

The Ethics of Lonergan's Existential Intellectualism

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In fond memory of Ken Bunker

In my heart you will remain forever young

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## Introduction

From 1938 to 1949 Lonergan researched and completed two studies of Aquinas -- "Gratia Operans: A Study of the Speculative Development in the Writings of St. Thomas of Aquin" and "The Concept of Verbum in the Writings of St. Thomas Aquinas."<sup>1</sup> In the first work Lonergan examines how Aquinas sought to understand the movement of operative and co-operative grace in a way that results neither in a complete determinism that eliminates human freedom nor in an account of human freedom that makes grace superfluous. It is the problem of reconciling providence with human liberty.<sup>2</sup> The second work explores both the psychology and metaphysics of Aquinas' theory of intellect with the expressed aim of understanding what he means by the intelligible procession of the inner word.

In both studies primary questions -- such as "Whether the image of God is in man as regards the mind only?" and "Whether grace is appropriately divided into operative and co-operative grace?"<sup>3</sup> -- are situated within larger contexts. Lonergan discovered that Aquinas'

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<sup>1</sup>Lonergan's doctoral thesis "Gratia Operans: A Study of the Speculative Development in the Writings of St. Thomas of Aquin" S.T.D. thesis, Gregorian University, Rome, 1940 was rewritten for publication in 1941, 1942, and 1971. The 1971 Grace and Freedom: Operative Grace in the Thought of St. Thomas Aquinas, ed. J. Patout Burns, London: Darton, Longman & Todd added stylistic changes as well as expanded notes to the original publication in Theological Studies (1941 & 1942). "The Concept of Verbum in the Writings of St. Thomas Aquinas" was published between 1946 and 1949 in a series of five articles in Theological Studies 7 (1946): 349-392; 8 (1947): 35-79, 404-444; 10 (1949): 3-40, 359-393, and later in book form Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas, ed. David B. Burrell, C.S.C., London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1967.

<sup>2</sup>One instance of the debate took place in the 17th century between the disciples of Bañez and Molina. The debate ended in 1607 in a stalemate when Paul V silenced the discussion. Lonergan writes that the impasse between the two groups typifies "the bipolarity of disintegrating synthesis" (GF:144).

<sup>3</sup>See ST I, q. 93, a. 6 and ST I-II, q. 111, a. 2.

thought on gratia operans "was but an incident in the execution of a far vaster program" (GF:139). The "vaster program" includes a theory of the will, a theory of divine transcendence, and a theory of universal instrumentality. In the development of his thought on operative grace, Aquinas did not simply focus upon actual grace alone, or upon single human acts of willing by themselves, but faced a more encompassing question, namely how to reconcile eternal and unmoved motion with the effects of this motion, effects which are not simultaneous or constantly occurring. He adapted Aristotle's theory of motions which stipulates that every mover must be in a right relationship with the moved in order for there to be motion. Since any relationship is provided by something other than mover or moved, the ultimate and dynamic order of all relations has a cause which transcends each and every mover. Every mover except the first is moved.

The self-motion of free choice is but an instance of pre-moved motion, of a caused cause. Like any other cause, willing is an instrument of divine providence which is the cause of the entire order of dynamic relations. This "law of universal instrumentality" is the general context for understanding human freedom. To understand Aquinas' thought on human freedom one must have in mind the larger context of universal instrumentality.

A theory of operative and co-operative grace that does not violate human freedom, in turn, is situated within the account of human willing in general. So while Aquinas' theory of the will is nested within the broader context of universal instrumentality, acts of will inspired by grace are doubly nested -- within the two contexts of universal instrumentality and a theory of human freedom. It is this expansive, general, and multi-layered context that accommodates a whole range of problems involving motion, operations, causality, freedom, habits, and conversion. Lonergan writes of the breath of Aquinas' thought:

There is a disinterestedness and an objectivity that comes only from aiming excessively high and far, that leaves one free to take each issue on its merits, to proceed by intrinsic analysis instead of piling up a debater's arguments, to await with serenity for the coherence of truth itself to bring to light the underlying harmony of the manifold whose parts successively engage one's attention. Spontaneously such thought moves towards synthesis, not so much by any single master stroke as by an unnumbered succession of the adaptations that spring continuously from intellectual vitality. (GF:I40)

In his second major study Lonergan discovered a vast program in Aquinas' writings on the intelligible procession of the inner word. Aquinas' theory of the intelligently emanating inner word, which reached a refined expression in the Summa Theologiae, is theological in its primary intent, involves terms from physics and metaphysics, and is embedded in a psychological analogy. In order to understand what Aquinas meant Lonergan encountered, as it were, "several hermeneutical circles that, in cumulative fashion, are relevant to an interpretation."<sup>4</sup>

One of Lonergan's primary concerns is addressing the prevailing obscurity regarding the procession of the Spirit and the related obscurity regarding the procession of the Word. These processions are analogous to the twofold procession of inner word and love, and so a limited, obscure, analogous understanding of divine process is possible by a grasp of the much closer human processions.

On a limited but profound point Lonergan discovered that there are empirical but not empiricist reasons for the way in which one goes about retrieving Aquinas' intellectualism, reasons that spring from a practical hermeneutic -- appropriation of psychological (conscious) facts. In his writings on procession of the inner word Aquinas, following Augustine, attributes the key role to a conscious act of understanding (intelligere) as ground and cause of inner word, not to an unconscious abstraction of universals. In the first chapter of Verbum Lonergan candidly states what is at stake in appropriating the act of understanding:

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<sup>4</sup>SS:584.

The contention of this paper will be that Aquinas was speaking of understanding and that an interpretation in terms of general metaphysics misses the point; to follow Aquinas here, one must practice introspective rational psychology; without that, one no more can know the created image of the Blessed Trinity, as Aquinas conceived it, than a blind man can know colors. (V:II)

The vast scope of Aquinas' thought on understanding and willing presents what Lonergan calls an "enormous problem of developing one's understanding."<sup>5</sup> To meet the "enormous problem" Lonergan did not read the entire corpus time and again or attempt a "Summa of the Summa," and he never claimed to have exhausted the resources of his teacher.<sup>6</sup> Rather he sought to develop adequate historical, theological, metaphysical and psychological contexts for understanding what Aquinas wrote concerning operative and cooperative grace, specification and exercise of the will, and the twofold procession of inner word and love. The "enormous problem" is the problem of developing a context, or horizon, for interpreting an author, and there is no recipe or rule for doing this.<sup>7</sup> A horizon is determined by (I) those

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<sup>5</sup>"[T]he temptation of the manual writer is to yield to the conceptualist illusion; to think that to interpret Aquinas he has merely to quote and then argue; to forget that there does exist an initial and enormous problem of developing one's understanding" (V:216). Russell Hittinger expresses the enormity of the problem in Aquinas' natural law: "If one devotes just a bit to time reading the Prima secundae of the Summa theologiae, one will be struck by the fact that Aquinas' account of practical reason has plural starting points. Natural law is not reduced to one sort of material or method. Rather, it is a way of thinking about, and then organizing, a wide array of subjects: final causality, human intentionality, the virtues, legal precepts, and the history of divine dispensations . . . . For Aquinas, the natural law method (if indeed it is correct to use this term), is a component part of the exercise of faith seeking understanding -- fides quaerens intellectum." "Varieties of Minimalist Natural Law Theory," p. 169.

<sup>6</sup>Fred Crowe describes Lonergan's practice: "His technique is not to sit down and read Aquinas through five times, but to study a particular question as it recurs in the Opera omnia. Any significant question will do to force the acquaintance with modern Thomist Wissenschaft which is a necessary material substratum for understanding his thought." "Origin and Scope of Insight," p. 28.

<sup>7</sup>Lonergan writes of the significance of contexts: "All human knowing occurs within a context, a horizon, a total view, an all-encompassing framework, a Weltanschauung, and apart from that context it loses sense, significance, meaning." "The Future of Christianity," 2C:162. In Verbum



questions that have been adequately met; (2) those that have not yet been resolved -- the known unknown; and (3) relevant questions that have not yet occurred -- the unknown unknown.

This dissertation is a report on my ongoing efforts to meet a distinct but related "enormous problem" -- to develop a context for understanding what Lonergan means by "existential ethics." Lonergan's mature viewpoint is existential both in the Thomistic sense of affirming a critical and real distinction between essence and existence, and in its thematization of the distinct but related intentional acts of an "existential subject." What Lonergan learned in his studies of Aquinas is an essential component of Lonergan's ethics. I contend, therefore, that my enormous problem implies the enormous problem of learning what Lonergan discovered in Aquinas. Even though the phrase "existential subject" does not appear in his writings on Aquinas, an integral part of Lonergan's developed meaning (and the primary focus of this thesis) is what he learned in the eleven-years he spent researching Aquinas, an apprenticeship that "changed him profoundly."<sup>8</sup> Without the eleven years Lonergan spent "reaching up to the mind of Aquinas," neither his magnum opus Insight: A Study of Human Understanding nor Method in Theology would have or could have been written.<sup>9</sup> In Method in Theology he describes the

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he writes of the circular labor of reading Aquinas: "Only by the slow, repetitious, circular labor of going over and over the data, by catching here a little insight and there another, by following through false leads and profiting from many mistakes, by continuous adjustments and cumulative changes of one's initial assumptions and perspectives and concepts, can one hope to attain such a development of one's own understanding as to hope to understand what Aquinas meant" (V:216).

<sup>8</sup>Lonergan writes the following concerning changes in meaning: "Every act of meaning is embedded in a context, and over time contexts change subtly, slowly, surely" in "The Future of Thomism," 2C:49. He writes of the "profound change" in the epilogue of Insight: "After spending years reaching up to the mind of Aquinas, I came to a two-fold conclusion. On the one hand, that reaching had changed me profoundly. On the other hand, that change was the essential benefit" (I:748).

<sup>9</sup>Fred Crowe writes of a possible "shift in tactics, maybe even the very radical shift in strategy that Insight shows over" Lonergan's early interest in Marx, Hegel, and philosophy of history: "Had he written his masterpiece . . . on leaving Amiens [1938] it might have been to challenge

significance of his apprenticeship to Aquinas in these words:

Aquinas' thought on grace and freedom and his thoughts on cognitional theory and on the Trinity were genuine achievements of the human spirit. Such achievement has a permanence of its own. It can be improved upon. It can be inserted in larger and richer contexts. But unless its substance is incorporated in subsequent work, the subsequent work will be substantially poorer affair. (MT:352)

The first four chapters of my thesis explore how this achievement contributes to an existential ethics. My primary focus is interpreting what Lonergan writes in his two major studies of Aquinas. Numerous citations to Aquinas are found throughout, not to defend the accuracy of Lonergan's interpretation, but to indicate a preliminary familiarity with the territory Lonergan traversed during his eleven-year research. The expertise required to defend Lonergan's interpretation as authentic would be a further task.

Chapter One examines the procession of the word by contrasting the causality of an intelligible emanation with the causality of other types of emanation. The difference between the causality of rational consciousness and other types of causality is central to Lonergan's reading of Aquinas and stands in contrast to conceptualist readings. Concepts either (1) proceed from intelligence in act and so intelligibly; (2) proceed spontaneously but unintelligibly as do images from imagination; or (3) do not proceed at all. Lonergan finds in Aquinas' writings evidence for asserting the first position. It is a crucial claim and the reason why I begin the dissertation with an analysis of this process.<sup>10</sup> If inner words proceed from an act that is intelligent, then they are

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Hegel with another view of world history. In any case it would not have been Insight that emerged; to write that work, he needed a real encounter with Thomas Aquinas; instead of starting his career as a new luminary, he needed instead to become a disciple, a learner, an apprentice." Lonergan, p. 40.

<sup>10</sup>Note that Lonergan himself chooses to begin the Verbum studies with an analysis of understanding. He writes in Verbum: "I have begun, not from the metaphysical framework, but from the psychological content of Thomist theory of intellect: logic might favor the opposite procedure but, after attempting it in a variety of ways, I found it unmanageable. . . . The Thomist

rational, not as derived, for example, the way conclusions follow from premises, but as understanding in act is rational. This more fundamental rationality defies reduction to some law because it is "the pure case of intelligible law" (V:33). In other words, the rationality of inner words is a meta-law that is normative for all acts of understanding, including interpretation, application, verification, and affirmation.

In Chapter Two I examine two radically different meanings of "consciousness." Lonergan writes that "Aquinas adverted to the act of understanding and made it central in his rational psychology" (V:217) and asserts that to understand Aquinas' writings on the inner word, one must do as Aquinas and Augustine did and attend to the psychological analogy. What Lonergan does, what he invites us to do, what sets him apart from other so-called "Transcendental Thomists," and what is really one of the hermeneutical keys to understanding his works, is to capitalize on the fact that understanding -- direct, reflective, deliberative, or decisive -- is indeed conscious. This means that understanding is more like indigestion than digestion; more like growing frustrated than growing hair. And it makes possible a greater awareness of just what is happening when we are understanding in any area of our lives. It also provides personal, empirical reasons for understanding what is meant by "the primacy of intellectualism" and defending it against Cartesian rationalism and Kantian idealism.

In Chapter Three I first take up the problem of precisely distinguishing between sensitive and intellectual knowing. Then I address the further problem of distinguishing within intellectual knowing two types of inner words -- direct understanding and judgment. Finally I distinguish knowing in a loose or generic sense of any single act, from knowing in the strict sense of

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application of metaphysics to the tasks of psychological analysis cannot be studied in some preliminary vacuum. That application exists only in psychological contexts, and it is easier to interpret metaphysics as applied to psychology when one is aware of the psychological facts involved" (V:45-46,95). In the fifth and final chapter I will address the issue of logical versus methodological starting points.

functionally related conscious acts that culminate in judgment about what is so. The critical problem is to find evidence for affirming the reality of knowing in the strict sense. The critical problem is not a version of the "bridge problem," which sets up a dichotomy between knowing and reality, or consciousness and being. In the final section of Chapter Three I examine the difference between the two problems and investigate how the "bridge problem" stems from a misunderstanding of "consciousness."

The aim of Chapter Four is to continue and expand the analysis of critical realism to develop a context for understanding essential and effective freedom. The discussion of procession, intelligible emanation, and consciousness continues with an analysis of the procession of love. In Aquinas' Trinitarian context, love is a rational act proceeding in the will from the inner word. Like the procession of the inner word, love is an intelligible emanation. As an intelligible emanation love is not an impulse towards a desired object, or a principle of process or motion. It is simply a term, or end of a process. In order for there to be a wholesome striving or tending toward some object, there must first be consent to or acceptance of what is good. This is a complacent aspect love, which is the basic act of willing.

This aspect of love, which is relevant to the Trinitarian context, is not the only aspect, and is insufficient for understanding human acts. Something more than an account of the intelligible emanations of the inner word and love is needed to do ethics. The procession of love in the will from the inner word is distinct from an act of love proceeding forth from the will. This latter motion is a self-motion of properly human acts. To grasp the dynamics of essential and effective freedom, we must consider not simply willing as an intrapersonal process and intelligible emanation, but also willing as exercise or self-motion that terminates in things.<sup>11</sup> The

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<sup>11</sup>While the procession of love in the will from the inner word is the analogue to the procession of the third Person in God, the outward procession of an act of love from the will is analogous to creation.

distinction between the procession of love in the will from the inner word, which is a principle of human acts, and willing as self-motion alleviates the confusion that results from an account of human freedom that stresses efficient causality, "action," and concern for doing, and underplays the complacent, receptive procession of love from the inner word.<sup>12</sup> In Aquinas' mature view there are two lines of causation converging in human acts -- specification and exercise.<sup>13</sup> The former is a complacent, receptive procession of love from the inner word, while the latter has two causes -- acts of willing an end in which the will is mota et non movens and acts of willing means in which the will is mota et movens.

In the last part of Chapter Four I identify and surmount a measure of abstraction operative up to this point in the dissertation. Essentially free, humans are effectively limited in our freedom. In order to integrate an intellectualist account of human reason as a dynamic structure, a potential to become intentionally all that is that involves operations in both the intellect and will, with the reality of human living as a process of development with numerous contingencies, we need a comprehensive and general theory of operation or motion. The problem might be stated as a question: Is it possible to retain the two-fold intelligible emanation of inner word from understanding and of love from both inner word and understanding, incorporate them into a theory of specification and exercise of willing, but add to them an explanation of the myriad contingencies that surround both these processes and their extension in the realm of human freedom? To answer this question I will examine the theory of universal instrumentality, which is the general context for Aquinas' writings on human freedom. I will discuss how an implication of this position is human solidarity.

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<sup>12</sup>The lopsided account also leaves the analogy for the second divine procession in obscurity.

<sup>13</sup>In the De Malo and the Prima secundae Aquinas distinguished the specification from the exercise of willing. On specification by the intellect see De Malo q. 6, a. 1; ST I-II q. 9, a. 1. On the se movet of the will see ST I-II q. 9, a. 3. Texts that assert explicitly a motion in the will: ST I-II q. 80, a. 1; q. 109, a. 2, ad 1m.

In Chapter Five I describe an ethics that incorporates the assumptions, distinctions, theorems, definitions, and method of the previous four chapters. Such an ethics is speculative, critical, heuristic, and difficult. The significance of such an ethics is not one of having all the answers, nor even all the pertinent questions. Nor is its significance a particular code or rule for decent conduct. Rather its significance is methodological. It provides a general context for reading Lonergan and, indirectly, for reading Aquinas; and, more importantly, a general context for "reading" one's own life. The context, which is the overall aim of my project, is understanding both the meta-laws of human consciousness and the direct and indirect controls upon effective freedom.

The subjective pole of this context is an approach, a way, a method for discriminating between better and worse ethical theories. It might appear that I am mixing apples ("epistemology") and oranges ("ethics"). What Lonergan does in a way unparalleled by other "existential" thinkers is to give an account of what is normative in human action. He endorses a phenomenologically ostensible contemplation as part of a critically realist philosophy, but he cautions against simply taking existentialism and incorporating it within Scholastic philosophy.<sup>14</sup> When objectivity is considered "idealistic," unattainable, or merely a hangover from hyper-rationalist philosophy, then "authentic subjectivity" tends to denote something other than the principle of objectivity. Like Kierkegaard, Lonergan contends that objectivity, as properly conceived, is the fruit of authentic subjectivity, and to denounce it is "to induce, not a merely incidental blind spot in one's vision, but a radical undermining of authentic human existence."<sup>15</sup> Lonergan's retrieval of Aquinas' theory of universal instrumentality acknowledges the contingencies of what we might call the "facticity" and "historicity" conditioning human

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<sup>14</sup> See his "Notes on Existentialism," I.I "General Orientation," p. 2.

<sup>15</sup>CS:220.

freedom. Even so, his existential ethics is critically realist. It is difficult -- demanding involvement and finally making personal development and conversion topics for consideration -- but its difficulty is also its importance. It is a difficulty and importance suggested by Aristotle, for whom ethics was not a matter of abstract knowledge but character formation. To a person young in years or immature in character a study of ethics would be pointless and unprofitable. One has to be ready, or at the least ready enough, to make "readiness" a foundational topic in ethics.

There is a development of existential ethics in Lonergan's later writings where history, the nature of human science, cultural pluralism, stages, functions and realms of meaning, multiple differentiations of consciousness, the two-directional nature of development, and the primacy of conversion are in the forefront of his thinking. The context of his thought shifted, adapted, and evolved as he read Jean Piaget, Susanne Langer, Max Scheler, Wilhelm Dilthey, Dietrich Von Hildebrand and others. Insight could be read as an attempt to "meet the issues of our own day." (V:220) in philosophy of science, epistemology, ethics. It is a massive achievement, but it did not fulfill Lonergan's original intention. "Insight was an exploration in other fields, prior to trying to do method in theology."<sup>16</sup> There is, in other words, a filling out or change in context that has the effect of redefining what "existential ethics" means.<sup>17</sup>

In the final part of Chapter Five I will briefly touch upon further developments in Lonergan's developing thought that extend his position and expand his meaning. These are the more explicitly "existential" elements of his developing viewpoint.<sup>18</sup> The later developments in

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<sup>16</sup>"An Interview with Father Bernard Lonergan, S.J." 2C:213.

<sup>17</sup>Lonergan remarks of his own developing point of view: "There is a spreading out, moving on, including more. Like recently [1970] what I've got a hold of is the fact that I've dropped faculty psychology and I'm doing intentionality analysis." "An Interview with Fr. Bernard Lonergan, S.J." 2C:222-223.

<sup>18</sup>The existential dimension of Lonergan's thought became evident in the notes from a course

Lonergan's thought have been a part of my own horizon for reading and interpreting Lonergan's two studies of Aquinas, and it is possible that my reading is better than was his writing. In the final chapter I will consider the significance of this possibility.

Since Lonergan's studies find their ultimate intelligibility within theological contexts, my interpretation is philosophical in Gilson's sense of "Christian Philosophy." Without believing in divine providence, actual and habitual grace, and a personal and triune God, neither Aquinas nor Lonergan would have written what they did. This does not mean, however, that Aquinas' conception of the will or of the word proceeding within the intellect, or Lonergan's retrieval of these, are strictly theological. In both cases what is believed acts as a "friendly star" to philosophical reflection.

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given on existentialism in 1957, a series of articles written in the mid-60's ("Cognitive Structure," "Existenz and Aggiornamento," and "Dimensions of Meaning"), the 1968 Aquinas lecture The Subject, and the later writings, including Method in Theology. In these writings there is an increasing clarification of and emphasis on the transcendental notion of value, the primacy of conscience, and the "fourth level" of human consciousness.



## Chapter One

### Procession of the Inner Word

Lonergan writes that his intention in the Verbum articles is to understand what Aquinas meant by the intelligible procession of an inner word (V:215). In order to understand what Aquinas meant Lonergan encountered, as it were, "several hermeneutical circles that, in cumulative fashion, are relevant to an interpretation."<sup>19</sup> Aquinas' theory of the intelligible procession of the word, which reached a refined expression in Summa Theologiae, Pars prima, QQ. 27 and 93, is theological in its primary intent, involves technical terms from physics and metaphysics, and is embedded in a psychological analogy that Aquinas inherited from Augustine.

Like Aquinas, Lonergan uses analogy to move from what is closer and more clear to a limited understanding of what will always remain mysterious -- the Divine Processions. "The psychological analogy is just the side-door through which we enter for an imperfect look" (V:209).<sup>20</sup> For both philosophers a limited, analogous understanding ("imperfect look") of eternal procession is related back to what Lonergan calls core "psychological facts" of the twofold

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<sup>19</sup>SS:584.

<sup>20</sup>"The psychological analogy truly gives a deeper insight into what God is. Still, that insight stands upon analogy; it does not penetrate to the very core, the essence of God, in which alone trinitarian doctrine can be contemplated in its full intelligibility; grasping properly "quid sit Deus" is the beatific vision." (V:208)

human procession of inner word and love. Neither Aquinas nor Lonergan begin with necessary principles and draw conclusions, nor do they derive or deduce rational psychology from revelation. Rather, they join Augustine in employing an "introspective" analysis of the conscious procession of an inner word that is prior to language. Thus even though the theory of the intelligible procession of the word is theological in its primary intent,<sup>21</sup> what the theologian understands first is the human mind and its natural and rational processions. Then she or he notices an analogy and strives to understand the nature of the analogy.

What is the analogy? Aquinas expresses it in these words:

Procession, therefore, is not to be understood from what it is in bodies, either according to local movement, or by way of a cause proceeding forth to its exterior effect, as, for instance, like heat from the agent to the thing made hot. Rather it is to be understood by way of an intelligible emanation, for example, of the intelligible word which proceeds from the speaker yet remains in him.<sup>22</sup>

As the human word proceeds from human understanding and human love proceeds from both understanding and inner word, so in an analogous way do eternal Word and Love proceed in the Triune God from an infinite Understanding.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>"Finally, St. Thomas's thought on verbum occurs, for the most part, in a trinitarian context. If Thomist philosophers, quite comprehensibly, are reluctant to venture into his field, it remains that a historian must do so." SS:584.

<sup>22</sup>ST I, q. 27 a. 1, c. The procession of love is also an "intelligible emanation": "Now the Divine Persons are distinct from each other by reason of the procession of the Word from the Speaker, and the procession of Love connecting Both. But in our soul word cannot exist without actual thought, as Augustine says (De Trinitate xiv. 7). Therefore, first and chiefly, the image of the Trinity is to be found in the acts of the soul, that is, inasmuch as from the knowledge we possess, by actual thought we form an internal word; and thence break forth into love." ST I, q. 93, a. 7, c.

<sup>23</sup>The second procession is one of Lonergan's primary concerns in the Verbum, and yet he devotes relatively few pages to exposition and gives this reason: "Once one grasps the processio intelligibilis of inner word from uttering act of understanding, there is not the slightest difficulty in grasping the simple, clear, straightforward account of Aquinas offered of proceeding love"

In his reflections on the inner word Aquinas faced a challenge unknown to Augustine -- namely to fit this "original Augustinian creation into an Aristotelian framework" (V:vii). In Aquinas' writings on the procession of the inner word the (Augustinian) psychological analogy and (Aristotelian) metaphysical framework are not at odds, but complement and mutually support one another. The problem is "the relation of subject to soul, of the Augustinian mens or animus to the Aristotelian anima."<sup>24</sup> Lonergan maintains the psychological aspect is especially original and significant. He writes of his research in Aquinas:

The novelty of the verbum articles was their effort to show that the Thomist analysis of intellect was not merely metaphysical but also psychological, that it was concerned not only with the intellect as a power of the human soul but also with the intelligence of conscious human subject.<sup>25</sup>

The precise meaning of "conscious human subject" will be explored in Chapter Two. In this first chapter I begin by examining a distinction Aquinas makes between two different kinds of procession. The significance of this distinction is that only one of the two processions is both natural and rational, and it is not found in the imagination or in any other act conceived on the analogy of seeing or imagining. In Section 2 I explore what Aquinas means when he writes that the procession of the intelligible word from the speaker is an "intelligible emanation" (emanatio intelligibilis). Section 3 treats the physics and metaphysics of intelligible process, different kinds of "movement," and how it is possible to conceive of understanding as a perfect movement that is also a received act. This will involve a discussion of distinct meanings of "active" and "passive" (V:204). In Chapter Four we will explore Lonergan's retrieval of Aquinas account of proceeding love.

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<sup>24</sup>"When conscious acts are studied by introspection, one discovers not only the acts and their intentional terms but also the intending subject, and there arises the problem of the relations of subject to soul, of the Augustinian mens or animus to the Aristotelian anima." SS:579.

<sup>25</sup>SS:576.

potencies and the difference between understanding as a received perfection and understanding as the exercise of efficient causality. In section 4 I will contrast Lonergan's retrieval of Aquinas' account of intellectual process with the "conceptualist" account.

### 1.1 The Inner Word

In the De veritate Aquinas differentiates the procession of a word in the intellect, on the one hand, from the procession of love from the will, on the other.<sup>26</sup> These processions are both operations but two different kinds of procession, namely processio operationis and processio operati.

All processions are according to some action or operation. Some actions, like heating or carving, go forth and presuppose an external, material patient. Other operations, such as seeing, understanding, or willing, are actions which remain in the agent.<sup>27</sup>

Processions that remain in the agent can be further divided. Processio operationis is an "internal" operation in which a perfection emerges from and in what is perfected.<sup>28</sup> For example, the act of loving (basic act of the will) is to the will, and understanding is to possible intellect, as acts are to potencies, as perfections are to what are perfectible (V:198). The relation is between potencies and acts. Processio operati is a second type of "internal" operation which refers to a relation of act to act. In this procession one thing emerges from another thing without the former

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<sup>26</sup>DV q. 4, a. 2, ad 7m. The context of distinguishing intellectual operation from volitional operation is the question whether the Word is predicated both personally and essentially of God.

<sup>27</sup>Aquinas distinguishes these types of procession as those that go forth and perfect a patient and those that perfect and remain in an agent. Happiness, like feeling, understanding, and willing, is an action and perfection that remains in the agent. ST I-II, q. 3, a. 2.

<sup>28</sup>Perfection refers to an actuation of what would otherwise remain in an imperfect state of potency. There is a kind of perfection from nature that simply belongs to the essence of what something is, but it is not perfection of what is in act, or what is brought about by growth. Cf. ST II-II, q. 184, a. 3.

perfecting the latter. This type of procession is peculiar and unique to intellectual beings.

Aquinas writes that inward procession

applies most conspicuously to the intellect, the action of which remains in the intelligent agent. For whenever we understand, by the very fact of understanding there proceeds something within us, which is a conception of the object understood, a conception issuing from our intellectual power and proceeding from our knowledge of that object.<sup>29</sup>

Simultaneously with the act of understanding, the inner word proceeds.<sup>30</sup> The will can prevent the occurrence of phantasms or suppress certain questions, but once one understands an inner word is spoken necessarily. In other words, until the inner word is spoken we do not understand.

Speaking the inner word is not a second illumination of the phantasm, but rather an activity of one who is understanding expressing himself or herself inwardly; one is understanding as conceiving (intelligere as dicere), and what he or she expresses is an inner word (verbum).

Both types of procession occur, for example, in the construction of a house. In the physical construction of the house there are actions proceeding from an agent (builder) to a patient that perfects the patient (the house). There are also acts of understanding experienced by the architect puzzling over plans. These acts are perfections within the architect who is merely in potency to understanding until he actually understands. Both of the physical construction of the house and the acts of understanding are processions in which there is perfection (processio operationis).

In addition to these there is a procession that is not a perfection of the architect.

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<sup>29</sup>ST I, q. 27, a. 1, c. As there is neither capacity for perfection nor materiality in God, "created analogy to the divine procession has to be sought in instances of processio operati, such as the procession of the inner word in the intellect" (V:98).

<sup>30</sup>Aquinas writes in the Summa contra gentiles: "The word conceived by our intellect does not proceed from potency to act except in so far as the intellect proceeds from potency to act. For all that, the word does not arise in our intellect except as it exists in act; rather, simultaneously with its existence in act, there is a word conceived therein." SCG IV: 14.

Assuming that the architect understands the idea for the house, he is able to design or create a plan. In understanding he becomes a kind of principle. Within the architect there is an "intimate and uniform procession of an intelligible act . . . For when we call the builder the principle of the house, in the idea of such a principle is included that of his art."<sup>31</sup> Even though there is production in the activity of intelligent designing or defining, the relation in this procession is between two acts -- understanding as creating and the inward reception of the creation in the one creating. This is the relation between intelligence in act and the inner word (verbum).<sup>32</sup>

## 1.2 Inner Words, Outer Words, and Meaning

Lonergan translates the verbum that proceeds from understanding and is synonymous with Aquinas' verbum interius, verbum cordis and verbum mentis as "inner word" (V:I). Aquinas' conception of "inner word" was influenced by Augustine, who writes of "the true word that belongs to no language, the true word about a true thing, having nothing from itself, but everything from that knowledge from which it is born."<sup>33</sup> This word is contrasted with spoken, written, or imagined "outer words." What differentiates outer words from other sounds, such as sneezing or burping, is intended meaning.

The contrast between inner and outer words also has to do with intended meaning. In the Commentary on the Sentences Aquinas compares the inner word to the major premise of a syllogism, the imagined word to the minor premise, and the spoken word to the conclusions

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<sup>31</sup>ST I, q. 27, a. 1, ad. 3. We will examine below (see Section 4.2.1) how form as the term of understanding is distinct from understanding, as when an architect designs plans for a house.

<sup>32</sup>"[T]he inner word is to our intelligence in act as is act to act, perfection to proportionate perfection; in us the procession is processio operati; in us dicere is producere verbum" (V:I98).

<sup>33</sup>Augustine, The Trinity, p. 483.

(V:2).<sup>34</sup> The emphasis here is on the inner word as efficient cause of the outer word with the imagined word acting as intermediary. In later writings Aquinas emphasized a slightly different relation between inner and outer words. Inner words are what can be or are meant, while outer words are what can or do mean the inner word.

[T]he exterior vocal sound is called a word from the fact that it signifies the interior concept of the mind. Therefore it follows that, first and chiefly, the interior concept of the mind is called a word; secondarily, the vocal sound itself, signifying the interior concept, is so called; and thirdly, the imagination of the vocal sound is called a word.<sup>35</sup>

Uttering a vocal sound that does not signify an inner word is tantamount to either parroting or simply babbling. Meaningless outer words are real, i.e. real as sounds, images, or written symbols; but they have no "signified."

Another indication that inner words are what can be or are meant is the use of abstract terms. Outer words such as "truth" or "happiness" are abstract, while combined outer words such as "I am confused" are true or false. But "no real thing is abstract; and no real thing is true or false in the relevant sense of truth or falsity" (V:5-6). We never experience happiness per se, and truth and falsehood are properly in the mind. ("Verum et falsum sunt in mente.") As meaningfully uttered, these terms directly refer to inner words and only indirectly to real things. The mode of reality need not be identical with the mode of knowing, since realities are particular while knowing may be universal. Concrete, particular things like radios or events like a ball game, on the other hand, are neither abstract nor true nor false.<sup>36</sup>

Besides distinguishing inner and outer words, Aquinas distinguished understanding and

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<sup>34</sup>In I Sent., d. 27, q. 2, a. 1 sol.

<sup>35</sup>ST I, q. 34, a. 1. c.

<sup>36</sup>"Because outer words may be abstract, and true or false, because real things are neither abstract nor true nor false, the immediate reference of their meaning is to an inner word" (V:3).

inner word, with the latter being an effect of the former.

Now, for us every object of understanding really proceeds from something else. For example, conceptions of conclusions proceed from principles, conceptions of the quiddities of later things proceed from quiddities of things prior, or at least an actual conception proceeds from habitual knowledge. Now, this is universally true of whatever we understand, whether it be understood by its essence or by its likeness; for conception itself is an effect of the act of understanding.<sup>37</sup>

The human inner word as an object proceeding from the act of understanding is really distinct from understanding because there are two distinct acts -- understanding and inner word of defining or judging.<sup>38</sup>

Human inner words are also products inasmuch as what is known as true or false or abstract is a product. "Intelligence in act is proportionate to producing the inner word" (V:199). It is a known product since, if this were not the case, we would never invent or define, assert or deny. Like the idea of an invention known by the inventor who (assuming resources, tools, etc.) uses creative imagination to work out (excogitare) a design of particular plans for inventions, an inner word stands above real things.

If, while lecturing or giving a public speech, we were asked by "Could you kindly put it in other words? Could you say it another way?", we could, if we truly understood, since intelligence in act is proportionate to producing a second distinct act. This line of thinking,

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<sup>37</sup>DV q. 4, a. 2, c.

<sup>38</sup>Not in every intelligible procession must there be a distinction between principle and spoken word, between a first and second act. Aquinas writes: "The more perfectly it [word] proceeds, the more closely it is one with the source whence it proceeds. For it is clear that the more a thing is understood, the more closely is the intellectual conception joined and united to the intelligent agent; since the intellect by the very act of understanding is made one with the object understood. Thus, as the divine intelligence is the very supreme perfection of God, the divine Word is of necessity perfectly one with the source whence He proceeds, without any kind of diversity." ST I, q. 27, a. 1, ad. 2.



Lonergan maintains, coincides with Aquinas' view that human knowing is a becoming. When the intellect is or has become an actuation of the species, intellect, on account of and because of what it is, then "pivots" to speak an inner word.<sup>39</sup> Even though the object of intellect always comes through the phantasm, the intellect

is not content with an object in this state. It pivots on itself to produce for itself another object which is the inner word as ratio, intentio, definitio, quod quid est. And this pivoting and production is no mere matter of some metaphysical sausage-machine, at one end slicing species off phantasm, and at the other popping out concepts; it is an operation of rational consciousness. (V:34)

This "pivoting" does not mean that inner speaking is voluntary in the way outer expression is. Nor is it to deny simultaneity of the procession of the intelligible word with understanding. Rather, it is simply a metaphor for what is unique about the causality of rational consciousness.

In the process of understanding as speaking an inner word there is production of a word but not perfection of the act of understanding. "The inner word is to intelligence in act as act to act" (V:198). It is this kind of process (processio operati), not the other (processio operationis), that is uniquely analogous to divine procession.<sup>40</sup> Though "internal," the procession of the word is intimately related to various forms of outer expression. What outer words mean, if they mean, are inner words.

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<sup>39</sup>Since both types of procession -- one a perfection of intellect (processio operationis), the other an act proceeding from an act without perfection (processio operati) -- play a part in the knowing process, the theory that human knowing is a perfection is incomplete. The problem of knowledge of what is other, once one asserts that knowing is a perfection of the knower, is taken up in further detail below in Chapter Three, section 3.

<sup>40</sup>Aquinas restricts the analogy to the inward procession found in rational creatures: "... nec in ipsa rationali creature invenitur Dei imago nisi secundum mentem" (ST I, q. 93, a. 6. c). Neither Arius nor Sabellius affirmed procession in God because both of them considered procession as an outward act.

### I.3 Procession of the Word: Intelligible Emanation

Aquinas writes that the procession of the inner word that remains in the "speaker" is an "intelligible emanation" (emanatio intelligibilis).<sup>41</sup> What does he mean by an "intelligible emanation"? Are there other types of emanation? If so, how are they different?

Aquinas distinguishes two emanations. First there is the emanation of all being from the universal cause. Secondly there are emanations of particular beings from particular agents. Aquinas considers the different grades of particular beings and the kind of emanation that is present in each grade.<sup>42</sup> A diversity of emanations, of one thing coming forth from another, follows upon a diversity of natures. Inanimate things have no emanation in themselves. Only if something external acts upon them, as does fire upon a log, does one thing flow forth to another. In animate plant life there is emanation from within, but its terminus is external. The blossom of the apple tree becomes an apple which, when finally ripe, is separated from the tree. A more perfect grade of life is the sensitive in which operations take place internally. Aquinas gives the example of images proceeding from sense impressions, and then from images flows memories. "For the exterior sensible impresses its form on the exterior senses; from these it proceeds to the imagination and, further, to the storehouse of the memory."<sup>43</sup> Intellectual life is still more perfect than sensitive life. Intellect is able to reflect, and indeed reflect upon itself and understand itself, in a way that senses cannot.

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<sup>41</sup>In considering procession in God, Aquinas writes that procession "is not to be understood from what it is in bodies, either according to local movement, or by way of a cause proceeding forth to its exterior effect, as, for instance, like heat from the agent to the thing made hot. Rather it is to be understood by way of an intelligible emanation, for example, of the intelligible word which proceeds from the speaker, yet remains in him." ST I, q. 27, a. 1, c.

<sup>42</sup>On the emanation of particular things from a universal first principle, see ST I, q. 45, a. 1. The diversity of emanations is treated in SCG IV: 11, 5.

<sup>43</sup>SCG IV: 11, 5.

It is this reflective character that distinguishes intelligent emanations from the other grades of emanation. The intelligible procession of the inner word, in addition to being a processio operati, is an intelligible emanation. How do the two aspects of the causality of rational consciousness differ? "The inner word of defining is not only caused by but also is because of the act of understanding" (V:199). The inner word as caused by understanding is a processio operati. Intelligence in act is sufficient cause for producing a proportionate effect -- an inner word. The procession of the inner word is also reflective, not in the sense that any time we understand we reflect upon our understanding, but in the sense that there is a sufficient cause that is known to be sufficient. Because of a rationally conscious intellectual act (intelligere as dicere), an inner word is consciously produced, i.e. produced from sufficient grounds known to be sufficient.

[I]t is in the self-possession of understanding as the ground of possible conceptualization that one may best discern what is meant by saying that the self-expression of understanding is an emanatio intelligibilis, a procession from knowledge as knowledge, and because of knowledge as knowledge. (V:42)

The inner word is not simply a production from sufficient grounds, but a production from known sufficient grounds. There are also sufficient grounds for the natural procession of heat to a steak on the grill, but there are notable differences between this procession and the procession of an inner word in an intelligible emanation.

First, the procession of the heat is intelligible, but it is actually understood either by someone with a sufficient knowledge of thermodynamics or by an experienced chef who has the practical know-how to moderate the temperature of the grill. The procession of the "inner word" is also intelligible. But its intelligibility is intelligence in act. In other words, the procession of the heat is intelligible but not reflective; it is what can be understood, or a potential object of investigation. But the intelligible procession of the inner word is understanding itself, "the very

stuff of intellect" (V:33).

A second difference is that while the intelligibility of the natural procession of heat is related to the intelligibility of the physical laws of thermodynamics and can be expressed as particular laws, the intelligibility of the procession of the inner word is the principle generating any particular laws whatsoever, and can only be expressed as first principles, the "meta-laws" grounding the generation of any particular laws. An intelligent procession of an inner word stands to a particular physical law as causal action to its effect.

[I]nner words proceed according to the principles of identity, non-contradiction, excluded middle, and sufficient reason; but these principles are not specific laws but the essential conditions of there being objects to be related by laws and relations to relate them. (V:33)

The claim that these principles are "essential conditions" is a foundational assertion about a bedrock of human reasoning. One discovers these principles the way one discovers the law of gravity -- through a process of reasoning. Still, one does not demonstrate the accuracy of these principles the way one might demonstrate the law of gravity. The reason for this is that demonstration, as well as exhortation, persuasion, and conjecture, are more or less rational, more or less intelligent, more or less reasonable inasmuch as they more or less proceed from actual intelligible emanations.<sup>44</sup>

The third difference, closely related to the second, is that while the intelligibility of a natural process is imposed, the intelligibility of the procession of the word is native. The

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<sup>44</sup>This is only partially true. Most of what we "know" is actually believed; most of what we claim to "understand" we also believe with the hopes, perhaps, of understanding. Beliefs are not irrational. However, the grounds for believing and the grounds for assenting to what one understands, while both instances of intelligible emanations, are not the same. "The will is the cause of an act of belief, but though the latter is a verbum, it is not a verbum proceeding directly from an intelligere" (V:192 note #33). The decision to believe is not the same as understanding what one believes. The significance of this qualification will be addressed in Chapter Five.

intelligibility of natural processes is imposed by divine intelligence and therefore a vestige of intelligent ideas and intelligent design. It is an intelligibility that is a possible object of our understanding. But the intelligibility of the procession of an inner word is intelligence itself -- i.e. "native," not in the sense that we naturally and spontaneously understand intelligible processions (understanding), which involves tremendous labor, but in the sense that the activity of understanding anything whatsoever is intelligible and intelligent. Thus, though both processions involve causality, which implies a relation of dependence, the two types of causality

are radically different in their whole buildup. When you are concerned with the intentional order on the intellectual level, you discover a sufficiency of reason that functions as a causality, but a causality that can't be compared with a definition of causality in the natural order, the definition a physicist might give you, for instance. That difference is the difference between intelligible emanation and [natural] causality.<sup>45</sup>

Intentional causality is not opposed to natural causality, as if intelligible emanations are unnatural. Causality in the intentional order is a unique case of natural causality, one that is both intelligible and intelligent. Thus, the important difference between an intelligible emanation and, for example, a gaseous one, is not that one is an effect with a sufficient cause as its ground while the other is not. The difference is in the nature of the sufficient ground.

Inner words do not proceed with mere natural spontaneity as any effect does from any cause; they proceed with reflective rationality; they proceed not merely from a sufficient cause but from sufficient grounds known to be sufficient and because they are known to be sufficient. (V:199)

A gaseous emanation from radioactive decay is intelligible but not intelligent, so there is no "pivoting" involved. "Intelligence" denotes self-possession and self-expression, i.e. not simply sufficient grounds, but known sufficient grounds for one act proceeding from another. Only in

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<sup>45</sup>CT:I9.

an intelligible emanation of an inner word is the sufficient ground a knowing that is aware of its sufficiency. This perfection marks a radical difference between the intelligible emanations of intelligent beings and the emanations present in both inanimate and animate beings.

Lonergan refers to this sufficient ground as "basic and essential rationality":

To introduce a term that will summarize this, we may say that the inner word is rational, not indeed with the derived rationality of discourse, of reasoning from premises to conclusions, but with the basic and essential rationality of rational consciousness, with the rationality that can be discerned in any judgment, with the rationality that now we have to observe in all concepts. (V:34)

This description of the rationality of proceeding inner word as "basic and essential" is another way to say rationality is "native" to human understanding. The native intelligibility of intelligence in act is a kind of "first principle," for although the intelligible is grasped in act and not a priori, it is grasped through "the basic and essential rationality of rational consciousness." Lonergan writes that the principle of non-contradiction "is the natural law of the procession of any concept from intelligence in act, so it is the first principle ruling all conceptualization; and as Aquinas affirmed, it is the first principle governing all judgment." (V:57) The possible range of first principles of reason, or of the "law" of intelligence, is unlimited. For example, with regard to this same principle of non-contradiction, "any sensible is relevant, and none is more than an illustration; for this principle does not arise from an insight into sensible data but from the nature of intelligence as such." (V:56) A reflective or thematic analysis or articulation of the principle of non-contradiction does not arise from intelligence as such. But the principle itself arises from intelligence. The point Lonergan is making is simply this: Those who are unaware of first principles, and even those who question or reject the idea of first principles, still conceive and make judgments; and in conceiving and making judgments ("intelligence as such") they are rationally conscious.

That the principle of non-contradiction arises from the nature of intelligence itself, and

not from custom or training, is crucial. Alasdair MacIntyre, in his analysis of narrative-embodiment and enquiry-bearing traditions, claims that when a tradition is in an "epistemological crisis" and before identity is restored, its systematic formulations and story may both be jettisoned in favor of new ones. A return to "first principles" of Platonic and Aristotelian theories of practical reason (for example), "themselves, and indeed the whole body of theory of which they are a part, themselves will be understood to require justification. . . . Hence such first principles are not self-sufficient, self-justifying epistemological first principles."<sup>46</sup> The position which MacIntyre has in mind treats principles as expressed, as artifacts, not principles as operative; principles as actus signatus, not as actus exercitus. MacIntyre does not, and might not be able to recognize the crucial difference between "first principles" as correlative to intelligence in act and implicit in performance, on the one hand, and their culturally and linguistically mediated expressions, on the other. Since MacIntyre does not seem to have access to a theory of intelligible emanation that can make sense out of first principles as correlative to intelligence in act, "he is unable to see how he can maintain both that first principles are trans-traditionally normative and tradition-constituted."<sup>47</sup> Lonergan, for whom first principles are native to speaking inner words of definition and judgment, stakes his claim on a personal appropriation of Aquinas' theory of intelligible emanation, and is able to distinguish human nature from human historicity.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup>Whose Justice? Which Rationality?, p. 360. See also "Epistemological Crises, Dramatic Narrative and Philosophy of Science."

<sup>47</sup>Michael P. Maxwell, "A Dialectical Encounter Between MacIntyre and Lonergan on Thomistic Understanding of Rationality," p. 399.

<sup>48</sup>Lonergan elaborates on this important distinction in "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness," 3C:169-183.

### I.3 Intellectual Passion and Action

#### I.3.1 Actus Perfecti and Movement

A breakthrough in Lonergan's efforts to face the "enormous problem" of understanding what Aquinas meant by the intelligible procession of the word was to identify, distinguish, and relate two meanings of "operation." According to one, "operation" is an actus perfecti (act of the perfect or complete), which denotes the act of something inasmuch as it is simply in act. A second meaning of "operation" denotes an exercise of efficient causality. Neither type of operation is an actus imperfecti (act of the imperfect or incomplete), which denotes the act of something that is in potency inasmuch as it is in potency.

The difference between actus perfecti and actus imperfecti is found in the Ethics, where Aristotle contrasts the incompleteness of movement with the completeness of operation. Movements, taken in this narrow sense, become in time, with one part succeeding another. For example, an orange rolling across the kitchen counter is a spatial movement with a certain duration. To ask about the movement is to ask about what happens over the whole span of time. The orange cannot simultaneously be rolling a certain distance and have rolled that same distance. It is either rolling or has rolled. And if it is rolling, its motion is incomplete or imperfect (actus imperfecti), or the act of what is in potency inasmuch as it is in potency.

An operation, by contrast, is the act of what is in act, not what is in potency. An operation endures through time, but does not become in time. In other words, an operation does not have a duration, for there is a coincidence of action and end. At each instant an operation is complete or perfect.

There is a distinction between action (praxis) distinct from its end and action coincident with its end. One cannot at once be walking a given distance and have walked it, be being cured and have been cured, be learning something and have learned it. But at once one is seeing and has seen, one is understanding and has understood, one is alive and has been alive, one is happy and has been happy. In the former instances there is a difference between action and end, and we have either what is not properly action or, at best,



incomplete action -- such are movements. In the latter instances action and end are coincident -- such are operations. (V:I02)<sup>49</sup>

Like the act of willing (velle), understanding (intelligere) is a movement that is complete "at once" in itself. One understands (e.g. a joke) or does not; there is no middle ground. Sometimes it takes a minute or two to get a joke, or even longer for an idea to "sink in." There is a middle ground, but this is the middle ground of learning, or "reasoning in order to understand," but not yet understanding. Only in a loose sense can understanding be taken as extending to all operations that make up reasoning.<sup>50</sup>

There is another experience that suggests understanding actually grows over time and does not happen all-at-once. It is the experience of understanding multa per unum, i.e. when insights coalesce in a developing viewpoint. We understand one point, then another, then a third and so on, changing our minds as we go, until the whole problem is settled. This obviously takes time and does not happen "at once." Still, what is happening in this process is an accumulation of insights that either do or do not occur, i.e. a succession of operations in which "at once one is understanding and has understood."

Lonergan writes that when Aquinas distinguishes actus imperfecti from actus perfecti, he is following the analysis of De Anima III,<sup>51</sup> where Aristotle has a broader conception of movement, one which includes the act of something perfect (actus perfecti) that is complete all at once. Movement as conceived here is no longer simply the act of what is incomplete.

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<sup>49</sup>Lonergan is paraphrasing Aristotle, Metaphysics, IX, 6, 1048b18-30.

<sup>50</sup>Aquinas distinguishes intelligere proprie and intelligere communiter: "We are said to understand, properly speaking, when we apprehend the quiddity of things or when we understand those truths which are immediately known by the intellect, once it knows the quiddity of things. ... Intellect can also be taken in a second sense -- in general, that is, as extending to all its operations, including opinion and reasoning." DV q. I, a. 12, c.

<sup>51</sup>Lonergan cites De Anima, III, 7, 431a5 ff & lecture 12, §766 (V:104).

One [movement] is the act of something imperfect, i.e., of something existing in potentiality, as such: this movement is successive and is in time. Another movement is the act of something perfect, i.e., of something existing in act, e.g., to understand, to feel, and to will and such like, also to have delight. This movement is not successive, nor is it of itself in time.<sup>52</sup>

Thus even though we find in Aquinas a contrast between movement and operation, this has to be understood in light of his reading of De Anima and his affirmation of a twofold motus.

#### I.4.2 Actus Perfecti as a Pati

Sensation, understanding, and willing are not only instances of actus perfecti, they are also instances of what Aquinas called "pati," something undergone. Aquinas cites Aristotle in describing understanding as a passive activity:

Just because a thing is able to act, it does not follow that it is capable of receiving action. But ability to understand is ability to be passive; for as Aristotle remarks, "understanding is a kind of undergoing."<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>52</sup>ST I-II, q. 31, a. 2, ad 1m. The contemplative life and the active life share in the broader conception of movement, since "to contemplate is itself a movement of the intellect, in so far as every operation is described as a movement; in which sense the Philosopher says (De Anima, III, 7) that sensation and understanding are movements of a kind, in so far as movement is defined as the act of a perfect thing." ST II-II, q. 179, a. 1, ad 3m.

<sup>53</sup>SCG II, 60, 8. The passage Aquinas cites is De Anima, III, 4, 429a13.

Aquinas repeatedly asserts that since, broadly speaking, reception is a pati, "intelligere quoddam pati est."<sup>54</sup> There is no contradiction in thinking of operating subjects as being moved.<sup>55</sup>

This seems counter-intuitive. Spontaneously we might expect that all human operations are instances of some type of efficient causality. An operation or action in a subject seems to suggest an efficient cause doing something, and if there is a receiving involved, it would be on the part of the object operated or acted upon. When "I sense" or "I know," I seem to be doing something by means of an activated efficient potency that is producing some effect. In other words, I am the efficient cause. If not all actions are efficient, what is a received action? How is an operation which is complete in itself (actus perfecti) receptive? How can understanding be an act of what is perfect or complete and also be an undergoing of some change? How can an act of something perfect and complete all-at-once be in any way receptive? Lonergan notes the difficulty:

There is no difficulty in thinking of movement in the strict sense of actus imperfecti as a pati. But there appears to be enormous difficulty in thinking of movement in the broad sense, which includes the actus perfecti, as a pati. (V:107)

In his later works Aquinas distinguished pati proprie from pati communiter. Pati proprie is associated with suffering or alteration for the worse, while pati communiter is found in all

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<sup>54</sup>In III Sent, d. 15, q. 2, a. 1, sol. 2; "As a matter of fact, what is sensed and what is understood are related to intellect and sense more like agents, inasmuch as the operations of sensation and understanding are in a certain sense passive" (DV q. 8, a. 1 ad 14m.); "Posse autem intelligere est posse pati: cum 'intelligere quoddam pati sit'" (SCG II, 60, 8). Cf. (V:128-133).

<sup>55</sup>This has to be carefully distinguished from the operatio of God which denotes unmoved efficient causality. Aquinas made clear that operative grace was an operation of an effect. "For the operation of some effects is attributed not to the moveable but to the mover" (ST I-II, q. III, a. 2 c.). This would have been superfluous if operation could only be an effect. While today many would balk at the idea of operating subjects being moved, "the notion of operation as passive, as something predicated not of the mover but of the moved was familiar to Aquinas" (V:110).

creatures insofar as there is potentiality in everything except what is pure act. It is simply a receiving according to potency. It presupposes a subject, but it in no way diminishes the recipient. In fact it denotes a perfecting of the subject in which it is received: "inasmuch as immanent act is a perfection received in a creature, necessarily it is a pati" (V:I38).

Since intellect and will are immaterial, their movements cannot be accompanied by a loss, except accidentally.<sup>56</sup> But when Aquinas wrote of an "operatio non activa sed receptiva" he apparently had in mind a received perfection, an active reception, a pati (communiter) of the operating subject. Lonergan writes "that there is an acting which is simply being in act, and simply being in act is not opposed to being changed and being moved. On the contrary, movement itself is defined as an act." (V:I09)

It is true that "I" am "acting" or "operating" when I sense or I know, but it is a mistake "to conclude immediately that 'I' also denotes the ontological subject of efficient causality" (V:I09). This conclusion cannot account for a distinction Aquinas makes regarding the two acts of intellect, namely

the distinction between intelligere and dicere [is] a distinction between the two meanings of action, operation: intelligere is action in the sense of act; dicere is action in the sense of operating an effect. (V:I39)

The crucial distinction under consideration here is between actus perfecti and the exercise of efficient causality. What makes the idea of "simply being in act" difficult to conceive is that if acts are known by their objects, and the object of the intellectual operation of understanding is the inner word, then understanding cannot also be receptive. Why? An efficient act that produces its object cannot also be a receptive act if, by definition of efficient and receptive potencies, "one subject [is excluded] from being both efficient and receptive" (V:I13). If there is

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<sup>56</sup>ST I-II, q. 22, a. I, c.

only one mode of intellectual operation, and it is the operation of an efficient potency, then it cannot be a receptive act.

The solution Lonergan found in the way Aquinas utilized an Aristotelian definition of efficient potency, on the one hand, and an Avicennian definition of principle of operation, on the other. What is confusing is that Aquinas uses the same term, potentia activa, to refer both to efficient potency and principle of operation, even though the latter is a sub-division of "nature" -- "principle in the thing of movement in the thing," and not an instance of efficient potency.<sup>57</sup> In some cases it bears the Avicennian meaning of what Lonergan translates as "active potency," in others it bears the Aristotelian meaning of what Lonergan translates as "efficient potency." If one assumes potentia activa refers only to efficient potency, then receptive potency (potentia passiva) must be taken to mean a receptivity to form but not as an activity. That is, since, by definition, receptive potency is opposed to efficient potency, it could not be at once receptive and active (efficient); it could not be a received, perfect act. And this is the reason why some would claim that the species appears in the intellect without a conscious activity on the part of the intellect, i.e. unintelligently and unconsciously after the sensitive species of some object sufficiently impresses itself upon the sensitive potency.

But in fact Aquinas expressed the relation between species as form and intelligere in two different manners. For Aristotle "efficient potency" (potentia activa) and "receptive potency" (potentia passiva) are relational, implying a duality. "Receptive potency" is the principle of receiving movement or change from another or from the selfsame as other. "Efficient potency" is

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<sup>57</sup>The third chapter of Verbum is Lonergan's effort to come to grips with the "enormously complicated" task of determining the meaning of technical physical and metaphysical terms. The meanings are complicated "first, by Aristotle's efforts to adapt the Greek language to his own technical purposes, secondly, by the imperfect coincidence of the earlier Latin equivalents, mediated by Arabic culture, and the later fruits of direct translation from the Greek" (V:xiv).

a principle of movement or change in the other or in the self as other (V:II3).<sup>58</sup> Efficient potency "looks towards an effect even though it may not actually produce one" (V:II7).

What is important to note about Aristotle's understanding of efficient and receptive potency is that it necessarily involves some "other" or "the selfsame as other" and excludes the selfsame from being both efficient and receptive. The efficient potency of heating is related to a receptive potency of being heated.<sup>59</sup> It is possible to have both in the same subject, provided two different parts, one to be moved by the other that is mover. But one and the same subject cannot be both receptive and efficient in the same respect.<sup>60</sup> Thus one and the same act of understanding would have to be either the act of a receptive potency, in which intellect is capable of being moved and is a pati, or the act of an efficient potency, in which there is a processio operati of the inner word within the intellect.

In addition to "efficient potency" and "receptive potency," Aristotle conceived of a "natural potency." It is simply a principle of action in the selfsame, a "principle in the thing of movement in the thing; it is 'principium motus in eo in quo est motus'" (V:II3). It does not imply a relational element, and is thus neither an efficient potency nor a receptive (potency), for each of these imply some "other." What natural potency and efficient potency do share in common is that both are principles of movement in the broad sense of the term, though the

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<sup>58</sup>Aristotle defines "potency" as: (1) "the principle of motion or of change which is in a thing other than the thing moved or changed, or in the thing moved or changed but qua other; . . . (2) also means the principle of being moved or of being changed by another thing or by the thing itself qua other." Metaphysics, V: II, 1019a15 ff.

<sup>59</sup>"Things that can act and be acted upon are called "relative" by virtue of a potency to act and a potency to be acted upon, . . . For example that which can heat is relative to that which can be heated, in view of the fact that each is so capable." Metaphysics, V: 15, 1021a15-17.

<sup>60</sup>"For example, the art of building is a potency which does not exist in the thing built, but the medical art is a potency which could be in the man who is being healed, but not qua being healed." Aristotle, Metaphysics, V: 12, 1019a16-18.

motions are distinct (V:I35-I36).

In the Avicennian scheme, found predominantly but not exclusively in Aquinas' earlier works,<sup>61</sup> "active potency" (potentia activa) refers to a principle of operation or action, which may involve an ulterior effect when action goes forth into external matter, or may not involve such an effect but simply remains within the agent.<sup>62</sup> "Active potency" is a principle of operation and possible consequent effect, but not an efficient cause of operation (V:II5-II8,I28). "Passive potency" (potentia passiva), simply refers to a potency to receive form (V:II2;II4-II9).

The difference between someone who is learning a science for the first time, and someone who has already learned, and is therefore in possession of the science, is the difference between "passive potency" and "active potency" in the Avicennian scheme. In other words, intellect as capable of receiving form as new corresponds to "passive potency"; intellect as capable of re-actualizing a prior act of understanding corresponds to "active potency." In one case one is receptive to form, while in the other one is able to exercise the operation in virtue of the form previously received.<sup>63</sup> In the first case, "we are at the mercy of fortune, the sub-conscious, or a

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<sup>61</sup>The different meanings of active power appears in Aquinas' treatment of power in God. ST I, q. 25, a. 1. In the body of the article active power is the (Aristotelian) "principle of acting upon something else; whereas passive power is the principle of being acted upon by something else . . . therefore in God there is active power in the highest degree." In the third objection power is not only the principle of effect but the (Avicennian) principle of an operation or action. "In creatures, power is the principle not only of action, but likewise of effect. Thus in God the idea of power is retained, inasmuch as it is the principle of an effect, not however as it is a principle of action, for this is the divine essence itself" (ad 3m.).

<sup>62</sup>Understanding and willing remain in the agent. Heating, by contrast, "passes into something else." Cf. SCG II, 30, §12.

<sup>63</sup>The difference between an active and passive potency in the will is illustrated by the difference between two people who are sick, the first desiring to be healed, the second not. In the first there is an active potency that is exercised when one deliberates about means to being healed. But before the second person will be able to deliberate, he or she will undergo a change, a pati, since beginning to will the end when previously one had not is a moved moving. The will is perfected, but it is a received perfection. This point is further discussed in Chapter Four, section 4.2.1.3.

teacher's skill, for the emergence of the appropriate phantasm" (V:29).

Avicennian "active potency" and "passive potency" are subdivisions of Aristotelian "natural potency." As such their acts can be receptive, for "what is opposed to receptive potency is efficient potency and not some sub-division of natural potency" (V:138). "Active potency" as a principle of operation does not imply a product and is not the same thing as principle of effect or produced term (principium effectus).

The fundamental distinction operative in Aquinas' treatment of movement in the intellect is this: There is an active potency that is the principle of operation or action which may not involve anything over and above itself and is natural, pertaining to the thing considered in itself, and there is a distinct efficient potency that is the principle of an effect, a movement or change in the other and so pertains not merely to the thing considered in itself but in relation to some "other" or "self as other." It is one act that both: (1) actuates the passive potency, is a received perfection (pati), and (2) produces an effect.

Without distinguishing natural and efficient potency, and without adverting to the differences between the Aristotelian and Avicennian meanings of potentia passiva and potentia activa, the claim that an operation of intellect is received is difficult to defend. With this distinction in mind, however, it is possible to conceive of "active potency" not as an efficient cause but as a received perfection, a received operation, a movement in the thing moved that is a pati communiter.

#### I.4.2.I Species and Intelligere

The relation between species as form and the act of intellect is twofold, following the Avicennian and Aristotelian definitions of active potency (V:125). In various works

one may read that (intellect actuated by) species is the "principium actus intelligendi," the "principium actionis," the "principium formale actionis," the "principium formale quo



intellectus intellegit". (V:125-126)<sup>64</sup>

Here species is simply the formal principle of operation, the formal principle of understanding, the form that specifies intellect, not the efficient cause.

A second, distinct conception of form appears in Aquinas' writings. For, in addition to a principle of understanding there is the product, the term, the effect of understanding, "the thought-out form of a house which is the term of the act of understanding and, as it were, its effect" (V:126).

The distinction between the two is found in the way Aquinas reconciles God's simplicity with the infinity of ideas.<sup>65</sup> Lonergan cites De veritate, where Aquinas defends the plurality of Divine ideas by contrasting form as principle of understanding with form as term of understanding:

A form can exist in the intellect in two ways. First, it can exist there so as to be a principle of the act of understanding, as is the form had by a knower in so far as he understands. This is the likeness of what is understood, existing in him. Second, the form can exist in the intellect so as to be the end-term of the act of understanding. For example, by understanding an architect thinks out the form of a house; and since that form has been thought out by means of an act of understanding and is, as it were, effected by that act, it cannot be a principle of the act of understanding and thus the first means by which the understanding takes place.<sup>66</sup>

The species and the inner word which is uttered, constituted, or produced by understanding (dictum), are related (the relation is one of principle of act to the consequent term of act proceeding from act), but not the same. In so far as one understands, the likeness of what is

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<sup>64</sup>References are to DV q. 3, a. 2, c.; DP, q. 8, a. 1 c.; SCG I, 46, 2.; and DSC, a. 9 ad 6m.

<sup>65</sup>A surprising but crucial discovery for Lonergan was that the "principal expression [of the Thomist concept of inner word] is to be found, not in trinitarian passages, but in the discussions of the plurality of divine ideas" (V:6).

<sup>66</sup>DV q. 3, a. 2, c.

understood exists in him. The form can also exist as the term of understanding, as when an architect designs plans for a house. Yet the form that the architect works out cannot be the form of the "working out" itself.

Though the metaphor of "working out" sounds strictly practical, the activity of "working out" could be speculative or practical. In both cases, the intellect is first informed by the species when one is actually understanding. That is, in both there is an understood. Then "because the intellect is brought into act by means of this form, it can now operate and form quiddities of things, as well as compose and divide."<sup>67</sup> In both speculative and practical insights there is an act of understanding and an utterance of a word that remains within the agent. Operation of the intellect, unlike the will, terminates in the mind.<sup>68</sup> What differentiates speculative and practical intellect is whether the thing apprehended is directed to operation or not, but this is accidental to the act of intellect and therefore to the procession of the inner word.<sup>69</sup> In both practical and speculative acts of intellect, a word proceeds that mediates between intellect and the thing known.

In a sense, then, the intellect produces that by which it arrives at knowledge of things.<sup>70</sup> Quiddities, as well as affirmative and negative propositions, are products "of such a kind that through them the intellect arrives at the knowledge of an exterior thing."<sup>71</sup> Both operations --

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<sup>67</sup>DV q. 3, a. 2.

<sup>68</sup>"There is this difference between the intellect and the will: an operation of the will terminates in things, in which good and evil are found; but an operation of the intellect terminates in the mind, in which the true and the false are found, as is said in the Metaphysics." DV q. 4, a. 2, ad. 7.

<sup>69</sup>"Now, to a thing apprehended by the intellect, it is accidental whether it be directed to operation or not, and according to this the speculative and practical intellect differ." ST I, 79, II, c.

<sup>70</sup>"Hence, this product is, in a fashion, a second means by which understanding takes place." DV q. 3, a. 2, c.

<sup>71</sup>DV q. 3, a. 2, c.

forming quiddities and making negative or positive assertions -- occur because of what intellect has become, i.e. because the intellect is brought into act. Both operations are intelligent acts proceeding intelligently and consciously from intelligent acts (intelligent emanations).

In operations that are not intelligent, the operation can attain the object without also attaining the "why" or the sufficient reason. This is so even if it is an intelligent being who is operating. "Thus sight sees because of light, but although sight sees both light and color, it does not perceive light as the motive of it perceiving color."<sup>72</sup> In seeing, as in every operation, there is a reason why the operation attains its object. In rational operations, such as forming quiddities and making assertions, the formal object "quod" is attained by the formal object "quo." In this case "quo" is the reason why "quod" is attained and it is known to be the reason. So the produced (excogitated) form by means of which an architect understands what he is to make is on account of the attainment of the complex object.

A similar argument is found in the Summa contra gentiles. Understanding does not proceed to some external thing understood (as does heat to a steak on the grill), but remains "within." Understanding is related to the understood by means of the species in the intellect, which is the principle of understanding. Once informed by such a species, the intellect "by an act of understanding forms within itself a certain intention of the thing understood, . . . which the definition signifies."<sup>73</sup> It is only because an intention is formed within that we can understand things present and absent indifferently. The intelligible species received in the intellect is distinct from the intention that is the terminus of intelligent operation. Aquinas writes:

For, by the fact that the intelligible species, which is the form of the intellect and the principle of understanding, is the likeness of the external thing, it follows that the intellect forms an intention like that thing, since such as a thing is, such are its works.

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<sup>72</sup>DES: §37.

<sup>73</sup>SCG I, q. 53, 3.

And because the understood intention is like some thing, it follows that the intellect, by forming such an intention, knows that thing.<sup>74</sup>

#### I.4.2.2 Intellectual Objects

Aristotle maintained that potencies are distinguished by their acts, and the acts by their objects (V:128;140). Thus the apparent paradox cited above (i.e. of an operation or action being a received perfection) and its resolution, as well as Lonergan's discovery of Aquinas' distinction between active potency as principle of movement (Avicenna) and active potency as principle of effect (Aristotle), have implications in the field of objects.

Though Aquinas does not affirm that understanding (intelligere) is the operation of an efficient potency, nor that species is the efficient cause of understanding (intelligere), this does not eliminate a consideration of efficient causality from an analysis of intellectual operation. Indeed, Aquinas describes the relation between objects and acts in terms of efficient causality. Where the potency is efficient, the act produces an object. Where the potency is receptive, however, the object produces the act (V:129).<sup>75</sup> In every instance of potencies and acts, there will be an efficient cause involving objects, though in any given instance one has to determine which is cause and which is effect.

A moving or agent object produces the act of a receptive potency (Aristotle's potentia passiva). This is the relationship between illuminated phantasm and understanding (intelligere) as an act that is a received perfection. It is also the relationship between the sensible and sensing.

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<sup>74</sup>SCG I. q. 53, 4. The difficult twofold relation -- species as principle of understanding and species as thought-out form -- follows Aquinas' use of both Avicennian and Aristotelian conceptions of active potency.

<sup>75</sup>The possibility of an object producing an act in a receptive potency, Lonergan writes, "has been forced into oblivion by neglect of the Aristotelian scheme of analysis" (V:129). In footnotes (#186-189) he cites several passages where Aquinas distinguishes object as moving cause from object as term or end.

Meeting the objection that the divine essence cannot be the object of created knowledge because the judged is to the judge as passive, [Aquinas] answered that on the contrary the sensible and intelligible are to sense and intellect as agent inasmuch as sentire and intelligere are a pati quoddam. (V:I32)<sup>76</sup>

While the illuminated phantasm is the moving or agent object, producing the species and moving the intellect to understanding (intelligere), the verbum is a terminal object produced by the act of understanding as conceiving (dicere).

On the level of intellectual apprehension the agent object is the quidditas rei materialis, . . . known in and through the phantasm illuminated by agent intellect; this agent object is the objectum proprium intellectus humani; it is the object of insight. Corresponding to this agent object there is the terminal object of the inner word; this is the concept. (V:I40)

An illuminated phantasm moving the intellect to operation is a processio operationis, a received perfection, and a pati. Conceiving (dicere) an inner word is a processio operati in which one act grounds another. It is an exercise of efficient causality "that does not include the Aristotelian restrictions of in alio vel qua aliud" (in the other or in self as other)(V:I98).<sup>77</sup> The procession of the inner word is an intelligible emanation. But it does not presuppose some "other."<sup>78</sup> The distinction between an agent and possible intellect, which we will now explore, is not between two

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<sup>76</sup>Reference is to DV q. 8, a. 1, ad I4m: "That about which the intellect or the sense judges need not be passive, even though it may be signified as passive. As a matter of fact, what is sensed and what is understood (the object of a judgment) are related to intellect and sense more like agents, inasmuch as the operations of sensation and understanding are in a certain sense passive."

<sup>77</sup>Aquinas encountered the limitation of Aristotle's conception of efficient potency when treating divine activity. "Divine potency cannot be passive, for God cannot suffer change; nor can it be active for, according to Aristotle, that is the principle of change in the other as other, but divine activity does not presuppose an "other" (V:II6). The reference is to In I Sent., d. 42, q. 1, a. 1, ob 3a.

<sup>78</sup>Fred Crowe writes of the difference: "The 'cause' in 'because of' is not the Aristotelian efficient cause, but the very Thomist 'emanatio intelligibilis.'" "Rethinking the Trinity: Taking Seriously the 'Homoousios,'" p. 19.

separate intellects, but between intellect as productive efficient potency and intellect as receptive natural potency (V:I39).

#### I.4.3 Possible and Agent Intellect

In the process of reasoning that moves from sense and imagination through questioning to understanding and conception, something is added to sensible data, analogous to light illuminating colors and making them actually visible. What is added is an efficient potency, namely agent intellect. It is posited because "evidence as relevant and phantasm as illuminated are not mere sensible data" (V:I40). If the proper object of inquiry is not the quidditas rei materialis, but a subsisting immaterial form, then an active element would be superfluous, and a claim could be made that intellectual knowing is basically analogous to sense knowing. Such immaterial objects would by themselves be intelligible in act.<sup>79</sup> "Like roadside signs that impose their message whether we are interested or not, such forms would offer ready answers to questions we had never even thought of."<sup>80</sup> But since the forms of natural objects do not subsist immaterially, our understanding and knowing do not happen spontaneously and immediately, the way our seeing does when we open our eyes. "[T]he theory of innate ideas--and, one may add, of Kantian a priori forms--contradicts the experience we all have of working from, and on, a sensible basis towards understanding" (V:31-32).

As active, intellect is potens omnia facere. It is a unique type of efficient potency, one that acts by illuminating images, transforming the mere presentations of revery into moving

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<sup>79</sup>The reason for assigning an active part of intellect to make things intelligible is that "the natures or forms of the sensible things which we understand are not actually intelligible" (ST I, q. 79, a. 3.).

<sup>80</sup>David B. Burrell, "Intentional Activity and Performance: Paradigm for Actus," p. 121. We do hold "answers" to questions that we have not raised, but these are more properly called "beliefs." See note #32 above.

objects, the illuminated phantasm moving the intellect to understanding (intelligere). The agent object (quidditas rei materialis) is known through an illumination of phantasm by agent intellect. Thus agent intellect does not directly make everything, but acts externally and indirectly.

[A]gent intellect did not include the specific determinations of the various natures of material things but only was capable of making any such nature intelligible in act. Hence, while phantasm caused in possible intellect the determination of the act of understanding, agent intellect caused the element of immaterialization, of intelligibility in act. (V:82)

As passive, intellect is potens omnia fieri, a natural potency that receives. The possible intellect of one in possession of a science is an active potency in the sense of principle of operation in virtue of form. The possible intellect of one learning something for the first time is a passive potency to the reception of form (V:I39).

Whenever an object is received in possible intellect, it is received or understood as illuminated by agent intellect. The agent object moves the natural potency of possible intellect to an operation that is also a pati, the reception of the species. The act of conceiving a terminal object is understanding "pivoting on itself to produce for itself another object which is the inner word as ratio, intentio, definitio, quod quid est" (V:34). This producing is what Aquinas meant by emanationem intelligibilem.<sup>81</sup> And, as Lonergan writes,

this production is not merely utterance, dicere, but the utterance of intelligence in act, or rationally conscious disregard of the irrelevant, of critical evaluation of all that is relevant, of intelligere. This intelligere can be what it is only if there are objects to move it as well as the objects that it produces. (V:I40)

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<sup>81</sup>ST I. q. 27, a. I, c. "Secundum emanationem intelligibilem, utpote verbi intelligibilis a dicente."

### 1.5 "Conceptualism"

Lonergan's interpretation of Aquinas' writings places him at odds with what he calls the "conceptualist" interpretation, which does not distinguish the receptive and productive modes of understanding. According to this reading, intelligere is conceived solely as efficient and productive act. There is but one mode of intellectual operation, namely the production of the concept. According to this account it would be impossible, by definition, for the same act of intellect to be receptive, since efficient potency and receptive potency are opposed. It would be contradictory to speak of an operating subject being moved when understanding is simply and solely the operation of an efficient potency.

With these assumptions one might account for the presence of an intelligible species in the intellect in the following way:

The potentia passiva of the intellect must be understood as a receptivity to form but not as a potency to the intellectual activity of receiving form. The species must, then, somehow get into the intellect without operation on the part of the intellect, which is possible only if the impression of species upon intellect occurs unintelligently and indeed unconsciously.<sup>82</sup>

When a species of some object sufficiently impresses itself upon the sensitive potency an expressed species emerges in the intellect more or less unconsciously and automatically. This automatic and unconscious process might be referred to as "abstraction of the universal" or simply as "conception." In either case, the only act of understanding is a recognition of an already present concept or the comparison of already present concepts.

One problem with this position is how a species effects its own operation. Does an unintelligently received concept produce an awareness of the already present concept? The less perfect cannot produce the more perfect any more than form can be efficient cause of its own

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<sup>82</sup>Pat Byrne, "Thomist Sources of Lonergan's World-View," p. 131.



esse.<sup>83</sup>

The assertion that the intelligible species appears without an act of understanding Lonergan finds to be more in line with Kant, "whose critique was not of the pure reason but of the human mind as conceived by Scotus" (V:25) than with Aquinas. The Thomist position, according to Lonergan, is that species is not an efficient potency, and that whatever produces the species also produces its operation (V:127). For Aquinas there are two distinct modes of acting in the first act of intellect, with two distinct objects. Intelligere refers to understanding as receiving the species. Dicere refers to understanding as producing a second act, i.e. as uttering an inner word. If understanding is simply the operation of an efficient potency, without qualification, then it simply cannot be a received act, or a pati. Understanding could not be the operation of a receptive potency -- receiving its operation from a mover (the illuminated phantasm). Nor could it be either the operation of an (Avicennian) active potency re-actualizing a form already received, or the operation of a (Avicennian) passive potency -- receiving the form for the first time, both of which are sub-divisions of acts of a natural potency. If the single mode of intellectual operation is the act of an efficient potency, the intellect might be receptive to form, but not a potency to the activity of receiving form. Thus the form or species emerges without activity, i.e. without intellectual operation. In other words, the species is impressed upon the intellect unintelligently and unconsciously. From here it is but a short step to say the species was always present, or in the mind a priori (Kant). But Lonergan discovered that Aquinas asserted a mode of understanding that is received and whose object is its mover:

Aquinas states that the passive potency is active, not with respect to species alone, but with respect to the act, the action, the operation of the potency . . . Aquinas as a matter of

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<sup>83</sup>A related problem with this interpretation is that it fails as an analogy, for the operation of a form is a perfection of the active potency, or a processio operationis. But there is no movement towards perfection in Divine process.

fact actually does say that sentire is a pati and that intelligere is a pati. (V:130)

Without distinguishing and clarifying the meanings of potentia activa and potentia passiva, it would be easy to confuse or simply fuse understanding in its relation to an illuminated phantasm (processio operationis) to understanding in its relation to inner word (processio operati). Without distinguishing efficient and natural potency one is likely to overlook the division of objects in the intellectual field. And as objects determine acts, the inadequate treatment of objects lends itself to an impoverished metaphysics of acts. The chances are it will be the pre-conceptual act of understanding (intelligere) which is lost when the two objects are not carefully distinguished. Lonergan's research convinced him that actio and passio refer to the same act in terms of relations to different potencies and different objects:

Finally, while we have seen that the terms operatio and actio sometimes mean simply act or being in act and sometimes mean the exercise of efficient causality we now find that the precision of trinitarian theory led Aquinas to distinguish exactly between these two meanings with regard to the operation or action of intellect: when that operation is meant in the sense of act, it is termed intelligere; but when by operation is meant that one act is grounding another, it is termed dicere. (V:126-127)

Though the acts are distinguishable, they are not two separate acts. Temporally we formulate or conceptualize at some point in time, and again perhaps at a later point in time. In addition there are incidental acts of understanding how to formulate or express what it is we understand. Sometimes a formulation is inadequate, for example when one leaves "coplanar" out of the definition of a circle: "a set of [coplanar] points equidistant from a center." But conceiving occurs, if it occurs, because one is understanding (V:199). An inner word is always uttered, and this utterance is nothing other than understanding producing another act (the receiving of the word) in the possible intellect.

Conceptualization comes as the term and product of a process of reasoning. As long as the reasoning, the fluctuation of discourse, continues, the inner word is as yet unuttered.

But it is also true that as long as the reasoning continues, we do not as yet understand; for until the inner word is uttered, we are not understanding but only thinking in order to understand. Hence understanding and inner word are simultaneous, the former being the ground and cause of the latter. (V:37-38)<sup>84</sup>

### Conclusion

The procession of the inner word is a peculiar kind of process, one that remains "within," presupposes perfection, but does not itself bring about perfection. Besides examining two types of procession, we have contrasted the causality of an intelligible emanation with the causality of other types of emanation. Inner words proceed because of "known" sufficient grounds. There is production involved here, but that is not all. There is also the reception of an operation. It was in identifying and distinguishing the different meanings of active and passive potency in Aquinas that Lonergan is able to reconstruct a Thomist account of understanding that preserves both the receptive and productive aspects.

What is the significance of this first chapter for our overall aim of developing a context for understanding what Lonergan means by "existential ethics"? It is far from apparent, for as yet nothing has been said either about ethics or about what is existential philosophy. The significance is that the rationality of inner words proceeding from acts of understanding is a meta-law, or what Lonergan describes as "the pure case of intelligible law," (V:33) that governs all particular derivations and applications of precepts. What Lonergan calls the "conceptualist" reading of Aquinas does not discriminate between the causality of proceeding inner words and natural, spontaneous causality, e.g., the causality of breathing.

In the next chapter we will further probe the problem already mentioned, i.e. how to

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<sup>84</sup>"The will can prevent the occurrence of intelligere by preventing the occurrence of a corresponding phantasm. Again, the will is the cause of an act of belief, but though the latter is a verbum, it is not a verbum proceeding directly from an intelligere. But we cannot permit the occurrence of intelligere and yet prevent the procession of its immediate verbum" (V:192).

relate a metaphysics of knowing to a psychology of knowing. What, in terms of empirical data of human consciousness, are "known sufficient grounds?" What has been established thus far are certain claims about processes, motions, receptive and active potencies, moving and terminal objects, possible and agent intellect. This has been carried out in order to better understand (1) the procession of the word; (2) how the "basic and essential rationality of rational consciousness" differs from other types of causality; and (3) why it is not a problem to speak of an operating subject being moved.

The task in the next chapter is to understand how a psychological "introspective" approach is compatible to, complementary with and implied by what has been established. Understanding, in both its receptive and productive aspects, is consciously experienced. The basic and essential causality of rational consciousness is likewise a psychological phenomenon. These are crucial and controversial claims. They might evoke suspicions of impending subjectivism or ethical relativism. Lonergan contends that a critically realistic philosophy can respond to subjectivist and relativist positions by an appropriation of a source of realism in human consciousness. But what is meant by "consciousness"? In the next chapter we will contrast two meanings of "consciousness," one of which leads to subjectivism, the other reveals how an appeal to personal experience is integral to philosophical reflection.

## Chapter Two

### Consciousness

The first chapter began by examining Lonergan's study of Aquinas' thought on the intelligible procession of the inner word. An intelligible procession of the inner word from an act of understanding mediates between "outer words" -- spoken, written, or imagined, and the real things and events that these outer words indirectly mean. Outer words might refer to what is abstract or true or false, but no real thing or event is abstract true or false.<sup>85</sup> Inner words are what can be (significabile) or are (significatum) meant, while outer words can or do convey meaning.

What is peculiar about the procession of the inner word is that in addition to being an emergence of a perfection from a proportionate and received perfection that remains "within" the agent (a "processio operati"), it is an intelligible emanation. "The inner word of defining is not only caused by but also is because of the act of understanding" (V:199).<sup>86</sup> The procession of the inner word is essentially different from natural processes, whose causality is intelligible but not intelligent.<sup>87</sup> Emanations occur in chemical, vegetative, and sensory processes, but only in

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<sup>85</sup>"The term of the intellect, namely true, is in the intellect itself. . . . Thus, then, truth resides primarily in the intellect, and secondarily in things according as they are related to the intellect as their principle." ST I, q. 16, a. 1, c.

<sup>86</sup>See section 2 of Chapter One.

<sup>87</sup>The difference between intelligent and intelligible causality, on the one hand, and merely intelligible causality, on the other, grounds the German distinction between the Geisteswissenschaften and the Naturwissenschaften. This does not make the former an easier task. On the contrary, the former puts the investigator's own personal development "on the line" in a way the latter does not. See section 3.2 below and section 1.4 of chapter Five.

knowing is there an emanation that is at once intelligible and intelligent. All emanations have an efficient cause, but only in an intellectual emanation is there a sufficient ground that "knows" itself to be sufficient. Neither the sensory integration of sensible data, nor the natural procession of images from imagined objects, is an intellectual emanation. Both processes are intelligible, or able to be understood, but neither process is intelligence in act. "The intellect reflects upon itself and the intellect can understand itself."<sup>88</sup> The procession of the inner word is reflective, not in the sense that any time we understand we reflect upon our understanding, but in the sense that there is a sufficient cause that is conscious. Because of a conscious intellectual act an inner word is consciously produced, i.e., produced from sufficient grounds.

There is a problem with asserting that these sufficient grounds are "known to be sufficient,"<sup>89</sup> as Lonergan does. The problem is that the "knowing of sufficient grounds" is not an intentional, reflective, or introspective knowing but a prior condition for these. The procession of an inner word does not have as one of its conditions an intentional or reflective cognizance of this procession. The procession does, however, presuppose one is rationally conscious.

The first aim of this second chapter is to clarify precisely what the phrase "known sufficiency of rational consciousness" means. I will juxtapose two basic and opposed conceptions of "consciousness," namely consciousness as perception and consciousness as knowledge sub ratione experti. Next I will examine evidence for Lonergan's assertion that an introspective,

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<sup>88</sup>SCG IV, II. Aquinas restricts the analogy to rational creatures in whom reflection occurs. Note that "reflection" in this context does not mean an intentional, focussed analysis of intellectual activity, but rather the causality of an intelligible emanation.

<sup>89</sup>"[I]t is in the self-possession of understanding as the ground of possible conceptualization that one may best discern what is meant by saying that the self-expression of understanding is an emanatio intelligibilis, a procession from knowledge as knowledge, and because of knowledge as knowledge" (V:42). See section 2 of Chapter One.

rational psychology is one of the hermeneutical circles relevant to interpreting Aquinas' writings on the inner word. Finally I will discuss why an analysis of the rationally conscious human subject is complementary to and intertwined with the metaphysics of the soul.

## 2.I Consciousness as "Knowledge"

### 2.I.I Consciousness as "Knowledge" Sub Ratione Experti

The "known sufficient grounds" of an intelligible emanation refers to an internal experience that is knowledge, but a precise kind of knowledge. The known sufficient grounds are known under the formal aspect of the experienced (sub ratione experti) rather than under the formal aspect of being or truth, the possible or probable, or the good.<sup>90</sup> Since "knowing" tends to connote intentional, objective knowledge, the phrase "self-presence" might be more lucid than "knowing sub ratione experti."<sup>91</sup> One can internally experience, or be present to oneself, as rational without necessarily adverting one's attention to what is nevertheless experienced.

An example of an internal experience is the prior, unpatterned, and tacit knowledge of "feeling blue" or "falling in love" before these are noticed or named.

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<sup>90</sup>In his reply to Fr. Prego's contention that consciousness must be a cognitio and a perceptio with a proper term and content, Lonergan writes: "I have no doubt that consciousness has a content; I defined it as 'an internal experience, in the strict sense of the word, experience, of the self and of its acts.' I grant that all cognitive acts have terms, but I believe they also have principles, and I should say that consciousness is of the principle not the terms. Also, I have no doubt that Suarez is correct in distinguishing between cognoscere proprie, where one cognitive act is the object of another, and cognoscere minus proprie, where each cognitive act is known by the very exercise of the act itself. Further, I think I have good reasons for being more precise and saying sub ratione entis, quidditatis, et veri instead of proprie, and saying sub ratione experti instead of minus proprie. Finally, I have no doubt that consciousness is a cognoscere sub ratione experti." CAS:171-172.

<sup>91</sup>What mediates the meaning of these two phrases is identifying the reality to which these outer words refer.

It is one thing to feel blue, and another to advert to the fact that you are feeling blue. It is one thing to be in love and another to discover that what has happened to you is that you have fallen in love. Being oneself is prior to knowing oneself. St. Ignatius said that love shows itself more in deeds than in words; but being in love is neither deeds nor words; it is the prior conscious reality that words and, more securely, deeds reveal.<sup>92</sup>

In order to feel blue or fall in love one must be awake, though not necessarily reflecting on feeling blue or falling in love. Likewise, it is one thing to understand but another thing to reflect upon our acts of understanding, i.e., to notice, name, and explore the act of understanding either in itself or as it is dynamically related to other acts like wondering and conceiving. Reflection, in any case, is possible because of a tacit or peripheral awareness one has while awake. This background awareness is what is meant by "consciousness."

Consciousness as self-presence is neither physical proximity nor intentional presence, though it is easily confused with intentional presence. In order to distinguish the three possible kinds of "presence" mentioned here, imagine a forest in the White Mountains of New Hampshire in early October. A sea of brilliantly colored oaks and maples is "present" in the woods of the White Mountains. A first meaning of "presence" (P1) is simply physical presence. If we now imagine a couple hiking along, to whom the trees are "present," we find a second kind of presence -- an intentional presence (P2). The sea of colored trees is present to the two hikers as seen, pondered, smelt and felt. There is a relation between someone doing the seeing, pondering, smelling, and feeling, and the seen, pondered, smelled and felt oaks and maples. This intentional relation, this presence of the trees to the hikers, is significantly different from the way the trees are simply physically present in the forest.

There is still another kind of "presence." In order for the blend of oaks and maples to be

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<sup>92</sup>EA:229.



present to the hikers, they must be present to themselves (P3), or "conscious." If they were in the forest but not conscious, e.g., in a deep sleep, there would be physical proximity but not intentional presence. Thus intermediate between mere physical presence (P1) and intentional presence (P2) is consciousness as self-presence (P3). Consciousness "is presence in, as it were, another dimension, presence concomitant and correlative and opposite to the presence of the object."<sup>93</sup> Consciousness as self-presence is simultaneous and concomitant with the knowledge of objects.

Consciousness is a queer kind of "knowing," namely a knowing sub ratione experti of the subject and his or her acts.<sup>94</sup> We could refer to self-presence (P3) using any number of terms -- "knowledge sub ratione experti," "consciousness," "experience," "tacit apprehension," "subsidiary awareness."<sup>95</sup> What mediates the meaning of these terms is a personal appropriation of the reality to which they refer -- the subject present to herself or himself as subject.

Take as another example of the meaning of self-presence (P3) the contrast between the

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<sup>93</sup>CS:210. It is the third meaning of presence that underlies the scholastic distinction between an actus exercitus -- spontaneously but non-reflectively feeling blue -- and an actus signatus -- explicitly reflecting upon conscious acts by naming, identifying, grouping, and interrelating them.

<sup>94</sup>"One and the same act is at once the act of the object and the act of the subject; inasmuch as there is a sensibile actu or an intellectus actu, an object is known; inasmuch as there is a sensus actu or an intellectus actu, the subject in act and his act are constituted and known." CAS:I67.

<sup>95</sup>Michael Polanyi distinguishes two forms of awareness: "focal" and "subsidiary." Besides those things that are focally noticed, there are others of which we are only tacitly aware. We really are aware of them, and as soon as we attend or intend them, our awareness of them shifts from being subsidiary to focal. Eugene Webb cautions that the ocular analogy connoted by "focal" and "subsidiary" be disregarded. He also writes that the "distinct cognitive operations Lonergan discusses, he [Polanyi] did not emphasize [in their distinctness], and in his discussion of the tacit dimension he seemed to assume that it was not especially important to advert to them distinctly. One result was that Polanyi did not develop the clear distinction Lonergan did between differentiated and undifferentiated consciousness." Eugene Webb, Philosophers of Consciousness: Polanyi, Lonergan, Voeglin, Ricoeur, Girard, Kierkegaard, p. 76.

experiences of following a good joke and of growing toenails. The latter is a vegetative act and it is virtually unconscious,<sup>96</sup> which is not to say that it is unreal or does not happen, but that we are not directly aware of our toenails growing. It is an organic activity about which most of us have as much awareness while in a deep sleep as we do while wide awake. The experience of following a good joke, on the other hand, involves internal awareness; understanding a joke, is a conscious act. It is because understanding is conscious that we know when we have "gotten" the joke and when we have not.

In the above example the contrast is between an unconscious organic event and a conscious cognitive state. This does not mean that only intellectual acts are conscious. Indigestion, for the most part, is conscious. After dinner someone might be so engrossed in Bach's Brandenburg Concertos that he does not reflectively know he is really suffering (sub ratione experti) indigestion. Later he might notice the pain, say to himself "I went overboard with the salsa and sour cream" and reach for some Alka-Seltzer. But prior to noticing the discomfort, he really was upset, really felt discomfort.

The difference between the conscious and the unconscious is not that the former is intelligible while the latter is not. The growth of toenails is intelligible. Both a physician and a metaphysician, each with his or her respective training, presuppositions, methods, aims, etc., understand something about growing toenails. Yet in neither case does their understanding effect greater internal awareness of growing toenails. They are understanding something that is virtually unconscious. This does not mean that physicians, metaphysicians and those who are neither

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<sup>96</sup>We should not rule out the possibility of an extraordinarily heightened awareness in this area. "I once made a buddhist retreat . . . I vividly remember the day we dedicated some twelve hours and more to becoming aware of all the sensations in the tiny area between the nostrils and the upper lip! Most of us drew a blank for hours on end and it was only by dint of patient, persevering effort at concentration and awareness that this stubborn area began to yield its sensations." Anthony de Mello, S.J. Saddhana: A Way to God, p. 16.

cannot think about or look at their toenails. It simply means that the looking or passing thought will not alter their "internal" awareness.

What is given in consciousness, as simply given, is not an object of actual introspection. Consciousness as self-presence (P3) is not introspection, but a background awareness that makes introspection possible. Of the three kinds of "presence" mentioned above, it is by far the most difficult to identify since it is not an object of either introspection, sensation, or understanding, but a condition for both of these.

Intentionality effects the presence of an object to the subject, of spectacle to a spectator. Consciousness is a far subtler matter; it makes the spectator present to himself, not by putting him into the spectacle, not by making him an object, but while he is spectator and as subject.<sup>97</sup>

Self-presence (P3), or consciousness, is not a background awareness of some thing, for example, the background sounds one hears outside a window that come into focal awareness when we shift our attention to them. Consciousness is not some unruly distraction by another object diverting one's attention, like a mailbox full of junk mail. It is not the presence of any object at all -- agreeable, repulsive, or indifferent -- and does not present an object -- be it in the foreground, background or somewhere in between -- to one who is conscious. Nor is it intentional knowledge of oneself as an object (subject as object).

Consciousness is a radical presence of the subject as subject -- I am (more or less) awake; if I were not, I could not meaningfully utter the word "I." Consciousness is primary in the sense that without being self-present one could not advert to the sounds of planes, sirens, birds, horns outside the window. While objects are present (P2) by attending to them, the subject as subject is present (P3), not as intended, but as intending. Consciousness is this basic presence of the

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<sup>97</sup>Lonergan, "Christology Today: Methodological Reflections," 3C:92.

subject as subject. Conscious is "knowledge" only in the curious sense of knowledge under the formal aspect of the experienced (sub ratione experti) that is simultaneous with and concomitant to the knowledge of objects as intended and known under the formal aspect of being or truth.

It is crucial to distinguish consciousness from intentionality, for the two are easily confused, but they are not the same. Our sensitive, intellectual, and rational operations are both intentional -- related to an intended object -- and conscious. As conscious they are experienced by someone who is awake. There is a content to consciousness, namely, the subject and his or her acts, but the content is known under the formality of the experienced. Intentional acts place us in relation to an object present to us and thus differ from merely vegetative acts. An object is known as intended (P2), or known sub ratione entis, quidditatis, et veri. Intentional presence makes objects present the way the sea of colors is present to the hikers. Lonergan states the difference between the presence of subjects and objects:

Objects are present by being attended to; but subjects are present as subjects, not by being attended to, but by attending. As the parade of objects marches by, spectators do not have to slip into the parade to become present to themselves; they have to be present to themselves for anything to be present to them; and they are present to themselves by the same watching that, as it were, at its other pole makes the parade present to them.<sup>98</sup>

What makes this precise and technical meaning of consciousness difficult to grasp is the tendency to dichotomize consciousness and being: Consciousness is one thing, and over and against consciousness are existing things which are the object of consciousness. For Lonergan, however, consciousness is not separate from or in tension with being. Consciousness "does not go beyond being but merely denotes a being in a particular degree of ontological perfection."<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>98</sup>CS:210.

<sup>99</sup>DCC:96. "[I]t is the person who is conscious both of the person and of his acts. Nonetheless, since the 'conscious' does not go beyond being but denotes a being in such a grade of ontological perfection, consciousness is said to belong to the person from nature inasmuch as

As commonly used, "consciousness" does not mean self-presence but intentional presence (P2) of the personal subject. The expression "being self-conscious" ordinarily refers to intentional reflection upon oneself, or a heightened awareness of conscious acts, in which the subject is attended to. When this self-reflection is carried out to an extreme degree, behavior can become stifled or cramped. The point is that whether cramped or not, the self is present as intended (P2).

If we want to be precise and consistent with our analysis, however, self-reflection is not a matter of being "self-conscious." One could only be "self-conscious" if "consciousness" means perceiving or looking, intending, questioning, comprehending, affirming, or some other act that makes present an intended object or even the subject herself or himself as an object (P2) and not the personal presence that is a condition that makes each of these possible (P3). If consciousness constitutes the basic unity of the cognitive agent as present (P3), it makes possible reflection and heightened awareness, for example, when we notice that we are feeling blue, but it is not identical with self-reflection. In other words, if "consciousness" meant self-presence (P3), "being self-conscious" would be a redundancy. This phrase would then mean "being self-self-present." If what "consciousness" meant were self-presence, it would be more accurate to speak of "self-intended," "self-reflective," "introspecting oneself," or of "heightening one's awareness of oneself and one's acts." These phrases name an activity that is not simply self-presence but presupposes self-presence. This activity is not a fourth meaning of "presence," but a particular kind of intentional presence (P2), one in which the intended is actually oneself. Watermelons are not introspective (P2) because they are not rationally conscious (P3).

In distinguishing different meanings of presence, we are not separating them. Self-presence (P3) is always concomitant with the intentional presence (P2), and this intentional presence is never "pure" but filtered through certain pre-dispositions, for example, the influence

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nature is the measure of ontological perfection. DCC:102.

of what is conceived, believed, or hoped for upon what would otherwise be purely sensitive knowledge.<sup>100</sup> The couple hiking in the White Mountains formally shares the same experience insofar as they are both human; both are cognitive agents experiencing the same part of the world. There is a generic similarity of consciousness as an infrastructure. But the subject is never pure infrastructure. If formally they share the same structure in being human, materially there is a great difference in what is actually intended that stems from their unique lives and the uncountable biological, psychological, intellectual, sociological differences fashioning these lives. Or, more obvious still, consider five different hikers -- a botanist, a poet, a toddler, a buddhist monk, and a cross-country skier. Each would be "present" in the White Mountains in unique ways.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>100</sup>In Chapter Three I will examine a "functional definition" of knowing that will distinguish knowing loosely conceived from knowing in a strict sense. Such an approach links radical empiricism, i.e., the "pure experience" of conscious knowing, with intellectual knowledge, i.e., what is known sub ratione entis, quidditatis et veri.

<sup>101</sup>In the movie "The Scent of a Woman," the blind veteran played by Al Pacino has a heightened awareness, a differentiated presence, to the scent of perfumes -- which he knows by name -- that most of us do not enjoy.

## 2.1.2 Intending Intentionality

It is one thing to understand the external thing and another to understand a conscious intention, that is, the attention to some object. Both can be signified by an exterior word. Though the intention itself is an "interior" experience, it also can be understood when intentionality as intending (intentio intendens) itself becomes the intended (intentio intenta). Humans are capable of a sort of dual (both/and) attention. "We can know what understanding is by understanding; for the species of the object understood also is the species of the understanding intellect" (V:76).<sup>102</sup> Though intending an object, a rationally conscious subject can nevertheless intend his or her intending:

Thus any object to which intellect attends falls under the intentio entis intendens. That intending is conscious; it is simply the wonder Aristotle said was the beginning of all science and philosophy. Still, it is one thing to wonder about sensible objects: it is quite another to wonder about intellectual wonder itself. Only in this second case does our own intentio entis intendens fall under our own intentio entis intendens; and only then is it considered sub ratione entis.<sup>103</sup>

In the first case, the more common by far, wonder is conscious but it is transparent. An actual experience of consciously wondering is not explicit knowledge of wondering. To wonder about wonder itself, i.e., to investigate conscious intentionality, is a philosopher's task.

Oftentimes "experience" and "knowledge" are used interchangeably with

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<sup>102</sup>"The human soul understands itself through its own act of understanding, which is proper to it, showing perfectly its power and nature" (ST I, q. 88, a. 2, ad 3m). The dual (both/and) aspect of human intentionality will be further discussed below in section 3.

<sup>103</sup>CAS:I68. In the Summa contra gentiles Aquinas writes of a possible science of intentions: "It is one thing to understand a thing, and another to understand the intention itself, yet the intellect does so when it reflects on its own work; accordingly, some sciences are about things, and others are about intentions understood." SCG IV, II, 6.

"consciousness," as if they were synonymous. The possible ambiguity here is that "experience" sometimes means a practical know-how -- as in "he's a person of experience" -- whereas knowledge usually refers to what is understood more or less explicitly and under the formal aspect of what is true and believed to be true by some justification. Strictly speaking, consciousness is neither practical know-how nor knowledge of a true object but the presence, or simple "awakeness," of the subject as subject, which makes both practical know-how and knowledge sub ratione veri possible. Simultaneously with knowing an intended object, a consciously sentient, consciously intelligent, and consciously responsible subject is present as subject, i.e., "known" sub ratione experti.<sup>104</sup>

Though we generally characterize all conscious acts as "internally experienced," or as known sub ratione experti, this is not to suggest that they are homogeneous. There are divisions of conscious acts. Lower activities, those shared with the raccoons in the White Mountains (such as moving, desiring, feeling, and perceiving), and higher activities (such as wondering, understanding, conceiving, choosing, dedicating, and loving) are all conscious and intentional, but they are not all of the same perfection. A moment of pure reverie on a lazy summer day at the beach and the decision to accept a job are both conscious and intentional, though clearly of different orders and of varying significance. In a late essay Lonergan describes the diversity of conscious acts as a

polyphony with different themes at different intensities sung simultaneously . . . different qualities, what Gerard Manley Hopkins might call the different self-taste, on the successive levels: the spontaneous vitality of our sensitivity, the shrewd intelligence of our inquiring, the detached rationality of our demand for evidence, the peace of a good conscience and the disquiet released by memory of words wrongly said or deeds wrongly

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<sup>104</sup>Consciousness as an experience of responsibility or accountability will be further discussed in Chapters Four and Five.



done.<sup>105</sup>

In addition to distinguishing various groups of conscious acts, we should keep in mind that the presence of the subject as subject is always concomitant with the knowledge of some object, and that this knowledge is conditioned by the various psychological, intellectual, and cultural-sociological circumstances. Additionally, there is variance in growth and development occurring over time. It is not simply the physical appearance of the old neighborhood that changes over the years, but its meaning. Eliot writes in "Four Quartets":

We shall not cease from exploration  
And the end of all our exploring  
Will be to arrive where we started  
And know the place for the first time.<sup>106</sup>

The diversity of conscious acts and their variation over time is why our common experience is one of rapid oscillations and a great mixture which makes an "introspective" study a delicate, enduring and challenging affair. The complex oscillations and variable patterns of a stream of consciousness are lived before, if ever, there is the leisure, desire,<sup>107</sup> or communal support to contemplate and discern different "self-tastes," to identify and relate different kinds of questions, to relate these questions to inner and outer speaking, or to distinguish feelings that have a cause such as fatigue and hunger, from feelings that intend an object such as admiration and indignation. "So it is, in fact, that both acts of seeing and acts of understanding occur

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<sup>105</sup>"Religious Knowledge," 3C:132.

<sup>106</sup>T.S. Eliot, *Four Quartets*, p. 39.

<sup>107</sup>If it blooms at all, such desire is a late-bloomer. "Man develops biologically to develop psychically, and he develops psychically to develop intellectually and rationally. The higher integrations suffer the disadvantage of emerging later. They are the demands of finality upon us before they are realities in us" (I:625).

consciously, yet most people know what seeing is and most are mystified when asked what understanding is."<sup>108</sup> Our acts of understanding truly are experienced; they truly are conscious acts. Furthermore, insofar as one and the same act is an act of object and subject, i.e., insofar as everything that is known is known insofar as it actually is (unumquodque cognoscitur secundum quod est actu), what we truly experience and truly know sub ratione experti is an actually existing object. It is not true, however, that whatever is known is known as object (unumquodque cognoscitur secundum quod est objectum). What is conscious, or internally experienced, is known insofar as it actually is, but is not known sub ratione entis, vel quidditatis, vel veri. What is "known" through consciousness is an object and has a quiddity, but it is not known under the formalities of being or quiddity.<sup>109</sup> Thus, though we have "true knowledge" through consciousness of both acts and objects of understanding, this "true knowledge" is knowledge sub ratione experti, not sub ratione veri. "It is only when we understand and conceive understanding and conceiving that we know understanding and conceiving sub ratione quidditatis."<sup>110</sup> Even though acts of understanding are a "dime a dozen" and conscious, it is a further, subtle step to

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<sup>108</sup>CAS:208.

<sup>109</sup>CAS:I68 note #18. In this note Lonergan defends his position against both "subjectivism" and "objectivism": "Consciousness is true knowledge of what has a quiddity and is a being, but it is not knowledge under the formalities of being, quiddity, truth. Inasmuch as it constitutes in act what it knows, it recalls Aquinas' remark that the light of agent intellect is known per se ipsum (De veritate, q. 10, a. 8, ad 10m, 2<sup>ae</sup> ser. - in contrarium). Finally, inasmuch as it constitutes in act what it knows, it enjoys a natural infallibility, which, however, has the indistinctness of the preconceptual (see SCG III, 46, §6) and cannot be preferred by man as intelligent and rational to what is known intelligently and rationally under the formalities of being, quiddity, truth. Such a (nonrationally) preference is the error of subjectivist tendencies recently denounced in H. Duméry. The total negation of the subject is, of course, just the opposite error which, by its wholesale incomprehension of issues, evokes and provokes exaggerated subjectivist views."

<sup>110</sup>CAS:I68. This is the critical problem that will be discussed in Chapter Three, section 5.

appropriate these acts.<sup>111</sup>

### 2.1.3 Consciousness as Perception

This conception of consciousness as experience (conscientia qua experientia) that we have been exploring is opposed by many modern thinkers for whom consciousness is perception (conscientia qua perceptio). For them "consciousness" denotes a kind of perception, a physical or mental looking. To be conscious means one is looking -- either at something other or at oneself, either with the eyes in one's head or with the "eyes of the mind." So consciousness makes manifest some object, an object seen in the foreground, and I am simply "unconscious" of whatever is not there to be seen.

Cartesian introspection is a focusing on the self as an object, and the perceived conscious subject is a first from which certain other facets of Descartes' philosophy are derived. This disembodied and dehistoricized subject is the first object of perception (conscientia qua perceptio) and the first site of certainty. For Kant the first object is a deduced condition of possibility that supplies a transcendental starting point. But this starting point is not someone who feels blue or falls in love, but someone who is disembodied and stripped of his or her living character. For both Descartes and Kant the contrast is between a focal perception, or what is focal and explicit, on the one hand, and all else that is not perceived, or what is in the background and implicit, on the other. The unconscious becomes conscious by moving from the background

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<sup>111</sup>Consciousness of intellectual acts makes possible an intentional analysis and appropriation of these same intellectual acts. Lonergan refers to these two as the "two times of the temporal subject": "There is an earlier time in which it is on the basis of natural spontaneity that he is the subject of his actuated intellectual nature; and there is a later time in which he is the subject of his own actuated and to be actuated intellectual nature, not spontaneously but knowingly, willingly, and through his own intention." *De Deo Trino: Pars Systematica*, p. 169. The transition to the later time is effected through understanding, belief, and love. Ibid. pp. 169-170.

to the foreground. What was unperceived is now perceived.

This all sounds very much like the contrast previously discussed between "feeling blue" but not being focally aware of the feeling, on the one hand, and turning one's attention to the fact of feeling blue, on the other. What is the difference? The difference is that consciousness as experience (conscientia qua experientia) of feeling blue is not a perception of an object, or even a perception of a subject. Consciousness as experience is an awareness or "awakeness" that makes any perception or inquiry at all a possibility. We are able to ask "How am I feeling?" and then to notice and name the phenomenon of feeling blue precisely because we are awake, or present in the third sense (P3), and attentive. Even so, being awake is a necessary condition for attending, but it is not a sufficient condition. What we really experience -- e.g., really feeling blue -- while known as experienced (sub ratione experti), is not always or necessarily known as an object. We objectively know the phenomenon of feeling blue when we notice, name, identify (i.e., appropriate) this feeling. Before doing this, however, we really are conscious, we really feel blue. Thus the significant division is not between what is perceived and what is not perceived, but between what is experienced and what is not experienced.

If consciousness is taken to mean perception (conscientia qua perceptio), then an analysis of attending or reflecting changes considerably. If consciousness is a kind of perception, or looking, then it is an intentional presence of some object, for example, the maples and oaks present to the two hikers (P2). If consciousness were an intentional perception, it would reveal a perceived object or subject as object. Consciousness would make present -- perceptible, visible, tangible -- a perceived object, but it would not constitute a difference in the subject as subject.

Why would consciousness as perception not constitute a difference in the subject? Perception simply manifests what the object is without having a constitutive effect upon the object. "It can only reveal its object as it was in its proper reality prior to the occurrence of the

cognitive act or function named consciousness."<sup>112</sup> If consciousness is likened to perception, then when I am unconscious I am unable to perceive, and when I am conscious I am actually perceiving. What is revealed by perceiving either myself or some other object? Since consciousness as perception does not constitute a difference in the object of perception, then what is revealed to me is the object "in its proper reality" prior to perception. Hence when I am perceiving myself, the perception does not constitute a difference in the self as object of perception, and so what is revealed is the object (myself) prior to perceiving, i.e., prior to being conscious. In other words, if the object of perception, which in this case is myself, is not affected, constituted, or changed by the perception, then what is perceived is an unconscious subject.<sup>113</sup> Being self-conscious would then mean that one is perceived in the parade of objects in front of the self who is perceiving.

Conceiving consciousness as a perception is not entirely inaccurate. It is right insofar as by consciousness human subjects are in some way made known, in some way made present. But it is the mode of knowing, the mode of presence, that is under question. Consciousness conceived as perception makes consciousness an intentional knowing, a presence of some intended object, including the subject as object, to an intending subject.

It is precisely this widespread understanding of consciousness that evokes suspicions about Cartesian "introspection" as a viable philosophical approach. If consciousness were perception or some other form of intentional knowledge, then "introspection" would mean "perceiving or taking a look at oneself." The problem with conceiving consciousness as

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<sup>112</sup>CAS:I64.

<sup>113</sup>"If without consciousness John cannot be the consciously intelligent or the consciously rational or the consciously free or the consciously responsible principle of his own intelligent, rational, free, or responsible acts, then by consciousness as knowledge of an object John merely knows himself as neither consciously free, nor consciously responsible." CAS:I76.

perception is that it misses the constitutive aspect of consciousness, the fact that consciousness is not just revelatory but also makes us capable of feeling blue and falling in love.

[C]onscientia-perceptio . . . is simpliste. It takes account of the fact that by consciousness the subject is known as the subject. It overlooks the fact that consciousness is not merely cognitive but also constitutive. It overlooks as well the subtler fact that consciousness is cognitive, not of what exists without consciousness, but of what is constituted by consciousness . . . [I]t constitutes and reveals the basic psychological unity of the subject as subject.<sup>114</sup>

Consciousness as both constitutive and revelatory of someone suffering or understanding or choosing does not mean that this someone is an object of reflection (self-reflection). The object of suffering, understanding, or choosing, like any object, must be known as intended. The revealed subject who suffers or understands or chooses is the subject as subject. This conception of the "subject as subject" is elaborated in Lonergan's notes on existentialism:

What is the reality of the subject as subject? It is reality in a very prior and probably conceptually incomplete sense, but nonetheless in a very real sense. The subject as subject is reality in the sense that we live and die, love and hate, rejoice and suffer, desire and fear, wonder and dread, inquire and doubt. That is what the existentialist is talking about, the subject as subject, the subject that is the victim of all these things, the origin of all these things. And that in his own living has a certain presence to himself in some queer sense of the word presence . . . it is the subject present to himself not as presented in any theory or affirmation of consciousness, but as the prior non absence, prerequisite to any presentation as the a priori condition of any stream of consciousness.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>114</sup>DCC:I65. "[C]onsciousness not merely reveals us as suffering but also makes us capable of suffering and similarly it pertains to the constitution of the consciously intelligent subject of intelligent acts, the consciously rational subject of rational acts, the consciously free subject of free acts." CAS:I65. See also DCC:83-88.

<sup>115</sup>NE:I26.

## 2.2 The Appeal to Consciousness in Aquinas

### 2.2.1 Empirical and Scientific Self-Knowledge

Lonergan maintains that Aquinas, in his analysis of intellect, appealed to experienced, psychological fact.<sup>116</sup> One of the "points of introspective psychology" Lonergan finds in Aquinas is the "distinction between what we should call empirical awareness of our inner acts and a scientific grasp of their nature" (V:77). Both are types of knowing. The first is a knowing sub ratione experti. The second is in terms of objects, acts, and potencies. Since the scientific grasp is attained only through prolonged study, most people are ignorant of it. Since philosophers attain this sort of knowledge discursively, while angels and devils do so intuitively, "even the devils know the essence of our souls better than we do ourselves" (V:77).<sup>117</sup>

Unlike essential self-knowledge, empirical self-knowledge is universally experienced. It is knowledge of inner movements of an individual's mind and heart, and so it is proper to the individual. Aquinas writes the following about these two kinds of self-knowledge:

[W]e should observe that each person can have a twofold knowledge of the soul, as Augustine says. One of these is the knowledge by which the soul of each man knows itself only with reference to that which is proper to it. The other is that by which the soul is known with reference to that which is common to all souls.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>116</sup>"[T]he Thomist theory of intellect had an empirical and introspective basis" (V:75). "Evidently, the Aristotelian and Thomist program is not a matter of considering ocular vision and then conceiving an analogous spiritual vision . . . . On the contrary, it is a process of introspection that discovers the act of insight into phantasm and the definition as an expression of the insight" (V:76-77). "[T]here is to be found in the independent Thomist writings not a few additional points of introspective psychology" (V:77). "The appeal to experience in Thomist psychological theory, though without the benefit of a parade of modern methodology, nonetheless is frequent and even not inconspicuous" (V:78).

<sup>117</sup>Lonergan cites Aquinas, DM, q. 16, a. 8 ad 7m.

<sup>118</sup>DV q. 10, a. 8.

Aquinas distinguishes two types of self-knowledge, but implied in each of the two is a third, giving the following threefold division: (1) universal, empirical knowledge (sub ratione experti), i.e., self-presence of the subject as subject corresponding to being humanly conscious. This universal self-presence makes possible both (2) empirical, common sense self-reflection,<sup>119</sup> and (3) theoretical knowledge about the nature of any self as known. Common sense empirical knowledge corresponds to Aquinas' self-knowledge "only with reference to that which is proper [to an individual]." Theoretical self-reflection corresponds to Aquinas' self-knowledge "with reference to that which is common to all souls." Theoretical self-knowledge is a grasp of the nature of the human mind, "not what each man's mind is, but what it ought to be in the light of the eternal types."<sup>120</sup> It demands more than self-presence (P3) and common sense self-knowledge. For an essential understanding of what the mind ought to be like, "the mere presence of the mind does not suffice, and there is further required a careful and subtle inquiry. Hence many are ignorant of the soul's nature, and many have erred about it."<sup>121</sup> The "careful and subtle inquiry" is a self-reflective study, one in which rationally conscious subjects reflect upon rationality. The "introspective method" of attending to psychological facts is a component of the "careful and subtle inquiry" to which Aquinas refers. This "method" is consistent with Aquinas' hermeneutical principle for self-understanding: ". . . anima humana intelligit se ipsam per suum intelligere, quod est actus proprius eius, perfecte demonstrans virtutem eius et naturam."<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>119</sup>Ways in which this type of self-knowledge is achieved would include hearty dialogue, meditation, "examination of conscience," dream analysis, and sound therapy.

<sup>120</sup>Augustine, De Trinitate, ix, 6. Aquinas cites this passage in ST I, q. 87, a. 1.

<sup>121</sup>ST I, q. 87, a. 1, c. Theoretical knowledge of the mind is a high achievement. Lonergan writes that the writings of Augustine, Pascal, and Newman "all remain within the world of common sense apprehension and speech, yet contribute enormously to our understanding of ourselves" (MT:261).

<sup>122</sup>ST I, q. 88, a. 2, ad 3m. See also In III de Anima, lect. 8, §704, lect. 9, §724. Both passages



which Lonergan renders thus: “. . . the human soul understands itself by its understanding, which is its proper act, perfectly demonstrating its power and its nature.”<sup>123</sup> Self-understanding is by reflection upon a conscious act, not by an intuitive, direct grasp of essence. Indeed, both common sense and theoretical self-knowledge are attained through "understanding anything and reflecting on the nature of our understanding" (V:76). Both common sense and theoretical reflection add a second tier to the scaffolding of primitive self-presence (P3).

Aquinas, like Aristotle, distinguishes potencies of the soul through acts and objects. If we note that powers and natures, which are not in themselves conscious, but as metaphysical entities are related to intelligere, which is a conscious (psychological) act, the relevance of empirical introspection becomes apparent. By relating metaphysical conditions of cognition to psychological (conscious) facts a phenomenologically ostensible demonstration of the intellect as receptive (what some refer to as the "possible intellect") is made possible:

Now power and nature are metaphysical entities. To demonstrate them perfectly involves one in a long list of metaphysical theorems. Yet we have Aquinas' own word for it that a perfect demonstration of these metaphysical entities may be derived from a consideration of intelligere, the proper act of the human soul.<sup>124</sup>

There is other evidence that Aquinas must have appealed to empirical knowledge to derive his theory of intellect. He holds that the human soul, in this life, does not immediately understand immaterial substances in themselves because of a natural orientation toward understanding the nature of material things; and Aquinas asserts that this is known experientially. For example, he writes:

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are cited in notes #130 & 131 (V:76).

<sup>123</sup>"Insight: Preface to a Discussion," CWL 4:I43.

<sup>124</sup>Ibid.

But in Aristotle's opinion, which experience corroborates, our intellect in its present state of life has a natural relationship to the natures of material things; and therefore it can only understand by turning to the phantasms, as we have said above (Q. 84, a. 7). Thus it clearly appears that immaterial substances which do not fall under sense and imagination, cannot first and per se be known by us, according to the mode of knowledge which experience proves us to have.<sup>125</sup>

Experiential knowing is also implied in conceiving and affirming a personal intellect. How do we know it is we who know, and not a supra-personal agent? "[I]f we had no experience of abstracting intelligibilities and receiving them in act, then it never would occur to us to talk and argue about them" (V:78). In other words, questions about and reflection upon the process of abstraction follow upon conscious experience. When Aquinas argues that the agent intellect is not a separate substance but part of the soul, he appeals to experience:

Now, both actions -- of the agent intellect and of the possible intellect as well -- are proper to man, since man abstracts from phantasms, and receives in his mind things actually intelligible. For, indeed, we should not have become aware of these actions had we not experienced them in ourselves.<sup>126</sup>

Aquinas' point is that it is not a supra-personal agent but a personal agent doing the knowing, and that the same personal agent is responsible for what that same individual knows. Still, how do we know this to be the case? We know this through actions consciously experienced. If we are not philosophers, or are philosophers unfamiliar with this particular language ("agent" and "possible intellect," "abstracting from phantasm," etc.), we at least talk about "getting the point"

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<sup>125</sup>ST I, q. 88, a. 1, c. Emphasis added.

<sup>126</sup>SCG II, 76, § 17. Emphasis added. See also ST I, q. 79, a. 4, c.: "Wherefore we must say that in the soul is some power derived from a higher intellect, whereby it is able to light up the phantasms. And we know this by experience, since we perceive that we abstract universal forms from their particular conditions."

(or not), "following the argument or joke" (or not), "assenting" or "agreeing" (or not), and "deciding what is to be done and doing it" (or not). The reason we can and do in fact talk about these experiences is not because they are unconscious, but because they are conscious, i.e. known sub ratione experti.

## 2.2.2 Aristotelian and Augustinian Influences

### 2.2.2.1 Aristotle

Aquinas, in his writings on the procession of the inner word from understanding, relates metaphysical entities to psychological acts. This intersection of metaphysics and psychology, two of the "hermeneutical circles relevant to an interpretation,"<sup>127</sup> stems from a convergence of Aristotelian and Augustinian influences,<sup>128</sup> and the convergence of these two influences presents the problem of what Lonergan describes as "the relation of subject to soul, of the Augustinian mens or animus to the Aristotelian anima."<sup>129</sup>

In De Anima Aristotle asserts that there must be both a passive and active principle of understanding. The reason for this assertion is that humans are not constantly understanding, but are moved from not understanding at one time to understanding at another. Understanding "moves" from potency to act by being moved. What is effected by this motion is an intentional identity -- understanding and understood are identical in act.<sup>130</sup> Since the human soul is capable of being moved to receive any form (potens omnia fieri), every finite act of understanding is a

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<sup>127</sup>See Introduction note #4.

<sup>128</sup>"Thomist thought on verbum is metaphysical by its insertion in an Aristotelian framework, and it is psychological in virtue of its derivation from Augustinian trinitarian theory." SS:576.

<sup>129</sup>SS:579.

<sup>130</sup>De anima, III, 4, 430a3.

pati, something undergone. We receive sense impressions and acts of understanding occur to us in a way beyond our choosing.

Aristotle's analysis of the passive dimension of the mind's understanding in the De anima is not that of an introspective psychologist; the results indicate a fair amount of introspection. Lonergan writes of Aristotle's self-reflection: "It was scrutinizing both the object understood and the understanding that Aristotle investigated the nature of possible intellect" (V:76).

Interestingly, in Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics one finds an explicit appeal to experience which is consistent with the preceding analysis of consciousness as experience. Aristotle writes that in general we perceive our own seeing, our own hearing, our own walking, our own thinking, as well as all other activities.<sup>131</sup> If Aristotle is right, if we perceive our own seeing, hearing and understanding, does "perceiving" refer to ocular vision? Does it refer to conscientia qua perceptio? How could one literally look at sensing or look at understanding?

Aquinas refers to Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics in his discussion of empirical self-knowledge found in De veritate. The soul is known "because he perceives that he senses, understands, and carries on other vital activities of this sort."<sup>132</sup> In his commentary on this passage from Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics Aquinas writes that perception of being alive, which is desirable to the virtuous man, is a "reflective act in which we perceive that we perceive and understand that we understand."<sup>133</sup> This reflection does not literally mean sensing that we sense,

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<sup>131</sup>Nicomachean Ethics IX, 9, 1170a29-34.

<sup>132</sup>"Concerning the actual cognition by which one actually considers that he has a soul, I say that the soul is known through its acts. For one perceives that he has a soul, that he lives, and that he exists, because he perceives that he senses, understands, and carries on other vital activities of this sort. For this reason, the Philosopher says: 'We perceive that we sense, and we understand that we understand, and because we sense this, we understand that we exist.'" DV q. 10, a. 8.

<sup>133</sup>Commentary on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics, p. 577.

i.e., see seeing, hear hearing, or taste tasting. Aquinas excludes immediate perception of seeing: "[I]t is impossible for the primary thing seen to be the very act of seeing, because all seeing is of some visible object."<sup>134</sup> The same holds true for other sensitive acts as well as intellectual acts. Nor does "perceiving" refer to some "spiritual vision" analogous to ocular vision and attributable to intellect by which we might "see" understanding.

The primary thing seen cannot be the very act. What both Aristotle and Aquinas mean by the "perception" of sense, understanding, and other vital activities is reflective awareness of these activities, and this could only be the case if these activities are conscious. One can perceive or reflect upon one's acts only in the act of seeing or understanding and only insofar as one is conscious, or self-present (P3).

#### 2.2.2.2 Augustine

Aquinas inherited from Augustine a psychological context for understanding the procession of the inner word.<sup>135</sup> The Augustinian verbum is a non-linguistic utterance that is totally and consciously dependent upon a prior knowing.<sup>136</sup> Augustine's discovery of the procession of an inner word was part of his own self-knowledge, and it was such a basic self-knowledge that provided him grounds for refuting Academic doubt. It was in his own mind, not

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<sup>134</sup>ST I-II, q. I. a. I, c.

<sup>135</sup>"But as Augustine says, there can be no word in our souls without actual thinking. And so an image of the Trinity is to be looked for in the mind first and foremost in terms of activity, in so far as out of the awareness we have to form an internal word by thinking [prout scilicet ex noticia quam habemus, cogitando interius verbum formamus] and from this burst out into love." ST I, q. 93, a. 7. Aquinas would substitute intellectus in actu intelligens eticens and verbum for Augustine's memoria and intelligentia respectively. ST I, q. 93, aa. 6-8.

<sup>136</sup>"Nihil de suo habens, sed totum de illa scientia de qua nascitur . . . quod scimus loquimur; de visione scientiae visio cogitationis exoritur; qui quod scit loquitur" (De Trinitate XV, xii, 22).

in someone else's, that Augustine found evidence for an affirmation of verbum that was itself a verbum. Lonergan writes:

The Augustinian affirmation of verbum was itself a verbum. For it to be true, on Augustine's own showing, it had to be totally dependent on what Augustine's mind knew through itself about itself.<sup>137</sup>

The evidence Augustine found for affirming an inner verbum was "internal," or what we might call phenomenologically verifiable.<sup>138</sup>

While Aquinas owed much to Aristotle, especially his metaphysical account of passive and active principles of the act of understanding that brings about an identity between knower and known in the intentional order, Lonergan writes that Aquinas' "greater debt was to the Augustinian theory of judgment with its appeal to the eternal reasons" (V:188). Aquinas shared Augustine's concern for veritas, which adds to Aristotle's theory of knowing by identity the possibility of self-transcendence (V:189).<sup>139</sup>

Aristotle compared agent intellect with light but, as Lonergan observes, Aquinas went a step further. Aquinas was able to "argue for an identification of agent intellect with the ground of intellectual light" (V:79). Besides the reception of an intelligible species with its extrinsic origin in sense, there is also an intrinsic cause of our understanding. This immanent cause

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<sup>137</sup>SS:582-583.

<sup>138</sup>"Unde enim mens aliquam mentem novit, si se non novit?" De Trinitate IX, iii. 3. As with "intro-spection," the spatial metaphor "internal" can be misleading. "Strictly, only spatial objects are internal or external and, while external experience may be of spatial objects, it itself is not a spatial object and, still less, is internal experience." CS:209.

<sup>139</sup>Self-transcendence refers to knowing the other as other. The problem of how there can be such self-transcendence, once one asserts that knowing is, at least in part, an identity of knower and known, will be addressed in Chapter Three.

Aquinas calls "the light of our souls."<sup>140</sup> Aquinas transposes Augustine's appeal to eternal reasons to a participation of light in uncreated light.<sup>141</sup> Besides the receptivity of an intelligible species, there is an interior cause of understanding -- "the light of our soul." The "light of our soul" is known "not indeed to the extent that light is an object, but inasmuch as that light is the element making species intelligible in act" (V:80).<sup>142</sup>

Augustine's solicitude for veritas and Aquinas' conception of knowing by an immanent light is central to an understanding of the procession of the inner word. For Augustine the conscious dependence of the inner word upon a prior knowing is essential. It is accidental whether the verbum in and through which truth is known is grounded in memory or recent experience. What matters is the correspondence of the verbum with things known (verbum verum de re vera).

## 2.3 Ontological and Psychological: Complementarity and Interdependence

### 2.3.1 "Completing the Circle"

In taking up "the problem of the relation of subject to soul, of the Augustinian mens or animus to the Aristotelian anima,"<sup>143</sup> how does one reconcile the study of a conscious subject who "senses that he senses, understands that he understands" with something like Aristotle's non-introspective study of a soul as found in De Anima? The more difficult way, the one

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<sup>140</sup>SCG II, 77, ad. fin.

<sup>141</sup>"Unde nihil prohibet ipsi lumini animae nostrae attribuire actionem intellectus agentis; et praecipue cum Aristoteles intellectum agentem comparet lumini" (SCG II, 77, ad fin.). "[W]e know, we understand, we judge all things by a created light within us which is a participation, a resultant, a similitude, an impression of the first and eternal light and truth" (V:83-84).

<sup>142</sup>Lonergan cites Aquinas, DV q. 10, a. 8 ad 10m: ". . . we understand the light of the agent intellect, in so far as it is the reason for the intelligible species, making them actually intelligible" (V:80 note #152).

<sup>143</sup>SS:579.

favored by logic, is to begin with metaphysics, with what is first quoad se. After attempting first the metaphysical framework, Lonergan "found it unmanageable" and changed course (V:46). Perhaps this explains his cautionary words about the evident risk of losing the psychological analogy that was central to both Aquinas and Augustine:

[T]he Thomist application of metaphysics to the tasks of psychological analysis cannot be studied in some preliminary vacuum. That application exists only in psychological contexts; and it is easier to interpret metaphysics as applied to psychology when one is aware of the psychological facts involved. Without such awareness interpretation has to limp along on more or less remote and certainly non-psychological analogies. (V:95)

With regard to the importance of metaphysics, Lonergan asserts that "until all the evidence on all the points has been passed in review there can be no conclusions" (V:45). So whether one begins with the metaphysics, what is first quoad se, or the psychology, what is first quoad nos, what is important is to "complete the circle."<sup>144</sup>

If Aquinas' treatment of the inner word "aims at being a statement of psychological fact," then some familiarity with the psychological facts underpinning Aquinas' and Augustine's writings greatly aids interpreting what they might have meant. Was the psychological content of the psychological analogy lost? "In a sense it was not lost because in medieval thought psychological introspection did not exist as a specific technique."<sup>145</sup> This is a huge claim, one easily mis-understood given the fact that modern concerns with "method" and "technique" by

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<sup>144</sup>"The point is to complete the circle. One way to complete the circle is to begin from knowing. But one can begin with the metaphysics of the object, proceed to the metaphysical structure of the knower and to the metaphysics of knowing with the further psychological determinations that can be had from consciousness. . . . One can begin from what is prior quoad nos, what is first for us, or one can begin from what is prior quoad se, what is first in reality. As long as one completes the circle, the same thing will be said, but it will be said at different points along the way." UB:220.

<sup>145</sup>CT:9. See also V:ix-x, 44, 84-85.



and large have more to do with a epistemological problem of how to maneuver safely from subjectivity to objectivity, or vice versa, than with a practical appropriation of Aquinas' theory of intelligible procession of the word.<sup>146</sup>

Lonergan in fact begins his study of verbum with a psychological analysis of what he calls "psychological facts." He writes that it is easier to interpret Aquinas' metaphysics of abstraction of a concept with an explicit awareness of the psychological facts. These facts are: (1) understanding is a conscious act and a received perfection; (2) understanding is the ground and origin of an inner word; and (3) inner words proceed not by the mere spontaneous causality of material processes, such as cooking a steak on the grill, but as actus ex actu.<sup>147</sup> Grilling a steak involves a process and the production of a terminal object, but the process is not what is meant by an intelligible emanation, and the terminal object is external to the agent. Although it is intelligible, the emanation of flames to the steak is essentially different from the procession of the inner word from intelligence in act.

Does a psychological analysis imply the priority of the "psychological" over the "ontological," the "subjective" over the "objective," "epistemology" over "metaphysics," or "transcendental reflection" over "immediate realism"? The question itself is indicative of how deeply steeped we might be in the mistaken assumption that consciousness is a perception. It assumes that there are two and only two possibilities. Either (a) one "begins" with subjectivity, or (b) one "begins" with objectivity, where in both cases the model of consciousness as perception is

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<sup>146</sup>There is a subtle, critical problem, but it is not the bridge problem, but the problem of "complete returns." This will be discussed in Chapter Three.

<sup>147</sup>"The word conceived by our intellect does not proceed from potency to act except in so far as the intellect proceeds from potency to act. For all that, the word does not arise in our intellect except as it exists in act; rather, simultaneously with its existence in act, there is a word conceived therein." SCG IV, 14, §3.

assumed, and one is simply asking whether to begin with the perceiver or the perceived. Lonergan opts for neither (a) or (b). Nor, he believes, does Aquinas.

Are we to begin with both? It depends, for if by "both" we mean beginning both with the perceiving subject and the perceived object, we have really just complicated a problem. We would still be still hindered by a faulty conception of consciousness. Underlying all three options -- (a), (b), and "both" -- are unverifiable assumptions, e.g., that conscious acts are either opposed to or outside of being, rather than a perfection within being.

The either/or thinking, on the part of both those who demand that philosophical reflection begin with mere subjectivity and those convinced that reality is immediately and obviously given "out there," falls prey to a misunderstanding of knowing as a conscious activity that is a perfection within being. It is true that we can do only one thing at a time, and that without distinguishing and breaking apart in order later to unite philosophy becomes unmanageable. Beginning either with what is prior quoad nos or with what is prior quoad se does not mean accepting a dichotomy between knowing and being. The ontological and psychological approaches are interdependent procedures. Just as the psychological and ontological are distinguishable but not separate ("consciousness does not go beyond being but merely denotes a being in a particular degree of ontological perfection"), so too are psychological analysis and metaphysics. We might ask for ontological causes, for what is first quoad se. In this case one moves from essence to potencies and then to acts. But one can just as easily ask for psychological causes, or what is first quoad nos, and then the order is reversed. In either case,

the ontological and the cognitional are not incompatible alternatives but interdependent procedures. If one is assigning ontological causes, one must begin from metaphysics; if one is assigning cognitional reasons, one must begin from knowledge. Nor can one assign ontological causes without having cognitional reasons; nor can there be cognitional

reasons without corresponding ontological causes.<sup>148</sup>

In other words, the ontology of knowledge implies and evokes psychology; psychology implies and evokes an ontology of knowledge; and in neither case is there a bridge problem, though there is a critical problem.<sup>149</sup> There is an interdependence and a relationship of mutual implication, which is another way of saying that knowing itself, just as the known, is; that consciousness is both psychological and ontological; that "consciousness denotes a being in a particular degree of ontological perfection;" and that one cannot "assign ontological causes without" at least implicitly "having psychological reasons." This is a repudiation of any sort of bridge problem and any traces of immanentism, solipsism, and relativism.<sup>150</sup>

### 2.3.2 A Personal Appeal

One important implication of such a tandem "introspective" method is that it suggests a personal appeal to psychological facts. Kierkegaard's exhortation to "inwardness," though not fine-tuned through a personal and theoretical reconnaissance of the psychological facts regarding inner speech borrowed by Aquinas from Augustine, shares the spirit of personal appropriation:

The last ignominy, for Kierkegaard, would be for someone to say [of him], "This author represents inwardness." As an abstract, everything would be said in this one word; but in effect nothing would be said, since the question was not what the author represented but

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<sup>148</sup>"Insight: Preface to a Discussion," CWL 4:I44.

<sup>149</sup>See Chapter Three, section 4.

<sup>150</sup>The assertion, on the part of hermeneutical philosophers, that presence-to-self is but a mode of presence-to-world is also a repudiation of a dichotomy between knowing and being. To conceive and affirm a critical realism, however, is a further, hefty achievement, requiring something like Aquinas' theory of intelligible emanation.

what the reader would do.<sup>151</sup>

Without the "doing" the outer expression of the "doing" is simply verbiage, mere philosophical jargon. There exists a real danger of following in the verbal footsteps of an outstanding thinker, but not following his or her praxis. It is the danger of orthodoxy detached from orthopraxis.

Loneragan finds in Aquinas ample evidence that he "did": "The standard argument against the Averroists was the affirmation, "hic homo intellegit": deny such a proposition and, since you too are an instance of hic homo, you put yourself out of court as one who understands nothing." (V:78) If I deny that I understand anything at all, there is little reason for you to hear me out, for I'm telling you, in so many words, that I'll be speaking gibberish.<sup>152</sup> In arguing against the Averroists, Aquinas simply employed a retortion argument, demanding consistency between claims (actus signatus) and the way these claims are made (actus exercitus). If we had no access to what is happening when claims are made -- i.e., if we were unconscious -- the argument would fail. At the same time, if we had no access, we would not bother to argue, because arguing attentively and intelligently presupposes one is awake.

If someone were to reply that an appeal to conscious subjects is an argumentum ad hominem and is simply fallacious, it would do little to argue, for "nothing has been said" until the disputant would turn inward and personally attend to the psychological facts. Without such a personal turn and attention, arguing is pointless. "Having ears they still do not hear." Without the possibility of direct communication one either turns to indirect discourse or simply acknowledges the impasse.<sup>153</sup>

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<sup>151</sup>Frederick Crowe, "The Exigent Mind: Bernard Lonergan's Intellectualism," p. 328.

<sup>152</sup>There is incoherence even in making the apparently intelligible claim that I have no experience of intelligence. If I intend my words to express something, anything, intelligible, then my intention undermines my assertion. This is the basis for retortion arguments.

<sup>153</sup>Relevant to Kierkegaardian indirect discourse is what Lonergan writes of "the profound

### Conclusion

The appeal to acts "given in consciousness" is basic and far-reaching. It makes an "introspective"<sup>154</sup> study of the existential subject either crucial, unlikely, or impossible. It all depends on how one conceives "consciousness." However it is conceived, "it must be integrated all along the line."<sup>155</sup>

Lonergan's maintains that "intentionality analysis" of the conscious subject is crucial for a retrieval of Aquinas' understanding of the procession of the word. Aquinas practiced "introspection." This is not all he did, but insofar as he did do this, his thought is enriched by an empirical edge that it would not otherwise have. Intentionality analysis is not a metaphysics of knowing, or a faculty psychology of acts of the soul known through their objects. It is the existential subject heightening his or her awareness of acts which are "given in consciousness" (V:ix), where "consciousness" has the precise and technical meaning of "knowing" sub ratione experti. One implication of implementing an empirical hermeneutic is the complementarity and interdependency of fields like rational psychology, epistemology, ethics, and metaphysics.

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significance of satire and humor" for human development. "[S]atire breaks in upon the busy day . . . It enters not by argument but by laughter. For argument would presuppose premises, and premises that would be accepted easily would be mistaken . . . humor keeps the positions in contact with human limitations and human infirmity" (I:625-626).

<sup>154</sup>Lonergan would grow wary of the connotations of "introspection" -- literally "looking into" or "looking inside" -- and its Scotist implication of inner intuition by which one grasps one's essence. He increasingly spoke of "intentionality analysis."

<sup>155</sup>CT:8. Lonergan makes the remark in specific reference to speculative theology on the Trinity -- that the three divine persons are three conscious persons, and that "either consciousness is brought in all along the line or it is not brought in at all"-- but it holds equally for any philosophy mindful of conscious human persons. His work in Christology is also an "integration all along the line." See De constitutione Christi ontologica et psychologica; "Christ as Subject: A Reply," CWL 4:162-179; "Christology Today: Methodological Reflections," 3C: 74-99.

Intentionality analysis also provides an alternative to the Cartesian and Kantian foundationalist approaches being attacked by hermeneutical and deconstructivist philosophers. In precisely distinguishing two opposed conceptions of consciousness (conscientia qua perceptio and conscientia qua experti) and the corresponding accounts of introspection -- one an immediate perception of acts, the other reflective self-knowledge -- we are able to interpret Aquinas' incorporation of the Augustinian psychology without assuming he assimilated Augustine in the way he has been criticized by linguistic philosophers.<sup>156</sup> Fred Lawrence writes of this critique and the resulting suspicions of "introspection":

The critique by post-Wittgensteinian linguistic analysis and by continental philosophical hermeneutics of Augustine's picture of the way we acquire language, as cited by Wittgenstein at the beginning of the Philosophical Investigations, is now taken for granted. As a result, any talk about consciousness or introspection is understood to be just a variant of Cartesianism, which is the Enlightenment's version of Augustine's picture. . . . Neither Aristotle nor Aquinas held that consciousness is an already-in-here-now mental container with a range of possible already-out-there-now objects, that have, as it were, to be brought over into the container.<sup>157</sup>

Since Aristotle did not write of the conscious life of the human subject, nor chart inner conversions in literary language as Augustine did in his Confessions, one might read Aquinas' work on the inner word objectivistically and impoverish his words. But if Augustine's affirmation of verbum intus prolatum was dependent itself upon what Augustine knew of inner speech, and if Aquinas relied upon the psychological basis in Augustine's thought in explicitly working out his theory of intelligible emanation, then there is no reason to suppose that our understanding of

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<sup>156</sup>The criticism is against a view that language is acquired by filling a container-like consciousness with objects perceived "out there" or "in here." Names are purportedly and somewhat arbitrarily linked to objects through a combination of gesture and memory.

<sup>157</sup>"Lonergan's Foundations for Constitutive Communication," pp. 239-240.

Aquinas is diminished by carefully attending to psychological facts. An existential mediation of meaning, one that "interprets our dreams and our symbols, that thematizes our wan smiles and limp gestures, that analyzes our minds . . ." <sup>158</sup> is complementary to the study of soul. Since Lonergan was able to distinguish between psychological reasons and ontological causes, without separating the two, his "anthropological turn" is not a transcendental-idealist turn to a transcendental subject or ego that neglects or excludes the subject that, as a matter of fact, one is.

One difficulty is that simple matters can easily be complicated by words and explanations. Any effort to explain, describe, probe, analyze or present an account of intelligent consciousness is simply a pointer. <sup>159</sup> It is like trying to scratch an itchy foot through your shoe. You might get to the itch through gently rubbing your shoe or eventually scratching your shoe very hard. Of course, there is always the possibility that you might simply digress and obsess about shoe sizes, styles, or colors. It would be much easier to take your shoe off and scratch your foot directly. As with the shoe, our examination of human consciousness has been once removed. They are pointers -- an invitation to something rather simple though extremely elusive. We can offer no more than pointers because what ultimately matters is appropriation, which can always be brushed aside. The philosopher who neglects the "restless spirit of inquiry" or the procession verbum cordis from understanding might miss the "itch" altogether:

Process theology provides an insightful world-view -- but if it includes the subject, does it include the subject that I am, that I might be? Analytic philosophy exercises my intelligence and judgment -- but can it coherently clarify the exclusion of my curiosity

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<sup>158</sup>"Dimensions of Meaning," CWL 4:244.

<sup>159</sup>"To work out the theory of how to make the egg stand on its end is much harder than giving the egg a little tap, as Columbus did, and having it stand there. In general, questions of method, questions of the possibility of knowledge, are in the second remove, and they are much more difficult, much more abstract, much more complicated, than the business of doing it." UB:19-20.

regarding that exercise?<sup>160</sup>

This concern for consistency between the exercise or experience of philosophy, on the one hand, and philosophy as written, spoken, or otherwise thematized, on the other hand, is the intrinsically meditative and therapeutic issue of method. Part of the therapeutic work that will be examined in the next chapter is to differentiate two knowings, both of which are conscious, one of which involves the procession of two distinct types of inner words, the other involves emanation but not intelligible emanation.

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<sup>160</sup>Philip McShane, Introducing the Thought of Bernard Lonergan, p. 12.



## Chapter Three

### Knowing as Structured

The subtle difference between consciousness as perception (conscientia qua perceptio) and consciousness as experience (conscientia qua experientia) is crucial for understanding the intelligible procession of the inner word. On the one hand, if by "consciousness" one means either externally directed perception of something other than oneself or internally directed perception of oneself, then the "basic and fundamental rationality" of the proceeding inner word is problematic. If consciousness is a type of perception, then the intelligible emanation of the inner word must be an unconscious phenomenon, unperceived and even imperceptible in which case there would be no relevant psychological facts, and the psychological analogy might be interesting, perhaps fascinating, but merely speculative and finally unverifiable.

If, on the other hand, the intelligible emanation of an inner word is known sub ratione experti, that is, conscious as experienced, then a metaphysics of knowledge can be interpreted as it applies to and is complemented by the psychological facts. Knowledge of the human mind is knowledge of its potencies, acts and objects. When the acts under consideration are cognitive acts, or acts constituting knowledge, then the "careful and subtle inquiry"<sup>161</sup> of these mental acts poses the problem of self-knowledge. There could only be such a problem if cognitive acts are conscious as experienced. What is experienced -- e.g. feeling blue -- can be known through a shift

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<sup>161</sup>For knowledge of the nature of the human mind "the mere presence of the mind does not suffice, and there is further required a careful and subtle inquiry. Hence many are ignorant of the soul's nature, and many have erred about it." ST I, q. 87, a. 1, c.

in attention and a heightening of awareness. When Aquinas writes that knowledge of the human mind "requires careful and subtle inquiry," he is not referring simply to knowledge in general, but self-knowledge. Surely one can err or prejudge or judge hastily in knowing, but self-knowledge is especially difficult. This difficulty derives from what Lonergan calls the "psychological problem" that two knowings, namely sensitive and intellectual, co-exist in us, often without differentiation by us. He describes this problem in Insight:

But the hard fact is that the psychological problem exists, that there exist in man two diverse kinds of knowing, that they exist without differentiation and in an ambivalent confusion until they are distinguished explicitly and the implications of the distinction are drawn explicitly.<sup>162</sup>

The problem Lonergan alludes to is not simply the verbal identification of two kinds of knowing, but how to relate and distinguish the two in such a way that one does not fall prey to the "myth of the eyeballs," the tendency to presume that knowing tout court is basically a matter of taking a good look at what is known already-out-there or already-in-here. The look is either a sensitive look, i.e. through one or other sensitive organ, or a "spiritual look."

The problem is evident in so-called "modern epistemology." Foundationalist approaches since Descartes, Hume and Locke share various assumptions about knowing, one of which is the conviction that knowing is basically a type of perception, another being the ultimacy of the subject-perceiver/object-perceived dichotomy. These assumptions have been attacked by hermeneutical philosophers like Gadamer and Rorty, who recognize the "ubiquity of language," or the "wordedness" of the concrete world in which we live (Sprachlichkeit der Welt). But a

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<sup>162</sup>(I:xxii-xxiii). Fred Crowe writes of the centrality of the problem in Insight: "The whole of Insight can be read, it seems to me, as an extended effort to establish a coherent realism based on a proper recognition of the duality of our knowing. This lies behind the repeated statement that the real is being, that is, what can be intelligently grasped and reasonably affirmed - not, as might be thought by a naive realist, what can be seen or touched." "Lonergan's Search for Foundations: The Early Years, 1940-1959." p. 121.

diagnosis is not a remedy. Are we, with Rorty, to conclude that there is no standard of rationality that is not ultimately of our own creation and no form of argumentation that is not simply conventional.<sup>163</sup>

The psychological problem is basic, i.e., it does not play favorites. It did not arise with Descartes, and though Rorty and other "post-moderns" jump on an anti-foundationalist bandwagon, they share a deeper psychological problem. Writing of Tertullian's materialist assumptions, Lonergan asks whether we do not in fact share in these same assumptions:

Some people have the impression that, while Tertullian and others of his time may have made such a mistake, no one repeats it today. Nothing could be further from the truth. For until a person has made the personal discovery that he is making Tertullian's mistake all along the line, until he has gone through the crisis involved in overcoming one's spontaneous estimate of the real -- and the fear of idealism involved in it -- he is still thinking just as Tertullian did. It is not a sign that one is dumb or backward. St. Augustine was one of the most intelligent men in the whole Western tradition, and one of the best proofs of his intelligence is the fact that he himself discovered that for years he was unable to distinguish between what is a body and what is real.<sup>164</sup>

What is meant by "body" is known sensitively and only sensitively. What is meant by "real" is known intelligently and mediated by the procession of an inner word that is neither seen in the light "out there," nor "seen" "in here." Our acts of understanding are only "seen" figuratively, i.e., known sub ratione experti.

The subtle and difficult problem of self-knowledge is to grasp the structured process of intelligently knowing the real without collapsing that structure to sensing, imagination, intuition, or a "spiritual look." Resolving the crisis of overcoming spontaneous tendencies to point at reality "out there" is personally to identify the crucial differences between sensitive knowing and fully human knowing.

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<sup>163</sup>Cf. Richard Rorty, "The Fate of Philosophy," pp. 28-34.

<sup>164</sup>CT:II.

Our spontaneous estimation of what is known and how it is known often does not even get as far as to recognize the two diverse kinds of knowing. In other words, at first we do not know there is a problem! If there were not a diversity of knowings, there would not be a psychological problem. Toads, for example, do not have an epistemological problem. But if the sensitive integration of sensitive data is only a component in fully human knowing, and if neither judgment nor understanding are sensitive activities, but activities of the mind, then the view that reality is known by inner or outer perception is incompatible with Aquinas' account of the procession of the inner word.

An indication of the basic psychological problem is the prevalence of "conceptualism" that, like perceptualism, is not simply a modern problem.<sup>165</sup> As discussed in the previous chapter, epistemological conceptualism maintains that the spontaneity of sensitive knowing is also found in intellectual knowing. In this case an intelligible species is impressed upon the intellect without a corresponding act of intellect, and naturally and spontaneously universalizing occurs:

... for conceptualism consists precisely in the affirmation that concepts proceed not from intellectual knowledge and so intelligently but, on the contrary, with the same natural spontaneity as images from imagination. (V:217)

The natural and spontaneous procession in the imagination is not an intelligent emanation; it is not a product of intelligence in act. When one is at rest without a care in the world, for example while reclining in a lounge chair at the beach on a hot July afternoon, images and sensations do not cease. One continues to hear the waves, feel the sun, smell the salt, perhaps drift off to an island in one's imagination. These activities are conscious, but they are not the same as understanding because one is not striving to understand.

If concepts arise in us in virtually the same manner as images in the imagination, then

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<sup>165</sup>Scotus, for instance, stressed the primacy of intuition, the unconscious appearance of a concept that is intuited intellectually and then applied to the world out there.

they do so spontaneously and without an act of intellect. If one claims concepts appear spontaneously and without a conscious act of understanding, one might just as well claim they are there universally, necessarily, or a priori (Kant). If this true, the job of philosophy is easier than Lonergan makes it out to be. We could account for concepts by saying "they simply appear and do not ask me how, why, or from where."

To the extent that we either downplay or overlook understanding as a received perfection grounding an inner speaking (intelligere as dicere) that is rationally conscious, we risk reading Aquinas as if he were a conceptualist who fails to distinguish the coexistence of two diverse knowings. Likewise, when too much is made of "universal concepts" and not enough made of their source, conceiving can be construed as a process basically analogous to sensing or imagining, a process in which there is a natural and automatic procession of the concept, but not an intelligently conscious procession.<sup>166</sup> In any case, Lonergan does not find the "conceptualist" interpretation of Aquinas a faithful one, and finds a great deal at stake in being able to differentiate between two radically different and yet related types of knowing.

### 3.I Sensitive and Intellectual Knowing

#### 3.I.1 Sensitive and Intellectual Knowing - Similarities

Both sensitive and intellectual knowing are natural in that there is something from human nature in each. As animals, humans have conscious, natural tendencies towards reproduction, protection, and intussusception. The human counterpart to Fido's sensitive knowledge of his dog house is "the sensitive integration of sensible data ... [that] exists in the human animal and even in the human philosopher" (V:7). It is a thoroughly extroverted way of knowing, and though it might exist in infants in a pure form, for those living in a world of language and symbols, a world

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<sup>166</sup>Rousselot, for one, found that in the writings of Aquinas intelligence and intellect are more basic than concept.

"mediated by meaning," it is a limit that is only approached in moments of pure reverie, child-like playfulness, ecstatic union with another.<sup>167</sup>

Another natural, conscious tendency, one that is specifically human, is the desire to know.

Aquinas writes of this desire:

When man knows an effect, and knows that it has a cause, there naturally remains in man the desire to know about that cause, what it is. And this desire is one of wonder, and causes inquiry, as is stated.... Nor does inquiry cease until he arrive at knowledge of the essence of the cause.<sup>168</sup>

The desire native to intellectual knowing is the curiosity that is the unteachable condition of learning. It is evident in the questing of children insofar as other basic needs are met.<sup>169</sup>

Both sensitive and intellectual knowing involve a kind of natural light, but neither light is an object since we do not experience either light in its pure form. The object of sight is the visible color and the object of intellect is the intelligible. We can come to know intellectual light not as an object, but "in so far as it is the reason for the intelligible species, making them actually intelligible."<sup>170</sup> Just as we discern corporeal light indirectly in seeing color, so too we experience

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<sup>167</sup>The distinctions between the infant's "world of immediacy," the adult's "world mediated by meaning and motivated by value," and the mediated return to immediacy are commonplace in Lonergan's later writings. "Besides the immediate world of the infant and the adult's world mediated by meaning, ... there is a withdrawal from objectification and a mediated return to immediacy in the mating of lovers and in the prayerful mystic's cloud of unknowing" (MT:77). See also "Existenz and Aggiornamento" and "Dimensions of Meaning" in CWL 4 and Method in Theology, index under "world mediated by meaning."

<sup>168</sup>ST I-I, q. 3, a. 8.

<sup>169</sup>Gareth B. Matthews develops this in Philosophy and the Young Child. An indication of the "psychological problem" is the number of philosophers whose "metaphysics," "epistemology," "ethics," "hermeneutics," etc. scarcely, if at all, thematize this wholesome, organic, questioning -- the conscious subject as embodied quest.

<sup>170</sup>DV q. 10, a. 8 ad 10m.

intellectual light indirectly in the activity of understanding, i.e. as intellectual light illumines some phantasm.

It never is just inquiry but always inquiry about something. It never is pure understanding but always understanding this or understanding that. Even so, we may discern it [intellectual light] introspectively, just as externally we discern light in seeing color (V:89).

Intellectual light is introspectively observed, not as illumined, but as illuminating, or "in ratione medii cognoscendi."<sup>171</sup>

A further similarity is that both sensitive and intellectual acts are instances of a perfect operation, or what Aquinas called actus perfecti, an act complete in itself "that does not need or anticipate something further to become what it is to be, act that intrinsically stands outside time" (V:I06). This is so even though operations such as sensing and understanding endure through time and are occasioned by movements which are temporal and incomplete (e.g. flipping the pages of Whitman's Leaves of Grass, walking about the Museum of Modern Art, or drawing a Venn diagram).<sup>172</sup>

Sensitive and intellectual knowing are both true and both conscious as experienced (conscientia qua experientia). In other words, acts of seeing, hearing, smelling, imagining, remembering, wondering, probing, understanding, conceiving, verifying, and affirming/denying

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<sup>171</sup>The reference is to In I Sent., d. 3, q. 4, a. 5 sol.

<sup>172</sup>Aquinas contrasts the incompleteness of movements with the completeness of operations in commenting on Aristotle's assertion in the Ethics that pleasure is not a form of motion: "He says first that the operation of the sense of sight called seeing is complete at any moment whatsoever. It does not require anything coming later to perfect its form. Now if time were needed for its completion, no time whatsoever would suffice but a certain duration would be necessary, as is the case with other activities occurring in time whose generation requires a particular measure of time. But seeing is perfected in a moment. The same is true of pleasure." Commentary on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics, p. 603.

not only reveal an intended but also constitute the subject present as subject.<sup>173</sup> Without this primary presence constituting the basic psychological unity of the subject as subject, we would not be able to say it is "I" who see, hear, wonder, etc. Furthermore, both involve some kind of emanation. Aquinas writes that in the sensitive soul, emanation

may have an external beginning, but has an internal termination, and, the more fully the emanation proceeds, the more it reaches what is within. For the exterior sensible impresses its form on the exterior senses; from these it proceeds to the imagination and, further to the storehouse of the memory.<sup>174</sup>

Both types of knowing involve non-material assimilation. The sense powers are receptive to sensible forms without receiving the matter natural to these forms; only the sensible form of the snow-covered woods, not the actual woods, is received in seeing. Intellect is receptive to intellectual form in abstraction from the hic et nunc. The time, place, even the color of the chalk, are coincidental to questions and insights that occur "in" the classroom.

### 3.1.2 Sensitive and Intellectual Knowing - Differences

In each of the ways sensitive knowing and intellectual knowing are similar, there exist notable differences. In the mere seeing of roadside signs there is an emanation with an external beginning, a reception of sensible form without an assimilation of matter, true knowledge, efficient causality, and an act that is a perfection of the agent (actus perfecti). Still, in sensitive knowing there is neither intelligent production nor intelligent procession, and so the emanation, assimilation, knowledge, and causality in seeing are essentially different from the emanation, assimilation, knowledge and causality of inner speaking.

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<sup>173</sup>These two types of presence, P(2) and P(3) respectively, were discussed in Chapter Two, section I.

<sup>174</sup>SCG IV, II, s. 4.



Intelligent production occurs when, for example, one is able to define a parabola. There is efficient causality in being able to imagine a parabola, but when one hits upon an adequate definition, there is something more. A definition or explanation is an act caused by a prior act of understanding. Still, the productive aspect is not the only one, for there is an intelligible aspect as well.<sup>175</sup>

The inner word of defining is caused by but also because of the act of understanding. In the former aspect the procession is "processio operati." In the latter aspect the procession is "processio intelligibilis." (V:199).<sup>176</sup>

This inner expression is a "pivoting" of intelligence, where the metaphor of "pivoting" signifies that one rationally conscious act produces a second, distinct act that is not a perfection of the first. In other words, there is efficient causality in all types of emanation, but the causality designated by the phrase "because of" is unique to intelligible emanations. There simply is

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<sup>175</sup>Nor is the productive aspect an adequate analogue for divine procession. Production is analogous to creation, or the processions of creatures from God, not to procession within. "As Lonergan stresses, to take these inner processions of the inner word and of proceeding loving, simply in their productive aspect, misses the point of Aquinas' analogy!" Peter Beer, S.J. "The Holy Spirit and Lonergan's Psychological Analogy," p. 177.

<sup>176</sup>The non-productive aspect of rational consciousness is analogous to the Word proceeding from Speaker. The difference between the two processions is that human words proceed by a process that is a "processio operati" with two really distinct entities, while divine Understanding and divine Word are not really distinct (V:200). The analogy for the divine procession is had by separating from the causality of intelligible emanation the distinction between principle and term. What is left is a real, intelligent dependence without distinction whatsoever. Principle and term are identical, but the relation between the two is nevertheless real (V: 89). Aquinas writes: "Therefore, although in God the one understanding, the act of understanding, and the intention understood, or Word, are by essence one, and for this reason each is necessarily God, there remains the distinction of relation alone, in so far as the Word is related to the one who conceives as to Him from whom He is" (SCG IV, 11, 13). Since divine Understanding and divine Word are not really distinct, the procession is a pure processio intelligibilis. It might seem that the dependence of one on another is merely mental, not real. This is so "only inasmuch as one prescind from the reality of mind" (V:200).

nothing like this type of causality in imagining a parabola.<sup>177</sup> The imagined parabola has its sufficient cause in the reception of sensible forms that are stored in the imagination. But the definition has its sufficient cause in a grasp of the intelligible form that is known to be sufficient and because it is known to be sufficient (V:I99). Intellectual knowledge "is not merely aware empirically of its acts but also reflects upon their nature" (V:75). This reflection is the actual occurrence of an intelligible emanation that distinguishes sensitive and intellectual knowing. It is not, however, reflection upon reflection.<sup>178</sup>

The full sequence from what is potentially intelligible to what is actually understood involves at least these steps: (1) the parabola as merely imagined by a brute (merely sensitive being), is not even potentially intelligible to that brute; (2) the same object present to an intelligent being who is not seeking to understand is potentially intelligible to this person;<sup>179</sup> (3) if and when a question occurs, there emerges a something-to-be-understood, or a potentially understood; and (4) the potentially understood becomes actually understood in the accumulation of acts of understanding. The transformation of a potentially intelligible into an actually understood

involves no difference in the phantasm but only in the possible intellect, just as the difference between colors in daylight and colors actually seen involves no difference in the colors but only in eyes and sight (V:I75).

What does this have to do with the psychological problem, the subtle problem of self-knowledge? Since intellectual knowing always involves an image or phantasm, i.e., sense and

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<sup>177</sup>Nor is there anything like this in acts of will. See Chapter Four, section I.

<sup>178</sup>The so-called "critical problem" of knowing knowing will be defined and examined in Section 5 below.

<sup>179</sup>"Thus, pure reverie, in which image succeeds image in the inner human cinema with never a care for the why or wherefore, illustrates the intelligible in potency" (V:I74).

imagination always play a determinative role, sensitive integration of sensitive data is not merely an occasion or disposition for intellectual assimilation. If this were the case, there would be two entirely unrelated ways of knowing with two entirely unrelated objects. But sensitive knowledge is not simply an occasion or disposition but the material cause of our knowledge, in addition to which there is a formal cause and an efficient cause.<sup>180</sup>

The psychological problem is to identify and relate the psychological (i.e. conscious) acts involved in illuminating a phantasm, and to appreciate the strange difference between mere sensitive knowledge, of which we have limited experience, and sensitive knowledge as a component in intellectual knowledge. Identifying and relating conscious acts provide empirical reasons for explaining why the analogy between literally seeing in the literal light of day and figuratively seeing in the figurative light of mind is simply an analogy. In fact there is a two-fold source of knowledge corresponding to the sources of understanding -- one on the level of sense, the other intrinsic to the mind, the light of intellect.<sup>181</sup> A material object of understanding is supplied by sense or imagination or some other data of consciousness.<sup>182</sup> Yet illuminations that bear fruit in descriptions and explanations and evidence for making a judgment are not mere sense

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<sup>180</sup>"Since the phantasms cannot of themselves affect the passive intellect, and require to be made actually intelligible by the active intellect, it cannot be said that sensible knowledge is the total and perfect cause of intellectual knowledge, but rather that it is in a way the material cause." ST I, q. 84, a. 6, c. ad fin.

<sup>181</sup>"The object of understanding is supplied and offered to us, as it were, materially, by the imagination; formally, as object of understanding, it is completed by intellectual light" (V:81).

<sup>182</sup>Data of consciousness include imagining, sensing, understanding, judging, deliberating, planning, choosing, taking counsel, acting, etc., all of which are conscious (known sub ratione experti), but none of which are imaginable. It might be asked how these unimaginable data can provide the material object of understanding if in this life we cannot understand without conversion to the phantasm. Since acts are known by their objects, potencies by acts, and essence of the soul by potencies, "there exists an associative train linking imaginable objects with conscious experience. It is by exploiting that link that intelligence investigates the nature of sense, imagination, intellect, will, and the soul." CAS:173-174.

data or images or data of consciousness. In addition to having a material cause, intellectual operation has a formal cause that is not given in sensible data:

In order to cause the intellectual operation, according to Aristotle, the impression caused by the sensible does not suffice, but something more noble is required, for the agent is more noble than the patient, as he says. Not, indeed, in the sense that the intellectual operation is effected in us by the mere impression of some superior beings, as Plato held; but that the higher and more noble agent which he calls the active intellect, of which we have spoken above (Q. 79, AA 3,4), causes the phantasms received from the senses to be actually intelligible, by a process of abstraction.<sup>183</sup>

Sensation, as the act of a material organ, has for its object a sensible form existing in matter, while intellect has for its object an intelligible form. But since a human intellect is not an angelic intellect or a Cartesian mind, "it is the potency of a form that actuates matter, and so its object must be a form, existing indeed in matter, but not as it exists in matter" (V:158 emphasis added).

One of the prominent differences between merely sensitive knowing and truly intellectual knowing is that seeing an object in corporeal light involves our eyes and a light external to the eyes, while "seeing" an intelligible object in intellectual light is an experience of intelligence whose light is internal. There would be a closer parallel between corporeal light and intellectual light if the eye itself could make colors visible and was also the receptive potency to receive the determination of the illuminated object.<sup>184</sup> Then there would be both an act and potency in the same organ.

Though the experience of intelligence is one in which the intellect is both active and passive, ordinarily this is not reflectively known. Such reflexive attention is a further step that has no counterpart in physical seeing. Corporeal light is not known by corporeal light, but

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<sup>183</sup>ST I, q. 84, a. 6, c.

<sup>184</sup>Cf. SCG II, 77.

in some fashion it [the soul] does know its own intellectual light by its own intellectual light, not indeed to the extent that light is an object, but inasmuch as that light is the element making species intelligible in act (V:80).

The "psychological problem" is that we tend to forget the strangeness of the immediately already-out-there-now, the world merely illuminated by corporeal light;<sup>185</sup> and yet, ironically, when giving some account of what is meant by "real," we tend to highlight the criteria for knowing bodies that are "already-out-there-now" -- sensible, tangible, confrontable. As will be discussed in further detail below (in section 4), the criteria for knowing in the strict sense of human knowing are: (1) correct understanding of (2) inner and outer experience that involves illumination by both (3) corporeal light and (4) intellectual light. Even someone like Hume, who emphasized the "liveliness" of "impressions," and reasoned that our thoughts and ideas are inferior to those impressions from which they derive, was more than a bundle of impressions. Hume understood and made judgments. One of his judgments is indicative of the psychological problem. He mistakenly judged that he could explain understanding and judgments by appealing to the "more lively" and "forcible impressions." No matter how "lively" sense impressions might be, they are in an entirely different category from intelligible emanations.

Lonergan and Aquinas distinguish sensitive knowledge from intellectual knowledge. While the former is immediate in a living, sensate being, the latter is mediated by consciously raising questions and the emergence of an intelligibly emanating word. Hume, of course, has no account of intelligible procession, and his philosophy makes it unnecessary: "All our ideas or more feeble perceptions are copies of our impressions or more lively ones."<sup>186</sup>

Another example of the existence of the problem is found in Kant, who is indebted to

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<sup>185</sup>The visible, illuminated by corporeal light, is symbolic of all sensibles and even of the data of inner experience. In other words, in addition to the "already-out-there-now-real" there is the immediate inner experience ("already-in-here-now-real").

<sup>186</sup>David Hume, An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding, p. II.

Hume not only for awakening him "from his dogmatic slumber," but also for his sense of reality. This sense of reality is seen in Kant's emphasis upon intuition (Anschauung) through which an object is given us. Giovanni Sala writes the following of the centrality of intuition in Kant's philosophy:

There are many activities which contribute to the constitution of our knowledge; but if we ask what constitutes knowledge as knowledge of an object, and hence as knowledge at all, we have to answer: It is intuition. No matter how many mediated relations other activities are able to establish with the object, if we wish to avoid the nonsense of a series of mediations, no one of which reaches the reality to be mediated, we must say that there is a type of cognitional activity whose very nature consists in setting up a bridge between knower and known. This is intuition.<sup>187</sup>

For Kant our knowledge of an object, of what truly is, is immediate in sense intuition. Kant is aware of various faculties and acts, and his transcendental analysis attempts to uncover the structure of these acts. But the end result, what is known through Denken, is the same object already and immediately known through Anschauung.<sup>188</sup>

For Lonergan and Aquinas, the model of knowing as looking at a sensible singular (or even looking at an intellectual universal) cannot account for knowing in the full sense. Truth regarding what "is" is not in sense as something that sensation knows:

For although sight has the likeness of a visible thing, yet it does not know the comparison which exists between the thing seen and that which itself apprehends concerning it. But

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<sup>187</sup>"The A Priori in Human Knowledge: Kant's Critique of Pure Reason and Lonergan's Insight," in Lonergan and Kant: Five Essays on Human Knowledge, p. 9.

<sup>188</sup>Sala writes that this tension between knowing as intuition and knowing as a structure is unresolved in Kant's Critique of Pure Reason: "Of what use are the phases of thinking and judging which follow upon intuition? No matter how many functions we ascribe to them, we cannot say that they are not intuitive but only transport from one level to another - and what does that mean? - the very same object which has already revealed itself to us immediately in the Anschauung." *Ibid.*, p. 10.

the intellect can know its own conformity with the intelligible thing.<sup>189</sup>

The "conformity" which "intellect can know" is what is meant by the basic rationality of a procession of a word from an act of understanding. In intellectual assimilation the form is not reproduced in something material, e.g. an ear or eye, but is received in a strictly immaterial potency, the possible intellect.

To say intellect is reflective in a way that eyes, for example, are not, does not mean that what is seen is not true or real. It simply means that what is seen as simply seen is not known to be true or real. The intellect, on the other hand, knows its conformity: "Truth is known by the intellect in view of the fact that the intellect reflects upon its own act -- not merely as knowing its own act, but as knowing the proportion of its act to the thing."<sup>190</sup>

What is most obvious in knowledge of reality is the sensitive integration of something "now" and "out there." A materialist would have no problem making this the total criterion not only for Fido's knowing but for the totality of ours as well. An idealist might object, saying "there is more than meets the eye": there exists an intellectual field corresponding to intellectual powers, and this has as much to do with knowing as sensitive integration of sense data. If this person wants to hold on to this assertion about an intellectual field and intellectual powers, and yet maintain that "reality" means what is sensitively integrated, he joins the likes of Kant in distinguishing between the sensible phenomenon and the unknowable thing-in-itself. Lonergan writes that

the Thomist position is the clear-headed third position: reason is the criterion and, as well, it is reason -- not the sense of reality -- that gives meaning to the term "real." The

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<sup>189</sup>ST I, q. 16, a. 2.

<sup>190</sup>DV IX, I, c. The intellect knows its conformity sub ratione experti. To know this conformity sub ratione entis, quidditatis, et veri is the subtle and difficult problem of self-knowledge, i.e., understanding understanding and knowing knowing. See section 5.2 below.

real is, what is; and "what is" is known in the rational act, judgment (V:7).

### 3.1.3 Knowledge of Intellectual Light

#### 3.1.3.1 Grasp of First Principles

In what fashion is intellectual light known by intellectual light? Lonergan maintains that "the most conspicuous" way that the light of our souls enters within the range of introspection is our grasp of first principles. "[T]he light of agent intellect is said to manifest first principles, to make them evident"(V:80).<sup>191</sup>

Intellectual light is simply first, making both terms (which precede principles) and principles intelligible, and then using these terms to derive secondary principles.<sup>192</sup> Since this light is first, and since in this light terms, first principles, and all knowledge become known, there is a sense in which we have all knowledge from the beginning.<sup>193</sup> The mind contains all knowledge virtute.

It is in this sense of containing all knowledge virtute that we can understand the claim that first principles are self-evident in themselves. The reduction of scientific knowledge to prior knowledge does not regress indefinitely because there is something of a starting-point in what is

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<sup>191</sup>Aquinas writes: "Moreover, the knowledge which comes about through something naturally implanted in us is natural, as is the case with indemonstrable principles which are known through the light of intellect." SCG III 46.

<sup>192</sup>ST II-II, 171, a. 2, c: "The intellectual light that is in a subject by way of an abiding and complete form, perfects the intellect chiefly to the effect of knowing the principle of the things manifested by that light; thus by the light of the active intellect the intellect knows chiefly the first principles of all things known naturally."

<sup>193</sup>"The soul itself forms in itself likeness of things, inasmuch as through the light of the agent intellect the forms abstracted from sensible things are made actually intelligible so that they may be received in the possible intellect. And in this way all knowledge is in a certain sense implanted in us from the beginning (since we have the light of the agent intellect) through the medium of universal conceptions which are immediately known by the light of the agent intellect." DV, q. 10, a. 6, c.



naturally known -- indemonstrable first principles known through the light of agent intellect. These principles are evident from the beginning. They are not reasoned to, but underlie the activity of reason to begin with. They underlie the knowing process that makes propositions self-evident to us. As operative, though not as formulated, first principles are not arrived at upon termination of a process of reasoning, but are part of the origin of reasoning itself -- part of the "basic and essential rationality of rational consciousness."<sup>194</sup> This is why Lonergan writes "this principle [non-contradiction] does not arise from an insight into sensible data but from the nature of intelligence as such" (V:56). In other words, the principle as operative is not found at the terminus of a chain of reasoning, but along the way. Intellect is naturally "principled." Our motivation for defining, once we understand, or affirming or denying, once we reflectively grasp sufficient evidence, is the natural light of intellect. This motivation, while not taught, is conscious. As a worded proposition, the principle of non-contradiction is like any other -- self-evident to us as long as we understand the terms. The meaning of terms such as "whole," "part," "being," and "non-being" are not innately grasped or known a priori. These terms must be scrutinized in order for their meaning to be grasped.<sup>195</sup>

This brings us to a second, related point regarding intellectual light's "most conspicuous" knowledge of intellectual light in the grasp of first principles. Intellectual light is related to specific intelligible forms as cause to effect, as general power to specific product. There is a two-fold source of knowledge, since in addition to the intrinsic light of mind there are extrinsic

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<sup>194</sup>Principles that are universally self-evident are known as experienced (sub ratione experti) prior to and as a condition for being known explicitly as named, understood, and affirmed (sub ratione veri).

<sup>195</sup>It is the function of wisdom to grasp these meanings. "Now to know the meaning of being and non-being, ... which are the terms whereof indemonstrable principles are constituted, is the function of wisdom." ST I-II, q. 66, a. 5, ad 4m.

sensibilia from which intelligible forms are abstracted.<sup>196</sup> So the "most conspicuous" way that intellectual light is known -- i.e., through our grasp of first principles -- is known in act only when combined with sensibilia. In other words, even self-evident first principles are known naturally, through abstracting from singulars. In this way they are like concepts, known in the illumination of the phantasm by the intellectual light of the agent intellect:

For certain seeds of knowledge pre-exist in us, namely, the first concepts of understanding, which by the light of the agent intellect are immediately known through the species abstracted from sensible things. These are either complex, as axioms, or simple, as the notions of being, of the one, and so on, which the understanding grasps immediately.<sup>197</sup>

How can one assert both: (1) that, for example, the first, indemonstrable principle of speculative reason -- "Non est simul affirmare et negare" -- pre-exists and (2) this first principle is known through a process of abstraction from the phantasm?<sup>198</sup> It is not because these self-evident first principles are acquired the way moral or scientific habits are acquired, i.e. caused by a multiplicity of acts.<sup>199</sup> It is because the light which in one sense (virtute) contains all knowledge, including knowledge of first principles, in another sense is utterly indeterminate and requires materials to work on, just as corporeal light does not contain the determinations of colored

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<sup>196</sup>DV, q. 10, 6, c.: "The opinion of the Philosopher is more reasonable than any of the foregoing positions. He attributes the knowledge of our mind partly to intrinsic (partim ab intrinseco), partly to extrinsic (partim ab extrinseco), influence."

<sup>197</sup>DV, q. 11, 1, c.

<sup>198</sup>The same question can be restated with reference to the first, indemonstrable principle of practical reason -- "Bonum est faciendum, malum vitandum."

<sup>199</sup>Cf. ST I-II, q. 51, a. 2, c. "For everything that is passive and moved by another, is disposed by the action of the agent; wherefore if the acts be multiplied a certain quality is formed in the power which is passive and moved, which quality is called a habit: just as the habits of moral virtue are caused in the appetitive powers, according as they are moved by the reason, and as the habits of science are caused in the intellect, according as it is moved by first propositions."

objects but is able to make them visible. Perhaps this is why Aquinas argues against equating the habit of first principles with agent intellect.<sup>200</sup> Sensible data is required for both the immediate determination of first, indemonstrable principles, and for the prolonged effort at discovering secondary truths. First principles do not, by themselves, yield any truths of particular sciences. Their influence is wide, extending over every particular field of knowledge, but their concrete application requires insight, and insight always has for one of its sources the sensibilia.<sup>201</sup>

### 3.1.3.2 Questions

One of the ways in which intellectual light is indirectly observed is in the activity of asking questions. Intellectual light

is the principle of inquiry and of discourse; man reasons discoursing and inquiring by his intellectual light, which is clouded with temporal continuity because man obtains his knowledge from sense and imagination (V:81).

The variety, frequency, and tenacity of our questions are conditioned by our intellectual development, education, acculturation and socialization, and leisure, as well as by our talents, and interests. Questions vary accordingly, as do their interpretation and thematization. There are practical, theoretical, and philosophical questions: "Why?", "How?", "What?", "How often?", "Really?", "Am I sure?", "Is this worthwhile?", "Should I really do this?", and "Is this truly

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<sup>200</sup>"Hoc esse non potest, quia etiam ipsa principia indemonstrabilia cognoscimus abstrahendo a singularibus . . . Unde oportet praeexistere intellectum agentem habitui principiorum sicut causam ipsius." De Anima, 5, c, ad fin.

<sup>201</sup>"The intellectual light which is man's native endowment is an over-all faculty, a ranging power, a general capacity, a universal force by which man may learn all that is to be learned in the natural field; however, it is not determinate knowledge. Now first principles, the instruments of this light, share in its virtus; that is to say, they have something of its range, something of its power, something of its activity. However, they also share in its deficiencies, for they are not fully determinate knowledge, but instruments by which to reach it." Fred Crowe, "Universal Norms and the Concrete Operabile in St. Thomas Aquinas," p. 147.

good?". While situated by the manifold conditions mentioned above, there is a certain unquestionability to questions:

Spontaneously I fall victim to the wonder that Aristotle named the beginning of all science and philosophy. I try to understand. I enter, without questioning, the dynamic state that is revealed in questions from intelligence.... I can question everything else, but to question questioning is self-destructive. I might call upon intelligence for the conception of a plan to escape intelligence, but the effort to escape would only reveal my present involvement and, strangely enough, I would want to go about the business intelligently and I would want to claim that escaping was the intelligent thing to do.<sup>202</sup>

In order to see I need only open my eyes; but in order genuinely to ask a question it must first occur to me, or to someone else and genuinely be embraced by me. In other words, questions cannot simply be willed to happen, like opening a door or answering the phone. Just as sentire and intelligere are a pati of sense and intellect respectively, so are questions initially instances of pati -- a non-manipulable motion suffered or undergone rather than willed.

Of course there are what we could call "loaded questions," like "Have you stopped pampering your students?" There are rhetorical questions, ambiguous questions, even questions that have no intelligent answer, such as "What is the fractional measure of the diagonal of the square?" or "Why did he or she do wrong?" But we would not be able to classify questions as either "loaded," "rhetorical," or "ambiguous" unless we also had at least incipient knowledge of honest, unambiguous questions.

In addition to there being tainted questions, we avoid embracing questions whose answer might demand an unwelcome change of behavior. Knowing I am not able to live up to certain standards, or fearing that the answer might challenge my outlook and behavior, I brush the questions aside.<sup>203</sup> Genuinely to embrace and live a question or set of questions is a decision to

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<sup>202</sup>(I:330) The spontaneity and unmanipulability of genuine questions is why Lonergan writes they are "a priori, and they alone are a priori." "Mission and Spirit," 3C:28-29.

<sup>203</sup>"Now to ask whether theology is a praxis ... is not to ask whether the views of Kant or

join in and be challenged and possibly changed by a personal, interpersonal, and ultimately trans-personal conversation:

The question why pushes out to demand a framework within which even the studied opinion of an expert can be assessed. It is no respecter of persons; rather it seeks a ground which can be shared in common but does not require the support of anyone--expert or group--for it can establish itself.<sup>204</sup>

It is also to live, perhaps for many months or years, without having an adequate, fleshy solution (both the dynamic orientation and the moments of breakthrough are organic, though not reductively so). They are experienced whenever we are perplexed, doubtful, discerning, or inquiring as to what is so and what should be done, as well as when we understand, resolve the problem, make the wise choice. Human development is not that of a disembodied, thinking mind. Thus, "the initiative of development may be organic, psychic, intellectual, or external, [but] the development remains fragmentary until the principle of correspondence between different levels is satisfied."<sup>205</sup> In all cases, however, questions function as a principle of both movement and rest that mediate between the strangely different types of knowing:

Aristotle defined a nature as an immanent principle of movement and of rest. In man such a principle is the human spirit as raising and answering questions. As raising questions, it is an immanent principle of movement. As answering questions and doing

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Schopenhauer, Kierkegaard or Newman, Nietzsche or Blondel, Ricoeur or Habermas are to be made normative in theology. On the contrary, it is to ask a general question and a rather technical one. It is to ask whether there are basic theological questions whose solution depends on the personal development of theologians." "Theology and Praxis," 3C:185.

<sup>204</sup>Burrell, David B., "What the Dialogues Show About Inquiry," p. 110.

<sup>205</sup>(I:471). A similar point is made by Thomas Gilby OP: "The mind, says Thomas, is entire in every part of the body, and it philosophizes best when the heart is knowing and the head is loving." Phoenix and Turtle. The Unity of Knowing and Being, p. 103.

so satisfactorily, it is an immanent principle of rest.<sup>206</sup>

Aquinas argued against the Averroists that agent intellect was immanent, but apparently never debated whether intellectual light was immanent or transcendent (V:79). An intellectual light that illuminates the phantasm when curiosity is excited is a personal possession, and the relation of this light to specific intelligible forms is an undetermined cause to a determined effect. Since intellectual light enters within the range of our experience as the principle of inquiry and discourse, it is potentially knowable. In other words, questions themselves can be intended and questioned.<sup>207</sup>

To wonder about wonder is to begin to seek knowledge of intellectual light by intellectual light. In attaining personal knowledge of intellectual light as manifested in first principles and as the source of inquiry, we are also in a better position to differentiate sensitive and intellectual knowing. We are beginning to address the psychological problem at its source: the confusing existence of two distinct kinds of knowing. Part of the confusion is that if intellectual knowing is not primarily confrontation but identity between knower and known, how is anything ever known as being other?

### 3.2 Knowledge of the Other: Direct Understanding and Judgment

Aquinas contrasts the Aristotelian position on knowing as identity and the Platonic position on knowing as contact between intellect and intelligible.<sup>208</sup> For Plato there exists contact

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<sup>206</sup>Lonergan, "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness," 3C:172. See also Fred E. Crowe, "Neither Jew nor Greek, but One Human Nature and Operation in All."

<sup>207</sup>"It is one thing to wonder about sensible objects: it is quite another to wonder about intellectual wonder itself. Only in this second case does our own intentio entis intendens fall under our own intentio entis intendens; and only then is it considered sub ratione entis." CAS:I68.

<sup>208</sup>SCG II, 98.

between the intellect and the intelligible. Thus knowing is not, primarily, identity, but duality or confrontation. The advantage of this position is that it can account for knowing some other.

Aristotle holds that understanding occurs when there is an actual identity of the thing understood and intellect actually understanding and Aquinas agrees:

In operations that remain in the operator, the object signified as the term of operation, resides in the operator; and accordingly as it is in the operator, the operation is actual. Hence the Philosopher says (De Anima iii), that "the sensible in act is sense in act, and the intelligible in act is intellect in act." For this reason why we actually feel or know a thing is because our intellect or sense is actually informed by the sensible or intelligible species.<sup>209</sup>

Here the emphasis is upon perfection, and as long as faculty and object are in act identically, there is knowledge. With the claim that knowing is by identity, the problem is how to provide for knowledge of the other. For if the act of the sensible is the act of sensation and if the act of the intelligible is the act of (direct or reflective) understanding, still the act of the thing as real is not identical with knowing it. Identity of these acts does not ensure an identity of potencies. Knowing by identity involves perfection of some faculty, but it is not yet knowledge of the other.

If the very logic of the Aristotelian position makes it clear that our knowledge of forms, whether sensible or intelligible, can be accounted for by identity, still the same logic forces the conclusion that our knowledge of essence and of existence has to be differently grounded. (V:72)

Aquinas encountered the limits of the Aristotelian theory of knowledge by identity in establishing how God could know anything distinct from the divine essence. The solution was to appeal to the inner word which mediates between actual identity of intelligible forms and understanding, on the one hand, and knowledge of essence and existence, on the other. It is in conceiving and judging that one grasps the difference. These acts (conceiving and judging) are

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<sup>209</sup>ST I, q. 14, a. 2, c.

not acts of understanding an illuminated phantasm, but acts of understanding as conceiving (intelligere qua dicere), generating an inner word (verbum). These processes are analogous to the existence of many ideas in the simple, Divine mind.

[I]n the divine mind there are the proper ideas of all things. Hence Augustine says, "that each thing was created by God according to the idea proper to it," from which it follows that in the divine mind ideas are many.<sup>210</sup>

The analogy is between the many ideas in the Divine mind and the two processes in which there is intelligent production. First, reflection moves beyond identity to combine sensible data with the direct understanding in the expression of an essence, and secondly, on another level, to generate a judgment, or to affirm that essence has existence.

Only by reflection on the identity of act can one arrive at the difference in potency. And since reflection is not an identity, the Aristotelian theory of knowledge by identity is incomplete. Hence to the Aristotelian theorem of knowledge by immateriality Aquinas had to add a further theorem of knowledge by intentionality (V:72).<sup>211</sup>

In Aquinas' theory of knowledge by intentionality, the process from identity to conception and affirmation are differentiated by two fundamentally different types of inner words. Reflection upon the light of the mind as principle of inquiry reveals two distinct types of questions intending two distinct types of inner words, namely, the definition and the judgment.<sup>212</sup>

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<sup>210</sup>ST I, q. 15, a. 2, c. See also DV, q. 3, a. 2; SCG I, 53. The divine essence can be known as it is in itself; but it can also be known according to various modes. Divine simplicity is compatible with multiplicity of ideas. Distinctions between creatures are not accidental but intentional, and so "intelligible characters proper to individual things exist in God and that for this reason there are in Him many ideas." DV q. 3, a. 2, c.

<sup>211</sup>The difference between knowledge by immaterial identity and knowledge by intention "appears clearly in the case of one immaterial angel knowing another immaterial angel without the former's knowledge being the latter's reality" (V:72, note #115). Cf. ST I, q. 56, a. 2, ad 3m.

<sup>212</sup>Lonergan cites the following where Aquinas divides inner words into the two classes of definition and judgment: DV, q. 4, a. 2, c; q. 3, a. 2, c; DP q. 8, a. 1, c.



Both acts of understanding have their instrumental or material causes, but the direct act has this cause in a schematic image or phantasm, while the reflective act reviews not only imagination but also sense experience, and direct acts of understanding, and definitions, to find in all taken together the sufficient ground or evidence for a judgment. (V:47)

Both types of inner word proceed from an intelligere and are mediated by wonder. Both processions are intelligently conscious, though with different "self-tastes." The difference in the product indicates two distinct sources: the intelligere whence proceeds the definition is a direct act of understanding, whereas the intelligere from which the judgment proceeds is a reflective and critical act of understanding that Lonergan likens to the act of Newman's illative sense (V:47).<sup>213</sup>

Each type of inner word proceeds from intelligent acts that are conscious processions, and both acts have their principal cause in the agent intellect. In both cases acts of understanding are related to questions; and in both there are intelligible emanations -- inner words proceeding actus ex actu. In neither case is there freedom from the flux of the sensible and the imaginable. To define is an expression both by and of an insight into a phantasm. To judge is an expression both by and of a reflective act. In each case "by" indicates that the procession is a processio operati, a production in which intelligence in act produces an inner word that is not a perfection of intelligence. "Of," on the other hand, indicates that this production involves the unique causality of rational consciousness, i.e. the procession is a processio intelligibilis.<sup>214</sup>

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<sup>213</sup>At an early age Lonergan had been much inspired by Newman's An Essay in aid of a Grammar of Assent. He read it six times as a young philosopher, and though he does not quote Newman at length or attempt a summary of his doctrine, his influence upon Lonergan is unquestionable. Lonergan remarked in 1958 in the Halifax lectures: "My philosophic development was from Newman to Augustine, from Augustine to Plato, and then I was introduced to Thomism ..." UB:350. Years later Lonergan would remark: "I had become something of an existentialist from my study of Newman's A Grammar of Assent." "Insight Revisited," 2C:276.

<sup>214</sup>The difference between the two aspects -- "caused by" and "because of" -- has been discussed in Chapter One, Section 2.

In us inner word proceeds from an act of understanding by a "processio intelligibilis" that also is a "processio operati," for our inner word and act of understanding are two absolute entities really distinct. (V:200)<sup>215</sup>

The difference in ground whence proceed the two distinct words is this: agent intellect as spirit of wonder illuminates the phantasm in which is grasped an intelligible species in direct acts of understanding. The prototype question is "Quid sit?", which intends a definition or some possibly relevant hypothesis. Agent intellect as spirit of critical inquiry, on the other hand, seeks sufficient evidence for making a judgment. In this case the prototype question is "An sit?" which intends rationally known truth. So while the expression of direct understanding is the definition of the intelligibility of a phantasm, the term of critical inquiry is the generation of an expression of consciously known truth. The two expressions are related, but it is only in the second of the two that the real is known (i.e. known sub ratione entis, quidditatis, et veri).

### 3.2.1 Direct Understanding

As simply seeking (direct) understanding of intelligibilities, one is open, flexible, exuberant, playful. Excess is initially welcomed, as is evident in working on a crossword puzzle or reading a good mystery novel. At the beginning of a murder mystery there is a vast array of clues, possible motives, and possible scenarios. The involved reader asks "What happened?", "How did it happen?", "What are possible motives?". As insights emerge, accumulate, and coalesce, so too do possible answers to these questions. To narrow the possible solutions down too early might preclude hitting upon a solution. It is to let the critical exigence of reflective understanding dominate the exigence of direct understanding.

The possible solutions are not had without a phantasm, and in some cases the insight

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<sup>215</sup>By contrast, the divine Word proceeds by a processio intelligibilis that is not a processio operati "at least inasmuch as divine understanding and divine Word are not two absolute entities really distinct" (V:200).

seemingly leaps forth from the appropriate image. To take a geometric example, in grasping the primary definition of circle "one sees the curve, the radii, their equality, ... by one's eyes or imagination; one cannot know them in any other way" (V: 27). In order to understand, as a matter of fact, we form images in which is found the solution. Still, this does not make insight a species of sensation or imagination. The solution or definition is beyond sense and imagination, and it is not a priori.<sup>216</sup> Grasping the possibility of uniform curvature, and the necessary and essential conditions for there to be uniform curvature, are not seen with one's eyes, but "seen" (i.e. known) in the actual occurrence of insight into the phantasm.

In Plato's Meno Socrates tries to establish a theory of anamnesis or recollection by summoning an uneducated boy and having him discover on his own how to double a square. After doubling the legs of the square to create a square four times the original, the boy finally stumbles upon the diagonal of the original square and is able to construct one double the size of the original. He does not know Pythagoras' discovery that the square of the diagonal is equal to the sum of the square of the two sides, but stumbles across it with the help of Socrates' questions that lead him along.

We do not have to agree with what Socrates concludes -- that the boy must have had the idea prior to the questions and prior to the image (diagram). This is simply an example of insight into phantasm mediated by inquiry -- the boy really took up the questions.

In terms of our discussion above, what has happened is that from an act of understanding, and because of this act of understanding, a word (verbum) is conceived. The one understanding is expressing or conceiving (intelligere as dicere) and what he produces is not a further illumination of phantasm but an inner word (verbum), a definition, a hypothesis. This

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<sup>216</sup>"In Kant there is no talk of insight, but only of the concept, the image, and the concept governing the image. Kant's synthetic a priori presupposes that the insight already exists and that the concepts are already formed." UB:35.

inner expression is a "pivoting" of intelligence. As previously noted, the outer expression is dependent upon the inner expression for its meaning, but this in no way precludes our ability simply to memorize or mimic a definition, a set of terms, or a socially acceptable philosophical (or other) jargon.

Though the inner word proceeds as soon as one understands, this is obviously not the case with outer words. It might take some time to articulate or spell out what one is understanding. At times the outer expressions lag, or are inadequate. We are at a loss for words. Sometimes this reveals either a failure to understand, or a partial understanding of a vast web of related questions. In any case, up to this point these are simply possibly relevant hypotheses. There remains the further question "Given these various possibilities, what actually happened?"

### 3.2.2 Reflective Understanding

As seeking reflective understanding, one might well be shrewd, parsimonious, and/or critical in order to attain closure, evidence to support positing either this or that, or if certitude is out of the question, evidence for affirming this with some greater degree of certitude than its alternatives. Once again, the process is mediated by one or other question: "Did this happen or not?", "Did he or did he not commit this crime?", "Was he or was he not insane?", "Is she or is she not the one for this job?", "Is this new square really twice the original?".

The difference in the grounds for the two types of inner words can be seen, for example, in the following questions: (1) "Why does my engine rattle and why do my brakes squeak?" and (2) "Do I really need new brakes and an overhaul?". There are many ways the first question might be answered. It is a question that intends a direct act of understanding, something that makes sense out of the phenomena. The second question intends a "yes" or "no" answer -- if the brakes are shot, they are shot.

Since there are different types of question -- some intending a definition, an explanation,

or grasp of the quod quid est, others intending judgment, affirmation, or negation -- what is "actually known" might refer to what is known sub ratione quidditatis or sub ratione entis.<sup>217</sup> Aquinas relates knowing in the full sense to procession in the intellect, not in the will:

[T]he De Veritate argues that there is a processio operati in the intellect, though not in the will, on the ground that "bonum et malum sunt in rebus, sed verum et falsum sunt in mente." This clearly supposes that the judgment is an inner word, for only in the judgments is there truth or falsity. (V:4)<sup>218</sup>

Loneragan notes that Aquinas related judgment to agent intellect in his independent writings, not in his commentary on De Anima, and writes that "this relation of intellectual light to judgment goes beyond the Aristotelian theory of agent intellect"

(V:83). Aquinas both shared Augustine's solicitude for veritas and "adapted Aristotle to his purpose ... reaching a refinement in his account of ... emanatio intelligibilis -- that made explicit what Augustine could only suggest." (V:xiii) Lonergan concedes that Aquinas added existence, the actus essendi, to Aristotle's ontological causes. He adds that corresponding to this ontological cause is a psychological cause, the conscious act of judgment of existence, a real assent in which judgment is not only caused by but also because of a reflective act of understanding. Some claim that Lonergan's discovery of the verbum of judgment, though neither more nor less adequate as an analogy to the proceeding Word, is more significant than his retrieval of the first proceeding word.<sup>219</sup>

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<sup>217</sup>To avoid confusing the different senses of "knowing," I will distinguish "knowing" in a loose or generic sense, and knowing in a strict or specific sense of a set of related activities culminating in the inner word of judgment. See Section 4 below -- "A Functional Definition of Knowing."

<sup>218</sup>Reference is to DV, q. 4, a. 2 ad 7m.

<sup>219</sup>Pat Byrne writes: "By a masterful phenomenological hermeneutic, Lonergan discovered that in Aquinas one must distinguish and relate two types of processions, which provide the ground for parallel distinctions between two types of intelligere and two types of verbum -- concept and

### 3.2.3 Composition or Division

Compositio vel divisio is the name for the second type of inner word. Since a conjunction of written or spoken words (outer words) expresses a judgment, it might appear that linguistic words correspond to inner words and that the inner word of judgment is the synthesis of inner words. From here one explains judgment as something basically having to do with putting together or distinguishing concepts. This position, Lonergan claims, belongs more to Scotus than Aquinas, and the problems attendant on this position have plagued many other philosophers, including Kant. Lonergan claims that for Aquinas the primary concern of judgment is the truth of some composition or judgment. Truth is not just a synthesis as synthesis, but the veracity of the synthesis; not just a conjunction of words but a relationship or correspondence between inner words and the reality, between mental synthesis and real synthesis:

While the direct act of understanding generates in definition the expression of the intelligibility of a phantasm, the reflective act generates in judgment the expression of consciously possessed truth through which reality is both known and known to be known. (V:47-48)

The statement "I am tired" is a claim or judgment about what is so. As linguistically expressed, it is a combination of English words, each word with a possible range of meanings. But any combination of linguistic words will not do, for linguistic compounds might also express questions, hypotheses, conjectures. What constitutes the difference between these utterances: "I am tired?" and "I am tired!"? Something more is needed to make the second utterance that goes beyond what is needed to make the first. In the second, in which reality is "both known and

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judgment. In some ways, Lonergan's discovery of this distinction and relation is even more important than his discovery of the act of insight itself." "The Fabric of Lonergan's Thought," p. 49.

known to be known," a reflective understanding of the data rationally and therefore consciously generates a second word. That "I am tired" is known (sub ratione experti), i.e., "known to be known by the basic and essential rationality of rational consciousness," or I would not utter these words.

Consciously possessed truth is not, primarily, a relation between inner words. It is the affirmation of a correspondence between the inner words and some reality; and it is not a blind affirmation but a knowledge of truth. So even though in a way truth is in the senses, and in a way truth "is in the intellect knowing what a thing is," the "perfection of the intellect is truth as known."<sup>220</sup> Lonergan observes that in a judgment the terms, synthesis, and act of positing a synthesis can be likened to matter, form, and existence (V:49). The object of judgment is not a mental synthesis but something which assumes synthesis -- positing the correspondence between mental synthesis and realities compounded of essence and existence:

Without such positing there may be synthesis, as in a question or an hypothesis, but as yet there is no judgment. Again, synthesis though not posited, may be true or false, but as yet it is not known to be true or false. (V:49)<sup>221</sup>

In other words, the object is not a synthesis plain and simple, but the veracity of a synthesis known in positing the synthesis. The synthetic aspect of judgment is in the coalescence and development of insights. When before there might have been two separate intelligibilities to be grasped, a new insight grasps a both in higher viewpoint. Though we cannot have many simultaneous acts of understanding, we are able to understand many things through one

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<sup>220</sup>ST I, q. 16, a. 2.

<sup>221</sup>In Insight, pp. 275-276, Lonergan refers to the compositio vel divisio as the "direct borrowed content of judgment"; reflective understanding as the "indirect borrowed content," which links question and answer; and the positing of the compositio vel divisio as affirmed or denied, i.e., as known to be true or false, as the "proper content." "Thus, the proper content of judgment, the 'Yes' or 'No,'" is the final partial increment in the process." p. 276.

(intelligere multa per unum). Complex insights can be expressed by "such baffling abstractions as classicism or romanticism, education, evolution, or the philosophia perennis" (V:58).

The synthetic element of judgment, however, is not the whole of it. Lonergan rejects a purely discursive account of intellect, which "reduces the act of understanding to seeing a nexus between concepts" and is false "not as a point of theory, but as a matter of fact."<sup>222</sup> The fact referred to is the psychological fact of understanding without which humans would be unable to reason. Intellect is indeed discursive, but

without initial and natural acts of understanding, reasoning would never begin; nor would there be profit or term to reasoning, did it not naturally end in an act of understanding in which the multiple elements of the reasoning process come into focus in a single view. (V:58)

The "single view" is really not a physical or mental view at all, but positing a synthesis which differentiates these two utterances: "I am tired!" and "I am tired?". Both utterances are meaningful, and both involve a synthesis of terms. What is posited in the first, however, is neither affirmed nor denied in the second. Thus the key element to judgment is not any one of the terms of the judgment by themselves, nor the synthesis of all the terms alone, but the positing of the synthesis of the terms. Until a synthesis is posited, it is not known to be true or false.<sup>223</sup> Without existential positing "the primary meaning of 'Est,' the affirmation (or negation) of an 'in actu esse,' is not involved" (V:49). The source of positing, or knowing something to be true or false, is the second type of intelligere, reflective understanding:

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<sup>222</sup>Note #122, (V:25-26). In this lengthy footnote Lonergan identifies Scotus and Kant as upholding a purely discursive account of intellect, and asserts a need for study of Scotus' influence: "While M. Gilson has done splendid work on Scotist origins, there is needed an expansion of Scotist influence."

<sup>223</sup>Lonergan, who writes that "a reflective and critical act of understanding [is] not unlike the act of Newman's illative sense," was fond of Newman's remark that "Ten thousand difficulties do not make one doubt."



For no less than the first type of inner word, the second also proceeds from an intelligere. No less than the procession of the first type, the procession of the second is an emanatio intelligibilis. (V:65)<sup>224</sup>

Though sense knowing is true or false, it is not known by sense to be true or false. Likewise, though a concept is either similar or dissimilar to an object, conceptualization does not know the similarity or dissimilarity. It is only with judgment, "only in the production of the second type of inner word, that intellect not merely attains similitude to its object but also reflects upon and judges that similitude." (V:59)<sup>225</sup>

But here we face a problem. How do I judge the similitude between my knowing and the standard? If the standard itself is known, then I am really comparing two known things, which merely multiplies comparisons. But if the standard is not known, then there is no way to compare. Lonergan asserts that Aquinas affirmed a necessary standard that was neither the unknown nor a second item of knowledge, neither some unknown thing-in-itself, nor a second representation:

The Thomist standard lay in the principles of the intellect itself: "nomen mentis dicitur in anima, sicut et nomen intellectus. Solum enim intellectus accipit cognitionem de rebus mensurando eas quasi ad sua principia." (V:60)<sup>226</sup>

Measurement by a standard is the cause of assent. The standard of reflective understanding imposes accountability since assent involves one existentially "as a personal act, committing the

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<sup>224</sup>"The quiddities formed in the intellect, or even the affirmative and negative propositions, are, in a sense, products of the intellect, but products of such a kind that through them the intellect arrives at the knowledge of an exterior thing." DV, q. 3, a. 2, c.

<sup>225</sup>"But the intellect can know its own conformity with the intelligible thing; yet it does not apprehend it by knowing of a thing what a thing is. When, however, it judges that a thing corresponds to the form which it apprehends about that thing, then first it knows and expresses truth." ST I, q. 16, a. 2, c.

<sup>226</sup>The passage Lonergan cites is DV, q. 10, a. 1 c.

person, and a responsibility of the person" (V: 61). Moral fault is not imputed to what goes on in our dreams while we are asleep. To affirm or deny I must be wholly, personally "there." Once the evidence for assent is grasped, the "yes" or "no" of rational judgment proceeds naturally, consciously, and intelligently.

With the procession of the second type of word there is a kind of closure, exemplified in the court of law when all the testimonies have been heard, deliberations have ended, and a verdict is reached. Direct insight is represented in a hypothetical definition or a question which, per se, is neither true nor false. It is untouched by the standard of reflective understanding.

When critically reflecting I am not asking whether I really understand something (direct intelligere), but whether the intelligible species I have understood is indeed the intelligible form of the sensible image. Thus the image, the questions, the direct understanding are drawn upon as means to something beyond themselves. Judgment is not a negation or transcendence of phantasm, question, direct understanding. Rather, it is a return to them, for the sources of judgment are "in sense and intellectual light" or "in sense and in naturally known principles" (V:64-65). Reasoning develops "through a dialectical interplay of sense, memory, imagination, insight, definition, critical reflection, judgment; we bring to bear on the issue all the resources at our command." (V:58) This dialectical interplay, a thumbnail sketch of "critical realism," like "romanticism" and "post-modernism" is also a "baffling abstraction." The obscurity of the interplay is reflected in the variety of empiricist, phenomenalist, idealist, and realist conceptions of human knowing.

To understand the parts of the interplay (e.g. sense, memory, questions, insight, etc.) in themselves and in relation to each other requires what Lonergan calls a "functional definition." As we will see, the advantage of proceeding this way is that it preserves the proper role of each of the parts without reducing the whole to any one of the parts and without identifying one of the parts as the prototype of what the others must be like.

### 3.3 A "Functional Definition" of Knowing

#### 3.3.1 Parts: Knowing in the Loose Sense

In a loose sense, any cognitional activity by itself could be called "knowing." For example, sensitive knowing, or the sensitive integration of sense data, could be called knowing. In the diagram the first box refers to this loose sense of knowing -- sensitive knowing. Rarely, if ever, do we experience pure, unmediated sensitive knowing. Examples would be the "animal behavior" of people fighting or someone sun-bathing without a concern in the world. In any case, objects that are really sensed or imagined, and really "out there" or "in here," as data, are simply cases of sensitive integration.

The second row begins with the occurrence of a question. Since questions are always about inner or outer data, the two mutually define one another in an implicit definition. "Data" are anything that can be wondered about; "questions" illuminate data, transforming it into a potentially intelligible for the one raising the question. The strength in defining implicitly is that the range of the definition extends to all instances of data and all instances of questioning. If "x" can be questioned, then by definition "x" is data. If "y" illumines any "x," then by definition "y" is a question. An implicit definition is thus relational.

Understanding, the next box, leaps forth when the sensible or imaginable data are in the right relation. This suitability is not brought about simply by wondering since insight is conditioned by, but neither caused by nor determined by, our questions. Sometimes questions linger. Often times the insight comes when we are (apparently) away from the problem, focused on something entirely different, taking a walk, or perhaps even sleeping.

The process from question to understanding, represented by the first arrow, is a "processio operationis." The intellect is perfected in understanding, an active reception. The arrow dips down to the first level to show that questions regard data, that insights are into the phantasm, not simply occasioned by them.

This is a first function of understanding (intelligere) -- in response to and dependent upon inquiry, whose occurrence, in turn, is dependent upon some experience. We wonder about what is provided by the flow of sensation, perception, imagination. If the proper object of inquiry was not the quidditas rei materialis, but a subsisting immaterial form, then an active element would be superfluous; such immaterial objects would by themselves be intelligible in act.<sup>227</sup> But since the forms of natural objects do not subsist immaterially, understanding and knowing do not happen spontaneously and immediately, the way seeing does when we open our eyes. The intellectual operations in the intellectual field are related to sensitive operations by "functional complementarity" rather than by similarity.

A second function of understanding is the grasp of form in the sensible, which is related to but even more basic than the grasp of universal in the particular. In the relation of universal to particular, for example of circle to this circle, abstraction occurs. It occurs because the intelligible immanent in the sensed or imagined circle is grasped: "The universal abstracts from the particular, but the intelligibility, grasped by insight, is immanent in the sensible and, when the sensible datum, image, symbol, is removed, the insight vanishes."<sup>228</sup> Here Lonergan is arguing that the link to the concrete is not simply the abstraction of universal from particular. It also includes the conscious and "more intimate" grasp of unity or pattern grasped by insight which makes abstraction possible. As noted in the previous chapter, this involves a complication. Since intelligere proprie is prior to and the cause of conceptualization, and since we can only express through concepts, "any attempt to fix the act of understanding, except by way of introspective description, involves its own partial failure" (V:25). For Aquinas, the primary meaning of the intelligible "was not whatever can be conceived, such as matter, nothing, and sin, but whatever can be known by understanding" (V:I80).

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<sup>227</sup>ST I, q. 79, a. 3.

<sup>228</sup>S:II.

Since phantasms are not the direct object of intellect, what is known by intellect is not phantasm but what is represented, or latent in the phantasm. "[A]ccordingly, insight into phantasm is like looking in, not at, a mirror" (V:163). Aquinas writes of a difference between the ways in which the likeness of a thing are in sense and intellect:

The likeness in sense is abstracted from the thing as from an object of knowledge, and consequently, the thing itself is directly known by means of this likeness. The likeness in the intellect, however, is not abstracted from the phantasm as from an object of knowledge but as from a medium of knowledge -- after the manner in which our sense receives the likeness of a thing which is in a mirror.<sup>229</sup>

A third function of understanding relates to the next arrow in the diagram, which represents a "processio operati." A formulation, definition, or explanation proceeds because of direct understanding. Unlike the emergence of insight, where questions do not directly cause understanding, here there is a direct causal connection. This connection is the causation of intelligent consciousness, or the "basic and essential rationality of rational consciousness," the intellect "pivoting" on itself to speak an inner word because of what it is/has become.

The first box in the third row represents a second type of question, one that intends judgment. Like any question, it occurs to someone before being posed, as opposed to simply being willed. This row is like the second in many ways. First, the questions presuppose data. The intended judgment is not more data, but an affirmation about a relation involving the data. It also presupposes some understanding. The doctor's judgment about the symptoms is different from our own, not because he has better vision (which she or he might not have), but because of a developed medical understanding. His or her judgment involves sensible and visible conditions as well as intelligent appreciation of these conditions. Again, the (reflective) insight is an instance of a processio operationis.

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<sup>229</sup>DV, q. 2, a. 6, c.

The second box in this row, like the second box in the second row, fulfills three functions: (1) response to some question; (2) apprehension of all motives for making a judgment; and (3) grounding an intelligible emanation expressed in the judgment.

That sensation, imagination, questions, understanding, conceiving, and judging are conscious activities is of ultimate significance. Implicit definitions, by themselves, might have any number of referents. The way "point" and "line" are implicitly defined, for example, is purely relational. "Data," "questions," "insight," and "conception" are also defined relationally. But in this case, the terms name events that are conscious, and so their meanings can be mediated by personal appropriation:

A set of basic analogous terms whose meaning develops with the development of the person provides the fruit of self-appropriation, the basis that makes the difference between the plaster cast of a man and the philosopher.<sup>230</sup>

In other words, whatever shorthand one uses for referring to the process of reasoning ("experience," "understanding," "judgment" or "X," "Y," "Z" or "goobly-gip," "goobly-gop," "goobly-gup"), it does not have to have the descriptive meaning that varies from town to town or from one lecture to another. It can be phenomenologically and theoretically specified by a retrieval of what de facto is happening when one is understanding, affirming, speaking, listening.

### 3.3.2 Whole Structure: Knowing in the Strict Sense

In a strict sense, knowing is not any single activity, but a compound of many distinct, irreducible and dissimilar activities that are related by function and complement one another. Any single cognitional operation, considered by itself, is not knowing in the strict sense: "Empiricists have tried to find the ground of objectivity in experience, rationalists have tried to

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<sup>230</sup>UB:55.

place it in necessity, idealists have had recourse to coherence. All are partly right and partly wrong, right in their affirmation, but mistaken in their exclusion."<sup>231</sup>

If any given, single, cognitional activity is not knowing in the strict sense, this does not mean it is a merely immanent event. In the concrete flow of intentional consciousness, single activities are not isolated but related, and they have

the intermediate status of an intentional act: as given, it refers to some other; but the precise nature and validity of that reference remain to be determined; and such determination is reached through the further intentional operations needed to complete the pattern constitutive of full objectivity.<sup>232</sup>

One might ask if there is a part in the whole that grounds an immediate relationship to being. At first it might seem that an immediate realism is grounded in an immediate relationship between sensitive knowing (first level) and "real objects." The question is "What do we mean by 'real objects'?" It is easy to confuse two different objects -- what is known in judgments about understood data and what is already-out-there-now -- and the two different knowings that, when undifferentiated, constitute a "psychological problem." Bodies that are "already-out-there-now-real" and known in sensitive integration are not the same as objects both known and known to be known in rationally conscious judgments about intelligently understood experience.

Our immediate relationship to real objects is neither from sense data, nor data of consciousness, nor acts of direct or reflective acts of understanding. The relationship is immediate in the intention of being and mediate in all other cognitional activities: "The intentio intendens of the subject summons forth and unites cognitional activities to objectify itself in an intentio intenta that unites and is determined by the partial objects of the partial activities."<sup>233</sup>

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<sup>231</sup>CS:212.

<sup>232</sup>"Mission and the Spirit," 3C:28.

<sup>233</sup>CS:212.

The intention (or notion) of being is an active principle manifested in both types of questions intending both types of inner words. It is neither ignorance nor knowledge, but intends the latter.

In the diagram everything after the first box in the bottom row are self-constituting cognitional activities not experienced by non-wondering beings. They are the basic elements of human cognition, and they symbolize what is happening when one is knowing in the strict sense. Empiricists, idealists, and conceptualists are "right in their affirmation," each in their own way getting at one or other part. To identify, understand, and affirm the various parts in their relationships, and not to reduce the whole to any single part or even to a subset of parts, is a personal challenge requiring more than a few days of contemplation. This is why Aquinas writes that knowledge of the mind "requires careful and subtle inquiry . . . many have erred about it."<sup>234</sup>

### 3.3.3 Difficulties in Conceiving the Whole

There are a number of difficulties in conceiving the full structure of human knowing. A first difficulty is that spontaneously we tend to believe that what is meant by the "real" is what is picturable or imaginable, and what I cannot either see or imagine is simply not real. In short, the biological and extroverted criteria of what is real -- i.e. bodies already-out-there -- seem to be adequate. For the "naive realist" and the "idealist" the picture-able world is real and

the original relationship of cognitional activity to the picture is the look; and so it is in looking that the naive realist finds revealed the essence of objectivity, and it is in Anschauung that the critical idealist places the immediate relation of cognitional activity to objects. There exists, then, something like a forgetfulness of being. There exists in

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<sup>234</sup>ST I. q. 87, a. 1, c. In his lecture on the philosophy of education given at Xavier University, Cincinnati in 1959, Lonergan spoke of "the family resemblance between the empiricists, idealists, and realists of ancient Greece, of the Middle Ages, and of our own time. They talk different languages, of course, and there is a far greater subtlety of analysis in the modern philosophers; but the fundamental differences are essentially the same." Topics in Education, p. 95.



man a need for an intellectual conversion ex umbris et imaginibus in veritatem.<sup>235</sup>

In contrast to the picture-able world, the functional definition of an electron, parabola, amoeba, engine, dog, human subject, or some other "thing" specifies an intelligible relation, or a set of relations.<sup>236</sup> Understanding the relation or set of relations proceeds from an intelligent grasp of the intelligible form apprehended in the phantasm but not as it exists in the phantasm. The relation or set of relations grasped in the phantasm is not imaginable, even though these relations (e.g., "is equal to" or "is similar to") evoke certain images.

A second difficulty with thinking "functionally" about human knowing is that even when one grasps that it is a complex activity made up of many parts, the parts do not resemble one another. To take one part, usually physical or mental seeing, as prototype, and infer that other activities are or must be like this one, is the easy but inaccurate way:

It follows that a study of human knowing cannot safely follow the broad and downhill path of analogy. It will not do, for instance, to scrutinize ocular vision and then assume that other cognitional activities must be the same sort of thing. They may turn out to be quite different and so, if one is to proceed scientifically, each cognitional activity must be examined in and for itself and, no less, in its functional relations to other cognitional activities.<sup>237</sup>

Though dynamically and intentionally related, not all acts resemble one another, which is the reason for defining functionally. Sensing, imagining, questioning, understanding, conceiving,

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<sup>235</sup>CS:218-219.

<sup>236</sup>The word "thing" takes on a technical meaning in Lonergan's Insight. "As the electron, so also the tree, in so far as it is considered as a thing itself, stands within a pattern of intelligible relations and offers no foothold for imagination. The difference between the tree and the electron is simply that the tree, besides being explained, also can be observed and described, while the electron, though it can be explained, cannot be directly observed and can be described adequately only in terms of observables that involve other things as well" (I:250).

<sup>237</sup>CS:208.

reflecting and affirming each contributes to objective knowing. But "intellectual operations have their objectivity, not because they resemble ocular vision, but because they are what ocular vision never is, namely intelligent and rational."<sup>238</sup>

A third difficulty is that not only are the parts different, but they are not equally accessible. Sensitive and imaginative integration is most abundant; the occurrence of direct understanding less so; and judgments are the rarest. To experience seeing it is enough to open my eyes in light. To experience direct or reflective understanding something more is needed; I have to be engaged in learning something, anything. It requires the occurrence of lived questions and self-attention to spiritual activity.<sup>239</sup> Lonergan describes this as

(1) the authenticity that is ready to get down to the elements of a subject, (2) close attention to instances of one's own understanding and, equally, one's failing to understand, and (3) the repeated use of personal experiments in which, at first, one is genuinely puzzled and then catches on.<sup>240</sup>

Someone might object to the use of personal experiments, not in favor of impersonal experiments, but in opposition to the idea of experimenting at all. Intellectual exercise might be construed as some kind of technique or experiment.<sup>241</sup> This charge, however, does not extend to Lonergan's

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<sup>238</sup>CS:218.

<sup>239</sup>"Spiritual activity" is defined as that which is both intelligible and intelligent. Cf. Insight, pp. 516-520.

<sup>240</sup>CS:209. As Kierkegaard questioned whether those desiring to "go beyond" faith had even reached a faith to go beyond, one might wonder whether the post-modern mood in philosophy encourages the attempt to go beyond or "deconstruct" reason without a Zen-like, practical retrieval of the hypothesis of intelligible emanations.

<sup>241</sup>Richard Rohr describes the ultimately shallow attempts to uncover a personal, psychological replacement for transcendent reality during the 1960's: "Almost overnight the subjective self became objective truth. It was the unassailable 'ground of being' which could not be questioned or left unaffirmed, at least in enlightened circles.... Our search for the permanent, the transpersonal, the civic, and the global was no longer much of a search. We had discovered personal existence, and questions of essence seemed boring." "Why Does Psychology Always

appeal to personal experiments, nor to Aquinas' appropriation of psychological facts central to his psychology. Aquinas' theory of intelligible procession is really quite Socratic and artistic. As the source of inquiry, discourse, and conversation, intellectual light is at the heart of the Socratic "method," which is neither technique nor recipe but an attitude or disposition of openness to and acceptance of the known unknown, the docta ignorantia, that is present in any genuine inquiry or dialogue. Guthrie writes: "To be a Socratic is not to follow any system of philosophical doctrine. It implies first and foremost an attitude of mind, an intellectual humility easily mistaken for arrogance . . . ." <sup>242</sup> The Socratic attitude of mind is much closer to art than it is to technique or "method" in the sense of a set of rules for obtaining a definitive and comprehensive system. Aquinas likens intellectus agens to Aristotle's nous poetikos, and Lonergan writes of the artistry present in the illumination of the phantasm:

Perhaps, agent intellect is to be given the function of the subconscious effect of ordering the phantasm to bring about the right schematic image that releases the flash of understanding; for agent intellect is to phantasm, as art is to artificial product (V:81).

The Socratic attitude I am describing is compatible with Gödel's post-systematic discovery in mathematics that a set of definitions and postulates gives rise to questions that cannot be answered on the basis of those same definitions and postulates, thus pointing out the limitations of axiomatic systems and the exigence for a post-systematic mediation of meaning.<sup>243</sup>

Personal experiments are Socratic if indeed I am genuinely puzzled and am willing to live in the tension of knowing and not knowing, i.e., living a question or set of questions that may

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Win?" p. 11.

<sup>242</sup>W.K.C. Guthrie, Socrates, pp. 127 & 129.

<sup>243</sup>Gerald McCool makes this observation regarding the possibility of a single perennial Thomist system in theology. See From Unity to Pluralism, pp. 200-230.

linger for years.<sup>244</sup> The mood of living a question, of striving not so much for the finish line as for a place to begin, is captured in a letter Husserl wrote to Brentano:

How I would like to live on the heights. For this all my thinking craves for. But shall I ever work my way upwards, if only for a little, so that I can gain something of a free distant view? I am now forty-five years old, and I am still a miserable beginner.<sup>245</sup>

The essential benefit of repeated personal experiments is the appropriation of a personal and unassailable ground that sublates Husserl's miserable beginning and is, finally, independent of what Aquinas, Lonergan or any other philosopher might have to say about it.<sup>246</sup>

### 3.4 The Critical Problem

#### 3.4.1 Psychological and Theoretical

In 1933, while reading Augustine's *Cassiciacum* dialogues, the young Lonergan was struck by Augustine's practice of introspection and his gradual realization that God could be better understood on the analogy of spirit than matter. Still earlier, in the 1920's, Lonergan had developed an admiration for Newman's philosophy. In particular, Newman's emphasis on verification struck him as down-to-earth and common sensical, and confirmed that philosophy requires personal involvement. Newman writes of self-knowledge in A Grammar of Assent: "In

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<sup>244</sup>One of Lonergan's years-long lived question was how to introduce history into Catholic theology: "All my work has been introducing history into Catholic theology." Curiosity at the Center of One's Life: Statement and Questions of R. Eric O'Connor, p. 427.

<sup>245</sup>Quoted in H. Spiegelberg, The Phenomenological Movement, Vol. I, The Hague, 1965, p. 89.

<sup>246</sup>"[O]ne can find out for oneself and in oneself just what one's conscious and intentional operations are and how they are related to one another. One can discover for oneself and in oneself why it is that performing such and such operations in such and such manners constitutes human knowing. Once one has achieved that, one is no longer dependent on someone else in selecting one's method and in carrying it out. One is on one's own." (MiT,344)

these provinces of inquiry egotism is true modesty."<sup>247</sup>

In later writings Lonergan points to Augustine, Newman, and Pascal as gifted and insightful philosophers, thinking and writing within the horizon of common sense, "contribut[ing] enormously to our understanding of ourselves" (MT:261). Aquinas differs from these three in his appreciation and implementation of Aristotle's technical metaphysics, which adds precision to the problem of self-knowledge. His trinitarian speculations combine introspective psychology with the precision of Aristotelian science.<sup>248</sup>

The Augustinian and Aristotelian influences on Aquinas differ in kind, not just in degree. The difference is analogous to the difference between phenomenologically describing the thrill of parachuting and understanding the physics of free-fall. Neither is "better," but a great deal of muddle is avoided in differentiating the two.<sup>249</sup>

One of the benefits of a phenomenological and theoretical approach that combines reflection on the conscious subject with a theoretical exigency for mutually defining terms and relations is the purification of metaphysics:

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<sup>247</sup>John Henry Newman, *A Grammar of Assent*, p. 384.

<sup>248</sup>Lonergan writes of medieval thinkers following in Aquinas's footsteps: "The Thomists were quoting Aristotle in the same way they were quoting Augustine, except that they quoted Aristotle more frequently. But Aristotle was serving quite a different purpose than Augustine. He was supplying them with the means of having a coherent set of solutions when they were solving questions. He was supplying them with what is called a conceptuality, a *Begrifflichkeit*--in other words a set of terms and relations where the terms fix the relations and the relations fix the terms and the whole set is verifiable." "Questionnaire on Philosophy," p. 13.

<sup>249</sup>In an interview Lonergan remarks on Augustine's perspicacity: "Augustine was a person who knew the human soul in an extraordinary way. He knows more about consciousness than Thomas does. But he was not a technical theologian." *Curiosity at the Center of One's Life* pp. 403-404. An appreciation for the difference between a phenomenology of knowing and a theoretic grasp of knowing as a structure is vital for a differentiated consciousness in which "the workings of common sense, science, scholarship, intentionality analysis, and the life of prayer have been integrated." "Unity and Plurality" 3C:247.

The point to making metaphysical terms and relations not basic but derived is that a critical metaphysics results. For every term and relation there will exist a corresponding element in intentional consciousness. Accordingly, empty or misleading terms and relations can be eliminated, while valid ones can be elucidated by the conscious intention from which they are derived. (MT:343)

A second benefit is that one is able to proceed phenomenologically without bracketing existence or skirting epistemological or ethical issues. When the difficulty in returning from suspended judgment in an epoche becomes an impossibility in returning to judgment, then an analysis of grasping the virtually unconditioned in reflective rationality becomes impossible.<sup>250</sup> With the help of Aquinas' theory of intelligible emanation, Lonergan achieves a full-blown phenomenology that does not terminate at describing the pre-conceptual nor privilege an undifferentiated Lebenswelt. His analysis does not end with what is pre-predicative but illuminates the dynamics of human knowing by including reflection on the conscious acts of the existential subject and a theorem of intelligible emanation.

### 3.4.2 Seizing the Difference Between Subject and Object

If there is a critical problem in philosophy, it is how the human mind is proportionate to knowledge of reality. Lonergan states the critical problem in these words:

The critical problem is not a problem of moving from within outward, of moving from a subject to an object outside the subject. It is a problem of moving from above downwards, of moving from an infinite potentiality commensurate with the universe towards a rational apprehension that seizes the difference of subject and object in essentially the same way that it seizes any other real distinction. (V:88)

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<sup>250</sup>In his notes for a course on Existentialism at Boston College in July 1957 Lonergan writes that an attempt to seek an immovable ground in what is immediately evident, primarily given, epoche "is involved in a confusion of 'animal faith' with 'rational judgment.'" NE:13.

Though he employs a spatial metaphor, what Lonergan means by "movement from above downwards" is "philosophical movement," not physical movement, "spirobics" not aerobics. If conscious acts are a perfection within being, and not outside or in opposition to being, then the problem is not a matter of a human subject confronting an object or a subject confronting a subject. The critical problem is a movement of understanding understanding and judging judging, a movement in which there is first identity of knower and known before knowledge of the known in and through a procession of concepts and judgments about the known, and a movement which shares the same essential structure as understanding and judging anything. "We know by what we are; we know we know by knowing what we are" (V:88).

In Aquinas' notion of intellect reflecting upon itself in knowing what is true, this intellectual awareness of truth, or the intellectual awareness of being proportionate to knowing what is real, there is an inchoate epistemology. In De Veritate Aquinas distinguishes sensitive and intellectual knowing by the completeness of their respective returns. Truth is in the sense but not as known by sense, whereas truth is in the intellect as known by the knower:

[T]he most perfect beings, such as, for example, intellectual substances, return to their essence with a complete return: knowing something external to themselves, in a certain sense they go outside of themselves; but by knowing that they know, they are already beginning to return to themselves, because the act of cognition mediates between the knower and the thing known. That return is completed inasmuch as they know their own essences.<sup>251</sup>

Sensitive knowing is aware, but not rationally aware. As discussed in Section I, this does not mean sensitive knowing is untrue or unconscious. It does mean that sensitive knowing is not rationally conscious, not aware of its own proportion to what is real. Acts of sensing and imagining are not intelligible emanations.

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<sup>251</sup>DV, q. I, a. 9, c.

Reflective acts of understanding are rationally conscious, i.e., acts that are aware of themselves as proportionate. Aquinas writes:

Truth is known by the intellect in view of the fact that the intellect reflects upon its own act -- not merely as knowing its own act, but as knowing the proportion of its act to the thing. Now, this proportion cannot be known without knowing the nature of the act; and the nature of the act cannot be known without knowing the nature of the active principle, that is, the intellect itself, to whose nature it belongs to be conformed to things. Consequently, it is because the intellect reflects upon itself that it knows truth.<sup>252</sup>

The intellectual self-reflection Aquinas writes of here is what Lonergan means by rational consciousness that is not simply sufficient ground for speaking an inner word but a known sufficient ground. Still, the knowing is not knowing in the strict sense of affirming what is understood about experienced inner and outer data. Not in all, or even most, instances do we humans reflectively notice the proportion about which Aquinas writes. We know it consciously, or sub ratione experti. "Intellectual reflection" is the "basic and essential rationality of rational consciousness" (V:34), and precisely because it is conscious such reflection is an opening to a fuller self-reflection in which the proportion of intelligence to the real is known sub ratione entis et veri. By reflecting on the nature of intellect in act, i.e., as known in rationally conscious acts, we are able to know our capacity for knowledge of what is real. Lonergan finds in Aquinas "more than an embryonic epistemology," one "that is apt to find little echo in the modern mind" (V:87).<sup>253</sup>

The critical problem is not how we know what is other, after first knowing our own essence. Rather it is understanding and affirming the difference between what Aquinas means by

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<sup>252</sup>DV, q. I, a. 9, c.

<sup>253</sup>"Just as Thomist thought is an ontology of knowledge inasmuch as intellectual light is referred to its origin in uncreated Light, so too it is more than an embryonic epistemology inasmuch as intellectual light reflectively grasps its own nature and the commensuration of that nature to the universe of reality" (V:87).



"incomplete returns" and "complete returns."<sup>254</sup> But since affirming this difference is itself an instance of a complete return that occurs consciously, such an affirmation is a complete return upon a complete return. It is a duplication of reason, and it does not happen automatically or spontaneously, the way ice melts when heated: "[T]he mere fact that one is understanding something, does not make it inevitable that one reflexively directs one's attention to the intellectual light involved in the act." (V:79) In knowing x, y, or z one becomes an intelligent actuation of the form in the phantasm. In other words, we know by what we are or have become. Ordinarily this fact is transparent; we do not reflect upon or even know that this is happening. A duplication occurs is a two-fold procession of inner words of conception and judgment about the two-fold procession of inner words of conception and judgment. "We know we know by knowing what we are" (V:88).<sup>255</sup> The procession of the judgment which grasps the sufficient evidence for asserting that "Complete returns are" is unique.<sup>256</sup> And one need not be explicitly concerned with "epistemology" or "metaphysics" as object to grasp evidence for making this judgment.<sup>257</sup>

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<sup>254</sup>In Insight, Lonergan writes that the problem is one of distinction, not elimination: "The problem set by the two types of knowing is, then, not a problem of elimination but a problem of critical distinction. For the difficulty lies, not in either type of knowing by itself, but in the confusion that arises when one shifts unconsciously from one type to the other. Animals have no epistemological problems" (I:253).

<sup>255</sup>"We know by what we are; we know we know by knowing what we are; and since even the knowing in "knowing what we are" is by what we are, rational reflection on ourselves is a duplication of ourselves" (V:88-89).

<sup>256</sup>While all intelligible emanations are analogous to Divine procession, this verbum is unique in that there is an identity of speaking and what is spoken. "[I]n the measure one grasps the character and implication of the act by which intellectual light reflects by intellectual light upon intellectual light to understand itself and pronounce its universal validity, in that measure one grasps one of the two outstanding analogies to the procession of an infinite Word from an infinite Understanding" (V:87). This judgment appears in Chapter XI of Insight - "Self-Affirmation of the Knower."

<sup>257</sup>In Insight Lonergan writes of "upper" and "lower contexts": "Let us say that this noetic

The possibility of this duplication, of "seiz[ing] the difference between subject and objects," hinges upon the presence of an object and the fundamental presence of the conscious existential subject. In his notes on existentialism Lonergan describes this radical presence of subject "not as presented to himself in any theorem or affirmation of consciousness, but as the prior prerequisite to a presentation, as the a priori condition of possibility for any stream of consciousness (including dreams)."<sup>258</sup>

### 3.4.3 "Our Course is in the Night"

The "return upon returns" in the judgment of self-affirmation might sound similar to the terminus of Hegel's dialectic. How does the self-knowledge Lonergan finds in Aquinas compare to the self-knowledge found at the terminus of Hegel's dialectic?

For Lonergan, self-knowledge is an affirmation that has conditions, but it does not demand an infinite grasp of all conditions. The scheme that is practically grasped in the appropriation of conscious activities "is just the actuation of our capacity to conceive any essence and rationally affirm its existence and its relations" (V:88).

In a sense the critical problem is resolved in a "return upon returns," the grasp of a scheme that relates parts one to another and fixes the meaning of both terms and their relations by an appeal to consciousness. Terms are conscious operations -- inquiring, understanding, conceiving, weighing evidence, judging -- while relations are conscious processes linking the

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activity is engaged in a lower context when it is doing mathematics or following scientific method or exercising common sense. Then it will be moving towards an upper context when it scrutinizes mathematics or science or common sense in order to grasp the nature of noetic activity. And if it comes to understand and affirm what understanding is and affirming is, then it has reached an upper context that logically is independent of the scaffolding of mathematics, science, and common sense." (I:xxvi)

<sup>258</sup>NE:35.

operations -- insight into phantasm, inquiring about some experience, judging the veracity of one's understanding, etc. By implementing this special case of implicit definition we were able to arrive at the functional definitions, a theory of human knowing that stands above all particular instances. This implicit definition does not determine a priori contents of further acts, i.e., what will be conceived or affirmed tonight. Thus "the meaning of the terms develop with the development of the person."<sup>259</sup>

Embracing the critical problem is an ever-precarious process, and not an accomplishment, a fait accompli, or a terminus of a dialectical process. Human knowing and living are a developing, a being-in-process (I:625), which means self-understanding and self-knowledge is never complete but ever on-the-way. Though essentially autonomous,

we do not know ourselves very well; we cannot chart the future; we cannot control our environment completely or the influences that work on us; we cannot explore our unconscious and preconscious mechanisms. Our course is in the night; our control is only rough and approximate; we have to believe and trust, risk and dare.<sup>260</sup>

Though Lonergan does not say as much in Verbum, the critical problem is interpersonal through and through. Our risking and daring, including the practical decisions by which we make the world and the existential decisions by which we constitute our lives, are situated within interpersonal relations.<sup>261</sup>

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<sup>259</sup>UB:55.

<sup>260</sup>EA:224. A relevant story is told of a Buddhist novice asking the master how many years it will take to reach enlightenment. The master replies "ten years." The eager novice then asks: "What if I work hard?" The master replies: "Oh, then it will take 20."

<sup>261</sup>When Lonergan thematizes the interpersonal context in Method in Theology he is not overturning the critical problem as stated in Verbum, but making explicit its interpersonal context. Cf. Method in Theology, pp. 47-52.

### 3.4.4 Critical Problem vs. Bridge Problem

The critical problem of "knowing we know" by "knowing what we are" is not the modern epistemological problem of how knowledge is objective, how to get outside or beyond the consciously perceived self (conscientia qua perceptio) to "objective reality" that is already-out-there. This is the "bridge problem" that merely reinstates the phenomenologically unverifiable subject-object split and presumes that "consciousness" means perception or confrontation. It certainly was not a concern for Aquinas, for whom knowing primarily is identity or perfection. For inasmuch as intellect and intelligible object are in act, they are in act identically. As discussed in section 2 above, to know something as other, once one posits that knowing is a perfection, requires reflection first to express essence and second to affirm existence. For Aquinas, in knowledge of being there are elements of both identity and difference/confrontation, but difference/confrontation is only had through reflection on identity. Confrontation does arise in the problem of how anything is known as other if knowing, in its first instance, is identity. The solution is the two-fold procession of concept from act of understanding and affirmation of existence from reflective understanding "in virtue of our intellectual light" (V:74).

Lonergan writes of the relative importance of confrontation and identity in knowing:

[C]onfrontation does arise, but only in a second moment and by a distinct act, of perception as distinct from sensation, of conception as distinct from insight, of judgment as distinct from reflective understanding. On this showing confrontation is not primitive, but derived; and it is derived from what is not confrontation, not intuition, nor formal and explicit duality.<sup>262</sup>

The primitive act from which confrontation -- both conceiving and judging -- is derived is the

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<sup>262</sup>From Lonergan's review of Dom Illtyd Trethowan's Certainty: Philosophical and Theological, p. 155.

conscious act of direct or indirect understanding, the received operation of an active potency.<sup>263</sup> What makes this position difficult to fathom is that to conceive and express the primitive act, which is preconceptual, "involves its own partial failure; for any such attempt is an expression, and expression is no longer understanding and already concept" (V:25).

For reasons quite different from Lonergan's, Gilson contests the pseudo-bridge separating knowing subjects from known objects. In Thomist Realism and the Critique of Knowledge he writes: "You cannot cross a bridge that does not exist."<sup>264</sup> However, his way of interpreting the "immediate presence" of reality, and his belief in having to start with thought or being effectively reconstructs the bridge: "You can start with thought or with being, but you cannot do both at the same time. If you wish to construct a Thomistic epistemology, everyone knows you must start with being."<sup>265</sup> Central to his immediate realism is Gilson's claim that a Thomistic epistemology "start with being." For Gilson the mind's grasp of being, or what he calls "intuition of being," is due to the mind's immediate grasp of the intelligibility of being in the sensible object present to the knower in the phantasm.

Lonergan is also an immediate realist. But he claims that "realism is immediate" not because we "start with being" in Gilson's sense, nor because we "start with thought" in Gilson's sense, nor even because we "do both at the same time" in Gilson's sense, nor finally "because it [realism] is naive and unreasoned and blindly affirmed, but because we know the real before we know such a difference within the real as the difference between subject and object." (V:88) For Gilson there is no critical problem because "realism is immediate." In other words, the mind immediately apprehends intelligible being, without the two-fold procession of conceiving and

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<sup>263</sup>See Chapter One, Section I.3.2.

<sup>264</sup>Thomist Realism and the Critique of Knowledge, p. 82.

<sup>265</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 84.

affirming, i.e., without intelligible emanation.

For Lonergan there is indeed a critical problem, the problem Aquinas describes as knowledge of the soul's nature that requires "a careful and subtle inquiry."<sup>266</sup> Knowledge of the soul's nature is obtained by reflecting upon the objects and acts of the soul. Now since the acts are not the acts of some other being or of a transcendental ego, but acts of a conscious subject, this is a personal problem. In opposition to Gilson, Lonergan argues that immediate realism can be mediated, which is precisely the critical problem -- the mediation of what is immediate, or what is conscious.<sup>267</sup> For example, such mediation exists both in sound psychotherapeutic praxis and philosophical praxis as radical cognitive therapy.<sup>268</sup> It is through and through interpersonal.<sup>269</sup> These experiences are not "merely subjective," or "merely psychological" because "consciousness is a perfection within being," not something over against being. In other words, the objects of the intellectual acts of attending, inquiring, understanding, conceiving, doubting, and judging

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<sup>266</sup>ST I, q. 87, a. 1, c.

<sup>267</sup>His criticism of Gilson is elaborated in "Metaphysics as Horizon" CWL 4:188-207. "Professor Gilson is equally convinced that perception is the one manner in which cognitional activity attains objectivity" (194). "His fact of intellectual perception is not conceived independently of his Thomist system. It is not investigated simply in terms of psychological introspection and analysis. On the contrary, Professor Gilson does not believe metaphysicians should attempt to do psychology. He asserts a general osmosis between sense and understanding, but leave it to psychologists to work out the details. He indicates the area in which the perceptual judgment of existence is to be found, but he makes not effort to survey, explore, and work out a detailed report." (197)

<sup>268</sup>"Besides the immediate world of the infant and the adult's world mediated by meaning, there is the mediation of immediacy by meaning when one objectifies cognitional process in transcendental method and when one discovers, identifies, accepts one's submerged feelings in psychotherapy" (MT:77).

<sup>269</sup>"In the main it is not by introspection but by reflecting on our living in common with others that we come to know ourselves." CS:220.

may be either the self or other things. In the former case they are reflexive; in the latter, direct. This difference is not formal but material; in both cases the formal objects are ens, quidditas, verum.<sup>270</sup>

When the subject is known as object, the subject is known twice -- once by consciousness, i.e., sub ratione experti, and once reflexively. Since intelligent acts are conscious, or known sub ratione experti, the personal subject is known (sub ratione experti) simultaneously and concomitantly with objects, and there is no reason to hold that "the sole content of a cognitional act is its object."<sup>271</sup>

This is all nonsense if the "subject" is someone faced or confronted through consciousness as perception (conscientia qua perceptio). To the extent that questions of priority - object/subject, being/consciousness -- or of "where to start" -- epistemology, metaphysics, ethics -- tacitly assert a bridge problem, they presuppose a problem that does not exist. The possibility of mediating what is immediate presupposes that "consciousness" refers to knowledge sub ratione experti. If we can appreciate the difference between consciousness as experience, e.g., of feeling blue or having fallen in love and therefore knowing (sub ratione experti) without self-reflectively knowing (sub ratione entis et veri) what has happened, and consciousness as inner-looking or inner-perception, we avoid misleading connotations of the phrase "transcendental method." It also allows us to separate the existential subject from the res cogitans, the subject as primary object that has been under attack by deconstructive philosophers.

The problem of getting from one side of the bridge to the other, either from "in here" to "out there," or from "out there" to "in here" "tends to vanish when the whole stress falls on the interpersonal situation, the psychic interchange of mutual presence, the beginnings of what may

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<sup>270</sup>CAS:I66, n. I4.

<sup>271</sup>CAS:I67.

prove to be a lifelong union."<sup>272</sup> There do indeed exist interpersonal challenges, but they are not variations of the bridge problem, but problems of growing in an understanding of I, Thou, and we, problems that imply there is no bridge to begin with. Mutually shared experiences and common understandings and commitments do not require that an immediately present "I" confront a "Thou" "out there," or that a "Thou" "out there" is immediately known. A mutual presence of both I and Thou adds up to an "us" "talking about ´ourselves´ and what ´we´ have done and shall do."<sup>273</sup> In our daily conversations about what "we should do" we encounter opportunities to grow both in self- and other-understanding through a mutual self-mediation.<sup>274</sup> What makes possible common living in which we are indeed present to self and to others as intended and largely mysterious is a concomitant presence of subject as subject.

What does this contribute to the debate about from which side of the bridge the philosopher should begin? By means of an "inverse insight," which "finds fault not with answers but with questions,"<sup>275</sup> and is rarer than direct insights, the question itself is found misleading, presupposing something phenomenologically unverifiable and rooted in a misconception of

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<sup>272</sup>CS:219.

<sup>273</sup>Ibid.

<sup>274</sup>Loneragan writes of mutual self-mediation: "There is a mutual self-mediation in the relationships of mother and child, father and son, brothers and sisters. There is a mutual self-mediation between equals, between superiors and inferiors, parents and children, teachers and pupils, professors and students. . . . Mutual self-mediation proves the inexhaustible theme of dramatists and novelists. It is an imponderable in education that will not show up in charts and statistics." "The Mediation of Christ in Prayer," p. 13.

<sup>275</sup>An inverse insight is had, for example, when trying to determine the rational measure of the diagonal of a square. The question "What ratio of  $p/q$  is equivalent to the measure of the diagonal?" leads to a contradiction as one tries to identify  $p$  and  $q$ . The measure is a surd, "not the rational fraction that intelligence anticipates it to be" (I:21). Asking whether to start "with thought" or "with being" is like asking for the ratio of  $p/q$  equivalent to the diagonal. There is no answer to either question; they both lead to contradictions.



consciousness, namely that we can "begin with thought," or "begin with being." The question "Shall we judge reality as a function of knowledge or knowledge as a function of reality?"<sup>276</sup> presents an either/or and sets up a dichotomy between consciousness and being, between knowing and reality, and tacitly affirms the unreality of knowing that justifies inattention to, neglect of, or contempt for the existential subject. This is philosophically (and psychologically) disastrous.

But if "subjectivity in its very performance is already "outside" in the realm of being-in-itself in general,"<sup>277</sup> if knowing is a perfection "within" being, i.e. if "being is not one thing with knowing another," (V:88) and if the difference between what is but does not "is" (e.g. a rock) and someone who is and also intelligently utters the word "is" (you and I) is grasped the way any other distinction is reached, then that someone (you and I) who is both intelligible and intelligent is known in essentially the same way any other being is grasped.

### Conclusion

Up to this point the primary focus of this dissertation has been on human cognition, on intellectual acts proceeding from intellectual acts, on the relations between various conscious and intentional acts, and on the differences between these processes and other "natural" processes. In this third chapter we have addressed a universal problem: two diverse knowings co-exist in human experience without differentiation. For a philosopher the problem becomes one of distinguishing between knowing in the loose sense of any of a number of operations and knowing in a strict sense. Defining knowing in a strict sense poses the difficult and critical problem of self-knowledge.

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<sup>276</sup>Gilson, Thomist Realism and the Critique of Knowledge, p. 169.

<sup>277</sup>E. Coreth, Metaphysik. Eine methodisch-systematische Grundlegung, translated and cited by Lonergan in "Metaphysics as Horizon," CWL 4:202.

In the next Chapter I will explore the extension of "being on one's own" from the limited and somewhat abstract discussion of knowing to the broader horizon of existential living.

The central insights Lonergan had in reading Aquinas' writings on the intelligible procession of the word are aids in understanding the community of speculative and practical knowing. An empirical, "introspective" approach is appropriate for interpreting the complex interplay of intellect and will in order to arrive at an understanding of the dynamics of human freedom. We will see that human action can be defined both a loose sense and in a more precise and strict sense.

## Chapter Four

### Essential and Effective Freedom

We have been investigating the elements of a definition of human knowing as a set of dissimilar but functionally related acts. The elements are the so-called "core psychological facts" of verbum as conceptualization and verbum as judgment, and they provide a hermeneutical key for grasping what Aquinas meant by the procession of the word.

One of Lonergan's original aspirations in retrieving Aquinas' conception of the inner word was to shed some light on the dynamics of human love, discoverable independently of revelation and yet analogous to the puzzling procession of the Spirit.<sup>278</sup> He devotes many pages to explicating the procession of inner word in the intellect and only in the last article, in relatively few pages (V:201-205), does he write of the love that proceeds in the will from the intellect. He gives the following reason for the lopsided treatment of the twofold procession: "Once one grasps the "processio intelligibilis" of inner word from uttering act of understanding, there is not the slightest difficulty in grasping the simple, clear, straightforward account Aquinas offered of proceeding love." (V:204)

In the first section of this fourth chapter I examine the dynamic procession of love in the will from the word. Why, given his clarification of the first procession, does Lonergan consider this procession "simple, clear, [and] straightforward"? While investigating the procession of the

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<sup>278</sup>This concern is expressed in the introduction to the first of five articles "The Concept of Verbum in the Writings of St. Thomas of Aquinas" originally published in Theological Studies 7 (1946): 349-392; 8 (1947): 35-79, 404-444; 10 (1949): 3-40, 359-393.

word from direct or reflective understanding I have prescind from investigating processions either in or from the will and have set aside the questions that now will be addressed. At no point has there been a denial that in anyone who understands there is also a will and acts of willing. The twofold inward procession of word and love is an integral part but certainly not the whole of what constitutes a human act, or essential freedom.

The aim of this fourth chapter is to incorporate what has been established thus far in an account of essential and effective freedom. In order to do this it will be necessary to extend our analysis beyond the preceding investigation of intelligible procession and human knowing. To conceive an "existential ethics"<sup>279</sup> requires an account of both psychological facts that is inclusive of the two-fold intelligible emanation of inner word from understanding and of love from both inner word and understanding, as well as the other elements of human acts that are not intelligible emanations. This can be done without diminishing or abandoning the core psychological facts of verbum as conceptualization and as judgment. The questions before us are: (1) How is an intellectualist account of human reason as a dynamic structure integrated within an theory of essential freedom? and (2) How is this account of freedom compatible with the fact that our knowing and, more generally, or living, is a process that is organically, psychically, intellectually, and socially-culturally conditioned?

In Section 2 I analyze the interplay of specification and exercise of human acts, as well as the direct control over these same human acts. Specification is a judgment on the good and it is a word proceeding from understanding. Exercise refers to self-motion that is free. Direct control

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<sup>279</sup>The phrase appears in Lonergan's 1976 Questionnaire on Philosophy. For our purposes "existential ethics" means reflection upon the questions, insights, deliberations, decisions, and choices of an existential subject, both as a conscious knower and conscious doer, one who is radically social, stamped with a character initially beyond one's own choosing, undergoing development, possibly gifted with conversion. The full scope of the meaning of "existential subject" in Lonergan's later writings is beyond the range of this thesis, but I will note some of the further issues in Chapter Five.

of human acts refers to the receptive moment of willing in which the will is moved by an external mover and does not move itself (mota et non movens).

In section 3 I examine the "law of universal instrumentality" which, Lonergan maintains, is the general context for understanding Aquinas' conception of human freedom. Aquinas' thought, especially after the Summa contra gentiles, includes the "vaster program" of understanding a dynamic and hierarchical universe. The "vaster program" includes a theory of the will, a theory of divine transcendence, and a theory of universal instrumentality. Aquinas did not simply focus upon single human acts of willing by themselves, but faced a more encompassing question, namely, how to reconcile eternal and unmoved motion with the effects of this motion, effects which are not simultaneous or constantly occurring. He adapted Aristotle's theory of motions to assert that the dynamic order of all relations has a cause which transcends each and every mover. Every mover except the first is moved, not by ceaseless interventions on the part of some first mover, but by the "first motion" that sets the stage for any and all motions. Such a view presupposes that the whole comprising parts is prior to parts alone. I will examine primary (divine) and secondary causality and the general theorem of universal instrumentality.

An understanding of the possibility of caused causes and pre-moved movers, far from eradicating the intelligibility proportionate to natural, intelligent and free events, helps to clarify their dynamics. When emphasis is placed solely on individual acts of willing -- for example, when human freedom is deemed incompatible with a cause more primary than the will itself, or when human freedom is abstracted from the emerging, dynamic order and left in an essentialist vacuum -- then one's account of human freedom will be different from Lonergan's interpretation of Aquinas' position.

In section 4 I examine the implications of universal instrumentality for understanding human freedom. Human acts are but instances of pre-moved motions, of a caused causes. Like any other events, understanding and willing are pre-moved. Since human acts are not outside the

emerging order of caused causes and moved movers, but a special instance of a moved mover, these acts are instruments of divine providence which is the cause of the entire order of dynamic relations. Like any other cause or mover, with the exception of the first cause, willing is an instrument that is intrinsically subordinate to the entire order of dynamic relations of causes and movers.

It is this context that accounts for the reality of the numerous controls upon the freedom that we do in fact experience. It is also this context, in part, that sets both Lonergan and Aquinas apart from both other "existential" philosophers who do not explore the compatibility between terrestrial contingency and human freedom, or between direct and indirect control and human autonomy.

The scope of my investigation up to this point has been limited in the following ways: (1) the procession of the inner word is a part of what Aquinas means by "right reason," but it is not, per se, a human act; and (2) there exist both direct and indirect controls of human acts other than intellectual specification and volitional exercise. In his writings on the procession of the inner word Aquinas does not assert that understanding occurs without an act in the will. It is a further question that he does answer affirmatively -- i.e., in anyone who understands there must be an act of willing.<sup>280</sup> Lonergan, who finds evidence in Aquinas for asserting that the intelligible emanation of the word is a conscious act of understanding, acknowledges that there are causes other than intellectual specification that must be considered when analyzing human acts. The point is this: an interpretation of Aquinas' writings on the intelligible procession of the inner word is possible without explicitly raising the question "What is the essence of essential and effective human freedom?" This is a relevant question, but it is not directly relevant to understanding understanding as a conscious act of uttering an inner word.<sup>281</sup> Just as we might

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<sup>280</sup>See section 4.I below.

<sup>281</sup>A qualification is necessary. Resolving the critical problem (discussed in Chapter Three),

study the nervous system of frogs without asking about or denying the intelligibility of their mating habits (which are an integration of nervous system and other processes), in a like manner we have explored conscious and intelligent process without asking about or denying the intelligibility of practical knowing and doing.

#### 4.I Amor Procedens

##### 4.I.I Processions in Intellect and Will

Aquinas gives the following reasoning for claiming that in anyone who understands there must also be a will: Actual understanding is not without an intelligible form, just as a natural thing is made to be in act by its proper form. And just as a natural thing has a natural tendency to operate in a manner fitting to what it is, so too in one who understands there is a natural inclination to the proper operation of understanding. This inclination in us is an indication of the presence of the will.<sup>282</sup>

Both will and intellect are powers of the soul naturally directed toward their objects, ultimately the same object desired under two different aspects, namely, being as true and being as good. Both intellect and will are movers although they are different in kind. They are each known through their acts and objects. Activity in each is partially dependent upon right relations brought about by premovers other than intellect and will, and so their operations are alike in being opposed to divine operation, which is not conditioned.<sup>283</sup> In each there is an action that is

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insofar as it calls for a "real ascent," is an essentially free and effectively conditioned human act. The freedom we have with respect to knowledge, including self-knowledge, is different from the freedom we have with respect to conduct. Even so, judgments involve the whole person and so to ask about the precise difference between knowing in the loose sense and knowing in a strict sense (as we did in Chapter Three) is also to ask a practical question. I will further discuss this point in chapter Five.

<sup>282</sup>SCG IV, 19.

<sup>283</sup>In section 3 below we will examine conditioned right relations and premotion.

an actus perfectus, an action that is complete in itself. The will follows the apprehension of the intellect and is moved by the intellect which presents an object determining the act.<sup>284</sup> But the will also moves the intellect as to its actual exercise.<sup>285</sup> This subtle psychological process entails a distinction between the will as receiving (via receptionis) and will as moving or acting (via motionis):

Will and intellect have a mutual priority over one another, but not in the same way. Intellect's priority over will is in receiving, for if anything is to move the will it must first be received into intellect. . . . But in moving or acting will has priority because every action or movement comes from the intention of the good; and hence it is that the will, whose proper object is the good precisely as good, is said to move all the lower powers.<sup>286</sup>

Once one grants mutual priority, the problem is how to explain how human action ever occurs without an infinite regress of intellect specifying the will and will moving the intellect.<sup>287</sup>

From all this one might suspect that if a word proceeds from understanding, then so too does a distinct term proceed from the act of love within the will. The similarities and relationships of reciprocal causality between intellect and will might be taken to imply parallel processions. If this were the case, there would be the following analogy: As word proceeds from

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<sup>284</sup>"Since the will follows the apprehension of the intellect or reason" (ST I-II, q. 5 a. 8). "Now the first formal principle is universal being and truth, which is the object of the intellect. And therefore by this kind of motion [determination of the act] the intellect moves the will, as presenting its object" (ibid., q. 9, a. 1).

<sup>285</sup>"A thing is said to move in two ways: First, as an end; for instance, when we say that the end moves the agent. In this way the intellect moves the will . . . . Secondly, a thing is said to move as an agent, as what alters moves what is altered, and what impels moves what is impelled. In this way the will moves the intellect, and all the powers of the soul . . ." ST I, q. 82, a. 4, c.

<sup>286</sup>DV q. 14, a. 5, ad 5m.

<sup>287</sup>The problem of an infinite regress is taken up below in section 4.2.1.2.



understanding, so does love proceed from willing.<sup>288</sup>

Is there a processio operati in the will that parallels the procession of inner word from act of intellect? In the De Veritate Aquinas denies complementary processions:

[T]he will does not have anything proceeding from it except in the manner of an operation. The intellect, however, has something in itself that proceeds from it, not only in the manner of an operation, but also in the manner of a thing that is the term of an operation.<sup>289</sup>

What proceeds from the will in the manner of an operation is an act of loving. This is a perfection of the will just as understanding is a perfection of the possible intellect; both processes are instances of a processio operationis.<sup>290</sup>

There are processions of acts of love from other acts of love. The procession involving the will and the inner word that is relevant to Aquinas' Trinitarian theory, however, is not a procession of an act of love from an act of love.<sup>291</sup> Lonergan writes that Aquinas, following St. Anselm, frequently and clearly affirmed a distinct procession in the will of love from the inner word in the intellect (V:204-205).<sup>292</sup> This is the procession that is relevant to Aquinas'

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<sup>288</sup>Diagram I [A---->B; C--->D] A and B are the dicere and verbum in the intellect. C and D are presumed to be some corresponding pair of acts in the will, and the relation between them is presumed to be a processio operati. What these acts are, both in themselves and in their relation to one another, is unclear.

<sup>289</sup>DV q. 4, a. 2, ad 7m.

<sup>290</sup>Likewise, both processes are irrelevant to Trinitarian theory.

<sup>291</sup>"God understands all things by one simple act; and by one act also He wills all things. Hence there cannot exist in Him a procession of Word from Word, nor of Lover from Love: for there is in Him only one perfect Word, and one perfect Lover." ST I, q. 27, a. 5 ad 3m.

<sup>292</sup>Diagram 2 [A--->B--| ->C] A and B are the dicere and verbum. C is amor. The vertical line ( | ) indicates that the second procession is in the will from the first procession, which is in the intellect.

Trinitarian theory.<sup>293</sup> There cannot be dynamic presence of the beloved in the will of the lover without the mediation of a word. Willing depends on knowledge that has come to its term in judgment, otherwise it is not an appetitus sequens intellectum. "Without an intelligible procession of love in the will from the word of intellect, it would be impossible to define the will as rational appetite" (V:201).<sup>294</sup> This does not make the word or concept the loved object, since it is not the word or concept but the conceived that is loved (V:204).

A procession in the will from an inner word is called "complacent," but this term must be disassociated from connotations of being inertial, lethargic, and irresponsible, which are all common to it in English usage. In Aquinas' writings complacentia is a term indicating that the will is a faculty of affective consent to, or pleasurable acceptance of, what is good. In his discussion of love as a passion Aquinas writes:

The first change wrought in the appetite by the appetible object is called love, and is nothing else than complacency in that object; and from this complacency results a movement towards that same object, and this movement is desire.<sup>295</sup>

To say that love is an emanatio intelligibilis from an inner word means that love is not simply or

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<sup>293</sup>"For love proceeds from a word: we are able to love nothing but that which a word of the heart conceives." SCG IV, 24 §12. "We can love with a rational and holy love only that which we bring to actual conception in the intellect. But the conception of the intellect is a word, and so love must take its origin from a word." De rat. fid. 4, §967. See also note #20 (V:100-101) where Lonergan gives numerous citations where Aquinas writes of the procession of love from the inner word.

<sup>294</sup>There is also the rule Nihil amatum nisi praecognitum. An exception to this rule will be noted Chapter Five, section 5.2.2.

<sup>295</sup>ST I-II, q. 26, a. 2, c. The general sense of motion includes both tending and the complacency of being changed by the appetible object: "Although love does not denote the movement of the appetite in tending towards the appetible object, yet it denotes that movement whereby the appetite is changed by the appetible object, so as to have complacency therein." Ibid., ad 3m.

even primarily a principle of movement towards possession of an object. Prior to movement towards an object there is a complacent resting in an object as known. The will's first response to the good is not movement towards it but a change in the subject. Love conceived in this way has an object, but it rests in tranquil possession of the good that is.

"Concern" is the technical counterpart to the "complacency" that corresponds to the motion of intending an end, or the movement towards the same object of complacency. Complacency and concern are thus two distinct attitudes of willing, and thus two attitudes of love as the basic act of willing.<sup>296</sup> Concern refers to love as the intentio finis, the active striving for some object to-be-made or some deed to-be-done, while complacency refers to love as receptive. In the attitude of concern love is a principle of moving or acting (via motionis). In the priority of intellect over will (via receptionis), however, love is a terminal point, or end of a process. It is ontologically and psychologically receptive. Although we might think of the will primarily as an outer-directed efficient cause, there is a prior receptive act of willing, a pati:

The basic act of will is a term rather than a principle. Moreover, it is simply term; it is not a compound act in which an inchoate willing as principle produces another willing as term to provide a parallel with intellect where understanding produces the word. Still less is it a matter of will's producing its own first act, lifting itself by its bootstraps.<sup>297</sup>

This reception of willing as a term is not at odds with the mutual priority of intellect and will over one another cited above. Will has priority over intellect in moving or acting in which there is an intention of the good. Our analysis of love as the basic act of will has prescind from a consideration of motion towards an object. In other words, by distinguishing the procession of

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<sup>296</sup>Cf. F. E. Crowe, "Complacency and Concern in the Thought of St. Thomas."

<sup>297</sup>"Complacency and Concern," p. 14. A dual aspect of the good coincides with the dual attitude of willing: "The good as perfective is the object of love as appetitive; the good as simply harmonious with affective will is the object of love as complacent." Ibid., p. 202.

love from an inner word from acts of love as desiring, seeking, or striving, we are able to break apart a complex process.

The relevance of this distinction for our analysis of procession is that complacent response to what is good, which is distinct from actively striving for a good to-be-made or to-be-done, is a term in the via receptionis and corresponds to the second procession -- the procession of love in the will from an inner word. As the word is an emanatio intelligibilis from understanding, so too the procession of love as an attraction to a known good is an emanatio intelligibilis from the inner word.<sup>298</sup> It is both the dicere and the verbum that "spirate" the complacent love, not any choice by the will or some other force.<sup>299</sup>

The major obstacle to accepting this view is the belief that the subject must be the efficient cause of his or her own vital acts, and so to posit an act of willing that is received appears contradictory.<sup>300</sup> As was shown in Chapter One, action or operation sometimes denotes efficient causality, but sometimes denotes simply being in act. Simply being in act is not opposed to being moved or being changed (V:109). Like intelligere, velle might refer to an operation that is a received perfection, a pati in the sense of pati communiter (V:132). The velle finem that makes possible an indeterminate intentio finis in which deliberation about means to the end can occur is

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<sup>298</sup>Lonergan contends that this is what Aquinas held: "To have an analogy we have to find an instance in which there is not merely causality, but also that different type of dependence which we -- and St. Thomas, I believe -- called emanatio intelligibilis (intelligible emanation)." CT:6.

<sup>299</sup>The will's passivity in the via receptionis is analogous to the second Divine procession as distinct from the efficient causality in the will of the via motionis that is analogous to the procession of creatures from God. This is not to make an absolute out of Trinitarian theory: "I do not think St. Thomas was guilty of arguing backwards from what he attributed to God by analogy to what he must find in man to constitute the analogy. If human love is an analogy for divine proceeding Love, it is because independently of revelation we can discover that human love is a term." Fred Crowe, "Complacency and Concern in St. Thomas," p. 16.

<sup>300</sup>This obstacle might be the reason why concern, which corresponds to the intentio finis of the Prima Secundae, has received more attention than complacency.

really an operation, a willing, but it is receptive. The will is mota et non movens.

#### 4.1.2 Dynamic Presence

The verbum proceeding from understanding and the procession of love in the will from the intellect in which the beloved is dynamically present are both instances of a processio operati and an emanatio intelligibilis. In the former aspect there are real distinctions between understanding, inner word, and procession of love from word. The act of understanding and the proportionate act of speaking an inner word are distinct acts with distinct objects.<sup>301</sup> In a like way, understanding and spoken inner word are distinct from proceeding love. Again there is a relation between perfection and proportionate perfection and a real distinction between principle (understanding and spoken inner word) and term (loving). In neither procession is there a relationship of perfection to perfectible. There are processions in which intellect and will are perfected, but they are not instances of processio operati.<sup>302</sup>

In both processions, in addition to a productive aspect, there is also an intelligible aspect. Inner words and love as dynamic presence proceed from sufficient grounds that are known to be sufficient. As the inner word is both caused by and because of (direct or reflective) understanding, so too love as dynamic presence in the will is both caused by and because of understanding and inner word.<sup>303</sup> These processes are essentially different from chemical or biological processes in which there is causation and emanation, but not the causation of an

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<sup>301</sup>See section 1.3.2.2 of Chapter One.

<sup>302</sup>"The act of understanding is to the possible intellect, the act of loving is to the will, as act to potency, as perfection to its perfectible; the procession is 'processio operationis' . . . " (V:198)

<sup>303</sup>See section 2 of Chapter One for an analysis of the subtle but important difference between being "caused by" and "because of." It is because both processions share in both a productive and an intelligible aspect that Lonergan believes clarity about the second procession is gained by clarifying the first procession.

intelligible emanation, the "basic and essential rationality of rational consciousness" (V:34; 199-200). In material emanation there is the intelligibility of a natural process, but not the intelligibility of intelligent process, "the pure case of intelligible law."

What, then, is the difference between the two processions? There is a difference between the way the beloved is present in the intellect in the act of understanding, and the way the beloved is present in the will. Aquinas writes that the beloved

is in the intellect by reason of the likeness of its species; it is in the will of the lover, however, as the term of a movement is in its proportioned motive principle by reason of the suitability and proportion which the term has for that principle.<sup>304</sup>

In the intellect the beloved is present simply by a likeness (per similitudinem speciei); in the will the beloved is present dynamically. Dynamic presence of the beloved in the will per se is not choice of means or its manifestation; it is not love as seeking or striving; it is not even love as giving or receiving. It is love as affective quiescence -- complacency in the good as end rather than concern for means to an end. The amatum is in the amans "by being impressed on his heart and thus becoming the object of his complacency."<sup>305</sup> It is the dynamic presence of the beloved in the mind and heart of the lover that is distinct from deliberation, counsel, prudential judgment, or election -- operations which pertain to the pursuit of a known but absent good. This dynamic presence is not intrinsically interpersonal, for the beloved might be an object or, in rightly-ordered self-love, the beloved is oneself.

An example of the twofold procession of word and love can only be had by abstracting from human acts the elements of procession. For example, consider fixing a flat tire. Prior to fixing the flat, which begins with an act caused in the will by the will, there is a complacency.

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<sup>304</sup>SCG III, 19, 4.

<sup>305</sup>ST I-II, q. 28, a. 2, ad 2m.

This is velle (simpliciter). Our experience is not just of complacency but of concern for the good of fixing the flat tire so we can get on our way. In other words, since our knowing and acting are in-process, dynamic presence is only an element of the whole movement, which includes intending an end, willing the means necessary to an end, and finally deciding to fix the flat.

#### 4.2 Essential Freedom: Exercise and Specification

The act of willing that is love as a term in the via receptionis is distinct from willing as principle in the via motionis, or willing as an efficient cause of human acts. Aquinas distinguished properly human acts (actus humani) from acts done by humans but in which the humanity of the agent is incidental to the action (actus hominis).<sup>306</sup> Asking a waiter for some freshly ground pepper on a salad is a human act since it is specified by a known, deliberately chosen end. Sneezing while eating the salad, on the other hand, is a non-deliberate act of a human. It is an act that happens to be done without any choice. No less than requesting pepper, sneezing is a conditioned (one of which conditions is choosing some pepper in the first place) and caused event; but it does not have for one of its causes a deliberate motion.

Lonergan finds in Aquinas' mature theory of human acts two lines of causation converging.<sup>307</sup> In the De Malo and the Prima secundae Aquinas distinguished the specification from the exercise of willing. In apprehending an object, intellect specifies or determines the will.<sup>308</sup> This is a necessary condition for deliberate willing (human acts), but it is not sufficient.

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<sup>306</sup>ST I-II, q. I, a. I.

<sup>307</sup>He was aided by O. Lottin, "Liberté humaine et motion divine," Récherches de Théologie Ancienne et Médiévale 7 (1935), 52-69, 156-173.

<sup>308</sup>On specification by the intellect see DM q. 6, a. I; ST I-II q. 9, a. I. On the se movet of the will see ST I-II q. 9, a. 3. Texts that assert explicitly a motion in the will: ST I-II q. 80, a. I; q. 109, a. 2, ad Im.

Specification does not cause the exercise of willing, the se movet of the will, since the will is not a wholly passive potency desiring whatever is presented as good. The exercise or act of willing has two causes, both involving the will: (1) acts of willing the means and (2) acts of willing an end, an object desirable in itself.

#### 4. 2.1 Willing the Means

The activity of taking counsel is part of the via motionis leading up to an election of means and finally an action. Lonergan lists four elements combining in the free choice of means: (1) a field of action with more than one possible outcome; (2) an intellect capable of working out at least two possible actions; (3) a will that is not determined by the first course of action; (4) a self-moving will (GF:95).<sup>309</sup>

(1) Field of Action. For example, at the beginning of each new semester a student has a range of courses from which to choose. If ten courses are offered and one is choosing exactly three, then there are 120 possible outcomes. But, for a variety of reasons, there might be only eight courses offered, in which case the total number of possible three-course combinations is 56. Or, again for a variety of reasons, one might be limited to taking two courses, which would increase the number of possible combinations. In any case, there is a field of action, and if, for whatever reasons, there were not, one could hardly deliberate about which courses to choose.

(2) An intellect that is capable of working out at least two possibilities. Normally one does not calculate the total number of possibilities. One is simply aware that there are at least two possibilities and that there are limiting conditions to be kept in mind while working out the

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<sup>309</sup>Lonergan notes that of the four elements (1) is most prominent in De veritate; (2) from the Commentary on the Sentences up to the Pars prima; (3) in the Pars prima; and (4) in the De malo and Prima secundae (GF:95-96). The fact that one or other of the elements receives greater emphasis in particular writings "is explained satisfactorily by the accidents of historical development" (GF:97).



possibilities. These are limiting conditions: some of the courses being offered either prepare one more directly than others for exams or fulfill other requirements; one might have to keep in mind a schedule of other commitments; there might be particular interests within one's major to consider, as well as when the courses might be offered again. Still, given all these limiting factors, if there are at least two possibilities, and one knows them as possibilities, then this condition for a free human act is fulfilled.

(3) A will not automatically determined. If for some reason the first set of possible courses considered has the effect of precluding further considerations, then deliberation would not occur and there is not a free choice. This happens, for example, when some courses are simply required and "there is no choice in the matter." Another example of automatic determination occurs when someone has a hard time ordering from a menu, and simply chooses whatever the next person is having. This is a choice, but a choice to have one's choice determined by another's choice. In any case, in order for there to be a free choice of means, there cannot be such an automatic determination. Willingness, or habitual inclinations to choose certain things and not others, plays a tremendous role in the choices we make. Likewise, the absence of willingness effectively precludes certain choices until one's willingness emerges.<sup>310</sup>

(4) A self moving-will: The worked-out possibilities do not determine the courses one will select. The registration-deadline sets a limit for deliberation without penalty, but the deadline merely poses a time-constraint, it does not cause the particular selection of courses. This selection is a self-motion which puts an end to deliberation and settles upon the means to some end. All four elements are necessary for there to be free human acts. If the order of events presented only one possible outcome, or, more generally, if the world order excluded any different

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<sup>310</sup>"Just as a person that has not learnt a subject must go through a laborious process to acquire mastery, yet, once mastery is acquired, can grasp readily the solution to any problem that arises in the field, so too a person who has not acquired willingness needs to be persuaded before he will will, yet once willingness is acquired, leaps to willing without any need of persuasion" (I:598).

course of action, or if there were a range of possible outcomes but they were unknown and unknowable, or if knowledge of one possibility automatically determined the will's act, or, finally, if the will were incapable of moving itself, then there could not be a human act. Even self-motion by itself does not constitute human acts, for this is found in plants and animals. In other words, the four elements of freedom hang together as a theory, and to drop one or more of them and call the remainder freedom is not faithful to the writings of Aquinas. The first three aspects by themselves are inadequate because non-determination is merely a condition for self-motion.

Specification of willing is a grasp of possible courses of action through practical understanding. It is a consciously proceeding word as part of a pattern of concern for something to be done. It is a principle but not a sufficient cause of a human act. Without grasping how consciously proceeding inner words are principles but not absolutely determinative causes of conscious and free human acts, one might be hard-pressed to give psychological reasons why we insist that human acts are both rational and free. Lonergan writes of this difficulty:

When a student is asked for a philosophical proof of human liberty, he is likely to appeal to consciousness. If it is objected that, in consciousness of a free act, we are conscious only of the fact that we chose one part or the other, but not of the possibility of choosing the opposite, most students are stumped. For the appeal to consciousness must be an appeal to the conscious subject who is principle of this act or that act and is aware of the fact that he is principle of either. The appeal must be to the conscious subject and to intelligible emanations.<sup>311</sup>

The appeal to the conscious subject and intelligible emanations has been the focus of the first three chapters. To be aware of oneself as a principle of an act is moral consciousness. It is central to Lonergan's existential ethics, adding to the consciously proceeding and dynamically present inner word the aspects of responsibility and obligation. Responsibility and obligation do not follow simply from the nature of an intelligible emanation per se. Rather, they follow from a

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<sup>311</sup>Lonergan, CT:I3.

consideration of rationally conscious processions of inner words as principles of action.

An intentio finis in human deliberations orients us in such a way that once a judgment regarding a good-to-be-done is reached, i.e., once an inner word regarding what ought to be done proceeds, we are bound by nature of what we are to act. The question "Is this to be done?" intends a reflective insight regarding what ought to be. Insofar as the insight occurs, then the decision should follow and one should act. There is no explanation for why we do not act accordingly, for an explanation would attempt to make reasonable what is unreasonable.

#### 4.2.2 Willing an End

The process leading up to choice of means involves weighing possible actions (deliberation) and measuring between them (commensuration). These are voluntary acts (actus humani) in the sense that they presuppose intention, which, in turn, presupposes "some knowledge of the end."<sup>312</sup> In other words, these acts are circumscribed by an intention of something beyond, something for-the-sake-of-which. While execution begins with what is closest, it is made possible by what is remote. And though the ways of attaining happiness are many,<sup>313</sup> human action would never "get off the ground" without an ultimate end:

[I]f there were no ultimate end nothing would be desired, nor would any act be terminated, nor would the intention of the agent ever be at rest; and if there were no first means in relation to the end, no one would begin to do anything and deliberation would never end, but go on indefinitely.<sup>314</sup>

In all intelligent proportionings and comparative relatings, knowledge of an end is indispensable.

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<sup>312</sup>ST I-II, q. 6, a. 1, c.

<sup>313</sup>"Different ways of living come about among men by reason of the different things in which men seek the highest good." ST I-II, q. 1, a. 7, ad. 2.

<sup>314</sup>ST I-II, q. 1, a. 4.

But if this end is to make possible not just this or that instance of deliberation, commensuration, decision, and action, but allow for commensuration in all cases, and even allow for commensuration between two or more things that really are good, it must be an inclusive end. Here there is a relationship of dependency since to will means that one must will some end.<sup>315</sup>

For example, an instructor recognizes that a joke in class, in certain instances, is a good thing. But the joke is not the ultimate good, but one of many, such as joking, listening, lecturing, and pausing.<sup>316</sup> Comparisons are not just between means and a specific end, but between different ends which are themselves means to something else. Commensuration between two or more goods intentionally presupposes a higher, inclusive, ultimate end. We do A for the sake of B; B for the sake of C; and so on. One need not be considering the ultimate end, merely intending it, "just as when going somewhere we do not have to think of the end at every step."<sup>317</sup> In most cases, relationship to this "something higher" is a conscious but largely unknown dynamic state.<sup>318</sup>

Another example: After returning from work one day someone might want to exercise. But she also plans to eat dinner, relax (perhaps see a film or listen to music), finish writing a draft of a paper, and return a few phone calls. After making the first call she finds out a good friend lost her job and needs a friendly ear for support. All of these things are good, but she simply does

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<sup>315</sup>Cf. ST I-II q. I, a. 6. "All things which man desires he necessarily desires for an ultimate end. . . . First because whatever man desires, he desires under the aspect of a good. If it is not desired as his complete good, which is the ultimate end, he must desire it as tending toward his complete good. . . . Second, because the ultimate end as moving the appetite is like the first mover in other motions."

<sup>316</sup>"What is done jokingly is not ordered to some extrinsic end, but to the good of the one who does it, inasmuch as it affords him pleasure or relaxation. But man's ultimate end is his complete good." ST I-II q. I, a. 6, ad. I.

<sup>317</sup>ST I-II q. I, a. 6, ad. 3.

<sup>318</sup>"Ordinarily the experience of the mystery of love and awe is not objectified. It remains within subjectivity as a vector, an undertow, a fateful call to a dreaded holiness" (MT:113).

not have enough time to do them all. So in light of what is most important, this woman deliberates, commensurates and decides to spend time with her friend over dinner after returning some, but not all, of the calls. While deciding what to do there is "something higher" conditioning the deliberation and choice. To get at the "something higher" we could ask her "Why A, B, and C but not D?"

#### 4.2.3 Direct Control of the Will

Willing the means to an end follows taking counsel, and taking counsel is an activity that is willed. So willing the means presupposes a specified object, which is the term of an intellectual process. Intellect is the first mover in the sense that the will can act only if a specified object is first provided. Yet this merely pushes the question back one step -- what causes specification? Is there specification without an act of will? It seems that the condition for the self-motion of the will is a prior self-movement, and that step in turn presupposes prior self-movement ad infinitum.

In the De malo Aquinas resolves this dilemma. Since the will is not constantly willing that the intellect take counsel,

it is necessary that something move it to the act of willing to take counsel; and indeed, if it moves itself, then once again some counsel must precede the movement, and an act of will must precede this counsel. Since this series cannot be infinite, it is necessary to posit, with respect to the first movement of the will, that the will of a being that is not always actually willing is moved by something external, by whose impulse the will begins to will.<sup>319</sup>

Aquinas' solution is not to claim the intellect specifies and exercises the will, in which case the act of will with respect to the end could be caused by an intellectual apprehension, but to posit the

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<sup>319</sup>DM, q. 6, a. 1.

existence of an external mover that moves the will without violating its integrity. In other words, there is not an infinite regression of pre-motion because there is an extrinsic mover of the will.

Aquinas gives as an example someone willing to do what is necessary to be healthy, that is, choosing the means leading to the end which is health.<sup>320</sup> Before deliberating about the means of attaining health, there must be a desire to gain health as an end; otherwise deliberation would never get off the ground. If someone does not have this desire, a reorientation to a new end is not a matter of the will "pulling itself up by its own bootstraps," for

every agent which is sometimes in act and sometimes in potency needs to be moved by some mover. Now it is evident that the will begins to will something which it did not will before. Therefore it must be moved by something to will it. It indeed moves itself, as we have said, in that by willing an end it is led to will the means.<sup>321</sup>

The "something" by which the will begins to will that which it previously did not will is not the will. It is not a self-motion but a motion "in virtue of the instigation of some exterior mover."<sup>322</sup> In this instance the will is mota et non movens. Thus, there is not an infinite regression of causes and motions since there exists a cause transcending the web of motions.

Although it is disproportionate to the range of possible choices that exist without it, the first motion of willing to do what is necessary to be healthy is not a violation of the will, or an imposition of something foreign. In other words, the first motion is in accordance with the will's inclination, or "voluntary." The will actually wills, actually operates, although its operation is an operatio receptiva, a moved motion. It contributes an act even though the act is received. The

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<sup>320</sup>ST I-II, q. 9, a. 4, c.

<sup>321</sup>ST I-II, q. 9, a. 4. Emphasis added. "In that it wills the end, it moves itself to will the means to the end." Ibid.

<sup>322</sup>ST I-II q. 9, a. 4, c. "Unde necesse est ponere quod in primum motum voluntatis voluntas prodeat ex instinctu alicuius exterioris moventis, ut Aristoteles concludit in quodam capite Eth. Eudemicæ."

will moves itself only insofar as it is ordered to an end, but to an end to which it does not move itself. The passive act produced in the will without any efficiency by the will "is a vital, immanent, voluntary act, just as the act of understanding in the intellectus possibilis is a vital, immanent, intellectual act, though intelligere est pati."<sup>323</sup> Velle, like sentire and intelligere, is an instance of a pati, not in the sense of suffering diminishment or loss, but in the sense of something that is found in every creature inasmuch as there is potentiality involved.<sup>324</sup> Although velle involves a recipere, it entails nothing that takes away from the recipient and is actually named a perfici.<sup>325</sup> Simply being in act is not opposed to being moved, and this allows for the possibility of a received activity, an operatio as act of will that is a received perfection. This received perfection is not violent because there is a concurrence of the will; it is not coerced.

Just as the intellect perfected (actually understanding) is able to utter its inner word of conception or judgment, so too a "will actually willing the end moves itself to willing means" (V:128). Even though both of these processions are conscious, there is something peculiar about the choice of means: it is not only intelligent and rational, but it is free as well. In other words, both intellect and will have to be (of necessity) "aligned" in order for further acts to proceed. But in the further act of decision there is self-motion and it is not necessary. We did not have to get out of bed this morning.

Is this passive act also necessary? It is necessary, not in the sense that everyone is willing to do what is necessary to be healthy, which is empirically not the case. Rather it is necessary in

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<sup>323</sup>OGSC:63.

<sup>324</sup>The apparent paradox that an operation is also receptive has been addressed in Chapter One.

<sup>325</sup>"The word 'passive' is used in three ways. First, in a general way, according as whatever receives something is passive although nothing is taken from it: thus we may say that the air is passive when it is lit up. But this is to be perfected rather than to be passive. . . . in the sense of mere reception, we speak of feeling and understanding as being a kind of passion (De Anima i. 5)." ST I-II, q. 22, a. 1, c.

the sense that insofar as someone does indeed have this desire who previously did not, necessarily something other than the will moved the will, bringing about the relation between the will and the end of health necessary in order to choose the means leading to health.

Is this non-coerced, voluntary operation also a free act? Is it the will's very nature to be free? In other words, is the will both necessitated and free when moved to will an end?<sup>326</sup> Lonergan maintains that there are indeed elements of necessity and freedom in Aquinas' conception of freedom as a whole, but that non-coercion is not sufficient to make willing a new end a free act. In itself willing an end is a necessary, non-coerced act that is free only as a cause of something else but not as a cause of itself. "Freedom lies in choosing, but choosing presupposes the dynamic orientation from which free acts spring."<sup>327</sup>

Lonergan does not oppose Aquinas' assertion that we will only the end and the means only as directed to an end. Rather he interprets this to mean that we cannot will the means without willing the end anymore than we can walk without moving towards something. We will both together, "so that what is willed in the means is the end."<sup>328</sup> It is a mistake to interpret this

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<sup>326</sup>This is the position of Terry Tekippe in "Lonergan's Analysis of Error: an Experiment," and Lonergan and Thomas on the Will: An Essay in Interpretation. Tekippe claims that the absence of coercion makes willing an end a necessitated and free act. Michael Stebbins, in "What Did Lonergan Really Say about Aquinas's Theory of the Will?" and Fred Crowe, in "Thomas Aquinas and the Will: A Note on Interpretation" have defended Lonergan's interpretation against Tekippe.

<sup>327</sup>"Gratia Operans: A Study of the Speculative Development in the Writings of St. Thomas of Aquin," p. 329. In later writings Lonergan distinguishes "horizontal liberty" from "vertical liberty" (MT:40,122,237-38,240,269). The former refers to a range of actions that are possible given one's overall orientation; the latter refers to a radical change in orientation, one that is disproportionate to the prior, and altering the possible range of actions.

<sup>328</sup>ST I-II, q. 8, a. 2, c. "Hence the will is directed to the means only as it is directed to an end, so that what is willed in the means is the end" (ibid). Lonergan writes in Insight: "There is no room for choosing the part and repudiating the whole, for choosing the conditioned and repudiating the condition, for choosing the antecedent and repudiating the consequent" (I:602).



to mean that willing the end "in the means" requires absolute freedom of choice -- the will "pulling itself up by its bootstraps" -- with regard to the ultimate end. Exercise is a complex action, a compound of a non-violent, non-coercive, extrinsic and higher cause and a self-moving, intrinsic and free cause.

#### 4.3 Universal Instrumentality

In Section 2 we examined the essence of self-motion in terms of specification, execution, and the four necessary conditions of human freedom. This adds to Lonergan's retrieval of Aquinas' writings on the twofold procession of word and love a critical discussion of the election of means to some end. Free acts of love proceeding from the will are neither the first nor the second procession taken by themselves, but these processions as principles of pre-moved self-motion.

What does it mean to say that self-motion is itself pre-moved? More generally, how is any motion pre-moved? What is the general dynamic pattern or order making possible any and all such operations or causes? Assuming this order, how is freedom possible?

In his study of operative grace in the thought of Aquinas, Lonergan encountered the perennial problem of reconciling divine providence and human liberty. The question is how to understand operation of a First Cause in such a way that does not essentially undermine human freedom.<sup>329</sup> Aquinas maintained that the causation of a created cause was itself caused, and that

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<sup>329</sup>Charles Boyer, S.J. suggested Lonergan study St. Thomas's writings on operative grace, saying "Here is an article that I don't know how to interpret, one on which I've consulted authors and commentaries in vain, one that doesn't seem to lend itself to either a Molinist or Bañezian reading. Take this article, if you like. Study the loci paralleli and the historical sources." (From notes Lonergan made in preparing for his doctoral defense, Lonergan Archives.) One instance of the debate took place in the 17th century between the disciples of Bañez and Molina. The debate ended unresolved in 1607 when Paul V silenced the discussion. Lonergan would write that the impasse between the two groups typifies "the bipolarity of disintegrating synthesis" (GF:144).

God operates in the operation of the will as much as in natural causes.<sup>330</sup> Lonergan found that Aquinas' thought on operations, causality, human freedom, instrumentality, and divine transcendence developed "not so much by any single master stroke as by an unnumbered succession of the adaptations that spring continuously from intellectual vitality" (GF:140). While Augustine engaged in a point-for-point refutation of the Pelagian heresy, "the thought of Aquinas on gratia operans was but an incident in the execution of a far vaster program" (GF:139).

#### 4.3.1 Divine Efficient Causality

God's operation in the operation of the will, along with the cooperation of the will itself as a moved self-mover, poses the problem of divine causality.<sup>331</sup> What is the nature of the reality "A is the efficient cause of B"? In particular, what does it mean to say "A causes B" when "A" is a divine cause, an eternal operation, and "B" is a temporal operation? Why does "B" act at this or that particular time and neither sooner nor later? Is there a third entity "C" between the cause and the effect? Is something added to the cause to make up for a deficiency? Is it a relation of dependence of the effect on the cause? Is there an existent beyond A and B that makes a relation

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<sup>330</sup>De Potentia, q. 3, a. 7. The weaker claim would be that God is a principle who operates by creating the power of willing, but that actual willing is not caused by God. Aquinas makes the stronger claim: "We receive not only the power of willing from God, but also the operation. Again, this statement of Solomon, "whithersoever He will, He shall turn it," shows that divine causality is not only extended to the power of the will but also to its act. Besides, God not only gives powers to things, but beyond that, no thing can act by its own power unless it acts through His power, as we showed above. So, man cannot use the power of his will that has been given him except in so far as he acts through the power of God" (SCG III, 89).

<sup>331</sup>Causation is common to both operative and cooperative grace. Operative grace is attributed to God when God is the sole mover, i.e., when the will is mota et non movens; cooperative when the will is et mota et movens. ST I-II, Q. 111, art. 2.

possible?<sup>332</sup>

One way to consider efficient causality is to imagine a flow of causes and corresponding effects that form a series. In this Humean picture of efficient causality as influx, an influence goes from A to B. If we let "A" denote the efficient cause of "B" and "B" denote the efficient cause of "C," then in such an influx there are three possibilities of efficient causality.

First, there could be an influx from A to B, and from B to C, but not A to C. In this case we have two cases of immediate causality, nothing more. In a second case we could imagine not two but three cases of influx: from A to B, B to C, and A to C. Unlike the first, A is the efficient cause of C. Both A and B produce C, which means A is an immediate efficient cause of C. Thus, as in the first case, A is an immediate cause only, not a mediate cause, i.e., not a cause using an intermediary. In a third case of efficient causality, we again have three influxes: from A to B', A to B'', and B'' to C. In this case there is a real difference between B as effect of A and B as cause of C, and this is denoted B' and B'' respectively. Here there are three influxes: from A to B', from A to B'', and from B'' to C, and the reality of mediate efficient causality is maintained. Mediate causality is predicated of A insofar as A uses B as a mediating agent.

Lonergan judges these three considerations of efficient causality inadequate.<sup>333</sup> Either influxes are real or not. If not, then efficient causality as influx does not exist. But if influxes name a reality, then each and every influx itself must be produced and we face a possibly infinite regress of influxes. If we name a first influx, then it either is or is not distinct from that which it produces. If it is not distinct, then it is really just an effect. If it is a really distinct reality that eliminates the infinite series, then it is the type of reality that is called a "real relation": "There is no real efficient causality of efficient causality, and so on to infinity, because the reality of efficient

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<sup>332</sup>Much of the analysis that follows is taken from Lonergan's essay "On God and Secondary Causes."

<sup>333</sup>OGSC:57-58.

causality is the reality of a real relation, and relatio relationis est ens rationis."<sup>334</sup> The first three views of efficient causality as influx share a common failure "to think out what is the reality of causality as such."<sup>335</sup>

In his consideration of efficient causality as relational, as opposed to an influx, Lonergan distinguishes between an accidental causal series and one properly so called. An example of an accidental series would be loaning one's car to a friend who forgets to put gas in it and stalls out on the highway. The relation of a stalled car (C) to loaning one's car (A) in the accidental series is one of conditioned to condition, not of causal dependence. Loaning the car is a condition but not a cause of it being stalled.

A proper causal series is illustrated by the damming of the Mississippi River with sandbags. Rescue workers pile sandbags along the surging river; the sandbags restrict and direct the flow of water; farms and houses are preserved and extensive damage is prevented. In this case the rescue workers are not only the condition for salvaging property, but also a cause. Since they make use of a mediating agent, or caused cause (the sandbags that are instrumental to restricting the flow of water), the workers are mediate causes. And like the reckless driver who is more responsible for speeding than the car (and who receives the ticket, not the engine or the suspension), the workers are more a cause of the river's flow than are the sandbags.

In the proper causal series, unlike the accidental series, (A) is both condition and cause. Moreover, there are three real relations of dependence: barriers of sandbags (B) depend on workers (A); flow of the river away from property (C) depends on sandbags (B); and flow of the river (C) depends on workers (A).

These three relations are instances of efficient causality. There is no need to imagine a

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<sup>334</sup>OGSC:57.

<sup>335</sup>OGSC:57.

fourth element (D) secretly moving from workers to sandbags to river. Nor need we imagine the workers ostensibly reaching around the sandbags to achieve the desired effect. Finally, the efficiency of the dam does not result from incessant or intermittent interventions on the part of the workers. Surely a need to buttress the barricade might arise. However, "other things being equal," their plan governs each combination or interference of the effects of floodwater.

But other things might not be equal. Rains could dramatically increase. Lightning might strike. An earthquake could send waves of water over the barricade. How do these unforeseen circumstances affect efficient causality?

Lonergan differentiates between two conceptions of efficient causality in a proper causal series, and it is the "conditionality" of events that distinguishes them. In both cases one could grant that only infinite being is the proportionate cause of the being of any and all causes, events, and exercises of efficient causality. The difference arises when one asks, "What accounts for the limitations on finite causes?" Either (1) a remediable defect in a created cause itself accounts for the difference between potentia agendi and ipsum agere or (2) the limitation on created causes is due to the fact that all causes are conditioned, and over these conditions the finite cause has no control.

Lonergan attributes the second position to Aquinas and Aristotle. "[B]oth arrive at the same goal, namely, that the objective difference between posse agere and actu agere is attained without any change emerging in the cause as such" (GF:69).

#### 4.3.2 Causality and Premotion

Why does a cause act at a certain time, neither sooner nor later? Why does God's operation, which is eternal, have effects that are not always and simultaneous, but at a given time? The mere existence of some mover and a moved is not sufficient to account for motion. The two must be in a right relation, itself brought about by a prior motion, a "pre mover" distinct

from the original mover and moved. When the relation, e.g., between a steak and heat on the grill, is right, the conditions for motion are favorable. In his commentaries Aquinas refers to a motion prior to the motion of the mover and moved that removes whatever impediment exists to motion.<sup>336</sup>

In Aristotle's cosmology there is an unmoved mover, but since for every change there exists a prior change, the world is eternal. Bañez would get around this by substituting for the Aristotelian premotion, which is tempore prius, a premotion that is natura prius. A Bañezian premotion results from any created agent or mover enjoying a special participation of the (pure) act of being, a metaphysical state that is not shared by the moved.

The difference between the two is significant. A Bañezian premover is postulated whenever a creature is a cause. For Aristotle prior to every motion there must be the removal of any impediment preventing the motion from happening. A premover removes this impediment, thus making possible a particular motion at a particular time. So for Aristotle there is a premotion and a premover whenever a cause is in act. The Aristotelian premover "brings about not some special participation of absolute being but, again explicitly, some relation, disposition, proximity that enables the mover to act upon the moved" (GF:71).

Aquinas did not assert a premotion that was natura prius. With Aristotle he held that the premover affects mover or moved indifferently. Yet he incorporated Aristotle's conception of a prior mover into a cosmology in which creation, not change, is first. Causation is always and

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<sup>336</sup>In VIII Phys., lect 2. Lonergan paraphrases Aquinas' commentary as follows: "A motion taking place at a given time presuppose more than the existence of mover and moved, else why did the motion not take place sooner? Obviously there must have been some inability or impediment to account for the absence of motion. With equal evidence this inability or impediment must have been removed when the motion was about to take place. It is even more evident that such removal must itself be another motion, prior to the motion in question; and though St. Thomas did not use the term, we may refer to this prior motion as a premotion. Finally, the premotion necessarily involves a premover and, if the problem of causation in time is to be solved, the premover must be distinct from the original mover and moved" (GF:70).

everywhere conditioned, and the ultimate fulfillment of conditions is not another conditioned cause, but a transcendent cause, or one beyond any finite cause.

Since no finite cause can create, it must presuppose the patient on which it acts, suitable relations between itself and its patient, and the noninterference of other causes. Over these conditions the finite cause has no control, for the conditions must be fulfilled before the finite cause can do anything.<sup>337</sup>

Provided certain conditions, e.g., suitable relations, certain things will act. "Other things being equal," the dam will prevent extensive damage. "Other things not being equal," however, the possible outcomes are many.

To take another illustration, imagine dry timber in a thirsty forest in the heat of early July and sparks from fireworks. Considered abstractly, the two conditions are potentially the cause of a forest fire. Concretely the two would have to be brought into right relation before an actual fire would occur. What is not so obvious is that there exists not just individual promotions, but a conditioned range of series, a sequence of sequences, of promotions forming a dynamic, intelligible, invisible pattern.

Hume could not get beyond an atomistic and image-bound analysis of causation because, although he had ideas, even the "liveliest" were "inferior to the dullest sensation." The intelligibility of causation is a secondary matter; of primary importance is the immediately perception or impression. If there is a pattern or series of relations, it is derived from and inferior to some "lively impression."

This analysis of causation is like "deriving" human acts from human diets (or human understanding from human phantasy). The two are related: too much food and drink and one wants to nap. But a diet conditions without determining the integration of the lower vegetative

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<sup>337</sup>OGSC:56.

activities by the higher order of human acts.<sup>338</sup> The broader view is that no matter how many nor how lively are one's immediate impressions, the intelligibility of the dynamic pattern is something altogether different.

A reason for defining knowing functionally is that it preserves what Hume had right -- we do in fact have impressions and without seeing red we cannot understand "red" -- without being reductively empiricist. For the empiricist "what causes trouble is that immediacy and causality are not conceived but merely imagined."<sup>339</sup> What is merely imagined is not known in the full sense, but known loosely. The psychological problem previously discussed is that insofar as we are human animals there is a duality in our knowing. Hume's account of knowing does not account for the duality, only one side of the duality.

In the example of a forest fire, one possible antecedent might be a traveller who carelessly tosses a sparkler from a car while driving in a dry area. There are, however, further conditions for this to occur: the direction of the wind, the dexterity of the driver, his strength, the physical forces acting on the flying sparkler, the position of the timber, its flammability, the position of the sun, etc. Each of these conditions, in turn, have their conditions. There is a difference, then, between an appeal to an imagined flow of discrete finite causes, on the one hand, and to the fulfillment of conditions for finite causes, on the other:

[T]hough the conditions are finite entities and negations of interference, though the conditions of the efficiency of one finite cause may be fulfilled by suitable operations and abstentions on the part of other finite causes, still it remains that all the other finite causes

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<sup>338</sup>To appreciate the interplay between biology and intelligence without being reductionist would require something like the analysis of horizontal and vertical finality. This also pertains to the interdependence between the seen as seen or the imagined as imagined (intelligible in potency) and the seen or imagined as understood (intelligible in act). Only in the latter is there an emanatio intelligibilis. On the interplay of horizontal and vertical finality see Lonergan, "Finality, Love, Marriage."

<sup>339</sup>OGSC:62.



equally are conditioned. Hence, appeal to other finite causes can do no more than move the problem one stage further back.<sup>340</sup>

On this broader view the series of Aristotelian premotions is quite intricate.<sup>341</sup> Intimations of its intricacy are had in pondering, for example, the myriad conditions making possible the birth and sustenance of one's philosophical or other interests. As one begins to enumerate some of these conditions, one sees that these conditions are likewise conditioned. And if this is the case, then there is no way to get behind the conditionality to appeal to unconditioned finite causes.

Let us pursue this further with a common example: a billiard set-up. One might argue that there is a first-cause for the event of the initial break. In fact, everything and everyone involved in making possible the event of the break, including the freely chosen act, have their fulfilling conditions. This is true for developments -- such as learning how to walk -- as well. "Since every development and every emergence depends upon a complex of events, only the cause of the order of the universe can be the sufficient ground for any development or emergence" (I:664). Whether one considers a billiard set-up or any other state of events, there is no unconditioned, finite first mover. Only an unconditioned first cause of the vast web of conditioned conditions could ground development and emergence. For Aquinas this first cause is God, and the vast web or conditioned conditions is creation. Lonergan describes the work of creation as

a master plan that envisages all finite causes at all instants throughout all time, that so orders all that each in due course has the conditions of its operation fulfilled and so fulfills conditions of the operation of others.<sup>342</sup>

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<sup>340</sup>OGSC:56.

<sup>341</sup>The general features of Lonergan's cosmology are given in Chapter 4 of *Insight*. His two major studies of St. Thomas were a great influence upon his understanding of "emergent probability." See Pat Byrne, "The Thomist Sources of Lonergan's Dynamic World View."

<sup>342</sup>OGSC:56.

### 4.3.3 Thomist Application

The law of premotion, when combined with the belief that the First Mover is a universal cause, "yields the theorem that God applies all agents to their activity" (GF:89). In Aristotelian cosmology, there was no first cause for contingent terrestrial events but only for the motions of the celestial spheres. Chance combinations of causes "arose simply from the multi-potentiality of prime matters and not at all from the plans of divine providence of which Aristotle knew nothing" (GF:77).<sup>343</sup> Prior to writing the Contra gentiles, Aquinas associated divine providence with Aristotelian premotion only "in a vague manner" (GF:80). But in the Contra gentiles the theorem of divine transcendence makes possible "the higher synthesis" of Aristotelian contingency and providence that places God above the created orders of necessity and contingency and asserts that "between terrestrial contingency and the causal certitude of providence there can be no incompatibility" (GF:79).<sup>344</sup>

#### 4.3.3.1 Picture-Thinking about Eternal Operation

Aristotle held that an accident is something occurring, not always or of necessity, but as a matter of chance. For him terrestrial contingent events happened without an apparent cause to which they could be reduced. There is no science of the contingent (per accident) "for every science is of that which exists always or for the most part, but the accident does not come under either of these."<sup>345</sup> Aquinas would agree that all terrestrial activity is contingent (per accidens)

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<sup>343</sup>Aristotle posited mediating celestial spheres that are capable of being moved by desire. Heavenly spheres, like sons of a Greek family, have a predictable course. Terrestrial bodies, like Greek slaves and domestic animals, wander about haphazardly.

<sup>344</sup>Cf. SCG III, 94.

<sup>345</sup>"An accident, then, is that which occurs, but not always nor of necessity nor for the most part. . . . it is clear why there is no science of such a thing; for every science is of that which exists

and transcends scientific knowing, but he also believed in the efficacy of divine providence. In adapting Aristotelian cosmology Aquinas had to face a question that did not occur to Aristotle: How are we to reconcile God's eternal and providential activity with temporal causes?

The Bañezian-Molinist controversy, as is typical of so many attempts to reconcile eternal and temporal causality, was tainted by temporal metaphors such as "foreknowledge" and "predestination." The problem is not so much with spatial-temporal metaphors as such, but with the limitations of what Lonergan would later call "picture thinking."<sup>346</sup> "Picture thinking" might imagine God's "foreknowledge" as a view-from-atop-the-mountain. What is going on below is present to the one above in a way that it is not to those below. If there is a truck going down the mountain and a motorcycle speeding up, it is possible that neither is aware of the other nor of the predictable ("predetermined") collision. But the one on top of the mountain has a pre-view of what is bound to occur. He sees it all about to happen.

This image, like the image of God (used by the "time thinkers") knowing today what will happen tomorrow -- looking into a heavenly crystal ball, can be misleading. Images qua images are potentially intelligible. Transcendent knowing and acting, which are not even extrinsically conditioned by space and time, are free of spatial and temporal restrictions. As unimaginable and eternal, they are best expressed in the present tense -- God knows, wills, creates.<sup>347</sup> God does not know events as future or past. In God's presence there is neither inside

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always or for the most part, but the accident does not come under either of these." Metaphysics XI, 8, 1065a1-5.

<sup>346</sup>The intelligible is intrinsically conditioned by neither space nor time; so we should add to the fallacy of "picture thinking" the fallacy of "time thinking." Being is contained in neither space nor time; space and time are within being, "outside" of which there is nothing. Cf. note # 62 (GF:103-104).

<sup>347</sup>The present tense is itself still lacking since our "now" is a temporal now that temporally follows what has been and temporally precedes what is yet to be. God's "now" is an atemporal, eternal "now" in which there is no succession. "There are no divine afterthoughts" (I:695).

nor outside, nor is there a yesterday, tomorrow, or today, only an eternal "now" to which everything is present.<sup>348</sup>

A helpful analogy for understanding how it is that God providentially grasps everything in an all-at-once eternal "now" is the way some composers can hold an idea of a concerto or symphony in their minds. The notes, movements, crescendos, interludes, etc., are grasped as an intelligible whole that is, from the "perspective" of the notes, instruments, and movements, transcendent. There is diversity in the single idea of the composer and there is a plurality of ideas in the procession of the Divine Word.<sup>349</sup> Alan Walker describes the unity of a musical masterpiece in terms of "a single background idea":

I should like to put forward a hypothesis about great musical structures. All the contrasts in a masterpiece are foreground projections of a single background idea. Masterpieces diversify a unity. Behind the shifting, kaleidoscopic variety of a great work's manifest music lies its latent idea, the inspired, unitive source which makes that variety meaningful.<sup>350</sup>

The analogy lags in that the composer's idea is typically a synthesis of many ideas, coming at the term of a creative process, and subject to many contingent conditions in many of which the composer has no input, whereas the divine idea is an infinite Word spoken eternally. Because of the different "time zone," the divinely composed symphony turns out to transcend what exists

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<sup>348</sup>Modern physics acknowledges that its objects, what it seeks to understand, need not be imaginable entities in imaginable space-time. This acknowledgement marks a decisive break with the umbilical cord to the imagination. The difficulty in first understanding, and secondly communicating what is super-natural is analogous to the same difficulties with the "principle of equivalence" in General Relativity. See Pat Byrne, "The Fabric of Lonergan's Thought," p. 26 footnote #8.

<sup>349</sup>Lonergan notes that the compatibility of the plurality of divine ideas with divine simplicity is a key element in Aquinas' theory of the inner word (V:6).

<sup>350</sup>Alan Walker, "Chopin and Musical Structure: An Analytic Approach," in Alan Walker (ed.), Frederick Chopin, (London: Barrie and Rockliff, 1966, p. 228.

either of necessity or contingently. It is indeed necessary, but in God's "now." What God knows is known infallibly, and so one can intelligently say "If God knows x, then x must be so." But God's knowledge of the "x" in the protasis is always present. It follows, if "x" is taken in the same sense in both protasis and apodosis, then the "x" in "x must be so" is also present, and "then x must be so" is hypothetically necessary (GF:105-106). The known qua known is not known as future. God's intellectual and volitional operation by which divine government occurs is hypothetically necessary: "For however infallible the knowledge, however irresistible the will, however efficacious the action, what is known, willed, effected, is no more than hypothetically necessary. And what hypothetically is necessary, absolutely may be necessary or contingent." (GF:107-108) The solution to the problem of contingency -- that what is known invariably must happen -- is to affirm the disproportion between the temporal order and the order of infallible knowing. What is in the second order is hypothetically necessary. It is conditional upon God's knowing and willing in a "now" unlike our now: "We must therefore say that fate, considered in regard to second cause, is changeable; but as subject to Divine Providence, it derives a certain unchangeableness, not of absolute but of conditional necessity."<sup>351</sup> What is known infallibly is indeed unchangeable, but what is infallibly known and unchangeable is not absolutely necessary, but conditionally so, i.e., contingent upon it being infallibly known and unchangeable.

#### 4.3.3.2 Doctrine of Divine Transcendence

The problem with imagining providence or creation happening "way back when" is that for God there is no "way back when." Divine knowing and willing lie outside the temporal order of beings in what Lonergan describes as "the logico-metaphysical simultaneity of the atemporal present" (GF:116). So the known qua known, which is hypothetically necessary, is not the

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<sup>351</sup>ST I, q. 116, a. 3.

known qua future, which is absolutely necessary. In addition to time and reality, the modes of reality -- necessity and contingency -- are part of the divine art work. From the First Cause all else proceeds, including different modes of being, such as the "necessary" and the "contingent." Divine proximate causes produce both necessary effects and contingent effects. What is divinely intended to be contingent is contingent (GF:I08).<sup>352</sup> And the production of a contingent effect is through a contingent, not a necessary, cause (GF:I09).<sup>353</sup>

By distinguishing hypothetical and absolute necessity, we are able to affirm that divine knowing, willing, and action are indeed infallible, but that what is known, willed, and effected is only hypothetically necessary; absolutely it may be contingent or necessary. This is what Lonergan calls "the doctrine of divine transcendence" (GF:I07). In the Contra gentiles the theorem of divine transcendence makes possible "the higher synthesis of Aristotelian contingency and Christian providence" (GF:79). The synthesis places God above the created orders of necessity and contingency by asserting that there is compatibility between terrestrial contingency and the causal certitude of providence (GF:79). By his will there are both proximate causes operating to produce necessary effects and proximate causes operating to produce contingent effects. A geometer not only makes triangles but makes them "equilateral or isosceles at his pleasure" (GF:I08).<sup>354</sup>

A theorem of divine transcendence, which places God above the orders of necessity and contingency, makes possible the formulation of a general law: All combinations resulting in

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<sup>352</sup>Cf. SCG III, 94: "So, it is obvious that, though divine providence is the direct cause of an individual future effect, and though it is so in the present, or in the past, indeed from eternity, it does not follow, . . . that this individual effect will come about of necessity. For divine providence is the direct cause why this effect occurs contingently."

<sup>353</sup>Cf. ST I, q. 19, a. 8.

<sup>354</sup>Consider dividing the animal kingdom into laughing and non-laughing categories. Now consider a pure spirit. A pure spirit transcends the order of the prior division.

motion, as well as all interferences with motion, are reducible to the First Cause. What Aristotle did not hold but what Aquinas, in faith, was led to investigate and finally affirm is that the intrinsic certitude of divine providence stands "above" the per accidens, and the pattern of contingent events is intelligible to God (GF:78-79):

It is possible for an effect to result outside the order of some particular cause; but not outside the order of the universal cause. . . . it is impossible for anything to occur outside the order of the Divine government.<sup>355</sup>

Without the general law one might argue that providence is certain in all cases because it is certain in each. But by affirming the law, one can affirm that providence is certain because it is the cause of all causes, i.e., certain in each because certain in all. God applies natural and voluntary agents to their activity without being an unqualified immediate efficient cause of each and every event.

Lonergan argues that when Aquinas writes of "application" -- the providentially caused relations and dispositions between mover and moved -- he does not mean physical predetermination but is simply adding irresistible, providential efficacy to Aristotelian premotion (GF:72-80). Providential efficacy refers to God as universal, as cause of causes, not in all cases because in each individually, but in each individually because as cause of the whole. That providence is an irresistible cause appears in the Contra gentiles, and not before, because there Aquinas saw clearly that divine providence is a certain cause of every combination or interference of terrestrial causes (GF:80). In the De veritate the certitude of providence with respect to necessary causes is affirmed in particulars and in general, but in the case of contingent causes it is affirmed only with regard to general results (GF:78).<sup>356</sup> The speculative problem of the

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<sup>355</sup>ST I, q. 103, a. 7.

<sup>356</sup>Cf DV q. 6, a. 3, c. Lonergan notes in this article an apparent exception: dogmatic grounds require the affirmation not just of the general results of predestination of the elect, but also the particular. But the exception is only apparent since the general result, not individual acts, is assured by "so many graces that either the predestined does not sin at all or, if he does, then he

irresistible efficacy of divine providence was settled "only when Aquinas settled down to the vast task of thinking out the Christian universe" (GF:80). Every agent operates when proper conditions are fulfilled; but these conditions have their conditions; and God is the universal and transcendent cause -- universal as cause of all causes, and transcendent cause as above the created orders of necessity and contingency. Aquinas thus succeeds in meshing Aristotelian premotion with his belief in a created world order.

#### 4.3.4 Universal Instrumentality: Participation

When Aquinas worked out that divine providence is certainly present and unimpeded in all combinations and interferences within the realm of terrestrial causes, in effect he was claiming that God operates in each operation and causes each causation. In this way Aristotelian contingency was made compatible with providence.

Lonergan finds in Aquinas' concept of universal instrumentality the blend of Aristotelian ideas of motion and terrestrial process with the "Platonist idea of universal causes, that is, of causes that necessarily are the causes of any effect within a given category" (GF:80). The result is universal instrumentality: every operation is not simply conditioned and thus operates when the conditions are fulfilled, but is also an instrument of the divine plan. An instrument "is a lower cause moved by a higher so as to produce an effect within the category proportionate to the higher"(GF:81).<sup>357</sup> This definition applies universally to all developments and all events since

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repents and rises again" (GF:78-79).

<sup>357</sup>Aquinas writes of instruments: "It is the nature of an instrument as instrument to move something else when moved itself. The motion by which the instrument is moved by the principal agent is therefore related to the instrument as a complete form is related to an agent acting of itself. It is in this way, for instance, that a saw works upon a bench. Now although the saw has an action which attaches to it in accordance with its own form, that is, to divide, nevertheless it has an effect which does not attach to it except in so far as it is moved by a craftsman, namely, to make a straight cut agreeing with a pattern. Thus an instrument has two operations, one which belongs to it according to its own form, and another which belongs to it in



they are all fulfilling conditions for further developments and events, and used by a higher agent:

[I]t follows that every created agent is an instrument in executing the divine plan; for its operation is the fulfillment of a condition for other events; and so it is used by a higher agent for an ulterior end. (I:664)

For example, the chemical processes in a liver participate in a living organ, producing effects proportionate to the functions of a liver. A well functioning liver, in turn, is moved by a higher cause and has effects within the category of psychoneural functions. All causes are finally used by a higher with the exception of the highest. So, in addition to giving being (creation) and conserving in being every created cause, God "uses the universe of causes as his instruments in applying each cause to its operation and so is the principal cause of each and every event as event."<sup>358</sup>

The operation of created causes as instruments beyond their proper proportion within the being of a higher cause is a participation in which lower causes participate in the productive capacity of the higher. The difficulty in conceiving this is in maintaining the disproportion.<sup>359</sup>

One way to maintain the disproportion is to distinguish three kinds of "finality." "Finality" refers neither to a substance nor an accident, nor to the first in a series, nor even to the last or end but to a relation to an end. Lonergan's triple distinction is as follows:

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so far as it is moved by the principal agent and which rises above the ability of its own form" (DV q. 27, a. 4). Other citations for the origin and accounts of "instrumentality" in Aquinas are given in note #82 (GF:81).

<sup>358</sup>OGSC:57. Lonergan finds in the interpretations of Aquinas which reduce God's role exclusively to creation and conservation a neglect of the Platonic influence on Aquinas' concept of universal causality. He specifically refers to H. Stufler, Gott der erste Beweger aller Dinge (Innsbruck: 1936) in note #83 (GF:81).

<sup>359</sup>Both "angelism," which absorbs the whole of human nature into what is highest in human nature, and "naturalism," which reduces rational powers to organic functions, violate the disproportion.

(1) Absolute finality. Every particular being, insofar as it is good, has both its source and destination in absolute goodness. Every created being is related to God as an end that is intrinsically good.

(2) Horizontal finality has to do with relations to an end proportionate to what a thing is: "[It] results from abstract essence; it holds even when the object is in isolation; it is to a motive or term that is proportionate to essence."<sup>360</sup> Horizontal finality by itself is abstract. It is a relation considered in isolation from other relations.

(3) Vertical finality adds concreteness to the abstract, it adds plurality to the isolated instance. It is the relation not of all things to God, nor of essence to proportionate end, but of a lower process to a higher end, one (relatively) supernatural to its own horizontal finality. Vertical finality is manifest in sciences such as biochemistry and biophysics, e.g., in the recognition that subatomic particles participate in biological processes without ceasing to be subatomic particles.

Lower orders may be subordinate to higher orders instrumentally, as when many brush strokes give rise to the beauty of a painting. But they might also be participative when subordination means entering into the being and doing of the superordinate. Chemicals somehow participate in organs; living organs somehow participate in animal life. Horizontal finality is "more essential," but vertical finality is "more excellent":

Thus the essential end of oxygen is to perform the offices of oxygen as oxygen; but its more excellent end is its contribution to the maintenance of human life, and this end oxygen attains not in isolation nor per se but in combination with other elements within the human biological process.<sup>361</sup>

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<sup>360</sup>FLM:22.

<sup>361</sup>FLM:22. The biological and neurological processes underpinning the flow of images in humans have the "more essential" relations to their respective proportionate ends, but have the "more excellent" relations of participating in higher ends. For example, on a merely biological level, eating and drinking are vital activities for the sustenance of life. In addition to this end, however, eating and drinking have the "more excellent" relations as fulfilling the conditions for

Ultimately vertical finality is governed supernaturally, i.e., beyond any and all natural orders. Vertical finality is, as Lonergan writes about it, "of the very idea of our hierarchic universe, of the ordination of things devised and exploited by the divine Artisan."<sup>362</sup> This so-called "ordination of things" is comprehensive, a whole beyond the singularity of parts or aggregates. If intermediaries act, they must have some participation in the proportion of the principal mover.<sup>363</sup> Because there is such a comprehensive pattern of relations of caused causes and moved movers any analysis of human acts that considers these acts in abstraction from their participation in vertical finality is finally inadequate.

#### 4.3.5 Summary of Universal Instrumentality and the Analogy of Operation

An emerging order of relations might bring across our paths an inspiring author, an opportunity, a possible course of action. These might appear coincidental. Many, many "other things had to be equal" for these to occur.

Initially Aquinas conceived the divine operation in the operation of creatures along the lines of creation and conservation. This position was refined when in the Contra gentiles his idea of providence developed further. There Aquinas argues that the creature's causation is caused by creation, conservation, and universal instrumentality, or universal finality in which lower agents

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the emergence of and participating in the being and the doing of human acts. We eat in order to live, but the excellence of our living is not reducible to eating habits.

<sup>362</sup>FLM:22. Elsewhere Lonergan describes the emergence of higher from lower: "For it is only as an instrument operating beyond its own proportion that the lower, as long as it is lower, can bring about and participate in the constitution of the higher; and it is only the cause of the whole universe that from lower species can bring about the emergence of successive higher species." "Mission and Spirit," 3C:24.

<sup>363</sup>"That participation is called fate; it is the dynamic pattern of world events, the totality of relations that constitute the combinations and interferences of created causes; it stands in the created order to the uncreated plan of the divine artisan as the vibrations of the ether stand to the inspiration of Beethoven" (GF:89).

participate in relationships to ends beyond the ends proportionate to their essence. Human participation is unique. While "divine providence extends to all singular things, even to the least," humans are subject to providence both as governed and as "able to know the rational plan of providence in some way."<sup>364</sup>

Lonergan writes that in the Thomist "analogy of operation" there is an affirmation "that the causation of the created cause is itself caused; that it is a procession which is made to proceed; that it is an operation in which another operates." (GF:88) If causality is imagined as an influx, then divine motion denotes God's ceaseless intervention in immediately causing every event. On the other hand, one can conceive of God as an immediate efficient cause if one means by "immediate" something like "never being a means" and conceives efficient causality as a relation of dependence. This way of conceiving immediate causality does not preclude the existence of other causes. Nor does it preclude God from also being a "mediate cause" if this phrase denotes a property predicated of a cause that uses a mediating agent. Mediate causality is predicated of A, the first in some causal series, when A uses B as an intermediate cause. God is proximate cause according to the efficacy of the action but not according to the order of the list of causes. Divine providence is genuinely present in each case because it is the cause of all causes. God applies all agents to their activity without being the unqualified immediate efficient cause of every event. Aquinas regarded insistence on God's unqualified immediacy as "utterly frivolous."<sup>365</sup>

It should be noted that the analogy of operation is a general theorem and that, unlike

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<sup>364</sup>SCG III, I13. What does it mean for humans actively to govern, to participate in divine providence? In Insight Lonergan writes of becoming "executors of emergent probability," (227) which is what happens compactly in planning a vacation, raising a family, or educating a younger generation.

<sup>365</sup>"As to the slanderous objection that God is more the proximate cause than free choice is, that is utterly frivolous, for God is the proximate cause according to the efficacy of the action and not according to the order in which causes are listed." Responsio ad Magistrum Ioannem de Vercellis de 108 articulis, q. 74, cited OGSC:62.

similar versions which presuppose a First Mover, it does not make predictions about particular motions, for example future celestial motions, but outlines the dynamics of any and all motions known or supposed (GF:88). It is more like the theorem of acceleration than either the experience or description of "going really fast" on a roller coaster. The theorem states that every mover and cause, with the exception of the First, is a moved mover and a caused cause because they are subjects of requisite relations that are provided from beyond the mover or cause itself.

As general, the theorem covers all movers and causes, including movement of the will and the efficient causality involved in deciding, choosing, doing. The analogy of application stipulates that every created mover is itself moved, that every agent operates when the conditions for operating are fulfilled. The flame from the grill and the steak have to be in the right relation for cooking to occur. But it is not just the steak and flame, but every single agent and patient that depends upon a complex set of events which is itself dependent upon further conditions. The dynamic order providing right relations is beyond the means of any finite cause or mover, and each finite cause participates in the dynamic order, not through successive and ceaseless maneuvers on the part of the Orderer, but through the unity of the dynamic order (GF:76-77).<sup>366</sup> In this order, every agent or operation is an instrument for further agents and operations, since every action or operation is the fulfilling conditions for other events.

In the next section we will explore the indirect control of human freedom that is implicit in the theorem of universal instrumentality and participation. Indirect control is a corollary of the theorem of operation. If operation presupposes premotion according to the general theorem, then the divine Artisan indirectly moves each operation by creating the whole pattern of relations. Free acts emerge from antecedent situations over which those same free acts have no direct control.

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<sup>366</sup>In arguing that God's knowledge is not discursive, Aquinas quotes Augustine: "Augustine says (De Trinitate, XV), God does not see all things in their particularity or separately, as if He saw alternately here and there; but He sees all things together at once." ST I, q. 14, a. 7.

This acknowledgement of indirect control upon human acts is not a denial of essential freedom, but an expansion in the direction of greater concreteness. Most basically humans are free not because we act unreasonably or stupidly at times, which we do as a matter of fact, but because of the ineradicable terrestrial contingency of what is, what is known, and what is willed.<sup>367</sup> There are, in effect, many contingent limitations and controls that condition the essential freedom discussed above. To take a few examples, being essentially free to compose a symphony, understand quantum mechanics, or cut down on coffee-consumption is not the same as the effective freedom to do these things. Essentially free, humans are effectively limited by both direct and indirect controls.<sup>368</sup>

#### 4.4 Indirect Control, Effective Freedom, and Human Solidarity

##### 4.4.1 Indirect Control

The analogy of operations is a general theorem claiming that all operations are operations in which another operates. When conditions happen to be fulfilled, there is operation. The fulfillment of conditions is dependent upon other pre-moved events, and so on, while the occurrence of the entire sequence of events has for its condition a First Cause. The dependence upon prior pre-motions, when applied to human acts, is what is meant by the "indirect control."

Both specification of the will by the intellect and exercise or act of will caused by the will are conditioned by "a dynamic pattern of relations -- the pattern through which the design of the divine artisan unfolds in natural and human history" (GF:84). In addition to God's creation and conservation of a self-moving will, there exist both internal and external antecedent conditions

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<sup>367</sup>"Man is not free because he can be unreasonable in his choices. Rather the root of freedom lies in the contingency of the formal intelligibility of proportionate being. Because such intelligibility is contingent, it cannot guarantee its own existence or occurrence" (I:621).

<sup>368</sup>Direct control of the will was examined above. See section 4.2.I.3.

through which control human acts are indirectly controlled. These two sets of indirect control (internal and external) constitute, as it were, the "facticity" or "historicity" of human freedom. Free acts emerge from and are conditioned by antecedents over which free acts have no direct control. "It follows that it is possible for God to manipulate these antecedents and through such manipulation to exercise a control over free acts themselves" (GF:II5).<sup>369</sup>

Internal indirect control refers to native intellectual ability as well as things like temperament, mood, aptitude, and disposition. All of these things are mutable and have their source in something higher that is immutable.<sup>370</sup> These factors condition biological, psychoneural, intellectual and volitional development. Like all events and developments, these have their causes, which in turn are caused causes. In other words, they are pre-moved according to the general law that only the cause of the entire order of motions and causes can be sufficient ground for development or emergence (I:664).

Consider, for example, the concrete conditions for the emergence and then the development of musical genius. There are many, many internal conditions ("other things being equal") having to do with temperament, imagination, artistic talent, etc., for the emergence of a Mozart. Although he was free to develop and use his talent, he was not free to choose these many internal conditions. These conditions are part of the indirect control over human acts.

More generally, we might consider the occurrence of understanding. In the act of understanding there emerges a suitable relation between the intellect and an illuminated phantasm.

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<sup>369</sup>Cf ST I, q. 103, a. 5 ad 3m; SCG III, c. 113; SCG III, c. 90.

<sup>370</sup>"Whereas matters pertinent to bodily things, whether they are internal or external, when they come within the use of man, are governed by God by means of the angels and the celestial bodies. Now, in general, there is one reason for this. Everything that is multiform, mutable, and capable of defect must be reducible to a source in something that is uniform, immutable, and capable of no defect. But all things that are within our power are found to be multiple, variable and defectible" (SCG III, c. 91.).

This relation is contingent. The conditions for making limited judgments are what happen to be the case.<sup>371</sup> In an essay tracing the compatibility of contingency with a so-called post-modern concern for what is "other," Fred Lawrence describes the conditionality or situatedness of understanding by noting some of the internal factors:

Aside from the biases causing selective inattention to different areas of possible inquiry, there is the sheer historicity of the lower manifolds of the sensing subject. Some people just see or hear less well than others. But there is also the conditioning of the psyche with its feelings and images. Since insight is into, or occurs in, data represented through feeling-laden images, it can rightly be spoken of as "bubbling up" in a person's psyche. But understanding is also dependent upon the asking of questions. What kinds of questions a person is liable to ask depends on all sort of internal and external conditions.<sup>372</sup>

External indirect control refers to the situations which intellect apprehends and in which the will has to choose (GF:115).<sup>373</sup> Again, since the sufficient grounds for the emergence of events and situations is the cause of the entire order, the Orderer indirectly controls human acts by indirectly controlling all situations. And the Orderer indirectly controls all situations by controlling the entire pattern in which situations emerge. A field of action in which there is more than one course of action possible -- a part of Aquinas' theory of freedom -- is a conditioned emergent.

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<sup>371</sup>"The virtually unconditioned can be grasped, if fulfillment of its conditions happens to be given. And the fulfillment can never be more than what happens, for the fulfillment consists in the occurrence of relevant data, and the occurrence of data, like all occurrence, is contingent. For it merely happens that I exist, that I experience in such and such a manner, etc." (I: 616).

<sup>372</sup>Fred Lawrence, "The Fragility of Consciousness: Lonergan and the Postmodern Concern for the Other."

<sup>373</sup>"It is clear that our acts of choice have the character of multiplicity, since choices are made of different things, by different people, in different ways. They are also mutable, both because of the instability of the mind, which is not firmly fixed on the ultimate end, and also because of the fluctuating character of the things which provide our circumstantial environment" (SCG III, q. 91, §4).



Since internal and external indirect controls over human acts are all parts of a design that is single and comprehensive, these controls mix. Take, for example, the occurrence of this practical insight concerning what to do about the tomato worms in one's garden. Like the seeing and hearing and even the emergence of the question "What should I do about these worms?", the practical insight is conditioned both internally and externally, both by sensitive and intellectual development and by the external situation that gives rise to the question.

Like all finite operations, the occurrence of practical understanding is dependent upon a number of pre-motions, themselves pre-moved according to "a dynamic pattern of relations." It is a complex event, conditioned by biological and psychoneurological manifolds which make up the conscious but largely unknown sensitive flow of our lives.<sup>374</sup>

The sensible or imaginable presentations are modified until they form a suitable phantasm, i.e., until intellect and mover of intellect are in the right relationship.<sup>375</sup> Assuming that the question has occurred, what happens is that the phantasm is modified until there is a suitable relationship between the image and the intellect. When understanding occurs, it is a new emergence that gives unity to what otherwise would be a mere aggregate.<sup>376</sup> Prior conditions set

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<sup>374</sup>This sensitive flow, moreover, is not static but developing, as is evident in the formation of skills in children. Lonergan writes: "In the normal state, there is a spontaneous adaptation and adjustment between the orientations of intellectual and psychoneural development. But even perfect adjustment does not dispense one from the necessity of acquiring sensitive skills and habits and, until they are acquired, one is not free to speak a foreign language or to play the violin merely by taking thought" (I:622). The conditions for speaking a foreign language or playing the violin are internally and externally indirectly controlled. The development of these abilities and, more generally, of any skills or habits, is conditioned by the "pattern of world order."

<sup>375</sup>"For the agent operates in accord with the pattern of world order when the conditions of the operation are fulfilled" (I:664).

<sup>376</sup>"The prototype of emergence is the insight that arises with respect to an appropriate image; without the insight, the image is a coincidental manifold; by the insight the elements of the image become intelligibly united and related; moreover, accumulations of insights unify and relate ever greater and more diversified ranges of images, and what remains merely coincidental from a lower viewpoint becomes systematic from the accumulation of insights in a higher viewpoint" (I:481).

the stage for deliberating, deciding, choosing and acting since two of the essential elements of human freedom are (1) a field of action with at least two possible outcomes, and (2) an intellect capable of working out at least two possible actions. An act of willing is pre-moved by an act of intellect specifying some content; an act of intellect is pre-moved by some phantasm; and phantasm is pre-moved by the historical situation.<sup>377</sup>

We do play a part in this process -- modifying the phantasm, raising related questions, asking for input or advice from a wise person, and, assuming the practical insight has occurred, acting responsibly. These are voluntary acts. Understanding what should be done is a received operation (pati).

#### 4.4.2 Effective Freedom

Like other "existential" thinkers, Lonergan is less concerned with abstract necessity, a hypothetical state of pure nature, or some possible but non-existent world order, than he is with the existing world order and the contingent limitations on the effective freedom that we do in fact experience. These contingent limitations are conditions under which the normative first principles native to authentic human action are operative.

We have to consider these two things at once if we are to understand Lonergan as an existentialist who learned much from Aquinas: (1) there exist first principles and natural laws of authentic knowing and choosing, but they are not to be confused with the formulations of these principles; and (2) there exists a dynamic, emerging and hierarchical order that is first, conditioning from every side our knowing and choosing, setting the conditions under which first principles are operative. Either one of these points without the other is only half the truth.

In addition to the limitations of indirect control of external conditions as well as the

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<sup>377</sup>Lonergan, "Pantôn Anakephalaiôsis" [The Restoration of All Things. Hereafter citations will appear simply as "Restoration."]

indirect control of both psychoneural and intellectual development, there is another and related limiting factor. Any human act is partially determined by the willingness to do some things and the unwillingness to do others. In other words, much of what we do is habitually done according to a "law of psychological continuity" (GF:48-54). For example, there may exist the antecedent willingness (or habit) of physical exercise, in which case persuasion is unnecessary and one finds pleasure in exercising. When the antecedent willingness and habit do not exist, however, one has to be persuaded.<sup>378</sup>

Just as a development of practical intelligence increases the range of possible courses to be considered, so too the expansion of willingness opens up possible courses of actions to be carried out. These two processes are genetically linked -- one of learning, the other of developing an antecedent willingness that more and more closely approximates what Lonergan describes as "the universal willingness that matches the unrestricted desire to know [which] is indeed a high achievement" (I:624).

Effective freedom is the "thin strip of autonomy" that remains in spite of both God's direct control over the basic orientation of willing and God's indirect control over both external situations and of psychoneural, intellectual and volitional development. Although what is known and what is willed are known and willed contingently, or conditioned by a "dynamic pattern of relations unfolding in natural and human history," still a human act is a unique case of contingent emergence. Unlike other contingent events, a human act is one in which a moved mover is responsible for his or her motion. The free action is not a consequent but rather a contingent emergence "that both decides in favor of the object or against it and that constitutes the subject as deciding reasonably or unreasonably" (I:619). The reasonable and known-to-be-reasonable

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<sup>378</sup>This limitation might be insurmountable depending upon how open one is to what is strange. "But persuasion takes time, and until that time is devoted to persuading oneself or to being persuaded by others, one remains closed to otherwise possible courses of action" (I:623).

course of action is not always the chosen one. The peculiarity of human freedom is this: both the intended object, the to-be-done, and the extension of practical knowing into practical doing, are contingent.<sup>379</sup>

The contingency of what is, of its being known, and of its being willed is consistent with Aquinas' claim that in practical matters what is true is the same for everyone only in regard to the common principles.<sup>380</sup> His position is clearly a "situational" ethics, not in a relativistic sense, but in the sense that practical decisions always involve a prudent (or not-so-prudent) decision based on a particular, unique grasp of a particular, concrete situation. In particular, the natural capacity to discern good and evil is attributed to both *synderesis* and right reason.<sup>381</sup> Phenomenologically, right reason refers to contingent (pre-moved) deliberating, evaluating, and deciding about contingent (pre-moved), particular, concrete situations. What the mean is in any concrete situation is worked out by prudence, and it will vary from person to person.<sup>382</sup> Prudence, which relates both to the particular and the universal, is not in us from nature but from teaching and experience,<sup>383</sup> which is also to say that it is subject to myriad contingencies. Application of specific precepts that result from the exercise of practical reason is a discursive process. As

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<sup>379</sup>"The reasonableness of human acts of will is not a natural endowment but an ever uncertain personal achievement. . . . The decision, then, is not a consequent but a new emergence." *Insight*, pp. 616 & 619.

<sup>380</sup>ST I-II q. 94, a. 4, c. "But as to the proper conclusions of the practical reason, neither is the truth nor rectitude the same for all, nor, where it is the same is it equally known by all."

<sup>381</sup>ST I, q. 79, a. 12, ad. 3.

<sup>382</sup>"Medium non eodem modo invenitur in omnibus." ST II-II, q. 47, a. 7, c.

<sup>383</sup>"The means to the end, in human concerns, far from being fixed, are of manifold variety according to the variety of persons and affairs. Wherefore since the inclination of nature is ever to something fixed, the knowledge of those means cannot be in man naturally, although by reason of his natural disposition, one man has a greater aptitude than another in discerning them, just as it happens with regard to the conclusions of speculative sciences." ST II-II, q. 47, a. 15, c.

discussed above, this process is controlled directly and indirectly and defies being reduced to law.

Application that is intelligent defies easy reduction to law because

inner words proceed according to the principles of identity, non-contradiction, excluded middle, and sufficient reason; but these principles are not specific laws but the essential conditions of there being objects to be related by laws and relations to relate them. (V:33)

This does nothing to diminish the essential primacy of synderesis, the habit of practical understanding that is from nature. Rather, it is a recognition that since the capacity and activity of discerning good and evil are attributed to both a natural habit and a process of reasoning, prior to the process we do not know the specific external term but only the general term. Vernon Bourke formulates the essential primacy of synderesis: "Synderesis is another formulation of the rule: that there are some things that a decent person will do and others that he will not do."<sup>384</sup>

Aquinas uses the example of returning borrowed goods. Should they be returned? Well, it depends on the situation. In other words, the application of this precept is conditioned by the intelligibility of the situation, and this intelligibility is reached through a process of reasoning leading up to insights. Goods need not necessarily be restored to their owner in all cases. Sometimes it simply would not be such a good idea.

In this situation there might be an appeal to some higher principle, such as "do no harm." But like any principle, it is not self-interpreting and is meaningfully applied in and through a practical insight. Practical reason is that process of determining what to do, given this or any principle, in this or that particular case. With both specific principles -- such as "let no one who is insane harm either self or others" -- and general principles -- such "seek the good and avoid evil" -- the principle is concretely applied by a process of practical reasoning by the prudential person on the spot. Every case will entail a potency-to-act reduction, since every case

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<sup>384</sup>See Vernon Bourke. "The Synderesis Rule and Right Reason."

will entail a contingent situation that is known contingently. No situation will be the same since the operabile emerge in different forms with differing details, and an attempt, even by a wise person, to take account of each and every case in all its detail, results in "muddle."<sup>385</sup> Changes in human laws are permitted not only because human reason advances only gradually from the imperfect to the perfect, but also because of changing conditions.<sup>386</sup> To claim that the operabile is changing is but another way of saying that a good to-be-done is contingent in its being, in its being known, and in its being willed. Contingency does not, however, imply unintelligibility. It is reasonable simultaneously to hold that reasoning is a contingent process, new forms of the operabile develop rapidly, and the process of "chasing" the operabile is governed by certain norms.

What preserves the scope and authority of practical reason and practical wisdom is their concrete generality. Prudence mediates between the rigors of moral science and the particularity of hitting the mean in any particular situation. So even though the mean varies,<sup>387</sup> determining the mean in any situation is not haphazard. Such determination depends upon something that is permanent and invariant: the light of intellect which contains virtute all knowledge and is potens omnia facere. All commands and all precepts flow from and converge on a single root (in una radice) and have the character of the first principle of practical reason.<sup>388</sup> The unity behind the diversity and the reason why all precepts have the character of natural law and are ultimately based

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<sup>385</sup>ST I-II q. 96, a. 6, ad. 3.

<sup>386</sup>"On the part of man, whose acts are regulated by law, the law can be rightly changed on account of the changed conditions of man, to whom different things are expedient according to the difference of his condition" (ST I-II, q. 97, a. 1, c).

<sup>387</sup>"It belongs to the ruling of prudence to decide in what manner and by what means man shall obtain the mean of reason in his deeds." ST II-II, q. 47, a. 7, c. "Since, however, the mean as such is not found in all matters after the same manner . . ." (Ibid, ad. 3m).

<sup>388</sup>ST I-II, q. 94, a. 2, ad 1.

on one foundation is the light of intellect.

#### 4.4.3 Human Solidarity

The whole order that is prior to the parts and conditioning all intellectual and volitional acts implies both a factual and moral human solidarity.<sup>389</sup> Achievements and oversights, as well as beneficent and malevolent acts of others alive and deceased, as a matter of fact condition the possible emergence of present understanding and present choice. Even the few creative artists, scientists, and philosophers are heavily indebted. Lonergan writes:

Any new idea is gestated by the situation of successive centuries, is brought to birth by some chance individual meeting the postulate of the situation, immediately becomes the property of all affected by the situation as though the individual were but the instrument for general development.<sup>390</sup>

The pattern of pre-motions that conditions (1) the appearance of phantasms, (2) the grasp of an intelligibilities in the phantasms, (3) the specifications of the will, and (4) the habit or willingness to do certain things is, in good part, an inheritance. The divine artisan remains the principal cause, but humans act as instruments. We act individually, according to a given orientation and way of life. Still, any given orientation, or any given character, results from operations in the intellect and will, which in turn are conditioned without being determined by some historic situation. So there is an indebtedness of each individual to all: "No person is self-determined; no person fails to make things better or worse for the emergence of future personalities. This orientation of all men to all men is a moral personality."<sup>391</sup>

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<sup>389</sup>In his later writings Lonergan treats human solidarity in his discussion of the primacy of interpersonal relations and what he calls "development from above downward." These will be discussed in Chapter Five, section 2.

<sup>390</sup>"Restoration," p. 146.

<sup>391</sup>"Restoration," p. 152. "It follows that 'person' is never a general term. It always denotes

To speak of solidarity is not to deny the differences in sensitive, intellectual and volitional development, and most radically, differences in orientation. Because of these differences the horizon of what is meaningful and of value, and to a large extent habitually known and lived for one person or group of people, might be strange, unfamiliar, unthinkable, or unimaginable for another person or group of people, or even for the same person or group of people at another time. What is beyond one's horizon is perhaps known only as an unknown, or perhaps it is entirely unknown. In any case one's horizon expands in intellectual and moral development, and the greater the development, "the broader the base from which one can move towards still further insights and, perhaps, the greater is the facility with which one can reach them" (I:623).<sup>392</sup> In this expansion there is a primordial indebtedness to others.

### Conclusion

The choice of the will is but a particular instance of the general theorem governing terrestrial events: each caused causing participates in providence through the dynamic order of the universe. God conditions human freedom, "govern[ing] above its self-governance, to set the stage and guide the reactions and give each character its personal role in the drama of life." (GF:II6)<sup>393</sup>

The field of action, the nature and number of possible outcomes, the working out and

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this or that person with all of his or her individual characteristics resulting from the communities in which he has lived and through which he has been formed and has formed himself. The person is the resultant of the relationships he has had with others and of the capacities that have developed in him to relate to others." Lonergan, *Philosophy of God and Theology*, pp. 58-59.

<sup>392</sup>Since the being of men and women "is being in process" and their "existing lies in development" (I:625), there is a permanent problem of sustaining development. "The problem is radical, for it is a problem in the very dynamic structure of cognitional, volitional and social activity. It is not a question of error on this or that general or particular issue. It is a question of orientation, approach, procedure, method" (I:631).

<sup>393</sup>"[A]bove the government whereby the rational creature governs itself as master of its own act, it requires to be governed by God" (ST I, q. 103, a. 5, ad 3m).



apprehension of these possible outcomes, a non-determined will and the willingness to move in favor of a particular outcome -- all part of Aquinas' theory of the will -- are conditioned events. Essentially humans are free; effectively our essential freedom is limited. Still, none of the conditions effectively limiting our essential freedom determines actual choice. "[T]he will has its strip of autonomy, yet beyond this there is the ground from which free acts spring; and that ground God holds as a fencer moves his whole rapier by grasping only the hilt." (GF:143) The recognition of indirect control is not a denial of essential freedom, but an expansion in the direction of greater concreteness.

By situating the dynamics of intellect and will within the larger context of universal instrumentality, Lonergan parts ways with the modern liberal and existential approaches which side-step the God-question and attempt to conceive of human freedom as absolute and independent of a higher cause.

The root problem in reconciling divine efficacy, what Lonergan calls the "certitude of providence," with human freedom, is the attempt to make the former fit into the categories pertaining to the latter. The categories of contingency, temporality, spatiality, even necessity do not apply to God's efficacious actions. Nothing is either future, past, behind, in front, contingent or even necessary to God. God's efficacy in any and all operations transcends the orders of necessity and contingency. "God alone has the property of self-transcendence" (GF:116).

With regard to the possibility of human freedom, what preserves its integrity is the distinction drawn between vertical and horizontal finality. There can be a self-governing beneath an other-governing when one distinguishes what the self-governing is in itself from that same self-governing as participating in what is disproportionate and transcendent. The analogy of operation states that all operations are operations in which another operates. When the conditions happen to be fulfilled, there is operation. The fulfillment of conditions is dependent upon other pre-moved events, and so on, while the occurrence of the entire sequence of events has

for its condition a First Cause. Free human acts, like any operations, fall under the "general law" of universal instrumentality. Aquinas' conception of God differed from Aristotle's.<sup>394</sup> When Aquinas sought to understand how an eternal operation has effects that are not only temporal but temporally distributed -- i.e., not always and constantly occurring at every moment -- he had to show how the universal order of caused causes is an instrument of divine providence.

Within this order "vertical finality" refers to the relation of any lower process to a higher end. Every agent and every operation is related to an end proportionate to its being. This proportionate end is "natural" but not isolated or "pure."<sup>395</sup> Every agent and every operation is related to a higher end insofar as by vertical finality processes are related to and participate in higher processes, i.e., processes that are disproportionate to the natural relations of horizontal finality.<sup>396</sup> For example, in humans biological and psychoneurological processes have the "more essential" relations to their respective proportionate ends. Eating and drinking sustain life. These

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<sup>394</sup>"Aristotle held that God moved all things by being the object of love for the intelligences or the animated spheres; but to St. Thomas God was more -- transcendental artisan planning history: 'Deus igitur per suum intellectum omnia movet ad proprios fines'" (GF:84).

<sup>395</sup>Lonergan considers the possibility of a state of pure nature a marginal theorem, not a central doctrine. There is a tendency to conceive finite natures as first, rather than subordinate to the whole. Lonergan relates this tendency to essentialism and conceptualism: "The real issue, the one momentous in its consequences, lies between the essentialist and conceptualist tendency and, on the other hand, the existential and intellectualist tendency." "The Natural Desire to See God," CWL 4:90-91.

<sup>396</sup>Vertical finality is a crucial notion for understanding the relations between the natural and supernatural orders. By distinguishing horizontal and vertical finality one can draw a line between what something is of itself and what that something is in its sharing in the infinite. This allows one to speak of what is "natural" both per se and as participating in what is supernatural. Lonergan does not claim to invent this (theorem of the supernatural): "in the writings of St. Albert and St. Thomas, the supernatural is a scientific theorem: it has an exact philosophic definition; its implications are worked out and faced" (GF:13). See also J. Michael Stebbins The Divine Initiative: Grace, World Order, and Human Freedom in the Early Writings of Bernard Lonergan, pp. 76-92.

same processes have the "more excellent" relations as both fulfilling the conditions for the emergence of human acts and participating in these human acts. The excellence of human life is more than eating and drinking, but it is a higher integration of eating and drinking. It is not just a will or an intellect that desires happiness; it is an incarnate person who hungers and thirsts.<sup>397</sup>

Human acts can be studied as a combination of intellectual and volitional acts, known through their respective objects. Still, humans are not isolated existents, but parts of a whole which is prior to the parts. Just as the family precedes the individual, the larger community is prior to the family, and the history of different peoples is still prior to the larger community, world-process is prior to any and all parts. Thus, the primary meaning of "human nature" is not an abstractly considered individual essence but an immanent intelligibility of the world-process.<sup>398</sup>

This whole is a dynamic, hierarchical, conditioned, and emerging order in which any possible field of action refers to emergent possibilities conditioned by the dynamic whole.

For example, the pre-existing and psychically- and socially-embedded conceptions and expectations, the emergence of novel questions, the instruments and observations, and the speculative breakthroughs that make possible the discovery of quantum theory in the 20th century, or the systematic integration of the theorem of the supernatural in the 13th century, are contingent, i.e., contingent upon many, many other events. In both cases there is a solidarity that is the object studied in different ways by historical research, by a sociology or psychology of knowledge, and by metaphysics of motion and premotion. The general doctrine that handles the

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<sup>397</sup>Aquinas quotes the prophet Isaiah in arguing that bodily perfection is required for happiness: "You shall see and your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like an herb" (Isaiah 66:14). ST I-II q. 4, a. 6.

<sup>398</sup>"What about the axiom, 'Nihil in natura frustra'? If nature is taken as world order, the principle is certainly valid, for there is no possible world order that is not in accord with divine wisdom and divine goodness, and whatever is in accord with that wisdom and goodness is not in vain." "The Natural Desire to See God," CWL 4:87.

universality of divine influence is Aristotelian premotion. "While later theologians were preoccupied with divine control of the will, Aquinas was preoccupied with the Aristotelian theorem that all terrestrial activity is contingent." (GF:77)<sup>399</sup>

A moral philosopher does not have to proceed this way, nor even have to read Aquinas' treatises on happiness or habits with this in mind. The Prima secundae is a masterpiece in human psychology. Its emphasis is on tendency to the good and happiness as an activity. But in these questions Aquinas is not investigating universal instrumentality, or how a human act is itself caused so as to produce an effect within a higher category. Nor is he seeking to explain how humans are subject to divine providence both as governed and as governing -- "able to know the rational plan of providence in some way."<sup>400</sup>

To do justice to the scope of Aquinas' ultimate purpose, i.e., to think about virtue, habit, human acts, happiness in the context of ultimate order, one must consider the big picture, the general context of the Thomist concept of "universal instrumentality," the dynamic order of primary and secondary causality in which human acts have both a proportionate, "natural" (or essential) end as well as a higher, "supernatural," excellent end that does not abolish the first end.

In this chapter I have gone beyond the limited analysis of the terms and relations involved in consciously knowing (in a strict sense) to examine Lonergan's retrieval of Aquinas' developed theory of human freedom. I have also shown how human acts are situated within the larger context of universal instrumentality, and that it is this larger scope that enables us to make sense out of indirect control over human acts and the fact of factual and moral solidarity.

In the fifth and final chapter I analyze the "existential ethics" that incorporates the

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<sup>399</sup>"St. Thomas with his firmer grasp of wider principles saw that the need of some divine influence was universal; indeed, the problem of the initium consiliandi was but a particular case of the more general doctrine of Aristotelian premotion" (GF:100).

<sup>400</sup>SCG III, 113.

distinctions, theorems, definitions, and method of the previous four chapters. The analysis of process, intelligible emanation, and direct and reflective insights is expanded to give a functional definition of human freedom. The analysis of consciousness is preserved and enlarged to include the unique "self-taste" of responsibility corresponding to the "notion of the good." The critical problem is reconsidered as well. It is not simply a problem of self-knowledge, but of self-choice, where what is chosen are both the invariant norms of human consciousness ("laws of spirit") and an acceptance of the limiting conditions of historicity.

## Chapter Five

### Existential Ethics

In the previous chapter I investigated how the theorem of the supernatural and the distinction between "horizontal" and "vertical" finality preserve both the disproportion and the compatibility between terrestrial contingency -- taken generally and inclusive of human acts -- and primary causality. I also explored how the analogy of operation stipulates that every cause and mover except the first is a caused cause and moved mover, and that given the unity and priority of world order, every cause and mover is also an instrument of the divine artisan, "an operation in which another operates" (GF:88). One of the implications of this completely general theorem, which seems to have occurred to Aquinas while writing the Summa contra gentiles, is that human acts emerge from and are conditioned by antecedents over which humans have no control. There are determining or controlling factors which effectively "horizon" human freedom.

Once we recognize the pervasiveness of indirect control, the difficulty is how to steer between the Scylla of mere concreteness, of deconstructivist revelling "almost to the point of vertigo in the aleatory possibilities of being otherwise,"<sup>401</sup> on the one hand, and the Charybdis of remote, static maxims, on the other. I propose in this final chapter a way of conceiving an existential ethics that is able to do this. It is an ethics that is faithfully and deeply rooted both in the critical intellectualism of Lonergan's Verbum and in the general theorem of pre-motion and operation which he finds in Aquinas.

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<sup>401</sup>Fred Lawrence, "Lonergan and the Postmodern Concern for the Other," p. 79.

In Verbum there is not an extended treatment of ethics or natural law, let alone existential ethics, for this was not Lonergan's intention. The aim of these articles is to understand the psychology and metaphysics of the intelligent process that is compatible with what Aquinas writes of Divine processions. The critical problem was described as a problem of seizing the difference between object and subject, of knowing knowing, and of mediating what is immediate. This problem was distinguished from the so-called "bridge problem" in Chapter Three.

In his first major study of Aquinas (Grace and Freedom) Lonergan recovers Aquinas' theory of human freedom as it is situated within the vast program of a theory of universal instrumentality and operation. A whole range of problems involving motion, causality, habits, operations, and freedom are set within the vast program. These problems and their solutions are certainly relevant to doing ethics, but that was not the aim of this study either.

What I do in this chapter is (1) to outline an ethics that incorporates many of the crucial discoveries of Lonergan's two studies; (2) to add to these discoveries the later, "existential" developments of Lonergan's thought, which I argue is a further refinement, not a rejection, of his earlier writings; and (3) to comment on the methodological demands and difficulties of such an ethics. I argue that the commonality and continuity between "epistemological" claims and "ethical" claims is methodological, and that "transcendental method" does not require that we assert the primacy of either practical or speculative knowing. Although the freedom we have with regard to speculative knowing is different from the freedom we have with regard to our conduct, there is both a continuity and a commonality between the two processes.

In ethics the critical problem is not how to get from "subjective" or "merely psychological" precepts to an objective standard or measure of what is good conduct. Rather it is the problem of heightening our awareness of the dynamic norms and contingencies of good conduct. The significance of the existential ethics that I will examine in this final chapter is that it is critical and realistic, it affirms dynamic norms for human praxis, and it acknowledges the

myriad contingencies that condition our lived experience of freedom. The invariant or "natural" norms are not extrinsic rules or precepts, but the "transcendental precepts" that correspond to questions and the relations constituted by raising these questions. Though there are many precepts, they flow from a single "intention" or "notion of the good." These precepts and the relations that they designate are normative standards.



### 5.1 Existential Ethics as Speculative

In Chapter Three we explored a "functional definition" of knowing as a pattern or structure of dynamically related conscious acts. An advantage of this definition is that it neither reduces the whole to any of its component parts nor overlooks the uniqueness of any single part. It distinguishes knowing in a loose or generic sense of any act -- e.g., perception or conception -- from knowing in a strict sense of a group of functionally related but dissimilar acts.

Just as there is a "loose" sense in which knowing could be construed as seeing or understanding or some other operation, and a "strict" sense in which knowing is a group of functionally related and dissimilar conscious acts, so also there is both a "loose" and a "strict" sense of what constitutes human freedom.<sup>402</sup> Loosely, any single operation, such as imagining, taking counsel about means, deliberating, or moving oneself, could be construed as human freedom. More common, perhaps, is the tendency to identify freedom with self-motion, i.e., with willing as an efficient cause. Strictly speaking, however, human freedom is a complex, dynamic whole, including but not reducible to any one of its parts -- sensitive, intellectual and volitional operations -- including self-motion.<sup>403</sup>

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<sup>402</sup>Loneragan refers to these two as "elementary" and "compound": "By elementary knowing is meant any cognitional operation, such as seeing, hearing, understanding and so on. By the compound is meant the conjunction of several instances of elementary knowing into a single knowing" (MT:12).

<sup>403</sup>In his response to Terry Tekippe, Fred Crowe suggests that by conceiving willing as a dynamic structure with parts related to one another, one is able to account for elements of freedom and necessity without attributing both freedom and necessity in the same way to the same act. "In some activities the will is necessitated, in some activities it is free . . . . Analysis of willing as a dynamic structure combining different activities enables Lonergan to hold both halves of the passage in harmonious relation." "Thomas Aquinas and the Will: A Note on Interpretation," p. 133. The passage Crowe refers to is ST III, q. 18, a. 1, ad 3m: "The power of the will is natural, . . . but the movement or act of this power -- which is also called will -- is sometimes natural and necessary, e.g., with respect to beatitude; and sometimes springs from free-will and is neither necessary nor naturally determined."

The vast scope of universal instrumentality and the analogy of operation (examined in Chapter Four) add a further context to the dynamics and end of human acts. An order of relations, which is neither chosen nor caused by an individual or group of individuals, must be kept in mind as we consider the good of a human act. A human act is an historical event whose goodness is not simply one that achieves a certain end, but one that contributes to the good of history.<sup>404</sup> One of the basic problems for ethics and natural law theory is that the question "What is natural?" has to be further specified as "What is natural with respect to: (1) horizontal finality (the essential good) of humans; (2) an ecology or good of order; (3) continuous excellent development; (4) vertical finality of lower orders to higher orders; or (5) the universe and world process as a whole?"<sup>405</sup> The good as history is not something systematically grasped except from a transcendent point-of-view.

An ethics of human maxims and laws, while appropriate and necessary, cannot measure up to historically conditioned good or decent human acts. Human maxims and laws have to change first, because human reason is a matter of development, and secondly because the situations about which we reason also change. Thus human laws or precepts must be flexible and change "secundum diversos causas qui emergunt."<sup>406</sup>

An existential ethics, on the other hand, insofar as it specifies the invariant or "natural" relations that are indeterminate and compatible with emergence, and identifies a normative

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<sup>404</sup>"There is an ethics of achievement, and its basis is the precept of charity. You cannot tell what the good is going to be, because the good is not any systematic entity. The good is a history." Topics in Education, p. 103.

<sup>405</sup>Cf. Pat Byrne "Insight and the Retrieval of Nature," pp.48-50.

<sup>406</sup>ST I-II, q. 97, a. 1, c. One of the differences between the precepts of natural law and of human law is that the precepts of the former are invariant, while those of the latter changes on account of changing expediencies according to changing conditions. See also I-II q. 96, a. 6, c: "If a case arise wherein the observance of that law would be hurtful to the general welfare, it should not be observed."

orientation, one that is not chosen but one which respects at a basic level what we are, and thus contributes to an ethics of character or achievement. It is not the whole of such an ethics. It asks about the good of natural relations or patterns of operations and about the conditions of these natural relations, "other things being equal." But it is neither a theory of excellent development, a theory of social-political order, nor a philosophy of history.

The purpose of what follows in this section is: (1) to identify the different concerns that differentiate factual patterns of knowing from more practical patterns; (2) to see that there is a basic isomorphism and continuity between these two patterns; (3) to explore how the "intention of value" plays a normative role in this pattern of relations; (4) to understand how this implicit definition of human acts specifies invariant or "natural" relations; and (5) to explore how existential ethics is a "natural law" by comparing it to traditional natural law theory.

### 5.1.1 Speculative Knowing and Practical Concern

In order to understand the continuity and isomorphism between knowing being on the one hand, and making or doing what is good, on the other, we need a way to distinguish the two. What precisely is being compared? Between what two things is there a continuity and isomorphism?

The two things are two distinct patterns or groupings of the stream of conscious operations and their corresponding objects. What distinguishes the two patterns of operations are different concerns corresponding to different goals as well as a difference in the quality of responsibility, a change in the "self-taste" of the subject.<sup>407</sup> There are, for example, the distinctive "self-tastes" of envisioning, planning and hosting a dinner party that differ from the "self-tastes"

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<sup>407</sup>Much of what I discuss here is suggested by Lonergan's discussion of "patterns of experience" in *Insight*, pp. 181-190. The patterns are distinguished by the various biological, aesthetic, intellectual and dramatic purpose or attention aimed at different terminal goals that organize a stream of movements, emotions, sensations, memories, conations, images.

of grasping and formulating the Pythagorean theorem and verifying one's formulation. There are other distinct "self-tastes" corresponding to the aesthetic delights of music and art. One is present to oneself differently in these three situations. In each case self-presence, or "level" of consciousness, is determined by an over-arching concern, purpose, or interest.

If what distinguishes the practical, speculative and aesthetic patterns of operations is a difference in interest or concern, then any single act (such as seeing) or kind of act (such as sensing or understanding) is sublated by the overall concern. Acts of imagining occur in planning the dinner party, pondering the Pythagorean theorem, and listening to Beethoven's fifth symphony. Still, the orientation and concern is different in the three cases, which means that the acts of imagining are sublated in different ways towards different ends. One could even say that while envisioning the dinner party one's acts of imagining are practical.<sup>408</sup>

Speculative reflection has an internal term, a knowing that is an end. As one puzzles over the measure of a square's diagonal in relationship to the measure of the sides, what one intends to discover is an intelligible relation. Reflection in the practical pattern of concern has an external term in the deed-to-be-done. It intends a knowing that has sufficiently scrutinized objects and motives of a possible course of action, but beyond the knowing is the doing, and what finally will end reflection is a decision.

Questions about the dinner party do not regard simply what is, but what ought-to-be. What is intended is an affirmation that something or some event is conveniens, operandum or bonum. What makes this affirmation different from affirming a geometrical theorem is not a

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<sup>408</sup>Pat Byrne writes that "experience, understanding, and judgment are merely shorthand for distinctive ways in which subjects are present to themselves, and it is the quality or "level" of self-presence which specifies acts. If one is present as inquiring, or intelligently conscious, then "acts of imagination, memory, and sensitive attentiveness are no longer 'lower-level' acts; they are second-level, intelligent acts; they are 'sublated' acts precisely because the subject actually enacting them is present to self as intelligent." "Consciousness: Levels, Sublations, and the Subject as Subject," p. 140.

qualitatively different kind of knowing, but a step towards application in which knowledge directs action, for example, the actions of grocery shopping and cooking. There is, in other words, the same cognitional process in both patterns. Responsible action is intelligent action, where "intelligent" refers to acts of understanding (intelligere), rather than a mysteriously appearing universal concept or mysteriously appearing universal imperative.<sup>409</sup> As another example of two concerns and a shift from one to the other, imagine the following scenario. After enjoying a good film, you enter your garden, where you discover tomato worms crawling along your tomato plants. The experience of enjoying a film is one of aesthetic liberation from biological purposiveness, intellectual pursuits and practical decisions. Watching a film is an experience of attending, one in which one is conscious (unless the film is terrible and puts you to sleep), but one in which he or she is "on holiday" from other concerns. This all changes in the garden, where you are now faced with a practical problem.

In the garden there are two sets of questions that might occur corresponding to two different concerns. There are factual questions: (a1) How often do tomato worms appear in the garden? How many worms are there? (a2) Is this frequency really the case? Are there really that many? There are also practical questions: (b1) What should I do about the tomato worms in the garden? (b2) Is this really a reasonable and feasible plan? Neither of these two sets of questions are operative while one is enjoying a film. Factual or practical questions would merely distract one and detract from the liberating experience of watching a film.

There is an isomorphism between the two sets of question. Both (a1) and (b1) are questions intending an intelligibility. The difference is that (a1) intends the intelligibility of what is so, while (b1) intends an intelligible plan that is not yet in effect. Both (a2) and (b2) are

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<sup>409</sup>The "conceptualist" fascination with universality and necessity, and general neglect of or disregard for the conditions of the emergence of understanding, is found in ethical theories that stress laws and universal precepts while overlooking that a wise woman or man must, in any case, interpret and apply these laws and precepts.

questions intending a judgment. But while (a2) intends a factual judgment affirming that a certain frequency is or is not the case, (b2) intends a practical judgment, or reflective insight, affirming that something ought to be done. What is affirmed is the conveniens, bonum, operandum of an operabile, not its existence.

In general, practical questions are of two types and intend two different types of inner words: (1) "What should I do here and now?" and (2) "Should I really do this?" These questions are isomorphic with factual questions, and as before, there is a two-fold procession of inner words of prudential, direct, and reflective understanding. Questions for direct understanding intend either (a1) a definition, correlation, or ideal frequency of what is or (b1) what-ought-to-be-done, while questions for reflective understanding intend either (a2) an affirmation or negation of the definition, correlation, or ideal frequency of what is, or (b2) a consent to the goodness of the would-be existence of a defined plan, correlation, or ideal frequency. For example, we decide to invest in a chemical spray for the tomato worms because this is judged the best of all the possible ways to handle the situation.

The duration of the process of reflection is a variable, but what finally ends reflection is not a further insight or a grasp of the appropriateness of the act, but the human act itself. This act, if it is a human act and not simply an act of a human, is a summation of operations. At some point, after considering all the possible courses of action, we arrive at a reflective insight regarding the appropriateness of what ought-to-be. An inner word mediates both between our questions and possible plans and between our possible plans and our chosen plan. The rapid oscillation of questions, some of which are factual (e.g., "Do my neighbors have this problem?" "Did this happen last summer?" etc.), ends when we actually decide what to do and do it. We decide to invest in the spray and now we get in the car and head off to the nursery.

Decision does not replace or override intellectual knowing, but merely shifts the overall

context, "changing a cognoscere into a dirigere by adding movere."<sup>410</sup> Although the concern shifts and changes the context of reasoning, the intellectual processes discussed in the preceding chapters do not need a different explanation now. In other words, a prudential judgment about the conveniens of a particular action emerges according to intellectual laws and principles. A prudential judgment involves the procession of an inner word, "the pure case of intelligible law" (V:33). Direct insight provides intelligible content -- for example, the possible plans for a dinner party -- and reflective insight brings the process of deliberation and evaluation to a close when we decide. Reasoning in order to understand is as much a part of prudential judgments as it is of speculative ones.<sup>411</sup>

Even if there are no external or sensitive impediments, and the possibility of what ought-to-be-done has been worked out and is unique, still this possibility is not a necessity.<sup>412</sup> So even after settling upon the particular plans for the party -- what to serve, when to begin, whom to invite, what music to play, other entertainment, etc. -- one must put these plans into action. The sensitive flow, the external circumstances, and the practical insights are contingent, but the decision and action is a contingent emergence that confers actuality upon what is otherwise mere possibility. Freedom "is a special kind of contingency that arises . . . in the order of spirit" (I:619).

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<sup>410</sup>Fred Crowe, "Universal Norms and the Concrete 'Operabile' in St. Thomas Aquinas," p. 269.

<sup>411</sup>Of the three acts that belong to practical intellect -- counsel, judgment, and command -- command is proper to practical intellect "insofar as this is ordained to operation" (ST I-II, q. 57, a. 6, c.), but it does not add knowledge, which is complete in counsel and judgment. What is added is an intention in which knowledge is made directive of action.

<sup>412</sup>"The rational subject as carrying out an obligation is not just a knower but also a doer, and his rationality consists not merely in excluding interference with cognitional process but also in extending the rationality of his knowing into the field of doing. But that extension does not occur simply by knowing one's obligation. It occurs just inasmuch as one wills to meet one's obligations" (I:614).

In the practical pattern the subject is conscious, or self-present, as responsible. Planning, deliberating, deciding, choosing, acting do not just regard objects; these acts simultaneously constitute the subject as present. This self-presence, or experience of self, is not another operation to be added to the list of seeing, imagining, inquiring, planning, deliberating, etc. Rather this self-presence is an aspect of all these operations in the practical pattern. When there is a concern for something to be made or done, the "self-taste" of the subject is an awareness of obligation and responsibility. Apprehending a field of objects does not determine his or her action. Specification is a necessary but not sufficient condition for deliberate action.<sup>413</sup> Our awareness of being the cause of action is a self-presence of one intending to do or make something.

### 5.1.2 Isomorphism between Speculative and Practical Patterns

What I contend, and what is suggested by some of Lonergan's later writings, is that there exists an isomorphism between asking and answering speculative and practical questions, and that there is a critical problem in ethics.<sup>414</sup> Lonergan does not say as much in his studies of Aquinas, but the critical problem is not simply a knowing of knowing, but also a willing of willing. The one who is seizing the difference between subject and object is never just a knower, the seizing is never simply an act of understanding, and the subject who is different from the object is not an intellect or transcendental ego. The critical problem involves the whole person. Recall that Lonergan likened judgment to Newman's real assent in Verbum. The "critical problem" was epistemological in the narrow sense of resembling Kant's Critique of Pure Reason (Erkenntnistheorie), but existential and intellectual.

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<sup>413</sup>This was discussed above. See chapter Four, section 2.

<sup>414</sup>"The intention of the intelligible, the true, the real, becomes also the intention of the good, the question of value, of what is worth while, when the already acting subject confronts his world and adverts to his own acting in it" S:22-23.



"Existential ethics" and "existential subject" are phrases from Lonergan's later writings. In these writings there is a notable shift in emphasis upon "authenticity" and a distinct "notion of the good." There is a refinement and a more adequate expression in later writings than what is presented in Insight.<sup>415</sup> In all likelihood Lonergan would not have been able to identify the normative component of responsible decisions as both distinct from and subsuming the normative moment of knowing.<sup>416</sup> What I hope to show is that this development in Lonergan's thought is not a shift away from critical philosophy towards existentialism, but an incorporation of many of the concerns of existentialist writers within a critical realism.<sup>417</sup>

It is on the basis of an isomorphism between the questions and act of understanding in each of the speculative and practical patterns of concerns that I contend the psychology of intelligently emanating words is relevant and indeed central to ethics.<sup>418</sup> The appeal to

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<sup>415</sup>"In Insight the good was the intelligent and reasonable. In Method the good is a distinct notion. It is intended in questions for deliberation: Is this worthwhile? Is it truly or only apparently good? It is aspired to in the intentional response of feeling to values. It is known in judgments of value made by a virtuous or authentic person with a good conscience." "Insight Revisited," 2C:277.

<sup>416</sup>See Fred Lawrence's essay: "'The Modern Philosophic Differentiation of Consciousness' or What is Enlightenment?" pp. 269ff.

<sup>417</sup>"Existentialism" is a difficult label, for most so-called "existentialists" repudiated the label. Kaufmann offers this definition of "existentialism": "The refusal to belong to any school of thought, the repudiation of the adequacy of any body of beliefs whatever, and especially of systems, and a marked dissatisfaction with traditional philosophy as superficial, academic, and remote from life -- that is the heart of existentialism." Existentialism from Dostoyevsky to Sartre, p. 12. Lonergan, who writes that he "became an existentialist while reading Newman" taught a course on "Existentialism" at Boston College in 1957. He critically examined the methods and orientations of Jaspers, Sartre, Marcel and Heidegger to clarify the significance of existentialism for scholasticism.

<sup>418</sup>Fred Crowe's study "Universal Norms and the Concrete Operabile in St. Thomas Aquinas" argues the same point based upon an extensive study of Aquinas. Crowe claims that for Aquinas first principles, the instruments of intellectual light, share in the range and power and activity of intellectual light as a potens omnia facere et fieri. They also share in its indeterminacy, "for they [first principles] are not fully determinate knowledge but instruments by which to reach it" (147).

psychological facts in existential ethics is an extension and development of the appeal to the psychological facts that, Lonergan contends, Aquinas made central to his rational psychology (V:217-22) and that aided Lonergan enormously in his efforts to understand what Aquinas meant by the intelligible procession of the inner word.

Prior to Chapter Four our analysis dealt with consciously proceeding words and the problem of differentiating animal knowing, or knowing in a loose sense, from human knowing, or knowing in the proper sense of what is correctly understood about experience. Just now we have distinguished two patterns -- one of practical concern, the other a more speculative concern for simply understanding some phenomenon. It should not be assumed, however, that we enjoy a "pure" or hermeneutically innocent way of knowing. The patterns are determined by general orientation, but in any case it is a whole person that is involved. Even the most speculative endeavor is never simply intellectual or merely speculative but also volitional and practical, and indeed organic and psychic as well.<sup>419</sup> Within the framework of intentionality analysis of existential subjects, "pure speculation" or "speculation qua speculation" is an abstraction. There is an element of phronesis in even the most speculative knowing, which is always situated within a

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Both scientific and ethical knowledge develop by intelligently discovering laws and applying them intelligently to situations (I:48-I:49).

<sup>419</sup>There are numerous places in later writings where Lonergan situates knowing within the fuller framework: "I have attempted . . . to add a note on the relations between the dynamic structure of objective knowing and the larger dynamic structure that is human living" (CS:221). "So far, our reflections on the subject have been concerned with him as a knower . . . We have now to think of him as a doer . . ." (S:19). "If now we turn to ordinary, human living, it is plain that we have to do with neither the biological, nor the artistic, nor the intellectual pattern of experience. . . it is not difficult to discern an artistic or, more precisely, a dramatic component" (I:187). Finally, the conditions for the philosophic/intellectual conversion that clearly grasps the differences in criteria between the world of immediacy and the world mediated by meaning is a moral conversion that is not content with easy solutions and what is satisfying but seeks what is truly good, including a truly good, real apprehension of knowing, truth, being. See Method in Theology, index entries under "conversion" -- intellectual and moral.

flow of opportunities, events, and influences which is initially not of one's own choosing and which is permeated by feeling-laden images that carry us along and through which we discern what to do and what to contemplate in the first place. Lonergan writes that the scientist or philosopher as an existential subject is committed:

Scientific or philosophic experiencing, understanding, and judging do not occur in a vacuum. They are the operations of an existential subject who has decided to devote himself to the pursuit of understanding and truth and, with greater or less success, is faithful to his commitment (MT:340).<sup>420</sup>

The questions "Why speculate?", "Why speculate about this and not that?", "Why speculate now?", and "What resources are needed to speculate?" have everything to do with the practical problem of living. Speculation as a human activity, and not simply as an activity of speculative intellect, is within a horizon or context of meaning and value, and is a temporal process that involves human acts that are more or less authentic.<sup>421</sup>

To inquire about "authentic speculation" presupposes the kind of existential philosophy that "starts from the assumption that authenticity cannot be taken for granted."<sup>422</sup> This type of ethical reflection is not a dismissal of speculative knowing, but a distinct hermeneutic for interpreting what is meant by practical and speculative intellect.<sup>423</sup> The hermeneutic is one which

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<sup>420</sup>Norris Clarke writes: "It is no longer possible to return to a pre-hermeneutic state of innocence. The ideal of a timeless system of thought, free of historical conditioning or presuppositions, that carries convictions by sheer impersonal, objective rigor of its reasoning, without initiation into a living tradition of interpretation, should now be recognized as unrealistic, unrealizable in our concrete human condition." "Thomism and Contemporary Philosophical Pluralism," p. 106.

<sup>421</sup>"A life of pure intellect or pure reason without the control of deliberation, evaluation, responsible choice is something less than the life of a psychopath" (MT:122).

<sup>422</sup>Lonergan, "The Ongoing Genesis of Methods," 3C:160.

<sup>423</sup>Lonergan writes that "what was named speculative intellect now turns out to be merely the operations of experiencing, understanding, and judging, performed under the guidance of the

asks "What is happening as I am knowing in any area of my life?". But notice that implied in this broad question is another: "Why, for what end, with what assumptions in mind, for what purpose, am I doing this?".

Authenticity in any realm is not the fruit of a day's labor but a gradual withdrawal from inauthenticity.<sup>424</sup> What one knows, what one does, what one has become and now lives habitually is but a limit to be transcended by further development and growth. There is ever a moving beyond.<sup>425</sup>

### 5.1.3 The Intention of the Good in Lonergan's Later Writings

Authentic praxis in any areas of our lives is known by appropriating the psychological facts of an authentic existential subject. By what means do we distinguish what really is authentic from what might merely be a guise for authenticity? When all is said and done, is existential ethics a matter of personal taste based upon idiosyncratic ideals? Is it possible to make any normative claims with regard to the good of human acts from a psychology of practical operations? Something must be said concerning not simply the unity of operations, but if and how there is anything normative about the unity of operations.

We never move without moving somewhere, without being committed to someone or

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moral deliberation, evaluation, decision, that selects an appropriate method and sees to it that the method is observed." "Unity and Plurality," 3C:246. I elaborate on the difficulties of a full scale methodological shift in existential ethics below in section 5.1.3.

<sup>424</sup>"So human authenticity is never some pure and serene and secure possession. It is ever a withdrawal from inauthenticity, and every successful withdrawal only brings to light the need for still further withdrawals" (MT:110).

<sup>425</sup>"In this life the critical point is never transcended . . . . Today's resolutions do not predetermine the free choice of tomorrow, of next week or next year, of ten years from now. What has been achieved is always precarious: it can slip, fall, shatter. What is to be achieved can be ever expanding, deepening. To meet one challenge is to effect a development that reveals a further and graver challenge." "Existenz and Aggiornamento," CWL 4:224.

something, even if the someone or the thing committed to is mysterious.<sup>426</sup> A that-for-the-sake-of-which structures even our most mundane decision. For Aquinas it is intention that brings together the many operations -- specification, counsel, command, use, execution -- into one single act. Intention is an act of will, and as such it is not blind, since will is an intellectual appetite, a "knowing wanting." This intention is not chosen, but the condition for the possibility of choosing. An "ultimate end" (finis ultimus) is necessarily desired, and along with it whatever is ordered to this end, e.g., existence and life.<sup>427</sup> This ultimate end is a starting point, or first principle, in matters of human conduct.

Let us reflect for a moment on how the intention of an end is concretely operative. We rise in the morning to get to work, to pay bills or a mortgage, and to prepare for the future. But why pay bills? Why own a house or condo? For whom or what are we preparing? We pay bills so we are not evicted and do not spoil our credit rating. We own a condo because we need a place to stay and write-off the payments. We are preparing for retirement. But why do we need a good credit rating? What are we going to do when we retire?

Most people do not live simply to work, pay bills, own a house, or retire. These are relative ends, or means to something else. Lonergan writes that within such an ends-mean relationship, "there is no room for choosing the part and repudiating the whole, for choosing the conditioned and repudiating the condition, for choosing the antecedent and repudiating the consequent." (I:602) Implicit in the way we decide and choose there is something for-the-sake-of-which, a whole, a consequent. That we in fact reason this way is ordinarily not under

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<sup>426</sup>Lonergan uses the language of "ascent" in Method in Theology to describe ongoing development: "The free thrust of the subject into new areas is recurrent and, as yet, there is no supreme value that entails others. But at the summit of the ascent from the initial bundle of needs and clamors and gratifications, there are to be found the deep-set joy and solid peace, the power and the vigor, of being in love with God" (MT:39).

<sup>427</sup>ST I-II, q. 10, a. 2, 3m.

consideration, "just as when going somewhere we do not have to think of the end at every step."<sup>428</sup>

What is the whole, the condition, the consequent? It could be given a variety of names -- the good, happiness, a meaningful existence -- but the name is of secondary importance. Of primary importance is the reality named, a reality that is neither fully known nor utterly unknown, but known through a middle knowledge. Lonergan writes of this middle knowledge:

When I ask whether this or that is so, I do not as yet know whether or not this is so, but already I am intending what would be known if I did know the answers. So when I ask whether this is truly and not merely apparently good, whether that is or is not worthwhile, I do not yet know value but I am intending value. (MT:34)

The intention that makes a process of deliberation, decision and action possible is the "transcendental notion" or "intention" of "value."<sup>429</sup> In Lonergan's later reflections on the existential subject, it is this intention that unifies the many conscious and intentional acts. He also calls it the "notion" or "intention of good."<sup>430</sup> Metaphorically, the intention of the good is the "glue" of human consciousness. What links the many operations and determines their relations is a general and overriding intention. "Universally prior to any choice or action there is just the transcendental principle of all appraisal and criticism, the intention of the good" (S:26).

Concern about a dinner party, or concern about dealing with tomato worms, patterns the

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<sup>428</sup>ST I-II, q. I, art. 6, ad 3.

<sup>429</sup>The meaning of "value" as either a particular object or as a transcendental notion is not the common meaning. The word "value" as it is commonly used in American speech and in much of American philosophy, is relativistic and arbitrary. Allan Bloom attributes this to the influence of Nietzsche upon American culture, largely through the work of Max Weber. Cf. Allan Bloom, The Closing of the American Mind: How Education has Failed Democracy and Impoverished the Souls of Today's Students.

<sup>430</sup>Cf. S:I9-29.

process of deliberating, deciding, and choosing. It is true that there is a rapid oscillation of acts rather than a predictable and easily discerned step by step progression from image to question to judgment to evaluation to action. But there is order to the rapid oscillation, and the ordering principle is the intention of the good (or value). As Lonergan conceives it, the intention of the good is the unifying principle of human consciousness in much the same way that the "ultimate end" is first and unifying principle of moral conduct for Aquinas.

How do we know this intention exists? Does it exist? Can it be proven? The "intention of the good" is operative in everyday choices and actions, and "it is by reflection on that functioning that one comes to know what the notion of good is."<sup>431</sup> Of course, there are other intentions, other desires, that mix and blend with the intention of the good. But even the recognition of a multitude of desires, and the very fact that we can and do still ask, in the face of a multitude of pulls, what is ultimately good conduct -- this reveals the notion of the good. It is not yet knowledge of what is good, but a tending toward that knowledge. Lonergan writes of the notion of the good:

That notion is our raising questions for deliberation. It is our being stopped with the disenchantment that asks whether what we are doing is worthwhile. That disenchantment brings to light the limitation in every finite achievement, the stain in every flawed perfection, the irony or soaring ambition and faltering performance. (MT:36)

Why do we experience disenchantment? How do we know there is a flaw that can be perfected? We experience and know these things because of an imperfect knowledge of perfection, or what Lonergan calls the notion of the good.

This notion of the good as our ability to raise questions is the normative component in the pattern of operations. It establishes the relations that are "natural" between operations as well

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<sup>431</sup>S:25.

as a natural standard for judging. Lonergan relates the achievement of self-transcendence to the transcendental notions which flow from the single, unifying intention of the good:

The transcendental notions provide the criteria that reveal whether the goals are being reached. The drive to understand is satisfied when understanding is reached but it is dissatisfied with every incomplete attainment and so it is the source of ever further questions. The drive to truth compels rationality to assent when evidence is sufficient but refuses assent and demands doubt whenever evidence is insufficient. The drive to value rewards success in self-transcendence with a happy conscience and saddens failures with an unhappy conscience. (MT:35)

Judgments of fact purport to state what is so, whether or not I might want to believe it is so. Judgments of what is good purport to say what is really good, whether or not it is comfortable to know this.

The notion of the good is neither a particular good nor a good of order but is related to both as whole to part. Particular goods, such as calling a friend or finishing a project, are intended by the question "What is the worthwhile, responsible, and good thing to do, whether or not I feel like doing it or actually will do it?". A good of order make these particular goods possible. A good order is intended by the question "What are the roles and tasks, the cooperation, the institutional, political, economical schemes that make possible particular goods?". Good or value as a transcendental notion is neither a particular good or a good of order. It is what makes both types of questions, as well as the deliberation and choice that follow, possible.<sup>432</sup> We ask and answer these and other practical questions in light of our intention toward the good, which is not as yet an achievement or a resting in the possession of the good, but an orientation toward it. We do enjoy moments of satisfaction, fulfillment, and at-one-ness, but they too come to an end, and we experience disenchantment, striving, genuine nescience. Our living is in-process, or unfinished. There is much we do not know, and many good deeds yet to be done.

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<sup>432</sup>Cf. S:23-24 and MT:50-51.



When we are concerned about what to do, the intention of the good sublates and unites the rapid-fire oscillation of acts in a distinct way -- the distinctness of the "self-taste" of responsibility. In this case the unity of the acts, including understanding and judging the conveniens of the operabile, is a function of an intended good. Lonergan writes of the unity of consciousness:

The levels of consciousness are united by the unfolding of a single transcendental intending of plural, interchangeable objectives. These objectives are approximately the Scholastic transcendentals, ens, unum, verum, bonum, and they are interchangeable in the sense of mutual predication, of convertuntur.<sup>433</sup>

The intention of the good is both integrator and operator. It integrates the lower biological and psychological processes as they participate in the higher human operations of understanding, affirming, deciding, and acting. These lower processes have their own natural, intelligible laws according to horizontal finality, but they are also integrated by higher laws according to vertical finality.<sup>434</sup> What would otherwise be coincidental or random aggregates of images, feelings, movements, conations, and/or perceptions are organized by practical, dramatic, or speculative concerns.

The intention of the good, as operator, is the principle of self-transcendence that ever impels one beyond present limitations and achievements. As a principle of self-transcendence, the intention of the good does not cease from being integrator. Self-transcending acts penetrate the whole person:

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<sup>433</sup> S:22 and note #12.

<sup>434</sup>"Organic, psychic and intellectual development are not three independent processes. They are interlocked with the intellectual providing a higher integration of the psychic and the psychic providing a higher integration of the organic" (I:470).

The agility of the acrobat, the endurance of the athlete, the fingers of the concert pianist, the tongue of those that speak and the ears of those that listen and the eyes of those that read . . . the empathy that sets our own feelings in resonance with the feelings of others -- all bear convincing testimony that self-transcendence is the eagerly sought out goal not only of our sensitivity, not only of our intelligent and rational knowing, not only of our freedom and responsibility, but first of all of our flesh and blood that through nerves and brain have come spontaneously to live out symbolic meanings and to carry out symbolic demands.<sup>435</sup>

The intention of the good evokes organic, psychic, intellectual patterns and developments. Since these patterns and processes form a unity, development might begin in one part, but it remains incomplete until it penetrates the others.<sup>436</sup>

#### 5.1.4 Natural Relations and Implicit Definitions

For Lonergan the intention of the good, or our ability to raise questions, establishes "natural" relations and is a "natural" standard for achieving self-transcendence, or objectivity, in speculative and practical patterns of praxis. In order to clarify what Lonergan is claiming, it will be helpful to distinguish two hermeneutics for interpreting his claims.

Individual human operations might be described as they appear descriptively, or quoad nos. So, for example, if we were to ask three people to describe an "ellipse," we would get a variety of descriptions: "An ellipses is a squashed, or stretched circle." "An ellipse is the shape of a plate turned on its side." "An ellipse is like a bean bag on which somebody has sat." These definitions have a personal perspective to them.

Someone else might define an ellipse as "A set of co-planar points equidistant from two foci." This is a distinctively different kind of definition. It is a relational definition, one in which the terms are defined by relations rather than by a description.

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<sup>435</sup>"Religious Knowledge," 3C:133.

<sup>436</sup>See Lonergan's discussion of "the law of integration" and "the principle of correspondence" I:471-473.

When acts are related one to another, then acts are defined by their relations, relations are defined by acts, and insight into the nexus of acts and relations fixes the meaning of both terms and relations. This achievement is an explanatory or "implicit" definition of how things are related quoad se, the significance of which "is its complete generality" (I:12). The pattern of correlations is what is meant by "cognitional structure."

The definition of this structure is merely analytical or ideal to the extent that one has not appropriated, or made one's own, the patterns of acts and relations. Thus the importance of philosophical exercise is to mediate an existential meaning of terms, words, phrases that would otherwise be merely abstract.

As an example, the word "insight," like "hot" or "fast," has various connotations. If we were to ask the three same people what "insight" means, we would most likely get different descriptions. Yet "insight" can be defined implicitly in relation to "image" or "phantasm" as that which answers "questions" about what we grasp by means of the image or phantasm. In a like manner "conception" might be defined as the expression of the insight which answers questions about the presentation of the phantasm. We inquire about what we sense or imagine, the fruit of inquiry is understanding, and because we understand we are able to conceive. Thus "insight" is a term that is related to at least three other terms -- "image," "question," and "conception." All four terms are fixed by their relations to one another, and presuming one understands the nexus of terms and their relations, they have a precise or technical meaning.

There are terms and relations pertaining to an operable that implicitly define one another: (1) a situation, (2) a question about what to do, given the situation, and (3) the known unknown action that is intended by the question and that is known through a prudential judgement. The invariant or "natural" relations between situation, practical question, and true instances of "good" or "value" (or what is truly rather than apparently good), determine the meaning of these terms. Here we have another case of an implicit definition in which there is a nexus of terms and

relations.

While the determination of any act, e.g., the practical plans for a dinner party, are always particular, the correlations or structure of operations leading up to the particular decision is an invariant. Whatever conditions make for the occurrence and recurrence of the relations are likewise "natural" conditions. These conditions include both the "lower" processes of the physical, chemical and biological environments, but also the higher conditions of the human touch -- stories of praise and blame, encouragement, artifacts, physical training, and affective and intellectual education. These conditions are the "other things being equal" needed for the occurrence and recurrence of operations and their natural relations.

Within these natural relations operations retain their distinctiveness even while patterned, or related to other acts. If we were to consider the operations in abstraction from the pattern, most of these conscious acts per se are not human acts but human operations. With the exception of deciding and acting, the other operations are undergone; ontologically they are instances of a pati. For example, actually asking a question is a deliberate act, but the initial occurrence of a question is not something we decide to do the way we decide to open a door. Likewise, asserting what is ("It is getting late") or what ought-to-be-done ("We should be going home now") are both personal, deliberate acts, but the occurrence of a factual or practical insight, in itself, is not a deliberate act.<sup>437</sup>

This can be misleading, however, if we think of acts somehow existing in isolation and subsequently being brought together. Whether sleeping, waking, speculating, enjoying a symphony, attending to practical concerns, or praying, we cannot stop the flow or pattern of operations. Our attending to the flow of operations is, as it were, a plunge in medias res. These operations occur rapidly and with great oscillations, thus making it extremely difficult to identify

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<sup>437</sup>See Chapter One, section I.3.2.

and relate the operations involved in willing. "We cannot succeed without an exceptional amount of exertion and activity on the part of the reader" (MT:7).<sup>438</sup>

## 5.2 Transcendental Precepts and Natural Law

Lonergan's existential ethics that I have been outlining claims that there are invariant or natural relations among the operations of human acts. In order to compare this ethics to my understanding of Aquinas' natural law, I will first discuss "transcendental precepts" in light of our previous discussion of invariant or natural relations of operations constitutive of human acts.

The precepts "be attentive," "inquire diligently," "judge reasonably," "plan thoughtfully," and "be responsible for your actions" correspond to an invariant pattern of correlations between conscious operations. The precept "acknowledge your historicity" corresponds to the contingent social and cultural conditions of secondary determinations of these primary relations.<sup>439</sup>

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<sup>438</sup>This challenge was not unknown to Aquinas. In the Summa he outlines the investigation of willing: "Hence the Philosopher expresses himself thus (De Anima iii,9), that 'the will is in the reason.' Now whatever is intelligibly in an intelligent subject, is understood by that subject. Therefore the act of the will is understood by the intellect, both inasmuch as one knows the nature of this act, and consequently, the nature of its principle which is the habit or power." ST I, q. 87, a. 4, c. The difficulty is noted by Ralph McInerny, who writes that for Aquinas a human act is complex: "The analysis of one moral act into a plurality of parts does not suggest then that what we should be inclined to call a single human act has to be recognized as really or actually a plurality of human acts. Rather a single human act contains many parts which are only potentially many." Ralph McInerny, Aquinas on Human Action, p. 69.

<sup>439</sup>"... the structure of our knowing and doing expresses the conditions of being an authentic person; but this structure is a matter of being attentive, being intelligent, being reasonable, being responsible . . . since the actuation of the structure arises under social conditions and within cultural traditions, to these four there may be added a fifth, Acknowledge your historicity." "Questionnaire on Philosophy," p. 27. One way of acknowledging historicity is recognizing probability as an intrinsic and intelligible aspect of the dynamic order of relations discussed in Chapter Four. Cynthia Crysdale writes of a "revised natural law" that "recognizes the conditioned nature of all of existence, and in particular the statistical laws that contribute to world process." "Revisioning Natural Law: From the Classicist Paradigm to Emergent

These precepts are not extrinsic dictates. They express relations among conscious operations, relations that are not chosen but given in consciousness and perhaps discovered through reflection. Lonergan's existential ethics issues an invitation to reflect -- to identify, understand, affirm, and accept the relations.

The roots of these "transcendental precepts" ("oughts") "lie neither in sentences nor propositions nor in judgments but in the dynamic structure of rational self-consciousness" (I:604). Conscious operations are related by questions that determine relations and pose a natural and normative standard.<sup>440</sup> Questions, the "operators" which "promote the conscious and intentional subject from one level to another,"<sup>441</sup> establish the relations between acts, relations which are invariant or "natural."

Questions, therefore, pose a natural standard. Lonergan, who writes sparingly about the a priori, writes that operators, or questions, are a priori:

The operators are a priori, and they alone are a priori. Such operators are questions for intelligence: with respect to data they ask why, and what, and what for, and how, and how often. Such also are questions for reflection: with respect to the guesses, inventions, discoveries of human understanding they ask Is that so? Are you sure? Such thirdly are questions for deliberation: they ask whether suggested courses of action are feasible, worthwhile, truly good or only apparently good.<sup>442</sup>

The pattern of operations, and the way our questions order these operations, are natural.<sup>443</sup> The

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Probability," p. 484.

<sup>440</sup>In Verbum Lonergan writes that "the Thomist standard lay in the principles of the intellect itself: 'nomen mentis dicitur in anima, sicut et nomen intellectus. Solum enim intellectus accipit cognitionem de rebus mensurando eas quasi ad sua principia'" (V:60). The latin passage cited is DV q. 10, a. 1 c.

<sup>441</sup>Lonergan, "Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon," p. 129.

<sup>442</sup>Lonergan, "Mission and the Spirit," 3C:28-29.

<sup>443</sup>Cf. Pat Byrne, "Insight and the Retrieval of Nature," 50-55.

transcendental precepts are foundational imperatives because they express relations between conscious operations that are not of our own choosing. They are the equivalent in Lonergan's thought to "natural law."

Authentic praxis is thus defined in terms of natural relations. Authenticity is not itself the criteria, but the achievement of what happens when one is faithful to the foundational imperatives. Lonergan writes of this "built-in law":

Human authenticity is a matter of following the built-in law of the human spirit. Because we can experience, we should attend. Because we can understand, we should inquire. Because we can reach the truth, we should reflect and check. Because we can realize values in ourselves and promote them in others, we should deliberate. In the measure that we follow these precepts, in the measure we fulfill these conditions of being human persons, we also achieve self-transcendence both in the field of knowledge and in the field of action.<sup>++</sup>

The precepts -- be attentive, be intelligent, be reasonable, be providential, be responsible -- do not express just any relations whatsoever, but conscious relations that are defined implicitly and whose meaning develops as one discovers and appropriates the terms and their relations.<sup>++5</sup>

Although the precepts are natural and normative relations, their normativity, like the normativity of first principles, is general, not that of a particular human precept or maxim, -- e.g., "Do not lie" or "Return borrowed goods." In all cases what we attend to, what we inquire about, and what we know is a variable that emerges historically and is conditioned internally by aptitude, interest, habits, skills, and development. How we attend, how we understand, how we know what is real, and how we discern what is truly good is through an invariant and patterned set of operations. Transcendental precepts are indeterminate. They become determined only through

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<sup>++</sup>"The Response of the Jesuit as Priest and Apostle in the Modern World," 2C:I69-I70.

<sup>++5</sup>"A set of basic analogous terms whose meaning develops with the development of the person provides the fruit of self-appropriation, the basis that makes the difference between the plaster cast of a man and the philosopher." UB:55.

actual inquiry about a given experience, by weighing evidence, and by deliberating and evaluating.

Questions that emerge are given and, along with the intended objects, are in some sense a priori.<sup>446</sup> There is no a priori technique, however, for determining precisely what the intermediate between excess and defect is, or how exactly to feel pleasure and pain "at the right time, toward the right objects, toward the right people, for the right reason and in the right manner."<sup>447</sup> The pattern of correlations between conscious operations is inherently indeterminate and thus open to a range of possible determinants. The particular determinants, or "secondary determinations," are the conditioned, conscious acts of existential subjects.<sup>448</sup>

An existential ethics that accounts for both an invariant, natural pattern of human operations and the varying determinations of the pattern has the distinct advantage of taking subjects as they are and where they are, without sacrificing normativity. What is normative is a dynamic, open pattern or structure of operations together with the basic, underlying intention of the self-transcendent good. In Insight Lonergan writes that such an ethics

can steer a sane course between the relativism of mere concreteness and the legalism of remote and static generalities; and it can do so not by good luck nor by vaguely postulating prudence but methodologically because it takes its stand on the ever recurrent dynamic generality that is the structure of rational self-consciousness. (I:604).

It is possible to affirm a basic structure or pattern of operations without the pretense of also achieving some sort of luminous self-knowledge. Though we must "believe and trust, risk and

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<sup>446</sup>"And the term, transcendental, would refer not only to objects (one, true, real, good) and not only to the a priori of the subject but to both together, to the a priori of the subject's questions and to the range of objects disclosed in answers." "Christology Today: Methodological Reflections" 3C:76.

<sup>447</sup>Nicomachean Ethics, II, 6:I106b20-22.

<sup>448</sup>"It is necessary to distinguish in concrete relations between two components, namely, a primary relativity and other secondary determinations" (I:491).



dare,"<sup>449</sup> there is a "rock on which one can build."<sup>450</sup> In other words one can critically appropriate the "rock" of human consciousness even as one grows and develops, as the contingencies of both internal and external life emerge. Any actual set of operations which are correlated in the way the functional definition of freedom proscribes is "natural."

Lonergan's conception of transcendental precepts, specified by implicitly defining human acts in terms of related operations, shares much with Aquinas' natural law ethics. For Aquinas, natural law is not primarily an ethics of rules. Natural law is not a habit, nor is it some kind of technique for determining good acts. Natural law is intelligent participation in eternal law, it is consequent upon human nature -- what we are more so than what we do, and the same for all.<sup>451</sup> Aquinas argues that secondary and tertiary precepts of the natural law can be blotted out from the heart, but that the most general precepts cannot be blotted out.<sup>452</sup> What is consequent to human nature is even "in infants and the damned who cannot act by it."<sup>453</sup>

Although the precepts of natural law are many, they have one root -- the indemonstrable

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<sup>449</sup>See section 3.4.3 of Chapter Three.

<sup>450</sup>"There is then a rock on which one can build. But let me repeat the precise character of the rock. Any theory, description, account of our conscious and intentional operations is bound to be incomplete and to admit further clarifications and extensions. But all such clarifications and extensions are to be derived from the conscious and intentional operations themselves" (MT:19-20).

<sup>451</sup>ST I-II, q. 91, a. 3. While every aspect of the created order is subject to Eternal law, and non-rational creatures are subject passively through being moved, rational creatures are subject through some understanding of the Divine commandment (ST I-II, q. 93, a. 5). Natural law corresponds to what humans are, and it does not vary. "The natural law is consequent to human nature" (ST I-II, q. 94, a. 2). "It is therefore evident that, as regards the general principles whether of speculative or of practical reason, truth or rectitude is the same for all, and is equally known by all" (ST I-II, q. 94, a. 4).

<sup>452</sup>ST I-II, q. 94, a. 6, c.

<sup>453</sup>ST I-II, q. 94, a. 1, sed. contra.

first principle and starting point for reasoning. Precepts such as "Truth should be sought," "Life is to be preserved," and "Justice must be observed" are in accordance with natural inclinations.<sup>454</sup> These precepts have the character of one law inasmuch as they flow from one precept. In matters of conduct, this first principle is the end which is held by the innate habit of synderesis.<sup>455</sup>

The natural law is a grasp of certain common principles. From the common principles we proceed to more particular determinations, and this application of natural law to particulars is by means of both human law and divine law. For example, the universal precept that justice must be observed among all requires specification by either divine or human law. While moral precepts arise from the natural law, judicial precepts are the concrete application of precepts.<sup>456</sup>

When we descend from the general imperatives ("oughts") of the natural law to the particularities of what ought to be done here and now in this situation, numerous contingencies can come into play. "In matters of action, truth or practical rectitude is not the same for all, as to matters of detail, but only as to the general principles."<sup>457</sup> It is on account of the disparity between general principles and particular application of these principles that ethical systems generate many negative precepts but must remain somewhat general about what is good.<sup>458</sup> So, for example, "goods entrusted to another should be restored to their owner ... is true for the

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<sup>454</sup>ST I-II, q. 94, a. 2, c.

<sup>455</sup>"Synderesis is called the law of our intellect insofar as it is the habit containing the precepts of natural law, which are the first principles of human acts" (ST I-II, q. 94, a. 1, 2m).

<sup>456</sup>ST I-II q. 99, a. 4. c.

<sup>457</sup>ST I-II, q. 94, a. 4.

<sup>458</sup>"Law's precepts provide a common instruction, and the things that ought to be done when imperiled cannot be reduced to something common as the things to be avoided can. That is why the precepts of fortitude are given negatively rather than affirmatively" (ST II-II, q. 140, a. 1, 2m).

majority of cases."<sup>459</sup>

An attempt at determining a priori all exceptions to this rule would simply result in "confusion."<sup>460</sup> The more we move from the general to the particular, or to the contingencies of a given situation, the less success we have in accounting for all the relevant factors. It is not the consideration of specific cases that leads to confusion. Confusion results from an attempt to generalize from a specific case, or even from a large number of specific cases, to a universally binding law. This is not a limitation of natural law, but of human law. In some instances one may act beside the letter of a human law:

It happens often that the observance of some point of law conduces to the common weal in the majority of instances, and yet, in some cases, is very hurtful. Since then the lawgiver cannot have in view every single case, he shapes the law according to what happens most frequently, by directing his attention to the common good. Wherefore if a case arise wherein the observance of that law would be hurtful to the general welfare, it should not be observed.<sup>461</sup>

A basic difficulty is understanding how natural law is at once unchanging, an imperative the same for all, "according to the order of natural inclinations," and indeterminate.<sup>462</sup> The general imperatives or precepts of natural law are not merely formal, or tautologies. For Aquinas the first principle of practical reason and the precepts that follow from it are imperatives, not tautologies. They do not specify a priori the contingent and particular aspects of what is good,

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<sup>459</sup>ST I-II, q. 94, a. 4. See section 4.4.2 of Chapter Four.

<sup>460</sup>"No man is so wise as to be able to take account of every single case; wherefore he is not able sufficiently to express in words all those things that are suitable for the end he has in view. And even if a lawgiver were able to take all the cases into consideration, he ought not to mention them all, in order to avoid confusion" (ST I-II q. 96, a. 6 ad 3).

<sup>461</sup>ST I-II q. 96, a. 6, c.

<sup>462</sup>"The precepts of the natural law are general, and require to be determined: and they are determined both by human law and by Divine law" (I-II, q. 91, a. 3).

but they do direct one to do what is contingently and particularly good.<sup>463</sup> In other words, the first principles and first precepts of practical reason are binding, but they are not self-interpreting. For example, the first principle of practical reason -- "good is to be done and pursued, and evil is to be avoided,"<sup>464</sup> upon which all other precepts of the natural law are based, is indeterminate even though it is a starting point for moral activity. From this general and indeterminate principle human reason proceeds to particular determinations. Fred Crowe writes of the indeterminacy of first principles in general:

First principles remain incomplete and but partially determined until in the data of sense and phantasm conclusions emerge in a new act of understanding. What is true in geometry is true in ethics. One can scrutinize till doomsday the principle bonum faciendum, and even more determinate principles such as cuique suum, but it is not thus that ethics advances. It is by studying data, that of the stock exchange, television, prize-ring, and any other phenomenon of modern culture which presents moral problems, that conclusions will emerge. They will emerge not by mere application of old principles, but by the addition of new middles.<sup>465</sup>

In all cases "application" refers to grasping an intelligibility in the concrete and particular (the stock exchange, etc.).<sup>466</sup> The first principle of practical reason "does not involve a process from 'fact' to 'norm' but is self-evident in the same sense that the principle of non-contradiction is

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<sup>463</sup>Russell Hittinger writes of this imperative in Aquinas: "Given the ability of human reason to grasp an intelligible good, and the intentional movement of the will toward that good as an end, the first principle of practical reason stipulates that one ought to satisfy the intelligible requirements of the good, and to actively resist what is opposed to it." "Varieties of Minimalist Natural Law Theory," pp. 159-160.

<sup>464</sup>ST I-II, q. 94, a. 2.

<sup>465</sup>"Universal Norms and the Concrete 'Operabile' in St. Thomas Aquinas," pp. 147-148.

<sup>466</sup> This is why Lonergan refers to the procession of the inner word as "the pure case of intelligible law, . . . not a particular case but the resume of all cases" (V:33-34). An intelligible emanation relates to a particular, determined precept or maxim of human law by referring to it from a higher viewpoint.

implicit in the discourse of all reasoners."<sup>467</sup> We do not have to think about, deliberate about, ponder, imagine, or finally choose first principles. As it were, they structure the very way we think about, deliberate about, imagine, or choose.

It might seem ludicrous to claim that these common principles are universal, that the precepts themselves are ordered according to natural inclinations, and that it is a grasp of the overall good that is principle of ordering particular precepts. Still, natural law refers to the principles of practical reason, not to the actual, reflective grasp of these principles by any individual.<sup>468</sup> Further, the all-important distinction is between the first principles themselves and any given account of the first principles. Ralph McInerny states the distinction in these words:

Everyone can be presumed to know the first principles of practical reason but not any theory about them, nor even the description of them as "first principles of practical reason." What anyone can be presumed to know is that he ought to act in a way that furthers the good.<sup>469</sup>

In the application first principles are operative and "self-evident," but not self-evident as reflectively known. Both the precepts of the natural law and the first principles of speculative reason are self-evident principles (principia per se nota). This is in two ways: in itself (secundum se) or in relation to us (quoad nos).<sup>470</sup> A proposition self-evident in itself is one in which the predicate is contained in the definition of the subject (de ratione subjecti). It is self-evident to us if we know the definition of the subject, i.e., if we understand the definition. Some propositions

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<sup>467</sup>Vernon Bourke, "The Synderesis Rule and Right Reason," Monist 66 Jan. 1983, p. 74. [emphasis added]

<sup>468</sup>This has been touched upon in Chapter One, section I.2, where I noted that MacIntyre's analysis of first principles as tradition-bound does not consider the possibility of first principles as the causal relations of an intelligible emanation.

<sup>469</sup>Aquinas on Human Action, pp. 123-124.

<sup>470</sup>ST I, q. 94, a. 2.

are self-evident only to the wise.<sup>471</sup>

What comparison can be made between Lonergan's transcendental precepts and existential ethics and Aquinas' first principles of natural law? First, both have to do with the normative role of human intelligence in human conduct. Neither transcendental precepts nor first principles of practical reason are of human invention. Rather they are self-discoveries about what is implicit in the way humans reason. They are the principles, not the conclusions, by which as a matter of fact we deliberate.

Both Lonergan and Aquinas trace precepts to a single source. For Aquinas it is the first principle of practical reason. For Lonergan it is the notion of the good. These two sources are really two ways of talking about the same thing. The intention of the good is a middle knowledge in light of which we deliberate and evaluate. This notion is concrete -- intending particular actions -- but it is somewhat indeterminate, just like the principle "good is to be done and evil avoided." From this transcendental notion we can derive a list of transcendental precepts. But they have a common root and are united by the unfolding of a single intention.<sup>472</sup>

Both Lonergan and Aquinas recognize that there is a gap between general precepts or principles, which are the same for all (consequent to nature) and are imperatives, and detailed conclusions from application of these precepts. The precept "acknowledge your historicity" is in no way a repudiation of natural law, or what Lonergan calls "the built-in law of the human spirit." It is his way of saying "do good and avoid evil in the concrete, unique, historical situation in which you find yourself."

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<sup>471</sup>"Thus to one who understands that an angel is not a body, it is self-evident that an angel is not circumscriptively in a place: but this is not evident to the unlearned, for they cannot grasp it" (ST I-II, q. 94, a. 2, c).

<sup>472</sup>In Method Lonergan writes of an integral "scale of values" -- vital, social, cultural, personal, transcendent. These values correspond to a natural hierarchy of inclinations and the relations between them. MT:31-32, 50-52.

Finally, for both Lonergan and Aquinas the natural law is implicit in speculative and practical discourse. Neither first principles (Aquinas) nor transcendental precepts (Lonergan) are chosen. They are self-evident. Lonergan conceives this self-evidency in terms of questions, the "operators" of human consciousness. Aquinas writes that the truth or rectitude of first principles is the same for all.

### 5.3 Existential Ethics as Difficult

The "bridge problem," existing in its various dichotomies (e.g., subject/object, knowledge/reality, consciousness/being), presents a difficulty for taking "psychological facts" seriously. This subtle problem presupposes one either "begin with being" or "begin with knowing" and fails to see the possibility of a tandem method. The dichotomy, I argued, is a pseudo dichotomy entrenched in a misunderstanding of consciousness. If consciousness is a perfection in being, one can no more "begin with knowing" to the exclusion of being than open one's eyes in daylight without seeing an object. Likewise, if what is meant by "being" is not what is "already-out-there-now" but correctly understood experience, then one can no more "begin with being" to the exclusion of knowing than see a visible object without using one's eyes. Any metaphysical claim, including the claim to be getting along just fine without metaphysics, is implicitly a psychological claim and either is or is not supported by psychological facts. Likewise, any psychological claim, including the claim to be getting along just fine without an intentionality analysis of the conscious subject, is implicitly a metaphysical claim.<sup>473</sup> The combined claim to be getting along just fine without either metaphysics or psychology, is both a metaphysical and psychological claim, and either is or is not supported by psychological facts and metaphysical theorems. The real issue, the urgent, pressing and difficult issue, is personally and interpersonally

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<sup>473</sup>Though in Insight ethics and metaphysics are an expansion of a basis given by cognitional theory, latent metaphysics is always operative. See pp. 387 & 391.

to appropriate the criteria for discerning authentic from inauthentic praxis on an ongoing basis and with a healthy hermeneutics of suspicion. Among other things this will make conversion and differentiations topics for discussion.<sup>474</sup>

### 5.3.1 From Soul to Subject

One of the challenges of a critically grounded existential ethics is the personal demand placed upon the philosopher. It is a demand that can be understood by comparing existential reflection to reflection upon the soul.

"Soul" is "first act of an organic body." It is a metaphysical term that pertains to humans, whether we are asleep, idle, thinking, confused, miserable, or in love. The soul is the principle of life that is known by examining its powers, acts, and objects. The powers of the soul are distinguished by their acts, and acts are diversified according to the nature of various objects. In the sequence of powers, acts and objects, priority could be given the object, since faculties are known through acts, and acts through their objects. If priority in investigation is given to the object, one might assert the priority of intellect, which first receives the object, over will, which intends. Desire of the due end presupposes first an apprehension of the end. Since it is the speculative intellect that knows the true simply as true, the priority of speculative intellect over practical intellect might be asserted.<sup>475</sup> And finally if one's starting point in philosophy is metaphysics, psychology is then subordinated to natural philosophy -- faculty psychology.

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<sup>474</sup>Cf. MT:130-131, 267-294.

<sup>475</sup>I do not take this to be Aquinas' position. Neither does Fred Crowe, who finds in Aquinas' writings a "radical community of speculative and practical knowledge" since in both "there is the same cognitional process from principles to conclusions." Crowe suggests that those insisting on an essential difference between speculative and practical knowledge are appealing to John of St. Thomas. Cf. "Universal Norms and the Concrete 'Operabile' in St. Thomas Aquinas" pp. 258, 266, 274.



An emphasis upon soul, objects, and speculative apprehension of universal truths generates one set of priorities. These priorities have been attacked by various pragmatic, existential, phenomenological, hermeneutical and deconstructive schools of thought. While contesting this set of priorities, a philosopher might substitute for them a different set of priorities: ethics or epistemology as "first philosophy," subject over object, practical intellect over speculative intellect, fallible knowledge over universal and necessary premises.

It might appear that this is where Lonergan would enter the debate. In his research and writing on Aquinas (1938-1949) and in Insight Lonergan employs the language of faculty psychology. This seems to suggest the first set of priorities listed above. And yet, in both Verbum and Insight there is an appeal to conscious experience,<sup>476</sup> which seems to suggest something like the second list of priorities, as does Lonergan's explicit assertion in later writings of the primacy of practical reason.<sup>477</sup>

But if the second set of priorities is merely an inversion of the first, it is a merely a new deal, a reshuffling of the same cards. In other words, it is still within the parameters of the pre-Gödelian "second stage of meaning" with its logical control of meaning and conception of metaphysics as the science uniting all sciences.<sup>478</sup> In what Lonergan calls the "third stage of

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<sup>476</sup>Lonergan describes the novelty of the Verbum articles as an "effort to show that the Thomist analysis of intellect was not merely metaphysical but also psychological, that it was concerned not only with the intellect as a power of the human soul but also with the intelligence of conscious human subjects." SS:576. And he remarks on the exercises of Insight: "The first eight chapters of Insight are a series of five-finger exercises, inviting the reader to discover in himself and for himself just what happens when he understands. . . . The basic inquiry was cognitional theory, and while I still spoke in terms of faculty psychology, in reality I had moved out of its influence and was conducting intentionality analysis." "Insight Revisited," 2C:269 & 277.

<sup>477</sup>In "The Origins of Christian Realism" 2C:242, he writes of "the primacy of practical reason . . . the primacy of questions that lead to deliberation, evaluation, decision."

<sup>478</sup>Lonergan describes three stages of meaning in MT:85-99. Also see "Dimensions of Meaning," CWL 4:232-245. The stages are ideal types of historical developments that are

meaning," control is methodological and ongoing and has any number of formulations. Metaphysics does not disappear, but it is conceived as an "integration of heuristic structures," "not some categorial speculation that reveals that all is water, or matter, or spirit, or process, or what have you" (MT:25).

Existential ethics is a "logic" of the existential subject, the one who wonders, grows, risks, commits, suffers, rejoices, and, perhaps, falls in love.<sup>479</sup> Existential ethics differentiates the study of human acts from the study of plants.<sup>480</sup> It is a tandem method that "does not treat of objects without taking into account the corresponding operations of the subject; it does not treat of the subject's operations without taking into account the corresponding objects."<sup>481</sup> By transposing statements and claims to their source in the data of human consciousness it invites us to a

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complex, broad and controversial. Lonergan maintains that the scientific revolution of the late 17th and 18th centuries, and the historical and hermeneutical revolutions of the 20th century, are genuine achievements of the human spirit that have called into question classical conception of foundations. "The classical mediation of meaning has broken down. It is being replaced by a modern mediation of meaning that interprets our dreams and symbols, that thematizes our wan smiles and limp gestures, that analyzes our minds and charts our souls, that takes the whole of human history for its kingdom to compare and relate languages and literatures, art forms and religions, family arrangements and customary morals, political, legal, educational, economic systems, sciences, philosophies, theologies, and histories." "Dimensions of Meaning," CWL 4:244.

<sup>479</sup>Lonergan writes that the existential subject tended to be "overlooked on the schematism of older categories that distinguished faculties, such as intellect and will, or different uses of the same faculty, such as speculative and practical intellect, or different types of human activity, such as theoretical inquiry and practical execution" S:20.

<sup>480</sup>"If the objects of vegetative activity are causal, it remains that the objects of sensitive and intellectual activity are also intentional. If vegetative acts are not accessible to introspection, sensitive and intellectual acts are among the immediate data of consciousness; they can be reached, not only by deduction from their objects, but also in themselves as given in consciousness." SS:579.

<sup>481</sup>"Religious Knowledge," 3C:I41.

meditation that complements and enhances a study of soul.<sup>482</sup> In doing so, it grants priority neither to speculative nor practical intellect; neither to metaphysics, ethics, or epistemology; neither to intellect nor will, knowledge or love, object or subject. It does, however, distinguish between authentic and inauthentic theoretical, practical, philosophical, and interpersonal noetic praxis.

### 5.3.2 First Principles

The dual method that transposes ethical claims to their source in human consciousness has a bearing on our understanding of "first principles." If among the priorities of logic are sound first premises, and if metaphysics is first science, and the most universal premises regard being, then logically first principles or premises regarding being.

Logical priorities and, more generally, the debate about "first philosophy," presuppose a hermeneutical situation in which there either is a unique logical starting point or there are distinct logical starting points corresponding to the study of different objects. There is nothing wrong with proceeding this way any more than there is something wrong with the assumptions of Euclidean geometry. An ethics that prescind from an hermeneutical analysis of the horizon of existential subjects is not meaningless.<sup>483</sup> Meaning, in any case, is mediated by a certain set of assumptions and priorities that are not unique. These assumptions and priorities, moreover, cannot discriminate between different sets of priorities.<sup>484</sup>

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<sup>482</sup>Lonergan writes that Insight is "program not an argument, presumes readers, not premisses, advances by inviting not deducing." "The Original Preface of Insight," p.4.

<sup>483</sup>Rawls's description of an "original position" in his neo-Kantian, liberal ethics is an example of an approach that is meaningful but that is methodologically different from existential ethics. The unencumbered self in the original position is a noumenal self, hardly an existential subject.

<sup>484</sup>Non-Euclidean geometries simply appear odd to one operating under the assumptions of Euclidean geometry. Similarly, existential ethics appears strange to Kantian and neo-Kantian ethicists alike. "Pure practical reason" is not the practical reason of an existential subject.

An ethics that is methodological does not cease from the logical operations of well-formulated hypotheses and careful deductions of assumptions. But it also recognizes that discovery, verification, development, belief, differentiation and conversion are extra-logical but integral parts of an existential subject's horizon. What is needed is a meta-logic, or wisdom, to select terms, principles, and axioms. Such wisdom is elusive precisely because it is not reducible to or deducible from terms, principles, and axioms. Wisdom is "horizoned" in the lives of authentic subjects and it evolves as they develop. This is the philosophical counterpart to Gödel's insight that the first axioms and postulates of any system ultimately cannot be justified by that system.

Problems arise when either too much or entire emphasis is placed upon rigor and coherence, when certain assumptions are privileged and others brushed aside -- for example, when non-Euclidean geometries are excluded a priori, or when little or no attention is given to the existential horizon mediating the meaning of terms, principles, and axioms. It cannot be assumed we are speaking the same language.

Empiricism, idealism, and realism name three totally different horizons with no common identical objects. An idealist never means what an empiricist means, and a realist never means what either of them mean. An empiricist may argue that quantum theory cannot be about reality; it cannot because it deals only with relations between phenomena. An idealist would concur and add that, of course, the same is true of all science and, indeed, of the whole of human knowing. The critical realist will disagree with both: a verified hypothesis is probably true; and what probably is true refers to what in reality probably is so. (MT:239)

What becomes of first principles in the "third stage of meaning"? First principles are not eliminated, but they are not verbal propositions, self-evident, logical starting points, or indubitable truths. The role of first principles is assumed by a foundational grasp of the invariant structure of human consciousness and of the historicity of meanings, i.e., that meanings develop historically in accord with developing intelligence.<sup>485</sup> In Method in Theology Lonergan describes the difference

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<sup>485</sup>First principles in philosophy are not verbal propositions but the de facto invariants of

between logical and methodological first principles:

Foundations may be conceived in two quite different manners. The simple manner is to conceive foundations as set of premises, of logically first propositions. The complex manner is to conceive foundations as what is first in any ordered set. If the ordered set consists in propositions, then the first will be the logically first propositions. If the ordered set consists in an ongoing, developing reality, then the first is the immanent and operative set of norms that guides each forward step in the process. (MT:270)

What Lonergan describes here is a difference in kind, not degree. What is first methodically is not a proposition or set of propositions; nor again is it a treatise or proof; it is rather the immanent norms mediating the meanings of propositions, treatises, and proofs. The unifying principle in the "third stage of meaning" is neither a single first principle, a set of such principles, a doctrine, or an all-encompassing science, but rather the unity of differentiated collaborators.<sup>486</sup>

Authentic praxis in the realm of speculation, or any other realm for that matter,<sup>487</sup> is not

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human conscious intentionality . . . It is only on the basis of intentionality analysis that it is possible either to understand human historicity or to set forth the foundations and criticize the practice of contemporary hermeneutics and critical history" Doctrinal Pluralism, pp. 31-32. See also note #67 above. Garrett Barden takes up this basic point in After Principles. He does not argue against the reality of first principles, but against the ultimacy of logic, logical systems, concepts, and principles as known in propositions. "What is ultimate is that set of operations in their operation, not that set of operations as formally known and expressed in propositions and sentences. If one attempts, whether briefly or at great length, to define this set of operations, then one's definition is a set of propositions that are expressed in sentences. But it is neither these sentences nor the propositions they express that are ultimate; what is ultimate is the set of operations that propositions attempt to define, refer to, denote." p. 61.

<sup>486</sup>Fred Lawrence writes of the difficult transition from the second to third stage: "To people who conceive wisdom in terms of the second, classical, stage of meaning this placement of wisdom in the unity of differentiated consciousness feels like a vertigo-inducing displacement, because what the third state allows to become altogether clear is that there are no extrinsic criteria by which human existence is to get its bearings." Fred Lawrence, "Lonergan's Foundations," p. 276.

<sup>487</sup>There is a phronesis-like element operative in different "realms of meaning" -- common sense practicality and interpersonal living, empirical science, and philosophy. On realms of meaning, as well as their differentiation and integration, see MT:81-85, 95.

whatever we happen to choose, i.e. something "merely subjective." It is, however, subjective in the sense that authentic praxis is recognized by authentic subjects. How else would it be known? We know authentic praxis by virtue of what we are, or by believing or knowing someone who is wise, a law unto themselves. Elders are needed to transmit wisdom and provide a norm to novices who lack the years and experience to understand.<sup>488</sup> Even so, knowing who the wise elders are is by virtue of what we are.

Another difficulty is how to respond to the hermeneutical claim that our worlds are "worded" (die Sprachlichkeit der Welt), that there exists an inexorable linguistic dimension to human thought and action, that language itself is but a part of a larger drama, and, perhaps most especially, that introspecting a pre-linguistic "inner word" is make-believe.

A personal appeal to preconceptual as well as conceptual acts does not deny that language functions as a horizon for human reason. We are, in some ways, shaped by our mother tongue. Language is a part of what David Jones describes as "the mythus, deposits, matière, ethos, whole res of which the poet is the product."<sup>489</sup> It is not just the poet or artist who is product. Each of us, involved in the dramatic artistry of constituting our own lives, is molded and shaped, and part of this molding and shaping is linguistic.

Insight is into and in some sense in the phantasm. But neither the phantasm nor its symbolic, linguistic, or incarnate expression is identical to the act of intelligence. There is a remainder -- the speech within speech, the inner word. Although the spirit of inquiry is intimately related to what Wittgenstein calls "language games," it is a mistake to identify wonder, understanding, and inner speaking (verba) so thoroughly with language that everything is reduced to language and language itself is hypostatized, at worst becoming a prison-house in which one

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<sup>488</sup>Docility is a part of prudence. Cf. ST II-II, q. 49, a. 3.

<sup>489</sup>David Jones, Epoch and Artist, p. 117. Part of the "molding" is linguistic. See also Fred Lawrence "Language As Horizon?"

relative set of metaphors gives way to another relative set and interpretations are simply arbitrary. It is one thing to make a linguistic or hermeneutical turn; it is another thing, not incompatible with these turns, to identify the dynamics of speaking and listening and empirically to verify the "rock" of related conscious operations. "One needs to go beyond the horizon of language to talk explicitly about those structures of the human spirit that are not language, to attain a realism that is critical."<sup>490</sup>

A further reason why "it is quite difficult to be at home in transcendental method" (MT:I4) is what is required of the philosopher. We cannot study the unique data for grasping the psychological analogy without also asking about what is happening in our lives. This requires personal involvement and formation.<sup>491</sup>

This is not a concern for those sharing Cartesian, Lockean, Humean, or Kantian foundationalist aspirations.<sup>492</sup> For each of these the primordially of facticity and what Gadamer calls a "hermeneutic logic" is problematic. It is problematic because in theory, if not practically and psychologically, the conscious, existential subject is left out of the picture. Their "turn to the subject" does not ask the interpersonal, conversational questions "What is happening, as a matter of fact, when I am understanding, speaking, and listening?" They are not reflecting upon noetic praxis as guided by phronesis, and they are not seeking to differentiate the different "self-tastes" of the polyphony of consciousness and the precepts corresponding to these different "self-tastes."

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<sup>490</sup>Fred Lawrence, "Critical Realism and the Hermeneutical Revolution," p. 21.

<sup>491</sup>Pierre Hadot's studies have shown that personal development and self-appropriation were intrinsic to ancient philosophic practice. He suggests that the modern mentality of philosophizing as a specialized endeavor that does not directly and intimately bear on one's life is not representative of ancient philosophic practice. Cf. Philosophy as a Way of Life: Spiritual Exercise from Socrates to Foucault. Also see Eric Voeglin's "Reason: The Classical Experience."

<sup>492</sup>Lonergan places these thinkers in the first phase of modern philosophy with its heavy emphasis upon speculative knowing, and identifies a notable shift towards concern with praxis in thinkers like Kierkegaard, Blondel, Newman, and Ricoeur. "Unity and Plurality," 3C:242.

For them knowing is in some way analogous to seeing or intuiting.

The shift from logical to methodological priorities is similar to a gestalt shift in the scientific community when there is a change in scientific method,<sup>493</sup> but a shift to methodological priorities in philosophy is more demanding than a shift in scientific method. A change in method in the natural sciences poses a challenge, but it is a conceptual reordering that does not challenge one's self-image. In order for a new viewpoint in philosophy to become effective there must be a "real apprehension," an effective change in praxis. Foundations are existential, praxis-foundations, the "itch beneath the shoe."<sup>494</sup>

Fred Crowe intimates both the toil and profit in striving for existential foundations by comparing philosophical practice to spiritual exercises:

I suggest that there may be an analogy in the more familiar difficulty of interiority in the ascetical life. Anyone who has worked a while at "spiritual exercises" will know how difficult is the examination of conscience, how elusive the determination of motives, how alien to nature the effort to explore the inner life of the soul. Most of us would hardly undertake such exercises except on the very best authority in the spiritual life, yet, having done so, would probably agree the experiment profitable. Should we expect the appropriation of cognitional process to be much easier than that of motives, or the former to be any less profitable philosophically than the later ascetically?<sup>495</sup>

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<sup>493</sup>See Kuhn, Structures of Scientific Revolution, p. 112.

<sup>494</sup>See Chapter Two, section 2.2.3.

<sup>495</sup>"The Exigent Mind: Bernard Lonergan's Intellectualism," p. 28. Philip McShane expresses the challenge in these words: "What is Lonergan getting at? The uncomfortable answer is that Lonergan is getting at you and me. And my uncomfortable answer grows in value as an introduction to the degree that it causes the reader to pause in self-questioning, 'Do I want to be got-at?' The classical system-building theologian certainly does not want to be 'got-at,' be turned towards some sort of self-examination. For him, religious truths and topics, even such as regard, like faith and hope, the intimacy of the self, are to be grasped, considered, defended, in a manner which does not sharply touch that self. A century of Kierkegaardian bent should have eliminated such system-building, . . . ." Introducing the Thought of Bernard Lonergan, p. 7.



What Crowe is getting at is the difficulty in distinguishing the many desires that constitute our polymorphic lives.<sup>496</sup> If one assumes that desires are "merely psychological," personally relevant but irrelevant for ethics, then one's analysis will not be existential in the way we are defining it. In other words, even before getting to the difficult labor of self-appropriation, there is the difficult problem of welcoming this labor as philosophically valid to begin with.

The difficult labor also poses a pedagogical problem. For greater familiarity with direct and indirect insights puzzles, riddles, jokes, or a good detective story help facilitate self-appropriation. Appropriation of willing, deciding, action in the moral sphere demands greater involvement. It is not that personal experience of psychological facts ceases to matter, but that it is almost a contradiction to speak of exercises in this realm, and as Aristotle noted, a certain amount of maturity is demanded.<sup>497</sup>

If one is at all inclined towards theoretical speculation, the personal difficulty of appropriating conscious acts is compounded by a theoretical exigency and dis-ease that is illustrated in the early Platonic dialogues. Though everyone knew what "courage" was, no one was able to articulate a concise meaning common to all instances of this virtue. Socrates encountered hostility by asking about the whole of "courage" when all he was getting was bits and pieces. His questions pushed beyond the sense common to the many (common sense) to an entirely different realm of meaning.

Common sense or descriptive understanding relates things to ourselves. Explanatory

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<sup>496</sup>There are, besides the "pure desire to know" many others, including the desire to be known.

<sup>497</sup>This is the challenge of the "functional specialty" dialectics and foundations, the transition from indirect discourse about the convictions of others (e.g., Plato, Aristotle, Aquinas, Hegel, Lonergan) to direct and personal dialogue, from philosophy as mediating to philosophy as mediated. Fred Crowe writes: "Is an Augustinian confession of what we have been, of the past that has made us what we are, required as an integral part . . . when we enter upon the tasks of dialectic and foundations? Maybe by now you will agree that the impact of Lonergan's method, as I see it, will be brutal indeed." The Lonergan Enterprise, p. 91.

understanding relates things to one another. Both are instances of intelligence. And while neither is better than the other, a philosopher troubled by a lack of differentiation might privilege one over the other or simply conflate or confuse the two.<sup>498</sup> Descriptive phenomenology is a way we might begin to describe the largely unknown regions of human consciousness. But descriptive phenomenology will not provide norms.

While a lifetime could be spent doing a phenomenology of perception, of wonder, of action, of feeling, of smiling, or of some other aspect of human experience, ethics as speculative, though related, is a distinct project with its own difficulties. Both projects are worthwhile, but the second one seeks to understand the unity of consciousness rather than any particular faculty, different uses of the same faculty, different types of human activity, or a phenomenology of one or more activities. A grasp of the norms and dynamic relations of intentional conscious acts, which is an aim of existential ethics, is more than a highly nuanced common sense (MT:94), no more reducible to the customs and mores of the local townspeople than is an understanding of acceleration. It is much more than a weekend affair to appreciate the "mysterious relevance of theory to performance in the 'real' world" (MT:29). Such appreciation is in no way "totalizing"; it merely specifies an open, dynamic structure. Appropriating the dynamic norms of human consciousness, as well as the contingencies surrounding all human operations, is ever ongoing and precarious. Our course is still "in the night."

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<sup>498</sup>In his notes on Existentialism, with Husserl in mind, Lonergan writes of theoretical and common sense understanding as "two standpoints." "The alleged two truths are simply the result of applying the different criteria relevant and appropriate to the different standpoints. Science does not rest de facto on evidence and procedures of Lebenswelt. There has been a failure to attempt the phenomenology of the scientist and phenomenologist: Thales, Archimedes, Newton, Einstein are just odd and strange from common-sense viewpoint." NE:13.

#### 5.4 Further Developments

After his two major studies of Aquinas there were further refinements and developments in Lonergan's thinking, a filling out or change in context that would further define "existential ethics."<sup>499</sup> In Lonergan's later writings history, the nature of human science, cultural pluralism, stages, functions and realms of meaning, multiple differentiations of consciousness, the two-directional nature of development and the primacy of conversion are in the forefront of his thinking. They are part of a "moving viewpoint" that would enable him to understand more adequately the differences between Aquinas' cultural context and his own, and thus crystallize the problematic that would continue to preoccupy him: how to understand historicity without either becoming historicist or subordinating history to a totalizing systematic.<sup>500</sup> In the final section of this chapter I will note some of these developments.

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<sup>499</sup>In an interview in which Lonergan traces his developing point of view, he writes: "There is a spreading out, moving on, including more. Like recently [1970] what I've got a hold of is the fact that I've dropped faculty psychology and I'm doing intentionality analysis." "An Interview with Fr. Bernard Lonergan, S.J." 2C:222-223.

<sup>500</sup>Part of Lonergan's original intention was how to introduce history into Catholic theology. In an interview in 1977 Lonergan remarked: "The whole problem in modern theology, Protestant and Catholic, is the introduction of historical scholarship." The Question as Commitment, p. 103. Insight did not fulfill his original intention. "Insight was an exploration in other fields, prior to trying to do method in theology." "An Interview with Father Bernard Lonergan, S.J." 2C:213.

#### 5.4.1 Apprehension of Values in Feelings

In the summer of 1959 Lonergan read Jean Piaget and Susanne Langer. Later he would study the works of Dietrich von Hildebrand and Max Scheler. His views on ethics were on the move. With regard to the movement he writes: "There is a spreading out, moving on, including more."<sup>501</sup> Lonergan's moving point of view, however, did not undo what had learned in reading Aquinas. The "critical issue" of Verbum, which becomes in Insight an invitation to self-affirmation, is never displaced.<sup>502</sup>

What did become a bit clearer in Lonergan's thought is the role of feelings in his intellectualist account of human freedom. The question "Is it truly good for me to join the circus at this time in my life?", together with the ensuing decision and actions, involves both affective and cognitive elements. "Intermediate between judgments of fact and judgments of value lie apprehensions of value. Such apprehensions are given of feelings."<sup>503</sup>

The pertinent feelings in this case are intentional responses. There are non-intentional trends and states, such as hunger, thirst, fatigue, bad-humor. These non-intentional feelings still have causes and goals, and they can be identified and distinguished by understanding the relation either between a feeling that is an effect of some cause, or between a feeling that has a goal. Fatigue is an effect that has some particular cause, while thirst has the goal of drink. In order for these non-intentional trends and states to arise, we do not need to perceive or imagine them.

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<sup>501</sup>"An Interview with Fr. Bernard Lonergan," 2C:222.

<sup>502</sup>In Verbum the critical problem, which is also the problem of self-knowledge, is in simplest terms this: "We know by what we are; we know we know by knowing what we are" (V:88). The first ten chapters of Insight are preparatory exercises ("spirobics") to the critical problem of self-affirmation of the knower. The challenge Lonergan faced in writing Method was how to intimate the personal formation of "transcendental method" without re-writing all of Insight: "To say it all with the greatest brevity: one has not only to read Insight but also to discover oneself in oneself" (MT:260).

<sup>503</sup>MT:37.

Rather they arise and then we might notice them and do something about them.

Intentional responses are feelings that relate us to an object. Examples are joy, sorrow, hope, despair, trust, tenderness, admiration, reverence, horror (MT:31). Such feelings are related to people, situations, the past, the future, evils to be lamented, goods that must be accomplished. "Such feelings give consciousness its mass, momentum, drive, power. Without these feelings our knowing and deciding would be paper thin."<sup>504</sup> Likewise, when there is an abundance of feelings but a lack of knowledge there results "moral idealism, i.e., lovely proposals that don't work out and often do more harm than good."<sup>505</sup>

When the question "Is it really worthwhile to join the circus?" occurs, what is intended is a judgment of value regarding an ought-to-be-done. Answering the question requires a careful discernment of feelings, but also an apprehension of reality, possibility, probability. Feelings by themselves lead to idealism. Some intentional responses are self-regarding. They merely point towards what is agreeable or disagreeable, satisfying or dissatisfying. But the agreeable and pleasant may or may not be truly good. Normative feelings are intentional responses to objective goods, while others intend merely what is satisfying or pleasing to or for someone.<sup>506</sup> Values that regard what is truly good they lead to self-transcendence do so according to an integral scale or hierarchy -- vital, social, cultural, personal, and religious.

Self-regarding feelings are pleasures and pains, desires and fears. But disinterested feelings recognize excellence: the vital value of health and strength; the communal value of a successfully functioning social order; the cultural value proclaimed as a life to be

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<sup>504</sup>MT:30-31. "Knowledge is not enough ... moral feelings have to be cultivated, enlightened, strengthened, refined, criticized, pruned of oddities" MT:38.

<sup>505</sup>MT:38.

<sup>506</sup>Von Hildebrand writes of the different kinds of importance: "What matters is precisely whether the motivating category of importance is the value, the objective good for the person, or the merely subjectively satisfying." *Christian Ethics*, p. 61.

sustained not by bread alone but also by the word; the personal appropriation of these values by individuals; their historical extension in progress; deviations from them in decline; and their recovery by self-sacrificing love.<sup>507</sup>

This scale of values that are the objects of intentional feelings is ordered in such a way that the higher retain and yet go beyond the lower. For example, the vital values of health, strength, and vigor are conditioned by the social values of community and social order. These values, in turn, are conditioned by the value of a meaningful life.

#### 5.4.2 "Two Ways of Development"

Another development in Lonergan's later thought that fills out his earlier views on ethics is his thematization of the two ways of development that became a recurring theme in his writing beginning in 1974.<sup>508</sup> Understanding is conditioned "from below" by the types of images and questions that might occur to someone.<sup>509</sup> They are also conditioned "from above" by what is believed, valued, or cherished, and in whom one believes, and whom one admires and seeks to emulate.

The vector "from below upwards" is more predominant in early works, including both Verbum and Insight. "From below upwards" the whole mass of images, movements, memories, perceptions, and desires set the conditions and are the wellspring in which insights "bubble up." In the movement from below upwards judgments presuppose and supervene upon insights into phantasm. We cannot judge what we do not first understand, and we cannot understand without

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<sup>507</sup>"Natural Right and Historical Mindedness," 3C:I73.

<sup>508</sup>A helpful essay on the significance of this distinction in Lonergan's later writings is Fred Crowe's "An Expansion of Lonergan's Notion of Value," in Appropriating the Lonergan Idea, pp. 344-359. Crowe examines education in light of these two vectors in Old Things and New: A Strategy for Education.

<sup>509</sup>See section 4.4 of Chapter Four.

some phantasm.<sup>510</sup> Permeating this movement from below upwards is the eros of the mind, the restless spirit of inquiry, or the "pure desire to know" that illuminates the phantasm, and its fuller flowering in the intention of the good that "takes us beyond cognitional process into the realm of freedom and responsibility."<sup>511</sup>

The movement "from below upwards" begins with the lower activities of sensation and ascends to understanding, conceiving, reflecting, judging. The principle Nihil amatum nisi praecognitum expresses this upward vector of development. Loving, the basic act of will, follows knowing. We cannot love whom or what we do not know.

There are, however, exceptions to this principle in the eyes of love that reveal new values, in the "reasons of the heart that reason does not know." The occurrence of practical and speculative questions, and the supervening direct and reflective insights are themselves caught in a massive movement "from above downwards." It is a prior

movement from above downwards which begins in the affectivity of the infant, the child ... on [which] 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.<sup>512</sup>

Initially much of what is learned, believed, and valued is through osmosis and through one's cultural inheritance. This is not to say it is irrational. Early on the movement from above predominates when psychological and intellectual formation is "caught" more than learned, and

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<sup>510</sup>"Empirical method moves from below upwards, from experience to understanding, and from understanding to factual judgment. It can do so because it can presuppose that the data of experience are intelligible and so are objects that straightforward understanding can master." "The Ongoing Genesis of Methods," 3C:I60. See also "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness," 3C:I81.

<sup>511</sup>"The Ongoing Genesis of Methods," 3C:I60.

<sup>512</sup>Lonergan, "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness," 3C:I81.

when personal development is more affective and pre-rational than cognitive. Lonergan writes:

We come to know the good from the example of those about us, from the stories people tell of the good and evil men and women of old, from the incessant flow of praise and blame that makes up the great part of human conversation.<sup>513</sup>

Initially it is the resonating words of a friend or teacher that can resolutely convince us that there is something worthwhile in this work of art or the writings of this particular thinker.<sup>514</sup> To be "on one's own, to appropriate all that one has learnt by proceeding as does the original thinker,"<sup>515</sup> is an achievement whose initial and formative conditions are handed on rather than chosen. Even the rare genius or virtuoso is heavily indebted.

Within relationships real questions and concerns do arise concerning what is truly worthwhile and what can be left behind. Within the narrative of one's life an individual or group might inspire one to make new considerations, imagine things in another way, or to dare question even the most basic assumptions.

We realize it is not simply the words of the wise man or woman, but the integrity of those words, that convince and convict us. There is a challenge posed to both mind and heart, to what we are and what we have been. The words evoke feelings of gratitude or humility or shame. In the Symposium Socrates has such an impact on Alcibiades who is moved to tears from just listening to Socrates:

Well, aren't you a piper? Yes, a more wonderful performer than Marsyas! For he used to bewitch men through instruments by the power of his mouth, and so also now does anyone who pipes his tunes;... The only difference between you is, that you do the very

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<sup>513</sup>S:27.

<sup>514</sup>Lonergan writes of the primacy of personal relationships Method in Theology. For example, see the explanatory account of the human good, MT:27-56 where he relates personal relations to liberty, conversion, orientation.

<sup>515</sup>"Natural Right and Historical Mindedness," 3C:181.



same without instruments by bare words! We, at least, when we hear someone else making other speeches, even quite a good orator, nobody cares a jot, I might say; but when one hears you, or your words recited by another, ... we are overwhelmed and enraptured.<sup>516</sup>

The dramatic effect of this dialogue -- i.e., our ability to imagine the scene and be affected by it -- coincides with the drama of our ordinary lives. Our ordinary lives are within what Lonergan calls a "dramatic pattern of experience," and, developmentally, affective and imaginative formation precedes our critical abilities.<sup>517</sup>

#### 5.4.3 Significance of Developments

Lonergan's analyses of the apprehension of values in intentional feelings and of the twofold movement of development are a case of his viewpoint "spreading out, moving on, including more."<sup>518</sup> What is the significance of Lonergan's later analyses?

His analysis of intentional feelings adds, I believe, an affective normativity to ethics that complements the normative role of questions and understanding at the center of his intellectualist reading and retrieval of Aquinas. Norms are indeterminate correlations. In this case the correlations between judgments of fact, judgments of value and affective apprehension of value is another invariant norm, or primary relativity, that in itself is indeterminate. Particular questions, particular judgments of value and particular intentional feelings are in every case the "secondary determinations" of the indeterminate correlation.

For Aristotle the morally virtuous person feels pleasure and pain "at the right time,

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<sup>516</sup>Great Dialogues of Plato, pp. 109-110.

<sup>517</sup>"[T]he characters in this drama of living are molded by the drama itself . . . . Before there can be reflection or criticism, evaluation or deliberation . . . the dramatic pattern is operative, outlining how we might behave" (I:188-189).

<sup>518</sup>See Preface, note #17.

toward the right objects, toward the right people, for the right reason and in the right manner." A person becomes morally virtuous by doing good actions, and part of what makes actions good is the joy or pain, horror or admiration, tenderness or indignation that is felt at the right time, and in the right proportion towards the right object.<sup>519</sup> The cultivation of moral virtue has to do, at least in part, with the cultivation of appropriate feelings. To clarify what these appropriate feelings are, Lonergan distinguishes feelings that are trends or states from intentional feelings, and among intentional feelings distinguishes which are self-regarding, or merely satisfying, from feelings which are self-transcending and regard what is truly good.

This analysis of intentional feelings makes the understanding, discernment, and formation of feelings as important for existential ethics as the understanding, discernment and formation of understanding.

Feelings are enriched and refined by attentive study of the wealth and variety of the objects that arouse them, and so no small part of education lies in fostering and developing a climate of discernment and taste, of discriminating praise and carefully worded disapproval, that will conspire with the pupil's or student's own capacities and tendencies, enlarge and deepen his apprehension of values, and help him towards self-transcendence" (MT:32).

There is a critical difference between notionally apprehending true propositions about ethical norms, on the one hand, and really assenting to what is happening interpersonally, intellectually, and affectively, in cognitive and moral self-transcendence. Self-knowledge is deficient without affective self-appropriation.<sup>520</sup>

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<sup>519</sup>Aquinas refers to Aristotle's Ethics in writing of the passions of a virtuous man: "Aristotle says (Ethic ii, 3) that some describe virtue as being a kind of freedom from passion and disturbance; this is incorrect, because the assertion should be qualified: they should have said virtue is freedom from those passions that are not as they should be as to manner and time" ST I-II q.59, a. 2, c.

<sup>520</sup>"As always enlightenment is a matter of the ancient precept, Know thyself . . . beyond knowledge of knowledge . . . also knowledge of affectivity in its threefold manifestation of love in

Lonergan's analysis of the two ways of development is a refinement of existential ethics that helps us to think concretely about the interplay of invariant norms and historicity.<sup>521</sup> The invariant norms expressed in the transcendental precepts are discovered by reflection upon the activity of raising and answering questions. These norms are the source of meaning and value, but these norms can be violated. Therefore their vindication is not another precept or invariant norm, but "lies in the dialectic of history and awesomely indeed in the experiment of history."<sup>522</sup> It is one thing to conceive nature in the abstract, but it is another to conceive nature as concretely operating.

If human living is a being-in-process, human excellence is more a matter of excellent developing than reaching a fixed point in development. While the norms immanent in human intelligence and affectivity have a certain permanence, their concrete, historical operation develops, and develops in two distinct but related ways: "from below" and "from above." The authentic subject achieving self-transcendence (MT:51) develops in both directions. There is no pure development in either direction that is not affected by development in the other.

From "below upwards" one inquires, reflects, deliberates. But "authenticity cannot be taken for granted,"<sup>523</sup> and so one must ask not simply about the human spirit of inquiry as

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the family, locality in the community, and faith in God." "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness," 3C:179. "It is much better to take full cognizance of one's feelings, however deplorable they may be, than to brush them aside, overrule them, ignore them. To take cognizance of them makes it possible for one to know oneself, to uncover the inattention, obtuseness, silliness, irresponsibility that gives rise to the feeling one does not want, and to correct the aberrant attitude" (MT:33).

<sup>521</sup>"We have so to develop the notion of natural right so as to make it no less relevant to human historicity than it is to human nature." "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness," 3C:169.

<sup>522</sup>"Natural Right and Historical Mindedness," 3C:176.

<sup>523</sup>"Ongoing Genesis of Methods," 3C:160.

principle of asking and answering questions, but also about its purity, about the authenticity of one's beliefs, one's tradition, one's formation and education. In other words, one has to consider development "from above down." In conceiving development in both directions at once, one is willing to ask, with a Kierkegaardian hermeneutics of suspicion, about the completeness or incompleteness of beliefs, the authenticity or inauthenticity of traditions.

The twofold way serves as a constant reminder that the aim of existential ethics is to appropriate the criteria of authentic praxis, which is both an individual and collective responsibility. When we speak or write about "transcendental precepts" or "invariant norms" of an "existential subject" we should conceive of these precepts and norms as historically "horizoned." The concrete good of authentic subjects achieving self-transcendence is the good of history. There is an indebtedness of each of us to all, or "moral personality."<sup>524</sup>

The notion of "authentic praxis" and the recognition of an "end of the age of innocence"<sup>525</sup> do not displace or replace the analysis of the twofold procession of word and love, the critical problem of seizing the difference between subject and object, or the claims made regarding essential and effective freedom. It is true that in earlier works Lonergan emphasizes the light of agent intellect and the pure desire to know, while in later works he repeatedly writes of "the reasons of the heart" of an existential subject who is in love.<sup>526</sup> There is a shift in emphasis, but I find it unnecessary to choose between the restlessness of the mind and the "reasons of the heart," and the two ways of development are a way to maintain both principles.

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<sup>524</sup>See chapter Four, section 4.4.3.

<sup>525</sup>"The Ongoing Genesis of Methods," 3C:I60.

<sup>526</sup>"By the heart's reasons I would understand feelings that are intentional responses to values . . . by the heart I understand the subject on the fourth, existential level of intentional consciousness and in the dynamic state of being in love" (MT:II5).

### Conclusion

Lonergan describes Aquinas' thought on freedom and cognitional theory as a "genuine achievement,"<sup>527</sup> and maintains that a personal and critical recognition of intelligible emanations is vital to both philosophical and theological praxis.<sup>528</sup> To a large my efforts have been aimed at a preliminary grasp of Aquinas' "genuine achievement" as retrieved by Lonergan. In Chapters One through Three we were exploring the "nature" of intelligent process. Chapter Four, in good part, had to do with understanding the conditioned conditions under which and within which the patterns of operations occur and recur. The crucial distinction of Chapter Two between self-presence (or knowledge sub ratione experti) and intentional presence (knowledge sub ratione entis, quidditatis, et veri) allows us to distinguish the invariance of a pattern of correlated operations as conscious from any formulation or conception of the pattern.

Lonergan's appeal to psychological facts in his reading of Aquinas not only enabled him to understand what Aquinas meant by the procession of the inner word, but suggested a certain set of methodological priorities for philosophical praxis that enable one to discriminate and resolve differences.<sup>529</sup> In reading Aquinas Lonergan was not trying to wed him to Kant or Descartes, nor was he trying to show the relevance of Aquinas' metaphysics of knowledge to the

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<sup>527</sup>See Preface.

<sup>528</sup>"[T]he matter is so crucial for the present enterprise that some summary must be included here. Please observe that I am offering only a summary, that the summary can do no more than present a general idea, that the process of self-appropriation occurs only slowly, and, usually, only through a struggle with some such book as Insight." MT:7 note #2, also see p. 260.

<sup>529</sup>Lonergan contends that without a personal appeal to personal data "one no more can know the created image of the Blessed Trinity, as Aquinas conceived it, than a blind man can know colors" (V:11).

post-Kantian, Heideggerian context of German philosophy as was Rahner. He was trying to understand the psychological facts embedded in metaphysical categories, facts that would finally have to "bear the weight of the mighty superstructure of trinitarian theory" (V:95). One of the implications of this is that the term "transcendental," which is used to define a school of thought including Rahner, Maréchal, and Coreth, has a precise meaning for Lonergan. It refers to the recurrent and related operations that are an unfolding of the human spirit of inquiry that intends what is true and good. "Transcendental method" should not be associated with neo-Kantian metaphysical anthropology but with the practical exercise of intentionality analysis.<sup>530</sup>

What Lonergan calls "self-appropriation" and "self-affirmation" in Insight and later "transcendental method" in Method in Theology is a further development of what Lonergan achieved in Verbum. For all the changes in Lonergan's expanding thought, I would caution against a radically different "later Lonergan."<sup>531</sup> Although it is clear from his writings on Thomism that he sees a profound development in science, philosophy, and historical method that moves well beyond what Aquinas, living in the 13th century, was capable of acknowledging, it is also true that these slow-growing breakthroughs are themselves activities of intelligent process, and thus would be welcomed by Aquinas and should be welcomed by anyone claiming to be a disciple of being and a proponent of intelligence.

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<sup>530</sup>Lonergan himself did not find "Transcendental Thomist" a helpful category for identifying his approach. See Caring about Meaning: Patterns in the Life of Bernard Lonergan, p. 68.

<sup>531</sup>Fred Lawrence writes of the continuity: "Lonergan's explicit and rather novel introduction of the transcendental notion of value . . . would have had a real resonance in one's prior experience of self-appropriation. One's experience of real self-transcendence needed thematization. And this called for expanding the process of adverting to, distinguishing, naming, identifying, recognizing into that 'further dimension of consciousness' where 'freedom and responsibility, encounter and trust, communication and belief, choice and promise and fidelity' emerge." "What is the Enlightenment?" p. 269. The reference is to Lonergan's essay "Cognitional Structure" CWL 4:219.

The practical question regarding noetic praxis has little to do with questions regarding the primacy of intellect or will, epistemology or metaphysics, and everything to do with "core psychological facts":

From the viewpoint of history there are many questions beyond the bald fact that Aquinas adverted to understanding and made it central in his psychology. But these questions are further questions. They presuppose the bald fact and ask about its measure and degree, its emergence and development, its reinforcement and weakening from combination and conflict with other influences in Thomist sources and the medieval milieu. (V:219)

For intentionality analysis to succeed in reaching an understanding of understanding, the precise nature of psychological facts must be ascertained "and those facts can be ascertained only by ascertaining what was meant [by Aquinas] by intelligere" (V:46).

To ascertain these facts one need not read Aquinas or Lonergan. However these facts are ascertained they will be ascertained through some sort of critical reflection on and of the existential subject who is principle of free acts.<sup>532</sup> What is unique about Lonergan's existentialist approach to ethics is that he combines reflection upon the conscious subject with a group theory of operations which identifies recurring patterns of inner experience, questions, acts of direct and reflective understanding, conceiving, formulating, affirming, evaluating, deciding and acting.<sup>533</sup>

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<sup>532</sup>"When a student is asked for a philosophical proof of human liberty, he is likely to appeal to consciousness. If it is objected that, in consciousness of a free act, we are conscious only of the fact that we chose one part or the other, but not of the possibility of choosing the opposite, most students are stumped. For the appeal to consciousness must be an appeal to the conscious subject who is principle of this act or that act and is aware of the fact that he is principle of either. The appeal must be to the conscious subject and to intelligible emanations." CT:13.

<sup>533</sup>I have added the "existential" operations to Lonergan's list of knowing operations -- experience, understanding, judgment. Lonergan writes of the basic group of operations as "yielding the structure of material being in scholastic philosophy" and notes that from a grasp of the group one can "go on to discuss the differences among philosophers, and so to offer a theory of philosophic differences." Topics in Education, pp. 176-177.

Other "existentialist" philosophers do not approach the question of freedom as Lonergan does. Sartre, for example, is extremely perceptive in his descriptions of consciousness, but he is not seeking an analogue for the proceeding word as was Augustine; nor is he relating the moving object of understanding (illuminated phantasm) to understanding as receptive (intelligere), and the terminal object of understanding (verbum) to understanding as conceiving (intelligere qua dicere), as was Aquinas. Kierkegaard was critical of the Hegelian version of self-knowledge, but he did not attempt to meet the critical problem.<sup>534</sup>

The significance of existential ethics is finally political, for the personal and theoretical appropriation of conscious processions is an eminently practical-political affair:

Personally asking and answering the questions about what I am doing when I am knowing in any and all areas of my living--which can only be done if one returns to the Sache as an empirically verifiable matter of psychological fact--also gets one into asking and answering for oneself the practical and political question about the most choiceworthy way to live.<sup>535</sup>

Just as we do not walk without walking somewhere, so too we do not ask questions without also intending to find out what is really so, or what is really worthwhile.

Someone once remarked to me: "Thomism is like an old Victorian house -- nice place to visit but no one lives there any more." The problem and its solution is hermeneutical -- not simply the houses indwelt, museums visited, concerts attended, or wineries frequented, but the horizon -- development, differentiation and conversions, of the one visiting, seeing, listening,

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<sup>534</sup>This does not mean he accepted the modern subject/object dichotomy. James Collins writes of Kierkegaard: "He made only casual mention of whether knowledge would start with the world about us or with man. A sound instinct told him that there is no genuine disjunction here, even though his Augustinian leanings led him to give actual preference to man. He began with man, and yet he did not begin with man in the manner of recent Cartesians." The Mind of Kierkegaard, p. 246.

<sup>535</sup>Fred Lawrence, "Dangerous Memory and the Pedagogy of the Oppressed," in Communicating A Dangerous Memory: Soundings in Political Theology, p. 32.



tasting. "Qualis unusquisque est, talis et finis videtur ei."<sup>536</sup> The age of hermeneutical innocence, if ever there was one, is not the age in which we live.

There are those who question or even explicitly, sometimes playfully, deny the possibility of intellectual probity. Still, they too speak and listen. In the activity of speaking and listening, unless darkened by deceit, the truth-intention of Socratic dialogue as conversational, which is one way of understanding human intellect as a potens omnia facere et fieri, is performatively present.<sup>537</sup> The listening and speaking, moreover, need not be linguistic nor even efficient:

[T]he real conversation of which I speak need not be linguistically revelatory of the deep joys and sorrows of those who converse. They may also be of the type of conversation which Georg Simmel discusses in his "Sociology of Sociability" where friends flow forth in purposeless speech, or such conversation as is intimated by Rainer Rilke's words: "love consists in this, that two solitudes guard and bind and greet one another."<sup>538</sup>

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<sup>536</sup>Aquinas, ST I-II, q. 10, a. 3, ad 2. The quote is from Aristotle's Ethics: NE, III Ch.5, (114a32).

<sup>537</sup>Therein also lies the psychological analogy: passionately speaking and lovingly listening, i.e., with toes and tears, giggles and grunts, muscles and memories, are analogous to Word proceeding from Speaker and the divine Love of Listener for Speaker who is dynamically present in the Spoken Word.

<sup>538</sup>Philip McShane, Lonergan's Challenge to the University and the Economy, pp. 137-138.

## Appendix

Abbreviations used in footnotes and in the body of the text.

Works by Lonergan

C	Collection (CWL 4)
CAS	"Christ as Subject: A Reply" (CWL 4:153-184)
CWL	Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan
CS	"Cognitive Structure" in Collection, (CWL 4:205-221)
CT	"Consciousness and the Trinity"
DCC	<u>De constitutione Christi ontologica et psychologica</u>
DDT	<u>De Deo trino</u>
DES	<u>De ente supernaturali: Supplementum schematicum</u>
DM	"Dimensions of Meaning" (CWL 4:232-244)
DP	Doctrinal Pluralism
EA	" <u>Existenz</u> and <u>Aggiornamento</u> " (CWL 4:222-231)
FLM	"Finality, Love, Marriage" (CWL 4:17-52)
GF	"Grace and Freedom: Operative Grace in the Thought of St. Thomas Aquinas"
I	Insight: A Study of Human Understanding
MAH	"Metaphysics as Horizon" (CWL 4:188-204)
MT	Method in Theology
NDSG	"The Natural Desire to See God" (CWL 4:81-91)
NE	"Notes on Existentialism"
OGSC	"On God and Secondary Causes" (CWL 4:53-65)
S	The Subject
SS	"Subject and Soul"
UB	Understanding and Being
V	Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas
2CA	Second Collectin
3CA	Third Collection

Works by Aquinas

DM	De Malo (On Evil)
DP	De Potentia Dei (On the Power of God)
DSC	De Spir. Creaturis (On Spiritual Creatures)
DV	De Veritate (On Truth)
SCG	Summa Contra Gentiles
ST	Summa Theologiae
In Sent.	Scriptum super libros sententiarum magistiri Petri Lombardi (Commentary on Peter Lombard's sentences)

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