored as something radically and totally foreign or perhaps negated as merely unimportant.

In the movement through which something previously unknown becomes known, from experience to understanding to judgment to decision, the reverse and concomitant movement from above downward corrects the temptation to facilely categorize, distinguish and manipulate alterity as “different, other, wild, non-human, and in the extreme, non-Aryan.”⁷⁷⁵ Mark J. Doorley makes a helpful distinction between two meanings of alterity:

If by alterity one means merely the unknown as unknown, then yes, knowledge is a destruction of the alterity of that which is known. If, however, by alterity one means the difference and otherness of that which is known then no, knowledge is not a destruction of alterity.

⁷⁷⁴ Matthew Lamb, “The Notion of Transcultural in Bernard J.F. Lonergan’s Theology,” *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 8 (1990) 69.

⁷⁷⁵ Mark J. Doorley, “In Response to the Other, Postmodernism and Critical Realism,” in *In Deference to the Other* ed. Jim Kanaris and Mark Doorley (Albany: Suny Press, 2004) 124.

Lonergan's cognitional and epistemological theory protects and promotes alterity: "Being human means developing and engaging the potential to experience, understand, judge and act in the face of others."⁷⁷⁶ In the dynamism of human development from above downward, Doorley maintains it is the sense of wonder that is preserved. This opens one up to be "attentive to the richness of experience...Knowing is the child of wonder and wonder is the mark of being human."⁷⁷⁷ In the relationship with the Other, wonder precedes the conditions of knowing as the achievement of transcendence and the knowledge that what is known is not simply the same but different and other. Similarly, two lovers who find themselves in love before consciously adverting to it in the objectification of their feelings for one another through a judgment of value, experience wonder in their mutual self-presence. In affirming their mutual love and the otherness that makes their reciprocal self-donation actually possible the subjects come to know one another, yet always remain different, evolving in response to the Other. Love given is that mysterious vector and undertow that draws each lover out of himself or herself into the world of his or her lover. Wonder carries the subject beyond himself or herself into a world not of their unique making. Doorley goes on to state in reference to Lonergan's healing vector in history:

The breaking in of the Other, the breach of the ego's journey- Is this not what Lonergan means by the grace of God? When speaking of the healing vector of human development, Lonergan talks about the 'falling in love' of conversion, particularly religious conversion. This falling in love calls everything into question. It leads to new understandings and richer experiences. There is something very familiar in the postmodern characterization of the ethical relation as 'before metaphysics.' Prior to knowing, prior to understanding, and prior to experiencing, the human being is vulnerable to the inbreaking of the Other, of another person, of the unexpected, of the totally different.⁷⁷⁸

⁷⁷⁶ Saracino, "Subject for Others" 83.

⁷⁷⁷ Doorley, "In Response to the Other" 133.

⁷⁷⁸ Doorley, "In Response to the Other" 135.

VIII/ Theology and Meaning in an Evolving Church and World

The in-breaking of the Other, both God and the religiously Other; the networks of grace resulting from the created participation in the universal mission of the Holy Spirit; and its development in the movement from dialectic to dialogical relationships amongst the religions of the world has considerable consequences for Christian constitutive meaning. These ramifications are necessarily dependent upon an appropriation of history as God's word as a central feature of systematic theology. As Lonergan writes:

Besides systematic exegesis, there exists historical exegesis that *no longer omits the accidentals but includes them in a synthetic manner*. Besides systematic theology, there exists *a more concrete and comprehensive theology that considers and seeks to understand the economy of salvation in its historical development*.⁷⁷⁹

Contemporary systematic theology seeks to consider and integrate (but not domesticate or explain away) that which falls outside of the direct discourse of the self-mediating function of theology, for instance, non-Christian, non-Western religious experience and history. A more concrete and comprehensive theology seeks to understand the missions of the Spirit and the Son as the eternal processions linked to created external, contingent terms, which are by definition necessarily historical. A theology that seeks to understand the meaning of God and humanity in and through history, and as historical, must attend to the reality of religious diversity possibly as part of God's meaning in human history. Religious traditions as imitations and participations in the divine life through the missions move religious diversity from being merely a fact of history to a principle of how God works in history and how all history is the history of salvation.

⁷⁷⁹ Bernard Lonergan, *Divinarum Personarum* 19, cited by Doran in *What Is Systematic Theology?* 147.

For Lonergan the historical present is constituted by past memories, stories and histories *and* the future is already present in anticipations, estimates and forecasts.⁷⁸⁰ Human living is historical and subject to change because meanings and values change over time and vary from place to place: “what possesses a high probability in one country, or period, or civilization, may possess no probability in another.”⁷⁸¹ Central to Lonergan’s notion of history is that it is an expression of meaning that is subject to change. In distinguishing between human historicity and historical consciousness, Teevan writes that human historicity is “an existential history—the living tradition which formed us and thereby brought us to the point of forming ourselves.”⁷⁸² Historical consciousness “refers to a consciousness of oneself as responsible for the *making* of history” for the making of oneself and the world in which we live, present and future.⁷⁸³

Lonergan makes a famous statement: “All my work has been introducing history into Catholic theology.”⁷⁸⁴ The first principle in theology is the religious and theological meaning that is expressed in history and understood not only as narrative and descriptive of what was going forward in the past, but also explanatory of how stages and sequences in constitutive meaning up to the present and into the future are related:

Explanatory history is history in all its concreteness, yet history governed by a set of heuristic notions that would enable theologians to relate *to one another* in genetic and dialectical fashion various stages in the evolution of the meanings constitutive of the Christian church.⁷⁸⁵

The heuristic notion to which Doran refers is the potential totality of viewpoints that fosters an understanding of the relationship between various sets of historical data such as

⁷⁸⁰ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 181.

⁷⁸¹ Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 211.

⁷⁸² Teevan, *Lonergan, Hermeneutics, & Theological Method* 167.

⁷⁸³ Teevan, *Lonergan, Hermeneutics, & Theological Method* 166.

⁷⁸⁴ Frederick E. Crowe, *Lonergan* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1992) 98. Quoted from *Curiosity at the Center of One’s Life*, ed. J.M. O’Hara, 427.

⁷⁸⁵ Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* 148.

the meaning of a particular religious tradition that can be considered singly or examined together with other traditions to discover their relational meanings (what each may mean in relation to the other) and their communal meaning together.

What Lonergan is suggesting and is further developed by Doran in technical and precise terms is that Christian theology can no longer function through its historical self-mediation if it is to adequately mediate between religion and the role of religion within the cultural matrices it exists. An explanatory history is needed to relate various stages of meaning up to the present and anticipate future developments in addition to looking at what was going forward in the past. The latter is the central concern for critical history in theology's indirect discourse that remains at the descriptive level. At the explanatory level the discourse is direct. Doran writes:

But direct discourse is more than just continuing the effective history of the classical texts of the tradition, however permanent one may judge the significance of some contributions to be, and however much direct discourse will always partly be a matter of transposing that significance into contemporary contexts. To limit direct discourse to such a continuation of the tradition's effective history is to limit its mediating function to a self-mediation of Christian constitutive meaning, a mediation from revelation and tradition to the contemporary faith of the Church. And that is only part of theology's mediating function. For contemporary contexts themselves are further theological sources. They give rise not only to questions that can at times be answered by transposing insights from the tradition, but also to the very insights that will develop the tradition and so become part of what we will hand on to those who come after us.⁷⁸⁶

Theology that is more than self-mediating is a "locus of mutual self-mediation of the religious tradition and a given cultural matrix...or cultural matrices."⁷⁸⁷ An essential and integral dimension of the contemporary Western cultural matrix is diversity as a fact, and for religious thinking, the diversity of religious traditions . Hence, for theology to meet

⁷⁸⁶ Doran, "System and History: The Challenge to Catholic Systematic Theology," *Theological Studies* 60 (1999) 673.

⁷⁸⁷ Doran, "System and History" 656.

the exigencies of mediating between culture and religion, it must take into consideration religious diversity as a theological source that reveals what God is doing in the economy of salvation and the human interaction and response that develops and relates to it in its historical development and its various stages of meaning.

While Doran clearly affirms the mutually self-mediating relationship between theology and culture, he does not denigrate the important function of theological self-mediation for a community of shared meaning. Using Lonergan's notion of sublation, Doran asserts that self-mediation between faith and culture is sublated into "the mutual self-mediation of the church's constitutive meaning with the meaning and values constitutive of a given way of life."⁷⁸⁸ Meanings and values that would otherwise remain undiscovered or else underdeveloped are brought to light in the mutual self-mediation of Church and culture. The core of meaning and value is found in the divine missions, both within the Church and outside of its visible confines. Thus, Doran writes:

...there is such a thing as the universal mission of the Holy Spirit. The universal mission of the Holy Spirit, and in fact even the invisible dimension of the mission of the Word in whom all things were created, prompt the believing community at its best to *expect* to find meanings and values that are operative in the cultural matrix in ways that have yet to be realized in the church itself.⁷⁸⁹

Beyond the cognitional-epistemological analysis of human development from below upward that affirm the meanings and values mediated to the Church through its relationship with other religions (whose meanings and values are already operative in the cultural matrix) is the existential-decisional movement from above downward that breaks into history as total otherness and to which a response is elicited.

⁷⁸⁸ Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* 57.

⁷⁸⁹ Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* 59-60.

As an ecclesial enterprise, mutual self-mediation in the encounter of the world's religions includes the theology as well as the lived experience of faith of the Christian community. As the Christian understanding of the reality of the simultaneous presence of multiple religious traditions is widened and transformed as one that is "trinified" so too are the questions that arise from this context. Likewise, as the idea of what Christian constitutive meaning is shifts, the reality of being Christian also changes.⁷⁹⁰ Thus, questions of the salvation of non-Christians and the role of Jesus Christ in history are contextualized within the more comprehensive attempt to understand the Trinitarian missions and an explanatory theory of history. In this new context particular religions work out their destinies as unique but related components of a common destiny as a community of religious communities whose potential meaning together is far greater than any one singly. It is illustrated in mutual self-mediation through dialogical relationality where the gift of God's grace is developed into evolving sets of meanings and values. The social situation of grace entails the transformation of society and culture according to these sets of meanings and values. Lastly in the movement from dialectic to dialogical relationality between the religions of the world there arises the "possibility of establishing, as a reality in history, what we have come to call collective responsibility."⁷⁹¹

Doran's theology of grace, of mutual self-mediation, of history and theology offer interesting and fecund directions for understanding the full import of Lonergan's thought on the topic of religious diversity. A return to a previous citation from Crowe now takes on deeper significance:

⁷⁹⁰ Lonergan, "The Mediation of Christ in Prayer" 172.

⁷⁹¹ Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* 157.

...suppose that God loves a slow-learning people enough to allow them long ages to learn what they have to learn suppose that the destiny of the world religions is contingent on what we all learn and do— say, on Christians being authentically Christian, Hindus being authentically Hindu, and so on—then responsibility returns to us with a vengeance, and the answer to the question of the final relationship of Christianity and the world religions is that there is no answer yet.⁷⁹²

How are religious traditions as carriers and embodiments of divine meaning related? Is there a possibility of constructing a network of graced communities that together constitute a community of religious communities? If a community is constituted by common meaning, what common meaning could the various religious of the world achieve together? Such an achievement would be hard-won, and each religious community would have to be attentive to its self-mediating as well as mutually self-mediating functions. Each religion would have to consider the significance and potential value of dialogical encounter from within its own tradition of sacred texts, authoritative teachings and rituals, etc. and then in order to contribute to a religiously diverse common meaning. Ostensibly, each religion would require self-reflection and transformations in posture and position, in approach to otherness, in the process of appropriating new insights, in the dynamism of conversion and in the movements from inauthenticity to authenticity.

Lonergan's analysis of development from above downward coupled with relational and theological mutual self-mediation has repercussions for the manner in which development is conceived for the Christian Church. The in-breaking of the Other, whether the Divine or the religious Other that inspires wonder and evokes feelings, presents each religion with an opportunity to learn and develop further. This is a reality

⁷⁹² Crowe, "Lonergan's Universalist View of Religion" 178.

for the Church that Crowe names the “learning teacher.”⁷⁹³ He rightly asserts that the learning function precedes the teaching function of the Church, as exemplified in the witness of scripture through the councils or in the notion of divine inspiration through which God first teaches the writer or prophet before he or she writes or preaches. Throughout its history the Church continues to learn; each generation brings with it new questions and concerns, different languages, new doctrinal issues, new ethical and praxis-related questions.⁷⁹⁴

Christianity has existed alongside other religions throughout its history; its genesis had been particularly related to and shaped by Judaism, Greek philosophy as well as the cultures of the Near East and Imperial Rome. However, the development of Western (Latin) Christianity with Western culture and power initiated a particular self-understanding regarding its relationship to other cultures and religions. The era of the European colonization of the Americas in the 16th century through its expansion and intensification in the 19th century in Africa and Asia was supported by zealous missionary activity and complemented by legitimizing religious discourse. This history involved mass conversions, often forced, and implicated Christianity in the policies of official colonization. Contact between Christians and non-Christians was superficial or else master-servant; relations were laden with power dynamics that benefited European Christians who were often hostile and even disdainful of the people they attempted to subjugate and civilize. But the post-Vatican II approach to the religiously Other is radically different than any previous era of its history. It comes at the end of official

⁷⁹³ Frederick E. Crowe, S.J., “The Magisterium as Pupil: The Learning Teacher,” in *Developing the Lonergan Legacy*, ed. Michael Vertin (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004) 289-93 and also “The Church as Learner: Two Crises, One Kairos,” in *Appropriating the Lonergan Idea*, ed. Michael Vertin (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006) 372.

⁷⁹⁴ Crowe, “The Magisterium as Pupil” 290-291.

European colonialism, at a time of a greater sense of equality between the religions and cultures of the world, when power is deployed in very different manners and diversity is celebrated and differences respected. In the globalized context in which dialectic, dialogue and relationships occur today, not only is the attitude of the Roman-Catholic Church toward non-Christians different, the attitude of other religions toward the Church is equally new. Religions are increasingly crossing borders, however with much trepidation, to learn more about God and one another.

The post-Vatican II context for the encounter of the world's religions necessitates careful reflection on the situation today in order to authentically proclaim who God is for Christians and what it means to be a Christian in the context of diversity. How is the Christian meaning transposed over a two thousand year history alive and effective today?⁷⁹⁵ The rich reality of religious diversity must be considered as an important and integral dimension of the contemporary situation. From within this new and evolving situation systematic theology attempts to understand the meaning of the doctrine of the Trinity. Thus, for the Church as a learning teacher Crowe writes:

Contingencies nearest to God will share the divine stability, like the three contingencies of what God has done in sending the only-begotten, what God is still doing in giving the Spirit, what God will do among us in the eschaton. But even here, though the realities are fixed in themselves, our conceptions of them change...⁷⁹⁶

In the context of interfaith encounter, the doctrine of the Trinity does not change, i.e. what is affirmed in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, but what it means today must be re-considered, in continuity with the theological tradition out of which contemporary understandings are rooted and related. The definition of the missions as the processions

⁷⁹⁵ Crowe, "The Magisterium as Pupil" 292.

⁷⁹⁶ Crowe, "The Church as Learner: Two Crises, One Kairos" 381.

linked to created, external contingent terms certainly shares in the stability of the dogmatically defined Triune God, but an explanation of what is going on in the divine economy cannot be the same as before. As historical, no reflection on the missions, on what God has done and is doing in the divine economy can avoid a consideration of history. An explanatory history today cannot be and is not the same as it was in 1492 or 1867 or 1963. How Christians conceive of God at work for humanity in history and humankind's response to the divine invitation to share in the divine life is constantly evolving and changing.

Conclusion

Lonergan's Trinitarian theology has great implications for a systematic theological understanding of religious diversity. The four-point hypothesis coupled with a theory of history provides a theological understanding of what the simultaneous presence of multiple religions in history could mean for the Christian Church, in addition to a heuristic for anticipating present and future developments and directions in theology and praxis.

Lonergan's definition of the divine missions and the four-point hypothesis reflects divine-human relationality, locating the divine missions in creation and history and history in the divine missions. History is more than the arena for God's self-disclosure but is itself revelatory in its structure and sequences. The various religions belong to this "trinified" view of history. The world's religions are the fruits of the universal mission of the Holy Spirit and through this mission are invited to imitate and participate in the life of

the Triune God. Thus, it is possible to affirm religious diversity as the product of the divine missions and the human response to the gift of God's love given in the twofold mission of the Son and the Holy Spirit.

The elements of truth, holiness and grace in the religions of the world and in religious believers require Christians to be attentive to the experience of other religions. To ignore these elements would result in the repetition of past errors. Through dialogical relationships, Christians can expect to be transformed theologically and in praxis. In these relationships religiously Others reveal and give themselves as Other and are received as Other. In the spaces of diversity and difference the Other that is disclosed becomes other-for-us as we become us-through-another. History is "trinified" by the God who is the Other-for-us and through our participation in the divine relations we become through another. Humankind shares in God's relationality as beings-towards-Others just as God's eternal Triune being is being-towards-another.

CONCLUSION: LONERGAN'S CONTRIBUTIONS

Through the Spirit, the center of Christian community is not on the inside of a closed circle, protected by fortified walls, but rather on the margins of an open circle. Perhaps, then, the Christian community ideally becomes what it is by extending outside of its own identity, by building border crossings that serve as connecting points for reconciliation and partnership instead of separation.⁷⁹⁷
- Thomas E. Reynolds

This study addresses the question: What are Bernard Lonergan's contributions to a Christian systematic theological understanding of religious diversity. While Lonergan's treatment of the world's religions is scant compared to the volume he wrote in other areas, his theological method does provide a necessary starting point in the construction of a systematic understanding of religious diversity.

David Tracy suggests that Christian systematic theology cannot be done "except in serious conversation with the other great ways."⁷⁹⁸ He further claims that it is necessary to have this conversation not at the end but at "the very beginning"⁷⁹⁹ of the construction of a systematic theology today. Tracy's suggestion is an onerous task for Christian systematic theology that has for centuries operated in the mode of historical self-mediation. The contemporary systematics that Tracy calls for requires reflection on the mutual self-mediation of religion and the role of religions in cultures of religious diversity and difference.

⁷⁹⁷ Thomas E. Reynolds, "Welcoming Without Reserve? A Case in Christian Hospitality," *Theology Today* 63 (2006) 202.

⁷⁹⁸ David Tracy, *Dialogue with the Other, the inter-religious dialogue* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990) xi.

⁷⁹⁹ David Tracy, "Christianity in the Wider Context: Demands and Transformations," *Religion and Intellectual Life* 4 (1987) 8.

The task of constructing a Christian systematic theology that includes, from its inception and at least heuristically and anticipatorily, an analysis of other religions stands in need of an ordered and coherent presentation of the mysteries of faith. Various contemporary strategies aim at achieving the understanding of the unity of Christian doctrine promoted by Vatican I's *Dei Filius* that teaches that it may be achieved through analogies between the mysteries of faith and natural things; by connecting the mysteries with each other; and in connecting the mysteries with the ultimate end.⁸⁰⁰

One component in a theological enterprise that takes into account the reality of other religions "at the very beginning" is, naturally and rightly, *the* Christian doctrine of God, the Trinity. As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* counsels, the doctrine of the Trinity is the mystery of God's very self; it is the "source of all the other mysteries of faith" and enlightens them; it is the "most fundamental and essential teaching;" the history of salvation is identical to the "way and the means" that the Triune God reveals God's self as a Trinity of persons.⁸⁰¹

The central mystery of the Christian faith articulated in the doctrine of the Trinity is found latently in the Gospel accounts that express the message and meaning of Jesus Christ; in more developed and explicit conciliar statements, especially the Nicene-Constantinople Creed; and in later theological doctrines that "put order and coherence" to the tradition "and have been received as either entering into or explicating the meaning constitutive of the community."⁸⁰² The psychological analogy for the Trinity enunciated by Thomas Aquinas is a 'theological doctrine' that explicates the constitutive meaning of Christianity. Bernard Lonergan's trinitarian theology is a development and precision of

⁸⁰⁰ *Dei Filius*, Denzinger 3016.

⁸⁰¹ *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1995) no. 234.

⁸⁰² Robert M. Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005) 28.

this theological doctrine, first in the metaphysical and theoretical terms of his earlier analogy and later in a methodical theology derived from the categories of interiority analysis.

Lonergan's trinitarian theology, and in particular the four-point hypothesis coupled with his original treatment of the divine missions provides the theological "architectonic principle" that Peter Phan seeks in order to construct an ordered and coherent understanding of Christian faith.⁸⁰³ Further it includes not only a systematic understanding of religious diversity but potentially weaves other doctrines, theologies, pastoral practices, histories and contexts into an intelligible whole forming a "patterned tapestry."⁸⁰⁴

The second component required in the construction of a systematic theology that takes religious diversity into account from its beginning is a theory of history. In fact, such a theory is necessary for an understanding of the four-point hypothesis itself precisely because the missions are located in creation and history. Lonergan's theory of history based on his cognitional theory, epistemology and metaphysics as well as the scale of values developed by Robert Doran⁸⁰⁵ provide the grounding for a theory of history. At the top of the scale of values is religious value as the source of history-making, of progress through schemes of recurrence in realms of cultural, social and vital values. Wherever genuine and authentic progress takes place, the Holy Spirit is

⁸⁰³ Peter C. Phan, *Being Religious Interreligiously, Asian Perspectives on Interfaith Dialogue* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2004) 24.

⁸⁰⁴ Phan, *Being Religious Interreligiously* 24.

⁸⁰⁵ Robert M. Doran, *Theology and the Dialectics of History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990) 88-90.

present.⁸⁰⁶ “The discernment of the mission of the Holy Spirit thus becomes the most important ingredient in humankind’s taking responsibility for the guidance of history.”⁸⁰⁷

Lonergan’s trinitarian theology and theory of history provide the two components necessary for the ‘unified field structure’ for systematic theology. Unlike some other systematic frameworks for theological understanding, the unified field structure would be open to further development through systematic syntheses and transposition “in the light of new questions and exigencies.”⁸⁰⁸ As a heuristic it would anticipate new questions that a given system is not able to answer and encourage the move to a higher viewpoint or paradigm shift when required. Simultaneously the unified field structure would preserve permanent achievements of the past.⁸⁰⁹

The two basic principles enunciated by Tracy regarding religious diversity can be appropriated and developed by the unified field structure. The first, reality is plural and accounts of reality must also be plural; the second, “pluralism is a responsible and fruitful option because it allows for (indeed demands) that we develop better ways as selves, as communities of inquirers, as societies, as cultures, as an inchoately global culture to allow for more possibilities to enrich our personal and communal lives.”⁸¹⁰ The “more possibilities” to which Tracy refers are the “positive realities lurking in plurality” and “an appreciation of them on their own basic terms.”⁸¹¹

Lonergan’s contributions to a systematic understanding of religious diversity are highlighted in a comparison and contrast with three insightful, innovative and

⁸⁰⁶ Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* 77.

⁸⁰⁷ Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* 77.

⁸⁰⁸ Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* 67.

⁸⁰⁹ Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* 71-72.

⁸¹⁰ Tracy, “Christianity in the Wider Context: Demands and Transformations” 9.

⁸¹¹ Tracy, “Christianity in the Wider Context: Demands and Transformations” 12.

groundbreaking trinitarian approaches to religious diversity. Gavin D'Costa, S. Mark Heim and Jacques Dupuis share the opinion that the Trinity and trinitarian theology furnish the theological hermeneutic required to account for the reality of the simultaneous presence of multiple religions as well as a mechanism for integrating these accounts into the religious possibilities for Christian being in the world. However, while both D'Costa and Dupuis affirm the trinitarian center of their respective enterprises neither of them provide a systematic understanding of their trinitarian affirmation. D'Costa remains at the historical-dogmatic level, sometimes over-identifying the Holy Spirit with the Spirit of Christ; unable to imagine that the work of the Spirit may be varied in unknown ways from that of the ecclesial role ascribed to her in Christian theology. Such a pneumatological approach holds that the religious Other may reveal the face of the God disclosed by Jesus and may even remind Christians to be faithful to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. Nonetheless, the question of the providential meaning of otherness as other and difference as truly different remains unanswered. Is the Other only a means of mining the self-mediated meaning of the definitive self-disclosure of God in the Jesus Christ event? Or does the Other have meaning and value, related to the gift of the Holy Spirit, that surprises and disrupts Christian expectations and notions of revelation that result in a reconsideration of Christian identity, theology and praxis?

Dupuis' magisterial body of work resonates most closely with the trinitarian orientations provided by Lonergan's thought. Dupuis affirms the independent but related and complementary missions of the Son and the Spirit. His meticulous work illustrates the ways in which Christians have theologically understood the presence of the Son and the Spirit historically. Further, Dupuis' affirmation that religious diversity is the context

for theologizing is, in fact, the lived reality of most Christians today. Dupuis' descriptive and historical account and exposition of the theological issues at stake in the dialogical encounter of the world's religions benefit from Lonergan's systematic trinitarian theory. Both D'Costa and Dupuis recognize the inadequacy of the exclusivist/inclusivist/pluralist paradigms in which theologies of religious diversity are often situated, but both are unable to make the paradigm shift away from these, and hence, regularly return to the debates elicited and then circumscribed by these paradigms. Lonergan's thought occasions a new paradigm that is intensely trinitarian and pneumatological, that moves discussions away from the historical causality of the Jesus-Christ event toward an exploration of the meaning of the self-disclosures of the Triune God in the history of religious diversity. This shift is evidenced in his concomitant treatment of salvation and its relationship to the gift of God's love.

Heim offers an imaginative and creative speculative account of the relationship between the Triune God, human freedom and a diversity of possible religious ends. His trinitarian theory explores the dimensions of the Trinity but, unfortunately, tends to a modalistic and non-personal understanding of the divine persons. In privileging human freedom Heim is unable to postulate how the divine missions could act as an important and active ingredient in the constitution of history and the shaping of historical destiny. Moreover, while Heim argues that the possibility of multiple religious ends respects the integrity of various religious beliefs he also affirms a hierarchy of religious ends, effectively, positing an inequality between them.

Lonergan's trinitarian thought serves as a corrective to such an approach to religious diversity because of his understanding of the consubstantiality of the persons of

the Trinity. Lonergan's significant contributions with regard to the issues that Heim raises are to be found in his thought on the intersubjective relations between the persons of the Trinity and their relations to humankind; the distinct but complementary missions of the Son and the Spirit within the single divine economy; the orientation and direction that history may take because of the divine missions; the theological underpinnings of religious diversity in the various self-communications of the Triune God and less in human choices; and the equality and dignity of each religious tradition stemming from God's gift of self. This gift does not separate humans from God or one another, but leads all creation back to God.

A Lonerganian trinitarian understanding of religious diversity engages the foundations of his two psychological analogies for the Trinity; namely, his analysis of human development from below upwards and that from above downwards. Lonergan's earlier natural-cognitive psychological analogy is aligned with Lonergan's more frequently treated analysis of human development from below upward; the movement from knowledge to love through the four related levels of conscious intentionality: experience, understanding, judgment and decision. His later supernatural-affective analogy is based upon his notion of human development from above downward: the apprehension of value as the affective "knowing of the heart" that involves a response to, and the discernment and recognition of value.⁸¹² Hence, judgments of value and responsible living are made possible.⁸¹³ "Love is simply not the end of spiritual

⁸¹² Bernard J. Tyrrell, SJ, "Feelings as Apprehensive-Intentional Responses to Values," in *Lonergan Workshop* vol. 7, ed. Fred Lawrence (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988) 336.

⁸¹³ Glen Hughes and Sebastian Moore, "Hamlet and the Affective Roots of Decision," in *Lonergan Workshop* vol. 7, ed. Fred Lawrence (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988) 180.

procession,” writes Doran “[L]ove propels the entire set of autonomous spiritual processions.”⁸¹⁴

These two complementary movements reflect the dynamism of human consciousness and are correlative to the missions of the Son and the Spirit. The mission of the Son unfolds historically in the pattern of human development from below upward while that of the Spirit proceeds from above downward. Lonergan’s theory of human consciousness posits a dynamism and structure which remains stable, though its unfolding can be nuanced and its constitutive levels expanded. In fact, the complexity of historical consciousness requires such an expansion. In the subjective pole of Lonergan’s analysis of human development the psychic dimension, initially explored by Doran, reflects the need for religious communities, and Christians in particular, to reflect on their painful history, to acknowledge the need for contriteness, to seek forgiveness and healing as well as attentiveness to operative relations of power past and present. This is necessary toward the mutual construction of a shared future through encounter and conversation. Likewise, Doran’s exploration of the objective pole of Lonergan’s analysis of human development, in the movement from above downward, expands Lonergan’s notion of consciousness to take into serious consideration the gift of God’s love given, its subjective reception in the expansion of horizon and orientation to effectiveness in human history.

The transposition of the metaphysical language and categories of the more theoretical theology of the earlier Lonergan into the language and categories of a methodical theology derived from an interiority analysis remains a challenge for contemporary interpreters of Lonergan’s trinitarian thought. Reflection on Lonergan’s

⁸¹⁴ Robert M. Doran, “The Starting Point of Systematic Theology,” *Theological Studies* 67 (2006) 759.

contributions to an understanding of religious diversity gleans insights from both analogies as well as the need to connect them as each analogy provides specific insights necessary for the construction of a trinitarian theology of religious diversity.

The natural-cognitional analogy provides an understanding of consubstantiality through a likeness of the divine processions according to the mode of a *processio operati* understood on the basis of intellectual emanation.⁸¹⁵ Another of Lonergan's original contributions comes in his definition of a divine mission as the eternal relation joined to a created, contingent, external term. Furthermore, Lonergan's four-point hypothesis provides the theological core of the trinitarian framework for understanding the created imitation of and participation in the divine Triune life. The Triune God discloses the divine self in salvation history as God is in eternity, an inter-relationship of divine persons, and invites humanity to share in those relations.

Lonergan's supernatural-affective analogy emphasizes the importance of affectivity in the dynamic unfolding of consciousness. His later trinitarian theology is written in markedly existential language, reflecting the transposition to a methodical theology. He speaks of the Triune God as divine love given (the Holy Spirit), divine love declared (the Word) and finally, the consummation of divine love (the Father). These are illustrated by analogy in the human experience of two people in love: they first fall in love; they then avow their love; and in the development of their avowed commitment consummate that love and fructify it.

In the unfolding of human history, it is the mission of the Holy Spirit that plays a pivotal role in divine-human inter-relationality. It is only through the mission of the

⁸¹⁵ Bernard J.F. Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics*, vol. 12 of *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, trans. Michael G. Shields, ed. Robert M. Doran and H. Daniel Monsour (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007)145.

Spirit that the meaning of the Jesus-Christ event is made present and likewise, that the future event of the beatific vision is proleptically present. The gift of the Holy Spirit is the “falling in love” that transforms one’s horizon and “orientates” the human person toward acts of love that coalesce into the habit of charity.⁸¹⁶ The Holy Spirit is given in creation and history and thus is not limited to the Christian dispensation but is the first and foundational gift of God to all humankind. Thus, from a Christian systematic perspective all humanity, and certainly all religious traditions along with Christianity, is invited to imitate and participate in the divine life.

Lonergan’s trinitarian theology, and especially his theology of the Holy Spirit, contributes to a theological understanding of religion. His general “model of religion” facilitates a description of and framework for hypotheses regarding “religious diversity.” It further serves to communicate a Christian theological concept of religion to religiously other conversation participants. Lonergan’s methodical approach distinguishes, but does not separate, between the distinct operations, methods, and aims of a philosophy of God, religious studies and comparative theology with a Christian systematic understanding of religion.

Several salient features of Lonergan’s theological model of religions are pertinent to current debates in the Christian approach to other religions. They are, the universality of the gift of God’s love in history; the inherent openness in human consciousness to receive and respond to the gift and move the gift into conscious human living; the relationship of the gift of the Holy Spirit to the other two divine persons; the unity and complementarity of the two divine missions in the one divine plan; the inner and outer

⁸¹⁶ Bernard J.F. Lonergan, “Healing and Creating in History,” in *A Third Collection, Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan, S.J.* ed Frederick E. Crowe, S.J. (Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1985) 106. See also Robert M. Doran “Addressing the Four-Point Hypothesis,” *Theological Studies* 68 (2007) 678-679.

word of God present in the history of the religions of the world; the infrastructural and suprastructural dimensions of religions; the sufficiency of salvific grace in the gift of God's love given; the relationship between salvific grace and the paschal event as a Trinitarian mystery; universalist faith and the transvaluation of values and meanings; and lastly, the constitutive element unique to Christianity as suprastructural.

In exploring the scholars whose work informs Lonergan's thoughts on religious pluralism and dialogue several recurrent themes reveal some of Lonergan's concerns as well as directions his thought on the topic may take. R.E. Whitson, F. Heiler, W.C. Smith and R. Panikkar along with Lonergan argue that the contemporary era of interfaith encounter is unlike any that preceded it. Unlike the classicist approach of the past, historically sensitive encounters today must be conversational, respectful, egalitarian, and mutually enriching. At the same time, taking otherness seriously challenges each religion's self-understanding, the understanding of the meaning of the other religions, and the potential meaning of religions in historical process together.

Whitson queries if religions systems are open to one another, and if so, what that could mean for each religion singly and together. Whitson, like Lonergan, contributes to an exploration of sequences and stages of meaning in the history of religions. Heiler provides Lonergan with the empirical support for his claim that the religions of the world share the gift of the historical effusion of the Holy Spirit, reflected in seven principle areas of unity amongst them. Smith, like Lonergan, is interested in the experience of the gift of the Holy Spirit, and how this results in religious commitment. This commitment rests on the apprehension and judgment of value: one believes before understanding. This, along with Heiler's insight, underscores the magnitude of the Lonerganian

enterprise to transpose theology out of narrow Western categories of theoretical theology toward cross-cultural and trans-religious categories derived from interiority analysis. Panikkar asserts that the contemporary situation of dialogical encounter invites Christians to re-think their presuppositions about the religious Other and in the process about themselves. The new data revealed about God, the Other and oneself in the dialogical process require Christians to affirm or reject or modify their presuppositions. Thus, theological reflection on the possible meaning of the providential mystery of the religious Other may result in an evolution in thinking about the Other as well as in Christian theology and praxis.

The ramifications of a systematic theological approach to religious diversity in continuity with Lonergan's trinitarian theology, theory of history and model of religious diversity are best understood as directions and anticipations with great potential for Christian theology and praxis. First, the God doctrine enunciated in Lonergan's trinitarian theology provides a model for religious believers and communities for being in the world. Religious subjectivity would actually be intersubjectivity: being religious in the world today means being religious in relationship with other religions (interreligiously).⁸¹⁷ Akin to the divine Three, distinctiveness and identity are achieved only through relationality, being as being-towards-another.⁸¹⁸ The dimension of Lonergan's God doctrine relating to the divine-human and human-human relationships captured in the four-point hypothesis asserts a conceptual relation between God and humanity on God's part, but a real relation on the part of humanity; thus, God's ongoing generosity toward humankind and humankind's continued dependence on the Trinity.

⁸¹⁷ Thus, the title of Peter Phan's book, *Being Religious Interreligiously*.

⁸¹⁸ F. E. Crowe, S.J., *The Doctrine of the Most Holy Trinity* (Course Notes 1965-1966, Regis College, Willowdale, 1970) 158.

The gift of God's love, given and declared, initiates and confirms not only the relationship between God and humankind but secondarily between human persons and communities. Through the Holy Spirit all humankind is drawn into the inner life of God and humanity is assimilated into divine life as relational because these relations are identical with divine being.⁸¹⁹

Another significant direction Lonergan's thought leads when considering religious diversity is to an exploration of a theology of history. Lonergan's theory of history differentiates between historicity as an "existential history" that is the living tradition that forms subjects and brings them to the present and "historical consciousness" which refers to the subjective constitution of history through choices and actions. Thus, in his treatment of the simultaneous presence of multiple religious traditions Frederick Crowe inquires: what is God doing in the divine economy, past, present, and future? It is possible to address this question only because of God's actual self-disclosures in the particularities of personal and communal history. Crowe calls for some "total view of history." To this effect he posits two approaches: the first, the "synchronic," considers the simultaneous presence of many religions and the other, the "diachronic," looks for sequences and stages in meanings and values in the particularities of various religions in history. Both views of history interrogate the constitution of human history and the exercise of human freedom and responsibility in light of the divine missions.

A consideration of the historical character of religious diversity contributes not only to a descriptive account of the simultaneous presence of multiple religions, but more importantly for systematic theology, to an explanatory account. "Explanatory history is

⁸¹⁹ Neil J. Ormerod, "Two Points or Four?—Rahner and Lonergan on Trinity, Incarnation, Grace, and Beatific Vision," *Theological Studies* 68 (2007) 673.

history in all its concreteness, yet history governed by a set of heuristic notions that would enable theologians to relate *to one another* in genetic and dialectical fashion various stages in the evolution of the meanings constitutive of the Christian church.”⁸²⁰

Anticipations in the evolution of the constitutive meaning of the Christian church surface in relating the religious traditions of the world to one another.

An additional contribution of Lonergan’s thought gleaned from a treatment of religious diversity is in the area of revelation. According to Crowe, each of the divine missions is unique and not superfluous; the Spirit and the Son brings with him/her the particular meaning he/she wishes to disclose and share in history. Each is thoroughly historical with real effects in history. Hence, Crowe is insistent that the data of conscious interiority (associated with the mission of the Holy Spirit) be considered equal to and as important as the data of sense (associated with the mission of the Son). Moreover, just as religious studies and comparative theologies are attentive to the objective data constitutive of religions and exemplified in the study of sacred texts, historical figures and ritual practices, it behoves a systematic enterprise to be attentive to the data of interiority found in mystical prayer, non-discursive reasoning and religious experience.

A fourth and related implication of a Lonerganian systematic understanding of religious diversity is in the shift in systematic theology from causality to meaning. This shift is paralleled in the movement from a classicist to historical view of culture and is evidenced, for example, in the contrast between Lonergan’s early and later Christology.⁸²¹ A theological approach concerned less with causality and more with meaning relocates discourses about religious others from how they are saved with or

⁸²⁰ Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* 148.

⁸²¹ See Frederick E. Crowe, S.J., *Christ and History, the Christology of Bernard Lonergan from 1935-1982* (Ottawa: Novalis, 2004).

without explicit reference to Christ or membership in the Church, to the meaning of Christ and the Church in the context of religious diversity that is itself the product of God's self giving.

Lonergan's trinitarian paradigm for understanding religious diversity entails a thorough systematic treatment of the doctrine of the Trinity which informs a theology of religions and a 'trinified' structural analysis of history. The outcome is a positive evaluation of the fact of religious diversity. Religious diversity is not something to be overcome, but a providential gift where each religion participates in the divine mission of the Holy Spirit, and thus in the divine life. The challenge for Christians is to appropriate this judgment of value into conscious living. In pursuing this challenge, Lonergan's notion of dialogue and mutual self-mediation provides a lucid account of how the complexities of religious differences and otherness can be navigated, understood and appropriated.

In the movement from dialectical encounter to dialogical encounter religious believers from different traditions become mutually concerned with one another; this is a movement from self-centeredness to other-centeredness. In being other-centered the self is not negated but is known to be more authentic as the term of a relationship. Differences are adverted to, and being authentic-in-difference becomes a mutually reinforced value amongst conversation participants. The quest for intelligibility occurs in the challenging and unknown spaces of diversity and difference that are revealed through conversation. In these spaces of difference, conversation partners attend to the experience of the Other: both the divine and neighbour. "Lying within every encounter with the stranger [the

Other] is the potential for discovery.”⁸²² Such is dialogical encounter and conversation as mutual self-mediation: the mutual revelation and reception of one’s existential interiority. Mutual self-mediation is the technical expression of the affective dimension of the “I-You-We” relationship that lies at the heart of dialogical encounter.

Appropriating otherness is a challenging task that exposes the vulnerability of being in relationship. The experience of otherness that Christians appropriate does not, first and foremost, regard the religiously Other, but the totally Other, the divine Other. God’s grace, the Holy Spirit, unexpectedly breaks into human history and “breaches the [collective] ego’s journey.”⁸²³ This is the “trauma of astonishment” of the encounter with the Other that James Fredericks argues can grow into sustained friendships. “In encountering the Other, we are required to take seriously another center of meaning, value, and action; another orientation toward the world; another way of being human.”⁸²⁴ Thus, falling in love with God and with one another is an experience of the vulnerability precipitated by God’s self giving that calls everything into question, and leads to new understandings, experiences, judgments, and ways of living: “We cannot love and remain unchanged.”⁸²⁵ Lonergan’s trinitarian approach to the religious Other equips Christians with the rationale and the skills to welcome the stranger; to create “liminal zones of mutual sharing”⁸²⁶ where mutual self-mediation can take place, and communities of

⁸²² James Fredericks, “The Catholic Church and the Other Religious Paths: Rejecting Nothing that is True and Holy,” *Theological Studies* 64 (2003) 165.

⁸²³ Mark J. Doorley, “In Response to the Other, Postmodernism and Critical Realism,” in *In Deference to the Other* ed. Jim Kanaris and Mark Doorley (Albany: Suny Press, 2004) 135.

⁸²⁴ Fredericks, “The Catholic Church and the Other Religious Paths: Rejecting Nothing that is True and Holy” 165.

⁸²⁵ Fredericks, “The Catholic Church and the Other Religious Paths: Rejecting Nothing that is True and Holy” 167.

⁸²⁶ Reynolds, “Welcoming Without Reserve? A Case in Christian Hospitality,” 198.

loving friendship, rooted in the imitation of and participation in the divine life, can be built.

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