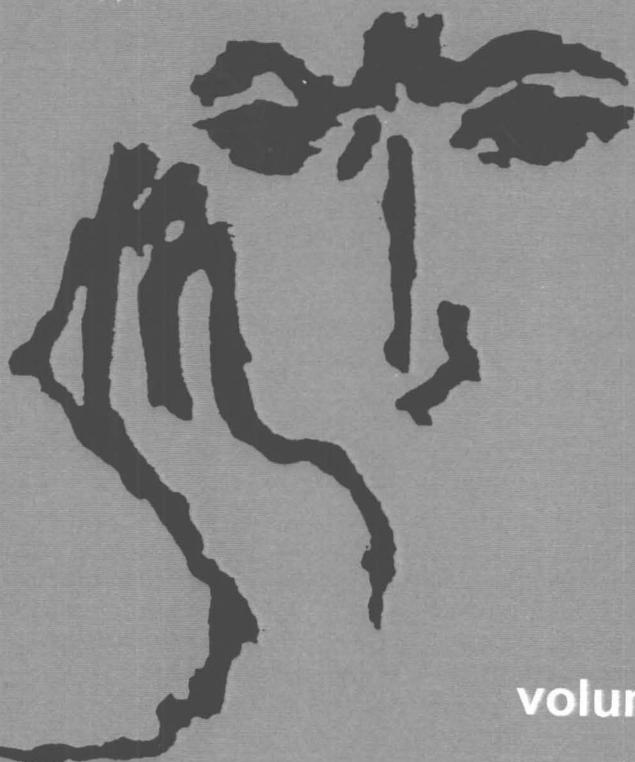


LONERGAN WORKSHOP



Celebrating the 450th
Jesuit Jubilee



volume 19

edited by
Fred Lawrence

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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

At the ordination of Tom Frink, S.J. (a friend of Lonergan Workshops since his Boston College days), Sue and I learned about 2006 Jubilee Year in honor of Ignatius Loyola and of his first close companions, Peter Faber and Francis Xavier. We immediately decided to dedicate the 33rd Annual Lonergan Workshop to the celebration of great Jesuit thinkers to honor that Jubilee:

33rd Annual Lonergan Workshop Boston College—18-23 June 2006

CELEBRATING THE 450TH JESUIT JUBILEE

Since September of 1525, when they were 19 years old, **Francis Xavier** and **Peter Faber** (one a Basque, the other from Savoy) had been college roommates in the College Saint-Barbe in the University of Paris, *when all of a sudden* [in the Fall of 1529] *destiny climbed the stairs of Sainte-Barbe in a shape as strange and unrecognizable as it ever has taken*—Ignatius Loyola, 14 years older than they, and already a seasoned (and injured) soldier, pilgrim, and spiritual enthusiast. These three were the core of a total of 7 original companions who would eventually become the *Compania de Jesus/Society of Jesus/Jesuits*. This year the Jesuits throughout the world celebrate these significant birthdays, along with the 450th anniversary of the death of Ignatius (on July 31, 1555). [J. Howard, citing James Broderick, SJ, *Saint Francis Xavier*]

Jack Howard, S.J., who gave us this quotation, also gave a fascinating talk on Peter Faber. Others celebrated that week in papers that do not appear in this volume include Ben F. Meyer by his McMaster University colleague, John C. Robertson; Vincent J. Potter, by Frank Braio on both Potter and Charles Sanders Pierce; and Teilhard de Chardin, whose thought was integrated into the cosmic dimensions of Lonergan's Trinitarian theology by Leo Serroul. Gordon Rixon, S.J., contributed another paper in his extraordinary series on Ignatius Loyola and Lonergan. Stephan Loos's paper entitled "The Discovery of History: Jesuits and Modernism" showed how members of the Society were involved on both sides of that controversy. All these papers will appear in a later edition of the journal.

With the editorial help of Regina G. Knox, we are able to begin catching up on late issues of Lonergan Workshop with this special Jesuit edition completed in

time for the Third International Lonergan Workshop 2-7 January at the Erbacher Hof in Mainz.*

Peter Bisson, S.J., who did his doctoral work in Rome on the theological implications of the order's postconciliar general congregations has been developing and deepening his grasp of these implications in terms of Lonergan's methodological category of differentiations of consciousness. Readers will probably be familiar with the Jesuits' relatively recent emphasis on social justice. "The Postconciliar Congregations: Social Commitment Constructing a New World of Religious Meaning" shows how the theoretical and interior differentiations of consciousness have transformed these congregations in the forty years after Vatican II.

Kevin J. Burke, S.J., returned from California to present "Reflections on Ignatian Soteriology: The Contribution of Ignacio Ellacuria." Ellacuria had been the subject of his BC doctoral dissertation. The great Spanish philosopher Xubiri provided Ellacuria with his foundations. Burke, who has devoted years to the study of both Ellacuria and Xubiri, revealed links between Lonergan's and Ellacuria's theory and praxis that express the challenge of a theology rooted in the Ignatian tradition.

In "The Models of Avery Dulles, S.J." *Richard J. Cassidy*, whose field specialty is New Testament studies, paid tribute to his former colleague and long-time friend, perhaps the most influential American ecclesialogist. Lonergan and Dulles formed part of the core of theologians who helped lead the church through the postconciliar period. In the course of a clear indication of Cardinal Dulles's overall trajectory, Cassidy focuses on the lasting achievement of Dulles's models of the church—a remarkably concise review of the key terms of that work.

The current Provincial of the Salesians in India, *Ivo Coehlo, S.D.B.*, spoke on "Francis Xavier, Lonergan, and the Problem of Missions Today." A tribute to Xavier introduces a paper that provides a brief overview of the church's approaches to evangelism framed by relevant contributions to the discussion by Lonergan. The result is a balanced interpretation of evangelization that is open to the values represented by non-Christian religions while never relativizing the significance of Jesus for God's universal salvific will.

Robert M. Doran, S.J., gave "Ignatian Themes in the Thought of Bernard Lonergan: Revisiting a Topic that Deserves Further Reflection." The results of research in archival materials show how much Lonergan was influenced by

*For the sake of meeting time constraints, we have also left certain inconsistencies in style of footnoting, etc., unrevised in this issue.

Ignatius. Doran treated the Ignatian spiritual heritage and the virtualities of Lonergan's thought for developing that heritage. He offers some extremely valuable insights concerning Ignatius's times of election, sanctifying grace, and also some important implications concerning fidelity to the Church.

Besides being a notable philosopher and student of Voegelin and Lonergan, *Glenn Hughes* is a published poet and critic of poetry. His talk honored the great Jesuit poet, Gerard Manley Hopkins. Hughes collaborated with the actress and dramatic reader, Diane Quaid, in what turned out to be an unforgettable evening when he read "Gerard Manley Hopkins and Lonergan's Notion of Elemental Meaning."

The Hughes-Quaid collaboration was one of two extraordinary tandem events at our Jesuit Workshop. *Paul Kidder* hoped that William Richardson, S.J., would respond to his tribute to the great Heidegger scholar, "Thinking with Fr. Richardson." Richardson gave a marvelous *ex tempore* response on Heidegger on truth as *aletheia*. Kidder's paper is a brilliant reprise of Richardson's interpretation of Heidegger and an apology to him for Lonergan's brusque response to Richardson's paper on Lonergan for the famous Florida conference in 1970.

Colin J. Maloney had Lonergan as a teacher and studied in Rahner's Faculty of Theology at Innsbruck University. He is competent in Lonergan's Roman treatises on the Trinity and the Incarnation, as well as a master of the Ignatian Exercises. In "Ignatian Discernment from Lonergan's Perspective" he interprets the experiential components of the Exercises in light of the systematics of especially *De Verbo Incarnato*, bringing out the Christocentric dimension of Ignatian mysticism.

Robert C. Miner's Notre Dame doctoral dissertation was on Giambattista Vico, the person who, during Lonergan's Roman years, supplied an expression for his project in method – *una scienza nuova*. British philosopher Robin G. Collingwood is another great thinker standing in Vico's line, who appears significantly both in Gadamer's *Wahrheit und Methode* and in Lonergan's *Method in Theology*. Miner's "Collingwood and Lonergan on Historical Knowledge," concentrates on history and historical method, (Lonergan also greatly appreciated his *Principles of Art*.) Miner's reflects on Collingwood in relation to Lonergan's treatment of him in *Method*.

Gilles Mongeau, S.J. has served apprenticeship in the retrieval of Aquinas in light of the rediscovery of the significance of medieval rhetoric. He is perhaps the only scholar to appropriate the fruits of this attention to rhetoric in Aquinas and the results of Lonergan's disentanglement of Aquinas from Baroque scholasticism in *Grace and Freedom* and from post-*Aeterni Patris* Neoscholasticism in *Verbum*.

The relative significance of both recoveries are detailed in his paper, "Trivium Pursuit: Lonergan on Aquinas."

Elizabeth A. Murray has worked on the philosophy of feelings in Lonergan and in authors from Kierkegaard to Nietzsche and Sartre. This has prepared her to venture into theological territory in "Joyful Sorrow," which treats spiritual writings of early church Fathers on the complexity of human feelings in those who, in Augustine's expression, have departed the confusion of Babylon and yet have not reached the heavenly Jerusalem. This paper elucidates feelings that oscillate between or mix the "joy that passes all understanding" and sorrow for one's imperfections and sinfulness.

The Australian ecclesiologist, *Neil Ormerod*, is a master at putting together the references of Lonergan and others to develop hypotheses for understanding the concrete realities of life in the church. The *Theological Studies* articles on Vatican II after forty years raise questions for understanding the real effective history of the church immediately before and following the Council (1962-65). In "What Really Happened at Vatican II – A Response to O'Malley and Schloesser" Ormerod draws upon Lonergan, Doran, and the Christopher Dawson book that so influenced the young Lonergan – *The Age of the Gods* – to work out a diagnostic vis-à-vis change in the church that grounds illuminating analyses of phenomena described by the historians John O'Malley and Stephen Schloesser.

Roman A. Siebenrock's talk, "*Gratia Christi*, The Heart of the Theology of Karl Rahner: Ignatian Influences in the Codex *De Gratia Christi* (1937/38) and its Importance for the Development of His Work" remarks that much of the early work of Rahner on grace and on the metaphysics of human knowing and the philosophy of religion parallel Lonergan's *Grace and Freedom* and *Verbum*. Before using key theses in Rahner's notes for students in his first teaching assignment, a course on grace at Innsbruck, to indicate themes in Rahner's theology that marked the entire arc of his career as a theologian, Siebenrock gives a lucid and brief account of the other *loci* and orientations underlying Rahner's theology.

Thinkers such as Otto Muck at Innsbruck and those associated with the early days of the American Catholic journal *Continuum* grouped Lonergan with the Marechal school of transcendental Thomism. Perhaps the only student of Lonergan to truly study the works of Joseph Maréchal, S.J., is *Michael Vertin*, who wrote his dissertation on him. Today, if most might be hesitant to link Lonergan's philosophy so closely with the great Belgian Jesuit, few would know in detail just why their approaches are quite distinct. Vertin's dialectical exercise, "The Finality of Human Spirit: From Maréchal to Lonergan," specifies precisely

the similarities and differences between them; and he touchingly shares his own breakthrough in self-correction regarding his own understanding of Maréchal. Incidentally, Lonergan liked to recall that when his fellow student in theology at “the Greg,” Stefanos Stefanu from whom he first learned about Maréchal, studied philosophy at Louvain, “Maréchal taught psychology and the other professors at the scholasticate taught Maréchal.”

João Vila Chã’s paper, “The Transformation of Consciousness: Walter J. Ong and the Presence of the World in the Making of Culture,” honors the genial Jesuit polymath of St. Louis University, Walter Ong. Ong was a disciple of Lonergan’s fellow Canadian Marshall McLuhan, that great English professor and analyst of the way new media bring to explicit awareness things about which people remained unaware for centuries or sometimes millennia. Lonergan admired him very much. Vila Cha takes us on a tour through Ong’s most important works from *Peter Ramus* to the more recent *Fighting for Life*, and *The Presence of the Word*, in a marvelous introduction to Ong’s achievement.

It is fitting that in his paper “Raymund Schwager, S.J.: Dramatic Theology” the young Innsbruck theologian and student of Schwager, *Nikolaus Wandinger*, should honor this great disciple of Ignatius, Karl Rahner, Hans Urs von Balthasar, and René Girard. Schwager also knew the work of Lonergan, and wrote a superb article on Lonergan and Girard for the Boston College COV&R meeting; he also used Girard to establish an interdisciplinary program of collaboration in Innsbruck’s theological faculty. Wandinger summarizes Schwager’s transformation of Balthasar’s notion of the dramatic in theology in an approach to the Gospels that is suggestive not only for the specialties of systematics and communications but also for systematics and biblical theology.

A great debt of gratitude is owed to Regina Knox whose editorial skills and discipline have helped us to revive the Lonergan Workshop journal, to Kerry Cronin as business manager, and to all the authors of this volume.

Fred Lawrence
Boston College
21 November 2006

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THE POSTCONCILIAR JESUIT
GENERAL CONGREGATIONS:
SOCIAL COMMITMENT CONSTRUCTING
A NEW WORLD
OF RELIGIOUS MEANING

Peter Bisson, S.J.

Campion College at the University of Regina

THE MOST REMARKABLE change in the Society of Jesus since the Second Vatican council (1962-65) has been how a new understanding of the importance of social justice has been transforming the Jesuit understandings of mission and identity. The new understanding of social justice gave it a constitutive role in the construction of religious meaning. My contribution to the Lonergan Workshop's celebration of this 450th Jesuit Jubilee Year, which marks the anniversaries of three founders of the Society of Jesus, Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556), Francis Xavier (1506-52), and Peter Faber (1506-46), is to analyze trends in the development of Jesuit religious meaning stimulated by the Society's four general congregations to date since the council. I maintain that the growing religious importance of social justice in the Society's understanding of its mission has been generating a new world of meaning, one increasingly differentiated by the four realms of meaning and forms of consciousness identified by Bernard Lonergan (1904-84): the transcendent, common sense, theory, and interiority.

As this new world of meaning began to emerge more clearly in the mid-1970s, the traditional predominance of relationships between the realms of transcendence and common sense was disrupted by the introduction of a realm of explanatory meaning and theoretical consciousness, which had not previously been present at that level and function of meaning, into the very constitution¹ of religious meaning. More recently, since the mid-1990s, the dialectical tensions between transcendence, common sense, and theory have begun to be sublated by a

¹See Bernard Lonergan's discussion of "constitutive meaning" in *Method in Theology* (New York: Seabury Press [1972] 1973), 78.

newly emerging realm of interiority. This history has been marked by new differentiations of consciousness, by the relations and tensions between them, and by a social form of moral conversion and by intellectual conversion. What seems to be moving forward is an increasing intending of the universal good on the one hand, accompanied by deepening communal interiority or communal self-knowledge, and self-appropriation on the other. The engine driving most of these developments has been the increasing religious importance of social justice for Jesuit mission and, indeed, for the church's mission.

I will begin by explaining the terms and meanings of the above hypotheses. The basic method of this investigation uses interiority as a framework to interpret the history of the ever more comprehensive insights and recommendations for mission made by the Society's general congregations since Vatican II, which will be done in two parts. This interpretive framework will enable us to identify in that history new realms of meaning and their related differentiations of consciousness, the tensions between them, and possible conversions.² This history will yield new insights into tensions around social justice in the Society of Jesus and in the church, insights that might identify potential resolutions, predict next steps in the development, and possibly suggest ways to promote this development and its significance in ways that are both intentional and coherent with the Society's charism. This history will use minimal narrative and description, for its intention is to interpret and explain the development of contemporary constitutive religious meanings for the Society. I hope to approximate Robert Doran's suggestion of explanatory history as a dimension of systematic theology.³

1. MEANINGS AND METHODOLOGY

Let us now explain the important terms in the hypothesis: the nature and importance of general congregations in the Society of Jesus, and the Lonerganian categories of worlds of meaning, differentiations of consciousness, and conversions.

In the life and governance of the Society of Jesus, a general congregation is a legislative meeting that makes decisions for the entire religious order

²See Robert M. Doran's discussion of "explanatory history" in *What Is Systematic Theology?* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 148.

³Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?*, the section on "System as Witness," 146-49.

everywhere in the world; indeed, this is the Society's highest legislative authority. Unlike other Catholic religious orders, who have such meetings in a regular and periodic fashion, the Jesuit general congregations meet only at need, usually to elect a new superior-general, who is normally elected for life, and sometimes to make decisions or set new directions that surpass the purview of normal Jesuit government. Because such meetings are not regular but exceptional, when they do occur they tend to be long. For example, the last general congregation, of 1995, was in session for about two and a half months. When a general congregation is convoked, Jesuits from every part of the Society are either elected or appointed, in a generally representative fashion, to represent their brothers and to deliberate at these meetings. Since its founding in 1540, the Society has had only thirty-four general congregations; since Vatican II, it has had four.

In Jesuit terminology, a general congregation is usually referred to by the abbreviation "GC" followed by a number that indicates which one it is in the history of the Society. Thus, since the council, the 31st General Congregation, or GC 31, met in 1965-66; GC 32 met in 1974-75; GC 33 in 1983; and GC 34 in 1995. GC 35 is scheduled to begin in January of 2008. Two of the postconciliar general congregations, GCs 31 and 33, elected new superiors-general; two others, GC 32 and GC 34, met only to deliberate on matters that normal Jesuit government could not handle alone.

Why focus on the general congregations since Vatican II? In the same way that the council changed the Catholic Church, the Society's general congregations since then have been different from the preceding ones. First of all, the previous thirty general congregations tended to have a conservative effect, and innovation came from the apostolate; the recent general congregations have themselves become agents of innovation.⁴ The previous thirty were mostly concerned with the distinctive nature of Jesuit spirituality and life; the postconciliar ones have been primarily concerned instead with the Society's apostolate or mission.⁵ The decrees of the previous thirty tended to be expressed in juridical language, while the postconciliar ones tend to use not only legislative but motivational and pedagogical rhetoric. Many of the older ones tended to use pragmatic criteria for their decisions, while postconciliar ones tend increasingly to use both more

⁴J. Padberg, "The First Thirty Congregations of the Society of Jesus," in *For Matters of Greater Moment. The First Thirty Jesuit General Congregations, A Brief History and Translation of the Decrees*, Series 1: Jesuit Primary Sources in English Translation, Number 12 (Saint Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources), 62, 64.

⁵Padberg, "The First Thirty Congregations of the Society of Jesus," 63.

religious and less concrete criteria.⁶ The differences in emphasis, interest, and even in criteria, as between the pre- and postconciliar general congregations, suggest a significant shift in the Jesuit world of meaning.

Now let us turn to Lonergan's idea of a world of meaning. The human world is mediated by meaning and motivated by value.⁷ Meaning is built by human experience, understanding, judging, and deciding, which in turn reshapes experience. Meaning exists and operates socially or intersubjectively,⁸ so the world mediated by meaning is a world known by a community's ongoing verifications.⁹ Meaning guides behavior. In the context of the Society of Jesus, the Jesuit world of meaning has to do with mission and identity, or the purpose of the religious order. Thinking in terms of mission is a fundamental characteristic of the Jesuit way of proceeding, and it conditions all other meanings. Thus mission constitutes the horizon of the Society's world of religious meaning, and any significant change in the meaning of mission will also change the world of meaning within which Jesuits understand, shape, and direct their work and life.

In my hypothesis, when I say "new" world of meaning, I do not mean that the foundational meanings of the Society's mission and identity, established by Ignatius of Loyola and his companions and confirmed by the popes in the mid-sixteenth century, have been replaced or displaced. But I do mean that they have been reinterpreted or transposed for radically different world and church situations. Let me give an example. The historical, founding and still legally binding statement of the Society's mission is found in the *Formula of the Institute* of 1550, and states that the Society of Jesus is founded chiefly "to strive for the defense and propagation of the faith and for the progress of souls in Christian life and doctrine."¹⁰ Four hundred and twenty years later, the 32nd General Congregation in 1975 reexpressed the Society's mission as "the service of faith, of which the promotion of justice is an absolute requirement."¹¹ The new

⁶See Thomas Philip Faase, *Making the Jesuits More Modern* (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms International, 1981), 177-207, especially 195-96.

⁷*Method in Theology*, 265.

⁸*Method in Theology*, 57.

⁹*Method in Theology*, 238.

¹⁰*Formula of the Institute of the Society of Jesus*, 1550, n. 1, in *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus and Their Complementary Norms: A complete English Translation of the Official Latin Texts* (Saint Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1996), 3. There is an earlier *Formula of the Institute* from 1540, the founding year of the Society, approved by Pope Paul III. Ten years later, in 1550, it was revised, and approved by Pope Julius III.

¹¹GC 32, Decree 4, *Our Mission Today; the Service of Faith and the Promotion of Justice*, n. 3. The standard notation for citing Jesuit general congregation documents, which I use here, is to

statement retains the priority of faith from the old one, but gives it a more explicitly and intentionally social twist with the emphasis on justice. As we will see later, this was a major transformation, one which depended on earlier changes and which led to many others.

Finally, let us look at Lonergan's explanation means by realms of meaning, differentiations of consciousness, and conversions. In societies that have reached a certain level of development as regards specializations and differentiations, Lonergan identifies four basic realms or kinds of meaning¹²: common sense, transcendence, theory, and interiority. Each kind of meaning has its own corresponding form or differentiation of consciousness, that is, its own proper mental procedures, operations, and ways of perceiving that may be present in all cultures, no matter how much the contents might vary according to place and time. The realm of common sense is the world of things and persons in their relations to us.¹³ Its mental operations constitute a cumulative and self-correcting learning process, so that people are able to deal appropriately with situations as they arise; common sense does so in everyday, often descriptive language, by which words serve to focus the mind's intention on things rather than name intrinsic properties.¹⁴ It is practical. Common sense, as a realm of meaning and form of consciousness, is present in all cultures, at all levels of development. Then, typically, comes transcendence, concerned with divinity or transcendent states beyond the sensible, beyond space and time. Its operations use the language and life of prayer and prayerful silence to relate to the world of transcendence,¹⁵ and the corresponding differentiation of consciousness is aware of an unconditioned or unlimited gift of love, which orients living to transcendence.¹⁶ While ancient and oral cultures did not sharply differentiate between the realms of common sense and transcendence, the cultures that have been through an Axial Age shift have made a sharp differentiation, which then results in two distinct forms of consciousness, common sense and religiously differentiated consciousness, which then interact with each other, both in opposition and in mutual enrichment.

give the number of the congregation, indicated by "GC"; the decree number, indicated by "D"; and finally the number of the article, indicated by "n."

¹²While others are possible, and Lonergan acknowledges others such as scholarship or art (compare with *Method in Theology*, 271-76), he normally treats these four as basic.

¹³Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 81-82.

¹⁴*Method in Theology*, 81-82.

¹⁵*Method in Theology*, 257

¹⁶*Method in Theology*, 266; Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?*, 95.

The differentiation of transcendence from common sense also differentiates between transcendent and immanent realms of meaning.¹⁷ Common sense is one form of immanence; theory and interiority are others. The realm of theory is interested not in things or persons as they relate to us but instead as they relate in a verifiable way to each other.¹⁸ Here inquiry is not pursued for practical ends but for its own sake.¹⁹ Theoretically differentiated consciousness operates systematically, is governed by logic, and its language tends to be technical,²⁰ used in an explanatory way instead of in common sense's descriptive way. Interiority is the most neglected of the four realms and differentiations of consciousness²¹; its object is immediate internal experience.²² Thus interiority has to do with the subject known by itself as subject. The operations and procedures of interiority are the identification and verification, in personal experience, of one's own conscious and intentional mental operations,²³ which in turn become more basic than the logical control of meaning as a way of proceeding.²⁴ Once interiority has become differentiated, it can be a foundation for using the other differentiations of consciousness.

Most relevant to this investigation are the interactions between differentiations of consciousness, especially those between theory, transcendence, and interiority. In fully differentiated and integrated consciousness, a long and arduous achievement, these realms and differentiations enrich one another, and a person can recognize and understand the distinct realms, shift between them, and relate them to one another.²⁵ Undifferentiated consciousness insists that all things be dealt with homogeneously, and common sense is used indiscriminately to deal with transcendence, explanation, and self-knowledge.²⁶ In unbalanced or troubled consciousness, the procedures and language of one realm are applied to the others,

¹⁷Glenn Hughes, *Transcendence and History: The Search for Ultimacy from Ancient Societies to Postmodernity* (Columbie, MI, and London: University of Missouri Press, 2003), 200.

¹⁸*Method in Theology*, 82, 273.

¹⁹*Method in Theology*, 72.

²⁰*Method in Theology*, 304.

²¹ Hughes, *Transcendence and History*, 201.

²²Bernard Lonergan, "Time and Meaning," in *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1958 – 1964*, ed. Robert C. Croken, Frederick E. Crowe, and Robert M. Doran, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, vol. 6 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 114.

²³*Method in Theology*, 257.

²⁴*Method in Theology*, 261.

²⁵Hughes, *Transcendence and History*, 59.

²⁶*Method in Theology*, 84; Hughes, *Transcendence and History*, 159.

which then leads to basic misinterpretation.²⁷ To move from one world to another is a difference in subjectivity, in the mental techniques used to approach things.²⁸ Lonergan also discusses the various limitations and forms of each of these forms, especially when not used properly, but I will not use these here. Lonergan observes that for most people in most times, the main differentiation of consciousness is that between transcendence and common sense, and the relations of opposition and mutual enrichment between them; today, for secularized people, the main differentiation of consciousness is that between theory and common sense, and the relations of opposition and mutual support among them.²⁹ One may add that the consciousness of religious people in a modern secular culture is troubled by a dialectic between transcendence and theory.

Having explained the terms of the hypothesis, the explanatory history adumbrated at the beginning of the paper can be restated. Up until the council, the Jesuits' world of religious meaning was characterized by the predominance of transcendence and common sense, and of the typical relations between them. After the council that world was troubled or unbalanced by the introduction of theoretical consciousness into the understanding of mission, that is, at the constitutive level of basic religious meaning for Jesuits. This was brought about by GC 31 in 1965, and especially by GC 32 in 1975 with its insistence that justice become a dimension of every aspect of Jesuit mission. Finally GC 34 in 1995 has potentially resolved the tensions by differentiating interiority from the other forms of consciousness, and using it at the constitutive level of religious meaning.

Before applying these concepts to the developments of mission understanding in the last four general congregations, a quick note on conversion is necessary. Lonergan understands conversion as a transformation of the subject and of the subject's world of meaning, that is, as a self-transcending, radical revision of one's point of view and direction³⁰. Conversion can resolve the apparent contradictions between different horizons of meaning. Lonergan identifies three kinds of conversion: religious, moral, and intellectual.³¹ Religious conversion is surrendering completely to ultimate concern; for Christians it is accepting and surrendering to God's unlimited, unreserved love for me without

²⁷*Method in Theology*, 84; Hughes, *Transcendence and History*, 200.

²⁸"Time and Meaning," 114.

²⁹*Method in Theology*, 266.

³⁰*Method in Theology*, 130-31, 338.

³¹Robert Doran has identified a fourth conversion, psychic, but I will discuss only the other three here.

qualification; the subject becomes a subject in love, with a total and other-worldly love, which can then become the ground for all self-transcendence.³² In moral conversion, the subject no longer makes choices based on satisfactions or fears, but rather on the basis of values, for the sake of the truly good, even if this might go against satisfaction.³³ One takes responsibility for one's choosing. Intellectual conversion is the most difficult of the three. Intellectual conversion means to come to know, correctly, exactly what one is doing when knows anything at all.³⁴ This means correct self-knowledge of oneself as a knowing subject, that is, knowing what one does when one experiences, understands experience, and judges whether the understanding of experience has been correct. This self-knowledge is arrived at in heightened self-consciousness, and intellectual conversion results in interiorly differentiated consciousness. To understand the emergence of a new world of religious meaning of mission for the Jesuits, an understanding of intellectual conversion will be particularly useful.

With our interpretive tools clarified, we turn now to how the postconciliar general congregations have constructed a new Jesuit religious world of meaning.

2. GC 31 AND GC 32: THE EMERGENCE OF SYSTEMATIC THEORETICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

2.1 GC 31: From "Missions" to Mission Systematically Understood

This history did not begin simply with GC 31 but has remote roots in the Society's modern social apostolate in the late nineteenth century and more immediate roots in Vatican II. Concern for justice is nothing new in the church or in the Society, but the modern social apostolate, whether of the church or of the Jesuits, is generally acknowledged to have emerged in response to the Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution with Pope Leo XIII's 1891 encyclical on the condition of the industrial working class, *Rerum Novarum*. What distinguishes the modern social apostolate from the traditional Christian concern to alleviate suffering through charitable works is the insight into the existence of social structures, their role in causing suffering, and the consequent need to respond to modern poverty not only with charity, but also and especially with

³²*Method in Theology*, 240-41, 242.

³³*Method in Theology*, 240.

³⁴*Method in Theology*, 239-40.

social or structural transformation and a social consciousness as indispensable ways to make the Gospel effective in social life.³⁵ As the twentieth century unfolded, a sense of urgency in this regard increased among more and more Jesuits, as among many other Christians, and became linked with the Society's typical concern to intend to the universal good more, what it calls "the *magis*."

Then Vatican II blew the sparks of this concern into a roaring blaze. The council updated the Catholic Church and opened it up to the modern world. It also called Christians to seek holiness not only in the traditional ways but also through involvement in the world and in the world's growing processes of socialization. The council also called on those in Catholic religious life, including the Jesuits, to update their institutes by returning to their roots. The religious core of this new spirit of openness, so different from the defensive mentality of the previous two centuries, was exemplified in the idea of "reading the signs of the times,"³⁶ so dear to Pope John XXIII and invoked by the council's Pastoral Constitution on the church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes*.³⁷ Reading the signs of the times meant examining contemporary social trends and transformations for the activity of God and hearing an invitation from God to participate in that divine, saving, activity in the world. In other words, the council called for involvement in the world because it expected to find God there.

As Vatican II was concluding its work, the Jesuit superior-general, Fr. Janssens, died, and so a general congregation was called. The 31st General Congregation met in 2 two-and-a-half month sessions in 1965 and 1966, the one before and the other after the council's last session during the fall of 1965. GC 31 began applying Vatican II's changes to the Society. In its first session it elected a new superior-general, Pedro Arrupe.³⁸ This native of the Basque countries in Spain, much affected by his service in Hiroshima when the atomic bombs were

³⁵See the very insistent and urgent 1949 instruction on the social apostolate by the then superior-general Johannes Baptist Janssens, S.J., "Instruction on the Social Apostolate." *Acta Romana Societatis Iesu*, 11 (1949): 709-26, reprinted in *Promotio Iustitiae* 66 (1997), published by the social justice secretariat of the Jesuit superior-general's general curia in Rome. The *Acta Romana Societatis Iesu*, or simply the *Acta Romana*, is the Society's digest of official documents, produced by the Jesuit curia in Rome.

³⁶This expression, sometimes phrased "scrutinizing the signs of the times" comes from Scripture, Matthew 16:2-3, where it refers to the imminent coming of the Messiah. Pope John XXIII adapted it to mean recognizing the activity of God in social, historical, political, and cultural changes that were characteristic of the day.

³⁷See *Gaudium et Spes*, n. 4, 11.

³⁸Fr. Pedro Arrupe, S.J., born 1907, served as superior-general from his election in 1965 until 1983, after a stroke had incapacitated him. He died in 1991.

dropped on Japan, became a charismatic and much loved leader, whom many now consider to be a saint. His leadership was crucial in promoting the new, more theoretical, comprehensive, and social forms of thinking that we will see below.

GC 31 initiated a global and systematic understanding of Jesuit mission. Until then, the term had referred to “the missions” or “mission work,” which meant bringing Christianity where it was not. GC 31 used the term in a new way, to refer to all the different works or ministries of the Society in one comprehensive category, “the mission of the Society” or “Jesuit mission,” which transcended each ministry and applied equally to all Jesuit works irrespective of ministry, time, place, or culture.³⁹ This comprehensive way of thinking about Jesuit work and identity was a new mental tool. It meant thinking less in terms of the practical content of particular Jesuit apostolates and ministries or in terms of “foreign missions,” and more in terms of global criteria, values, priorities, and orientations of the whole of Jesuit mission, which were to be applied in all ministries. Fr. Arrupe himself underlined this in his closing address to GC 31 when he observed that the general congregation, like Vatican II, “did not so much determine particular norms [that is, practical norms for particular forms of ministry], but rather offered principles, values, inspiration and defined orientations and directions.”⁴⁰ The new thinking approached mission from the point of view of theoretically differentiated consciousness, for it looked at mission in itself, and in terms of mission’s constituent terms and relations, instead of in terms of various ministries’ practical relationship to Jesuits.

An overview of some of GC 31’s more comprehensive decrees will illustrate this more systematic and theoretical form of thinking. Among the decrees that articulate a generalized sense of mission are the first three of those that GC 31 grouped under the heading “The Apostolate”: Decree 21, *The Better Choice and Promotion of Ministries*; Decree 22, *The Commission for Promoting the Better Choice of Ministries*; and Decree 23, *The Jesuit Priestly Apostolate*. They seek to concretize the general concern for revitalization into criteria for the choice of apostolates in an ongoing “revision of ministries.”⁴¹ Decree 21, *The Better*

³⁹Faase, *Making the Jesuits More Modern*, 195-96.

⁴⁰Fr. Pedro Arrupe, “Palabras finales del P. General” IV, 2, in *Congregación general XXXI Documentos*, 408 (my translation) not reported in the St. Louis English translation, nor in the *Acta Romana*.

⁴¹GC 31, D. 21, n. 3. All references to GC 31 and GC 32 documents are taken from *Documents of the 31st and 32nd General Congregations of the Society of Jesus, An English Translation of the Official Latin Texts of the General Congregations and of the Accompanying Papal Documents* (Saint Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1977).

Choice and Promotion of Ministries, which seeks to adapt the traditional Ignatian norms⁴² to contemporary needs, recommends closer involvement with the world; it offers as a theological reason “the union of our apostolate with the mission of the Incarnate Word,”⁴³ which includes among other dispositions the ability to recognize change and to engage in dialogue. Decree 22, *The Commission for Promoting the Better Choice of Ministries*, recommends that each province set up a commission to use these criteria in recommending ministries, and that it should make recommendations to the provincial at least once a year.⁴⁴ By using general criteria and orientations to evaluate and choose ministries, these decrees approach mission from a systematically theoretical and explanatory point of view. Furthermore, they promote such an approach by calling for similar evaluation and choice. The very brief Decree 32 on *The Social Apostolate* also exhibits the new theoretical consciousness. It points out the widening, even global import of the social problem, and therefore of the social apostolate, and speaks of “the social dimension of our whole modern apostolate.”⁴⁵ It uses the category of social structure⁴⁶ to extend the comprehensiveness of social concern beyond any single type of person or group, such as workers, to society itself and its structures.

These developments did not all proceed calmly. Decree 23, *The Jesuit Priestly Apostolate*, reveals tensions between the spiritual and the worldly that would later become an ongoing dialectic in the development of constitutive religious meaning after the council. The decree seeks to balance greater involvement in the world with the Society’s religious and priestly vocation. In subsequent developments, greater involvement with the world will provoke concerns about the preeminence of the spiritual and lead to attempts to articulate the spiritual in a stronger way. Conversely, stronger articulations of the spiritual goal of ministry will lead to concerns that the world is being abandoned.

In the period following GC 31, Fr. Arrupe’s leadership helped further the more generalized understanding of mission. For example, in a famous address to the Congregation of Procurators held in 1970, he outlined four basic “apostolic priorities” for the Society around the world: theological reflection, education,

⁴²GC 31, D. 21, nn.1-3. The traditional norms for choice of ministries are found in in Part VII, Chapters 1 and 2 of the *Constitutions of the Society of Jesus*.

⁴³GC 31, D. 21, n. 6.

⁴⁴GC 31, D. 22, n. 4.

⁴⁵GC 31, D. 32, n. 4b.

⁴⁶GC 31, D. 32, n. 1.

social action, and the media of social communication.⁴⁷ This articulation of priorities helped to implement the shift from mission understood mainly as works and as spreading the faith, to a higher level of generalization consisting of values and priorities, which of course included the classical end of the Society's mission, the defense and propagation of the faith,⁴⁸ cited in the "Meanings and Methodology" section of this paper. It is interesting to note that Fr. Arrupe's priorities were the fruit of research, for his talk summarized the results of a worldwide sociological survey of the Society's works, which he had initiated four years earlier as an implementation of GC 31's general orientations. Indeed, GC 31's new insights were themselves the fruit of research into the Society's origins and history, done either during or between the congregation's two sessions. The desire for research and scholarship is another indication of theoretical consciousness at work.

Thus GC 31 differentiated theoretical consciousness from practical consciousness, which had hitherto been the main way of applying religious consciousness to decisions about ministries. I do not mean to say that theoretical consciousness was a new thing to Jesuits. On the contrary, it had been present in many Jesuit scholars and intellectuals. But what was new was using theoretical consciousness at the level of constitutive religious meaning, to change the way of thinking about mission, and to set mission priorities for the whole Society, thereby helping to constitute the world of religious meaning in which Jesuits live, decide, and act. This innovation was not merely a new idea; it was a new mental skill, a new differentiation of consciousness. Moreover, it was asked of the whole Society. This meant thinking about mission not only about how ministries related to Jesuits personally, but globally, and in terms of how the various elements of mission related to each other. This was a more objective and seemingly "colder" way of thinking about ministry, which would challenge the apparent immediacy of the old way of building meaning by means of religiously and practically differentiated consciousness.

The new arrival did not do away with the older and more established religiously and practically differentiated forms of consciousness nor with their roles in constructing the Jesuit world of religious meaning. But the new arrival did

⁴⁷Fr. Pedro Arrupe, "Our Four Apostolic Priorities," or "Today's Apostolate in the Society," *Other Jesuit Apostolates Today: An Anthology of Letters and Addresses III*, ed. J. Aixala (Saint Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1981), 1-8; and *Yearbook of the Society of Jesus* (Rome: General Curia of the Society of Jesus), 1971-72.

⁴⁸Faase, *Making the Jesuits more Modern*, 87.

mean using the old forms together with a new one, which of course would eventually change the old ones too. While this transformation of consciousness and of religious meaning seemed to be absolutely essential for ministry in a postconciliar church and a globalizing world, the change would not be easy, for it would be difficult to make the three differentiations of consciousness work together well. They seemed to construct distinct worlds of meaning instead of one. The tension can already be seen in the decree on the priestly apostolate. While it does recognize that “the spiritual,” as expressed in religious and priestly ministry, and commitment to “the world,” as expressed in involvement, should be coherent with each other, and that the coherence even has a theological foundation like Christ’s union with the world,⁴⁹ there still were tensions between these commitments. That there was still a dialectic between them despite the conviction that they should go together, suggested an underlying related tension that was harder to identify. This was the tension between two ways of thinking, that is, between religiously differentiated consciousness and the newly differentiated theoretical consciousness.

GC 31’s shift to theoretical consciousness became the foundation for GC 32’s breakthrough from social apostolate to social consciousness. But GC 32’s breakthrough also intensified the budding dialectical tensions between theoretically differentiated consciousness and both the more familiar religiously differentiated and the practically differentiated forms of consciousness.

2.2 GC 32: From the Social Apostolate to Social Consciousness

GC 32 met from 2 December 1974 until 7 March 1975. It was not called to elect a new superior-general but to deal with business that went beyond the scope of the Society’s ordinary government. In the Society’s entire history, this was only the seventh such congregation; GC 34 in 1995 would be the eighth. GC 32 was a watershed transformation in the Society’s world of religious meaning, for it broadened justice from one apostolate among many to a constitutive dimension of all of Jesuit ministry, life, and prayer. It also transformed justice into a new way of perceiving and thinking: social consciousness. But it could not have done so without GC 31’s achievement of generalized and systematic thinking about mission, and without GC 31’s theoretically differentiated consciousness used to build religious meaning. GC 32’s transformation was enshrined in its main mission document, Decree 4, *Our Mission Today: The Service of Faith and the*

⁴⁹GC 31, D. 23, n. 1, 7.

Promotion of Justice, and encapsulated in the briefly formulated interpretation of Jesuit mission contained therein:

The mission of the Society of Jesus today is the service of faith, of which the promotion of justice is an absolute requirement. For reconciliation with God demands the reconciliation of people with one another [GC 32, D. 4, n. 2].

The new, far more comprehensive and systematic religious commitment to justice was a response to many things: to very numerous and insistent requests from around the Society for guidance about mission that would emphasize justice more strongly than before; to Pope Paul's 1967 encyclical on development, *Populorum Progressio*; to the very strong 1971 Synodal exhortation *Justice in the World*; to growing scandal about systemic poverty in the Third World; to the council's invitation to greater involvement in the world; and to Paul VI's request to the Society, during GC 31, to combat atheism – many felt that scandal at worldwide systemic injustice was the greatest cause of atheism in the modern world. Breathing this heady and hopeful atmosphere, GC 32 early in its sessions took the surprising decision to have a “priority of priorities” to guide the treatment of all its other topics.

The “priority of priorities” had two parts: the criteria of the Society's apostolic service today – which meant the preeminence of the spiritual, as in the dialectic discussed above – together with the promotion of justice as a criterion of the Society's life and apostolate,⁵⁰ which built on and surpassed GC 31's emphasis on involvement with the world. The intention behind this odd but creative expression was to have a guiding principle that was more than a simple criterion, and more than a new idea, but instead a new mind, a fundamental and existentially shaping commitment that would guide other commitments and criteria.⁵¹ The terms of the expression were only vaguely defined, but the relationship between them served as a heuristic device. Over the course of the congregation this heuristic insight eventually led to the shift from social justice understood as only one apostolic sector among others to understanding it as an orienting dimension of the Jesuits' entire world of religious meaning, that is, as a constitutive dimension of mission. The discussions and debates that led to these decisions were vigorous, with much opposition and confusion at first. But the

⁵⁰GC 32, “Historical Preface,” n. 5, 11.

⁵¹Conversation with Fr. William. Ryan, S.J., in Ottawa, in the summer of 1999; Fr. Ryan was a delegate of the Upper Canadian province to GC 32.

“priority of priorities” came to channel and galvanize the congregation’s energies. The new commitment went far beyond GC 31’s understanding of justice as an apostolic priority, and far beyond the more extensive commitment to justice hoped for by many of the preparations. Otherwise, a strong decree on the social apostolate would have sufficed. Instead, Decree 4 ended up being about the Society’s mission itself.

Eventually the “priority of priorities” became Decree 4’s brief mission statement quoted above. The first part of the double priority became “the service of faith,” and the second part became “of which the promotion of justice is an absolute requirement.” While the “service of faith” was preeminent as the goal of Jesuit mission,⁵² the whole formulation together was understood as the “integrating factor” binding together Jesuit ministries and personal and communal inner life into one coherent whole.

One other thing significantly galvanized and focused the congregation’s energies: Pope Paul’s direct intervention to stop discussion about extending to all Jesuit priests and brothers the special vow of obedience to the pope with regard to missions, which not all Jesuits make. Among other things, the Pope feared this change might make involvement in the world secularize the Jesuit understanding of priesthood.⁵³ While this startling and very painful incident seems to have resulted from misunderstood communications between the Holy See, Fr. Arrupe, and the general congregation, it nevertheless significantly marked the atmosphere in which the last third of the congregation unfolded. The congregation complied immediately with the Pope’s wishes, and the incident had the effect of strengthening delegates’ adherence to the Pope, to their own priesthods, to Fr. General, and to the Eucharist, where they would gather daily.⁵⁴ While the papal intervention did not significantly shape the content of the emerging social consciousness during and after GC 32, so I will not discuss it further here, it did sharpen the concern to maintain the preeminence of the spiritual in mission and evangelization. Thus it gave energy to the dialectic between the spiritual and

⁵²See Fr. Arrupe’s comments on this point, before GC 32, in “Notre apostolat actual en Afrique et à Madagascar,” *Acta Romana Societatis Iesu* 15 (1972): 860; also in P. Arrupe, *A Planet to Heal. Reflections and Forecasts*, 210.

⁵³See J. Padberg, *Together as a Companionship*, 63-73; Faase, *Making the Jesuits More Modern*, 60-67; and “Appendix” to the “Letter of the Cardinal Secretary of State to Father General” in *Documents of the 31st and 32nd General Congregations of the Society of Jesus*, 547-49.

⁵⁴Faase, *Making the Jesuits More Modern*, 114-15.

social involvement, which began in GC 31 and became much stronger after GC 32, as we will see.

In light of the concern about the specifically spiritual aspect of mission, it is important to clarify what GC 32 meant by justice. The term meant much more than socioeconomic justice or just social structures,⁵⁵ although it certainly included these meanings. Giving justice an explicit role in the construction of religious meaning and mission placed the concept in a religious context, and therefore gave it a wider and more religious meaning than it would normally have in secular contexts. Decree 4 took pains constantly to assert this religious meaning. This was the Gospel meaning of justice, manifested in generosity to anyone in need, in a willingness to recognize, respect, and actively promote the rights of all, especially the poor and powerless, and which culminates in friendship with God.⁵⁶ It also demands a spirit of reconciliation.⁵⁷ For example, Decree 4 first mentioned the faith-justice commitment in terms of reconciliation with God and with others (n. 2), then in the religious mission of the Society (n. 3), in new challenges to mission (n. 4-6), and in discernment (n.10). The longest discussion of justice came in an article on the Society's priestly apostolate (n. 18). Furthermore, the text insistently connected personal conversion and the transformation of social structures, never treating one without the other.⁵⁸ Despite these evident efforts, the spiritual and the social would often become separated from each other in later practical implementation, or at least appear to be.

GC 32 built on and surpassed GC 31's use of theoretical consciousness. While GC 31 had some decrees on particular apostolates, GC 32 had none; its decrees that dealt with ministry intended Jesuit mission as a whole. With the language of "priorities" and the intention to think about Jesuit mission in global terms, GC 32 began right away by directing GC 31's theoretical language and theoretical consciousness to the whole of Jesuit mission. GC 32 built on GC 31's comprehensive and systematic understanding of mission by understanding justice and the social as a constitutive dimension of mission, as did the 1971 Synod, and therefore of the world of religious meaning. By doing so, GC 32 built on GC 31's theoretical insight into mission by treating it as something with dimensions, as

⁵⁵I. Camacho, "The Articulation of Faith-Justice in View of the 34th General Congregation," paper given at the 5th Meeting of the Worker Mission, Loyola, Spain, 1995: 6-7.

⁵⁶GC 32, D. 4, n. 18.

⁵⁷GC 32, D. 4, n. 18.

⁵⁸I. Camacho, "La opción fe-justicia como clave de evangelización en la Compañía de Jesús y el Generelato del Padre Arrupe" *Manresa* 62 (1990): 239; GC 32, D. 4, n. 21, 31-32, 40.

something “dimensionable,” even though term “dimension” would only be used at GC 34 and afterwards. The “dimensionability” of mission presupposed the prior explanatory abstraction and generalization of mission, and thus was a highly theoretical move. Furthermore, the theoretical understanding and use of mission was extended not merely by more values, criteria, and priorities, but by identifying the relationships between terms that constituted Jesuit mission within itself, which were, respectively: the goal⁵⁹ of the Society’s mission, that is, the service of faith, and the integrating factor of the Society’s ministries and life, that is, the service of faith and the promotion of justice. The goal had preeminence over the integrating factor.⁶⁰

Thus the desire to achieve the more universal good led the Society, by means of exercising newly differentiated theoretical consciousness, from the social apostolate *within* Jesuit mission to the social dimension *of* Jesuit mission. With justice playing a new constitutive role in the construction of religious meaning for Jesuits, a new form of perceiving and thinking emerged and was demanded: social consciousness. This was theoretical consciousness raised from the levels of understanding and judgment to the existential level of choice of value. In social consciousness, the understanding is of things in themselves and their relations, as in the new understanding of mission, but this understanding has moved through judgment to decision, to a choice of social value. In GC 32’s faith-justice commitment, the Society demanded an existential, identity-shaping choice of comprehensive position or stance that would in turn affect many other choices. While social consciousness is an achievement distinct from that of GC 31’s, its form of thinking is still largely that of theory, at least until interiority emerges in GC 34. I will refer to GC 32’s achievement sometimes as theoretical-social consciousness, or as theoretically and socially differentiated consciousness.

When religious people understand things from the sensibility and point of view of social consciousness, this eventually transposes all that is seen into social terms, which includes traditional religious practices and beliefs, too. Even with

⁵⁹The decree itself does not use the term “goal,” which comes instead from Fr. Arrupe in “Notre apostolat actuel en Afrique et à Madagascar,” *Acta Romana Societatis Iesu* 15 (1972): 860. However, the decree consistently stresses the preeminence of the service of faith, and therefore treats it as the goal of Jesuit mission.

⁶⁰The terms “goal” and “integrating factor” were not used in a systematic fashion in GC 32’s documents, but the relationships that these terms named between the service of faith and the promotion of justice were consistently and systematically maintained. The terminology of “goal” and “integrating principle” will become explicit in GC 34, in 1995. GC 34, in its Decree 2, *Servants of Christ’s Mission*, n. 14, 15, prefers the expression “integrating principle,” although it uses the expression “integrating factor” once, in n. 14.

solid scriptural and theological grounds to do so, and even if this does not change the contents of beliefs and practices, such a profound transformation cannot possibly be smooth. To explain these difficulties, I would now like briefly to analyze the significance of theoretical consciousness and social consciousness operating in a constitutive way within the context of a modern Western religious world of meaning. In the Western world since the Enlightenment, religious meaning and identity have tended to be marginalized and privatized; the public realm is secular, and the religious realm is private, whether the privacy was that of conscience, of the family, or of a cultural ghetto, such as the Catholic community until Vatican II. The boundary between the religious and the secular corresponded more or less to that between the private and the public realms. Science, and therefore theoretical consciousness, was part of the public realm, and religiously differentiated consciousness was part of the private or marginalized realm. For much of the modern period, this boundary was carefully policed from both sides.

Social consciousness meant involvement in the world; it also involved theoretical consciousness. The introduction of social consciousness into the constitutive level of religious meaning made the boundary between private and public that had characterized the reciprocally defining opposition between the religious and the secular extremely porous. In effect, the change made the private public, and the public private, or, to make the point in the terms of this study, it made the world religious, and the religious worldly. These boundaries became porous both within the structure of personal religious and cultural identity, as well as externally in the structures of communal identity. Making the character of the religious and the sacralization of the world explicit was a major cultural and religious transformation, because it turned "normal" religious identity inside out; and the long-familiar reactive markers of religious identity no longer had the same functions, if they still had any at all. The Jesuits were not the first religious group to go through such a change,⁶¹ but they were perhaps the first organized group to do so, and with such a degree of intentionality. The change in the Society has not been uniform, but it has formally become part of the Society's world of meaning, as mandated by the recent general congregations and blessed by the papacy, even if the that blessing has sometimes been given with hesitation.

Given the magnitude of the transformation, it is no wonder there were difficulties. Despite GC 32's painstaking assertions of the primacy of the spiritual,

⁶¹Engaged Buddhists under the monk Thich Nhat Hanh in Vietnam in the 1960s, and liberation theologians in Latin America in the 1960s and early 1970s, preceded the Society in similar changes.

fragmentation nevertheless ensued in the lived-out implementation of the new commitment. In many provinces the change led to tensions and even polarization, with the formation of “camps” or “sides.” Some Jesuits in their ministries overemphasized the social aspect of the Society’s mission, while others overemphasized the spiritual to the point of dismissing the social.⁶² Often the “camps” were the apostolates of secondary and higher education on the one side, and the social apostolate on the other,⁶³ where the former saw the latter as secularized unreflective activists, and the latter saw the former as supporters of the ruling and oppressive elites. Since then, these tensions and misunderstandings have diminished and in some places largely disappeared.

This was a conflict between old and new meanings of the realm of transcendence. The sudden change in the relation between public and private, secular and religious, also helps explain the tensions. But recognizing the confused interactions of theoretically differentiated, religiously differentiated, and practically differentiated forms of consciousness sheds even more light on the tensions. While the latter two can operate well together, theoretical consciousness can have a dialectical relationship with both common sense and religiously differentiated consciousness, for it introduces a kind of distance and impersonality that disturbs the taken-for-granted world apprehended by the transcendent and commonsense differentiations alone. Moreover, from theory’s point of view, the relative familiarity of transcendent and commonsense worlds can seem naïve and lacking in objectivity. Up until GC 31, the Jesuit world of meaning, like that of most religious people, was lived in and maintained in terms of religiously differentiated consciousness and common sense and the relationships between them. After GC 31, theoretically differentiated consciousness started to threaten customary constitutive functions of religious meaning for the Jesuits, that is, the construction and maintenance of a world of religious meaning.

Even if one believes that there is no reasonable need for such tensions – (because faith and reason come from the same God) still, these tensions cannot be resolved as long as the different methods of perceiving and thinking, competent in their own realms, have not been appropriated and their respective strengths and weaknesses appreciated. Lack of self-knowledge then leads them to mix up distinct universes of discourse. But the differentiations cannot know their own

⁶²Michael Czerny – Paolo Foglizzo, “The Social Apostolate in the Twentieth Century,” *Promotio Iustitiae* 73 (2000): 13; GC 33, D. 1, n. 32-33.

⁶³Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, “The Jesuit University in the Light of the Ignatian Charism,” address to the *International Meeting of Jesuit Higher Education*, 27 May 2001, Rome, n. 19.

operations, or resolve the tensions between them, without the attainment of interiorly differentiated consciousness, which had not yet emerged in GC 32. GC 32's social consciousness firmly established theoretical consciousness at the constitutive level of meaning, which in turn set up dialectical relationships with religiously differentiated consciousness and common sense, with each making incompatible claims as regards constitutive religious meaning. People using various differentiations of consciousness without self-understanding then misunderstood each other.

One more point needs to be raised before examining the contributions of GC 33 and GC 34 to the postconciliar development of religious meaning in the Society. Was the genesis of social consciousness, and its use to constitute religious meaning, a form of conversion? It was certainly a change in the Jesuits' horizon of meaning, because the "secular" was now included in that horizon, not only as an object of mission, but also as a potential source for religious meaning. The new mental skill and viewpoint of social consciousness was a change in the subject, if one can see the Society or a critical mass of members within as a communal or corporate subject. In this sense, the Society came to see everything differently, in more social terms. The incorporation of justice into the service of faith did not amount to a change of goal, so it did not cause a change in direction, but the path to the goal involved making explicit dimensions that hitherto had remained latent. This changed the character of the direction, not simply by extending earlier developments but by radically transforming them.

These characteristics of the change suggest conversion in Lonergan's sense. The express orientation toward social values brought about a new form of orientation to values, and this suggests a kind of moral conversion. However, the change hardly entailed moving from a regular motivation by satisfactions and fears to a new motivation by values – for the Society had already been motivated by values. The change was more like a transformation of the values toward which the Society had been oriented, because all values were now regarded as having a social dimension. Thus, the new appropriation of social consciousness can be considered a species of moral conversion. This conversion then itself became a foundation⁶⁴ for new developments in the construction of religious meaning, especially by furnishing the further developments with new energy. Attributing to GC 32 to a conversion and not merely a development helps to explain the burst of

⁶⁴See Lonergan's discussion of foundations in *Method in Theology*, chap. 11, 267-93.

energy and dynamism in the subsequent period, including the provision of renewed vigor to the dialectic between faith and justice.

3. THE SHIFT TO INTERIORITY: GC 33 AND GC 34

3.1 GC 33: *The Dialectic Maintained and Guided*

GC 33 met from 2 September until 25 October 1983. It elected a new superior-general, Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, S.J.⁶⁵ It also sought to normalize relations with the Holy See⁶⁶ and to deal with the tensions and dialectic generated within the Society by GC 31 and intensified by GC 32.⁶⁷ It accomplished the latter task without trying prematurely to resolve the dialectic, for it did not seek to eliminate any of its obvious sources. Indeed, it did not try to do away with theoretical or social consciousness but instead confidently confirmed the new role of the promotion of justice in Jesuit mission's service of faith.⁶⁸ GC 33 treated mission with the same degree of generalization and abstraction as had GC 32. Like GC 32, it focused on Jesuit mission as a whole and so produced no decree on any single apostolate. All the material that had to do with Jesuit mission and identity was gathered in one comprehensive mission document, Decree 1, *Companions of Jesus Sent into Today's World*.

GC 33 responded to the post-GC 32 dialectic between faith and justice by reiterating the spiritual nature and explanatory unity of Jesuit mission. Its Decree 1 used religiously differentiated consciousness to stress the fundamentally spiritual nature of the faith-justice commitment by situating it first within the

⁶⁵Fr. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, S.J., born in 1928 in the Netherlands and a linguist by academic training, spent most of his active Jesuit life in Lebanon. He has been successful in improving relations with the Holy See.

⁶⁶After an illness incapacitated Fr. Arrupe in 1981, the new Pope, John Paul II, bypassed normal Jesuit provisions for choosing a temporary vicar, and appointed his own delegate, Fr. Paolo Dezza, S.J., to oversee preparing the Society for the next general congregation, as well as to guide the temporary government of the Society until the general congregation elected a new superior-general.

⁶⁷GC 33's Decree 1, in article n. 32, frankly acknowledges: "Our [the Society's] reading of Decree 4 of GC 32 has at times been 'incomplete, slanted and unbalanced.'" The sentence quotes Fr. Arrupe from his text *Rooted and Grounded in Love*, 67.

⁶⁸GC 33, D. 1, n. 2, 29, 30, 38. All references to GC 33 documents are taken from *Documents of the 33rd General Congregation of the Society of Jesus, An English Translation of the Official Latin Texts of the General Congregation and of Related Documents* (Saint Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1984).

church, and then within the distinctive Jesuit spiritual tradition. Decree 1's very first section, called "Life in the Church,"⁶⁹ asserted the ecclesial nature of the Society's identity and mission, in particular its special link with the Pope, and frequently cited recent papal documents. In another section, "Papal Calls,"⁷⁰ Decree 1 used recent popes' requests to the Society in order to contextualize and interpret the Society's faith-justice commitment. Thus it recalled the Society's ecclesial nature by observing that the faith-justice mission was received from God through the church,⁷¹ so it is from within the church that the Society looks at the world as object of mission. Decree 1 also took pains to contextualize GC 32's faith-justice commitment within the Jesuit spiritual tradition. It included a whole section called "Our Way of Proceeding"⁷² and used numerous references to foundational documents such as the Spiritual Exercises, texts of Ignatius of Loyola, and the *Constitutions of the Society of Jesus*. Finally, the decree also asserted the spiritual nature of the faith-justice mission by repeatedly asking that decisions be made by means of spiritual discernment.

Decree 1 used theoretically differentiated consciousness to stress the correct understanding of contemporary Jesuit mission as a unified whole, in which the spiritual was preeminent. It repeated in various ways that Jesuit mission was not faith alone or justice alone, and not even faith and justice juxtaposed, but rather one single mission and existential commitment rooted in "love of God and love of neighbour."⁷³ This concern for oneness, as a response to dialectic, was typically expressed with the new term "integral" or "integration,"⁷⁴ a term used very little in the documents of GC 31 or 32. GC 33 used the term to modify "mission," "evangelization," "service," and "liberation" and to intend wholeness, completeness, or comprehensiveness, that is, that integral faith or faith as a whole includes justice and that integral justice or justice as a whole is ultimately the justice of the Kingdom of God.

The insistence on the oneness of mission and on its spiritual character recognized the need to integrate justice into faith. But without understanding the corresponding need to integrate the theoretical-social consciousness with religiously differentiated consciousness, the recognition could not fully resolve

⁶⁹GC 33, D. 1, n. 6-8.

⁷⁰GC 33, D. 1, n. 37.

⁷¹GC 33, D. 1, n. 28.

⁷²GC 33, D. 1, n. 39-42.

⁷³GC 33, D. 1, n. 42.

⁷⁴GC 33, D. 1, n. 23, 29, 31, 32, 44.

the problem. Asserting their unity would not suffice. To recognize the need for integration was to recognize the dialectic, which was a significant step in the right direction, but recognition alone would not resolve the tensions. Thus, GC 33 introduced no major innovation with respect to the comprehensiveness or multidimensionality of mission, appropriated no new forms of consciousness, and used theoretical and social consciousness much as GC 32 had. Nevertheless it dealt with the dialectic by acknowledging it. It also clarified the focus of social and theoretical consciousness by reasserting the primacy of faith and by stressing the social aspects of faith and the religious aspects of justice. In doing these things, GC 33 also insisted on distinguishing but not separating social and theoretical consciousness from religiously differentiated consciousness, or vice versa – the vitality of one required the other. GC 33 was unable to resolve the dialectic, but perhaps its greatest insight and achievement was the choice to continue living the dialectic because its parts were important, and to continue holding its parts together and in fuller awareness of its tensions and dynamics.

But there were glimmerings of novelty. Perhaps because it acknowledged the post-GC 32 dialectic, GC 33 began to pay attention to mission in a new way. Not only did it attend to the world as the object of mission, or to the systematic understanding of mission, in the realm of theory, it also began to notice the the Society as the corporate subject or agent of mission, and to the quality of that agency. This was new, for neither GC 31 nor GC 32 expressly examined the Society as the operator of the mission they were trying to clarify, or pay close attention to the Society as constructing a new world of religious meaning. The beginning of a shift in attention toward the corporate subject of mission was manifested in three ways. For the first time, a general congregation decree had a substantial discussion and critical analysis of the Society's collective experience. Decree 1 devoted an entire section⁷⁵ to the experience of mission since GC 32. Second, the decree stressed the corporate nature⁷⁶ of the Society's commitment, first, because of the Society's ecclesial nature, and second, because the Society is one apostolic body. This was a social version of the intellectual and spiritual concern for oneness. Finally, the requests to use spiritual discernment in decision-making almost all asked, not for individual discernment, but for communal discernment⁷⁷, thereby recognizing the Society as a corporate performer of

⁷⁵GC 33, D. 1, n. 31-33; the section is called, unremarkably, "Our Experience."

⁷⁶GC 33, D. 1, n. 38.

⁷⁷GC 33, D. 1, n. 39.

discernment. With these three novelties, the Society was beginning to become aware of itself as a corporate subject exercising the new mission and beginning to notice and wonder about the quality of that subjectivity. In effect, the Society was beginning to turn social consciousness on itself, and that reflexive light showed the subject of social consciousness to be corporate or communal, and not simply an abstract or general entity in the theoretical realm.

These new, hesitant shifts of attention hinted at the beginning of a new differentiation of consciousness, interiority. Nevertheless, this was only a hint, for GC 33 attended primarily to the world as object of mission and to the understanding of mission since GC 32, and sought to be more aware of the dialectic between faith and justice, not yet capable of resolving it.

3.2 GC 34: From the Object to the Subject and Operations of Mission

GC 34 met from January 5th until March 22nd of 1995. Like GC 32 it was not called to elect a superior-general but to deal with matters that normal government could not handle by itself: to update the Society's mission orientations in the context of major changes in the world and the church and to update the Society's law in accord with conciliar and postconciliar developments. Like GC 33 and 32 before it, GC 34 also did not produce decrees on particular apostolates but instead dealt with mission in a comprehensive and systematic way. The principal decrees were four mission ones, deliberately linked to each other: Decree 2, *Servants of Christ's Mission*; Decree 3, *Our Mission and Justice*; Decree 4, *Our Mission and Culture*; and Decree 5, *Our Mission and Interreligious Dialogue*. The first, *Servants of Christ's Mission*, dealt with the whole of Jesuit mission while the other three dealt with specific dimensions; it was also the hermeneutical key to interpret and bind together the other three. *Servants of Christ's Mission* has three parts: the first, untitled, about the Society's religious experience of mission since GC 32 and in general; the second, entitled "The Graces Christ Gives," about the service of faith and the promotion of justice; the third, entitled "The Dimensions of Our Mission," about new dimensions of mission. I will focus mainly on this decree.

These documents, especially *Servants of Christ's Mission*, introduced three main innovations into the development of Jesuit religious meaning since the council. The first, most obvious innovation was the multiplication, by means of theoretical consciousness, of the dimensionality of mission from the social to the cultural and the religious. The second innovation was a more sustained and refined use of religiously differentiated consciousness. The third, the least obvious

but perhaps the most important innovation was a new differentiation of consciousness, interiority.

In GC 34's Decree 2 social-theoretical consciousness systematized the relations between the elements of mission identified by the previous three general congregations, and to build on the "dimensionability" of mission by identifying three distinct but related and constitutive dimensions of mission. Decree 2 identified three dimensions of Jesuit mission: the justice or social dimension, the cultural dimension, and the religious dimension, which included any religion. The third part of the decree, "The Dimensions of Our Mission,"⁷⁸ discussed this, and a separate mission decree was devoted to each dimension. The dimensions did not displace the role of justice established by GC 32 and clarified by GC 33 as Kingdom justice, nor did it reduce the earlier understanding of justice to one dimension among others. Rather, the dimensions differentiated the faith-justice principle into three dimensions.

The dimensions can be understood in two ways simultaneously. From the standpoint of theoretical consciousness, they are three dimensions of the object of mission, that is, of the world. Thus, for the service of faith and the promotion of justice to operate authentically, they must address, in a serious and respectful way, human life's structural or social aspects, its cultural aspects, and its religious aspects. At the same time, from the standpoint of interiority, which I will discuss later, the dimensions of mission are understood as a process that unfolds through the operations of mission. Thus, to the social or structural dimension of the world correspond the mission operations of social transformation and the accompaniment of the victims of injustice⁷⁹; to the cultural dimension of the world correspond the mission operations of inculturation of the Gospel, and dialogue⁸⁰; and to the religious dimension of the world correspond the mission operations of various forms of interreligious dialogue and respect.⁸¹ Decree 2 discusses the dimensions primarily as mission operations, whereas the three other mission decrees discuss them as both dimensions of the world and as dimensions of mission.

⁷⁸GC 34, D. 2, n. 14-21. All references to GC 34 documents are taken from *Documents of the Thirty-fourth General Congregation of the Society of Jesus; The Decrees of General Congregation Thirty-four, the Fifteenth of the Restored Society and the Accompanying Papal and Jesuit Documents* (Saint Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1995).

⁷⁹GC 34, D. 2, n. 14-19; D. 3.

⁸⁰GC 34, D. 2, n. 14-19; D. 4.

⁸¹GC 34, D. 2, n. 14-19; D.5.

The multiplication of dimensions builds on the theoretical understandings of mission in both GC 31 and GC 32. Introducing new dimensions of the constitutive functions of the Jesuit world of meaning complexifies matters considerably. How can these components be related to each other, and their relations integrated? The answer of Decree 2 is to relate the mission elements of faith, Kingdom justice, social justice, culture, and religion to each other as (1) the aim or main focus of mission,⁸² (2) the integrating principle of mission⁸³ and (3) the dimensions of mission.⁸⁴ The former list of elements sets the terms constitutive of mission, and the latter enumerated list specifies the relations in which the terms stand to each other. Hence, (1) the goal or aim of Jesuit mission is the service of faith; (2) its integrating principle is the service of faith of which the promotion of Kingdom justice is an absolute requirement; and (3) the dimensions of the integrating principle are justice, culture and religion, understood both as dimensions of the process of mission and of the object of mission.⁸⁵

The systematic ordering of the constitutive elements of Jesuit mission, and hence of the Jesuit world of meaning, is a bold use of theoretical consciousness and a refinement of social consciousness. This could not have been achieved without GC 31's abstraction and "dimensionability" of mission, GC 32's introduction of social consciousness into mission, and GC 33's clarifications of that insight.

Not only did Decree 2 use theoretical and social consciousness in a newly confident and masterful way, but it also did so with religiously differentiated consciousness. One manifestation of this was a deeper use of authoritative religious sources than the previous three general congregations did. Instead of short quotations or brief references to Ignatian sources, papal and conciliar documents or to Scripture in order to support or illustrate a point, Decree 2 both incorporated the sources into its argument, and discussed its sources. For example, it showed how the Society's mission, in its contemporary understanding, flowed from or had to be understood in light of sources such as the nature of the church's mission as understood today (n.3); recent papal teaching (n.3, 10); various aspects of the founding of the Society such as the experiences of Ignatius (n.4), the Spiritual Exercises (n.4), normative legal documents such as the Society's *Constitutions* and the *Formula of the Institute* (n.5, 7), and the early

⁸²GC 34, D. 2, n. 7, 14, 15.

⁸³GC 34, D. 2, n. 7, 14, 15.

⁸⁴GC 34, D. 2, n. 14-19.

⁸⁵GC 34, D. 2, n. 14-16.

experiences and insights of the first Jesuits (n.8). These discussions contextualized the contemporary Society within the current church and historically within the Society's religious roots. Church and Ignatian sources were not used simply to support or verify the new world of religious meaning but were acknowledged as playing constitutive roles in building that meaning.

A more remarkable sign of confidently used religiously differentiated consciousness is the new reliance on religious experience. GC 34 built on GC 33's small lead in this regard, but the language of all four of GC 34's mission documents is far more experiential than that of the earlier mission decrees. Indeed the language of religious experience is characteristic of the documents, especially Decree 2. The central points of each mission decree are made not primarily by theoretical arguments but rather on the basis of the Society's awareness of its own corporate religious experience of Christ, through its various mission commitments, and in particular on the basis of how it has been transformed by that experience in such a way that the Society's faith is more evangelical. The experience of Christ is mediated through the Society's contemporary mission commitments, through the Society's experiences of the Spiritual Exercises, and the experience of life according to the *Constitutions of the Society of Jesus*. For example, Decree 2 confirms and develops GC 32's mission insights not primarily through rational argument or religious authority, which it uses, but because, through the service of faith and the promotion of justice since GC 32, and through getting to know the poor, the Society has encountered the Crucified and Risen Christ present and active in the world.⁸⁶ Moreover, because of this encounter, the Society has been transformed: its faith has "become more paschal, more compassionate, more tender, more evangelical in its simplicity," and it has had martyrs (n.1). Thus the transformation and its coherence with the Gospel verify the authenticity of the encounter with Christ and therefore verify the authenticity of GC 32's new mission insights, becoming the basis for further development into the various dimensions. The three other mission decrees proceed in the same way: Christ has been encountered through social justice work, through inculturation, and through interreligious dialogue; this encounter has healed and transformed the Society in particular ways, and the Society adjusts its understanding and the performance of mission on the basis of critical reflection on the transformed state.

In GC 34's mission documents, the entire terminology of mission developed since GC 31," is guided by the language of religious experience, through

⁸⁶GC 34, D. 2, n. 1, 6, 7, 20.

encountering or listening to Christ as active in the world.⁸⁷ Since the religious experience invoked is always experience of Christ on mission in the world, the new experiential language makes Christ, not the Society, the primary agent of mission. The other mission decrees do the same, sometimes also stressing the agency of the Spirit. Thus the language of religious experience and the explicit sense of the centrality of divine agency expressly acknowledge for the first time the missions of Christ and the Spirit within the constitutive level of religious meaning.

What in GC 33 was a dialectic between faith and justice, between the spiritual and involvement in the world, has in GC 34 become skilled and sustained uses of theoretically and socially differentiated consciousness, and of religiously differentiated consciousness. What happened?

The explicit turn to the operations and processes of mission by theoretically and socially differentiated consciousness, and to religious experience in the use of religiously differentiated consciousness, indicate a turn to the subject. This means the Society of Jesus as a corporate subject, operator, or agent of mission. Furthermore the deliberate respect for religious experience and religious transformation as the primary basis for discussion indicate that the object of the Society's attention now includes the Society's internal experience, both of Christ and of the kinds and qualities of its own characteristic operations of mission. This involves appropriating its own interiority. That all four of GC 34's mission decrees function in this way suggests that interiorly differentiated consciousness is not simply an accidental or temporary achievement of Decree 2. Let us examine this achievement a little more closely.

GC 34's mission documents, especially Decree 2, recognize the terms and relations of mission as also the conscious performance of mission, that is, as aspects of the Society's self-awareness and a heightened consciousness of its intentional mission operations. The two parts of the dialectic that began in GC 31 as tensions between the preeminence of the spiritual and involvement in the world, that changed after GC 32 into tensions between the service of faith and the promotion of justice, which were recognized and managed in GC 33, have in GC 34 become deliberate mission operations verified in the Society's experience. The concern for the preeminence of the spiritual has become the service of faith, with its typical and recurrent mission operations of evangelization and the typical Jesuit spiritual ministries of preaching, administering the sacraments, and

⁸⁷GC 34, D. 2, n. 20.

catechesis; obedience to the pope with regard to mission and thinking and feeling with the church; attention to the action of Christ through communal religious experience and transformation; and communal and personal apostolic discernment. The intentional involvement with the world has become the promotion of Kingdom justice, with its typical and recurrent mission operations of: social analysis; social transformation; accompanying the victims of injustice, as well as accompanying and seeking to convert the perpetrators of injustice; inculturation of the Gospel, with all the cultural respect, scholarship, and dialogue this requires; the four forms of interreligious dialogue – of life, of action, of religious experience, of theology⁸⁸ – with the respect and scholarly labor this requires. These are not merely random operations, for they are ordered according to the mission relations of goal, integrating principle, and dimensions. That both sides of the dialectic have been recognized as mission operations with ordered relations to one another suggests that the dialectic has been largely resolved. Differentiated consciousness seems no longer troubled.

The dialectic has been resolved by the differentiation of interiority from the other differentiations of consciousness. Thus in GC 34 the object of the Society's attention is no longer only the world as object of mission, or the systematic understanding of mission, but also includes the Society's inner experience as the corporate subject of mission and the operational performance of that subjectivity. In these mission decrees, the Society has explicitly recognized its own corporate subjectivity, with its structures and operations, and has used that subjectivity intentionally, or deliberately insofar as its corporate subjectivity relates to mission and to the construction of religious meaning. This self-awareness and self-acceptance has enabled the Society, in GC 34's mission documents, to use religiously differentiated consciousness and theoretically and socially differentiated consciousness without confusing them. GC 32 used social consciousness only from the points of view of theoretically and religiously differentiated consciousness, which were in dialectical tension with each other.

One final point about GC 34's achievement needs to be raised: does the new achievement of appropriation of interiority also imply an intellectual conversion? The transformation analyzed above is not precisely a cognitive self-appropriation of the operations of experiencing, understanding, and judging, and of the relations between them. The operations recognized and intentionally used in GC 34's mission decrees because they have to do with mission, not with cognitional acts,

⁸⁸GC 34, D. 5, n. 4.

but with knowing and relating to Christ as active in the world, and with the internal operations of the subjectivity that does this. Perhaps this is analogous to cognitive self-appropriation, with existential and religious dimensions. Let us see how.

With the emergence of appropriated interiority, GC 34 has thematized what authentic Jesuit mission subjectivity is, and how it should operate authentically in the mission world mediated by religious meaning and motivated by religious and moral values. By identifying and recommending the performance of the mission operations of social consciousness and religious consciousness, from a basis in interiority, GC 34 not only attains a heightened awareness of the nature of its transformed subjectivity, but chooses this subjectivity and deliberately accepts the transformation. The newly identified mission operations will continue to affect and change the Society in accord with its newly shaped subjectivity, so in making its recommendations, GC 34 has consciously accepted to continue to be transformed in the same way. Thus, GC 34 appropriates the service of faith and the promotion of Kingdom justice that is existentially expressed by these operations. This acknowledgment and acceptance of the transformation suggest a conversion. Now let us look at the operations. I suggest that in the operation of corporate mission subjectivity, by self-transcendently joining Christ as active in the world, that genuine attention is attention to religious experience; that genuine intelligence or interpretation of these experiences is mission as global, dimensioned, social, ecclesial, and corporate in a specifically Jesuit way; that genuine rationality is verification of the effects of interpretation in religious transformation consistent with the Gospel; and that genuine responsibility is social consciousness and social commitment appropriated through interiority. While the correspondence of experience, intelligence, rationality, and responsibility with the existential and religious operations of mission might need to be adjusted, it does seem that the interiority achieved by GC 34 at least allows for the recognition and acceptance of the authentic performance of the levels of conscious intentionality in mission terms.

The final point about whether GC 34's transformation may be considered as an intellectual conversion has to do with overcoming the myth of false immediacy, that knowing is like taking a good look, and that the real is what is seen "out there now real." The analogy to the myth in the development of postconciliar understandings of mission is the impression in GC 31, GC 32, and GC 33 that mission means an outward orientation, for its object, whether the

world or the understanding of mission, is “out there.” GC 34’s Decree 2 overcomes this myth by an innovative use of the Spiritual Exercises.

GC 32’s and GC 33’s mission documents and the preparations for GC 34 used the Contemplation on the Incarnation⁸⁹ to help express or make their decisions.⁹⁰ In this spiritual exercise, which opens the phase of the *Exercises* where one comes to know Jesus and his motivations more deeply, the Trinity gazes with loving concern on the world, and decides to send the Word to become incarnate there, for the sake of the world and its salvation. In GC 32, GC 33, and the pre-GC 34 preparations, the Society imagines itself with the Trinity gazing with loving concern at the world and compassionately deciding to do something about the world’s needs.

GC 34’s Decree 2 uses the Contemplation differently.⁹¹ Instead of contemplating the world, it contemplates the Word being sent into the world, becoming incarnate there, acting there, and continuing to do so after his death, resurrection, and glorification. From the point of view of the Spiritual Exercises and its purposes, this shift of attention may be a nuance. But seen from the viewpoint of generalized empirical method, it is an earthquake – at least if “earth” is here understood as “world of meaning”.

When attention was directed to the world, or to the understanding of mission, its object might have been imagined to be “out there.” Engagement with the world by means of theoretical and social consciousness perhaps focused attention “out there,” and thereby took the “in here” for granted and did not attend to it in an intentional way. The “in here” was of the extroverted subject, and the space included the whole religious realm of meaning, which, as we have seen, was in dialectical relationship with the object of mission “out there.” But when the object of attention is Christ and what he was doing in the world, and if Christ is everywhere, then there could be no major, religiously significant inside-outside difference. The universality of the glorified Christ’s presence and activity, in the Spirit, works to dissolve this boundary, and makes the Society part of the mission world it may have thought it was considering from outside, and forces the Society

⁸⁹*The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius. Based on Studies in the Language of the Autograph*, Louis J. Puhl, S.J. (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1951), in. 101-109 or, in this translation, 49-51.

⁹⁰See GC 32, D. 4, n. 14; GC 33, D. 1, n. 34; “Challenges of Mission Today to Our *Minima Societatis*” (Rome: General Curia of the Society of Jesus, 1993), one of the working papers sent to all the Society in 1993 to aid the preparations for GC 34. This one used, and recommended using, the Contemplation on the Incarnation to discern God’s concerns for the world.

⁹¹GC 34, D. 2, n. 4.

to recognize performance as the operator of mission, and then to take responsibility for the quality of its operations. Then in the context of GC 34, the typically Ignatian reflection on the experience of contemplation,⁹² means that the Society is not reflecting on the quality of its engagement with the world, but on the quality of its engagement with Christ actively engaged in the world.

This shift displaced the impression of the world of mission as “out there now real,” and instead situated the object of mission, the process of mission, and the subject of mission (the Society) within a single horizon. Like intellectual conversion, this transformation led to recognizing the meaning of objectivity within the world mediated by meaning and motivated by value, which then was the authentic subject of mission operating in an authentic manner. Like intellectual conversion, this transformation involved interiorly differentiated consciousness. Like a conversion, this transformation resolved a not entirely authentic dialectical tension, and enabled the Society to understand many of the previous developments better. While this was not the appropriation of oneself as a cognitive subject, it was the self-appropriation of a corporate subject as a religiously knowing, deciding, and acting corporate subject.

One of the reasons we can say that GC 32's achievement of social consciousness was a conversion was that the change it enacted became a foundation for many other developments in religious meaning, as we have seen. Perhaps the only way we will know whether GC 34's achievement of interiority was also a conversion will be whether it became a foundation for further developments. We might only know this in GC 35. Nevertheless there are some indications of such developments. For example, the Social Justice Secretariat of the Jesuit General Curia in Rome has recently published two policy guideline documents where the teams that developed them deliberately used awareness of changes in the group's corporate subjectivity in their own discernment and decision-making processes. These documents were *Seeking Peace in a Violent World: New Challenges* (2005), and *Globalisation and Marginalisation: Our Global Apostolic Response* (2006). This transformation does seem to mark a new beginning for subsequent developments, for it allows the subject to use its abilities intentionally, and so to continue building religious meaning but to do so deliberately. The history of the development of new religious meaning for the Society since Vatican II, traced in this investigation, has potentially become self-

⁹²Keith Langstaff, S.J., “The Third Week of Ignatius Loyola's Spiritual Exercises and Anti-Jewish Overtones” (Toronto: Th.D. diss., Toronto School of Theology, 1995), 226.

conscious and intentional in GC 34. Thus, in order to express the momentousness of the change effected by GC 34, I call it an intellectual conversion but recognize that I am extending the usage of the term.

The achievement of interiority and something like intellectual conversion in GC 34's Decree 2 has propelled the Society into a new world of meaning organized around new questions. Instead of asking "What are the needs out there, and what should we do about them?" the Society in GC 34 asked instead, "What is Christ doing in our world? How are we being invited to join in his activity?" and, "How do we know?" The mission documents do not explicitly ask these questions, but they behave as though they do. Because of the dialectic, and intellectual unconversion, GC's 31, 32, and 33 were asking, in effect, the first kind of questions, with attention directed outwards. These are moral questions, and perfectly good ones, but the second kind of religious questions are from the outset, and they require religious answers. Because they are asked from the point of view of interiority, they allow the answers to have theoretical-social and practical components in a religious context.

The resolution of the dialectic between faith and justice, and the appropriation of the new form of mission commitment, have brought the postconciliar development of religious meaning full circle. The new questions carry the Society from an old, preconciliar world of religious meaning where everything seemed immediately religious, to a new world where everything is once again religious, but mediated by theoretically and interiorly differentiated forms of consciousness – a second immediacy, but differentiated and mature.

CONCLUSION

The world of Jesuit religious meaning since Vatican II has been characterized by differentiations of consciousness and conversions, in which the dialectics between both differentiations and conversions have propelled development forward. Underneath all this seems to be a dynamic whereby social concern became the form of a continuous intention to seek the universal good more. GC 34, with its emphasis on religious experience and on the centrality of Christ, would accept this but would probably prefer to say instead that the underlying vector carrying the development forward is the search to find and participate ever more fully in Christ's activity in the world. In either case, the dynamism is one of corporate self-transcendence.

If there is an underlying dynamic, then what might be the next steps in the development sketched out here? I can see two. The resolutions and integrations of GC 34 probably need to be appropriated more solidly, not in new insights but in new practices. The new questions that GC 34 seems to ask suggest that the next step might be the practice of communal apostolic discernment of the signs of the times. The Society would seek to recognize and respond to Christ as active in the world by recognizing in its collective experience and transformations the communal consolations and desolations that indicate the presence and action of Christ in context, how God is inviting participation in that activity, and the quality of the Society's engagement in or resistance to that invitation. Such a practice would have interiority as a basis for combining the research and analysis done by theoretical consciousness, with the perceptions and commitments of social consciousness within the context of religious consciousness.

Another possible next step might be the incorporation of ecological concern and consciousness into the dimensions of Jesuit mission. This is a growing preoccupation among many, for the integrity of human life depends upon ecological integrity. Doing something about it will require an expansion of social and theological horizons. There is no reason to think that the dimensions of Jesuit mission already identified are exhaustive. A further expansion of dimensions can be handled as long as the proper relations to the integrating principle and the aim of Jesuit mission are maintained, with the centrality of Christ as active in the world, even if the content of these relations might change considerably.

Interiorly differentiated consciousness and possibly intellectual conversion make faith public. They do so by transforming the subject of religious experience, eliminating the myths about knowing that internally marginalize the subject's faith. This change, with the self-awareness that comes with interiority, leads the subject not to be deceived by the stories that externally marginalize faith. Most importantly though, these changes allow the religious subject to use the differentiations of consciousness with intentionality and skill, allowing the religious subject to be an intelligent, reasonable, responsible, and loving participant in constructing a common world, in a second immediacy vastly different from the naïve immediacy of the pre-Enlightenment period. This in turn allows faith to make its own unique contribution to public and social life, which has been denied religious faith since the Enlightenment.

Does the development recounted here, especially in GC 34, represent a communal change in the Society of Jesus? While the resolution of the dialectic between faith and justice, and the achievement of interiorly

differentiated consciousness are good news, they really apply only to the mission documents of GC 34, probably to their writers, possibly to many of the delegates who voted for the decrees, and possibly to some who have allowed themselves to be deeply affected by the documents. Nevertheless, if the transformation can be recorded in a document written and approved by a group, then it has become communal to some degree. If it has become communal, then it can also become historical and be handed on. That it happened at all means it can happen again.

REFLECTIONS ON IGNATIAN SOTERIOLOGY: THE CONTRIBUTION OF IGNACIO ELLACURÍA

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AT DIFFERENT POINTS in my life Bernard Lonergan and Ignacio Ellacuría, each in his own way, captivated me. In my early training as a Jesuit I was introduced to *Insight: A Study in Human Understanding* by Jim Marsh, one of my professors at St. Louis University. In my first theology studies I had the occasion to study *Method in Theology* with Nancy Ring and Fred Lawrence.¹ During my doctoral studies, Roger Haight, Jon Sobrino, and the people of El Salvador helped me to encounter Ignacio Ellacuría and, through him, the Basque philosopher, Xavier Zubiri. In each of these encounters – with classic texts, visionary thinkers, passionate teachers, and a suffering but hope-filled people – I found myself richly blessed. And I am grateful for the invitation to share something of Ellacuría's thought with scholars of Lonergan.

During the year when the Society of Jesus remembers its founders – Ignatius Loyola, Francis Xavier, and Peter Faber – the Lonergan Institute is recognizing the great breadth and depth of theological reflection that has emanated from Ignatian spirituality over the last century. It is fitting to bring Ignacio Ellacuría into this conversation and to honor him as a significant theologian steeped in the Ignatian vision. In my reflections you may notice hints of convergence between Ellacuría and Lonergan, although my primary focus is not on the explication of the similarities and differences between them. Rather, attentive to the Ignatian vision that nourished both thinkers, I conceive this essay as a kind of experiment, a speculative exploration in the discipline of soteriology. Moreover, in view of the Lonergan Institute's desire to celebrate the founders of the Society of Jesus, I

¹Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, vol. 3, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992); *Method in Theology* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972).

consciously embark on this exploration as a Jesuit, one shaped in fundamental ways by the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius and the Ignatian integration of contemplation in action.

AN IGNATIAN SOTERIOLOGY?

I begin with a preliminary observation. The theme of salvation is absolutely central to Christian faith.

There is nothing particularly contested or controversial in this assertion, yet there is value in giving voice to it. The book of psalms, the prayers of the mass, and many Christian hymns teem with references to salvation, our saving God, and our savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. Indeed, Christian faith is faith in God-who-saves. Therefore, the life of Christian faith – spirituality – has to do with receiving and responding to the gift of salvation (however it is to be understood.) Because of this, every other Christian theme – God, Jesus Christ, Spirit, Trinity, church, sacraments, prayer, grace, sin, creation, providence, final judgment, and so forth – implicitly or explicitly evokes the theme of salvation, and every other subdiscipline in theology intertwines with and engages soteriology, the theology of salvation. At the heart of our conversations with people from other religious traditions and even in our attempts to dialogue with secular and atheistic interlocutors, we also find evidence of this theme. It is, in fact, an excellent entryway into conversations with those outside our own tradition because the quest for salvation brings us face to face with the most fundamental of religious questions. “Experience, especially repeated experience, of one’s frailty or wickedness raises the question of one’s salvation and, on a more fundamental level, there arises the question of God.”² The theme of salvation, obviously a central theme for Christian theologians, constitutes a fundamental human concern. As such it provides leverage to Christian apologetics even as it clears room for honest interreligious dialogue.

²*Method in Theology*, 39. For a brilliant, lifelong effort to tackle the question of suffering as the central issue of theology – especially the massive social suffering so present to our globalized consciousness – see the writings of Johan Baptist Metz; for example, see “Theology as Theodicy?” in *A Passion for God: The Mystical-Political Dimension of Christianity*, trans. J. M. Ashley (New York/Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1998), 54-71; “The Future in the Memory of Suffering,” in Johann Baptist Metz and Jürgen Moltmann, *Faith and the Future*, trans. John Griffiths (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1995), 3-16; “Facing the Jews: Christian Theology after Auschwitz,” *Faith and the Future*, 38-48.

This leads me to a question that probes the relevance of Ignatian spirituality to the theology of salvation. Does there exist something like an Ignatian soteriology?

On the surface, the answer to this question appears to be “no.” One finds textual evidence in the writings of Saint Ignatius, including the Spiritual Exercises, that his own image of salvation was formed in the dominant soteriological paradigm of his day: the “substitution” or “atonement” theory articulated early on by Saint Paul and Saint Augustine, and later by Ignatius’s contemporaries, Martin Luther and John Calvin, but which achieved a kind of classical status in the theology of St. Anselm (1034-1109).³ It would seem that Ignatius simply took for granted that Anselm’s theory represented what the church believes about salvation. Moreover, in contrast to theologies that arose in Franciscan circles,⁴ for example, we find no distinctive or novel salvation theories in the writings of the earliest Jesuit theologians.

This is not the end of the matter, however. My theological hunch is that Ignatian spirituality did indeed motivate new and distinctive approaches to soteriology, although for the most part these began to fully emerge only in the last century or so, as part of the renaissance in Catholic theology leading up to and following the Second Vatican Council. The twentieth century witnessed a veritable explosion of new theologies grounded in Ignatian spirituality, highlighted by such names as Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, Jean Danielou, John Courtney Murray, Bernard Lonergan, Karl Rahner, Hans Urs von Balthasar, Avery Dulles, Juan Luis Segundo, Aloysius Pieris, Michael Amaladoss, Roger Haight, Ignacio Ellacuría, and Jon Sobrino.⁵ Not surprisingly, one finds in these thinkers a range of approaches to salvation. For that reason, although my hunch regarding an Ignatian soteriology may appear novel, it does not so much plow

³St. Anselm of Canterbury, “Cur Deus Homo,” Book First, in *St. Anselm: Basic Writings*, trans. S. N. Deane (LaSalle, Ill.: Open Court Publishing, 1962), 191-253. References to salvation and the need to “save one’s soul” abound in the Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius; see, for example, the principle and foundation (#23), the first meditation on sin (#45-54), the contemplation on the Incarnation (#91-100), the three classes of persons (#149-157), the exercises of the Third Week (#190-209), and the first contemplation of the Fourth Week (#218-225), in Ignatius Loyola, *The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius*, trans. G. Ganss (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1992.)

⁴See Ilia Delio, “Revisiting the Franciscan Doctrine of Christ,” *Theological Studies* 64, 1 (2003): 3-23.

⁵Avery Dulles is himself fascinated by this “explosion;” see his essays, “Saint Ignatius and the Jesuit Theological Tradition,” *Studies in the Spirituality of Jesuits* 14 (March 1982): “Jesuits and Theology: Yesterday and Today,” *Theological Studies* 52 (1991): 524-38; “The Ignatian Charism and Contemporary Theology,” *America* 176 (April 26, 1997):14-22.

new ground as signal that some of the crops sown before and after Vatican II are now ready for harvest.

As is fairly well-known, the hegemony of Anselm's soteriology began to loosen during the Enlightenment. When viewed as an "explanation" of the logic of salvation – that is, in answer to the question "How are we saved?" – the Anselmian dialogue appeared incredible and eventually came to be dismissed as mythological. More importantly, Anselm's relative lack of attention to the role of human freedom in the divine-human interchange appeared to modern critics of religion as a glaring weakness. It collided squarely with the Enlightenment's aversion to heteronomy and its correlative passion for human autonomy. Indeed, Anselm's account so accents the role in our salvation of Christ's sacrificial death that the graced exchange happens "behind our back," as it were. In the eyes of some harsher critiques of the Christian message, including the great masters of suspicion, salvation thus appears not only as incredible but as a counter-value – a contributor to ideology, a source of *ressentiment*, an expression of projection. But these critiques misrepresent soteriology in general and Anselm's soteriology in particular.

Beginning with the Gospels and the entire New Testament, the Christian tradition has found a range of ways to speak about salvation. All of these soteriologies manifest a narrative structure. Moreover, we recover a sense of the richness of salvation narratives like that of St. Anselm precisely when we probe the connection between the fabulous variety of images of salvation in the Christian tradition and the myriad ways of living the Christian life. Indeed, insofar as "life in the Spirit" flourishes as a range of responses to God's saving gift, spirituality can be read as the practical correlative of soteriology. We discover an excellent example of this in the distinctive spirituality of Ignatius and the range of soteriologies correlative to it.

Ignatius, of course, was not an academic theologian. That is, he himself did not "do" theology. Rather, he lived a profoundly theological vision of faith and crafted the Exercises as a way to lead others into the living of that faith. The Ignatian accent is thus placed on action. It represents, in the felicitous phrase of Diego Laínez, a spirituality of "contemplation in action." For this reason, when addressing an "Ignatian soteriology" it is important to look beneath the surface of what he wrote and examine how he prayed and acted. The evangelical focal point of his spirituality of contemplation in action appears in the mission to "save souls," to use one of his favorite phrases. Even more importantly, Ignatius's (early modern) spirituality places heavy emphasis on human discernment and decision –

in a word, on human freedom. But Ignatius did not get enmeshed in a Pelagian calculus of grace and human freedom, much less a modern reductionism of transcendence to anthropology. A mystic plunged into the ocean of God, his Spiritual Exercises represents a profound witness to the faith in Jesus Christ. But it does so in the form of a mystagogy that recovers the *fides qua* as the experiential ground of the *fides quae*.⁶ Ignatius places the accent on action by acting, not by thinking about action. That comes much later, in the works of various theologians like those whom we honor at this conference. With this in mind I jump now to the thought of Ignacio Ellacuría, a late twentieth-century theologian vitally interested in salvation.

THE HISTORICAL SOTERIOLOGY OF IGNACIO ELLACURÍA

Ignacio Ellacuría was born in the Basque region of Spain in 1930. He entered the Society of Jesus in 1947 and was introduced to the Central American mission during his second year of novitiate. After studies in philosophy and the humanities in Ecuador, and a period of teaching in El Salvador, he studied theology in Innsbruck as a student of Karl Rahner from 1958 to 1961 and completed a doctorate in philosophy in Spain under the direction of Xavier Zubiri between 1962 and 1967. He returned to El Salvador where he worked until his death in 1989.

Perhaps best known for his contributions to the University of Central America and his efforts to bring about a negotiated settlement to the civil war in El Salvador, Ellacuría was the primary target of the grisly massacre that took the lives of six Jesuits and two women on November 16, 1989. However, long before he achieved notoriety as a university president, political theorist, and martyr, he engaged in the hidden academic labor of a teacher, writer, and editor. He was a brilliant philosopher and theologian who devoted a good deal of scholarly and pastoral thought to questions involving salvation. He even identified this theme as

⁶“Understanding Jesus Christ requires surrender, but, conversely, where such surrender exists he is being proclaimed as ultimate divine reality. *Fides quae* ([faith] in who Jesus Christ is) depends chronologically and logically on *fides qua* (the very act of believing in Jesus Christ).” Jon Sobrino, *Christ the Liberator: A View from the Victims* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2001), 325.

the “fundamental reference point of all my theological work,” although he viewed his own contributions to the subject as modest.⁷

Ellacuría’s special concern with soteriology appears in his first published collection of theological essays, *Freedom Made Flesh*.⁸ Here he frames the question of salvation in terms that evoke the structure of the divine-human relationship: “salvation history is a salvation in and of history.”⁹ This formula might seem simplistic, but Ellacuría uses it to invest the Christian vision with a profound, historically conscious, philosophical realism. The first term, “salvation history,” refers to the great salvific acts of God that break into the history of Israel and the movement begun by Jesus. But Ellacuría insists that “[t]here is not only a salvation history, but salvation must be historical.”¹⁰ Hence, theology does not discharge its responsibility by simply reciting salvation history or analyzing its transcendent logic in systematic concepts. Theology itself must *be* salvific. It does not conceive a merely notional connection between the realm of God and the human world but embodies a real, living connection. It cannot simply point to a salvation that occurred once and for all. Rather, as the ideological moment of ecclesial praxis,¹¹ it must embrace and practically mediate a salvation that is longed for and desperately needed right now. Nor can soteriology focus exclusively on a salvation that occurs “after” or “beyond” this life. It must seek to render a concrete account of Christian hope (1 Peter 3:15) that relates the eschatological fullness of salvation to its actualization in particular historical situations. In short, Ellacuría insists that “Salvation should not be understood univocally nor should it be understood as if the human being were a spirit without history, without incarnation in the world, nor as if salvation in the hereafter were not supposed to be signified, to be made into a sign, in the here and now.”¹²

Ellacuría insists that, to be faithful to the Gospels, theology must avoid the sirens of soteriological docetism that would characterize salvation as salvation

⁷Ignacio Ellacuría, “The Church of the Poor, Historical Sacrament of Liberation,” in I. Ellacuría and J. Sobrino, ed., *Mysterium Liberationis: Fundamental Concepts of Liberation Theology* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1994), 550-51, my translation. For an introduction to Ellacuría’s life and thought, see my book, *The Ground Beneath the Cross: The Theology of Ignacio Ellacuría* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2000).

⁸Ignacio Ellacuría, *Freedom Made Flesh: The Mission of Christ and His Church* (trans. John Drury) (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1976).

⁹Ellacuría, *Freedom Made Flesh*, 15.

¹⁰Ellacuría, *Freedom Made Flesh*, 134.

¹¹See Ignacio Ellacuría, “La teología como momento ideológico de la praxis eclesial,” *Estudios Eclesiásticos* 207 (1978):457-76.

¹²Ellacuría, *Freedom Made Flesh*, 134-35.

from history. When theology fails to adequately account for its historical “body,” it tends to produce an abstract theoretical *notion* of salvation that corresponds to an empty theological *ethic* and a distorted, potentially destructive ecclesial *praxis*. In the extreme, ahistorical theologies of salvation appear mythological. Even believers find them incredible, and young people often find them boring and irrelevant. More seriously, such accounts not only misrepresent what salvation involves, they actively thwart and oppose God’s salvific will by imprisoning the truth in injustice and covertly participating in the corresponding oppression of the children of God (Romans 1:18).

This way of framing the problem is characteristic of Ellacuría’s theological vision. These three considerations – notion, ethics, and praxis – correspond to the imperatives that orient humans in reality and account for the threefold structure of theological method: theology as *reflection on*, *embrace of*, and *active response* to the Reign of God revealed in and through history.¹³ A few words about this threefold method are in order.

Ellacuría maintains that the operation of human intelligence [*intelección*] entails more than the accumulation of facts or the interpretation of meaning. It involves facing reality and allowing oneself to be confronted by the burdens and demands of reality. In his view, theological method mirrors the encounter with historical reality. First, prior to conceptualizing what they know, humans grasp realities simply and primordially through the exercise of their “sentient intelligence” which functions in the first place on behalf of biological survival. The awareness of reality is not generated by mere sentience, nor does it occur through the meditation of a detached or “pure” reason. Rather, it follows from the activity of the human’s grounded, embodied intelligence and issues in an engaged and active knowing.

Second, the encounter with historical reality involves a fundamental openness to and embrace of reality in its manifold concrete manifestations. It entails an option to “pitch one’s tent” in the heart of the world’s pain, to embrace

¹³Ellacuría weaves these three considerations together in a passage remarkable for its compact wordplay and depth. The “act of confronting ourselves with real things in their reality” involves the noetic dimension of intelligence, “realizing the weight of reality” [*el hacerse cargo de la realidad*], the ethical dimension, “shouldering the weight of reality” [*el cargar con la realidad*], and the praxis-oriented dimension, “taking charge of the weight of reality” [*el encargarse de la realidad*]; see Ignacio Ellacuría, “Hacia una fundamentación filosófica del método teológico latinoamericano,” in E. Ruiz Maldonado, ed., *Liberación y cautiverio: debates en torno al método de la teología en América Latina*, las comunicaciones y los debates del Encuentro Latinoamericano de Teología, Mexico City (August 11-15, 1975), 626, hereafter cited as “Hacia una fundamentación;” see also Burke, *The Ground Beneath the Cross*, 99-149.

the wounded one as one's own neighbor (Luke 10:30-37); it includes an openness to historical reality precisely where that reality appears raw and repugnant; it requires a willingness to embrace reality especially where reality is characterized by poverty, suffering, and humiliation. As a dimension of theological method, the embrace of reality through a concrete option on behalf of reality's victims involves finding the most advantageous social-historical location from which to do theology.

Third, just as knowing includes opting for the most adequate place from which to know, the option only becomes actual as praxis. To know reality is to act on and change reality, to shape and reshape it. In just this way, theology is praxis. It achieves its end not in an abstract search for the truth about reality but in an active commitment to foster the full realization of reality. This claim echoes Marx's famous eleventh thesis on Feuerbach: "The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point, however, is to change it."¹⁴

Ellacuría emphasizes that the three levels of the encounter with reality do not unfold in a temporal sequence. They occur mutually and simultaneously. Hence, theology does not first conceptualize a faith content, then take up an ethical stance on the basis of that conceptualization and, as a final step, adopt a pastoral praxis in response to these first two. Nor does it invert this schema – as some superficial explanations of liberation theology would have it – and begin with praxis, move to an ethical stance, and from there conceptualize the faith. Rather, Ellacuría's method starts from the integral human encounter with historical reality. When confronting the problems of living in and among realities, the three dimensions of human intellection – intelligent apprehension, ethical embrace, and praxical response – operate in dynamic tension. Likewise, every act of theological reflection and production is simultaneously a noetic exercise, a deployment of one's fundamental ethical stance, and a historically real praxis.

¹⁴Karl Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," in R. Tucker, ed., *The Marx-Engels Reader*, 2nd ed. (New York: W.W. Norton, 1978), 145. It should be noted that Ellacuría did not consider himself a Marxist, and he did not focus his energies on reworking Marx. He engaged various Marxist and revisionist-Marxist thinkers, but his view of praxis is his own. It reflects his (and Zubiri's) conviction that reality has priority over meaning. "Precisely because of this priority of reality over meaning, no real change of meaning occurs without a real change of reality; to attempt the first without intending the second is to falsify the intelligence and its primary function, even in the purely cognitive order," "Hacia una fundamentación," (1975): 626. Further, Ellacuría imputes a precise, technical meaning to the phrase "the realization of reality," which corresponds to his conviction that reality is fundamentally open, that is, transcendent; see Ignacio Ellacuría, "El objeto de la filosofía" (1981), in *Filosofía de la realidad histórica* (San Salvador: UCA Editores, 1990), 33-35, 38-41; see also Michael E. Lee, "Transforming Realities: Christian Discipleship in the Soteriology of Ignacio Ellacuría." Ph.D. diss., University of Notre Dame, 2005.

Conceiving theological method in this contextually embedded, praxis-oriented way allows Ellacuría to align the universal character of theological assertions with the critical exigency generated by historical consciousness.

The concrete operation of Ellacuría's method appears most clearly in the critical-constructive process that he calls the *historicization* of concepts. "The prevailing tendency today of measuring the truth by the way it functions, rather than making it more difficult to recognize the theoretical validity of theology, reminds theology to elaborate anew the meaning of Christianity in terms of historical validity. With this there appears a principle of theological historicization which compels theology to refer to historical reality as the place of verification."¹⁵ Historicization does not primarily seek to articulate the history of a concept. In theology, for example, it aims first at uncovering the connections between theological affirmations and the historical realities that initially gave rise to them, whether these represent the original medium of a divine revelation or the elaboration of that revelation in scripture, liturgy, dogma, and so forth. Its critical function guards against idealized interpretations of the media of revelation and faith transmission and overly literal views of how those instruments transcribe God's presence. Constructively, it discovers the logic at work in the human experiences that gave rise to the faith tradition so as to foster new encounters with that faith as living and real.

It is important to note that the task of historicization is not that of historical research. In Lonerganian terms it appears much closer to the functional speciality of dialectics. Ellacuría deploys the process of historicization to analyze the way theological affirmations continue to operate in current historical situations. He is aware that every interpretation of divine reality has concrete implications in this world. As the conquest of the Americas dramatically illustrates, these implications can include theologically justified plunder, slavery, and the dismemberment of other religious traditions. As the present world economic order demonstrates, far too many Christians and Christian churches live comfortably ignorant of the realities of impoverishment, political disenfranchisement, and cultural marginalization that make their comfort possible. In its critical moment, historicization unmask these distortions and the damage they have caused. As a constructive operation, it helps the ecclesial community discern and respond to

¹⁵Ignacio Ellacuría, "Tesis sobre la posibilidad, necesidad y sentido de una teología latinoamericana," thesis no. 2.5, in A. Vargas Machuca, ed., *Teología y mundo contemporáneo: homenaje a Karl Rahner en su 70 cumpleaños* (Madrid: Ediciones Cristiandad, 1975), 326.

the signs of the times, the signs of God's Reign breaking into and leavening each moment of the present.

HISTORICAL SOTERIOLOGY: DISCERNING THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Theology helps the ecclesial community discern the signs of the times in the midst of the conflict-ridden dynamics of historical reality. Moreover, it does so precisely in relation to the praxis by which the faith community engages the larger sweep of historical praxis and in relation to the dynamics of grace that incarnate the Reign of God in history. Ellacuría writes:

If historical praxis is a divided praxis, if in this divided historical praxis the Reign of God and the reign of evil become present and operative, if the ecclesial praxis cannot be neutral with respect to this division and this operative presence, if the theological task receives its truth, its verification, from its incarnation in the true ecclesial praxis, in a truly Christian ecclesial praxis, then it must be asked, in what form of ecclesial praxis should its ideological moment of theological production incarnate itself? Appealing to the Reign of God is not quite enough. Rather, it is necessary to determine the place in which the truth of the Reign of God is most accessible.¹⁶

Those who are familiar with the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola might notice resonances here of his "Meditation on the Two Standards." If theology is the ideological moment of ecclesial praxis, then theology is a form of discernment. Moreover, from that perspective, the task of theology is to articulate the connection between historical reality and the Reign of God from a concrete historical place and in service of a concrete ecclesial praxis. The logic of this statement deserves closer examination. First, Ellacuría writes, "Theology should place itself at the service of ecclesial praxis whenever that praxis is Christian or in order that it be so."¹⁷ This identification of theology within the wider framework of ecclesial praxis elicits the awareness that the theological task constitutes a form of ministry. Second, ecclesial praxis shows up as a moment in the larger historical praxis to which it brings the Good News of the Reign of God. Thus, theology

¹⁶Ellacuría, "La teología como momento ideológico," 473.

¹⁷Ellacuría, "La teología como momento ideológico," 466.

serves the mission of the church, not the church as an end in itself. Put another way, theology serves the Reign of God to which the church itself is oriented.

Ellacuría argues that liberation theology's focus on the historical place of revelation and salvation does not reduce the gospel to an earthly gospel if indeed the church and theology remain focused on the Reign of God. He writes:

The theology of liberation understands itself as a reflection from faith on the historical reality and action of the people of God, who follow the work of Jesus in announcing and fulfilling God's Reign. It understands itself as an action by the people of God in following the work of Jesus and, as Jesus did, it tries to establish a living connection between the world of God and the human world.¹⁸

Thus, in relation to the church which it serves, theology remains authentically Christian insofar as the church orients itself according to the Reign of God. For its part, theology guides ecclesial praxis to its proper place within the whole of historical praxis by discerning where and how the church ought to incarnate itself. The term, *discerning*, should be underscored, along with the importance of verification, for the church must not align itself with any "Reign of God" except the one announced by Jesus. And conflict necessarily appears in the process of verification. Ellacuría writes:

A Reign of God which does not enter into conflict with a history configured by the power of sin is not the Reign of God of Jesus, however deeply spiritual it may appear, just as a Reign of God which does not enter into conflict with the malice and evil of personal existence is not the Reign of God of Jesus. We have, thus, a historically verifiable criterion, a verification much more certain and profound than that of a presumed and partial conformity with theoretical formulas. This is not simply a problem of orthodoxy and orthopraxis, because the praxis which is sought here is the *true* and complete realization of the Reign of God.¹⁹

Theological reflection must enter into a profound and sustained discernment regarding what in fact corresponds to the realization of the Reign of God. But theology does more than *reflect* on the Reign of God. As a response to grace, it *participates in* the historical realization of that Reign. This does not mean that theology should take responsibility for economic or political tasks, but it does

¹⁸Ignacio Ellacuría, "The Historicity of Christian Salvation," in I. Ellacuría and J. Sobrino, eds., *Mysterium Liberationis: Fundamental Concepts of Liberation Theology* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1994), 543.

¹⁹Ellacuría, "La teología como momento ideológico," 472, author's emphasis.

mean that it must read economic and political reality for signs of God's Reign and for signs of that which opposes God's Reign. Nor does this participation imply a denigration of the theoretical or academic elements in the theological task.²⁰ But it does mean that theology can only engage its proper tasks in dialogue with historical experience. Among other things, this also means that theology can and must utilize the social sciences to help it concretize, clarify, and deepen its grasp of the historical praxis within which it is embedded at any given moment.

THE SALVIFIC CHARACTER OF CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY

At the time he was assassinated, Ellacuría was finishing an article entitled "Utopia and Propheticism from Latin America: A Concrete Essay in Historical Soteriology."²¹ This dense and provocative title practically summarizes the intent and logic of his theological method. He calls this a *concrete* essay to indicate that it comes from and returns to a specific historical experience and place, Latin America. He calls it an essay in *historical soteriology*, but not in reference to a specific theological discipline (soteriology), much less the subdiscipline dealing with historical developments in our salvation-talk (historical soteriology); rather, he is highlighting a crucial aspect of all of theology. *Christian theology is historical soteriology*. This implies three things.

First, theology is not reflection on and response to God *in se* but God-for-us, that is, the God who saves in history. The point of God's self-communication in history is not to identify who is boss or to help us know how the universe ticks. The point is to save us. Second, the point of theology is not only to reflect on this saving self-communication but to respond to it, to participate in it, and to lead others to it. Viewed in this way, theology appears as a sacrament of salvation. To quote Jon Sobrino: "Theology becomes converted in its very task and not only in the contents which it offers, into soteriology. It becomes compassionate

²⁰Ellacuría judges that the "immediatism of the political activist which demands from every theological agent and undertaking an immediate reference to action, or which attains only a partial, superficial praxis, is the ruination of theological praxis and, in the final analysis, of theology's relative autonomy in the totality of historical praxis." "La teología como momento ideológico," 471.

²¹Ignacio Ellacuría, "Utopía y profetismo desde América Latina: Un ensayo concreto de soteriología histórica," *Mysterium Liberationis*, vol. 1 (San Salvador: UCA Editores, 1991), 393-442, trans. James Brockman as "Utopia and Prophecy in Latin America," *Mysterium Liberationis*, 289-328. In contrast to Brockman, I prefer to translate *profetismo* as "propheticism" rather than "prophecy."

reason.”²² Third, where reality itself is formed and deformed by human historical praxis, the elemental source of ultimate questions is the human need for salvation. Here we discern the transcendent depth of the biological imperative of survival that gives rise to human knowing. The Gospel of John gives radical expression to this. “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst” (John 6:35). Theology emerges out of the hunger for living bread – not ordinary bread but “every Word that comes forth from the mouth of God” (Matthew 4:4). Theological questions give voice to the thirst to “have life and have it more abundantly” (John 10:10).

To put this in a somewhat pointed way, Ellacuría does not trace theological knowing to a “pure desire to *know*” but to the thirst for *life* that underlies every concrete historical manifestation of the quest for salvation. Thus, as a fundamental faith praxis, Ellacuría insists that theology *historicize* salvation. It should seek to relate God’s offer of life-to-the-full to every concrete historical situation threatened by death. He writes: “A historical understanding of salvation cannot theorize abstractly on the essence of salvation. Not only is that abstract theorizing more historical than it appears, and as abstraction it can deny the real meaning of salvation, but it is also impossible to speak of salvation except in terms of concrete situations. Salvation is always the salvation *of someone*, and *of something* in that person.”²³ Precisely because of the concrete particularity of the human need for salvation, theology must read the signs of the times.

What is the significance of saying *that* we can read the signs of the times? It means that historical reality is penetrated by grace. It is not closed in on itself but it manifests what Zubiri and Ellacuría call its *theological* depth.²⁴ Ellacuría speaks in this regard of transcendence as something “that transcends *in* and not as something that transcends *away from*, as something that physically impels to *more* but not by taking *out of*; as something that pushes *forward*, but at the same time

²²Jon Sobrino, “La teología y el ‘principio liberación,’” *Revista Latinoamericana de Teología* 35 (May-August, 1995): 127.

²³Ellacuría, “The Historicity of Christian Salvation,” 544, author’s emphasis.

²⁴“The *theological* dimension of the created world, which should not be confused with the *theological* dimension, would reside in that presence of the Trinitarian life, which is intrinsic to all things, but which in human beings can be apprehended as reality and as the principle of personality. There is a strict experience of this theological dimension and through it there is a strict personal, social, and historical experience of God. This experience has different degrees and forms; but when it is a true experience of the real theological dimension of human beings, of society, of history, and in a different measure, of purely material things, it is an experience and physical probing of the triune life itself, however mediated, incarnated, and historicized,” Ellacuría, “Historicity of Christian Salvation,” 277.

retains."²⁵ He thus maintains a critical balance between the absolute "otherness" of the God who transcends history and the absolute "nearness" of the God who transcends in history. On the basis of the biblical witness, he argues that the transcendence of God does not simply involve distance and separation; it also involves nearness and the radical unity of God's history. This understanding of *transcendence-in-history* corresponds to an understanding of creation as "the molding *ad extra* of the Trinitarian life itself ... an act of communication and self-giving by the divine life itself."²⁶ In this view, everything by its very nature represents a limited way of being God. "It would not simply be that God is in all things, as essence, presence and potential, depending on the character of those things; it would be that all things, each in its own mode, have been molded according to the triune life and refer essentially to that life."²⁷

What does it mean to say that theology can and must respond to the signs of the times? It means that the category of history has real metaphysical weight and that historical reality is the locus of the self-communication of God. To put this another way, it means God's will and the Reign of God become present in history through the signs of the times. It means that theology has at its disposal the capacity to once again reflect passionately on the Gospel and to mediate that passion to the people that it serves. It means, finally, that theology can and must historicize the signs of the times. It must bear them in its flesh. This, too, Ignacio Ellacuría, reminds us in his ultimate concrete essay in historical soteriology, the shedding of his blood on behalf of the Reign of God.

²⁵Ellacuría, "Historicity of Christian Salvation," 254; author's and translator's emphasis.

²⁶Ellacuría, "Historicity of Christian Salvation," 276.

²⁷Ellacuría, "Historicity of Christian Salvation," 276, trans. emended.

THE MODELS OF AVERY DULLES AND SOME REFERENCES TO LONERGAN

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IN THE FIRST section of this paper I want to provide a brief assessment of Avery Dulles's achievements, principally with respect to his success in employing models for illuminating several key areas within Catholic theology. In the second section, given this setting of the annual Lonergan Workshop, I want to elaborate briefly upon some of the connectedness that exists between Avery Dulles and Bernard Lonergan. Finally, for those of you who might enjoy a presentiment of what is in store at the end of this paper, I am pleased to share that it will conclude with an intriguing anecdote involving Dulles and Lonergan that has never been publicly disseminated until now!

PART I. THE CHARACTER OF AVERY DULLES'S ACHIEVEMENTS

As a general statement it may be said that in all of his works Avery Dulles embraces Scripture with great reverence, manifests a profound appreciation for the Catholic Church's magisterium, and delights in appropriating the best insights of the Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox theologians who have preceded him. Avery Dulles is arguably the most influential living Catholic theologian in the English-speaking world. His brilliant distillation of insights and perspectives from these three sources is arguably what accounts for this standing.

In these days of Avery Cardinal Dulles's 50th anniversary of ordination as a Jesuit priest, and in this year of important 450th Jubilees within the Jesuit Order, it is appropriate to reflect upon the achievements that Avery Dulles has made in theology during these past fifty years. How might such reflections be structured?

The number of books, articles, and reviews published by Dulles render his work so extensive as to defy easy encapsulation. Further, within the present setting of the annual Lonergan Workshop at Boston College, is it possible to make reference to any connections between Dulles's work and Lonergan's? These are the two principal challenges that confronted me once I had received and accepted the invitation to present this paper.

In my effort to convey some sense of Dulles's contributions, I propose to concentrate attention upon his achievements in three of his works. In these works, he uses this construct of "models" as a vehicle for his overall presentations. *Models of the Church*, the first book in which he utilized the construct of models was published first in 1974, and then in an expanded edition in 1987.¹ His book, *Models of Revelation*, was first published in 1983 and then reprinted with a new introduction in 1992.² *The Assurance of Things Hoped For*, published in 1994, is the book-length work in which Dulles employs the construct of models for analyzing faith.³ An article, "Models of Faith," presented two years earlier in a Festschrift for Max Seckler, anticipated the later and much more comprehensive presentation made in the book.⁴

Before identifying the models that Dulles has delineated in each of these three works, I believe that it is important to focus attention upon the topic area of each book. What are three fields of theology addressed in these books? For emphasis, let me pause after each field as I name it: revelation... faith... church.

Without having confirmed this tentative insight with Avery Dulles himself, I am nevertheless now going to conjecture about the impact of his unfolding journey of conversion in his orientation to these three major areas of theology. Within a Lonerganian framework, it is possible to view Avery Dulles as gravitating to the three theological areas of revelation, faith, and church as a consequence of his own experience of conversion to Catholicism and as a result of his desire to understand more fully his experience of the revelation of Christ Jesus and the concomitant call to Catholic faith.

¹Avery Dulles, *Models of the Church*, expanded ed. (New York: Doubleday, 2002).

²Avery Dulles, *Models of Revelation* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1992).

³Avery Dulles, *The Assurance of Things Hoped For: A Theology of Christian Faith* (New York: Oxford, 1997).

⁴Avery Dulles, "Models of Faith," in *Fides quaerens intellectum. Beiträge zur Fundamentaltheologie*, ed. Michael Kessler and others (Tübingen: Francke Verlag, 1992), 405-13.

In effect, the phenomenon of Avery Dulles's conversion to active Christian faith and to membership in the Catholic Church gave rise to questions about the nature of revelation and the nature of faith. His conversion to Catholicism especially gave rise to questions about the identity and mission of the church to which he now belonged. These are questions that Dulles has pursued carefully and fruitfully for more than five decades.

A second consideration that may also be relevant to Dulles's initiatives with reference to ecclesiology, revelation, and faith is the fact that these three areas were established tracts during the time of Dulles's own theological studies. Then, upon the completion of his doctorate, Fr. Dulles's teaching responsibilities first at Woodstock, and then at Catholic University, required him to gain a certain degree of competence with respect to the presentation of courses in these three fields.

These background considerations may partially explain Fr. Dulles's interest in these three fields and the competence that he soon began to manifest in the courses that he taught. They do not explain his innovation in employing the construct of models as a means of analyzing these three fields. In his introduction to *Models of the Church*, Dulles credits H. Richard Niebuhr's classic work, *Christ and Culture*, for pointing him in the direction of models.⁵ Other thinkers whose insights about models exercised an influence upon him were Max Black, I. T. Ramsey, and Thomas Kuhn.⁶

To provide a list of Dulles's models without endeavoring to supply a concise description of each model is certainly not an optimal procedure. It must be recalled, especially as regards *Models of the Church* and *Models of Revelation*, that Dulles accords a substantive chapter to each model. Nevertheless, within the parameters of this paper, I must remain content with a simple naming of each model. I begin with a listing of the five models Dulles has constructed for the field of Revelation. They are the following:

1. revelation as doctrine
2. revelation as history
3. revelation as inner experience
4. revelation as dialectical presence
5. revelation as new awareness

⁵Dulles, *Models of the Church*, 11.

⁶Dulles, *Models of the Church*, 28-29. For an explanation of how his concerns about theological method influenced him to adopt the approach of models, see Avery Dulles, "The Problem of Method: From Scholasticism to Models," in *The Craft of Theology: From Symbol to System*, expanded ed. (New York: Crossroad, 1995), 41-52.

In a similar fashion I now identify the seven models of faith that Dulles sets forth in *The Assurance of Things Hoped For*. In order, they are the following:

1. the propositional model
2. the transcendental model
3. the fiducial model
4. the affective-experiential model
5. the obediential model
6. the praxis model
7. the personalist model

The achievement represented by Avery Dulles's five models of revelation and seven models of faith is twofold. First these models serve to communicate in a straightforward fashion that a rich variety of meanings can be present under the headings of "revelation" and "faith." Second, as the reader then begins to delve into each model that Dulles proposes, there is a substantive encounter with insights from Scripture, from magisterial teaching, and from the writings of theologians who have been prominent within the tradition.

Here I return to a point that I emphasized at the outset: that Dulles's principal achievement is the clarity and the comprehensiveness with which he mines the insights that are to be found in texts arising from Scripture, church teaching, and the writings of theologians. With his use of models, it is not so much the case that Dulles is breaking new ground as it is that he is bringing forward the best of the tradition and doing so with commendable clarity.

Let me move now to a treatment of *Models of the Church*. This is Professor Dulles's best-known book, and it has been translated into Spanish, Portuguese, Indonesian, Hungarian, and Italian. When first published, this book distinguished five models. Thirteen years later its expanded edition delineated a sixth model. These six models are the following:

1. the church as institution
2. the church as mystical communion
3. the church as sacrament
4. the church as herald
5. the church as servant
6. the church as community of disciples

The church is indeed a mystery. Cardinal Dulles maintains that, as a consequence of being a mystery, the church transcends all creaturely analogies and models. Still Dulles's naming of these six models and his cogent exposition of each of them is something that has proved immensely helpful to Catholics in all locations within the life of the Catholic Church as well as to other Christians. In effect, what Dulles has done is to provide numerous valuable insights that contribute to the understanding of the mystery that is the church.

Just as his schematizing of the models of revelation and the models of faith represented the fruits of Dulles's own efforts to understand the realities he encountered in his conversion, so also does his delineating of the models of the church represent the fruits of his efforts to understand the meaning of the church to which he had made such a profound personal commitment. *Models of the Church* does not provide a systematic theology of the church. Nevertheless, the book does establish a viable platform for any future attempt to fashion such a systematic theology.⁷ Impressive as they are, these six models, in Dulles's own estimation, constitute more a point for departure than a point of arrival.⁸

As I have noted above, Dulles reveres sacred Scripture, magisterial teaching, and the writings of other theologians. Each of his models is thus richly fashioned from these three sources. As he himself emphasizes, Avery Dulles has not been a vanguard figure in proposing new insights into the mystery of the church.⁹ Nevertheless he has been a vanguard figure in providing a clear understanding of the best insights that have heretofore emerged in the tradition.

Each of the models assembles and integrates biblical, magisterial, and theological sources in such a comprehensive way as to contribute to the research of trained theologians. Each of the models assembles and integrates biblical, magisterial, and theological sources in such a clear way as to provide important nourishment for those charged with pastoral ministry in the church.

⁷Two important studies treating Cardinal Dulles's contribution to ecclesiology are Anne-Marie Kirmse, O.P., "The Church and the Churches: A Study of Ecclesiastical and Ecumenical Developments in the Writings of Avery Dulles, SJ" (Ph.D. diss., Fordham University, 1989), and Robert R. Spezia, *The Ecclesiology of Avery Dulles: A Hermeneutical Key* (Rome: St. Thomas Aquinas University Press, 2003).

⁸Cardinal Dulles used this phrasing in e-mail correspondence with the author on June 20, 2006.

⁹At the May 25, 2006 dinner following the Mass celebrating his 50th anniversary of ordination, Avery Dulles offered this humble comment in assessing his own distinctive role as an articulator and elaborator of Catholic theology. This dinner took place at Fordham University, the site of Dulles's ordination in 1956.

PART II. AVERY DULLES, S.J., AND BERNARD LONERGAN, S.J.

In the preceding section of this paper, I have striven to communicate some sense of the achievements in theology that Avery Dulles has made. In the present section, I propose a brief overview of some ways in which Avery Dulles has referenced Bernard Lonergan's work.

My analysis in this section will principally focus upon the reference that Dulles makes to Lonergan in his three books dealing with models. Nevertheless, I want to begin with a question for which I do not know the answer: in what ways has Dulles engaged with Lonergan's major contributions in his Latin works on Christology and on the Trinity? During Dulles's years in Rome, Lonergan was presenting the material published in these texts. Nevertheless, I do not know whether Dulles has ever drawn upon Lonergan's Christological and Trinitarian contributions in any of his "non-model" books or articles.

In *Theological Studies*, in 1972, Dulles published a review of *Method in Theology*.¹⁰ From this review, and from a reference in *The Assurance of Things Hoped For* that I now wish to cite, it seems evident that Dulles was conversant with, and engaged with, Lonergan's two classics. In addition to establishing Dulles's familiarity with *Insight* and with *Method in Theology*, the following excerpt from *The Assurance of Things Hoped For* also provides a window for understanding the way in which Dulles cites the works of such theologians as Lonergan, Rahner, Congar, and de Lubac.

In relation to the transcendental model of faith Dulles refers to Rahner and Lonergan as two prominent exponents of transcendental theology. Dulles then proceeds to identify and distinguish Lonergan's approaches to faith in *Insight* and *Method*. (Please note that because of the parameters of this paper I am now going to cite only one of the *seven* paragraphs in which Dulles discusses Lonergan's treatment of faith in *Method in Theology*. My purpose is to indicate that Dulles draws a distinction between Lonergan's approach to faith in *Insight* and Lonergan's approach to faith in *Method in Theology*.) The kernel of Dulles's analysis is represented in the two paragraphs that follow:¹¹

¹⁰Avery Dulles, "Review of Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology*," *Theological Studies* 33 (1972): 553-55.

¹¹Dulles, *The Assurance of Things Hoped For*, 154.

(In *Insight*) Lonergan defends the reasonableness of faith on the ground that human beings must depend on the divine wisdom to escape errors and to solve problems that would otherwise be unsurmountable. Faith purifies the mind and gives answers that are “principally the work of God who illuminates our intellects to understand what we had not understood and to grasp as unconditioned what we had reputed error” (30). Faith in this perspective is heuristic: it is ordered to understanding according to the ancient precept, *crede ut intelligas*. Quite different from this Scholastic treatment is the approach to faith in Lonergan’s second major work, *Method in Theology*, where he makes a sharp distinction between faith and belief. Faith, he writes, “is the knowledge born of religious love” (115). It is “the eye of religious love, an eye that can discern God’s self-disclosures” (119).

In *Models of Revelation*, Dulles does not locate Lonergan in reference to any of the five models the he is constructing. However, in a section of the book in which he is introducing comparisons among the five models and setting forth considerations for a systematic theology of revelation that might bring forward the best features of each model, Dulles reflects that *Method in Theology’s* treatment of “dialectics” might well open the way for a sublation of the positive values of each model of revelation:¹²

What seems to be required at this point is the kind of process described by Bernard Lonergan under the heading of “dialectic.” In its initial phase, corresponding approximately to the content of this chapter, dialectic seeks to identify the fundamental conflicts between diverse interpretations, past and present. Then, by reference to certain critical standards (such as Lonergan’s own preferred standard of conversion to the transcendent), the dialectician seeks to bring to light the positive values (which Lonergan calls “positions”) and the disvalues (which he calls “counterpositions”) in the mutually opposed theories. Dialectic thus points the way to a new proposal that can “sublate” the previous theories.

In *Models of the Church*, Dulles’s principal reference to Lonergan occurs in his chapter entitled, “The Church and the Churches.” Citing *Method in Theology*, Dulles utilizes a crucial distinction of Lonergan’s in the following way:¹³

From a Roman Catholic perspective, Bernard Lonergan argues cogently that the Church is a constitutive and effective, as well as a cognitive,

¹²Dulles, *Models of Revelation*, 127.

¹³Dulles, *Models of the Church*, 156.

community. "It is constitutive inasmuch as it crystallizes the hidden inner gift of love into overt Christian fellowship. It is effective inasmuch as it directs Christian service to human society to bring about the kingdom of God." The division between churches, he observes, rests mainly on cognitive, rather than constitutive and effective, factors. Ecumenically, therefore, it is of crucial importance for Christians to act together "in fulfilling the redemptive and constructive roles of the Christian church in human society."

In addition to noting this reference in *Models of the Church*, I want also to draw attention to an implicit reference that Dulles makes to Lonergan in another of his works on ecclesiology, *A Church to Believe In*, published in 1982. Here Dulles employs Lonergan's distinction between understanding and judgment.¹⁴ In his chapter entitled, "The Two Magisteria: An Interim Reflection," Dulles explains the distinctive specialty of the theological magisterium as being that of "understanding." In contrast, the distinctive specialty of the ecclesiastical magisterium is that of "judgment." Here again is an example of Dulles striving to appreciate one of the facets of the church in which he himself believes so momentarily. In this instance, he employs Lonergan's categories to treat the character of the church's illuminative and authoritative teaching.

As I now move toward the conclusion of this paper, I take this opportunity to re-emphasize the important role that questions arising from his own experience have played in the work of Avery Dulles. Revelation, faith, church: these are critical fields of theology for anyone who has been graced to make a formal Catholic Christian profession. What is the nature of the revelation that God has entrusted through Jesus Christ? What does it mean to have faith? What mission has God providentially entrusted to the Catholic Church? All of us are the beneficiaries of the careful, prayerful theology that Avery Dulles has brought forward in each of these areas. In these days of the Jesuit Jubilees, and of his own fiftieth anniversary of ordination as a Jesuit priest, it is indeed a privilege for me to join with you in celebrating the many achievements of Cardinal Avery Dulles, S.J.

Permit me to close with an anecdote that may be of some interest to those of us who, from time to time, indulge in speculation about how things might have

¹⁴Avery Dulles, *A Church to Believe In: Discipleship and the Dynamics of Freedom* (New York: Crossroad, 1982), 125.

taken a different course.¹⁵ In the autumn of 1958, just after the death of Pius XII, young Avery Dulles arrived in Rome with a mandate to gain his doctorate in theology. One of the potential dissertation topics that he had formulated was “The Concept of *Lumen* in the Augustinian and Thomistic Tradition.” In light of the contents of two of the papers that have already been presented at this Workshop, please permit me to repeat this topic for emphasis: “The Concept of *Lumen* in the Augustinian and Thomistic Tradition.” With a view to securing him as the director for this dissertation, young Dulles approached one of the Gregorian’s most recognized professors: ... Bernard Lonergan!

In the end, because of the time that Professor Lonergan took in trying to reach his decision, Avery was led to work with another professor at the Gregorian, Johannes Witte, S.J., and to undertake a dissertation investigating the Catholic Church’s prophetic office. We are only left with interesting, but ultimately fruitless, conjecture as to how Avery Dulles’s journey might have unfolded if Bernard Lonergan had immediately accepted the dissertation proposal that Dulles brought to him. Perhaps this will be a minor speculation for some of us to take with us for clarification in the Communion of Heaven – if any such theological concerns are present when all theology is given over to Praise.

¹⁵Cardinal Dulles related this anecdote some years ago and confirmed these details, particularly the title of his dissertation proposal, in conversations with me during May and June of 2006.

FRANCIS XAVIER, LONERGAN,
AND THE PROBLEM
OF MISSIONS TODAY

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There were the needs of the people, and the Jesuits worked in hospitals, taught catechism, preached, and dispensed the sacraments. There were the voyages of exploration and the beginnings of colonization, and the Jesuits were in India, Malaya, Indonesia, Japan, China, and North and South America....¹

THE MISSIONARY METHODS OF FRANCIS XAVIER

FRANCIS XAVIER DIED in 1553 on the lonely island of Sancian, off the coast of China, after ten years of intense missionary work in the East. His body was buried in the sand, with plenty of lime to aid decomposition. A few months later when the grave was opened, it was found to be “perfectly fresh and incorrupt,” to the great surprise of all.² The body was carried to Malacca, and then onwards to Goa. In 1614, by order of Claudius Acquaviva, General of the Society of Jesus, the right arm was severed at the elbow and found its way to the church of the Gesù in Rome. That arm was the first thing that I went to see in Rome. Strangely, some months ago, Fred Lawrence and Sue, having decided to invite me to give this lecture on Francis Xavier and the problem of missions today, were reminded by Columban missionary Fr. Patrick McInerney that that same arm in the Gesù had a sign on it that said, “baptized miliardi di infedeli.”

¹Bernard Lonergan, “The Response of the Jesuit as Priest and Apostle in the Modern World,” in *A Second Collection*, ed. W. F. J. Ryan and B. J. Tyrrell (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1974), 182.

²*The Letters and Instructions of Francis Xavier*, trans. M. J. Costelloe (Anand: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, 1993), xxiii.

Now I am probably not one of the “miliardi” baptized by Francis Xavier. It is far more likely that I am a descendant of one of the infidels baptized by the Franciscans who arrived in Goa a full forty-two years before Francis. Most of Francis’s baptisms were administered not in Goa but on the Fishery Coast of South India, in various parts of Indonesia, and in Japan, and the numbers are in the area of tens of thousands rather than the “miliardi” proclaimed by the legend under the arm in the church of the Gesù.

All this, however, hardly distracts from the fact that Francis was one of the greatest of modern missionaries. He was endowed with prodigious energy. His movements were nothing short of amazing: in the short space of ten years (1542-52), he visited the Fishery Coast of India at least four times, made a long voyage to Malacca, Amboina, Ternate, and the Moro islands in modern Indonesia, and a journey to Japan, before finally dying off the coast of China; it was said that he never stayed for more than four weeks in a single place. The motivating factor behind his heroic activity was a tremendous love for Christ, coupled with the conviction that souls would be eternally damned without explicit faith in Christ and baptism. His method was to strengthen fledgling Christian communities as well as create new ones by administering baptism to whole villages after a most rudimentary instruction not lasting more than a few hours. He had the official backing of the colonial powers, and he did not hesitate to appeal for help from them when he needed it. He shared with his contemporaries a background and an upbringing that was decidedly classicist, though he did realize that the gospel had to be preached differently to the poor fisher folk of the South Indian coasts and to the more sophisticated Japanese. It has been said that his theological background was somewhat poor, even as compared to the level of his own times.³ On the need of learning, at least in India, he was explicit: “In these pagan lands there is no need for learning beyond what is required for the teaching of prayers, the visiting of villages, and the baptism of newborn infants.”⁴

Some elements in the missionary method of Francis Xavier were challenged already in his own short lifetime and by his own Jesuit confreres. On the topic of baptisms, for example, Antonio Criminali writes to Ignatius that the immediate

³L. M. Bermejo, *Unto the Indies: Life of St Francis Xavier* (Anand: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, 2000), 27, 105. The level of the times here refers to Aquinas’s teaching on the baptism of desire. But Francis was probably not that simple, as may be seen from the following which Bermejo himself quotes: “Few, whether whites or blacks, go to paradise from India, apart from those who die in their state of innocence, such as those who die when they are 14 years of age or less” (Bermejo, 104).

⁴Francis Xavier to Ignatius: compare with Bermejo, 107.

baptisms in Goa were a burden on his conscience, because reason demands that people should wait for at least forty days; Nicolo Lancilotto writes in more or less the same vein. Five years later, from Quilon in the South of India, Lancilotto complains that the new Christians return easily to their former idolatry and evil habits; he feels that it would be a lesser evil not to baptize them at all. As for himself, he never baptizes anyone unless he has instructed them for three to four months.⁵ Ignatius himself seems to have agreed with Lancilotto rather than with Francis.⁶ Lancilotto also rejects Francis's practice of using interpreters and maintains that missionaries should try to learn the vernacular.⁷ As for the need for learning, Lancilotto launches a veiled attack on Francis: "Those who say that the men of the Society who come here need not be learned, don't know what they are talking about".⁸

Jesuits with extraordinary learning and intelligence did arrive in India. Already in 1616, Thomas Stephens (1549-1619; arr. Goa 1579), who has the distinction of being probably the first Englishman in India, had mastered the local languages of Goa and the Vaisnava Hindu religious literature to such an extent that he was able to compose a *Khrista Purana*, a life of Jesus in verse along the lines of the *Bhagavata Purana* and the *Visnu Purana*.

In 1605 Roberto de Nobili (1577-1656) landed in Goa, where he probably met Thomas Stephens and learned about his pioneering efforts. He himself decided to leave the coasts so favored by the Portuguese and penetrate to the interior of Southern India, where he realized that he had to abandon Portuguese and European ways if he were to obtain a hearing from the Hindus and their pandits. He worked out a distinction between religion and culture, maintained that an Indian could become Christian without ceasing to be Indian by culture, turned himself into a Christian *sannyasin*, and went on to master Sanskrit, Tamil, and Telugu to such an extent that he was able to hold disputations with the Brahmins and compose at least fifty-four works in those three languages. We must note, however, that the distinction between religion and culture had been lived out, if not theologically formulated, for many centuries prior to de Nobili by the Thomas

⁵Bermejo, *Unto the Indies*, 102-103.

⁶Bermejo, *Unto the Indies*, 104. "Regarding the custom of refusing baptism unless the necessary catechetical instruction has preceded, it seems to be very reasonable."

⁷Bermejo, *Unto the Indies*, 102-105, 107.

⁸Bermejo, *Unto the Indies*, 107.

Christians of Kerala who, in the words of Placid Podipara, were “Hindu in culture, Christian in religion, Oriental in worship.”⁹

In 1651-1711 we have José Vaz, a Goan priest, who is regarded as the refounder of the Catholic Church in Sri Lanka. Like de Nobili, Vaz took pains to learn the local languages; Jacome Gonçalvez, one of his successors, became so proficient in Sinhala and Tamil that he is considered one of the fathers of the Sinhala language. If de Nobili had decided to work without the backing of colonial powers, Vaz had to work against such powers. Where de Nobili had chosen to adopt the lifestyle of a Hindu holy man, Vaz entered Sri Lanka and worked there for years dressed as a coolie, to avoid detection by the Dutch Calvinist authorities.

The de Nobili experiment, known to history as the “Malabar Rites,” collapsed some years after his death with the decree of Cardinal Tournon in 1704 and its confirmation by Rome in 1734. A fresh movement toward inculturation began only in the late nineteenth century with Brahmobandhav Upadhyaya (1861-1907), a Hindu Brahmin convert to Roman Catholicism. Brahmobandhav drew a distinction between *samaj dharma* and *sadhana dharma*, unknowingly reviving de Nobili’s distinction between culture and religion. He founded a Christian ashram, which was quickly put down by the ecclesiastical authorities, but the idea was revived when Jules Monchanin (Parama Arubi Anandam) and Henri Le Saux (Abhishiktananda) founded the Saccidananda Ashram at Kulitalai near Tiruchirapalli in 1950. The ashram movement, together with the movement for liberation and justice, is today one of the significant trends within the Indian Church. With Abhishiktananda and Bede Griffiths who succeeded him as the *acarya* of the ashram, however, we are already straddling the period marked by Vatican II.

THE MODERN MISSIOLOGICAL FERMENT

My topic is the problem of missions today, and my reading quickly made me aware that there is a huge variety of ways in which people use and understand the word “mission” and “missions” today.

⁹John C. England and others, eds., *Asian Christian Theologies: A Research Guide to Authors, Movements, Sources*, vol. 1 (Maryknoll, N.Y.: ISPCCK / Claretian Publishers / Orbis, 2002), 195.

Let me begin with the interesting fact that the use of the word mission in the modern sense began with Ignatius of Loyola and the Society of Jesus in the 1540s, meaning mostly “the expeditions and voyages which in all towns are attempted for the sake of the divine word.”¹⁰ The reality of mission has, of course, existed since the beginnings of Christianity and has been rendered by phrases such as the propagation of the faith, conversion of the heathen, religious instruction of the ignorant, apostolic proclamation, proclamation of the Gospel, planting of the church, and expansion of the Kingdom of Christ.¹¹

“Evangelization,” instead, is a word of Protestant origin. The revival movement of the nineteenth century understood evangelization as an attempt to convert the Catholics of southern Europe to the Protestant faith. Eventually, according to Müller, it became synonymous with mission.¹² In 1952 Karl W. Hartenstein coined the term *missio Dei* in order to find a basis for Protestant missionary activity in the activity of the Triune God himself; this was later adopted by World Missionary Conference of Willingen.¹³ By the 1960s, a distinction between “mission in the singular” and “missions in plural” became accepted in Protestant circles.¹⁴

In Catholic circles, there were the two competing schools of Louvain and Münster. While the Münster school stressed conversion as the goal of missionary activity, the Louvain school made a shift away from individual salvation to “planting the Church”: the goal was to convert sufficient numbers of people to form an indigenous church. Vatican II fathers tried to reconcile these schools by means of the famous compromise formula: the purpose of mission is preaching the gospel and planting the church among peoples or groups who do not yet believe in Christ; preaching is the chief means of this implantation.¹⁵

Thus mission is the term generally used for those “special undertakings in which preachers of the Gospel, sent by the church, and going into the whole

¹⁰F. Hrangkhuma, “Missiological Methodologies,” in *Missiological Approaches in India: Retrospect and Prospect*, ed. J. Mattam and K. C. Marak (Mumbai: St Paul’s, 1999), 268.

¹¹Karl Müller, “Missiology: An Introduction,” in *Following Christ in Mission: A Foundational Course in Missiology*, ed. S. Karotemprel (Mumbai: Pauline Publications, 1995), 24-25.

¹²Müller, “Missiology,” 29.

¹³Hrangkhuma, “Missiological Methodologies,” 269.

¹⁴Hrangkhuma, “Missiological Methodologies,” 269.

¹⁵Vatican Council II, *Ad Gentes* 6; compare with Julian Saldanha “Development of Missiology,” in *Mission and Conversion: A Reappraisal*, ed. J. Mattam and S. Kim (Mumbai: St Paul’s, 1996), 19; Müller, “Missiology,” 34-35.

world, carry out the work of preaching the Gospel and implanting the Church among people who do not yet believe in the Christ.”¹⁶ At the same time, like the Protestants, the council also went beyond missionary activity to its deep roots in the Trinitarian God. “At the core of the missionary nature of the Church, at the roots of her very existence, there is God who has revealed and given himself to humanity as Father, Son and Holy Spirit...” “The pilgrim church is missionary by her very nature. For it is from the mission of the Son and the mission of the Holy Spirit that she takes her origin, in accordance with the decree of God the Father.”¹⁷ Indeed, love is the source and foundation of the mission of the church: the plan of God springs from a fountain of love, the love of God the Father.¹⁸

We may note that the Trinitarian foundation of the missionary nature of the church refers not only to the divine missions *ad extra* but also and above all to the Trinity as communion of persons. This Trinity constitutes the source and cause of the church’s mission. Before Vatican II this connection was not always considered sufficiently relevant. The theological basis was, as a rule, the missionary mandate of Jesus (Matthew 28:19-20).¹⁹ But the Trinitarian foundation of the missionary nature of the church has to be understood not only in its starting point but also in its goal.²⁰ *Redemptoris Missio* states very clearly that “the ultimate purpose of mission is to enable people to share in the communion which exists between the Father and the Son.”²¹

The deliberations of Vatican II as well as other factors opened up a missionary debate and a great variety of interpretations. Missionary activity had gone hand in hand with colonialism; the rejection of the latter in the years before and after the council meant disrepute for the former too. The misery of the Third World moved the richer nations to get involved in development. Almost inevitably the supernatural aspects of missionary work were overlooked or even denied outright.²² The reinterpretation of “*extra ecclesiam nulla salus*” in *Lumen Gentium*, n. 16 led to a new theology of religions and a consequent confusion among missionaries and weakening of missionary motivation. For if all religions

¹⁶*Ad Gentes* 6, as cited in Müller, 22.

¹⁷*Ad Gentes* 2, as cited in Adam Wolanin “Trinitarian Foundation of Mission,” in *Following Christ in Mission: A Foundational Course in Missiology*, ed. S. Karotemprel (Mumbai: Pauline Publications, 1995), 37.

¹⁸*Ad Gentes* 2, as cited in Wolanin, 38.

¹⁹Wolanin, “Trinitarian Foundation,” 38.

²⁰Wolanin, “Trinitarian Foundation,” 44.

²¹John Paul II, *Redemptoris Missio*, 23.

²²Compare with Müller, “Missiology,” 25-26.

are a means to salvation, why not leave them alone and restrict mission to social work and the fight against injustice?²³

Some interpreted the council as sanctioning a shift from “missions” to “the mission.” The whole church, rather than just a few individuals, is missionary, and so the whole church should communicate the gospel to every person and to the whole person. Mission, we are told “means serving, healing and reconciling a wounded, divided humanity”; in India, for example, it has taken the form of several praxis-theologies: dialogue theology of mission, development theology of mission, inculturation theology of mission, and so forth.²⁴ This is good as far as it goes, but it has had the effect of downplaying or else completely neglecting missionary activity in the sense of proclamation of the gospel to those who do not yet believe in Christ. It has, in fact, amounted to what one observer has called “a complete volte-face with regard to evangelism” in the post-Vatican, postcolonial era.²⁵

Similar developments were taking place in Protestant circles. In 1986, for example, Stephen C. Neill declared: “The age of missions ended. The age of mission began.”²⁶ The singular *missio Dei* was considered to be of primary importance, and the plural *missiones ecclesiae* of secondary importance, in the sense that missionary activities are considered authentic only insofar as they participate in the mission of God.

In 1975, about ten years after Vatican II, Pope Paul VI issued *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, which is considered by many a turning point in Catholic mission debate. The documents of Vatican II had already begun using the term “evangelization” (in AA and AG), but it was *Evangelii Nuntiandi* that really adopted it, describing it as “a complex, rich and dynamic reality” which includes everything coming under the heading *missio Ecclesiae*.²⁷ It went on to define evangelization “as a complex process involving many elements as, for example, a renewal of human nature, witness, public proclamation, wholehearted acceptance of, and entrance into, the community of the church, the adoption of outward signs

²³Compare with John B. Chethimattam “Post-Modern, Post-Scientific Evangelization: The Future of the Christian Mission,” in *A Missiology for Third Millennium: A Contextualized Mission Theology*, ed. Thomas Aykara (Bangalore: Dharmaram, 1997), 92.

²⁴Louis Malieckal “Realizing an Indian Theology of Mission,” in *A Missiology for Third Millennium: A Contextualized Mission Theology*, ed. Thomas Aykara (Bangalore: Dharmaram, 1997), 129-31.

²⁵Chethimattam, “Post-Modern, Post-Scientific Evangelization,” 92.

²⁶Hrangkhuma, “Missiological Methodologies,” 269.

²⁷Müller, “Missiology,” 29, compare with Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 17.

and of apostolic works.”²⁸ These elements, says *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, “may appear to be inconsistent and even mutually exclusive, but in fact they are complementary and perfect each other. Accordingly it is essential to consider each element in relation to the others. The recent synod of bishops made a valuable contribution to the problem in urging everyone to consider these elements, not in contrast to each other but rather as interrelated, in order to arrive at a complete understanding of the work of evangelization on [sic] which the Church is engaged.”²⁹

Paul VI went on to clearly distinguish between evangelization and missionary activity: the former is the more general concept (in the sense of *missio Ecclesiae*); the latter is specifically *activitas missionalis*.³⁰

Evangelii Nuntiandi is a summary of a holistic mission theology, one that is neither purely spiritual nor purely horizontal; it represents an attempt to incorporate the developments of the postconciliar years. Redemption and creation both come from God; Jesus is both divine and human; the spiritual, intellectual, and material are all necessary for the full development of the human being. The cry for liberation cannot be ignored.³¹

We note, however, that this holistic mission theology, while admitting the possibility of the grace of salvation to those who do not know Christ, at the same time insists on the universal mediation of salvation by Christ and the necessity of the mission *ad gentes*. “The redemption offered by God in the general history of salvation is in view of the redemption in Jesus Christ; they are essentially related. The general is in view of the particular and also by virtue of it.”³² “The universal salvific will of God can in no way render its concretization in Jesus Christ optional or only complementary.”³³

Evangelii Nuntiandi's adoption of the word evangelization, its rich description, and the attempt to distinguish it from specific missionary activity, did not succeed in stemming the crisis in mission. Because the word mission had fallen into disrepute, the new term evangelization was eagerly taken up. It was, however, used in place of mission in the specific sense – to the detriment of the

²⁸*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 24.

²⁹*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 24.

³⁰Müller, “Missiology,” 22.

³¹Müller, “Missiology,” 31.

³²Sebastian Karotemprel, “General Introduction,” in *Following Christ in Mission: A Foundational Course in Missiology*, ed. Sebastian Karotemprel (Mumbai: Pauline Publications, 1995), 61.

³³Karotemprel, “General Introduction,” 61.

cause of the latter. It was in this context that John Paul II offered his *Redemptoris Missio* (1990) as an authoritative word.

Redemptoris Missio poses the questions sharply: “*Is missionary work among non-Christians still relevant? Has it not been replaced by interreligious dialogue? Is not human development an adequate goal of the church’s mission? Does not respect for conscience and for freedom exclude all efforts at conversion? Is it not possible to attain salvation in any religion? Why then should there be missionary activity?*”³⁴

The answers are an uncompromising affirmation of missionary activity. “To the question, ‘*why mission?*’ we reply with the church’s faith and experience that true liberation consists of opening oneself to the love of Christ.” The love of Christ impels us (2 Corinthians 5:14). “Mission is an issue of faith, an accurate indicator of our faith in Christ and his love for us.”³⁵ “*Why mission? Because to us, as to Saint Paul, ‘this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ’ (Ephesians 3:8).*”³⁶

None of this is new. Perhaps the most significant contribution of *Redemptoris Missio* lies in its attempt to establish the terms of the debate by distinguishing between three fields of evangelizing activity and coining a new term for missionary activity. Thus

1. *Mission ad gentes* is first proclamation to peoples who do not know Christ and the gospel, in among whom there is a lack of Christian communities sufficiently mature to be able to incarnate the faith in their own environment and to proclaim it to other groups.
2. *Ordinary pastoral ministry* is to Christian communities possessing adequate ecclesial structures, fervent in their faith and Christian living, bearing witness to the gospel in their surroundings, and having a sense of commitment to the universal mission.
3. *New evangelization or reevangelization* is for countries with ancient Christian traditions, and occasionally in younger churches, where entire groups of the baptized have lost a living sense of the faith, or may even no longer consider themselves members of the church.³⁷

³⁴*Redemptoris Missio*, 4.

³⁵*Redemptoris Missio*, 11.

³⁶*Redemptoris Missio*, 11.

³⁷*Redemptoris Missio*, 33; Müller, “Missiology,” 23. William R. Burrows has proposed the term *missio inter gentes* (mission among the nations) as more respectful of both the fact that mission in Asia is already primarily in the hands of Asians, and of the method of evangelization as collaborative and dialogical. Compare with Jonathan Y. Tan, “From ‘*Missio ad gentes*’ to ‘*Missio inter Gentes*’. II,” *Vidyajyoti: Journal of Theological Reflection* 69 (2005): 27.

Official teaching authorities have therefore taken clear positions. But we could still ask certain questions: why proclaim the gospel at all? How is such proclamation related to interreligious dialogue and human development? What is the role of the religions in the economy of salvation? What is the place of Christianity vis-à-vis the other religions? Since we are in the midst of a Lonergan Workshop, I might be forgiven for turning to Lonergan at this point.

LONERGAN AND THE PROBLEM OF MISSIONS TODAY

1. *Mission Ad Gentes*

The first thing to be noted is that Lonergan does not seem to have been overly affected by the postconciliar missiological turmoil. His position on the church's mission *ad gentes*, for example, remains constant throughout his life. In his most explicit statement on evangelization – an unpublished response to the 1973 presynodal pamphlet “Evangelization in the Modern World” – Lonergan declared that he accepts *in toto* the principles of evangelization listed in the pamphlet; among these are included the sacred right and duty of the church to evangelize.³⁸ But references to the missionary task span Lonergan's entire corpus. Chapter 20 of *Insight* had already made a veiled reference to the missionary task, when it envisaged that human beings would be called to collaborate with the divine solution in the sense of “making known to others the good news of the solution and its nature” as well as “transmitting it from each generation to the next.”³⁹ The final chapter of *Method*, as is well-known, deals with the church's mission to all peoples. The “Questionnaire” of 1976 makes mention of the command and the duty to preach the gospel to every class in every culture.⁴⁰ A paper of 1981 speaks of preaching to mankind the living Christ.⁴¹ In 1982,

³⁸J. Dadosky, ed., “Lonergan on Evangelization,” *Toronto Journal of Theology* 21, 1 (2005): 129-30.

³⁹Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, vol. 3 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 743.

⁴⁰Bernard Lonergan, “Questionnaire on Philosophy: Response,” in *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1965-1980*, ed. Robert C. Croken and Robert M. Doran, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, vol. 17 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 358; also 359.

⁴¹Bernard Lonergan, “Pope John's Intention,” in *A Third Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press and London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1985), 237.

perhaps his last published paper, Lonergan still writes about the diversity of apostles need to preach the gospel to all nations.⁴²

2. One Divine Plan

The next thing to be noted is that Lonergan believes in a single overarching divine plan from as far back as the *Pantôn* paper.⁴³ Chapter 20 of *Insight*, in its turn, states clearly and unambiguously that there is one divine plan of salvation, simply because there is one world order, one problem of evil, one God, and no divine afterthoughts.⁴⁴

Linked with the above is the clear-headed recognition that the work of salvation is first and foremost the work of God. The problem of evil cannot, in fact, be solved by human beings at our own level and by our own resources; there is needed a divine solution. We are called, of course, to collaborate in this solution, but we are reminded that it is “principally the work of God.”⁴⁵

3. The Place of the Religions

Third, we need to note that, despite holding clearly that there is one divine plan, and that there are no divine afterthoughts, chapter 20 of *Insight* never quite gets round to saying that the many religions are part of this one plan. This may quite possibly be due to the fact that Lonergan is writing in 1953, some ten years before the great opening of Vatican II to other religions. We must mention, however, the intriguing “refinement” of the original hypothesis to yield natural, relatively supernatural and absolutely supernatural solutions,⁴⁶ which rather obviously seems to be a reference to different types of religions. From a very Catholic and partisan point of view, we might hazard a guess that the first category includes the Oriental religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, and Taoism, but also Islam, which I have always thought would fit beautifully within a course of what we used to call “natural theology,” with its one God, one prophet, one pilgrimage, so spectacularly reflected in the strikingly beautiful and sober linearity of its art and architecture. Again, it does not require much intuition

⁴²Bernard Lonergan, “Unity and Plurality: The Coherence of Christian Truth,” in *A Third Collection*, 243.

⁴³Bernard Lonergan, “*Pantôn Anakephalaiosis*,” ed. F. E. Crowe and R. M. Doran, *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 9, 2 (1991): 139-72.

⁴⁴*Insight*, 717.

⁴⁵*Insight*, 751.

⁴⁶*Insight*, 746.

to guess that the third category refers to Christianity. As for the second category, we are almost driven to think that it refers to Judaism, but I am not familiar enough with the matter to hazard a guess.

In the postconciliar period, Lonergan comes round to recognizing the universality of salvation and the place of the religions.⁴⁷ Lonergan argues on the basis of God's universal salvific will: if God wills all to be saved, it can be assumed that he gives to all sufficient grace for salvation, which is the gift of charity.⁴⁸ From a more neutral perspective, he also appeals to empirical studies of religion for support. *Method* can therefore speak about religion in terms of the inner word of the gift of God's love given to all, and of "the religions of mankind in their positive moment, as the fruit of the gift of the Spirit."⁴⁹ But *Method* also speaks of the need of the outer word, along the lines of the declaration of love between a man and woman, and of the possibility that, at least in some cases, this outer word can be the word of God himself.⁵⁰

4. The Two Divine Missions

This theme of the inner and outer words of love is crystallized in the classical theological thesis of the two divine missions, the invisible mission of the Spirit that transcends space and time, and the visible mission of the Son in space and time.⁵¹

The attention given to the two divine missions modifies the perspective of chapter 20 of *Insight* considerably. The religions of the world may now be clearly seen as part of the one divine plan of salvation; they are fruits of the Spirit, of the gift of God's love that transcends the barriers of space and time and is offered to

⁴⁷It was almost certainly the Second Vatican Council that widened the range of his interests: compare with Frederick E. Crowe, "Lonergan's Universalist View of Religion," in *Developing the Lonergan Legacy: Historical, Theoretical and Existential Themes*, ed. Michael Vertin (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 114. Crowe quotes Lonergan, "Theology and Man's Future," in *A Second Collection*, 138.

⁴⁸Compare with, for example, "Theology and Man's Future," 139; Lonergan, "Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon," in *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1965-1980*, 401; Lonergan, "Philosophy of God, and Theology," in *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1965-1980*, 170.

⁴⁹Crowe, "Lonergan's Universalist View of Religion," 307.

⁵⁰Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 112-13, 119.

⁵¹The 1959 lectures on the philosophy of education make a reference to the two divine missions, but the context does not seem to differ significantly from that of chapter 20 of *Insight*: compare with Lonergan, *Topics in Education*, ed. Robert M. Doran and Frederick E. Crowe, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, vol. 10 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 68. Compare with, instead, Lonergan, "Mission and the Spirit," in *A Third Collection*, 31-32.

all.⁵² This does not mean that the natural-supernatural distinction in the categorization of religions is invalidated; that distinction regards the nature of the solution and not the source, which is in all cases God. To call a religion “natural,” in other words, is not to say that it is the fruit of merely human striving for God; it merely means that there is nothing in it that is disproportionate to human intellect.

Another way in which the perspective of chapter 20 is modified is the way the divine solution is understood. In hindsight, it becomes clear that the divine solution of chapter 20 refers only to the mission of the Son, for it is expected to have zero probability at some stages in human history, then to be emergent, and finally to be fully realized.⁵³ When instead the divine solution is understood to include also the mission of the Spirit, one would have to say that there is no stage in human history when the gift of God’s love is not offered to human beings – whether individually in the secret of the heart, or through the agency of some form of religion.

5. *The Distinctiveness of Christianity*

Lonergan was quite clear about what was specific and distinctive about Christianity. If in chapter 20 of *Insight* he merely outlines the possibility of an absolutely supernatural solution to the problem of evil, in the epilogue he lays open his hand to reveal that he identifies that possibility with Christianity.

In 1967, in the context of his new openness to the religions, he can still quote C. F. D. Moule to the effect that Christians stand neither for an original philosophy of life nor an original ethic: “Their sole function is to bear witness to what they claim as an event – the raising of Jesus from among the dead.” Lonergan adds: “What distinguishes the Christian, then, is not God’s grace, which he shares with others, but the mediation of God’s grace through Jesus Christ our Lord.”⁵⁴ In another context he suggested that we reframe the question of Nicea by asking whether God revealed his love for us by having a man die on the cross, or whether it was his own Son, a divine person, that he sent.⁵⁵

⁵²Crowe, “Lonergan’s Universalist View of Religion,” 307.

⁵³*Insight*, 720.

⁵⁴Bernard Lonergan, “The Future of Christianity,” in *A Second Collection*, 156.

⁵⁵Crowe, “Lonergan’s Universalist View of Religion,” 132-33, referring to Lonergan, “Theology and Praxis,” *A Third Collection*, 198.

6. A Theology of Religions

We could go further and ask: How might we conceive of a theology of religions? How do the religions relate to one another? What place does each religion have within the one divine plan?

Lonerger's assumption that there is one divine plan of salvation and two divine missions requires that we hold in unity both the religions of the world and the claims of Christianity. From a Christian point of view, therefore, a theology of religions will therefore have a Trinitarian structure.⁵⁶ In this we have the example of the church itself at the great moments of crisis. Faced with scriptural affirmations that the Father is God, the Son is God, the Spirit is God, and that there is still only one God, it boldly embraced both the oneness and the threeness of God. Faced with scriptural evidence for the divinity as well as the humanity of Jesus, it once again chose to affirm both, without letting go of the fundamental unity of the person of Jesus. On the matter of the religions, I am convinced that something similar is taking place. John Paul II has, in fact, said as much: "It is necessary to keep these two truths together, namely, the real possibility of salvation in Christ for all mankind and the necessity of the Church for salvation. Both these truths help us to understand the *one mystery of salvation*...."⁵⁷

The above is of course an affirmation, and to make an affirmation is not the same as to propose an understanding of it. Doctrines, in other words, are distinct from systematics. With Crowe therefore we could still raise the question of understanding: What exactly is God's plan? How do the religions fit into this plan? Crowe himself has advanced some intriguing answers which I will not go into at this point.⁵⁸

My suggestion is that we ought to seek generalization only after having understood the particular.⁵⁹ A theology of religions should be based therefore on a careful phenomenology and will work in closest collaboration with empirical

⁵⁶Jacques Dupuis speaks of a Trinitarian Christology as the interpretative key for a theology of religious pluralism. "The task ahead is that of showing how the affirmation of Christian identity is compatible with a genuine recognition of the identity of the other faith-communities as constituting different aspects of the self-revelation of the Absolute Mystery, though related to the Christ event, in a single but complex and articulated divine economy." *Christianity and the Religions: From Confrontation to Dialogue* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis; London: DLT, 2002), 94-95.

⁵⁷*Redemptoris Missio*, 9.

⁵⁸Crowe, "Lonerger's Universalist View of Religion," 137-41.

⁵⁹"[T]o me it seems a mistaken method to seek generalization before one has tried to understand the particular." Bernard Lonergan, "Religious Experience," in *A Third Collection*, 125.

studies of religion. This will serve to reduce the dangers of mental laziness, the a priori tendency to level down all religions, speaking glibly of many saviours, and so forth. It is simply too inexact and too crude to speak of all religions as having saviors or savior-figures, for example. The claims made by Hinduism for Rama, by Buddhism for the Buddha, by Islam for Muhammad, and by Christianity for Jesus, are simply too different to be classified under one category.

After the example of chapter 20 of *Insight*, however, we could indulge in some anticipations. Thus, for example, if the religions are first and foremost a fruit of the mission of the Spirit, of the inner word of God's love, then it follows that differences in religions are differences in the outer word.

Thus Lonergan suggests that the outer word may be simply the need of a human community to express to itself its religious experience and such would seem to be the Eastern religions. But it may also be the need or the initiative of God to speak an outer word to accompany the inner word of his love. Such may be the religion of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. The distinctiveness of Christianity lies in its claim that God in sending his Son not merely speaks an outer word but manifests the full, unlimited extent of his love for us.⁶⁰

We might take this line of thinking further. For if a religion regards its outer word as simply the result of the human need to express religious experience, it will very likely either insist upon or be willing to relativize its outer word. But if a religion regards its outer word as coming in some way from God himself, it will be rather unwilling to relativize it.

Such differences might not in themselves have caused any problems, were it not for the fact that most religions go one step further and make generalizations. Thus, for example, Christianity has for long centuries excluded the possibility of salvation in other religions. Again, Hinduism and Buddhism, besides considering their own expressions as relative, would go further and consider all religious expression as relative. They would find it difficult to take seriously, therefore, the claims of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam that the Absolute has entered into the world mediated by meaning. Yet again, Judaism and Islam would make common cause with Christianity on the ground of a divinely spoken word but would balk at the suggestion that the Almighty might have made a personal entrance into history.

So there are major differences between the religions, but these seem to be mostly in what they exclude rather than in what they affirm. Would it be too much

⁶⁰Crowe, "Lonergan's Universalist View of Religion," 131.

to hope for an irenic atmosphere in which difficult questions are faced rather than avoided or evaded, and issues are quickly boiled down to the basics? Perhaps we might look forward to a dialectic that might become dialogue on questions like the following: Is it legitimate to a priori exclude the possibility of the Absolute entering into the world mediated by meaning? Should we not instead take seriously the possibility of the Absolute intervening in the world of history? And if there is nothing to exclude this possibility, should we not take seriously the possibility of a personal entrance too?

The above anticipations are really variations of the “refinement” of the original hypothesis of *Insight* chapter 20. We are presuming, in other words, that some religions exemplify a natural solution to the problem of evil, while others exemplify a relatively supernatural solution or an absolutely supernatural solution, and we have been asking the further question about the mutual relationships between these types of solutions: Would a religion be open to the possibility of a supernatural solution? Would it be open to the possibility of an absolutely supernatural solution? Or would it instead block off such possibilities a priori, and why?

Does all this smack once again of the old insufferable superiority? It will probably seem so to many. However, the point I have been trying to make is merely that the claims of the religions are different, and because different, not always in competition. Perhaps we might have to find more respectful ways of expressing the “refinements” of the original hypothesis of chapter 20 of *Insight*. But it is a well-known Lonergan insight that all possibilities on a theme may be expected to be worked out in the course of time and on the large canvas of history. The refinement is merely, in my opinion, a case in point, and so need not be taken in any way as offensive. The religions represent a rainbow of possible solutions to the problem of humankind.

7. The Missionary Task

Let me come now to the question that is of immediate interest to the present paper. Does not the gift of the Spirit, and the recognition of our religious community with the world religions, eliminate the need for preaching the gospel to all nations?

Lonergan’s answer is simple and flows from all that we have been saying above about the one divine plan and the two divine missions: the mission of the Spirit does not make the mission of the Son unnecessary: both missions are needed. “Without the visible mission of the Word, the gift of the Spirit is a being-

in-love without a proper object; it remains simply an orientation to mystery that awaits its interpretation. Without the invisible mission of the Spirit, the Word enters into his own, but his own receive him not.”⁶¹

The missionary task also flows from the nature of the mission of the Son. For this mission is a visible mission: it takes place in space and time, and is bound by the limitations of space and time. But if such a mission is to be universally accessible and permanent, its prolongation in space and time can take place only through concrete human beings and a concrete human community which would pass on the word and embody the mission.

Finally, as Crowe suggests, the missionary task flows from the example of the Father himself: “If God, in giving the Holy Spirit to the human race, nevertheless judged it necessary to send the Only-begotten to be one of us, then we have the strongest possible ground for continuing to preach the gospel, the ground namely of the very example of God.”⁶²

But how is the gospel to be communicated to all peoples and nations? Here we have abundant help from Lonergan, suggestions that are still to be properly exploited. I will restrict myself to merely making mention of some of these.

The first suggestion regards communication to all nations, properly speaking. “One has to shift to the viewpoint of the existential human subject, from the conditions of possibility assured by human nature to the conditions of actuality permitted by the aberrations of human history. The former was the viewpoint of Vatican I. The latter is the question that becomes uppermost when one turns from abstract human nature to the concrete task of preaching the gospel to all nations.”⁶³

One has also to shift from a classicist normative notion to an empirical notion of culture. Communication of the gospel message, says Lonergan, presupposes that preachers and teachers enlarge their horizons to include an accurate and intimate understanding of the culture and language of the people they address. They must grasp the virtual resources of that culture and language and use them creatively so that the Christian message becomes a line of development within that culture rather than disruptive of it or an alien patch

⁶¹“Mission and the Spirit,” 32. For the correction of “visible” to “invisible,” compare with *Lonergan Studies Newsletter* 14 (1993): 8.

⁶²Crowe, “Lonergan’s Universalist View of Religion,” 136.

⁶³Bernard Lonergan, “Horizons and Transpositions,” in *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1965-1980*, 428.

imposed on it.⁶⁴ “A genuine Evangelizer,” says Archbishop Thomas Menamparampil of Gauhati, “identifies himself with the deepest aspirations of his people and radically commits himself to their fulfillment.”⁶⁵

The basic distinction here, Lonergan reminds us, is between preaching the gospel and preaching it as it has been developed in one’s own culture. A classicist would feel it perfectly legitimate to impose his culture on others, for she or he conceives culture normatively. The pluralist instead acknowledges a multiplicity of cultural traditions and various differentiations of consciousness within each tradition. But she or he does not consider it her task to either promote differentiations of consciousness or ask people to renounce their own culture. She or he would proceed from within their culture and seek ways and means of making it a vehicle for communicating the Christian message.⁶⁶

The second suggestion regards a possibility that is embodied in the theological method proposed by Lonergan: the movement from dialectic to dialogue. The functional specialty dialectic is envisaged as occurring on two levels. Through the first application of dialectic, dialectical oppositions in the past are brought to light; through the second application, dialectical oppositions in the present are brought to light. As a paper of 1977 notes: “But the very people that investigate the dialectic of history also are part of that dialectic and even in their investigating represent its contradictories. To their work too the dialectic is to be applied.”⁶⁷ But the second application itself can be done in two manners, one of which deals with subjects as objects, and the other with subjects as subjects. The latter possibility is dialogue. The 1976 paper “The Ongoing Genesis of Methods” describes it thus:

Finally, besides the dialectic that is concerned with human subjects as objects, there is the dialectic in which human subjects are concerned with themselves and with one another. In that case dialectic becomes dialogue. It is particularly relevant when persons are authentic and know one another to be authentic yet belong to differing traditions and so find themselves in basic disagreement. It may be illustrated by the ecumenical movement among Christians and by the universalist movement set forth

⁶⁴*Method in Theology*, 362.

⁶⁵Thomas Menamparampil, “Sharing the Gift of Faith in Asia,” *Vidyajyoti: Journal of Theological Reflection* 69 (2005): 23.

⁶⁶*Method in Theology*, 362-63. Compare with Ivo Coelho, “‘Et Judaeus et Graecus e methodo:’ The Transcultural Mediation of Christian Meanings and Values in Lonergan,” Lonergan Workshop, ed. Fred Lawrence (Boston: Lonergan Institute at Boston College, 2000) 16:83-106.

⁶⁷Bernard Lonergan, “Natural Right and Historical Mindedness,” in *A Third Collection*, 182.

by R. E. Whitson in his *The Coming Convergence of World Religions*, by Raymond Panikkar's diacritical theology and by William Johnston's Christian monks frequenting Zen monasteries in Japan.⁶⁸

The third suggestion regards collaboration among all people on the basis of our common humanity and the gift of the Spirit given to all. What Lonergan says about ecumenical collaboration "in fulfilling the redemptive and constructive roles of the Christian church in human society" would apply, *mutatis mutandis*, also to the wider ecumenism.⁶⁹ The work of redemption must go on, and all can collaborate in it, even when they do not feel they can acknowledge and accept the mission of the Son.

The fourth suggestion regards witness. The witness of a Christian life is the first and irreplaceable form of mission.⁷⁰ The evangelizer's message must take on flesh through his/her wholehearted involvement in the life and growth of the society at whose service she/he is.⁷¹ Lonergan could not agree more, with his stress on total authenticity, for the way of authenticity is both attractive and powerful.⁷² But with Archbishop Menampampil we add: proclamation today might consist in whispering the gospel to the soul of a people.⁷³ The need of the hour is a gentle proclamation, coupled with the renunciation of power. For principles of progress cannot be combined with principles of decline, and we are still reaping the fruits of use of force and the backing of colonial powers in former times.⁷⁴ We need to develop, in fact, the theme of friendship and mission, along

⁶⁸Bernard Lonergan, "The Ongoing Genesis of Methods," in *A Third Collection*, 159.

⁶⁹*Method in Theology*, 368.

⁷⁰*Redemptoris Missio*, 42.

⁷¹Menampampil, "Sharing the Gift of Faith in Asia," 24-25.

⁷²*Method in Theology*, 254. We could do well to explore in this context the brilliant comments of Panikkar on what he calls the monologic witness of a bygone era, the dialogic witnessing of today, and the way witnessing breaks out even from the bounds of dialogue: "Nevertheless, witnessing cannot be reduced to a component of dialogue. It presents its own consistency over and above any dialogue. We have no guarantee that the witness accepts the rules of the game of dialogue – even of dialogical dialogue. There is a 'divine madness,' a 'foolishness of the Cross' in most religions." R. Panikkar, "Witness and Dialogue," in *Myth, Faith and Hermeneutics: Cross-Cultural Studies* (Bangalore: Asian Trading Corporation, 1983), 244.

⁷³Menampampil, "Sharing the Gift of Faith in Asia," 22-26.

⁷⁴Compare with a particularly vitriolic response to the recent admonition given by Benedict XVI to the Indian ambassador: "The Pope also hopefully knows what the Church's barbaric priests did to Goan Hindus for almost two centuries. The inquisition that was responsible for the wholesale destruction of Hindu temples and the cruelty shown to Hindus has not been forgotten." M. V. Kamath, "A Sermon for the Pope," *Afternoon Despatch and Courier* (Mumbai) (2 June 2006), 6. Benedict XVI had commented on "the disturbing signs of religious intolerance" and "the

the lines of the ancient theme of friendship and philosophy. Phyllis Wallbank writes that the only way is the way of friendship:

From this comes a real wish to serve, and that often means time and listening. And through this friendship blossoms and is equal and not one-sided. Then any questioning and discussion come from the non-Catholic, and from HIS OWN questioning, comes discussion and then understanding. We must remember that it will be within the time schedule of the Holy Spirit and not ours! (I think we sometimes forget this, and it may be meant to bear fruit much later and with more maturity.) I think that it is the WAY we live that will change people, and so many of us are so far (speaking personally) from the way that He showed and someone from another faith such as a Muslim may be living more like we have been told to live. He may love God with all his heart, mind, soul and strength and his neighbour as himself and we Christians may be failing so often. If anyone finds God, surely he then finds the Trinity?⁷⁵

We are called, in short, to do our part; to gather, perhaps, the fragments – *colligite fragmenta* (John 6:12) – of the one plan of God. Who knows but that we may be called to reproduce in ourselves the rainbow of possibilities represented by the religions of the world, so that one day we might be Hindu and Muslim and Buddhist and Taoist and Christian, because we realize more and more clearly that God in his mercy is gathering us to himself in myriad ways, through the Son and through the Spirit.

XAVIER AND LONERGAN

We have been studying the unlikely pair of Francis Xavier and Lonergan, two Jesuits separated by some 400 years, sharing a surprising clarity about the missionary task of preaching the gospel to all nations but differing in their assumptions about cultures and religions. They differ also in their personalities: Francis, the *divino impaciente*,⁷⁶ moving all over South-East Asia in a brief span of ten years, driven by the urgency of the gospel message; Lonergan instead, the

reprehensible attempt to legislate clearly discriminatory restrictions on the fundamental right of religious freedom.”

⁷⁵Phyllis Wallbank, e-mail to me, 31 May 2006.

⁷⁶Bermejo, *Unto the Indies*, 109.

typical scholarly Jesuit, investing years in study in the deep conviction that this also is an eminently pastoral and practical occupation.

To the best of my knowledge, Lonergan never made explicit reference to Francis Xavier in his writings. I did find, however, an implicit allusion in a lecture of 1970 entitled "The Response of the Jesuit as Priest and Apostle in the Modern World." A principal function of the Society of Jesus, he says, was to meet crises and the problems of its day.

There were the needs of the people, and the Jesuits worked in hospitals, taught catechism, preached, and dispensed the sacraments. There were the voyages of exploration and the beginnings of colonization, and the Jesuits were in India, Malaya, Indonesia, Japan, China, and North and South America....⁷⁷

Lonergan goes on to note that the old Jesuits "took on the coloring of their age and shared its limitations," which meant that they were classicist in their outlook and hence slow to grasp the need for change. He draws attention to the fact there is a crisis of the first magnitude today, which he describes in terms of modernity, secularism, and self-destructiveness. He ends by outlining a program:

If I am correct in assuming that the Jesuits of the twentieth century, like those of the sixteenth, exist to meet crises, they have to accept the gains of modernity in natural science, in philosophy, in theology, while working out strategies for dealing with secularist views on religion and with concomitant distortions in man's notion of human knowledge, in his apprehension of human reality, in his organization of human affairs.⁷⁸

It is not difficult to recognize in these words Lonergan's own program of life. If Francis's voyages of exploration took him over continents planting the church and strengthening communities, Lonergan, I think, spent his energies evangelizing the equally vast continents of the world of meaning.⁷⁹ Lonergan shares Francis's

⁷⁷"The Response of the Jesuit..." 182. See note one.

⁷⁸"The Response of the Jesuit..." 186-87.

⁷⁹ There is an interesting occurrence of the phrase "voyages of exploration" in connection with the pure desire to know: "[The drive to know] can absorb a man. It can keep him for hours, day after day, year after year, in the narrow prison of his study or laboratory. It can send him on dangerous *voyages of exploration*. It can withdraw him from other interests, other pursuits, other pleasures, other achievements. It can fill his waking thoughts, hide from him the world of ordinary affairs, invade the very fabric of his dreams. It can demand endless sacrifices that are made without regret though there is only the hope, never a certain promise, of success." *Insight*, 28-29 (italics mine). William Matthews comments: "Although not presented as a personal statement about Lonergan's own desire, the remark has an unmistakable autobiographical ring to it."

conviction that the gospel must be preached to all nations, but his own practical contribution lies more in the area of the *missio Ecclesiae* than the mission *ad gentes*. Both Francis and Lonergan have their place in the one plan of salvation, which makes use of the strengths and weaknesses of individuals as well as of cultures and times to move towards its inscrutable purposes or rather to move in inscrutable ways towards the purpose once hidden but now made manifest in Christ Jesus – the reconciliation of all things in Christ.

IGNATIAN THEMES IN THE THOUGHT
OF BERNARD LONERGAN:
REVISITING A TOPIC THAT DESERVES
FURTHER REFLECTION

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THIS PAPER HAS gone through four stages. I first wrote a lengthy paper that needed to be streamlined for delivery at Regis College on 25 February 2005, as the first in a series on the Ignatian theologians who turned 100 in 2004-2005: Bernard Lonergan, Karl Rahner, John Courtney Murray, and Hans Urs von Balthasar. The streamlined version was then slightly revised for publication in the *Toronto Journal of Theology*. That published version has subsequently been revised further, given that I have had some new ideas on a few of the relevant topics. In this latest revision, I also reintroduce just a bit of the material that was dropped between stage 1 and stage 2.

Let me begin by stating what I will *not* be doing in this presentation. I am not an expert in the Ignatian literature. I am a Jesuit who has made the full Spiritual Exercises twice in my life and an abbreviated form of the Exercises many times. It seems that a number of elements that I have discovered in my own making of the Ignatian Exercises have also found their way into Lonergan's writings. So I wish to acknowledge these correspondences, some of which at least can probably be identified as Ignatian influences on Lonergan's thought. But I also find that Lonergan provides a contemporary idiom that has helped me understand what Ignatius himself was up to. I wish then to select some of the themes and currents in Lonergan's work that may be Ignatian in inspiration, thus locating him as a true son of Ignatius in the service of the church for the greater glory of God and to highlight his own contribution to the ongoing development of the Ignatian charism in the church. Thus, I will try to identify a movement, a dynamism, from Ignatius to Lonergan, and then in Lonergan a set of contributions to the clarification and development of the Ignatian charism in the church.

These two tasks, however, do not divide the sections of the paper. There are four sections, and these two tasks – from Ignatius to Lonergan and from Lonergan to a transposed Ignatius – are present in all of them.

I begin with the Ignatian ethos of Lonergan's first great book, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*. "Ethos" is a deliberately vague and indeterminate word that will become more determinate, I hope, in the course of this paper. I am not talking about any references to Ignatius, any direct and clear applications of elements from the Exercises, or anything else of that sort. There is nothing like that in *Insight*. I am talking about an atmosphere, a tonality, a spirit, a dynamism. It would be tempting to begin a presentation of the Ignatian characteristics of Lonergan's thought with comments on his later constant mention of the free gift of God's love and of the affective resonances in our response to that gift and in fact in our response to all values. But to skip over *Insight* in writing about Lonergan as Ignatian would be like trying to get away with making the Spiritual Exercises without engaging in the meditations on sin or the two standards or the three classes of people, or without reflecting on the three degrees of humility, that is, without doing the tough stuff. The atmosphere of God's love permeates *Insight* itself, of course, just as it does the "tougher" Ignatian considerations. But it is, may we say, a harsher love than Lonergan discovered later in life.

From *Insight* I will move to Lonergan's contribution to clarifying three Ignatian themes: the times of election, discernment, and consolation without a cause. While I will discuss the first two of these themes together (election and discernment), I want to emphasize that I am not conflating them. Discernment is related to election, of course, but it is a far broader theme. Discernment is called for whether or not one is faced with a decision. The whole of what we have come to call the examination of consciousness is a matter of discernment, and the examination of consciousness is frequently carried out independently of any need to make a decision. Discernment is about *Befindlichkeit*, how one finds oneself, which for Heidegger is equiprimordial with *Verstehen* as constitutive of *Da-sein*. It is because of the relation to one another of discernment and election that I will discuss them together, but we must keep in mind the distinction as well.

In the discussion of these Ignatian themes of election, discernment, and consolation as they appear in Lonergan's writings, there will emerge one further Ignatian characteristic of Lonergan's work, namely, the place of the Trinity at the heart of Lonergan's worldview. And from that Trinitarian mysticism I will move

to and conclude with some suggestions regarding the Ignatian rules for thinking with the church.

1. THE IGNATIAN ETHOS OF *INSIGHT*

1.1 The Greater Good

In this section I emphasize that Lonergan's concern for culture, for ultimate issues, long-term results, theoretical questions, and hard work, especially in chapter 7 of *Insight*. This reflects the Ignatian concern for the greater good.

While I was working my way through *Insight* for the first time in the summer of 1967, I asked myself, "What would I say about the author of this book if I knew absolutely nothing about him except his name?" I came up with two answers to that question. The first was – and I hope I may say this without offending anyone, since I am a citizen of both the United States and Canada – that the author was probably not an American. The second was that the author was probably profoundly influenced by the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius.

Now, of course, I already knew that both of these suppositions were true, or at least that the first was definitely true, since I knew that Lonergan was a Canadian, and that the second was probably true, since I also knew that he was a Jesuit. My primary reason for responding that the author was probably not an American is that chapter 7 of *Insight* reflects a view of society in which cultural values, the meanings and values of particular ways of life, have a very serious constitutive role to play in the fabric of the social order. This is a mentality that in my young life to that point I did not identify as American, one that I had not encountered even in American philosophical writings, a mentality that ran counter to the pragmatic orientation even of most American intellectual life in the middle decades of the twentieth century, a mentality that insisted that intellectual and cultural integrity are required for the well-being of the social order. The concern for culture and cultural differences as constitutive of the social order, as autonomous determinants of the way people live, is, I subsequently discovered, something that is, or at least was, much more a part of the Canadian mental fabric than it is of the American mentality. In fact, after moving to Canada in 1979, I discovered that the major difference between the two countries lies precisely here, in the role that culture plays in the social fabric of the country. But, I might add, this concern for culture has become much more precarious in Canada today than it

was in the days of Pierre Elliott Trudeau, despite the country's self-congratulatory comments about the multiculturalism of the nation.

It was the same chapter 7 that first convinced me that the author of the book *Insight* had been profoundly influenced by the Ignatian Exercises. Lonergan's respect for culture was a respect not only for the everyday meanings and values of diverse communities of people but also for the integrity of work at what he later would call the cultural superstructure, at the literary and artistic, scholarly and scientific, philosophical and theological levels, at which the transcendental concerns for beauty, intelligibility, truth, and the human good are reflected upon and promoted. This commitment to long-range effects, ultimate issues, even tough theoretical questions, has always been a hallmark of the Society of Jesus, where the Society has remained faithful to its own origins and vocation. Wherever this commitment has been lost or abandoned in the history of the Society, the Society itself has lost its way and has had to be called back to something very important in its service to the church, just as Fr. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, with mixed results so far, is trying to call the Society back today to the centrality of the intellectual apostolate, precisely for the sake of "the service of faith and the promotion of justice" that we have recognized as partly constitutive of our vocation.

Canadians will be no more let off the hook at this level of Lonergan's concern than would Americans. Ultimate issues, long-range effects, and tough theoretical questions are not only honored in this book. Concern for them is argued to be an essential ingredient in the well-being of any society. And that insistence is characteristically Ignatian. Canadians, including Canadian Jesuits, are no more immune to what Lonergan calls the general bias of common sense against these specializations than are any others. Far from it! But Ignatian spirituality does run profoundly counter to the general bias of common sense against the greater good. And so I recognized on my first reading that at this point in chapter 7, without using the word, Lonergan is in fact calling for a profound conversion in the reader's intellectual life, a conversion that would inspire one to opt for the greater good, for the *magis*, the more, and, in a religious and Christian and Catholic context, for the greater glory of God, in the very exercise of one's cognitional operations and in one's commitment as a knower. While this conversion is not precisely the philosophic conversion from naïve realism that Lonergan is talking about when he employs the term "intellectual conversion" in a technical sense in his later writings, it is the beginning of such a conversion, for it is an openness and dedication to intelligibility and truth as constitutive of human

knowing or, more precisely, as constitutive of what human beings know when they are knowing.

1.2 An Experience of Consolation

Two fellow Jesuits have remarked to me, quite independently of one another, that their experience on concluding each chapter of *Insight* was an experience of what St Ignatius calls consolation. Now here is what St Ignatius writes about spiritual consolation: "I call it consolation when there is excited in the soul some interior motion by which it begins to be inflamed with the love of its Creator and Lord, and when, consequently, it can love no created thing on the face of the earth itself, but only in the Creator of them all. Likewise, when it sheds tears, moving it to the love of its Lord, whether it be from grief for its sins, or from the Passion of Christ our Lord, or from other things directly ordained to His service and praise. Finally, I call consolation every increase of hope, faith, and charity, and all interior joy, which calls and attracts man to heavenly things, and to the salvation of his own soul, rendering it quiet and tranquil in its Creator and Lord."¹

Now what would the consolation be that these two people attested to?

Well, while it is probably true that some people have been reduced to tears when reading *Insight*, this is not what my Jesuit friends were talking about. Their experience was closer to the first and last instances of consolation that St Ignatius speaks about: an increase of an interior joy, of hope, faith, and charity, and a love of God and of all else in God. This consolation is related to an illumination that *Insight* can effect: in fact this world *is* intelligible, things *do* hold together, we *can* make sense of the universe and of our lives, we *can* overcome the fragmentation of knowledge, we *can* make true judgments, we *can* make good decisions, we *can* transcend ourselves to what is and to what is good. And *Insight* brings us to this illumination not by constructing some new universal narrative or all-embracing theory but by helping us come to know ourselves, to know the dynamic structure that integrates our operations of experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding. There is something about this conviction, this illumination, that is more than just intellectual satisfaction. There was for these Jesuits the sense that this is a philosophic worldview that is completely harmonious with their Ignatian heritage. As Hans Urs von Balthasar said about Aquinas's metaphysics, this

¹*The Text of the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius*, translated, with a preface, by Henry Keane, S.J. (London: Burns, Oates and Washbourne, 1952), 316.

philosophy too is completely harmonious with the biblical revelation of the glory of God.² That is the reason for the consolation. *Insight's* scientific, sociopolitical, cognitional-theoretical, epistemological, metaphysical, and ethical positions are completely harmonious with the biblical revelation of the glory of God. Even though there is no treatment of anything that directly has to do with the biblical revelation of the glory of God until the final two chapters and the epilogue, still the book is written by a person who, while he is working "from below upwards," as it were, in the advance of a moving viewpoint, is from the beginning in love, with the love that this same person would later emphasize is *God's own love for God and for everything else in God*. He writes from that stance. He is taken up in that from the beginning, and it shines through on every page. That is why readers of the book equipped to understand what Lonergan is saying can put the book down after each chapter with something remarkably like what St Ignatius calls consolation, that is to say, with an interior joy, with an increase in hope, faith, and charity, with the conviction that this book is *ad maiorem Dei gloriam*, for the greater glory of God, with a love for all things in their Creator and Lord.

Perhaps nowhere is this consolation more the experience of many readers in the strictly philosophical portion of the book, that is, prior to any introduction of the question of God, than in the remarkable chapter 12, "The Notion of Being." The chapter says the following: Being is everything about everything. Being is what would be known in the totality of true judgments. Being is everything that can be intelligently grasped and reasonably affirmed. Apart from being there is nothing. Being is completely concrete and completely universal. Being is incrementally known in every true judgment, but a true judgment is reached precisely as a true judgment only when one knows there are no further questions on a particular issue. So, the chapter implies without explicitly saying it, being is also a task. Reaching being in any concrete instance calls for a cognitive integrity or authenticity that nobody can take for granted either in oneself or in others. Thus the chapter offers a set of clues to a philosophical discrimination of truth and

²"The metaphysics of Thomas is ... the philosophical reflection of the free glory of the living God of the Bible and in this way the interior completion of ancient (and thus human) philosophy. It is a celebration of the reality of the real, of that all-embracing mystery of being which surpasses the powers of human thought, a mystery pregnant with the very mystery of God, a mystery in which creatures have access to participation in the reality of God, a mystery which in its nothingness and non-subsistence is shot through with the light of the freedom of the creative principle of unfathomable love." Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics*, vol. 4 of *The Realm of Metaphysics in Antiquity*, ed. John Riches (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1989), 406-407.

illusion, of the real and the unreal, of the true and the false. That discrimination is anything but automatic. It can entail a prolonged struggle. The struggle is felt in the soul of the reader, in feelings that are truly spiritual in their source, their meaning, and their implications. The feeling of the discrimination can be the feeling of a battle in which what is at stake is the very integrity of the reader's intellectual life. There is an existential crisis (not just a cognitive problem) that is entailed in arriving at the three basic philosophical positions of the book *Insight*, that is, the positions on knowing, on the real as being, and on objectivity.

Now I wish to suggest that in its spiritual tonality or "taste" this crisis is a philosophical instantiation of the decisive struggle that St Ignatius portrays in his meditation on the Two Standards. As one making that meditation is to pray for knowledge of the deceits that would lead one astray and for knowledge of the true life that Christ points out, so the reader of chapters 11, 12, and 13 of *Insight* is engaged in the existential discrimination of the waywardness of the human cognitional process and the painful discovery that what counts cognitively is not what is exciting, not what is expressed with the most clever rhetorical flourish, not what wins the attraction of the popular magazines, not what equips a professor of philosophy or theology to be a weekend celebrity – not riches, honor, pride, in Ignatius's terms – but the impalpable and in no way extravagant act in which one knows one can say in an inner word of assent, "It is," "This is the case," "No further questions on this issue." In the words of the Gospel, "Let your speech be 'Yes, Yes,' and 'No, No.' Anything else is from the evil one" (Matthew 7:37). Often one does not reach this very quiet and intimately private act until one has engaged some or all of the attractions that would pull one in a different direction. There is something akin in Lonergan to the Buddhist struggle between truth and illusion. And that struggle is spiritually akin to Ignatius's struggle between, on the one hand, riches, honor, and pride, and on the other hand poverty, the welcoming of the world's reproaches and contempt, and humility. And all of these are akin to a ceasing from some great striving, a detachment and disinterestedness, an indifference in the deeply committed Ignatian sense of that term. And in more contemporary Girardian terms all of these are akin to the truthful and humble relinquishment of rivalry and violence, to the converted acceptance of the Johannine Logos in whom all things were made, the Logos that in coming into the world was rejected, the Logos that in being rejected put an end to all violence, the Logos that is quite distinct from the Heraclitean logos for which all is born of conflict and war. For all that *Insight* might appear to be a book that comes from Athens rather than from Jerusalem, in the last analysis it is a book that began with

the author's love of the one who was murdered outside Jerusalem on a lonely Friday, a book that, because its author was absorbed by what happened to this same figure on the third day, is able to advance what is of worth in Athens and simply to leave the rest to wither away, a book that is able to teach its readers to do the same.

To return, then, to the experience of consolation, Lonergan's notion of being is invested with a hope that one does not usually find in philosophical meditations on being. It is a hope that informs all of Lonergan's writings. Recall Ignatius: "I call consolation every increase of hope, faith, and charity ..." The hope is precisely what Lonergan articulates once he moves onto explicitly theological terrain in the final chapter of *Insight*: the "confident hope that God will bring [our] intellect to a knowledge, participation, possession of the unrestricted act of understanding" that God *is*.³

1.3 Insight as a Set of Spiritual Exercises

I will conclude my remarks on *Insight* with a few indications from the opening pages of the book that would indicate how reading the book will engage one in a set of spiritual exercises.

First, then, just as St Ignatius tells us at the very beginning of the Spiritual Exercises that the purpose of the Exercises is to prepare and dispose the soul to free itself from all inordinate affections so that it might seek and find the will of God in the ordering of life for the salvation of one's soul, so Lonergan tells us at the beginning of *Insight* that if we are going to order our cognitional lives around the central act of insight, we will need to recognize the devices that block the occurrence of the insights that upset our comfortable equilibrium. There is a flight from understanding that is "resourceful and inventive, effective and extraordinarily plausible." Already the reader is being told that by reading this book he or she will be plunged into a struggle that, while cognitive and intellectual and philosophical, is also profoundly existential and spiritual.

Again in the preface, we read this unmistakably Ignatian statement: "Probably I shall be told that I have tried to operate on too broad a front. But I was led to do so for two reasons. In constructing a ship or a philosophy one has to go the whole way; an effort that is in principle incomplete is equivalent to a

³Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, vol. 3 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 724.

failure. Moreover, against the flight from understanding half measures are of no avail. Only a comprehensive strategy can be successful. To disregard any stronghold of the flight from understanding is to leave intact a base from which a counteroffensive promptly will be launched.”⁴ Clearly, there is a correspondence between these statements and the ethos of a number of considerations in the Spiritual Exercises. And clearly, discernment is required not only in everyday life but also in philosophical endeavors.

Again, after asking what practical good can come from this book, Lonergan appeals immediately to what we know by now is his very convincing and existentially moving theory of history. At this point, and so very early on in the book, we are told that the struggle in which the book will engage us is not just private and individual, but also social and historical. The delicacy of negotiating the struggle is suggested in the following question: “How, indeed, is a mind to become conscious of its own bias when that bias springs from a communal flight from understanding and is supported by the whole texture of a civilization?”⁵ And the first indication we have of where an ulterior answer to this question is found occurs in the introduction. “The issue of transcendent knowledge has to be faced. Can man know more than the intelligibility immanent in the world of possible experience? If he can, how can he conceive it? If he can conceive it, how can he affirm it? If he can affirm it, how can he reconcile that affirmation with the evil that tortures too many human bodies, darkens too many human minds, hardens too many human hearts?”⁶ One who has made the Spiritual Exercises might well think at this point of the setting that St Ignatius provides for the first contemplation of the Second Week, on the Incarnation: “I try to enter into the vision of God, in God’s triune life, looking upon our world: people aimless, people despairing, people hateful and killing, people sick and dying, the old and the young, the rich and the poor, the happy and the sad, some being born and some being laid to rest. The leap of divine joy: God knows that the time has come when the mystery of the salvific plan, hidden from the foundation of the world, will become manifest.”⁷ Lonergan’s writings, even at their most theoretical, are themselves a set of spiritual exercises in the Ignatian tradition.

⁴*Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, 7.

⁵*Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, 8-9.

⁶*Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, 23.

⁷David Fleming, *A Contemporary Reading of St. Ignatius’ Spiritual Exercises* (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1976), 34.

2. ELECTION, DISCERNMENT, AND TRINITARIAN MYSTICISM

2.1 Two Treatments of Decision in Lonergan, Three Times of Decision in Ignatius

It is now a commonplace among Lonergan students that there are two quite distinct treatments of decision in Lonergan's writings. The first treatment finds its most complete exposition in chapter 18 of *Insight*, the second in chapter 2 of *Method in Theology*. In *Insight*, in Lonergan's own words, the good is "the intelligent and reasonable." A good decision is a decision that is consistent with what one *knows* to be true and good. The decision-making process is very similar to the cognitional process, adding only the further element of free choice. If there is a fourth level of consciousness in *Insight* – and there is no explicit mention of one – it would consist only of this further element of free choice. In the process, one assembles the data, one has a practical insight into what is to be done, one grasps that the evidence supports the practical insight, one judges that this is to be done, one freely chooses to do it. Again, the good is the intelligent and reasonable. There is no mention in *Insight* of judgments of value, except in chapter 20 in which Lonergan is discussing belief. In *Method in Theology*, on the other hand, the good is, as Lonergan says, a distinct notion – distinct from the intelligent and reasonable. This does not mean, obviously, that the good is the stupid and silly, but that it is intended in a kind of question that is distinct from the question for intelligence, What is it? and the question for judgment, Is it so? The question that intends the good is rather something like, Is this worthwhile? Is it truly or only apparently good? The good is aspired to in the intentional response of feeling to values. Possible values are apprehended in feelings. The judgment of value that knows the good proceeds from a discernment of these feelings in which possible values are apprehended, in order to determine which are the possible values that are apprehended by love and which are ambiguous from the standpoint of performative self-transcendence. When these judgments of value are made by a virtuous or authentic person with a good conscience, or even better by a person in love in an unqualified fashion, what is good is clearly known. The good is brought about by deciding and living up to one's decisions. And all of this belongs to the

fourth level of consciousness. Thus, there are significant differences between the two presentations of decision.

Now it is often thought that the treatment in *Method in Theology* represents an alternative position to the treatment in *Insight*, and so that the presentation of *Insight* should be discarded in favor of that which appears in *Method*. I have long resisted this position, even if Lonergan himself may have held it. Each of Lonergan's articulations of the dynamics of decision has its own limited validity. The two articulations complement one another. The first is not overshadowed by the second. Rather, they mark distinct times of making decisions. They are both permeated by love and grace. And the criteria of both accounts must be satisfied in every decision that we make.

The basis for my position is not found in Lonergan, but in Ignatius. Lonergan's two approaches to decision-making can be related to, mapped onto, Ignatius's times of election. In fact, Ignatius proposes "Three Times, In Each of Which a Sound and Good Election May Be Made."

The first time is when God our Lord so moves and attracts the will, that, without doubt or the power of doubting, such a devoted soul follows what has been pointed out to it, as St Paul and St Matthew did when they followed Christ our Lord.

The second time is when much light and knowledge is obtained by experiencing consolations and desolations, and by experience of the discernment of various spirits.

The third time is one of tranquility: when one considers, first, for what one is born, that is, to praise God our Lord, and to save one's soul; and when, desiring this, one chooses as the means to this end a kind or state of life within the bounds of the Church, in order that one may thereby be helped to serve God our Lord, and to save one's soul. I said a time of tranquility; that is, when the soul is not agitated by divers spirits, but enjoys the use of its natural powers freely and quietly.⁸

Ignatius goes on to specify two methods of making a decision in this third time, when one is not agitated by various "pulls and counterpulls" (to use Eric Voegelin's expression⁹) but enjoys the use of one's natural powers (presumably, something like experience, understanding, judgment, and decision) freely and

⁸*Spiritual Exercises* §§, 175-78.

⁹See Eric Voegelin, "The Gospel and Culture," in *Jesus and Man's Hope*, vol. 2, ed. D. C. Miller and D. Y. Hadidian (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, 1971), 59-101, at 66, 67, 68, 72.

quietly. In these third-time methods the criterion is found in what Lonergan would call the constituents of *rational* choice. And so these third-time methods are applications of the general form of decision-making that Lonergan presents in *Insight*, where the good is the intelligent and reasonable. But in another and major section of the Exercises Ignatius proposes “Rules for the Discernment of Spirits” that are to be employed in part (but only in part) when one is in the second time of election, when one is agitated by various pulls and counterpulls of affect apprehending various possible values or being repelled by possible anti-values. That second time corresponds, in fact, to the general form of decision-making that Lonergan presents in *Method in Theology*. And so Lonergan’s two presentations of the dynamics of arriving at a good decision correspond to the third and second times of making a good election in Ignatius’s presentation in the Spiritual Exercises.

Let me make the following four points. First, the times of decision that Ignatius proposes are exhaustive. Either God has moved one in such a way that one has no doubts as to what one is to do, and then one is in the first time, or God has not so moved one, and so one has questions, and then one is in either the second or the third time. In the latter case, either one is tranquil or one is agitated by various pulls and counterpulls. If one is agitated by various pulls and counterpulls, one is in the second time. One is not free to exercise one’s natural powers of intelligence and reason but must rely on various guidelines for discerning what is good and what is not. If one is not agitated, one is in the third time, and then one is free to employ one’s natural powers to arrive at judgments of value and decisions that, in Lonergan’s terms, will acknowledge particular goods and goods of order as genuine values precisely because they are possible objects of rational choice.

Second, there is a complementarity between the second and third times in Ignatius, or between the two presentations in Lonergan. That is, the judgment of value and the decision that one arrives at in Ignatius’s second time, by discerning pulls and counterpulls, must be able to be adjudicated as well by the criteria of intelligence, reason, and responsibility that are explicitly appealed to in the third time. And the judgments of value and decisions that are arrived at in the third time must produce the same “peace of a good conscience” on the part of a virtuous person that would result from the proper discernment of affective pulls and counterpulls in the second time.

Third, then, Lonergan’s account of judgments of value and decision in *Insight* present principal points of the general form of St Ignatius’s third time of

making decisions. This account explicitly prescind from any discussion of affective involvements, and so it at least implicitly presupposes that the person making a decision is not agitated in such a way that one is prevented from employing one's natural powers of experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding. In this account one's decisions are good decisions if in fact they are harmonious with what one knows to be true and good. Moral integrity is a matter of *generating decisions and consequent actions that are consistent with what one knows*, that is, that are consistent with the inner words of judgments of fact and judgments of value that one has sufficient reason to hold to be true. And if this is the case, then Lonergan's account in *Insight* would remain as permanently valid as Ignatius's account of the third time of election. It just would not be the only account, because it names only one of the times of making a good decision. Nor is this mode of decision in fact independent of grace and the gift of God's love. For while it is by employing one's natural powers of experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding that one arrives at the decision, still the consistent fidelity to the norms of those natural operations that is required if one is to be a person who makes good decisions is itself a function of God's gift of God's love. The decision-making processes that Lonergan outlines in chapter 18 of *Insight* are no more independent of the presence of grace than are the decisions that St Ignatius speaks about when he writes of the third time of election. It is the consolation of God's love that leaves one tranquil enough to exercise one's own attentiveness, intelligence, reasonableness, and responsibility in a consistent manner.

Fourth, the presentation that is found in *Method in Theology* is relevant, not to Ignatius's third time, but to his second time of election. For here it is self-transcendent affectivity, affectivity that matches the unrestricted reach of the notion of value, the affectivity of a person in love in an unqualified fashion, that provides the criteria for the decision. Which course of action reflects, embodies, incarnates the self-transcendent love that matches the reach of the transcendental notion of value? The answer to that question indicates the direction in which one is to go as one heads toward a judgment of value and a consequent decision. All of this is confirmed by the considerations that Ignatius places in the second week of the Exercises precisely in the context of heading toward the election: the Two Standards, the Three Classes of Persons, the Three Degrees of Humility. All are beckoning to the total response of self-transcendent love.

2.2 Trinitarian Mysticism

It is a matter of great interest, I think, that Lonergan's two accounts of decision provide the elements also of two distinct but complementary approaches to a psychological analogy for a systematic understanding of Trinitarian processions and relations. At this point the Trinitarian mysticism of Lonergan joins and advances the Trinitarian mysticism of St Ignatius. If I am right about the correspondence of Lonergan and Ignatius on times of decision, then Lonergan relates the Trinity to Ignatius's own moments for making decisions that proceed from authentic judgments of value.

In the first psychological analogy found in Lonergan's work, which is presented in intricate detail in the systematic part of his work *De Deo Trino*, the analogue in the creature is found in those moments of existential self-constitution in which we grasp the sufficiency of evidence regarding what it would be good for one to be, utter the judgment of value, "This is good," and proceed to decisions commensurate with that grasp of evidence and judgment of value. From the act of grasping the evidence there proceeds the act of judging value, and from the two together there proceeds the love that embraces the good and carries it out. So too in divine self-constitution, from the Father's grasp of the grounds for affirming the goodness of all that the Father is and knows, there proceeds the eternal Word of the Father saying Yes to it all, and from the Father and the Word together there proceeds the eternal Love that is the Holy Spirit. This theology of God's own self-constitution in knowledge, word, and love is informed by an analogy with human rational self-consciousness as Lonergan has understood it in *Insight*. One's self-appropriation of one's rational self-consciousness in the form in which it is presented in *Insight*, or again as it functions in St Ignatius's third time of election, will ultimately entail a recognition of those processes, those processions, as constituting an *image* of the Trinitarian processions themselves.

But in his later work Lonergan proposes a distinct psychological analogy for the Trinity, one that is more closely related to the account of decision in *Method in Theology* and so to St Ignatius's first and second times of election. Here is what he says:

The psychological analogy ... has its starting point in that higher synthesis of intellectual, rational, and moral consciousness that is the dynamic state of being-in-love. Such love manifests itself in its judgments of value. And the judgments are carried out in decisions that are acts of loving. Such is the analogy found in the creature.

Now in God the origin is the Father, in the New Testament named *ho Theos*, who is identified with *agapē* (1 John 4:8, 16). Such love expresses itself in its Word, its Logos, its *verbum spirans amorem*, which is a judgment of value. The judgment of value is sincere, and so it grounds the Proceeding Love that is identified with the Holy Spirit.¹⁰

Because moral integrity, according to the presentation in *Method in Theology*, is a function of generating the judgments of value of a person who is in love in an unqualified way, and as those judgments of value are carried out in decisions that are acts of loving, so the Father now is infinite and eternal being-in-love, an *agapē* that generates a Word, the eternal Yes that is the Son, a Word that breathes love, a Yes that grounds the Proceeding Love that is breathed forth as from *agapē* and from its manifestation in such a Word.

“Such is the analogy found in the creature,” Lonergan writes. Notice that he does not say, “Such is the analogy from nature.” In *De Deo Trino*, he repeats over and over again the affirmation of the First Vatican Council that we are able to attain an imperfect, analogical, developing, and most fruitful understanding of the divine mysteries by proceeding from analogies with what we know by natural knowledge. It is clear from this constant repetition of the Council that he intends the analogy that he is presenting in *De Deo Trino* to be an analogy from nature. Commentators on the two analogies that Lonergan offers, the earlier and the later, have remarked that, while the earlier analogy proceeds from below upward in human consciousness, the later analogy proceeds from above downward. But there is a much more important difference. Each of the analogies is an analogy found in the creature, but the earlier analogy is found in nature itself, in our natural powers of understanding uttering a word of assent and of love proceeding from understanding and word, while the created analogue in the second analogy is already in the supernatural order. To my knowledge, this has yet to be emphasized or even recognized in the literature around Lonergan’s Trinitarian theology. The dynamic state of being-in-love in an unqualified way is what theology has traditionally called sanctifying grace, and in Lonergan’s theology sanctifying grace is a created participation in and imitation of the active spiration of Father and Word lovingly breathing the Holy Spirit, while the habit of charity that flows from sanctifying grace is a created participation in and imitation of the passive spiration, the divine Proceeding Love, that is the Holy Spirit. More concretely for

¹⁰Bernard Lonergan, “Christology Today: Methodological Considerations,” in *A Third Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1985; London, Chapman, 1985), 93.

Christians, I think, sanctifying grace is a created participation in and imitation of the Incarnate Word, whose humanity is a participation in and imitation of the one he called "Abba, Father." And what is this "Father?" What would it be to participate in the Incarnate Son, who himself is an imitation of "Abba"? "... love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you; in this way you will be children of your Father in heaven, for he causes his sun to rise on the bad as well as the good, and his rain to fall on honest and dishonest alike [Matthew 5:44-45]." As the Holy Spirit proceeds from the *agapē* that is the Father and the Word the Father utters in saying Yes to God's own goodness, so the habit of charity – a love that extends to enemies and that gives sunshine and rain to all alike – flows from our created participation in and imitation of that active spiration, that is, from the entitative change of the grace that makes us not only pleasing to God, *gratia gratum faciens*, but somehow imitative of the divine goodness. "You must therefore be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect [Matthew 5:48]." In this participation and imitation, this mimesis, if you will, we are moved beyond the otherwise endless cycle of violence, recrimination, judgment, blame, accusation, murder, hate, and false religion. So this habit of grace sets up a state of grace, even as it is set up by the state of grace, where the state of grace is a social situation, an intersubjective set of relationships, where the founding subjects, as it were, are the three divine subjects, and where grace prevails because they have come to dwell in us and with us.

In the first, natural analogy, the analogy that recognizes in human nature an image of the Trinitarian processions, love flows from knowledge and word, as Lonergan emphasizes over and over again in *De Deo Trino*. In the second, supernatural analogy, the analogy that recognizes that grace makes us not only images of but also *participants* in the Trinitarian relations, the dynamic state of being-in-love precedes our knowledge, and it gives rise to the knowledge that is known as faith, where faith is understood as the knowledge born of being-in-love with God: more precisely, the grasp of evidence that is possible only for such a lover and the judgments of value that proceed from that grasp. But more radically, it must be said, here too love flows from knowledge, but not from our knowledge. It flows, rather, from the *verbum spirans amorem*, the Word breathing love, that is the image of the eternal Father, the Word who himself proceeds from eternity as the Father's judgment of value pronouncing an infinite Yes to God's own goodness. And in this case the psychological analogue for the Trinitarian processions, while it is still a created analogue, is no longer a natural analogue. For the dynamic state of being-in-love that is the analogue for the divine Father is

itself the supernatural created habitual grace that we have known as sanctifying grace. And so the psychological analogy now provides, not simply an image of the Trinitarian processions, but a participation in them and *an imitation, a mimesis, of them.*

And so to return for a moment to the times of election: (1) in the third time, we employ our natural powers of experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding to arrive at good decisions, and in so doing we are embodying the natural analogue for the divine processions, where we are images of the Trinity; (2) in the second time, we are discerning the pulls and counterpulls of affective resonances, so as to arrive at decisions that will promote in us not only the image of the Trinity but participations in the divine being-in-love uttering the eternal Yes and with that Yes breathing the eternal Proceeding Love, and so that will enable us to be not only images of but also participants in the divine processions; and (3) in the first time, that dynamic state of being-in-love and its word of value judgment are so dominant that the loving decisions and actions flow spontaneously forth from them in a way that admits no doubt as to where they come from or whose life is being reflected in them: "I live, now not I, but Christ lives in me" (Galatians 2:20).

3. CONSOLATION WITHOUT A CAUSE

This brings us quite spontaneously and organically to the discussion of consolation without a cause, which I think we can discuss quite briefly. Lonergan refers approvingly to Karl Rahner's understanding of Ignatian consolation without a cause as consolation with a content but without an apprehended object. David Fleming's contemporary reading of the Spiritual Exercises seems to support this interpretation. "We know the experience of having certain thoughts, achievements, or events which bring about a feeling of great consolation in our lives. We also know the effect of another person or persons whose very presence or conversation can give us joy. But we can more readily attribute our consolation directly to the touch of God when there is no thought, no event, no person – in general, no object of any sort – which seems to be the source of such a movement ... in these cases, we should be aware that God is truly said to be the direct source of all our consolation."¹¹

¹¹Fleming, *A Contemporary Reading of St. Ignatius' Spiritual Exercises*, 88-89.

What is perhaps more important than Lonergan's agreement with Rahner on this point is what he does with this position. For he relates this understanding of consolation without a cause to his own reversal of what had become almost taken for granted in both the Augustinian and the Thomist traditions, namely, that nothing can be loved unless it is first known, *nihil amatum nisi praecognitum*. Of the Scholastic dictum Lonergan writes:

It used to be said, *Nihil amatum nisi praecognitum*, Knowledge precedes love. The truth of this tag is the fact that ordinarily operations on the fourth level of intentional consciousness presuppose and complement corresponding operations on the other three. There is a minor exception to this rule inasmuch as people do fall in love, and that falling in love is something disproportionate to its causes, conditions, occasions, antecedents. For falling in love is a new beginning, an exercise of vertical liberty in which one's world undergoes a new organization. But the major exception to the Latin tag is God's gift of his love flooding our hearts. Then we are in the dynamic state of being in love. But who it is we love, is neither given nor as yet understood. Our capacity for moral self-transcendence has found a fulfillment that brings deep joy and profound peace. Our love reveals to us values we had not appreciated, values of prayer and worship, of repentance and belief. But if we would know what is going on within us, if we would learn to integrate it with the rest of our living, we have to inquire, investigate, seek counsel. So it is that in religious matters love precedes knowledge and, as that love is God's gift, the very beginning of faith is due to God's grace.¹²

A consolation that has a content but no apprehended object is correlated with a reversal of a long-standing philosophical and theological tradition, with the priority of love over knowledge, with the possibility of falling in love without yet knowing who it is that we are in love with. Carlo Maria Cardinal Martini, who presented the keynote address in the Lonergan centenary celebration at the Gregorian University in November of 2004, made a great deal over this reversal in *Method in Theology*, finding it to be the potential source of a number of radical transformations in the church's pastoral theology and practice.¹³ At least one of those transformations is clear in *Method in Theology* itself: "On this showing, ...

¹²Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 122-23.

¹³Carlo Maria Cardinal Martini, S.J., "Bernard Lonergan al Servizio della Chiesa," *La Civiltà Cattolica* 156 (2005): 329-41, subsequently translated by Richard Liddy and published in *Theological Studies* 66, 3 (2005): 517-26: "Bernard Lonergan at the Service of the Church."

the ancient problem of the salvation of non-Christians [is] greatly reduced.”¹⁴ That is, the reversal is itself the source of the highly promising potential that is found in Lonergan’s work for the development of a Christian, and indeed Catholic, understanding of the dialogue of world religions.

Let me add one further comment, one that I believe is completely harmonious with what St Ignatius says about consolation without a cause. Lonergan learned from Dietrich von Hildebrand the distinction between intentional and nonintentional feelings. In nonintentional feelings “the relation of the feeling to the cause or goal is simply that of effect to cause, of trend to goal. The feeling itself does not presuppose and arise out of perceiving, imagining, representing the cause or goal.”¹⁵ Intentional feelings, though, “answer to what is intended, apprehended, represented.”¹⁶ Now in *Method in Theology* all of the examples that Lonergan gives of nonintentional states or trends are somewhat homely affairs: fatigue, irritability, bad humor, anxiety, hunger, thirst, sexual discomfort. But, I have often wondered, if consolation without a cause is consolation that has a content but that is not a response to an apprehended object, then is it not, in its originary moment, nonintentional? This does not mean that it is without direction. It does mean that it is a supernatural instance, a supernatural transformation, of that upwardly *but indeterminately* directed dynamism that Lonergan calls finality. Is this perhaps what Ignatius is getting at when he distinguishes the actual moment of this consolation from the subsequent periods in which one begins to work out plans or actions or to make resolutions? That is, is Ignatius suggesting something like a distinction of nonintentional and intentional moments and the need for discernment once the dynamic has become intentional? Well, yes and no. Such a conclusion makes sense at least in that we are talking about a consolation that is not a response to an apprehended object. And yet it does not ring completely true to our experience of such consolation. Lonergan provides what we need to solve the conundrum. Since this consolation comes from God and is the fruit of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Word, at its source it is God’s own response to God as God apprehends God. But we do not know that simply by experiencing it. I have already stated that this consolation without a cause *does* proceed from knowledge; but the knowledge is not ours; it is identical with the eternal Father and the

¹⁴*Method in Theology*, 123.

¹⁵*Method in Theology*, 30.

¹⁶*Method in Theology*, 30.

Father's only begotten Son, the eternal Word of the Father, the *verbum spirans amorem*.

Perhaps there is some parallel, even some analogy, that obtains between these two dimensions, human and divine, of the one experience of being-in-love in an unqualified fashion and the interaction or interrelationship of the two consciousnesses, human and divine, of the one person of the incarnate Word of God. But that is a matter for further exploration.

4. RULES FOR THINKING WITH THE CHURCH

With respect to Lonergan's relation to the Ignatian rules for thinking with the church, I wish to take a position that will not paper over what I think are the differences between the explicit statements of Ignatius and the developments found in Lonergan's latest writings regarding authority in general and, by implication at least, church authority in particular. But I also want to take a position that acknowledges the continuity. In all fairness to both Lonergan and Ignatius, the topic is one that could demand another paper at least as long as this one. I can do nothing more than indicate general lines of inquiry and direction.

First, then, no one is second to Lonergan in fidelity to the defined dogmas of the church. In addition, his devotion to the papacy is manifested in the fact that his work on grace and *verbum* in Aquinas and on understanding in *Insight* are two parts of his own creative response to what he experienced as a vocation awakened by a papal invitation to theologians, namely, Pope Leo XIII's invitation in *Aeterni Patris* "vetera novis augere et perficere," "to augment and complete the old with the new." These attitudes of fidelity and devotion are profoundly Ignatian and profoundly Jesuit. Lonergan's orthodoxy and fidelity were acknowledged during the papacy of Pope Paul VI, who named him an original member of the International Theological Commission and a consultant to the Vatican Secretariat for Non-Believers. I have personal memories of his distress over denials of the divinity of Christ, the Trinity, and the resurrection of Jesus in some contemporary Catholic and even Jesuit theological writing and biblical scholarship. His description of himself in *Method in Theology* as a Catholic theologian with quite conservative views on church dogma is accurate. I was told during my visit in Rome for the centenary celebrations at the Gregorian University that the papal greetings sent to this meeting from the Vatican Secretary of State and the concluding lecture by Cardinal Cottier, who had been the official papal

theologian, were both semiofficial endorsements of the orthodoxy and fidelity of Lonergan's work.

The faculty of Regis College, in its faculty days at the opening of the current academic year, reflected on a recent allocution of Fr. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, the Superior General of the Society of Jesus, on the fidelity that is required of us even today to the spirit of Ignatius's rules for thinking with the church. My principal contribution to that faculty discussion was to indicate a bit of perplexity as to why we were not focusing primarily on the issues of dogma and creed, on matters having to do with the divinity of Christ, the Incarnation, the Trinity, and the Resurrection. These are the areas, I submit, where there can be no departure or difference from the teaching of the church on the part of anyone who would exercise an Ignatian vocation within the church. These are the principal areas where the meaning must remain permanent even as it might be transposed into different idioms. But there are other items that *do* remain open, and the Ignatian response in the face of these more open issues is a more nuanced matter. Please bear with me as I try to articulate in a shorthand way just what these nuances entail, as I believe Bernard Lonergan would understand them.

First, Lonergan is clear that the notion of dogma presented by Vatican I must be interpreted quite strictly: dogma as spoken of by Vatican I, Lonergan says, is intrinsically characterized as stating something that could not be known by us at all unless it had been revealed by God. It is this that Lonergan invests with a permanence of valid meaning.

Second, at several points in his later, post-*Method* development there seem to be subtle attempts to demythologize the notion of authority. And I use the term "demythologize" with some – authority! That is to say, when Lonergan handed me an offprint of his short but trenchant article, "Dialectic of Authority,"¹⁷ he made what I found at the time to be a somewhat cryptic remark to the effect that perhaps much thinking about authority reflects mythic consciousness. When I asked him to elaborate, he declined, but pointed to the article. In this article Lonergan defines authority as legitimate power and insists that legitimacy is conferred by authenticity. Without authenticity, there may be power but the power is not legitimate, and so there is no authority. In a similar vein, in the paper "Religious Knowledge,"¹⁸ he asks about the source of genuine religious

¹⁷ Bernard Lonergan, "Dialectic of Authority," in *A Third Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1985; London: Chapman, 1985), 5-12.

¹⁸ Bernard Lonergan, "Religious Knowledge," in *A Third Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1985; London: Chapman, 1985), 129-45.

conviction. More precisely, he asks, How can one tell whether one's appropriation of religion is genuine or unauthentic and, more radically, how can one tell whether one is not appropriating a religious tradition that has become unauthentic? After Kierkegaard, I submit, we cannot avoid facing such wrenching questions. Lonergan's answer relies not on any external authority, even the highest in the Catholic religious world, but on the inner conviction of authenticity generated by self-transcendence. This seems, it must be said, quite different from what is explicitly conveyed in Ignatius's rules for thinking with the church (though perhaps not in the rest of the Spiritual Exercises). And the difference is due in part to the fact that we do live in a very different world from that of St Ignatius.

Third, among Catholic, indeed orthodox Catholic, thinkers, none is clearer on this difference of worlds than René Girard, and I think Girard could be used to complement Lonergan at this point. While Lonergan is the authoritative source on the difference between classicist and historical consciousness, Girard is the more complete thinker when it comes to the constitution of mythic consciousness. If much contemporary thinking about authority is still a matter of mythic consciousness, perhaps Girard even more than Lonergan has alerted us to the danger that lies therein. For the danger is not simply in the order of cognition. Mythic consciousness for Girard provides cover stories for human violence. The modern world, the post-Renaissance world, even in its pre-Enlightenment phase, and so even in the period of St Ignatius, no longer produced myths in the strict sense of the term. Nevertheless, it had not yet completely moved beyond unconsciously perpetuating victimage mechanisms that are covered over in myths. These victimage mechanisms are but present in much more explicit form in what Girard calls the medieval and modern religious texts of persecution.¹⁹ The papacy of John Paul II took the enormous step of acknowledging that this has happened in the history of the church and of asking forgiveness for the church's own complicity in violence. Still, it must be acknowledged that the church is *semper reformanda*, always in need of reformation and forgiveness, that the church of the future will ask forgiveness for the church's *present* complicity in violence, and that the maintenance of a system that uses authority without authenticity to control thought and expression, wherever that occurs, is a remnant of mythic

¹⁹See René Girard, *The Scapegoat*, trans. Yvonne Freccero (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1986). The point is well made in the first two chapters.

consciousness. A remnant such, while it is no longer believed by most, still exerts its powerful influence in ways that are at times very harmful.

Fourth, if I am correct that Lonergan is thoroughly Ignatian in what he writes about decision, and in fact that he provides only further differentiations of dynamics of decision that are already present in Ignatius's text, then his work is actually advancing the positions that are already present in the work of the founder of his religious order. And perhaps this gives us the key to the manner in which Lonergan can teach us a genuine Ignatian response to ecclesial authority in matters that are nondogmatic: advance the positions. I'm sure that Lonergan would not find himself in complete agreement with everything that Pope Leo XIII wrote in *Aeterni Patri*; in fact the encyclical probably was at variance with what Lonergan eventually came to recognize as an adequate appropriation of Aquinas. But that was never Lonergan's issue with the pope. He advanced what he found salutary in the encyclical and made no comments at all about what he found limited. And this shows a characteristic that marked all of his reading of other authors, not just of popes. "What are they onto? Go for the insights!" he said once, in response to a question about reading other authors. Why can't we do that also with popes?! As David Tracy said to me in a personal conversation, Lonergan was an extremely generous reader. This too is very Ignatian: every good Christian, Ignatius tells us at the beginning of the Exercises, will be more ready to accept than to reject the proposition of another. It is a question of readiness, of attitude, of what Lonergan calls antecedent willingness. There is a twofold methodological principle that Lonergan applies to the reading of other authors. The primary directive is always, Advance the positions. The other directive, Reverse the counterpositions, is, I would maintain, secondary. The basic Ignatian directive is, Love the church and love those who speak for it. Go for their insights. Find out what they are onto. The rest, in time, will drop away without a lot of bother. That is the Ignatian thrust as it would be reinterpreted by Bernard Lonergan. Lonergan's very advance of the Ignatian positions to the point of helping us appropriate the dynamics of the authenticity generated by self-transcendence can be the source of the reversal of the mythic remnants even in the Ignatian text, a reversal that can be done without any fanfare at all if we follow the guidelines of the positive thrust toward self-transcendent love. Reversing counterpositions is always secondary to advancing positions. Expect to find truth, and be disappointed if you do not, rather than expecting to find nonsense, and being surprised if you find something worthwhile. Make the texts you read *better* than they really are.

Let me return for one more moment to Girard, though. For what I am advocating is not easy, and it is particularly difficult if inauthentic exercise of authority has been harmful to one's own well-being, or to that of one's loved ones, if it has marginalized or victimized one or treated one as a scapegoat. The greatest temptation in that case is to engage in reverse scapegoating vis-à-vis the churches and their authorities. This is simply what René Girard calls mimetic violence. With the grace that establishes us in love, it is possible for us to acknowledge injuries while not responding in kind. The one whom we *are* to imitate, the one who himself imitated the Father, who lets his sun to shine on the good and the bad and his rain to fall on the just and the unjust, himself shows the way: "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." As Girard writes at the very end of his book *The Scapegoat*, "The time has come for us to forgive one another. If we wait any longer, there will not be time enough."

To conclude, I began by speaking of two movements in my paper: influences from Ignatius on Lonergan, and contributions of Lonergan to the development of the Ignatian charism. I hope I have offered some evidence that a fruitful interpretation of Lonergan's entire life's work would regard it as a massive advance on many fronts of the positions on authentic religion and genuine spirituality that are to be found in the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius Loyola.

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS
AND LONERAGAN'S NOTION OF
ELEMENTAL MEANING

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I

AN HOUR'S DRIVE east from Seattle, near Snoqualmie Pass in the heavily forested western side of the Cascade mountain range, there is a short trail leading to a clearing on the bank of a fast-rushing, steep-falling stream called Denny's Creek. In my late teens, friends and I used to make the drive on a sunny afternoon to sit and talk and maybe picnic at this secluded place. On one of these occasions, I became captivated by a spot in the stream where the downward-rushing water near the far bank, about ten feet away, dashed into a rock and sprayed up into the air, the water-droplets flashing in the sunlight in constantly changing movement, while the dark green water below coursed around the side of the rock facing me in a swift descending curve. My attention drifted away from my friends and their talk as I became ever more absorbed in watching the glittering bursting into air of the water-droplets, always the same and always different, with the colors of diffracted sunlight in the spray contrasting with the solid green water flowing around the rock. I became fascinated; I watched and watched with growing discernment of detail, entranced and focused, moved and excited by this beauty. I recall watching for a long time, though afterwards I said nothing about it to my friends.

What was I thinking while I watched? Well, in the usual sense of the word, I wasn't thinking. I was watching and feeling and focusing and dwelling. I had fallen in love with this show of beauty, and I focused my whole consciousness on it, seeing its various elements more and more distinctly and

their unity more and more fully, in an increasing tension of absorption. I opened myself to it and it entered me. I can visualize it to this day.

Absorbed in my loving and watching and dwelling, I wasn't trying to figure out anything. I wasn't thinking about the power of the stream, or wondering whether the spray would photograph well. And I wasn't trying to express in words, to myself or others, what I was experiencing. I didn't care what it meant. But it was still an experience rich with meaning. What kind of meaning? The kind that Lonergan calls *elemental meaning*. Let's examine what he means by this term.

Elemental meaning is meaning bound to the level of experience, where something's meaning and its embodiment or concrete presentation are indissolubly one. The meaning is encountered in the experience and cannot be separated *from* the experience: one must have the experience to discover its meaning. Lonergan uses the example of a smile. When a smile, he says, acts simply as a spontaneous intersubjective communication of meaning, its meaning is carried and perceived in the facial movement that reveals one subject to another. It is embodied meaning, and it communicates nonconceptually. Or, for another kind of example, consider the meaning of a favorite movement from some symphony – say, the Adagietto from Mahler's Fifth Symphony. Its meaning cannot be separated from the hearing of it. The music certainly mediates meaning, but that meaning is nonconceptual. Elemental meaning is precisely that meaning that interests or moves or fascinates one but where there is no distinction between the "meaning" and what is "meant." If you try to explain to someone in words the meaning the Adagietto has for you, you have moved beyond elemental meaning to linguistic, conceptual meaning. And unless you are very careful you will sound like an idiot.¹

Now although engaging elemental meaning is bound to the level of experience, this does not mean that the other levels of conscious intentionality are not also engaged – but they are engaged in a subsidiary way, as informing the appreciation of elemental meaning in the flow of experience. To return to my introductory anecdote, certainly not only my sensing, but my intelligence too, was intensely engaged in my appreciation of that beauty of stream, rock, and sunlit spray. That is, my intelligent subjectivity was apprehending the intelligibility in

¹Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972), 59-61, 74. On "elemental meaning," see *Method*, 62-67, 73-76, and Bernard Lonergan, "Art" (chap. 9), in *Topics in Education*. Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, vol. 10 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 215-17.

the data, but, in Lonergan's words, I was engaging that "intelligibility in a more concrete form than is got hold of on the conceptual level."² And in that absorbed apprehending, it can also be said that in some sense I was, as an intentional subject, simply "one with" the sensed and intelligible pattern I was experiencing. Lonergan uses the language of Aristotle to describe this identity of subject and object. He writes: "As Aristotle put it, the sensible in act and the sense in act are one and the same. . . . Similarly . . . intelligibility in act coincides with intelligence in act." The point, he continues, "is that meaning has an initial stage, which is the Aristotelian identity . . . and by *elemental meaning* I mean that first stage." Thus, he writes, "the subject in act *is* the object in act on the level of elemental meaning." And so – as I suspected in my own teenage way – my contemplative and loving absorption in that mystery of beauty at Denny's Creek was an experience of a kind of union, or communion.³

The notion of elemental meaning is important to Lonergan's philosophy for a number of reasons. As we've seen, it informs his analysis of *spontaneous intersubjective communication*; and it is also central to his notion of *incarnate meaning*, where a person or a group expresses meaning that is embodied in, and inseparable from, their deeds, lives, and destinies. But there are two other contexts of analysis in which Lonergan relies on the notion of elemental meaning that are most relevant to our theme of considering the poetry and thought of Gerard Manley Hopkins. The first of these is Lonergan's account of *symbolic meaning*; the second, and most important here, is his *examination of the nature of art*.⁴

First, then, Lonergan uses the notion of elemental meaning to explain the kind of meaning that pertains to the deep symbols of the psyche, symbols that effectively operate at a level below conscious objectification and analysis. These are the powerful symbols of dreams, as well as the images and words that in our waking hours subliminally reveal and release our organic and prereflective psychic energies to intentional, reflective consciousness. They serve our basic need for what Lonergan calls "internal communication." That is, we require symbols operative in the psyche below the level of our mind's conceptualized concerns to mediate between, and unify, our bodily energies, our spontaneous

²"Art," 219.

³*Method in Theology*, 74; "Art," 216, 217 (emphasis added).

⁴On these four contexts in which Lonergan employs the notion of *elemental meaning*, see Thomas Joseph McPartland, "Horizon Analysis and Historiography: The Contribution of Bernard Lonergan Toward a Critical Historiography" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Washington, 1976), 86-89.

feelings and imaginings, our orientation to values, and our thinking. Through the effective functioning of such symbols, Lonergan explains, intentional consciousness secures the collaboration of bodily and psychic vitality.⁵

What I am calling here the “deep” symbols of the psyche are dense with affect and rich in multiplicity of meanings. They motivate and energize us, and by awakening and sustaining feelings, they orient us to values, including the ultimate value, which is the divine mystery. But they can also frighten us, obstruct us in our thinking, and misguide us in our conscious living. As Lonergan puts it, the meaning of such symbols “fulfils its function in the imagining or perceiving subject as his conscious intentionality *develops or goes astray or both . . .*” The power and importance of such deep, prereflective symbols in our lives is obvious; and their meaning is *elemental* precisely because such symbolic meaning is not objectified, not scrutinized and judged – though to some degree it may be brought to light through dream interpretation or through the help of a capable therapist. But “[t]o explain the symbol,” Lonergan writes, “is to go beyond the symbol,” and this is “to effect the transition from an elemental meaning in an image or percept to a linguistic [that is, a conceptualized or defined] meaning.”⁶

Finally, and most important for our concerns, Lonergan relies on the notion of elemental meaning for his explication of the nature and purposes of art. We get a hint of this in his definition of art. Art, he writes, “is the objectification of a *purely experiential pattern*.”⁷ In other words, art is the expression – indeed it is the carefully crafted and composed, idealized expression – of a significant *experience of elemental meaning* on the part of an artist. In the artwork, the artist has created a concrete object – consisting of musical tones, or wood or stone, or paint, or bodily movements, or words – whose *form* is a pattern of internal relations that is isomorphic with the idealized pattern of the artist’s original experience. This artwork invites one to reenact, to reincarnate, the central moment and implications of the experience that inspired it. Thus, an experience of elemental meaning is both the origin of art, and also basic to the *appreciation* of

⁵*Method in Theology*, 66-67; on symbols, see 64-74.

⁶*Method in Theology*, 67. For a discussion of elemental meaning and the crucial function of elemental symbols in the psyche, in the context of an analysis of depth psychology and of “psychic self-appropriation,” and also as a dimension of both philosophical anthropology and theological foundations, see Robert M. Doran, *Theology and the Dialectics of History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 653-80.

⁷See “Art,” 211-22 (emphasis added).

art, since the proper apprehension of a work of art is a trying out, a participating in, the experience expressed in the artwork.⁸

Lonergan explains that, in stating that art objectifies a “purely experiential pattern,” the word “purely” refers to “the exclusion of alien patterns that instrumentalize experience.” That is, artistic creation and appreciation are not *for* anything, in the sense of getting on with the practical affairs of daily living, or with the intellectual concerns of study, and so on. Art is a liberation or release from all such concerns, a freeing up of the flow of consciousness in order to “explore possibilities of fuller living in a richer world.” An artwork, thus, is not an *explanation* of anything, but an *exploration* of a way of seeing, or of hearing, or of shaping one’s living, expressed in the prereflective, concrete language of symbols. “The symbolic meaning of the work of art is immediate,” Lonergan writes, and its concrete, symbolic immediacy is what allows us to experience it as elemental, rather than conceptual, meaning.⁹

The concrete language of symbols, as we have noted, is dense with feeling, and rich with multiplicity of meanings. As Lonergan observes, the artist “does not care how many different meanings one gives to his work or finds in it”; the more meaning the symbols communicate, the better. And it is just this overdetermination of meaning that enables artistic symbols, at their most profound, to suggest the unbounded depths of beauty and being that constitute the “plus” of meaning that is divine mystery. When we slip into the experiential pattern and respond sensitively to a powerful work of art – listening to a symphony by Mozart or Mahler, viewing a painting by Bellini or Van Gogh, ascending the broad staircase in the Louvre that leads up to the towering marble figure of the Nike of Samothrace – our encounter with its elemental meaning can move us to the depths, can open and transform our horizon of feeling and imagining – can even lead to conversion – *precisely because* it is meaning not yet fixed or limited to some conceptual category or definition. Elemental meaning *precedes* definition, and that is exactly what enables it to feelingly evoke the “undefined surplus of significance and momentousness” that mysteriously permeates and transcends all the things of this world.¹⁰

One might ask: what is the role of *insight* in the artist’s creation of an objectification of a purely experiential pattern? Lonergan explains: “The process

⁸“Art,” 218-19.

⁹“Art,” 213, 217, 219.

¹⁰“Art,” 220, 222; Bernard Lonergan, *Insight*. Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, vol. 3 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 556.

of [artistic] objectifying is analogous to the process from [an] act of understanding to [a conceptual] definition.” As a definition conceptually expresses what we have grasped in an insight, so “the purely experiential pattern becomes objectified, expressed, in a work of art.” But the act of understanding in the artistic process, Lonergan writes, is a matter of the artist’s having “insight into the elemental meaning”; and this is a quite distinctive type of insight. It is, Lonergan explains, a “grasp of the commanding form [in the experience] that has to be expanded, worked out, developed, and [a] subsequent process of working out, adjusting, correcting, completing the initial insight.”¹¹ Notice: the “commanding form” grasped in the initial insight is a pattern first encountered in the artist’s originating experience, and then expressed in the concreteness of artistic symbols, such as musical notes, colors, shapes. At no point need the artist look for or require a *conceptual definition* of what the pattern means. Think of the first musical phrase of Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony. Its meaning exists on the level of the experienced and objectified pattern, and as Lonergan states, this pattern “is not a conceptual pattern, and it *cannot be* conceptualized.”¹² Think of Van Gogh’s “Starry Night.” As a viewer, to conceptualize its meaning is to leave the symbolic, concrete realm of art, and to transform elemental into conceptual meaning. And now, of course, you are no longer exploring possibilities of fuller living in a richer world, but being an art critic – which all art lovers become, to some degree.

Now, the purpose of this paper is to use Lonergan’s notion of elemental meaning to explore and illuminate some of the poetry and some of the critical aesthetic concepts of Gerard Manley Hopkins, the only Jesuit who was also a great poet. An Englishman, Hopkins’s dates – 1844 to 1889 – place him firmly in the Victorian era, but his experimentalism in verse often causes him to be viewed and anthologized as a precursor to modernism. Establishing his proper place in literary history is, however, irrelevant to our concerns. To begin, we need only recall Lonergan’s account of the role of elemental meaning in the creation and proper apprehension of works of art, and its presence in the deep symbols of the psyche that can awaken us to the highest values.

My aim is threefold. First, I want to show how Hopkins was aware of, and worked to articulate, the fact that the origins of his art lay in intense experiences

¹¹“Art,” 218; *Method*, 63-64.

¹²“Art,” 219 (emphasis added). Lonergan writes in *Insight*: “The artist establishes his insights, not by proof or verification, but by skilfully embodying them in colours and shapes, in sounds and movements, in the unfolding situations and actions of fiction. . . . [Art] is an expression of the human subject outside the limits of adequate intellectual formulation or appraisal” (208).

of what Lonergan calls elemental meaning. Second, I want to indicate that Hopkins was always attending to the power of the symbolic use of language in poetry to express and evoke the presence of the invisible God in the natural world. And third, I hope to show why it might be reasonably argued that no great English poet of the last few centuries strove as hard as Hopkins (although Dylan Thomas may be a contender) to use the very *sounds and rhythms and musical patterning of verbal language* to make a poem an opportunity to encounter the “commanding form” of the poet’s originating experience.

II

Hopkins was raised an Anglican but, while at Oxford when he was twenty-two, he distressed his parents and most of his instructors by converting to Catholicism, being received into the church by none other than John Henry Newman, with whom he had discussed his emerging religious questions and convictions. Two years later, he entered the Society of Jesus, and – feeling an irresolvable conflict between his strong aesthetic propensities and ambitions, on the one hand, and his spiritual calling and duty, on the other – celebrated his entry into Jesuit life in part by burning his own copies of all the poems he had written up to that time. After three years of philosophical studies, some desultory periods of teaching, and finally three years of theological studies at St. Beuno’s College in North Wales, he was ordained a priest at age thirty-three. There followed a sequence of assignments in London, Liverpool, Glasgow, Oxford, and elsewhere, before he took up his last assignment in Dublin at age forty. This was as chair of classics and teacher of Greek and Latin at University College. His distaste for Ireland and lack of sympathy for the Irish political cause, and his nostalgia for England, together with his chronic melancholy and the grinding duties of his teaching position which filled him with frustration and anxiety over time tediously spent, wore him down emotionally and caused his health to decline; it was by far the darkest period of his life. He died in Dublin of typhoid five years after his arrival.

Though he had begun writing poetry again seven years after becoming a Jesuit, he showed his poems only to a few friends – among them the poet Robert Bridges – who often failed to understand or appreciate them, and none were published during Hopkins’s lifetime. Bridges, who published sixteen of the poems in various anthologies during the decades between Hopkins’s death in 1889 and the First World War, hazarded the publication of a first collection of Hopkins’s

verse only in 1918. And it was only with the publication of a second, enlarged and corrected, edition in 1930, edited by Charles Williams, that the literary world began to take note of one of the most brilliant and inventive poets of the English language.

So much for a few bare facts of biography. But it is Hopkins's temperament and his artistic viewpoints and achievements that I wish to discuss. And the key to understanding these is to appreciate the profound conflict within him between his unusually keen sensitivity to and passionate response to the beauty he found in the natural world – from early on expressed in drawings, journals, and poetry – and his severe and demanding sense of religious duty to honor the God who transcends nature, a duty that for years he believed would be undermined by indulging his aesthetic and artistic passions. To put it simply, he was by temperament both an aesthete (without the decadent connotation of that word), and an ascetic. The great accomplishment, the great victory, of his personal development was the resolution of this conflict within him. Out of that resolution flowed the great poetry of his maturity.

As mentioned, for seven years after becoming a Jesuit he abjured the writing of poetry; though as he taught and read, he continually studied and thought about the structural possibilities of verse, developing his own theories about rhythm, rhyme, meter, and the meanings conveyable through verbal music. In 1875, his desire to write verse was suddenly and grandly liberated from frustration when his superior at St. Beuno's in Wales suggested that he commemorate in verse the recent tragic wrecking of a ship, the *Deutschland*, in which five Franciscan nuns who had been expelled from Germany for religious reasons had perished, along with many others on board. The resulting poem, *The Wreck of the Deutschland*, was a thirty-five verse explosion of creative fervor, spiritual intensity, imaginal and syntactical density, emotional power, and poetic idiosyncrasy that put into practice ideas about verse that had been forming and fermenting in Hopkins for years. Not coincidentally, Hopkins had by this time reached a point in his philosophical and spiritual studies where he felt he *could* justify, theologically, his profound love of nature and the exercise of his poetic talents to communicate the beauty and value of created things. This new and liberating conviction, resulting in a major if not total resolution between the aesthetic and ascetic sides of his personality, can be traced to three principal sources.

First, from his teenage years and throughout his Oxford period, Hopkins had found inspiration and a fully companionable spirit in the great, and greatly influential, nineteenth-century aesthetician and author John Ruskin. Ruskin taught

that all beauty in nature was the expression and sign of divinity, and that the development of ever-more discerning aesthetic perception was a training not only in perceiving real theophanies, but also a moral and spiritual training, through its motivating the lover and seer of beauty to love and honor the beauty, glory, and goodness of God.¹³

But then came the obstacle of Hopkins's conviction that indulging his desire to compose poems, along with the springs of that desire, were incompatible with his religious duty as a Catholic and a Jesuit. This obstacle was overcome in large part through his study of two theological authorities: the founder of the Jesuit order, St. Ignatius of Loyola, and the thirteenth-century Scholastic theologian and philosopher John Duns Scotus. From the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius, Hopkins drew the crucial message that the created world in all its particularity is the gift and expression of God through his Word, the Logos who is Christ; that all of nature is therefore, as it were, "Christed"; that all patterns of beauty in nature are ontologically self-expressions of Christ; and that the principal duty of persons is to praise and serve God through the proper use of creation. In this way, as David Anthony Downes puts it in his book *The Ignatian Personality of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, "to see life and see it whole became for Hopkins to see Christ in every particular of experience."¹⁴ To love and praise nature in poetry could in itself, therefore, be seen as an aspect of religious service, and Hopkins's talent for doing so could be regarded as a gift from God to be exercised and developed, not left frustrated and unused.

Regarding the impact of Scotus on Hopkins, and Hopkins's finding in his writings a philosophical and theological grounding for exercising his desire to glorify both God and nature through his poetry, I will rely on this brief and effective summary by F. R. Leavis:

Hopkins' religious interests are bound up with the presence in his poetry of a vigour of mind that puts him in another poetic world from the other Victorians. It is a vitality of thought, a vigour of the thinking intelligence, that is at the same time *a vitality of concreteness*. The relation between this kind of poetic life and his religion manifests itself plainly in his addiction to Duns Scotus, whom, rather than St. Thomas, traditionally

¹³Philip A. Ballinger, *The Poem as Sacrament: The Theological Aesthetics of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, Louvain Theological and Pastoral Monographs 26 (Louvain: Peeters Press, 2000), 33.

¹⁴David Anthony Downes, *The Ignatian Personality of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, 2nd ed. (Lanham: University Press of America, 1990), 21; quoted in Ballinger, *The Poem as Sacrament*, 77.

indicated for a Jesuit, he significantly embraced as his own philosopher. Of the philosophy of Duns Scotus it must suffice here to say that it lays a peculiar stress on the particular and actual, in its full concreteness and individuality, as the focus of the real, and that its presence is felt whenever Hopkins uses the word "self" (or some derivative verb) in his characteristic way.¹⁵

Hopkins, in his mature journals and letters, will refer to Christ the Word, the Logos, through whom all things have been made, as the original "selving" of God, and of Christ's further "selving" of himself into all the "selves" that are the individual things and persons of creation. It is doubtful that Hopkins read Scotus deeply and systematically, but Scotus's angle of theological vision, and some of his epistemological specifics, enabled Hopkins to see his own aesthetic passion and talent, and his active indulgence in them, as a deepening communion with Christ, and thus as an element in the fulfillment of his religious vows and duties; even as it probably kept him from being allowed to continue on to a fourth, and desired, year of theological studies by his Thomist-inclined and Scotist-suspicious religious superiors.

And with this brief rehearsal of life and influences, we can move on to consider Hopkins's distinctive thoughts about the experiential origins of his art, and the even more distinctive products of those experiences, his poems, in light of Lonergan's notion of elemental meaning. But first, to receive a taste of what the freeing up of Hopkins's poetic giftedness has given *us*, let us consider one of the loveliest expressions of his constant message: that nature and natural beauty, in all of its varieties and particularities, is the self-expression, through the Logos, of God. As he wrote in one of his notes on the Spiritual Exercises: "God's utterance of himself *in* himself is God the Word, *outside* himself is this world. The world then is word, expression, news of God. Therefore its end, its purpose, its purport, its meaning, is God and its life or work to name and praise him."¹⁶

¹⁵F. R. Leavis, "Metaphysical Isolation," in *The Kenyon Critics, Gerard Manley Hopkins: A Critical Symposium* (New York: New Directions, 1945), 121 (emphasis added).

¹⁶Christopher Devlin, S.J., ed., *The Sermons and Devotional Writings of Gerard Manley Hopkins* (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), 129 (emphasis added). This is from Hopkins's notes on the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius; the passage is dated August 7, 1882.

Pied Beauty

Glory be to God for dappled things –
 For skies of couple-color as a brinded cow;
 For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;
 Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings;
 Landscape plotted and pieced – fold, fallow, and plough;
 And áll trádes, their gear and tackle and trim.

All things counter, original, spare, strange;
 Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)
 With swift, slów; sweet, sóur; adázze, díim;
 He fathers-forth whose beauty is pást change:
 Práise hím.¹⁷

III

In order to appreciate how Lonergan's notion of elemental meaning throws light both on Hopkins's poetry and his thoughts about the origins of poetry, we need to become acquainted with two neologisms of Hopkins, which he found indispensable for explaining, in his letters and journals, his aesthetic principles and his theological metaphysics. These two words are *inscape* and *instress*. Although the meaning of each of these words was rather flexible in Hopkins's usage, and appeared to expand in connotative breadth and explanatory significance for him over time, their core meanings can be stated fairly easily.

By *inscape*, Hopkins refers to a thing's uniquely individual form, the singular self-expressiveness that a thing is. Inscape is not something that can be known simply by viewing or listening to something, or understanding that it is a particular example of a certain species of thing. As the prefix *in-* suggests, it is a penetrating and organizing apprehension, a "scaping," of the essential and unique pattern of a thing, or person, or scene – the felt design of its absolutely individual "self" or "selving" within creation.¹⁸ Norman Mackenzie, in *A Reader's Guide to*

¹⁷Gerard Manley Hopkins, *Selected Poetry*, ed. Catherine Phillips (Oxford: Oxford University Press, Oxford World's Classics edition, 1998), 117-18.

¹⁸Arthur Mizener, "Victorian Hopkins," in *The Kenyon Critics, Gerard Manley Hopkins: A Critical Symposium* (New York: New Directions, 1945), 106.

Gerard Manley Hopkins, puts it this way: “Inscape is not a superficial appearance; rather it is the expression of the inner core of individuality, perceived in moments of insight by an onlooker who is in full harmony with the being he is observing.”¹⁹ Notice the need for the spectator or listener to attain a state of harmony or closeness with the thing perceived. This notion is expanded upon by Robert Bernard Martin, together with an emphasis on the independence of a thing’s inscape from any perception of it, as he explains that, through his use of the word *inscape*, Hopkins

was expressing his belief that when one understands a person, an object, or even an idea, through close study, that which is studied radiates back a meaning, one that is necessarily unique because each manifestation of the world is somehow different from any other, so that no two meanings can be precisely the same. Inscape is that meaning, the inner coherence of the individual, distinguishing it from any other example. It is *perceived only through close examination or empathy*, but it is not dependent upon being recognized; rather, it is inherent in everything in the world, even when we fail to notice it.²⁰

For Hopkins, his apprehension of a thing’s inscape was both the experiential origin of a successful poem, and that which he intends the poem to communicate to the listener. In a letter to Robert Bridges, Hopkins writes: “[Just] as air, melody, is what strikes me most of all in music and design in painting, so design, pattern, or what I am in the habit of calling ‘inscape’ is what I above all aim at in poetry.”²¹

His other neologism, *instress*, functions as a corollary to his term *inscape*, but serves a double purpose, having two basic meanings. First, *instress* refers to the force, the tensional dynamism, or “stress,” that holds together a thing’s form or inscape. Ultimately, in Hopkins’s theological perspective, *instress* is the active presence of God’s will sustaining a thing in its being or existence.²² Virginia Ridley Ellis explains beautifully Hopkins’s view of this divine grounding of *instress*. For Hopkins, she explains,

¹⁹Norman H. MacKenzie, *A Reader’s Guide to Gerard Manley Hopkins* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981), 233.

²⁰Robert Bernard Martin, *Gerard Manley Hopkins: A Very Private Life* (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1991), 205 (emphasis added).

²¹Claude Colleer Abbott, ed., *The Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins to Robert Bridges* (London: Oxford University Press, 2nd rev. edition, 1955), 66. (Letter of February 15, 1879.)

²²Ballinger, *The Poem as Sacrament*, 5.

the power of any created thing to give off instress and to instress derives specifically and absolutely from an original and divine source, God's stress of energy, which charges the world with life, sustains it, keeps inscapes taughly at tension, prevents disintegration of being. Instress is thus both the life-giving energy in any object, derived from God, and the energy given off by that object, news of its selfhood and of its maker, when it is perfectly fulfilling its God-given function. It is the outgoing energy of inscape, "the *form* speaking."²³

Second, however, and just as importantly, *instress* refers to the subject's *empathic perception* of a thing's instress, the felt apprehension of both the inscape of a thing and its stress or energy of being. Thus instress is a kind of bond, or better yet an identity, that can emerge between a perceiving subject and a perceived object when certain conditions are fulfilled, the first of these being – as Hans Urs von Balthasar notes – the openness of the subject to the deep experiencing of a thing. What is required of the subject, von Balthasar writes, is "an answering stress, so that it can hold communion with the stress of things and experience them from within. . . . The objective instress is taken up by the subject that is open to it, that is moved in its depths by the depth of its power of being."²⁴

With these notions in mind, let us focus on one of Hopkins's most famous poems:

God's Grandeur

The world is charged with the grandeur of God.
 It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;
 It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil
 Crushed. Why do men then now not reckon his rod?
 Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;
 And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil;
 And wears man's smudge and shares man's smell: the soil
 Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.
 And, for all this, nature is never spent;
 There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;

²³Virginia Ridley Ellis, *Gerard Manley Hopkins and the Language of Mystery* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1991), 33.

²⁴Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics* (7 vols.), general eds. Joseph Fessio, S.J., and John Riches; vol. 3, *Studies in Theological Style: Lay Styles*, tr. Andrew Louth, John Seward, Martin Simon, and Rowan Williams; ed. John Riches (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clerk, 1986), 365.

And though the last lights off the black West went
 Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastwards, springs –
 Because the Holy Ghost over the bent
 World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.²⁵

Familiarity with the ideas of *inscape* and *instress* heightens the significance of the word “charged” in the first line of this sonnet – “The world is *charged* with the grandeur of God” – and also enables us to grasp in a more nuanced manner how, for Hopkins, the resilience of nature’s beauty is finally impervious to the alienating impact of human doings and ignorings: for Hopkins, everything in nature *is* the very energy, the incarnated stress, of God’s immutable beauty.

Now, when we read how Hopkins himself describes the kind of attention, openness, and receptive scrutiny involved in the apprehension of the *inscape* and *instress* of a thing, we are immediately reminded of Lonergan’s account of the origin of an artwork in the focusing of consciousness on a “purely experiential pattern,” where the meaning encountered is the elemental meaning of Aristotelian identity, with all its emotional resonance. Hopkins writes that, in the receptive communion with a thing that is the basis of his art, there is a focusing of sensory perception and understanding that holds steady at an initial stage of attentiveness and awareness, the mind not being allowed to move on to reflective conceptualization. At such times the intellect, he writes, is “employed upon the object of sense alone and not referring back or performing some wider act within itself.”²⁶ It is, as he states elsewhere, a “holding of the intellect on the level of sensation.”²⁷ In a slightly more systematic comment on the topic from his Oxford years, Hopkins in one of his notebooks writes that the mind “has two kinds of energy, a transitional kind, where one thought or sensation follows another, which is to reason, whether actively as in deliberation, criticism, or passively, so to call it, as in reading etc.; [and] (ii) an *abiding kind* for which I remember no name, in which the mind is absorbed (as far as that may be), taken up by, dwells upon, enjoys, a single thought: we may call it contemplation . . .”²⁸

²⁵Hopkins, *Selected Poetry*, 114.

²⁶Humphry House, ed., *The Journals and Papers of Gerard Manley Hopkins* (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), 75. The sentence is from an Oxford undergraduate essay of 1864.

²⁷Stephen Edward Wear, “John Duns Scotus and Gerard Manley Hopkins: The Doctrine and Experience of Intuitive Cognition” (Ph.D. Dissertation, The University of Texas at Austin, 1979), 32; quoted in Ballinger, *The Poem as Sacrament*, 133.

²⁸House, *Journals and Papers*, 125-26 (emphasis added). This passage is from an 1868 notebook headed “Notes on the History of Greek Philosophy etc.”

Taking his epistemological bearings from Scotus, Hopkins eventually conceives of this process as a kind of "intuitive" understanding by which, through the strain of "abiding" attention, one may apprehend the inscape of an object. Hopkins distinguishes this "intuitive cognition" or "contemplation" of something immediately present to the senses from our regular mode of mental activity, which moves spontaneously from the sensory or imaginal apprehension of something to an "abstracting cognition" that produces the general concepts and formulated interpretations of meaning that are the basis of reflective reasoning. It is, in fact, quite difficult to abidingly dwell on a concrete thing in the manner Hopkins describes; as any artist will attest, to really *see* something, to *be* with it, to the point of effecting the kind of profound communion that Hopkins has in mind, must be learned through diligent effort and practice.²⁹

When one succeeds in it, however – when the objective instress is answered by a corresponding instress in the subject – there occurs a dynamic of subject-object identity that Hopkins describes by saying that "[w]hat you look hard at seems to look hard at you."³⁰ Indeed it seems that the object is looking hard at you, because the object is, in its ultimate ontological depth, a "selving" of the omnipresent divine reality whose will constitutes every created thing. And if a poem, or any artwork, successfully *communicates* the artist's experience of a thing's inscape and instress, then the artwork, too, will seem to be looking at you, to be addressing you and assessing you. Every profound encounter with a great work of art instills humility, because it is to find that one's own measure is being taken – an experience most famously expressed in Rainer Maria Rilke's poem on his encounter, in the Louvre, with the early fifth-century B.C. *Torso of a Youth from Miletus*:

Archaic Torso of Apollo

²⁹Ballinger, *The Poem as Sacrament*, 136-37. Hopkins scholars who study the influence of Scotus's epistemology on the poet often equate Hopkins's notion of "unique inscape" and Scotus's notion of *haecceitas* ("thisness"). Philip Ballinger indicates the problem with this equation. "The difficulty," he writes, "is that 'haecceitas' is not strictly associated with the first act of knowing as such, and it seems that Hopkins' aesthetic connection between sensation, being, Christ, inscape, and beauty must reside at this primary level. This is not to deny the importance of 'haecceitas' and its potential influence on Hopkins. Scotus' stress on the individual must have caused echoes in Hopkins who already tended in this direction (as did Ruskin). The point . . . simply put, is that 'haecceitas' is not something we can 'know' as such in Scotist thought. Therefore, it would be unlikely that Hopkins had this in mind as a Scotian correlation to inscape." Ballinger, *The Poem as Sacrament*, 129, n. 65.

³⁰House, *Journals and Papers*, 204.

We cannot know his legendary head
 with eyes like ripening fruit. And yet his torso
 is still suffused with brilliance from inside,
 like a lamp, in which his gaze, now turned to low,

gleams in all its power. Otherwise
 the curved breast could not dazzle you so, nor could
 a smile run through the placid hips and thighs
 to that dark center where procreation flared.

Otherwise this stone would seem defaced
 beneath the translucent cascade of the shoulders
 and would not glisten like a wild beast's fur:

would not, from all the borders of itself,
 burst like a star: for here there is no place
 that does not see you. You must change your life.³¹

Now, Lonergan would certainly recognize the validity of the experiences of inscape and instress described by Hopkins. But he would reject Hopkins's (Scotist-influenced) language of an immediate knowing through "intuition" or "intuitive cognition." The problem lies in Hopkins's supposition that the "holding of the intellect at the level of sensation" or in a state of "abiding attention" is merely of itself, without any other cognitive activity beyond sensory attention, productive of knowledge. For Lonergan, Hopkins does not properly distinguish between the sensory experience of taking a good hard look at something, and arriving at an insight into the "commanding form" of the object or pattern perceived. Hopkins lacks Lonergan's cognitional distinction between an *initial stage* of meaning involving absorption of attention and a feeling of identity with an experienced object – which, in Lonergan's phrase, is only a "potential" act of meaning – and a subsequent stage, entailing some degree of psychic distance from the object, where one "get[s] hold of" its meaning through insight into the object's "commanding form" and judgment on that insight's correctness. Such a process of

³¹Rainer Maria Rilke, "Archaic Torso of Apollo," in Rilke, *The Selected Poetry of Rainer Maria Rilke*, tr. and ed. Stephen Mitchell (New York: Vintage Books, 1984), 61. See also the note on 303.

insight and judgment, and not some immediate sensory “intuition,” is the basis of an artist’s “knowledge” about the meaning of the sensorily experienced pattern or object. But again, we must remember that this is a knowledge that emerges and grows and completes itself *not* through conceptual articulation and definition, but through the creation of a work of art which expresses in objective form the originating experience (Hopkins being perfectly correct in insisting on a distinction between artistic, contemplative “knowing” and conceptual knowing). The concrete artwork completes the transformation of the *potential* act of meaning apprehended in the original “absorption” into an *instrumental* act of meaning, with its uniquely artistic communicative function.³²

Again in common with Hopkins, however, Lonergan’s philosophical explanation that both the existence of our unrestricted desire to know and love, and the existence of the universe proportionate to human knowing, can be held to be *fully intelligible* only if the created universe is emergent from an unrestricted act of knowing and loving who is God, confirms Hopkins’s insistence that every created thing is an expression of a loving divine reality, and so can serve as an occasion for an epiphany, a revealing or unveiling of the divine presence in all things.

This might be the time to point out that this acknowledgment by both men that any created thing may, under the right conditions of receptivity, become an unveiling of the divine heart of nature, does not mean that either of them was a religious mystic in the usual, strict sense of that term. If we call a mystic one who is understood to have had, or claims to have had, an uncommon experience of profound personal oneness or union with God, through a rare act of grace or illumination or transformative vision – examples being St. John of the Cross, Teresa of Avila, Julian of Norwich – it is clear that Hopkins neither wishes nor warrants a claim to such a title. The ontological essence of each thing or person in nature may be divine, but Hopkins considers his awareness of this through abiding “contemplation” of an object, and any attendant feelings and experiences of communion, to be available to anyone who only makes the effort to attend, dwell on, and discover contemplatively the inscape and instress of any part or aspect of nature. As Marshall McLuhan writes,

Hopkins is not a nature mystic at all, nor a religious mystic, but an analogist [that is, his apprehension of God takes place not through a rare, inexpressible personal union with the radical “otherness” of God, but

³²*Method in Theology*, 74, 78; “Art,” 218.

through created beings who analogically reveal the being and attributes of divine transcendence]. . . . It may at first sound strange to hear that Hopkins is not a mystic but an analogist. That he does not lay claim to a perception of natural facts hidden from ordinary men is evident in every line of description he ever wrote. As for religious experience, it is the same. Nowhere in his work does he draw on an experience which is beyond the range of any thoughtful and sensitive Catholic who meditates on his faith.³³

It seems to me that McLuhan is accurate in this judgment, and that Hopkins was clear about the reach or range of his own religious experience, precisely because he had an unusually clear appreciation of the distinction between immanent being, in all its particularity and beauty, and the transcendence of divine transcendence. He did not confuse the two, or collapse one into the other. Arthur Mizener puts this nicely, and also in proper nineteenth-century European perspective, when he writes of Hopkins: "The clearness of his thought, however odd his words, on the immanence and transcendence of God saved him from any of the jerry-built cosmologies to which the Victorians and Romantics had frequently to resort in trying to deal with their intense awareness of nature."³⁴ To hear Hopkins himself on the topic is to confirm the clarity just referred to, although his *wording* is enjoyably convoluted:

Neither [he writes] do I deny that God is so deeply present to everything. . . . that it would be impossible for him but for his infinity not to be identified with them or, from the other side, impossible but for his infinity so to be present to them. This is oddly expressed, I see; I mean / a being so intimately present as God is to other things would be identified with them were it not for God's infinity or were it not for God's infinity he could not be so intimately present to things.³⁵

When he stops trying to use explanatory language, and writes about God in terms of his apprehension of the mysteries of God and faith, as in this excerpt from a letter to Robert Bridges, his eloquence returns:

[A] Catholic by mystery means an incomprehensible certainty. . . . [Y]ou know there are some solutions to, say, chess problems so beautifully

³³Herbert Marshall McLuhan, "The Analogical Mirrors," in *The Kenyon Critics, Gerard Manley Hopkins: A Critical Symposium* (New York: New Directions, 1945), 18.

³⁴Mizener, "Victorian Hopkins," 101.

³⁵Devlin, *Sermons and Devotional Writings*, 128. This passage is also taken from Hopkins's notes on the Spiritual Exercises.

ingenious, some resolutions of suspensions so lovely in music that even the feeling of interest is keenest when they are known and over, and for some time survives the discovery. How must it then be when the very answer is the most tantalising statement of the problem and the truth you are to rest in the most pointed putting of the difficulty!³⁶

The truth we are to rest in is God – and *God* is a word that, properly understood, is the most pointed putting of the difficulty that we face in our unrestricted desire to know true being. For it is the mystery of divine transcendence that, equally mysteriously, has “uttered himself” through the Logos who is Christ, into the outward selving of all the unique particular things in the universe. And, to employ Hopkins’s terms, the highest “pitch” or distinctiveness of selving within this “conglomerate of selves selving in Christ’s selving of God”³⁷ is reached in human beings, who not only by their very being give glory to God – as do all created things – but because of their higher faculties of conscious awareness can *know of* God, and thus “*can mean to give him glory.*”³⁸ All things exist to express themselves, Hopkins asserts, and as human beings we most fully express ourselves when we are most true to our moral and spiritual capacities – that is, when we are most Christlike. And all this we can hear in the sonnet of Hopkins referred to by its opening words, “As kingfishers catch fire”:

“As kingfishers catch fire”

As kingfishers catch fire, dragonflies draw flame;
 As tumbled over rim in roundy wells
 Stones ring; like each tucked string tells, each hung bell’s
 Bow swung finds tongue to fling out broad its name;
 Each mortal thing does one thing and the same:
 Deals out that being indoors each one dwells;
 Selves – goes its self; *myself* it speaks and spells,
 Crying *What I do is me: for that I came.*

I say more: the just man justices;

³⁶Abbott, ed., *The Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins to Robert Bridges*, 187. (Letter of October 24, 1883)

³⁷David Anthony Downes, “Gerard Manley Hopkins’ Christed Vision of Ultimate Meaning and Reality,” *Ultimate Reality and Meaning* 12 (March 1989), 63; quoted in Ballinger, *The Poem as Sacrament*, 11, n. 25.

³⁸Devlin, *Sermons and Devotional Writings*, 239.

Keeps grace: that keeps all his goings graces;
 Acts in God's eye what in God's eye he is –
 Christ. For Christ plays in ten thousand places,
 Lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes not his
 To the Father through the features of men's faces.³⁹

IV

Now we are in a position to consider what Hopkins understood the purpose of his poems to be, what he was trying to accomplish in them, what he wanted them to do for the listener. Simply put, he wanted them to carry over to the reader his own experiences of inscape and instress – to carry over to the reader his felt apprehension of the beauty, uniqueness, and divine energy of a thing, or a scene, or a person, dwelt upon and contemplated by Hopkins. This was in fact his view of the purpose of all art, but he considered poetry to be the finest artistic instrument for the task, due to its capacity to convey felt impressions through symbolic and musical meaning and *at the same time* convey precise meanings through verbal description. Of all the symbolic languages of art – which include musical sounds, the strictly visual languages of drawing and painting, the use of mass and shape in sculpture, bodily movement in dance, and so forth – only the symbolic use of words, and especially their use in poetry, “reconciles richness and multiplicity of suggestion and meaning with precision of meaning and wholeness of impact.”⁴⁰ Hopkins always aimed in his poetry, in Philip Ballinger’s phrase, to “word a thing in its inscape appropriately” and thus “to ‘selve’ a thing in poetic language,” resulting in a poem that, if listeners or readers were sufficiently open and conditionally disposed, would result in that inscape being “instressed in others.”⁴¹

How does one exploit the symbolic dimension of words in poetry? First, in terms of *sound*, by means of rhythm and metrical consistency, variety, and counterpoint; by external and internal rhyme, assonance and alliteration; by the careful use of hard and soft consonants, long and short vowels, and arrangements of stresses and pauses. Second, in terms of the *meanings* of words, by close

³⁹Hopkins, *Selected Poetry*, 115.

⁴⁰Ellis, *Gerard Manley Hopkins and the Language of Mystery*, 45.

⁴¹Ballinger, *The Poem as Sacrament*, 196, 221.

attention to connotation and emotional resonance, by simile and metaphor and startling or revelatory juxtapositions of images; by verbal condensation in the form of compound nouns or adjectives or compression of language (such as, "There lives the dearest freshness deep down things"); by syntactical variation and experimentation; by the use of onomatopoeia, and such rhetorical devices as meiosis and synecdoche. Hopkins became a master of all such poetic means, and was unusually sensitive to the emotional and imaginal impact of the music of words and word-combinations. We have already read enough to know that, for him, the sound-meanings and the rich allusiveness of word-symbols were as important in the poetic mediating of meaning as were the words, chosen with great care to denote highly specific images and concepts. "Poetry," he writes in a passage from his lecture-notes,

is speech framed for contemplation of the mind by the way of hearing or speech framed to be heard for its own sake and interest even over and above its interest of meaning. Some matter and meaning is essential to it but only as an element necessary to support and employ the shape which is contemplated for its own sake. (Poetry is in fact speech only employed to carry the inscape of speech for the inscape's sake – and therefore the inscape must be dwelt on . . .).⁴²

For Hopkins, the inscape can only come through to the listener if the *music* of the words enwrap and complement the meaning conveyed through images and concepts; the poem must, in part, bring the listener *sensorily* to the poet's initial revelatory or inspirational experience. Hopkins was, as Harold Whitehall puts it, "a half-musician writing a poetry half-music."⁴³

Now, to bring the listener to the poet's originating experience means to enable her to participate in that very "abiding" with the object or scene or person expressed in the poem, to feelingly experience its unique form and energy, its inscape and instress. This means crafting the poem in such a way that, as we listen, we are *kept from* moving on to an abstractive reflection on its meaning, which is our normal mode of responding to verbal language. Arthur Mizener explains this quite well:

⁴²House, *Journals and Papers*, 289.

⁴³Harold Whitehall, "Sprung Rhythm," in *The Kenyon Critics, Gerard Manley Hopkins: A Critical Symposium* (New York: New Directions, 1945), 54. Ballinger succinctly writes: "Hopkins' poetry is meant to be a kind of word-music whose aim is to catch the flow and life of things in the flow and life of spoken sound" (Ballinger, *The Poem as Sacrament*, 142).

Because Hopkins was intent on communicating the inscape, the felt pattern or design which was at the heart of a thing's reality for him, he desperately needed a way of speaking which would allow him to linger over, to stress for the listener, the quality of things. Therefore the typical unit of statement with him is a patterned and dynamically balanced series of sensuous notations. . . . This is clearly a device for *holding thought in suspense in order that feeling may be stressed*⁴⁴

If the poem is successful, then, it will (in Philip Ballinger's words) "'catch' things, 'stall' them and transform them into spiritual stuff," thus "[carrying] an object alive into the heart."⁴⁵ Let us look at Hopkins's effort to accomplish this in a brief lyric, "Binsey Poplars," which concerns the cutting down of a row of trees lining the bank of the Thames along the road between Oxford and the town of Binsey, trees which Hopkins considered especially beautiful. What he wishes to "carry alive into the heart" of the listener, then, is his specific experience of sadness and loss in response to the destruction of a unique scene of spiritual beauty.

Binsey Poplars

felled 1879

My aspens dear, whose airy cages quelled,
 Quelled or quenched in leaves the leaping sun,
 Áll félléd, félléd, are áll félléd;
 Of a fresh and following folded rank
 Not spared, not one
 That dandled a sandalled
 Shadow that swam or sank
 On meadow and river and wind-wandering weed-winding bank.

O if we but knew what we do
 When we delve or hew –
 Hack and rack the growing green!
 Since Country is so tender
 To tóuch, her béing só slénder,
 That, like this sleek and seeing ball

⁴⁴Mizener, "Victorian Hopkins," 106 (emphasis added).

⁴⁵Ballinger, *The Poem as Sacrament*, 217, n. 177.

But a prick will make no eye at all,
 Where we, even where we mean
 To mend her we end her,
 When we hew or delve:
 After-comers cannot guess the beauty been.
 Ten or twelve, only ten or twelve
 Strokes of havoc unselfe
 The sweet especial scene,
 Rural scene, a rural scene,
 Sweet especial rural scene.⁴⁶

In his analysis of art, Lonergan's account of the ambiguity and symbolic power of *literary language*, and of the unique difficulties and capacities of literary art, philosophically illuminates what Hopkins sets out to do and does. Because words always carry with them distinct conceptual meanings, no matter how contextualized or structured so as to be charged with symbolic connotation, Lonergan describes literary language as tending "to float somewhere in between logic and symbol." Words used symbolically, he writes, "follow the laws of image and affect" – that is, they are feeling-laden and rich in multiplicity of meanings – but at the same time, because their distinct conceptual meanings evoke in us a vast range of precise memories concerning our personal development, words have a unique symbolic power and scope. "The fact is," Lonergan writes,

that words have not only their proper meanings, but also a resonance in our consciousness. They have a retinue of associations, and the associations may be visual, vocal, auditory, tactile, kinesthetic, affective or evocative of attitudes, tendencies, and evaluations. This resonance of words pertains to the very genesis, structure, and molding of our consciousness through childhood and the whole process of our education. It pertains to the dynamic situation in consciousness that the words provoke.⁴⁷

The "dynamic situation in consciousness" provoked by the artistic use of words involves not only each person's distinctive development and historicity, but also the fact of human potentiality, of our *freedom* to direct our flow of consciousness

⁴⁶Hopkins, *Selected Poetry*, 127-28.

⁴⁷*Method in Theology*, 72-73; "Art," 229.

and to decide what to make of ourselves. Literary art, like all other art, reveals concrete possibilities of being and doing, of envisioning and feeling, of choosing who to be and become, as we recognize and respond to our human situation in between ignorance and knowledge, untruth and truth, mortality and immortality, immanent and transcendent being. The literary language of a poet of great originality, a poet who combines extraordinary aesthetic sensitivity with uncommon religious awareness and devotion – a Hopkins – will seek a way to express experiences in poems that startle us, whoever we may be, into spiritual epiphanies, and that encourage us to wonder at our human situation in terms of its profoundest meaning and possibilities.

For Hopkins, as we have seen, this will entail helping us to experience created reality in the divine energy or stress of its essential being, where the Logos who is Christ grounds all selving of things, and who in the example of the incarnate Christ reveals to us that our struggles and sufferings and even our agonies, as well as our complacencies, joys, and ecstasies, can be, should be, the conditions and occasions for spiritual growth, for a refining and tempering process of human development in which – ultimately through embracing the mystery of self-sacrificing love – we move more fully into union with the crucified and risen Christ who longs to receive us.

Now imagine the poet in the bright air of dawn observing a hawk (or kestrel), hovering and playing on the wind, holding itself in place, then swooping and diving, turning and rising – and the poet watching, in love with the bird's beauty and its mastery. And then, because of this love, perceiving suddenly, *through* the bird, the infinitely more dazzling beauty and mastery of Christ, whose presence blazes forth in the poet's heart – that heart which, like Christ, is a knight or "chevalier," and which, by way of the daily "plod" of spiritual effort and the enduring of inevitable crises, comes at last to shine and glow in a human reflection of Christ's glory.⁴⁸

The Windhover:

to Christ our Lord

I caught this morning morning's minion, king-

⁴⁸I owe some interpretive elements here to Donald McChesney, *A Hopkins Commentary: An Explanatory Commentary on the Main Poems, 1876-89* (New York: New York University Press, 1968), 67-69. The word *sillion* (from the French *sillon*) means a furrow down which a plough moves; compare with Milward, *A Commentary*, 38, reference at note 55.

dom of daylight's dauphin, dapple-dawn-drawn Falcon, in his riding
Of the rólling level údernéath him steady áir, and striding
High there, how he rung upon the rein of a wimpling wing
In his ecstasy! Then off, off forth on swing,
As a skate's heel sweeps smooth on a bow-bend: the hurl and gliding

Rebuffed the big wind. My heart in hiding
Stirred for a bird, – the achieve of, the mastery of the thing!

Brute beauty and valour and act, oh, air, pride, plume, here
Buckle! AND the fire that breaks from thee then, a billion
Times told lovelier, more dangerous, O my chevalier!

No wónder of it: shéer plód makes plóugh down sillion
Shine, and blue-bleak embers, ah my dear,
Fall, gáll themséives, and gásh góld-vermilion.⁴⁹

V

During his first and second year in Ireland, from sometime late in 1884 through the summer of 1885, Hopkins's chronic tendency toward anxiety and melancholy turned severe, and he suffered a long period of profound dejection, despair, and melancholy, which today we would likely characterize as clinical depression. During these many months, he refers in his letters to "that coffin of weakness and dejection in which I live," and to his extreme "fits of sadness";⁵⁰ in one letter he writes, "when I am at the worst, though my judgment is never affected, my state is much like madness. I see no ground for thinking I shall ever get over it . . .".⁵¹ He emerged from this period of torment with six sonnets created within and from its darkness, which are often referred to as the "sonnets of desolation," and which critics agree are among the finest of Hopkins's poems. None were enclosed in

⁴⁹Hopkins, *Selected Poetry*, 117.

⁵⁰Abbott, *Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins to Robert Bridges*, 214-15, 216. (Letters of April 1 and May 17, 1885).

⁵¹Letter to Alexander William Mowbray Baillie, written over the period April 24–May 17, 1885; quoted in Paul L. Mariani, *A Commentary on the Complete Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1970), 211.

letters to any of the few friends to whom he often sent his work, not even his closest literary companion Robert Bridges; they were discovered among his papers after his death. Very few great poets have written poems that give convincing witness to the experience of such extremes of depression – to Hopkins may be added Emily Dickinson and John Clare (all three of them, it is interesting to note, celebrated nature-poets), and possibly Shakespeare, especially in *King Lear*, although I doubt that Shakespeare was writing out of personal experiences of clinical depression. Hopkins surely was; and the fact that he wrote these poems at all is a testament to his tenacious religious faith that all things given to him to endure were given by God and thus could, and should, serve both as occasions for spiritual maturation and as proper material for his art.

Inevitably, Hopkins interpreted his desolation and depression as a mode of sharing in Christ's suffering. As Philip Ballinger notes, "[these sonnets] may not reflect the shining optimism of Hopkins' earlier nature sonnets, but they are still faithful to the expression of inscape as Christic self-expressiveness. They word and convey the 'terrible beauty' of Christ's self-sacrifice on the Cross as it is seconded in Hopkins' own life."⁵² Of this "terrible beauty," in the two darkest of these sonnets, the beauty is all in the artistic achievement, in the union of meaning and music that expresses an intimate apprehension of feeling one's self to be sickeningly alone and abandoned by God, the way the even *more* desolate souls in hell must feel. The experience communicated, however, is the inscape and instress of desolation, as in the sonnet "I wake and feel":

"I wake and feel"

I wake and feel the fell of dark, not day.
 What hours, O what black hours we have spent
 This night! what sights you, heart, saw; ways you went!
 And more must, in yet longer light's delay.

With witness I speak this. But where I say
 Hours I mean years, mean life. And my lament
 Is cries countless, cries like dead letters sent
 To dearest him that lives alas! away.

⁵²Ballinger, *The Poem as Sacrament*, 238, n15.

I am gall, I am heartburn. God's most deep decree
Bitter would have me taste: my taste was me;
Bones built in me, flesh filled, blood brimmed the curse.

Selfyeast of spirit a dull dough sours. I see
The lost are like this, and their scourge to be
As I am mine, their sweating selves; but worse.⁵³

For Hopkins, as we have seen, each thing in creation is a selving, a unique expression of the God who has worded the world into being. But, as we have also noted, all things are not equal in what he calls the "pitch," or "distinctiveness," of their selving. For the capacities and complexities of a thing give it greater or lesser potential for self-expressiveness; and as one ascends the chain of being to arrive at human beings, we find a creature who, through self-awareness, imaginative and affective capacity, and intellectual, moral, and spiritual consciousness, is radically distinct from all else we know of creation. From our mode of being follows not only our indescribably nuanced capacity for self-expression and our natural desire to know and love God, but also our potentialities for states of inward feeling and understanding, both glad and grievous, that belong only to self-conscious subjects. Hopkins writes:

I find myself both as man and as myself something most determined and distinctive, at pitch, more distinctive and higher pitched than anything else I see And this is much more true when we consider the mind; when I consider my selfbeing, my consciousness and feeling of myself, that taste of myself, of *I* and *me* above and in all things, which is more distinctive than the taste of ale or alum, more distinctive than the smell of walnutleaf or camphor, and is incommunicable by any means to another man Nothing else in nature comes near this unspeakable stress of pitch, distinctiveness, and selving, this selfbeing of my own.⁵⁴

In another of the sonnets of desolation, if one cares to compare degrees of despair, we find an even darker, more savagely desperate inscape of Hopkins's unique selfbeing, one in which the only comfort that can be gained is the hope – an un-Christian hope – that with death will come complete and utter annihilation. In a letter to Robert Bridges from May 1885, Hopkins writes: "I have after long

⁵³Hopkins, *Selected Poetry*, 151.

⁵⁴Devlin, *Sermons and Devotional Writings*, 122-23.

silence written two sonnets, which I am touching: if ever anything was written in blood one of these was." He is probably referring to the sonnet called "No worst".⁵⁵

"No worst"

No worst, there is none. Pitched past pitch of grief,
 More pangs will, schooled at forepangs, wilder wring.
 Comforter, where, where is your comforting?
 Mary, mother of us, where is your relief?
 My cries heave, herds-long, huddle in a main, a chief-
 Woe, wórd-sorrow; on an áge-old ánvil wínce and sing –
 Then lull, then leave off. Fury had shrieked "No ling-
 Ering! Let me be fell: force I must be brief."
 O the mind, mind has mountains; cliffs of fall
 Frightful, sheer, no-man-fathomed. Hold them cheap
 May who ne'er hung there. Nor does long our small
 Durance deal with that steep or deep. Here! creep,
 Wretch, under a comfort serves in a whirlwind: all
 Life death does end and each day dies with sleep.⁵⁶

What can we say about these sonnets in terms of their objectification of experiences of elemental meaning? I would like to suggest the paradoxical-sounding possibility that the intense affective patterns they express are grief- and terror-laden experiences of meaninglessness, of a felt absence of meaning, which in the initial stage of Aristotelian identity Hopkins would experience as radical abandonment by and separation from God. This is not a matter of *ideas* or *judgments* about meaninglessness, and has nothing to do with the reflective elaboration of such ideas and judgments into arguments for the absurdity of existence, such as one finds scattered throughout the literature of the twentieth century. Hopkins's task as a poet is to express elementary meaning in the affect-laden language of symbols in such a way that, if we are open to the work, we can taste for ourselves, try out for ourselves, the desolation suffered by Hopkins. This

⁵⁵Peter Milward, S.J., *A Commentary on the Sonnets of G. M. Hopkins* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 1969), 147. See Abbott, *Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins to Robert Bridges*, 219. (Letter of May 17, 1885)

⁵⁶Hopkins, *Selected Poetry*, 152

is why, when people who know these poems quote from, or refer to them, they do so with a shudder and an inward pause. To receive the inscape and instress of these poems, which are inscapes of Hopkins's interiority, is to find that a crushing sense of meaninglessness – as any close reader of Dostoevsky, or Samuel Beckett, or *King Lear* knows – can be the elemental meaning of an experience that transforms one's world, and forces open one's horizon, in an unexpected way.

The "sonnets of desolation" are not, one is relieved to know, Hopkins's last poetic word. In the four years remaining to him, although his health continued to decline and his spirits were frequently low, even to levels of despair, he again wrote poems expressing the beauty of nature, and the distinctive inscapes of personalities encountered, and of things and scenes observed. There are also a few sonnets – including the masterpiece "Thou art indeed just, Lord," which is sometimes labeled (questionably, in my view) a seventh "sonnet of desolation" – that express a hard-won resignation to the facts of his life, a dark but level steadfastness of acceptance, and a new appreciation of the diligent patience of the saintly.

In a late poem from 1888, the year before he died, Hopkins applied his poetic talent to a theme of great scope. In its long opening section, inspired by an aphorism of the philosopher Heraclitus, the poet envisions the universe as a fire ceaselessly burning, with all things including human beings incessantly passing away into ash and nothingness. Then, with a sudden shift of mood, the poet remembers and affirms his faith in the Christian promise of the Resurrection. Here, in a poem of extraordinary compression and artistic daring, are united Hopkins's passionate love of nature's beauty (especially his love of clouds and skylscapes, of falling light through trees and branches, of wind and ground and weather); his experiences of despair and meaninglessness; and his tenacious confidence in that glorious and mysterious contradiction, that the poor forked animal who is the mortal human creature is also a child of God, and a recipient of Christ's promise of redemption and eternal life:

That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire and of the comfort of the Resurrection

Cloud-puffball, torn tufts, tossed pillows | flaunt forth, then chevy on an air-
Built thoroughfare: heaven-roysterers, in gay-gangs | they throng; they glitter
in marches.

Down roughcast, down dazzling whitewash, | wherever an elm arches,

Shivelights and shadowtackle in long | lashes lace, lance, and pair.
 Delightfully the bright wind boisterous | ropes, wrestles, beats earth bare
 Of yestertempest's creases; in pool and rutpeel parches
 Squandering ooze to squeezed | dough, crust, dust; stanches, starches
 Squadroned masks and manmarks | treadmire toil there
 Footfretted in it. Million-fuelèd, | nature's bonfire burns on.
 But quench her bonniest, dearest | to her, her clearest-selvèd spark
 Man, how fast his firedint, | his mark on mind, is gone!
 Both are in an únfathomable, all is in an enormous dark
 Drowned. O pity and indig | nation! Manshape, that shone
 Sheer off, disseveral, a star, | death blots black out; nor mark
 Is any of him at all so stark
 But vastness blurs and time | beats level. Enough! the Resurrection,
 A heart's-clarion! Away grief's gasping, | joyless days, dejection.
 Across my foundering deck shone
 A beacon, an eternal beam. | Flesh fade, and mortal trash
 Fall to the residuary worm; | world's wildfire, leave but ash:
 In a flash, at a trumpet crash,
 I am all at once what Christ is, | since he was what I am, and
 This Jack, joke, poor potsherd, | patch, matchwood, immortal diamond,
 Is immortal diamond.⁵⁷

⁵⁷Hopkins, *Selected Poetry*, 163.

THINKING WITH FR. RICHARDSON

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WHEN I CAME to do graduate study at Boston College some years ago I had developed a guiding interest in Continental thought and had recently pursued a close reading of Heidegger's *Being and Time* in collaboration with Chip Hughes and with the assistance, in part, of Fr. William Richardson's famous study, *Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought*.¹ When, upon my arrival at BC, I learned that Fr. Richardson had joined the faculty the very year of my arrival, the coincidence had all the earmarks of providence, and it became immediately clear to me that, whatever else was to become of my graduate work, he would be one of my principal teachers and mentors. Though I emerged from graduate school as a specialist in the philosophy of Bernard Lonergan, my focus in Lonergan studies has been shaped by my work in Continental philosophy, and above all by the study of forms of ontology that move beyond the confines of traditional metaphysics. My focal concern, as a Lonergan scholar, has been to insist that ontology is of decisive importance to Lonergan's work, and that to preserve his philosophy as solely or primarily a cognitional theory or epistemology is to deprive it of much of its potential for thought.

It is a point of permanent embarrassment for me, therefore, that on the occasion that Fr. Richardson gave an invited paper exploring how a Heideggerian might respond to the chapters on "being" and metaphysics in the book, *Insight*,² Fr. Lonergan, in a remark to Fr. Richardson after the presentation, dismissed the analysis with the claim that his (Lonergan's) philosophy was not, in fact, *about*

¹William J. Richardson, *Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought*, 3rd ed. (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1974).

²William J. Richardson, "Being for Lonergan: A Heideggerian View," in *Language Truth and Meaning: Papers from the International Lonergan Congress 1970*, ed. Phillip McShane (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1972), 272-83. Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, vol. 3 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press [1957], 1977).

being, but was, rather, about knowing. This remark by Lonergan was, I would say, an unfortunate one. Not only was it inexplicably rude in its suggestion that Fr. Richardson's careful reading of passages on "being" in *Insight* had somehow missed the point that none of those passages was actually concerned with being; but it was also a curious distortion, by Lonergan, of his own thought; for (at least in the final analysis) the question of being is never superseded in his philosophy by the questions of understanding or of knowledge but functions as a needed corollary to those questions.

Fr. Richardson's paper was (and remains) accurate in presenting what a Heideggerian would be likely to make of Lonergan, which is all that the paper set out to do. A Heideggerian would most certainly focus on the fact that Lonergan's book defines being in terms of knowing (that is, as the "objective of the pure desire to know"). While Lonergan offers distinctions among the notion of being (a heuristic anticipation of the to-be-known), the concept of being, and the idea of being (which he eventually equates with God), each of these regards the content of acts of understanding.³ A Heideggerian would consider Lonergan's thought on these topics to be metaphysical and subject-ist, concerning itself with beings and the relations among them, doing so always through the vehicle of human understanding. Inasmuch as Lonergan grounds the metaphysics of beings in the idea of a supreme being his philosophy would be deemed "onto-theological."⁴ In being "metaphysical" in these respects, Lonergan's thought would be deemed oblivious to the most basic insight of Heidegger, which distinguishes all of these senses of the term "being" from "being" understood as the ground of the disclosure of beings and the totality of being, a ground which must be other than a being, even if that being is a supreme one.⁵

Against such an appraisal Lonergan's remark to the effect that his philosophy is concerned with knowing *rather than* being, even if it were accurate, would make no progress, for to be a metaphysician, on the Heideggerian view, one need not have any intention of being one. What Kant, for example, in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, thought of as an autonomous epistemological prolegomenon to metaphysics Heidegger considered to be precisely a

³Richardson, "Being for Lonergan," 272-75.

⁴Richardson, "Being for Lonergan," 276-78, 282. Martin Heidegger, "Introduction to 'What Is Metaphysics?'" in *Pathmarks*, ed. W. McNeill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 286-88, *Gesamtausgabe* (hereafter "GA"), vol. 9 (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1976), 377-80.

⁵Richardson, "Being for Lonergan," 277-78.

metaphysics. Kant's was not scholastic, or Leibnizian metaphysics, to be sure, but the metaphysics of an entity that is called the "subject" or "ego" as it finds itself situated within a reality set over against a field of intelligible objects to which it has restricted access in the form of appearances.⁶ Fr. Richardson rightly anticipates that Heideggerians might apply a similar interpretation to Lonergan.

This Heideggerian assessment of Lonergan cannot be understood adequately, of course, without thinking our way into the very distinctive sense of being that is the signature mark of Heideggerian thinking. The manner of Fr. Richardson's approach to this task provides one of the greatest benefits that Lonergan scholars can draw from his work, for they will recognize in it an interpretation sensitive to "what is going forward" in a thinker's development. Such an interpretation recognizes that later changes in the form of a thinker's expression of core insights may reflect less a failure of earlier formulations than a deepening of them; it recognizes that the failures of particular articulations always reflect, in part, the limitations of any linguistic horizon, and indeed, the finitude of language itself.

Lonergan scholars should appreciate, as well, an interpretive approach that is always drawn forward by the insistence of the questions themselves, fully aware of how frequently they lead one to places that one had not intended to go. It remains rare indeed to find the scholar who comes to Heidegger not to champion him, nor to demonize him, nor to accommodate, improve upon, or outdo him, but to join with him in the pursuit of his questions. An interpretation of this sort may surely follow those questions into critical perspectives beyond Heidegger's own scope and gifts, but it is especially careful not to steer the inquiry to a desired conclusion.

So let us recall, very briefly, what is at the core of Heideggerian thinking. In this task I am partial to the formulation that appears in Heidegger's "Letter on Humanism," a writing that lies some distance along the trajectory of his development.⁷ There we may discover that the primitive and first phenomenon for Heidegger's philosophy is the "lighting," or "clearing," or "opening" by means of which the world and the entities that inhabit it come to appear as they do, which is simultaneously the "lighting," or "clearing," or "opening" by means

⁶See Martin Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, trans. Richard Taft (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), GA 3.

⁷Martin Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," *Basic Writings*, 2nd ed., ed. D. F. Krell (New York: Harper and Row, 1993), GA 9. An expanded version of my exposition of Heidegger, here, appears in "The Lonergan-Heidegger Difference," *Philosophy and Theology*, 15, 2 (2003): 273-98.

of which the question of their being comes to be raised.⁸ To treat this “lighting” as the first phenomenon of a philosophy is to refuse to think of it as a characteristic of human subjects – as consciousness, say, or self-consciousness – for that would render it a second phenomenon after the first phenomenon of subjective existence. One refuses, equally, to treat it as a quality of the world – as *esse* or *ens*, or as the intelligibility that inheres in all things and their interinvolvements – for all such intelligibility constitutes that which is lit rather than the lighting, or the “how” of the appearing of things rather than the source or the event by which they are able to appear as anything at all. The primitive phenomenon defines the questioner as transcendence, both because it shows the latter caught up in, and formed by, a vast array of these intelligible worldly involvements, and also because it reveals the “ecstatic” quality within these involvements, that is, existence *as* questioner.⁹

For Heidegger, this irreducible openness is also radically finite. It is not the emanation of a *Lichtmetaphysik*, wherein beings become intelligible by their participation in the absolute intelligibility that transcends them. Any such projection of intelligibility beyond the primary phenomenon distorts it with metaphysical speculation. The authentic primary experience is of a lighting that lights so far and no further, beginning, as it were, from its limits, and bringing its obscure opposite with it in every moment. The truth that emerges with this lighting is *aletheia* – truth defined only by constant reference to *lethe*, the un-truth that embraces, pervades, and shapes it.¹⁰

This first phenomenon is a starting point for inquiry, yet it is not simply given. Indeed, the achievement of the starting point can be an arduous task in itself, and much of Heidegger’s work can be read as a series of strategies for achieving it. The terminological innovations of *Being and Time*, for example, represent one kind of strategy. The use of the term, *Dasein*, where one might have expected “subjectivity” or “consciousness” evidences Heidegger’s determination to hold in constant view both the irreducibility of the awareness that makes possible our questioning of being and his refusal to allow that primary phenomenon of awareness to be made secondary by situating it within a

⁸Heidegger, “Letter on Humanism,” *Basic Writings*, 229 (GA 9: 325); Martin Heidegger, “The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking,” *Basic Writings*, 441-43, *Zur Sache des Denkens*, 3rd ed. (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1988), 71-73.

⁹Heidegger, “Letter on Humanism,” *Basic Writings*, 229-31 (GA 9: 325-7).

¹⁰Martin Heidegger, “On the Essence of Truth,” *Basic Writings*, 125-26, 130-32 (GA 9: 187-89, 193-96).

psychology, a philosophy of mind, or a metaphysics of subjectivity.¹¹ Heidegger's treatment of the "finite transcendence" of *Dasein* locates both transcendence and finitude within the primary phenomenon of openness and prevents the transformation of existential transcendence into pure, godlike transcendence – and does so, again, while avoiding all talk of material or spiritual subjects, objects, forms, or substances.¹² The same pattern holds true for *Being and Time*'s masterstroke, the revelation of time as the paradigmatic way to think the being of *Dasein*, with its dimension of futurity founding our transcendence, the passing of all things commanding our situatedness or historicity, and the combined working of futural transcendence and passing absence establishing our ongoing presence to a world.¹³

From the very beginning, Fr. Richardson's studies of Heidegger have highlighted the ways in which the insistence of ontological questions moved Heidegger beyond the project of *Being and Time*. Without negating the value of *Dasein* analysis, there needed to be other, more radical, points of departure that follow the clue of transcendence while decentering their concern from subjectivity, points of departure that emphasize the question over the questioner.¹⁴ Here is where the notion of "ontological difference" becomes central. It is a term that one can define simply as a distinction between beings and their ontological ground, but one which, when elaborated in particular philosophical contexts, reveals itself to be the most daunting challenge of Heideggerian thinking. To the mind habituated to science and metaphysics the notion of "being" as ground must seem as "nothing," for it is none of the things that science and metaphysics conceives and, indeed, is no sort of thing at all.¹⁵ To train thought upon this "nothing" is to find more to it than a mere nullity, yet is never to erase the essentially negative and meditative character of the movement that approaches it.

Analogously, if one is a philosopher of history, the thinking of difference insists that one eschew the assumption that there is a single progression, or thread, or even (in any important sense) single timeline that runs through the whole of

¹¹Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), 67 ff. (GA 2: 56 ff.).

¹²Heidegger, *Being and Time*, Sections 46-53.

¹³Heidegger, *Being and Time*, Sections 62, 65, 67, and 68.

¹⁴Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," *Basic Writings*, pp. 231-32 (GA 9: 327-28); Richardson, *Heidegger*, 623-33; Thomas Sheehan, "A Paradigm Shift in Heidegger Research," *Continental Philosophy Review* 32, 2 (2001):1-20.

¹⁵Martin Heidegger, "What Is Metaphysics?" *Basic Writings*, pp. 95-99 (GA 9: 105-10).

human history; rather, negativity implies that being is disclosed through finite horizons, each adding something of ontic significance, perhaps, but each operating equally out of vast ranges of ignorance and misunderstanding of other and earlier horizons, and none constituting a world-historical breakthrough of ontological disclosure as such, the founding structure of disclosure being accessible as much in the age of ancient philosophy as in the age of science.¹⁶

Indeed, if one is any kind of philosopher, one will find that the notion of ontological difference poses obstacles to one's usual habits of thinking and speaking; thus Heidegger ends up challenging philosophical discourse as much as he employs it. Philosophical terms, for him, may evince more of their pertinent meaning when they are plumbed for connotations or cast against the background of an etymological history carrying traces of reflective struggle all along its path. Thinking that exposes the finitude of the very means of uttering finitude may start out upon a sure philosophical path but may push to the point where words strain and break, and in the end, perhaps, serve their purpose best by breaking.¹⁷ It is in the course of such thinking that the philosopher finds affinity with the poet struggling to free the latent meanings in words, or with the visual artist creating uncanny objects that recall the uncanny mystery of appearing, or with the architect creating dwellings out of a larger reflection on the meaning of the event of human dwelling on Earth.¹⁸

Clearly we are a far cry, here, from metaphysics by any ordinary definition. But are we equally far from the kind of metaphysics that Lonergan envisioned? Perhaps not so much as might first appear. To define being as the objective of the pure desire to know is not the same as defining being as an object of knowledge. This is a key motivation for Lonergan's decision to define being in a second-order fashion, as the objective of a particular human desire. Lonergan's goal was to get away from the standard practice of metaphysicians since the time of the ancients to articulate being in terms of a set of known concepts and facts. The implicit assumption behind this practice (though rarely made explicit) is that we know

¹⁶Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," *Basic Writings*, 238-42 (GA 9: 335-8); Richardson, *Heidegger*, 532-35.

¹⁷Martin Heidegger, *On Time and Being*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (New York: Harper and Row, 1972), 24, *Zur Sache des Denkens*, 3rd ed. (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1988), 25.

¹⁸Martin Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art," "Building Dwelling Thinking," and "...Poetically Man Dwells..." in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York, Harper and Row, 1971), 15-87, 143-61, 211-29 (GA 5: 1-74; GA 7: 145-64, 189-208).

¹⁸Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," *Basic Writings*, 255-59 (GA 9: 353-58).

enough about being to be able to say what the whole of being and the ground of being are like. Kantian epistemology represents a certain kind of advance over this practice, in that it at least makes thematic the fact that metaphysical categories are the fruits of cognition and must necessarily bear the mark of cognitive processes, but Kant only achieves this by believing, mistakenly, that epistemology can function without metaphysical assumptions altogether. Lonergan's position on the relation of knowing and being stands out distinctly against this background. It is that we know something of being, but almost certainly very little, and surely not enough to formulate conceptually the categories to which every possible being or way to be could be assigned. The history of metaphysics, for Lonergan, is a history of hubris in this regard, and the Enlightenment attack on metaphysics has not escaped some of the same propensities.

We must hear in Lonergan's definition of being, then, a resistance to such hubris. So far from being the content of our knowledge or the reality structured by logic, being is the whatever-it-is that our interrogative desire desires. Granted, the knowledge of beings that we possess is a result of that same desire, but a much larger horizon lies beyond the known in the "known-unknown" (that which we intend in questions as yet unanswered). And beyond that, of unfathomed scope and import, lies the "unknown unknown" (that for which we do not even have questions). Can we not say that in this relation to being we are acknowledging a radical degree of finitude? Should it not be easy for a Lonerganian to see the appropriateness of invoking this unknown-unknown as "the nothing"?

Perhaps it will be claimed that I am downplaying too much Lonergan's statements on the complete intelligibility of being, the heuristic anticipation of that intelligibility, the idea of being, and the notion of God. But I do not think that I am. Lonergan's genius is to do two seemingly opposite things at once: to provide hope that our questioning does truly intend being, intelligibility, God; but to insist, by the same stroke, that we must live out that hope through our restless interrogative spirit rather than through the complacent employment of our store of knowledge. If we grasp deeply the intentions of Lonergan's ontology, it would seem that he is closer to Heidegger's style of restless questioning than Heideggerians, or even most Lonerganians, have recognized.

But hold on a minute. Not so fast. Let us not forget that when thinking with Fr. Richardson we are never merely pursuing the exposition or comparison of thinkers but are following, at all times, the insistence of questions. If we are feeling that insistence adequately we will allow ourselves to be more thoroughly

troubled by finitude's pervasive malignancy than my rather tame presentation has done, pursuing instead the aggressive sense of finitude that Heidegger named with the term "errancy" (*Irre*). We will want to know, too, in this pursuit, whether the thinking of being, or of the ontological difference, is somehow to have an influence on the way one approaches matters of ontic concern, such as the care of persons, solidarity with those who suffer, the requirements of morality, and the meaning of religious faith.

One may ask, for example, of the extent to which errancy forms the ontological background to the sometimes horrendous suffering that can arise from the dynamics of our own psyches. That the analytic of *Dasein* can lead us to the question of the unconscious and its potential for neurosis and psychosis is evident from the example of Medard Boss, with whom Heidegger himself collaborated in seminars on the relation of fundamental ontology and psychoanalysis.¹⁹ Boss uses Heideggerian philosophy to pursue an existential-philosophical reaction against Freud's biologism. A more systematic (and more challenging) antireductionist response of Freud, however, is to be found in the work of the French psychoanalyst, Jacques Lacan, who did not simply react to Freud but transposed him, recasting the analytic tools of Freudian theory upon linguistic, rather than biological, foundations.²⁰ If, as Lacan holds, the unconscious is structured in the manner of a language, his thinking bears the potential for powerful connections to fundamental ontology, for Lacan thus begins to parallel Heidegger's attempts to hear the question of being as simultaneously revealed and concealed in the linguistic sedimentations of human history. In addition, Lacan's appropriation, from Freud, of the hiding-showing character of the psyche's metaphorical symbolizations, may serve as an important corollary to a theory of truth as *a-letheia*.

But for Lacan, one must realize, to enter, in the first years of life, into linguisticity is to have one's psyche thoroughly ordered by the structures of language, such that the inarticulate desires of infancy can, in this world, find neither fulfillment nor even a voice, overlaid, as they are, by language, which functions psychologically, now (in terms recalling Freud), as "the law of the

¹⁹On this relationship, see William J. Richardson, "Truth and Freedom in Psychoanalysis," in *Understanding and Experience: Psychotherapy and Postmodernism*, ed. Roger Frie (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), 77-82.

²⁰Richardson "Truth and Freedom in Psychoanalysis," 82-83. William J. Richardson, "Psychoanalytic Praxis and the Truth of Pain," in *Heidegger and Practical Philosophy*, ed. François Raffoul and David Pettigrew (Albany: SUNY Press, 2002), 340-41.

father.”²¹ In this horizon of structuralist determinacy it becomes questionable what room there might be for a humanism, or more emphatically, for a philosophy such as Heidegger envisioned, that would seek a *humanitas* higher than even the humanist tradition has imagined.

In comparison to the rigidity of structuralist-influenced Lacanian analysis the philosophies of poststructuralism, and of Jacques Derrida in particular, can seem like a liberation. Opposing, as does Heidegger, the subject-centeredness of existential and traditional humanistic philosophy, Derrida situates the subject within language, but language understood, now, in a manner that emphasizes its fluidity and endless variability. This endless linguistic play of meaning results from the fact that every linguistic distinction brings along with it its other and opposite, in a symbiosis that results from words needing one another in order to be distinguished from one another. Such an emphasis on the interdependency of words establishes a new line of resistance to the privileging of certain terms (such as the categories of metaphysics) as “essential” or “universal.”²² Thus, in a manner that is even more radical than Heidegger’s, Derrida underscores the finitude of thinking and humbles our sense that language grants us the intelligible building blocks of reality. Yet Derrida does so at what a Heideggerian must consider a significant cost, for his refusal to privilege certain varieties of discourse must surely extend to the same Heideggerian discourse that seeks to establish a particular kind of phenomenon or event as fundamentally disclosive of the meaning of being.

I have been enumerating characteristics of structuralist and poststructuralist theory in order to show how they might intensify the meditation on human finitude, including an intensification with regard to specific forms of human suffering. But we are permitted to raise the questions as to what these approaches, and Heidegger’s thought as well, have to suggest by way of the normative response to the finitude that grounds the world’s suffering. Implicit in this question are some very traditional philosophical themes – of freedom, responsibility, and morality. Fr. Richardson consistently, though in a patient way, has these questions in view. In a psyche thoroughly ordered by the law of the father, for example, where can we find the free agency that is the condition for

²¹William J. Richardson, “In the Name-of-the-Father: The Law?” in Richard Kearney and Mark Dooley, eds., *Questioning Ethics: Contemporary Debates in Philosophy* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), 207-10.

²²William J. Richardson, “Back to the Future?” in Francis J. Ambrosio, ed., *The Question of Christian Philosophy Today* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1999), 16-18.

making responsible choices? For a subjectivity thoroughly situated in free play of linguistic signifiers, where could the confidence arise to take command of real-life situations?

If we ask such questions of post-Heideggerian theorists we ought, eventually, to ask them of Heidegger as well. In doing so we find more promise, perhaps, but one imposing obstacle. We find more promise, in that Heidegger, while steadfastly refusing to conflate matters of practical life with the ontological thinking, nevertheless saw the practical-philosophical tradition that goes back to Aristotle as a fruitful means of approaching the realm of ontology. The notion of errancy that emerges in his later philosophy, while it indisputably functions as ontological condition rather than as ontic phenomenon, is clearly identified as the ontological condition for every sort of miscalculation, error, and appalling decision.²³ Yet an enormous obstacle stands in the way of taking Heidegger at face value on such matters, for his own decisions included the atrocious fact of his early endorsement of, and later cooperation with, National Socialism. While one should not shy away from the need to condemn Heidegger for these actions, Fr. Richardson would urge us to be careful in judging what it says about his philosophy. One can say that Heidegger's actions exemplify the errancy of which he writes without thereby "blaming them on being" and thereby excusing Heidegger, the man. For here, again, to say that errancy is the ontological condition for wrongdoing in no way makes it the ontic cause of wrongdoing. That remains the uniquely human power: to choose in light of understanding, and with the strength of character that is, for each of us, limited in dramatic ways, but ways that do not undermine the basic fact of freedom and, thus, responsibility.²⁴

I have been exploring how the researches of Fr. Richardson that move beyond the philosophy of Heidegger turn to problems of practical living, doing so in a manner that respects the ontological difference and intensifies the investigation into ontological negativity. I have turned to these researches in order to show that the engagement of Lonergan scholars with the work of Fr. Richardson faces significant challenges beyond those posed by Heideggerian thought. Even as these later studies introduce familiar philosophical issues – of freedom, responsibility, good and evil – they operate on the assumption that in a postscholastic and postmodern philosophical era the philosopher's address to them will take very unfamiliar forms.

²³See William J. Richardson, "Heidegger's Fall," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 69, 2 (1995): 229-30.

²⁴Richardson, "Heidegger's Fall," 250-53.

Why, one may well ask, must these matters be made so difficult, and why, if Fr. Richardson's work is so valuable, do we not get more definitive answers to the philosophical questions that this work so insistently pursues? I would answer that to appreciate the questions is not to *make* them difficult but to realize how difficult they truly *are*. And to travel along a path of inquiry not to deliver answers but to invite others along the journey – well, that is the way of wisdom, as can be seen from examples as ancient as Socrates or as recent as Bernard Lonergan. But must we indulge in such unremitting bleakness as this meditation on finitude would have us encounter? Yes indeed, I would answer, right up to the blackest black of Good Friday. For it is beyond that darkest night that there is found the Easter dawn. Yet as we travel that mortal path of life and thought, let us not fail to notice, and to share, the persistent joy that is to be had in thinking that acts in gratitude for the gift that has made all such thinking possible.



IGNATIAN DISCERNMENT FROM LONERAGAN'S PERSPECTIVE

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INTRODUCTION

IN THIS PAPER I attempt through the lens of Lonergan's thought to understand Ignatian discernment. For Ignatius the presupposition for discernment is that God's self-communication is the warp and woof of one's life. He expects that those who love the Lord live in constant dialogue with him. "God asks only one thing of me, that my soul seeks to be conformed with the Divine Majesty."¹ Ignatius's constant wish for others is for, "God our Lord by His infinite kindness to guide you and govern you in all things through His infinite and supreme goodness."²

My first focus, as a foundation for the paper, is Lonergan's teaching on God's self-communication. Then I examine Ignatius's teaching on consolation and desolation and the discernment of spirits because he believed that they reveal God's self-communication. After this, I review Ignatius's way of elections as a method to discover how God guides one to a personal, free, and loving choice that is his will. Finally, I consider the personal praxis one needs to develop in order to discern God's self-communication in all things and all things in God.

¹*Letters of St. Ignatius of Loyola*, selected and translated by William J. Young, S.J. (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1959), 25.

²*Letters*, 72.

GOD'S SELF-COMMUNICATION

Ignatius does not present a theoretical explanation of God's self-communication. He distilled his teachings mostly from his personal experiences. For instance, Ignatius tells us that "God dealt with him as a schoolteacher deals with a child, teaching him."³ An example of God teaching him is his vision by the river Cardoner. "His understanding was enlightened in so great a way that it seemed to him as if he were a different person and he had another mind, different from that which he had before."⁴ Ignatius believed that God acts similarly with all those making the Spiritual Exercises for "here the Creator and Lord works more surely in his creatures and the Divine Majesty gives a right direction to one's desire."⁵ Ignatius advises the giver of the exercises "that he should leave the Creator to work directly with the creature and the creature directly with its Creator and Lord."⁶ He describes the impact and implications of the Lord's self-communication both for the director and the exercitant. During the exercises "it is more opportune and much better that the Creator and Lord communicate Himself to the faithful soul in search for the will of God as He inflames her in His love and praise."⁷ In the elections the exercitant is to ask "God our Lord to be pleased to move my will and to bring to my mind what I ought to do."⁸ He sees the gift of God's love as the foundation for any choice. "This rule is that the love which moves me and makes me choose something has to descend from above, from the love of God; so that the person who makes the choice must first of all feel interiorly that the love, greater or lesser felt for the object chosen is solely for the sake of one's Creator and Lord."⁹ The immediate and direct self-communication of God is so central to the Spiritual Exercises that the Inquisition was suspicious that Ignatius belonged to the sect of the Illuminati.¹⁰

³*Saint Ignatius of Loyola: Personal Writings*, ed. and trans. Joseph A. Munitiz and Philip Endean (London: Penguin Classics, 1996), 25. # 27.

⁴*St. Ignatius of Loyola Personal Writings*, 27, # 30.

⁵Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius, as translated in *Personal Writings*, # 16.

⁶Spiritual Exercises, # 15.

⁷Spiritual Exercises, # 15.

⁸Spiritual Exercises, # 180.

⁹Spiritual Exercises, # 184.

¹⁰*Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu*, vol. 3, 503-24, as quoted by Michael Ivens, *Understanding the Spiritual Exercises* (Leominster: Gracewing, 1998), 15.

God's self-communication with a creature unites a creature with her creator directly, interpersonally. When God unites himself to men and women, the divine persons are immediately present as the gift of infinite love which the divine persons are. But God's interpersonal union with the creature is impossible from the creature's finite perspective for God is infinitely beyond the finite. "It follows that the divine order is beyond the proportion of any possible creature and so is absolutely supernatural."¹¹ Yet we believe that God overcomes this infinite distance and unites personally with men and women. Since the union is absolutely supernatural it can only be constituted by God and not by any created reality.¹²

There are three instances of God's self-communication: first, the incarnation of the Word as man, second, men and women becoming adopted children of God the Father, and third, their final consummation, the beatific vision. These three instances are interrelated because they mediate one another and together constitute the supernatural order. The finality of the supernatural order consists in our union with and participation in the divine life. This is constituted and caused by the hypostatic union of the only begotten Son with a human nature to become the man who is Mary's son. In the final consummation of our life in Jesus the blessed love and know the Father in his Son through their Spirit as they are loved and known by the Father in his Son through their Spirit.¹³ "When anyone is united to Christ, there is a new world; the old order has gone and a new order has begun" (2 Corinthians 5: 17). "He destined us in love to be his sons through Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 1: 5).

This threefold union of God with women and men is a mystery but what approach helps us to some understanding of this mystery? One key to Lonergan's approach to the threefold mystery of God's self-communication is the understanding of how we can make any contingent affirmation of God. A contingent affirmation is when one affirms of a subject something that is not necessary to what it is. The affirmation that "I am sitting in this chair" is a contingent affirmation, but it is true only because I am actually sitting in the chair now, but I need not be sitting in the chair. To affirm that God is creator of heaven and earth is a contingent affirmation because, though God is creator, He is not

¹¹Bernard Lonergan, *A Third Collection* (Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1985), 26.

¹²Robert Doran reminds us that in *De Deo Trino* Lonergan writes about four absolutely supernatural realities. Robert Doran, "Consciousness and Grace" *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 11, 1 (1993): 58.

¹³Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: Longmans, Green and Co., 1958), 725.

necessarily creator but has created the heavens and the earth only through his free choice. Language seems to imply that the God who creates and the God who doesn't create are different. God creating seems to be adding something new to the God who wasn't creating. However, since God is infinite perfection no further perfection or activity can be added to God. When we create something, we change. We change from being able to create to actually creating, moving from potential creators to actual creators. The act itself of creating does not change God who is already perfectly in act, act doesn't change as act. What changes is the coming to exist of what God causes to be. God is always infinitely in act and doesn't change in himself.

The only change to which we refer, when we say God creates, is the existence of the universe. Therefore, the truth of a contingent statement of God is that another reality outside of God exists with a real relation to God without any change in God. Nothing is added to God's reality, goodness, or beauty because creation exists. His infinite goodness, beauty, and love cannot be decreased or increased. This doesn't diminish the truth that God out of infinite love freely chooses to create the world. We call this reality that is apart from God a consequent, appropriate term. If it is true that God creates, there must exist a consequent, appropriate reality or term – the universe – otherwise the contingent affirmation is not true.¹⁴ Using the framework of what has to be presupposed for affirming something contingently of God, let us examine “the threefold mystery” that constitutes the supernatural order. In this mystery there are three contingent affirmations we make of God:

1. The Word became flesh, announced the Good News.
2. The sinner is justified by the gift of God's love.
3. The blessed know and love God as He is in himself.

Each of these contingent affirmations regarding God's self-communication requires the following in order to be true:

- A. An absolutely supernatural order, because the self-communication of God to a creature is totally beyond the capacity of any creature in any way to cause or to constitute such a union.

¹⁴Bernard Lonergan, *The Ontological and Psychological Constitution of Christ*. trans. Michael G. Shields, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, vol. 7 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 99, 103. See also Matthew L. Lamb, “An Analogy for the Divine Self-gift,” *Lonergan Workshop* 14 (1998): 140, and Bernard Lonergan, *Philosophy of God and Theology* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, London, 1973), 64-65.

- B. A created, consequent, appropriate reality or term outside of God.
- C. Because the material term neither causes nor does it constitute or ground the contingent truth but is a consequent condition, only God can bridge the infinite gap between creature and creator.

Because there is a “remarkable similarity”¹⁵ between the three instances of God’s self-communication and because Lonergan wrote extensively about the Incarnation, we will review what he wrote about the hypostatic union to help us understand the divine self-communication with men and women in their justification and its consummation in the beatific vision. We make the contingent affirmations that the Son of God, the eternal Word of the Father in the fullness of time became man, was born of Mary, grew up in Nazareth, was baptized by John, called a group of disciples, announced the Good News, was rejected by his own and suffered his passion and death on the cross, rose from the dead, sits at the right hand of the Father and will come again in glory. The Son’s human life and mission are not necessary but are a free gift of the Father in his Son through their Spirit. This affirmation of Jesus’ life and mission is a contingent affirmation about God’s eternal Son. There is no change in the eternal Word, God’s Son, but there is a consequent, appropriate reality, term that is related to the Son, namely, the human nature that enables the life and mission of Jesus as man.

Lonergan writes:

Again, there is no contingent truth prior to the existence of a contingent being. Hence, since it was possible that the Word not become incarnate, the truth of the incarnation is not to be had prior to the existence of an external, created, contingent, and appropriate term....The infinite act of existence is the sole reason and constitutive cause of this union because by the infinite act of existence the Word is not only what the Word necessarily is but also what the Word has contingently become. Only in this way can you maintain that the Word is really and truly man and that the same one is both God and man ...The term, however, which is the fact of the nature being actually assumed (*actu assumi*), is not the cause of the union, both because the infinite act of existence is the sole cause and because in the presence of an infinite cause any other cause is superfluous; ...¹⁶

¹⁵*The Ontological and Psychological Constitution of Christ*, 55.

¹⁶*The Ontological and Constitutional Psychology of Christ*, 145-47.

In the Incarnation the external, created term is a secondary, substantial act of existence that is required in order for the human essence or nature to exist in Christ as divine and human man. Because the term exists it is true that the son assumes a human nature. The substantial act received in Christ's human nature founds the real relation of the assumed nature to the Word alone. We must take care not to think of the term as needed for the existence of a human essence apart from the person of the Son, who as Jesus Christ, exists as God and man.

Whatever the Son is and does as a man is constituted by his infinite act of love and knowledge that is identical with his infinite act of existence. Jesus' human acts, such as knowing and loving, are a consequent, appropriate reality that functions as the term for the truth of the contingent affirmation that the Son loves as a human being. All his human acts are constituted and grounded by the infinite act of the Son's existence. Jesus' human loving and his divine loving are united in the one divine person without confusion or commingling. Jesus' human loving is constituted as is his human existence by Jesus' divine act of loving that is identical with his existence. Christ's act of human loving is an act specified through a human nature, but it isn't constituted by the created act of existence received in Christ's human nature but by the infinite act of existence of the Son, otherwise the act of loving could not be the eternal Son's human act of loving. His human love for his Father is constituted and mediated by the infinite loving of the Son for his Father. Jesus' human loving and knowing are assumed as a consequence of the hypostatic union of the divine and human natures by the person and according to the person of the Son.

Jesus' human being-in-love and his consequent acts of love and knowledge grounded in the hypostatic union are the supernatural perfection of Jesus' human nature for it is beyond human nature to love and know God properly as He is in himself. Since Jesus' human love is constituted by his infinite, sincere judgment of value expressing the Father's love, so too, Jesus' human love is a judgment of value expressing the Father's love. It is the "loving yes" of Jesus as man to the Father through the Spirit that is lived out in his life, ministry, passion, death, resurrection, ascension, and his return in glory. "For all the promises of God find their yes in him" (1 Corinthians 16: 20).

We need to consider how this understanding of the hypostatic union helps us to understand our union with Christ given with sanctifying grace. First, as the term for the Incarnation is not the cause of the union so also sanctifying grace as the external created term is the cause or source neither of our justification, nor of our attainment of our end through perseverance in justice by which we enter the

supernatural order of God's love. Just as the hypostatic union is the cause and source of the Incarnation of Jesus, so also is it the cause of our justification in Jesus the hypostatic union.¹⁷ Just as there is an appropriate term for the Word's Incarnation and mission so also there is in God's self-communication to men and women of sanctifying grace, along with the virtues and acts of hope, faith, and love, a created reality consequent, and appropriate as term because it is true that the Holy Spirit has been poured into our hearts such that we are sons and daughters of the Father in Christ.¹⁸

With the above perspective, we will first examine our being in Christ, for we are a new creation in Christ. Our new life in Christ is a dynamic state of being through relationships of knowing and loving with the Father in the Son through their Holy Spirit of love and not just an act or series of acts. This new life in Christ, as Lonergan continually quotes Aquinas, is a union in Christ as the known in the knower and the beloved in the lover.¹⁹ We will consider how Christ, through His union with the just, sublates their being, loving, and knowing.²⁰

OUR LIFE IN AND QUASI-IDENTIFICATION WITH CHRIST

To express our being-in-Christ the Scriptures use the metaphors of the vine and its branches, or of the body and its members. "His divine power has granted to us ... to become partakers of the divine nature [2 Peter 1:4]." We share the divine nature in as much as we are united with the humanity of Christ. This is the purpose of Christ's life and mission as expressed by St. Paul; "But when the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive the adoptions as sons. And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" (Galatians 4: 4-6). Our union in Christ is through our participation in the charity of Christ through his Spirit whom the Father has

¹⁷*The Ontological and Psychological Constitution of Christ*, 153-55.

¹⁸Bernard Lonergan, *Divinarum Personarum*, editio altera (Roma: Gregorian University Press 1959), 237. See also Bernard Lonergan, *De Deo Trino*, 3rd ed. (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1964), 229-40.

¹⁹Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, 1 q. 43, a. 1.

²⁰Perhaps the fifth level would be the fourth as sublated, the "apex" of the soul, although there would be only four levels that differ depending on whether one has fallen in love or not. Thus, we have four transcendental imperatives; be attentive, intelligent, reflective, and lovingly responsible, or, divide the last into be responsible and be loving.

poured into our spirits to be adopted as sons and daughters in the Son. Jesus' life and ministry and, above all his suffering, death, and resurrection reveal in its infinite and personal depths the meaning and purpose of the Father's gift of himself to us in his Son through their Spirit.

Through God's love in our hearts we are transformed into a being-in-love, a love without limit, conditions, or restrictions. This being-in-love is a dynamic orientation, a state, not a virtue or act or series of acts; it consists rather in the union through the interpersonal relations with the Father in the Son through the Holy Spirit, given with our incorporation as a member in the body of Christ.²¹ This being-in-love becomes "a first principle in one's living. It is the origin and source that prompts and colors all one's thoughts and feelings, all one's hopes and fears, all one's joy and sorrows."²² Through this love we can say with St. Paul that we have a new identity: "For me to live is Christ" (Philippians 1:21). Being-in-love is a being in Jesus so that "personal living is being in love with Christ."²³ This love is a dynamic state of being-in-love, a first principle that mediates virtues and acts of love. This being-in-love is the underpinning, origin, and source, both of love of one's family and one's fellow human beings.²⁴ All being-in-love is a total, permanent self-surrender not as an act but as a dynamic state.²⁵

Lonerger's notes on grace and the Spiritual Exercises affirm a quasi-identification with Jesus through love's union. "Through grace we are more and more living members of Christ Jesus, the whole of us body and soul, biologically, sensitively, intellectually, voluntarily. Life as a member is union and assimilation. There is assimilation through participation of the grace of Christ, producing in us the effects it produced in the humanity of Christ. Among those effects are habitual and actual illuminations of understanding and aspirations in the orientation of our wills. Life begins anew. Grace is the life of a member of Christ: it is mutual indwelling and operation."²⁶

²¹Bernard Lonergan, *Divinarum Personarum*, 236-39

²²Bernard Lonergan, *A Second Collection*, ed. William F. J. Ryan, S.J., and Bernard J. Tyrell, S.J. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), 145; see Bernard Lonergan, *A Third Collection*, 124.

²³Bernard Lonergan, *Collection*, ed. F. E. Crowe, S.J. (New York: Herder and Herder, 1967), 250.

²⁴Bernard Lonergan, *A Third Collection*, 127, Bernard Lonergan, *A Second Collection*, 151, 145.

²⁵Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 40.

²⁶Bernard Lonergan, "Grace and the Spiritual Exercises" *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies*, 21(2003): 90-94.

Through our being in Christ's love, we share his life, his love, and his knowledge. Jesus through his union with us shares our life, our love, and our knowledge. Since this state of being-in-love is a sharing in the life of Christ, we, in a sense, become Christ through love's union. Through a mutual self-mediation, love's union grounds and moves us to affirm that this other is our completion, our fulfillment, precious and beautiful. "Each of us is to himself immediate: oneself as one is.... Now in that immediacy there are supernatural realities that do not pertain to our nature that result from the communication to us of Christ's lifePaul did not persecute Jesus, he persecuted the Christians, but there was an identification between them and Christ."²⁷ I have a new identity in Christ. As a son or a daughter in the Son, one shares his mission, making what is missing in the sufferings of Christ. One is a "yes" to the Father in the Son's "yes" through their Spirit.²⁸

In a way Christ's love sublates one's life into life in Christ and what sublates goes beyond what is sublated; and it introduces something new and distinct, puts everything on a new basis, sets up a new principle, the principle of love. This first principle is a new basis of operations, directing them to a new goal and perfection, namely, to love's union in the beatific vision. Yet without interfering with the sublated operations or destroying them, on the contrary, the life in Christ needs and includes; it preserves all their proper features and properties and carries them forward to a fuller realization within a richer context.²⁹ This assimilation, this identification, this mutual union, shares in the human love of Jesus, which is grounded in the infinite love of the Son and is from the Father in his Son through their Spirit. Since union in Jesus' love is the basic, total fulfillment of the human spirit, it is the achievement and fulfillment of human authenticity. As supernatural, this union is impossible for any creature to bring about on its own.

What about the created sanctifying grace inhering in our soul? Sanctifying grace mediating the habits and acts of faith, hope, and charity is the created external term whose reality exists because the gift of Jesus and His Father through their Spirit has truly been given. Sanctifying grace mediating the habits and acts of faith, hope, and charity do not bring about the union with Christ because the

²⁷Bernard Lonergan, *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1958-1964*, ed. Robert C. Croken, Frederick E. Crowe, and Robert M. Doran, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, vol. 6 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 178.

²⁸See *De Deo Trino*, 256-59.

²⁹*Method in Theology*, 241. See also *A Second Collection*, 169.

infinite act of existence of Christ Jesus as the source and ground for the hypostatic union is also the ground and source of Christ's union in love with us. Both as man and God he loves us. Inasmuch as we are united in the charity of Christ we are united in Jesus Christ's human acts of love and knowledge constituted by the infinite act of the Word's existence. "He (the Father) is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, whom God made our wisdom, our righteousness and sanctification and redemption, therefore, as it is written, 'Let him who boasts boast of the Lord'" (1 Corinthians 1:30).

MY LOVE IS YOUR LOVE AND YOUR LOVE IS MY LOVE

Reciprocated love has the formal effect of constituting a union of mutual other selves who share a common consciousness.³⁰ In the words of John's Gospel: "In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you" (John 14: 20). "If a man loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him and we will come to him and make our home with him" (John 14: 23). "As the father has loved me so have I loved you; abide in my love" (John 15: 9). "I made known to them thy name, and I will make it known, that the love with which thou hast loved me may be in them and I in them" (John 17: 26).

Jesus' life and ministry and, above all, his suffering, death, and resurrection reveal the meaning and purpose of the Father's gift of himself to us in his Son through their Spirit in its infinite and personal depths. This love of the Father and Son invites us to share in the "yes" of Jesus to his Father and to love them with their Spirit of love. Thus the Father and Son's love for us "has the character of a response"³¹ since he chooses to come to me by a gift of love for him. St. Paul reminds us "that nothing in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8: 39). Lonergan echoes St Paul:

As God did not create the world to obtain something for himself but overflowed in loving the finite – ... as Christ in his humanity did not will means to reach an end, but possessed the end, the vision of God, and overflowed in love to loving us so too those in Christ participate in the charity of Christ: ...they participate in that charity because they are

³⁰*Collection*, 35.

³¹*Method in Theology*, 119.

temples of Christ's Spirit, members of his body, adopted children of the Father whom Christ could name Abba; ... ³²

The gift of God's love is a love of total surrender that invites human beings to mutual surrender. I rest in delight. I am no longer who and what I was. I am a new identity. There is now a "we" that defines, transforms, and creates who we are and who I am. I no longer live a separate, autonomous, self-contained life. I lose my life, only to discover a new life. The old self, my former life, is transformed through this union. My old self is transcended and is not left behind but sublated, raised to a fuller, higher way of being, a being-in-love, a common, shared life as a member of Christ's body, a member of his church. "By grace we are friends of God. A friend is another self, '*amicus alter ipse*.' We are other selves to the indwelling Spirit, and our sins grieve him. And God is another, a super-self to us, by charity."³³ Since the shared charity of Christ is the first principle of all our acts, in this communion of love, my loving is his loving and his loving is my loving. In love there is a "we" in all things.

**"GOD'S GIFT OF HIS LOVE IS THE CAUSE
OF OUR KNOWLEDGE OF GOD BY CONNATURALITY"³⁴**

When we quote "knowledge" here it is not meant in the strict sense of what is attained through experience, understanding, and judgment but a transformation of our awareness through love's union in Christ, our deepest fulfillment; it is our self-awareness of our new identity as a "we" in Christ. There is a grasp, an affective valuing, an appreciation of love's value without limit. This connatural grasp of value that flows from love's union grounds the judgment of value, which is what is meant by faith as distinct from belief.

Faith is the knowledge born of religious love By the heart's reasons I would understand feelings that are intentional responses to values. ... there is another kind of knowledge reached through the discernment of value and the judgments of value of a person in love. When the love of God floods our heart, there is an apprehension of transcendent value. This

³²*Collection*, 249.

³³"Grace and the Spiritual Exercises," 98.

³⁴See Thomas Ryan, "Revisiting Affective Knowledge and Connaturality in Aquinas," *Theological Studies* 66 (2005): 49-68. See also *A Third Collection*, 250 n. 9.

apprehension consists in the experienced fulfillment of our unrestricted thrust to self-transcendence, in our actuated orientation towards the mystery of love and awe.³⁵

To the degree that we love and are loved in Christ to that degree we share Christ's loving and knowing. Christ's knowledge is a human knowing but constituted by the divine knowing which is identical with his divine being. Christ's human knowledge is finite. "Not even the beatific vision of Christ is an act of understanding everything about everything."³⁶ Nevertheless, Christ as man knows the Father directly, immediately, and attains a proper knowledge of God. Proper knowledge of God must be in virtue of God's own self. In order to understand God properly one must be God.³⁷ Christ, who is man, is God. Can he properly know himself as God in his limited, human act of knowing? Christ as man has an immediate and proper knowledge of himself grounded not in the consequent term, the human act of loving, but in the infinite act of loving that constitutes the human act of loving and Christ's human being-in-love with the Father through their Spirit. In and through love's union there is a grasp of transcendent goodness. The eyes of Christ's human love, one with the Father, grasps the transcendent value that is the Father. His "knowledge" from love mediates love's sincere judgment of value, the light of glory that enables Christ as man to have the immediate vision of the Father, knowing himself as God, his mission and the Father directly and properly, face-to-face.

Because the just are one in Christ's love of the Father there is a union in love that grasps the transcendent value given in love's union with Christ. This union grounds their value judgment that is the light of faith, the horizon of faith, the eye of love. So too the blessed's total union in the love of Christ allows them to share Christ's love and union with the Father. By connaturality or emanation they share in Christ's grasp of transcendent value grounding the judgment of value that is the light of glory. The light of glory mediates the beatific vision not as constituting, causing the vision for the light of glory is only an external created term, but as Christ's human vision of the Father, his human word sharing the eternal Word because his union with his human nature is in and according to the divine person. The beatific vision for us is a participation in Christ's vision that is mediated by his human love grounded in his infinite love. "God's gift of his love

³⁵*Method in Theology*, 115.

³⁶*Collection*, 190.

³⁷*Collection*, 87.

is the cause of our knowledge of God by connaturality. (See Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, II-II, q. 45, a. 2c).³⁸ The beatific vision is the knowledge born of total religious love. That knowledge is an apprehension of transcendent value that consists in the experienced, total fulfillment of our desire for God. The judgment of value that this apprehension mediates in the just, is faith or the light of faith, and in the blessed it is the beatific vision or the light of glory.

In his work on the Divine Missions, Lonergan sums up our union in Christ:

From all of this we conclude that the divine persons themselves and the blessed in heaven and the just on this earth are in one another as those who are known are in those who know them and those who are loved are in those who love them. This knowing and loving is directed both to the ultimate end, which is the good itself by essence, and to the proximate end, which is the general good of order, the kingdom of God, the body of Christ, the church. This consequent mutual "being in" however, differs according to each one's nature and status: the divine persons are in one another through consubstantiality; the just are in God and in one another by way of intentional existence and the quasi-identification of love. We are in the Word, however, as known and loved through both his divine and his human nature; and the Word is in us in order that in knowing and loving a visible human being we may arrive at knowing and loving God, who dwells in unapproachable light. And because this prior knowledge and love is easier for us, since it includes our sense memory of the past and our imagination of the future, we are led through it to that higher knowledge and love in which we no longer know Christ from a human point of view, but our inner word of the divine Word is spoken in us intelligently according to the emanation of truth, and our love of divine Love is spirated according to the emanation of holiness. For the divine persons are sent in accordance with their eternal processions, to encounter us and dwell in us in accordance with similar processions produced in us through grace. Those who proceed from and are sent by the Father do not come without the Father, to whom be all glory through the Son in the Spirit.³⁹

... the Father sent his Word made flesh so that we, believers in the Word, may interiorly say and understand true words and through the Word according to holiness He sends the Spirit of the Word so that conjoined to

³⁸*A Third Collection*, 250 n. 9.

³⁹Bernard Lonergan, *Divinarum Personarum*, in the manuscript translation for publication by Michael Shields, S.J., 365-66.

the Spirit by love and made living members of the body of Christ we cry out: Abba, Father.⁴⁰

CONCLUSION OF PART ONE

God's self-communication in Christ and our union with Christ in love transforms our life so that we are identified with Christ in love and mutual self-mediation. All our actions that are mediated by the love of Christ abiding in us through his Spirit are also his actions. Because of this, for Christians, "being in Christ Jesus is identical with personal living."⁴¹ Any desire, any decision inasmuch as they are taken with Christ's love as their principle, are Christ's desires and decisions. "For me to live is Christ" (Philippians 1: 23). "I have been crucified with Christ: it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me: and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me" (Galatians 2: 20).

"In the measure that this summit is reached, then the supreme value is God, and other values are God's expression of his love in this world, in its aspirations, and in its goal. In the measure that one's love of God is complete, then values are whatever one loves, and evils are whatever one hates so that, in Augustine's phrase, if one loves God one may do as one pleases, *Ama Deum et fac quod vis*. Then affectivity is of a single piece."⁴² What one loves and chooses in union with Christ's loving and choosing as grounded in the hypostatic union, is Christ's loving and choosing the will of the Father through their Holy Spirit. The difficulty with discernment is not primarily knowing or deciding what the Father wants but to love in Christ, to be free from what is not Christ, that is, bias, compulsion, sin, self-centeredness, and so forth. Discernment is connatural to the degree that one's love in Christ is the first principle of all our discernments. We are called to be Christ, to continue his mission, to witness to the Father's love, to be continuously, mutually self-mediated by Christ, to live the law of the cross which is to overcome evil with love. "And the peace of God which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4: 7). "Let all that you do be done in love" (1 Corinthians 16: 14).

⁴⁰*De Deo Trino: Pars Systematica*, 259.

⁴¹*Collection*, 250.

⁴²*Method in Theology*, 39.

OUR AWARENESS OF GOD WITHIN

Now that we have considered the union of the Trinity with men and women let us summarize how this influences upon our experience, consciousness, and knowledge of God.

Knowledge is a compound structure or process that is made up of various components. It begins with exterior experience through our senses or interior experience. This first step, my experience, becomes something for me to understand and for me to articulate my understanding of the experience. Then on the next level there arises the question whether what I have understood and articulated is true or false. Only enacting the whole process or structure is properly called knowledge. "For the intending subject intends, first of all, the good but to achieve it he must know the real; he must know what is true; to know what is true he must grasp what is intelligible; and to grasp what is intelligible he must attend to the data of sense and to the data of consciousness."⁴³

Experience is just the raw material, a component in the structure of knowledge but it is not in itself knowledge. "It (God's love flooding our hearts) is an experience, not in the broad sense that refers to coming together and compounding of many conscious elements, but rather in the technical sense that refers to a single element and so constitutes not a structure but an infrastructure."⁴⁴ Each element in knowing is a part of the structure of knowledge but in itself it is not knowledge in the strict sense. Our experience of God is an infrastructure.

"Consciousness is the presence of the subject to himself that is distinct from, but concomitant with, the presence of object to the subject."⁴⁵ Not only do I see this page but also concomitant with my seeing the page I am conscious that I am seeing this page. "Consciousness is interior experience of oneself and one's acts, where 'experience' is taken in the strict sense of the word. 'Experience' may be taken in a broad sense or in a strict sense. Broadly speaking it is roughly the same as ordinary knowledge; strictly speaking it is a preliminary unstructured sort of awareness that is presupposed by intellectual inquiry and completed by it."⁴⁶

⁴³*A Second Collection*, 128.

⁴⁴*A Third Collection*, 125.

⁴⁵*Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1958-1964*, 170.

⁴⁶*The Ontological and Psychological Constitution of Christ*, 157.

When I fall in love with God because his Spirit has been poured into my heart am I aware of it and do I know that I have fallen in love with God? In Lonergan's opinion, "God's gift of his grace occurs not unconsciously but consciously. It is not confined to some metaphysical realm so that experiencing it would be impossible. It can come as a thunderclap as when, in the prophet Ezekiel's words, God plucks out man's heart of stone and replaces it with a heart of flesh. But more commonly it comes so quietly and gently that it is conscious indeed but not adverted to, not inquired into, not understood, not identified and named, not verified and affirmed. For, as you know, consciousness is one thing and knowledge is another."⁴⁷

The gift of my life in Christ in the strict sense is immediately conscious in the immediacy of the consciousness of my existence. "Being a temple of the Holy Spirit, a member of Christ, and adoptive child of God the Father, is something that is ours essentially by gift. Still, in the concrete, it is a part of our concrete reality.... It can be merely a vegetative living if one is in the state of grace. It just occurs, and we do not stop to think. It is a life within us that goes on, that is promised to us by Christ, that fructifies in us."⁴⁸ Religion often is the religious life we were born into, and never personally chosen. If there is little attention to it much slips by us. A bird watcher sees birds others wouldn't even notice. A flash of the wings or color is enough to identify the bird. Someone who is not a bird watcher doesn't advert to these things. It is not of interest to him. "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."⁴⁹

With attention, do we know God's love is within us? In the strict sense of knowing we do not know. If we did know we would know we are saved and in the state of grace. This love is known only through faith, which is the eye of God's love in us. "What we are by grace of God, by the gift of God, can have an objectification within us. What is immediate can be mediated by our acts and gradually reveal to us in an ever fuller fashion, in a more conscious and more pressing fashion, the fundamental fact about us: the great gift and grace that Jesus Christ brought to us."⁵⁰ One of the principal ways to objectify our being loved and united to God is by prayer. Being adoptive children of the Father "is

⁴⁷*A Second Collection*, 243.

⁴⁸*Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1958-1964*, 79.

⁴⁹*Collection*, 248-49.

⁵⁰*Philosophical and Theological Papers 1958-1964*, 179-80.

something in us that is immediate and becomes mediated by the life of prayer.”⁵¹ “Also we are aware of the gift of his love when we notice its fruits in our lives.”⁵² “Religious experience spontaneously manifests itself in changed attitudes, in that harvest of the Spirit that is love, joy peace, kindness, goodness, fidelity, gentleness, and self-control.”⁵³ Again, “[t]here is in the world, as it were, a charged field of love and meaning; here and there it reaches a notable intensity; but it is ever unobtrusive, hidden, inviting each of us to join. And join we must if we are to perceive it, for our perceiving is through our own loving.”⁵⁴

Faith as the eye of love is love’s power to grasp the revelation of the Lord in creation, in our religious traditions and in ourselves. To grasp that these “human” virtues, such as patience and kindness, are manifestations of the Father’s and the Son’s Spirit of Love poured into our hearts apprehended through our own loving whose eye is faith. Without faith we could not know that these are his gifts rather than human achievements. In this time of pilgrimage together we live and “know” our union with God only in and through the eye of love. This knowledge of the heart is not the factual knowledge reached by the combination of experiencing, understanding, and verifying. There is another kind of knowledge reached through the discernment of value and the judgments of value by a person in love. “Faith, accordingly, is such further knowledge when the love is God’s love flooding our hearts.”⁵⁵

In conclusion, we do not know God within us in the proper sense of knowing even though we are immediately conscious of ourselves, and in that concrete reality of ourselves the Trinity that abides within us. With the eye of love that is faith we can objectify our union in love. We raise our consciousness of God’s love within us through acts of love and service, through prayer, through the gifts of the Spirit, through reflection and study, the support of the believing community, and the example of the saints. From his experience Ignatius learned that consolation could reveal God’s presence and desolation his absence. Through his understanding of the dynamics of consolation and desolation, Ignatius developed his habitual, conscious paying attention to God’s self-communication.

⁵¹*Philosophical and Theological Papers 1958-1964*, 179.

⁵²*A Second Collection*, 153.

⁵³*Method in Theology*, 108.

⁵⁴*Method in Theology*, 290.

⁵⁵*Method in Theology*, 115.

He also expected others to find God in all things and all things in God or in other words, "to love and serve his Divine Majesty in everything."⁵⁶

DISCOVERING CONSOLATION AND DESOLATION AND THE DISCERNMENT OF SPIRITS

After his conversion at Loyola, Ignatius, a man of action, a leader of men, became a man of self-reflection. With this psychological development he begins to discover God's self-communication. He learns how God interacts with him, communicates his wishes, teaches, corrects, supports, and makes all things easy. He realizes, and his eyes are opened, to see that God's self-communication reveals itself through interior movements of consolation and desolation and through the discernment of various spirits. This understanding was basic for his own spiritual development, the creation of the Spiritual Exercises, his teaching on the ways of election, and the ability to find God in all things through a habitual, conscious attending to God. "He was always growing in devotion, i.e. in facility in finding God."⁵⁷

The first step in this process was his increased awareness that all actions, emotions, and thoughts have a concomitant impact, however slight or significant, on one's authenticity and one's relationship to God. Ignatius began to understand this while convalescing from the wounds he received in the battle with the French at Pamplona. To pass the time, he daydreamed for hours as he was confined to bed; the only books available were the life of Christ and the lives of the saints. He would imagine what he would do when he returned to the royal court as a hero, or he would imagine what he would do to serve Christ, imitating the deeds of the saints. He greatly enjoyed both of these musings. After awhile he became aware "that when he was thinking about that worldly stuff he would take much delight but when he left it aside, after getting tired, he would find himself dry and discontented. ... After his imagining how he would imitate the lives of the saints ... not only was he consoled while in such thoughts but he would remain content and happy even after having left them aside."⁵⁸

⁵⁶Spiritual Exercises, # 233.

⁵⁷Personal Writings, 63, # 99.

⁵⁸Personal Writings, 15, # 8.

Initially Ignatius didn't advert to the reason for this difference until "...one time his eyes were opened a little and he began to marvel at this difference in kind and to reflect on it, picking it up from experience that from some thoughts he would be left sad and from others happy, and little by little coming to know the difference in kind of spirits that were stirring: the one from the devil, and the other from God."⁵⁹ Ignatius knew when he was doing something else he was either happy or sad afterwards. He never connected the continued feelings of joy or the subsequent sadness to the previous thoughts and imaginings both of which he had enjoyed. Then he realized that some thoughts and imaginings gave him delight; nevertheless, after he had gone on to something else, they left him feeling sad while other thoughts left him happy. This was his first recognition of consolation and desolation. He now knew that the joy or sadness were connected with his thoughts but since he had not decided or chosen the different feelings that resulted, he attributed the joy to the source of all good things, namely, God, and the sadness to the father of lies, the devil.⁶⁰ This is his initial awareness of the discernment of spirits and consolation and desolation.

To understand consolation we must distinguish between three interrelated meanings of consolation inspired by Ignatius's distinction of consolation with a preceding cause and without a preceding cause,⁶¹ and by Lonergan's relating the love poured into our hearts by God to "consolation without a preceding cause" as explained by Karl Rahner.⁶² We will examine later Rahner's interpretation of Ignatius's without "preceding cause."

The primary meaning of "consolation" is the Spirit of love poured into our hearts from the Father through his Son, transforming us from being to a being-in-love. This dynamic state of being-in-love becomes the first principle of all our acts, thoughts, and feelings. Love, as the first principle, orders everything to love. "Love is the interior consolation that casts out all disturbances and draws us into total love of the Lord."⁶³ The Spirit of love is our consolation. As operative grace

⁵⁹*Personal Writings*, 15, # 8.

⁶⁰ As Boyle interprets this, "These emotional extremes he naively identifies with Satan and God. ... Loyola's discernment of dualistic spirits from affective states was not in origin even Christian." Marjorie O'Rourke Boyle, *Loyola's Acts: The Rhetoric of the Self* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 38-39.

⁶¹*Spiritual Exercises*, # 330.

⁶²*A Second Collection*, 173.

⁶³*Personal Writings*, 132.

it is purely grace given without conditions. "Finally, it may be noted that the dynamic state of itself is operative grace ..."⁶⁴

Included in the second meaning of consolation are those feelings, thoughts, or acts that are consequent to and result from our being drawn into total love of the Lord. The fruits of being in love with a mysterious, uncomprehended God are an other-worldly fulfillment, joy, peace, bliss. These consolations exist because the fulfillment of the human spirit transforms our heart's restless desires into joy, peace, and contentment. These gifts of the Spirit reveal God's love abiding within us. We achieve authentic fulfillment in the measure that we succeed in self-transcendence that has both its fulfillment and its enduring ground in holiness, in God's gift of his love to us.⁶⁵ "Because God's love is our fulfillment, it gives us joy, a joy that can endure despite the sorrows of failure, humiliation, privation, pain, betrayal, desertion. Because it is fulfillment, its absence is desolation and is revealed now in the trivialization of human life in debauchery, now in the fanaticism with which limited goals are pursued violently and recklessly, now in the despair that condemns man and his world as absurd."⁶⁶

The third meaning of consolation is "all interior happiness that calls and attracts a person towards heavenly things and to the soul's salvation, leaving the soul quiet and at peace in her Creator and Lord."⁶⁷ The state of being in love as first principle sublates our thoughts, emotions, actions so that they become consolations to the degree that they reveal, arise from and attract to Love through Love whom the Father through the Son has poured into our hearts. Only Love gives Love.

Consolation is

1. the totally surprising gift of falling-in-love.
2. the consequent gifts of the Spirit as fulfillment transforms our desires.
3. thoughts, emotions, and deeds sublated by the first principle of love as to become spiritual movements that lead, call, increase, enlighten, teach, and confirm us in greater love.

For Lonergan the reason for the dialectic of consolation and desolation is that human development involves the dialectic of authenticity and inauthenticity

⁶⁴*Method in Theology*, 107.

⁶⁵*A Second Collection*, 155.

⁶⁶*A Second Collection*, 153-54.

⁶⁷*Spiritual Exercises*, # 316.

experienced in the inner conflict between the attachment and interestedness of sensitivity and intersubjectivity and the detachment and disinterestedness of the pure desire to know. Every transcendence of self achieves a fundamental self-fulfillment that grounds consolation, which in turn reveals more inauthenticity (to be overcome) that is the ground of desolation.⁶⁸

The relationship between the consolation who is God and all other subsequent consolations is that the latter are given and flow from God's love as their ground and source. These consolations, the fruit both of love's fulfillment and our own sublated thoughts and emotions, do not ground or cause Jesus' love in us or cause any increase of His love in us, because no finite creature can cause or ground the Lord's love in us. Only the consolation without a proportionate cause, the Spirit of Jesus, can give us a love without limits or conditions proper to the Divine Majesty, or increase this loving. All consolations that are ordered by love as first principle, call, invite, lead to God, and as a consequence "there is no created thing on the face of the earth that we can love in itself, but we love it only in the Creator of all things."⁶⁹ Then, for those "who love God completely," everything supports them and leads them to love of one's Lord or toward his service and praise. God's love poured into our hearts, "once it occurs and as long as it lasts, it is a first principle in our living, the origin and source of the lovingness that colors our every thought, word, deed and omission."⁷⁰ These acts, thoughts, and emotions sublated by Jesus' love in us are instances of grace as cooperative.⁷¹

What is the purpose of these consequent consolations? Clearly these consolations give fervor and strength, make difficult things easy, and lead to love of one's Lord or toward his service and praise.⁷² "For anyone who proceeds with interior fervor, warmth and consolation there is no load so great that it does not seem light to them, nor any penance or other hardship so great that it is not very sweet. This consolation is not always with us, but proceeds always at specific times as arranged."⁷³ Consolation doesn't remain with us always, but it "will always accompany us on the way at the times that God designates."⁷⁴

⁶⁸*Insight*, 728.

⁶⁹*Spiritual Exercises*, # 316.

⁷⁰*A Second Collection*, 153.

⁷¹*Method in Theology*, 107.

⁷²*Spiritual Exercises*, # 315.

⁷³*Personal Writings*, 133.

⁷⁴*Letters*, 22.

Ignatius is clear that only God can give consolation. “Thirdly, spiritual desolation gives us true knowledge and understanding, so that we may perceive within ourselves that on our part we cannot arouse or sustain overflowing devotion, intense love, tears or any other spiritual consolation, but that all this is a gift and grace from God our Lord.”⁷⁵ Only God can overcome the infinite distance between creature and the Creator.

This is not to deny the mediation of our actions, thoughts, emotions, and so forth, since they can mediate but cannot cause God’s love to be poured into one’s heart. Ignatius loved to go out at night and gaze at the stars. The star’s beauty and the awe are not consolations until the first principle of love stirs up an emotion in his gazing a movement that led him “... to feel in himself a great impetus towards serving our Lord.”⁷⁶ This spiritual movement, to serve the Lord, mediated by gazing at the stars, is consolation. Ignatius realized one could cause emotions and that by his daydreaming he could be greatly delighted or moved by nature’s awesome beauty, or be greatly touched by music, fasting, and penance, the use of darkness or light; but nothing guarantees that there will also be given with them a movement to be closer to God, or to achieve authenticity. To transcend oneself through love, to go beyond oneself, is always God’s gift and grace.

Obviously, as in all things human, there are conditions, occasions, dispositions, causes, and so forth, but the achievement of transcendence and authenticity is always disproportionate to these. Ignatius knew all consolations are a pure gift, especially the Gift of gifts that is the Lord himself, who is the goal of all consolations. In a letter to Borgia, Ignatius writes, “...instead of trying to draw blood, seek more immediately the Lord of all, or what comes to the same thing, seek His most holy gifts, such as the gift of tears ...These gifts with His Divine Majesty as their end are an increase in the intensity of faith, hope, and charity, joy and spiritual repose, tears, intense consolation, elevation of mind, divine impressions and illuminations, together with all other spiritual relish and understanding which have these gifts as their objects.”⁷⁷

⁷⁵Spiritual Exercises, # 322.

⁷⁶Personal Writings, 16, #11.

⁷⁷Letters, 181.

THE AMBIGUITY OF CONSOLATION AND DESOLATION

God's self-communication seems rather straightforward. Spiritual consolation is a sign that a person is being united more closely to his Lord. Desolation is a sign that the Lord is withdrawing himself and his gifts. What a surprise it was for Ignatius to experience "great spiritual consolation, new enlightenments, enjoyments, a vision of great beauty that gave him much spiritual consolation" that were directed to God but were a deception. These spiritual consolations moved Ignatius initially to God but through a small shift in his thinking, there began a hardly noticeable diminishment of his union with God. This kind of consolation was St. Paul's angel of light that in reality is an angel of darkness. "It is the characteristic of the bad angel to assume the form of 'an angel of light' in order to enter the devoted soul in her own way and to leave with his own profit; that is, he proposes good and holy thoughts well adapted to such a just soul, and then little by little succeeds in getting what he wants, drawing the soul into his hidden snares and his perverted purposes."⁷⁸ For example, "when the enemy of our salvation sees that we are humble, he tries to draw us on to a humility that is excessive and counterfeit."⁷⁹

Ignatius gives the example of how even when God wraps us up in his love that cannot deceive, or enlightens the mind and moves our will to his purposes, it may happen that "as such a consolation fades away, while the inner mind remains in delight, the enemy arrives completely cloaked in joy and gladness, in order to make us add to what we have sensed from God Our Lord, to make us fall out of order and become totally unbalanced."⁸⁰

In Ignatius's experience these interior movements of consolation and desolation often began with a sequence of thoughts he had not chosen but came to him. He divided his thoughts into those that were grounded in his thinking and his choice and those that were not. "I presuppose that there are three kinds of thought processes in me, one sort which are properly mine and arise simply from liberty and will, and two other sorts which come from outside, one from the good spirit and the other from the bad."⁸¹ For example his daydreaming at Loyola about his

⁷⁸Spiritual Exercises, # 332.

⁷⁹Letters, 20.

⁸⁰Personal Writings, 134.

⁸¹Spiritual Exercises, # 32.

future either in court or following Christ was his choice. Then there were thoughts that were not his deliberate choice. "There came to him a harsh thought that troubled him"⁸² Sometimes he didn't have a lot of control over them. Once in Manresa he was ill at the point of death, a thought came to him, telling him he was just. He couldn't push the thought away, however much he struggled to conquer it.⁸³ Ignatius was aware of the association of ideas and feelings and that it was often impossible to know where our thoughts came from. They could be from our "moods, the flesh, the world." If they were consoling thoughts he attributed it to the good angel while consigning desolate thoughts to the enemy of human nature.

We look skeptically at this world of devils and angels influencing our thoughts. We are not of his culture and worldview. We think of association of ideas and memories, the unconscious, repressed thoughts and emotions, our habits, our bias and culture, and so forth. We see ourselves as quite self-contained and autonomous. But experience taught Ignatius that there were thoughts that he chose and there were thoughts that came to him and were not of his choosing, however they might arise. We still speak of being inspired or we might say, "I had a surprising idea," or "That temptation just came to me." Ignatius is not interested very much in one's own thoughts but in what occurs to me, or what is inspired in me. He realized God's self-communication occurred more in the thoughts and emotions that came to him as gifts, and inauthenticity was the source of any inauthentic sequence of thoughts. For Ignatius the thoughts caused by feelings of desolation often conceal what one needs to overcome to achieve authenticity.

Since many thoughts and feelings arise without one's having chosen them, one has to ascertain their intention and direction. These thoughts and feelings, if authentic, lead toward God and if inauthentic, lead away from God. This is why Ignatius writes, "There is much to be gained if the giver of the Exercises, while not wanting to ask about or know the exercitant's self-chosen thoughts or sins, is given a faithful account of the different agitations and thoughts brought by the different spirits..."⁸⁴ "When the exercitant is not affected by any spiritual movements, nor stirred by various spirits the director should question the exercitant closely and in detail."⁸⁵ When the first Jesuits were deliberating whether to consider founding a society or not, they prayed and pondered for

⁸²*Personal Writings*, 21 # 20.

⁸³*Personal Writings*, 27, # 32.

⁸⁴*Spiritual Exercises*, # 17.

⁸⁵*Spiritual Exercises*, #7.

several days and then brought their thoughts to the meeting. "We wanted it understood that nothing at all that has been or will be spoken of originates from our own spirit or our own thoughts; rather, whatever it was, it was solely what our Lord inspired."⁸⁶

Since Christ's love is the first principle of all our good thoughts and feelings, it grounds thoughts that are gifts more than just my thoughts and they can be a significant indicator of the Lord's self-communication. We are aware that there is a larger dimension in our spirit than just our thinking, feeling, and choosing. Similarly, temptations that arise in me without my choosing, whatever their source, can point to weakness and self-deception, unresolved issues, cultural biases, and inauthenticity.

Clearly, the discernment of God's self-communication is not straightforward. The discernment of consolation and desolation, of our thoughts, and of various spirits requires a hermeneutics of suspicion. "We must pay close attention to the whole course of our thoughts; if the beginning, middle and the end are entirely good and tend towards what is wholly right, this is a sign of the good angel. But if the course of the thoughts suggested to us leads us finally to something bad or distracting, or less good than what one had previously intended to do, or if in the end the soul is weakened, upset or distressed, losing the peace, tranquility and quiet previously experienced – all this is a clear sign of the bad spirit, the enemy of our progress and eternal well-being"⁸⁷

The words are difficult. If one's direction is ever so slightly off, it soon becomes a significant deviation. "When the enemy of human nature has been detected and recognized by his serpent's tail, and the evil end to which he leads, it profits the person who has been tempted to retrace immediately the whole sequence of good thoughts he has suggested, looking for their starting-point, and noting how the enemy contrived little by little to make the soul fall away from the state of sweetness and spiritual joy she was in, until he draws her into his own depraved intention."⁸⁸

Lonergan describes the discernment of spirits in terms of Voegelin's pull and counterpull: "it is the kind of knowledge thematized by ascetical and mystical writers when they speak of the discernment of spirits and set forth rules for distinguishing between pull and counterpull, between being drawn by the

⁸⁶Quoted in Jules Toner, *Discerning God's Will: Ignatius of Loyola's Teaching on Christian Decision Making* (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1991), 280.

⁸⁷Spiritual Exercises, # 333.

⁸⁸Spiritual Exercises, # 334.

Father to be drawn to the Son and, on the other hand, the myriad other attractions that distract the human spirit.”⁸⁹

Desolation can be ambiguous as the experience of God hiding himself when one has no devotion. This may be “to test our quality and to show how far we will go in God’s service and praise even without generous recompense in the form of consolations and overflowing graces.”⁹⁰ In our contemplation of his passion we ask to be sorrowful and for tears and confusion.⁹¹ One’s desolation, may really be purifying kind of gift if one remains at peace and centered in the Lord, desiring to be faithful and more loving.

In order to avoid a naïve attribution of our feelings to God, everyone needs to approach consolation and desolation with a hermeneutics of suspicion and recovery with love as one’s first principle. The hermeneutics of suspicion pierces through mere plausibility, or false consolation, and the hermeneutics of recovery discovers true consolation.

CONSOLATION WITHOUT CAUSE

Loneragan describes the being-in-love that is the first principle of our thoughts and desires as a consolation without a cause, in accord with Rahner’s interpretation of Ignatius’s consolation without a previous cause. Ignatius divides consolation into those without a previous cause and those with a previous cause. “Only God Our Lord gives consolation to the soul without preceding cause; for it is the Creator’s prerogative to enter the soul, and to leave her, and to arouse movements which draw her entirely into love of His Divine Majesty. When I say ‘without cause’ I mean without any previous perception or understanding of some object due to which consolation could come about through the mediation of the person’s own act of understanding and will.”⁹² Consolation without a cause means that there is no mediation of one’s thoughts or desires that one is aware of. It has a quality of coming to me and not “being born of” what I was doing, thinking, reading, and so forth. In this sense it is a surprise, a pure gift. Consolation without a cause can have an intensity, an ardor that so enflames the person with the love of God our Lord, that as long as this possession by love lasts, one can only act out of love.

⁸⁹*A Third Collection*, 195.

⁹⁰*Spiritual Exercises*, # 322.

⁹¹*Spiritual Exercises*, # 193.

⁹²*Spiritual Exercises*, # 330.

When embraced and caught up in divine love, one cannot love any creature in itself but only in the Lord of them all. Whether we advert to it or not, such a consuming and intense love is strong enough to overcome our inauthenticity, and our disordered attachments.

Lonergan agrees with Rahner that falling in love corresponds to consolation without a cause, a gift purely from God and thus without any created cause; yet it has a content without an object: "Again, it (the gift of God's love) corresponds to Ignatius of Loyola's consolation without a cause as interpreted by Karl Rahner, namely an experience with a content but without an apprehended object."⁹³ "By such love it (religiously differentiated consciousness) is oriented positively to transcendent loveliness. Such a positive orientation and the consequent self-surrender, enable one to dispense with any intentional object. And when they cease to be operative, the memory of them lets one be content with enumerations of what God is not."⁹⁴

Rahner's interpretation of Ignatius is not widely accepted. Philip Endean, a Jesuit and Rahner scholar who is sympathetic to his thought, writes, "Rahner discusses two Ignatian texts – the rule about 'consolation without preceding cause' and a passage from an important early letter – and argues that they ground some kind of objectless consolation. In neither case is Rahner's exegesis of Ignatius plausible, let alone coercive".⁹⁵

According to Endean's interpretation of Ignatius's consolation without a cause, "Throughout the Exercises, consolation – and indeed desolation – are catalyzed by various kinds of instruction and imaginative exercise. Ignatius here seems to be envisaging a consolation that arises without this kind of psychological stimulus. He is not making what would be an indefensible speculative claim about the exclusion of *any* created causality whatever."⁹⁶

An example from Ignatius may help clarify without cause as not arising from what one was thinking or desiring at that time. In Manresa, Ignatius firmly decided to abstain from meat and " – in no way was he thinking of making a change – when one day, in the morning when he had got up, there appeared to

⁹³*A Second Collection*, 173.

⁹⁴*Method in Theology*, 278.

⁹⁵Philip Endean, *Karl Rahner and Ignatian Spirituality* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 159. See Toner, *Discerning God's Will*, 303. See the whole section (301-13) and Daniel Gil, *La consolación sinc causa precedente: Estudio hermenéutico-teológico sobre los nn. 330,331, y 336 de los Ejercicios Espirituales de San Ignacio* (Rome: CIS, 1971), 89-96.

⁹⁶Endean, *Karl Rahner and Ignatian Spirituality*, p. 159 (italics by author).

him meat for the eating, as if he could see it with his bodily eyes, without any desire for it having been there before. And together with this there also came upon him a great assent of the will that, from then on, he should eat meat. And although he could still remember his intention from earlier, he was incapable of being doubtful about this: rather he could not but make up his mind that he had to eat meat.”⁹⁷

His confessor told him he should consider if this were a temptation. “But he, examining the matter well, was incapable of ever being doubtful about it”.⁹⁸ Key phrases are: “in no way thinking” and “without any desire,” and there is “a great assent of the will” and “he was incapable of doubting.” For Ignatius, “without a previous cause” means without any preceding thoughts about eating meat or any previous desire or thought to change his determination not to eat meat, and there is given a great assent that he is incapable of doubting. Although cannot doubt he remains free. Ignatius had a great deal of experience of how one’s thoughts and desires could be manipulated by self-deception, disordered desires, habits and selfish values, as well as compulsions and fears without any advance to their source. Yet he believed only God could directly inspire us outside of our thinking and desiring “to be drawn entirely into love of His Divine Majesty” so that he was incapable of doubting the experience. ⁹⁹

Lonergan affirms that falling in love with God is a consolation without previous cause, because it is God’s totally free gift. “Only God can give that gift and the gift itself is self-justifying”¹⁰⁰ without any previous finite cause so that because “falling in love is something disproportionate to its causes, conditions, occasions, antecedents.”¹⁰¹ Hence, one loves not as an act or series of acts but as being-in-love without in some way knowing whom we are loving. This is exceptional because “it is the Creator’s prerogative to enter the soul, and to abide in her without any preconditions” of knowledge or merit. Thus it is “an experience with a content but without an apprehended object.”¹⁰² We have no intellectual apprehension of the one with whom we have fallen in love. Rahner interprets “without previous thought” to mean that we have no concept of the object loved. Lacking any concept or object known in the strict sense, we are

⁹⁷*Personal Writings*, 25, #27.

⁹⁸*Personal Writings*, 25, #27.

⁹⁹*Spiritual Exercises*, # 330.

¹⁰⁰*Method in Theology*, 123.

¹⁰¹*Method in Theology*, 122.

¹⁰²*A Second Collection*, 173.

aware of a content that is the experience of transcendence. This "can only be the experience of transcendence as such, and this as a consequence will signify an experience which is 'without object' (nonconceptual), though not without content."¹⁰³

Lonergan is not himself interpreting Ignatius, but he thought he and Rahner explained consolation without a cause similarly; both agreed that there is a nonconceptualized content and an experience of total transcendence. Lonergan clarifies being-in-love further: "First, then, it is an experience, not in the broad sense that refers to the coming together and compounding of many conscious elements, but rather in the technical sense that refers to a single element and so constitutes not a structure but an infrastructure."¹⁰⁴ Experience as infrastructure seems to me clearer than Rahner's articulation of the experience of pure transcendence, which for Rahner becomes an immediate but nonconceptual experience.

Lonergan differs from Rahner. For Lonergan there is not an understanding of who or what we experience, and there can be no expression in a concept.¹⁰⁵ Lonergan can make love the ground of one's judgment of value rather than simply an indeterminate, nonconceptual, immediate experience of one's transcendence. I think this is faithful to the teaching that in this life we cannot know God immediately. Lonergan affirms that "by God's love one is orientated positively to what is transcendent in lovableness" and "the consequent self-surrender." This is the content of the consolation without a cause. There are the emotions of being-in-love and loving without limits and without conditions. Through the heart the transcendent is grasped not as truth but as value. "By the heart's reason I would understand emotions that are intentional responses to values; and I would recall the two aspects of such responses, the absolute aspect that is a recognition of value, and the relative aspect that is a preference of one value over another."¹⁰⁶ The heart's "knowledge content" is "apprehension" of transcendent value through connaturality proceeding from one's self-awareness of absolute fulfillment in love's union.

"This apprehension consists in the experienced fulfillment of our unrestricted thrust to self-transcendence, in our actuated orientation towards the

¹⁰³Karl Rahner, *The Dynamic Element in The Church*, tran. W. J. O'Hara, (London: Burns and Oates, 1964), 139.

¹⁰⁴*A Third Collection*, 125.

¹⁰⁵Raymond Moloney, S.J., *The Knowledge of Christ* (New York: Continuum, 1999), 96.

¹⁰⁶*Method in Theology*, 115.

mystery of love and awe.”¹⁰⁷ This apprehension may be expressed as a clouded revelation. It is orientated to the mystery of love and awe. “But who it is we love, is neither given nor as yet understood”.¹⁰⁸ When one falls in love without limits or conditions the existential subject is transformed into a subject in love, a subject held, grasped, possessed, and owned through a total and so an other-worldly love.¹⁰⁹ Our final fulfillment in love transforms our unlimited desire to an unlimited joy and peace, which are fruits of being in love with a mysterious, uncomprehended God.¹¹⁰ With this lived experience of unlimited love and joy there is an affective grasp of transcendent value.

“It is a consciousness of love, joy, peace ... Because the dynamic state is conscious without being known, it is an experience of mystery. Because it is being in love, the mystery is not merely attractive but fascinating; to it one belongs; by it one is possessed. Because it is an unmeasured love, the mystery evokes awe. ... inasmuch as it is conscious without being known, the gift of God’s love is an experience of the holy, Rudolf Otto’s *mysterium fascinans et tremendum*. It is what Paul Tillich named a being grasped by ultimate concern. It corresponds to St. Ignatius Loyola’s consolation that has no cause, as expounded by Karl Rahner.”¹¹¹

Lonergan has not done an exegesis on what Ignatius meant; he believes his account corresponds to Rahner’s exposition of Ignatius’s thought.

SUMMARY OF CONSOLATION WITHOUT CAUSE OR BEING-IN-LOVE WITHOUT LIMITS

I have fallen in love, without limits or conditions, and with all my heart, mind, and strength. My falling in love is an intentional response that is connaturally aware of the fundamental fulfillment of my unrestricted thrust to self-transcendence and of my actuated orientation to the mystery of love and awe. “The knowledge of God by connaturality comes about through charity.”¹¹² Falling in love is being in love with someone, but whom it is I love is neither

¹⁰⁷*Method in Theology*, 115.

¹⁰⁸*Method in Theology*, 122.

¹⁰⁹*Method in Theology*, 242.

¹¹⁰*Method in Theology*, 242.

¹¹¹*Method in Theology*, 106.

¹¹²Pierre Robert, “Interview with Lonergan,” *Lonergan Workshop* 10 (1994): 341.

given nor as yet understood. My being is sublated to a shared being-in-love. It becomes total and permanent mutual self-surrender without conditions, limits, or reservations. This mutual love is the intertwining of two lives. It transforms an "I" and "thou" into a "we" so intimate, so secure, so permanent, that each attends, imagines, thinks, plans, feels, speaks, acts in concern for both. But it is such a mutual self-surrender, not as an act, but as a dynamic state that is prior to and functions as the principle of subsequent acts. From it flows our desires and our fears, our joy and sorrow, our discernment of values, our decisions and deeds.

Being-in-love, I am transformed from an existential subject to a subject in love, a new shared identity, a subject held, grasped, possessed though a total and so other-worldly love. Because this love is unmeasured and is my fundamental fulfillment, I am conscious of joy and peace.

Since this love is total gift, it is not dependent on my being worthy or loveable or intellectually knowing, conceiving, or understanding. There is no intellectually apprehended object. The apprehension of values arises not from understanding but from the intentional response of love to this value as my fundamental fulfillment and actuation. Love's awareness is an infrastructure not knowledge; there is only uncomprehended mystery to which I belong, and by which I am possessed. Grounded in love's awareness one is ready to deliberate and judge and decide and act with the easy freedom of those that do all good because they are in love. The gift of love evokes awe and is an experience of the holy, as, for instance in the mystic's silent self-surrender in response to the gift of transcendent which is a mediated immediacy of one's subjectivity to the beloved who is acknowledged in a cloud of unknowing.

The consciousness of transcendent value revealed through love grounds the judgment of value in faith, a "knowledge" born of God's love flooding our hearts. Beliefs that are the result of judgments of value, and the judgments of value that motivate religious belief, come from faith as the eye of religious love. Faith discerns God's self-disclosures in one's heart, in creation, in history, in religious traditions, but above all in his Word made flesh. Faith grounds the objectification of the gift of God's love, especially through prayer and acts of love and concern. Faith's power of unrestricted love reveals and upholds all that is truly good; it is the ground of the spiritual discernment of God's concrete will for me at this moment.

With this understanding of consolation without a cause and its subsequent consolations and of the discernment of spirits, let us turn to Ignatius's method for

actually discerning God's self-communication while one makes the Spiritual Exercises.

THE THREE WAYS OR THE THREE TIMES OF ELECTION

A key presupposition of the Spiritual Exercises is that God reveals his will about the concrete specific disposition of one's life "by way of elections," "*por via de las elecciones*," as Ignatius expresses it in his letter to the fathers at Trent.¹¹³ In any of "the three times a sound and good election can be made."¹¹⁴ Though the Spiritual Exercises are a special time for God's self-communication, Ignatius believes that God reveals his will for all our decisions. This fundamental belief for Ignatius is echoed in the nearly routine ending of many of his letters. "May He in His infinite and supreme goodness deign to give us all His bountiful grace that we may ever know His most holy will and perfectly fulfill it."¹¹⁵ "May it please the Divine Wisdom to grant that we may always know His most holy will and find our peace and happiness in ever fulfilling it."¹¹⁶ He also uses the word to know "*conocer*" but usually it is "*sentir*," a lived awareness with a clear affective component¹¹⁷

Why are there three times? I think the three times are a systematization of Ignatius's own experiences of how "God our Lord is pleased to move my will and to put into my mind what I ought to do."¹¹⁸ The first time is a leading voice and the second a middle one and the third a low one.¹¹⁹ We need to remember that in all three a sound and good election can be made, that is, God does communicate his will. All three times have as their first principle the state of being-in-love whereby everything else is loved only with this love. In Ignatius' word, one is "indifferent" to anything apart from its relation to God. One is free from the distortion of wanting anything as if it were independent of God. Without this

¹¹³See the Spanish version of Ignatius's writings in the *Monumenta Ignatiana*, series 2a, *Exercitia Spirituality Sancti Ignatii de Loyola et eorum Directoria* (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores, 1919), 709.

¹¹⁴Spiritual Exercises, # 175.

¹¹⁵Letters, 218.

¹¹⁶Letters, 188.

¹¹⁷For a discussion of the various meanings of this word "*sentir*," see John Carroll Futrell, S.J., *Making an Apostolic Community of Love* (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources), 111-16.

¹¹⁸Spiritual Exercises, # 180.

¹¹⁹*A Third Collection*, 125, where consciousness is compared to a polyphony.

basic indifference one should not enter into the way of elections. "To sum up, nothing ought to induce me either to adopt such means or to reject them except the sole service and praise of God our Lord and the eternal salvation of my soul."¹²⁰

Only with faith's "eye of love" can we discern in all three times God's self-communication as only from God. No other cause is necessary for God's self-communication, even though it may be accompanied by certain thoughts and feelings, as gift of association, not as a constitutive cause. All three times are grounded in a consolation, as God's self-communication of being-in-love with greater or lesser intensity. All three times lead the person to greater freedom or indifference and to a closer union with God. "Their desire is to want the thing or not to want it only according as God our Lord shall move their will and as might appear to them personally to be more for the service and praise of the Divine Majesty."¹²¹

"One is to ask that God our Lord...be pleased to move my will and to put into my mind what I ought to do with regard to the thing before me that will be most for his praise and glory."¹²² One's constant petition is, "May the eternal wisdom and infinite goodness of Christ Jesus our Lord and God bestow on us all His light and integrity of mind, so that we may always know His most holy will and perfectly fulfill it."¹²³ God moves one's will and puts into one's mind what I ought to do in three different ways.¹²⁴ Are the three ways given in order of preference? "Ignatius' preference corresponds to the order of presentation. When not moved in the First Time, one resorts to the Second, and to the Third only when the Second is unfruitful.

THE FIRST TIME

"The First Time. When God our Lord so moves and attracts the will that without doubting or being able to doubt, the faithful soul follows what is shown, just as St. Paul and St. Matthew did when they followed Christ our Lord."¹²⁵ In the first

¹²⁰Spiritual Exercises, # 169.

¹²¹Spiritual Exercises, # 155.

¹²²Spiritual Exercises, # 180.

¹²³Letters, 187.

¹²⁴Spiritual Exercises, # 175-89.

¹²⁵Spiritual Exercises, # 175.

way the knowledge and desire are simply given by God so that without doubting or being able to doubt, the faithful soul follows what is shown. There is no process to discern an election through consolations and desolations as in the second time. Nor is there a process of reason pondering the pros and cons as in the third time. When there is no mediation of one's thoughts or desires, this is Ignatius's consolation without a cause, although it is not explicitly stated by Ignatius as a consolation without preceding cause, this is only inferred from Ignatius's letter to Teresa Rejadell and from the fact that no further process is indicated.

In the first time, his love is given to such a degree that there is given a judgment of value as to what I want and ought to do. This is so grounded in love that I have no doubt, nor am I able to doubt, and there is a firm will to carry it out. This doesn't exclude sharing with one's director or confessor and always reflecting to discern if any deception has seeped into my experience. In his famous letter to Teresa Rejadell he writes, "It often happens that our Lord moves and forces us interiorly to one action or another by opening up our mind and heart, i.e. speaking inside us without any noise of voices, raising us entirely to His divine love, without our being able to resist His purpose, even if we wanted."¹²⁶ Further on, he continues, "This [interior fervor, warmth and consolation] shows to us and opens the path with the direction we are to follow, and the opposite we are to avoid."¹²⁷

I think the first time is more often an exercise of vertical freedom, either moving one to a new self-identity by a conversion or by the gift of a new horizon determined by the value of love. If it is not a conversion to a new horizon it can be a broadening, an enrichment, and a deepening of love's horizon, which integrates the various levels of consciousness.¹²⁸ "So far from resulting from our knowledge and choice, it dismantles and abolishes the horizon within which our knowing and choosing went on, and it sets up a new horizon, within which the love of God transvalues our values and the eyes of that love transform our knowing."¹²⁹

Ignatius in his letter to Teresa writes that such a consolation without cause is often given.¹³⁰ By the end of the seventeenth century the first time was

¹²⁶*Personal Writings*, 133-34.

¹²⁷*Personal Writings*, 133.

¹²⁸*Method in Theology*, 40, 237.

¹²⁹*A Second Collection*, 172.

¹³⁰*Letters*, 22.

considered rare.¹³¹ Pierre Wolff, S.J., a gifted and experienced retreat director, writes, "I am not sure if I have ever seen this experience (of the first time) after decades of giving retreats."¹³² I would agree with Ivens and Toner that if one goes beyond the dramatic examples that Ignatius gives—St. Paul's conversion—the first time can be the simple, loving, and firm choice that comes with great conviction and one doesn't harbor any doubts. Although there may have been a previous significant time of questioning and searching, nevertheless the decision is just given with full assurance and resolve. A decision of the heart may be given without following directly from our thoughts and desires and can be considered as a first-time choice.¹³³ What distinguishes the first time is that love either dramatically or in all simplicity makes us totally indifferent and free, and our desire is so rooted in Christ's love poured into our hearts that we do not doubt it.

In Ignatius's time the Exercises were the principal instrument that led men to choose to enter the Society. I consider that the grace of the first time is often the grace of vocation, the grace of a new religious identity flowing from religious conversion. Nevertheless, the discernment of a vocation can occur in all three times. Here are some examples, I think, of first-time discernment. The first is from Thomas Merton:

Fall came, school began again, and then there was a day extraordinary even in Merton's not so ordinary life. Merton had been up all night with a couple of friends, and after a few hour's sleep back at his place, they brought in some breakfast, and talked and listened to jazz on the record player. "Somewhere in the midst of all this," a startling idea came to him: "I am going to be a priest." Even the autobiographer could not say what caused it, but it was "not a thing of passion or fancy. It was a strong and sweet and deep and insistent attraction that suddenly made itself felt but not as a movement of appetite towards any sensible good. It was something in the order of conscience, a new and profound sense this was what I really ought to do."¹³⁴

Interestingly, once the idea of priesthood is given, it is "startling" and comes to him with a strong, sweet, deep, and insistent attraction to a value that is in the

¹³¹Ivens, 145 n. 106.

¹³²Pierre Wolff, *The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius* (Triumph, 1997), 157.

¹³³Ivens, 136; Toner, *Discerning God's Will*, 121.

¹³⁴Thomas Merton, *Seven Storey Mountain*, 307, cited by Walter Conn in *Christian Conversion: A Developmental Interpretation of Autonomy and Surrender* (New York: Paulist Press, 1986), 173.

service of God. I find it easy to see in this a first-time discernment. That does not mean that there are no questions, that wise advice needn't be sought, or that one might not try avoidance, strive against it, or have concerns; but the experience remains valid, as given, and one knows that denial would be self-deception. I believe another example of consolation without a cause is aptly described by Doris Grumbach:

What happened was this: sitting there, almost squatting on those wooden steps, listening to the quiet, I was filled with a unique feeling of peace, an impression so intense that it seemed to expand into ineffable joy, a huge delight. (Even then I realized the hyperbole of these words but I could not escape them.) It went on. Second after second, so pervasive that it seemed to fill my entire body. I relaxed into it, luxuriated in it. Then with no warning, and surely without preparation or expectation, I knew that it was: for the seconds it lasted I felt, with a certainty I cannot account for, a sense of the presence of God. You cannot know how extraordinary this was unless you understand that I was a young woman without a history of belief, without a formal religion or any faith at all. My philosophical bent was Marxist; ...¹³⁵

This experience creates a new identity, defining who she is in God, and she spends her whole life searching to be faithful to the experience and to find it again.

In summary, in the first time, whatever the occasion or conditions, God our Lord enlightens the mind and what comes to mind, doesn't arise out of one's conscious reflection and feelings prior to that moment. One was not thinking about it. With Merton, it was a startling idea that came to him. Or the heart's decision slips into one's awareness and one knows it is right. The surprise may regard not the content but it's coming to mind. Then one's desire is so strongly attracted to what has been given that there is no going back to what was before without being inauthentic. Why is there no room for doubt? In his vision telling him to stop being a vegetarian, Ignatius is unable to doubt that this is God's will, even though he can reflect to see if he can doubt it as his confessor recommended. If the first principle of love leads one "to become inflamed with the love of her Creator and Lord" and grounds the apprehension of value and inspires the will to accomplish it, one cannot doubt love's judgment of value or the new identity that is given.

¹³⁵Doris Grumbach, *The Presence of Absence: On Prayer and on Epiphany* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1998), 3.

THE SECOND TIME

“The Second Time is when sufficient light and knowledge is received through experience of consolations and desolations, and through experience of the discernment of different spirits.”¹³⁶ The knowledge gained through consolations and desolations and the discernment of spirits is enough to make a sound and good election. In this time, one often struggles with doubts, and with desires for and against the object of election. In the second way to a good discernment (*se toma assaz claridad y cognoscimiento*) enough clarity and knowledge is received to reveal what I should choose in accord with his most holy will and good pleasure.¹³⁷ Ignatius in his letter to Francis Borgia about the possibility of Francis being named a cardinal clarifies how this second time works.

In this business of the (cardinal's) hat I think it will be best if I give you some account of the process of my feelings, as if I were examining my soul for myself, for the greater glory of God. As soon as I was informed for certain the Emperor had given your name, and that the Pope was happy to make you a cardinal I felt a kind of agreement or inspiration that I should prevent it as far as I could. At the same time, however, as I was not certain about the divine will – so many reasons occurred to me for and against – I gave an order in our house that all priests should celebrate mass, and the laymen say prayers, during three days, asking that I might be guided in all things for the greater glory of God.

During this period of three days, there were times, as I turned over the matter in my mind and debated it, when I felt (*en mi que venian*) some sort of fear and I lost that freedom of spirit to speak out and prevent the business. “How do I know what God our Lord wants me to do?” I thought, and I could not feel sure about preventing it. But at other times, when I began the normal meditations, I could feel these fears vanishing. I continued with this petition on several occasions, occasionally feeling fear and occasionally the opposite. At last, on the third day, I felt during the normal meditation, and ever since constantly, that my mind was quite made up and that I was decided in a way that was gentle and left me feeling quite free – to impede the nomination. ... If I did not act thus, I

¹³⁶Spiritual Exercises, # 176.

¹³⁷Spiritual Exercises, # 180.

would be and indeed am quite certain in myself that I would not give a good account of my self before God Our Lord, rather a wholly bad one.¹³⁸

As Ignatius considers all the reasons for and against he couldn't find clear direction through his reflections. Then he experiences the fear and loss of freedom—desolation. As a result, he could not feel sure about opposing it. Uncertainty. At other times, the fears vanish – consolation. The fear returns – desolation. On the third day, in prayer, he finds in himself a firm decision and a resolve that is final, peaceful, and free. Praying through the experiences of consolation and desolation and through the discernment of different spirits he is given a firm decision and a free and gentle resolve to oppose the nomination. His prayer has been that the Lord put into his mind and move his will to what he ought to do.¹³⁹ There isn't a process of just accumulating consolations or insights but rather love is first principle overcoming the inauthenticity that blocks discernment, in this case his fears, and lack of freedom. Then his mind becomes clear and his will is moved by the first principle of love to decide what he ought to do. In this struggle authenticity overcomes inauthenticity through the first principle of love.

In the second time, the need for the discernment of spirits vis-à-vis the variation of consolations and desolations indicates the need to become freer and more loving in the area revealed by the experience of various spirits and the dialectic of consolation and desolation. What causes the lack of clarity and the desire to oppose the proposed election is not the lack in or depth of the relevant consolation but the lack of freedom. One's identity, one's fears, one's biases, and disordered attachments are what we struggle with. The dialectical agitation of consolation and desolation is the struggle of authenticity to overcome inauthenticity. It seems to involve a horizontal exercise of liberty.

As usual, Ignatius considers the pros and cons and some say he combines the third and the second times. Outside of the first time, the need to ponder the issue is normal. During the Spiritual Exercises one doesn't discern in the second time through the reflection on pros and cons. Outside of the Exercises, considering the pros and cons is a natural process in coming to a decision. In the third time one is in the state of tranquility and the mind, though considering both sides, inclines more strongly to one side. In the second time, one is not in a time of tranquility nor does one arrive at a decision through a process of weighing pros

¹³⁸*Personal Writings*, 245-46.

¹³⁹*Spiritual Exercises*, # 180.

and cons, helpful though this might be, rather, one through experiences of consolation and desolation and through the discernment of different spirits, one's inauthenticity is overcome and then sufficient clarity and a firm decision are attained.

This second time is a mediated consolation, and it is now often considered as the usual way. Unlike the first time no consolation fills the spirit, embracing one in love so that there is no inauthenticity; love in the first time makes one radically indifferent. When one is being deeply loved, and this love moves one to choose, there is no way to doubt because love is never false. This second type is usually associated with a choice that one is considering. There is no sense that the thought comes to me and inspires me. An attraction to the value one is considering is there but not so intensely as to ground a firm conviction regarding what one should choose; one experiences conflicting spiritual movements. First, one is attracted to and happy in considering one's choice. Later one is not so attracted, and perhaps becomes fearful. There is a back and forth—a sign of a divided or fearful heart. Perhaps one's life is in the middle of a transition from one hierarchy of values to another. One does not feel not centered, integrated, self-possessed. One's fears, concerns, old habits, can play a role in the conflicting feelings. As Ignatius writes, "I would say nobody – can calculate and form an appraisal of the degree to which they impede and undo the effectiveness of the Lord's influence on themselves."¹⁴⁰ In prayer, one is moved to face the conflict that arises from lack of freedom and indifference. The more that love is given as the first principle of one's thinking and desiring, the more easily a value's priority revealed through one's love grounds a firmness of decision. There is no indication that Ignatius had any doubt or that he could doubt that he should oppose the "Red Hat" hat for Borgia. He arrives at this firm conviction not simply as a gift (as in the first time) but through a dialectical overcoming of inauthenticity.

THE THIRD TIME

In the third time, with the free and tranquil use of the soul's powers, the strong inclination of reason gives sufficient direction for a sound decision. This choice is between two goods, and there is no way to reason to a conclusion that either of the choices is God's will. Given that our values are Christ's and that we are

¹⁴⁰*Personal Writings*, 161.

indifferent, and that love is the first principle of our thinking, Ignatius trusts the attraction of reason to one good rather than the other. Reason guided by participation in Christ's love tends to prefer one choice over another. Ignatius trusts that the inclination of spiritual reason reveals what love wants. Love has sublated reason. In this third time one's spirit is tranquil. The free and tranquil use of one's natural powers in itself is a grace and a gift of the Spirit. Is this a lesser way? I believe that in the special circumstances of a thirty-day retreat, when one has withdrawn from ordinary life, and after weeks of intensive prayer, of movements of consolation and desolation, and of the discernment of various spirits, this is the third mode of choice and rather exceptional. But outside the Exercises in ordinary life, the Constitutions indicate that this is the usual way that superiors would discern God's will.¹⁴¹ As Ivens writes, "In a letter written towards the close of Ignatius' life he insists that reason alone gives sufficient grounds for someone to enter the Society of Jesus; this clearly refers to a choice of a state in life made in the Third time."¹⁴²

One begins with the same desire for discernment, praying that "God our Lord will be pleased to move my will and to put into mind what I ought to do."¹⁴³ Key to discernment in all three processes is authenticity or indifference in the same sense that the result of having fallen in love with God without conditions or limits so that as long as it lasts one cannot love any creature in itself except in the creator. "The love that moves me and makes me choose something has to descend from above, from the love of God; ..." ¹⁴⁴

THE THIRD WAY: TWO SCENARIOS

In the first scenario one has no desire for or against the decision. One is indifferent. One is like a needle pointing to the center, indicating that one is not moved for or against the decision. One loves God above all else and all else in him, one has the free and tranquil use of one's spiritual faculties, and one has asked the Lord to move one's will and to put into one's mind what one ought to do. After one has used one's intellect well, faithfully going over the matter, considering the pros and cons from every point of view, one chooses the

¹⁴¹Ivens, *Understanding the Spiritual Exercises*, 145 n. 105.

¹⁴²Ivens, *Understanding the Spiritual Exercises*, 139.

¹⁴³Spiritual Exercises, # 180.

¹⁴⁴Spiritual Exercises, # 184.

alternative toward which the intellect more inclined. This is “to choose in accord with his most holy will and good pleasure,”¹⁴⁵ and “what I perceive to be more to the glory and praise of God our Lord and the salvation of my soul.”¹⁴⁶

In the second scenario one is not equally open to accepting or refusing but has a desire either for or against the proposal, and guided by love one must discern through intelligence if one's desire is authentic or not. Ignatius offers three psychodramas, all aimed at creating a perspective in which one's deliberation tends to be more freed from biases and false attachments. Placing oneself in the psychodrama, one ponders one's response to a stranger in the same situation, or wonders what would have one wished to have decided at the point of death, or on the Day of Judgment. One should then follow the same decision for oneself now. Probably, one's judgment about what is authentic in the scenarios is under the guidance of the first principle of love. Maybe one's tranquility doesn't reveal a lack of indifference in the same way the dialectic of consolation and desolation in the second time does, but the various psychodramas aid one to judge and decide in accord with one's ultimate good, that is, one's union with transcendent love. As he tries to help one to be free, Ignatius knows only too well how one's inauthenticity is always at work.

Since this process can easily be open to questions and doubts Ignatius recommends that “After such an election or decision has been made, the person who made it, should turn with great diligence at prayer, coming before God our Lord, and offering him this election so that his Divine Majesty may be pleased to accept and confirm it, if it is to his greater service and praise.”¹⁴⁷ The “if” seems to imply some uncertainty for this kind of decision during the Spiritual Exercises. He never says what he means by confirmation but in the passage from his spiritual diary about discerning concerning whether Jesuit churches should have a fixed income. Even though he has great illuminations, visions, and great consolations, he still seeks confirmation, which seems to mean that he would have such a firmness of will that he can face anything that might arise.¹⁴⁸ Not that he doubted his decision, but he wanted “to put an end to the affair with my soul in a state of consolation and complete satisfaction.”¹⁴⁹ “When I sat at table, ... I was

¹⁴⁵Spiritual Exercises, # 180.

¹⁴⁶Spiritual Exercises, # 179.

¹⁴⁷Spiritual Exercises, # 183.

¹⁴⁸Knauer's article is helpful on this point. Peter Knauer, “Die Wahl in den Exerziten von Ignatius von Loyola,” *Theologie und Philosophie* 66 (1991): 321-37.

¹⁴⁹SW. 98.

strengthened by tears and a complete sense of security about all I had decided. ... all was firmness and confirmation on the matter.”¹⁵⁰

In his letter to Dr. Vergara, he writes, “The Holy Spirit will teach you better than anyone else the means to take to relish with affection and to put into execution with sweetness that which reason points out to be for the greater service and glory of God.”¹⁵¹ This “relish with affection” and “sweetness of execution” well describes confirmation. This isn’t transferring the third into the second time of discernment where the key is the dialectic of consolation and desolation to overcome inauthenticity. As Ivens notes, “Indeed if we pray honestly and openly for the Lord’s confirmation, we expose ourselves to the risk to ‘disconfirmation’.”¹⁵² Ignatius, knows from experience, that the impact of inauthenticity comes very quickly.

WHAT MAKES DISCERNMENT POSSIBLE?

Discernment is possible simply because we are in love with transcendent love, our Creator and Lord. This love is the first principle of all discernment, enlightenment, and of the acts of the will and imagination. We have already discussed how the Spirit of love poured into our hearts as pure unconditional love unites us to the humanity of Christ, bringing about a mutually shared being-in-love and a transformation in which “I” and “thou” become “we” so intimately, so securely and, so permanently that each attends, imagines, thinks, plans, feels, speaks, acts for the other. I no longer exist but Christ exists in me. We are sons and daughters in the only Son, sharing his loving and thinking, but only to the degree that we are authentic. There is always much more inauthenticity than we can imagine. There is always so much pull and counterpull. But what we lovingly think and desire is always ordered by Christ’s human love grounded in the hypostatic union; and Christ always “knows” and follows the Father’s will. The challenge of knowing God’s will is the challenge of knowing what my true, loving desire is.

¹⁵⁰SW, 99.

¹⁵¹*Letters*, 417.

¹⁵²Ivens, *Understanding the Spiritual Exercises*, 141.

DO WE EVER KNOW GOD'S WILL?

In accord with Lonergan's understanding of knowledge as the performance of experiencing, understanding, and judging we do not strictly know God's will. During this pilgrimage of life we know only obscurely through faith, but this can be a strong assent of the will grounded in the first principle of love. Through the eyes of faith we can be moved by God's love to have a firm belief that this decision is God's will for me. Love's affective apprehension of the supreme value of Christ's love abiding in me grounds all discernment of his Father's preference for me as his son or daughter in his Son; and it gives the deep desire and strength to accomplish our Father's will as my true and loving will.

HOW DO I KNOW THAT I AM NOT BEING DECEIVED?

The Imitation of Christ tells us that "Not every desire comes from the Holy Spirit, though it seems right and just. It is sometimes quite hard to judge whether a good or an evil spirit moves you to this or to that, or whether you are moved by your own spirit. Many are deceived in the end, who first appeared to have been moved by the Holy Spirit."¹⁵³ The world seems to share a great deal of religious illusion. To the inauthentic man, the inauthentic appears authentic.¹⁵⁴

In one sense I know I am not deceived because of itself love is true and authentic. However, since there is so much deception, fear, lack of freedom, self-centeredness, sin, bias, self-seduction, and so forth, we can always be deceived. This is why the Spiritual Exercises devote so much time to clarifying one's values, to identifying with Christ's values, and to becoming another Christ through mutual self-mediation. This explains its constant insistence on the need for authenticity or indifference. The fifth annotation affirms this fundamental disposition: "so that the Divine Majesty may make use of one's person and of all that one has." The sixteenth annotation speaks about the struggle with disordered desire by asking the Creator and Lord to give "a right direction to one's desires so that they be solely for the service, honour and glory of the Divine Majesty." Continually, the exercitant seeks to deepen his indifference, for example in the

¹⁵³Thomas à Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*, ed. Harold C. Gardiner, S.J. (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1955), bk. 111, chap. 15, 126.

¹⁵⁴*Method in Theology*, 291.

first consideration of the Principle and Foundation, of the two standards, of the temptations of Christ, of the three classes of men, of the three degrees of humility, and so forth.

Ignatius believed that we do not know the breadth and depth of our inauthenticity. Describing himself, Ignatius writes; “For my part, I am convinced that I am nothing but obstacle ...I am convinced of this one thing ... that there are very few in this world – nay, I will go further and say that there is no one – who during this mortal life can properly judge how far he is an obstacle and to what extent he resists the workings of God’s grace in his soul.”¹⁵⁵ What is indifference? “That is a real self-transcendence, a moving beyond all merely personal satisfactions, interests and tastes and preferences and becoming a principle of benevolence and beneficence, becoming capable of genuine loving.”¹⁵⁶

Loneragan deals with the issue of self-deception, when he says, “...our question has been the grounds of the inner conviction that informs religious living and the answer we have come up with is that self-transcendence is so radically and so completely the inner dynamic of human reality that one cannot but be aware when one is moving towards it and one cannot but feel constrained to conceal the fact when one is evading the abiding imperative of what it is to be human.”¹⁵⁷ Again, “Might one not then be deceived? One can be deceiving oneself. If one is deceiving oneself one is not in love. One is mistaking something for love. Love is something that proves itself.”¹⁵⁸ It is self-justifying. It is an inner light that, if one follows it, one lives; if one rejects the inner light one dies. “Being in love provides the real criteria by which all else is to be judged; and consequently one had only to experience it in oneself or witness it in others, to find in it, its own justification.”¹⁵⁹ “Accordingly, while there is no need to justify critically the charity described by St. Paul in the thirteenth chapter of his first epistle to the Corinthians, there is always a great need to eye very critically any religious individual or group and to discern beyond the real charity they may well have been granted, the various types of bias that may distort or block their

¹⁵⁵*Letters*, 84-85.

¹⁵⁶*A Second Collection*, 128-29.

¹⁵⁷*A Third Collection*, 133-34.

¹⁵⁸*A Second Collection*, 230.

¹⁵⁹*Method in Theology*, 283-84.

exercise of it.”¹⁶⁰ What helps us to avoid the traps of self-deception, the illusions of our culture, and our sinfulness?

DISCERNMENT SAFEGUARDS

Since Jesus' love is the first principle of our thinking in daily life, intelligence plays a significant role in discernment that is complementary to love. Intelligence is crucial in all three times of discernment because it is necessary always to have “enough clarity” in our discernment not to rationalize our decisions but to bring the critical reflection and assent that all discernment needs. Each time varies on how one receives the needed clarity. The heart has its own consciousness of the supreme value of Jesus' love abiding in us, and this comprehension goes beyond and is prior to understanding, but it does not contradict intelligence. The apprehension and judgment of value complements and transforms intelligence with the power of faith that prompts, molds, and colors all our thoughts.¹⁶¹

To deepen this love, the source of true discernment, Ignatius realized that the continued contemplation of Jesus' life and values were essential for the mutual self-mediation of our identity as we enter the “we” proper to love's union. Since religious discernment is to be “within the bounds of the church,” the mystical body of Christ, and the community of faith, the normativeness of the community is a source of wisdom and objectivity.¹⁶² As a representative of the believing community, the consultation with one's confessor or director is another safeguard against delusion. Ignatius stressed that what is true endures. Once he learned in Loyola that the false consolation of courtly imaginings were not lasting, Ignatius stressed that what is true endures. If one isn't totally at ease with one's decision, one should pray for confirmation. Another safeguard is to recall that love's decisions are always wrapped in the “Spirit's gifts of humility, kindness, self-control patience, i.e, the gift of the Spirit (Gal. 5:5) Similarly, the fruits of one's decision reveal over time whether love was the first principle of one's election, because time and experience uncover many things.”¹⁶³

Data and understanding make a difference. This is why Ignatius expected the superior to know the character, talent, spiritual growth, and so forth of the

¹⁶⁰*Method in Theology*, 284).

¹⁶¹*A Second Collection*, 153.

¹⁶²*Spiritual Exercises*, # 177.

¹⁶³*Letters*, 391.

Jesuits under him and to consult with anyone who had expertise on the matters under deliberation. "Knowledge of many particulars on which a sound opinion should be based if it is to have any value."¹⁶⁴ Ignatius would give advice and principles to consider, but since he was not in the situation and so much would be unknown to him, he would usually leave the decisions to the local superior.

Discernment happens in the present, and a different situation or new facts can change the discernment. Ignatius was convinced that our Lord wanted him to live his life in the Holy Land, the more to be like his Lord. However, under threat of excommunication he soon learned that he had to leave. The discernment is for the present time. It doesn't exclude changes in circumstances that shift the discernment. In his discernment on the poverty of Jesuit churches he changed a decision he had already approved in 1541. The experience of living with the decision and the occasion of writing the Constitutions give rise to a new discernment. This does not mean the first was wrong, only that discernment is bounded by current information for the sake of the loving decision in that situation. When he wrote Francis Xavier that under holy obedience he should return to Europe, Ignatius believed this was what God wanted. He didn't know that Francis had already been dead for nearly six months.

In the struggle for the cardinal's hat for Francis Borgia, Ignatius reminded him that the Spirit both can inspire the Emperor to want the hat for Borgia and inspire Ignatius to oppose it. Even though the pope's future decision will decide the issue, this doesn't invalidate the present, contrary inspirations. Nor does he reasonably project his discernment into the future, concluding that just because God inspires him to oppose the hat, it must follow that it is God's will that Borgia doesn't get the hat. He believes he is called in all humility to firmly oppose the decision, which is all that he is sure about.

As Lonergan puts it, "Finally what is authentic for a lesser differentiation of consciousness will be found unauthentic by the standards of a greater differentiation of consciousness."¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁴*Letters*, 410.

¹⁶⁵*A Third Collection*, 8.

THE PRAXIS OF FINDING GOD'S SELF-COMMUNICATION IN ALL THINGS

Ignatius realized that if one is to discover God's self-communication in all things, it was critical to develop a habitual praxis of reflecting on the direction and nature of one's interior movements of consolation, desolation, and thinking. This praxis shapes the Spiritual Exercises, the ways of election, and the continuous growth in authenticity. Ignatius would understand if a Jesuit were to omit his meditation because he was sick but not if he were to omit the midday or evening review or examen (examination of consciousness) to discover how the Lord was revealed in the interior movements of consolation and desolation and in the discernment of spirits.

This praxis of attentiveness to interior movements and thoughts is key not only to spiritual growth in daily life but also in the Spiritual Exercises. For every hour of mediation Ignatius expects fifteen minutes of review to discover how things have gone, whether one is consoled or desolate. These areas would be the matter for one's next meditation.¹⁶⁶ Ignatius's direction for the day of prayer: "The third and fourth contemplations are repetitions of the first and second exercises but "attention being always given to the more important places where one has experienced insight, consolation or desolation."¹⁶⁷ In fact this same process of discerning thoughts, consolations, and desolations would be used to discern how much penance God wanted one to do, how much to eat, or how much sleep one needs. "As God our Lord knows our nature infinitely better than we do, he often allows through such alternations (i.e. doing more and then doing less) to perceive what is suitable for each."¹⁶⁸

His faithful disciple Pedro de Ribadeneira tells us, "He has always kept this habit of examining his conscience every hour and of asking himself with careful attention how he had passed the hour. If at the end of it (the hour) he happened upon some more important matter or a task which prevented this pious practice he postponed the examen, but at the first free moment or the following hour he made up for this delay."¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁶Spiritual Exercises, # 77.

¹⁶⁷Spiritual Exercises, # 119.

¹⁶⁸Spiritual Exercises, # 89.

¹⁶⁹Cited by Ivens, *Understanding the Spiritual Exercises*, 33, n. 33.

The praxis of finding God in all things and all things in him starts from the assumption that authenticity cannot be taken for granted. The praxis to discover God in all things, accordingly, pursues a hermeneutics of suspicion as well as a hermeneutics of recovery. The hermeneutic of suspicion brings to light false consolations, self-deception, biases, compulsions, and everything that constitutes our inauthenticity. The hermeneutic of recovery discriminates between products of human authenticity and the results of human inauthenticity. Basically, performance of the twofold hermeneutic constitutes a distinct praxis, which is driven by the transcendental imperatives: Be attentive. Be intelligent. Be reasonable. Be responsible. Being-in-love reverses their order: "First there is God's gift of his love. Next, the eye of love reveals values in their splendor, while the strength of this love brings about their realization, and this is moral conversion."¹⁷⁰ Influenced by the love of Christ the transcendental imperatives become: Be lovingly responsible, lovingly understanding, and lovingly attentive. Love mediated by the eyes of faith orders all one's values. In the horizon of faith, within which we make all our judgments in daily life, is an expression of Christ's love, for he is the first principle of all that is authentic in our lives. Even if we are not aware of it, "being in Christ Jesus is identical with personal living."¹⁷¹

Ignatius bids us "to love and serve His Divine Majesty in everything."¹⁷² In order to make this the praxis of our life, St. Paul prays: "May he strengthen you inwardly through the working of his Spirit. May Christ dwell in your hearts through faith and may charity be the root and foundation of you life" (Eph. 3:17). He is sure that nothing "will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:39). Once love is the first principle of all our acts, then as St. Augustine wrote, "love and do what you wish."¹⁷³

¹⁷⁰*Method in Theology*, 243.

¹⁷¹*Collection*, 250.

¹⁷²*Spiritual Exercises*, # 233.

¹⁷³"Only if it is true love does it deserve to be called love, otherwise it is covetousness." Book VIII, 10 *The Trinity*, trans. Edmund Hill (Brooklyn, N.Y.: New City Press, 1991), 251-52.

COLLINGWOOD AND LONERGAN ON HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

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IN HIS LAST book, published a year before his death, Bernard Williams made a confession of sorts when he referred to R. G. Collingwood as “the most unjustly neglected of twentieth-century philosophers.”¹ What makes this utterance confessional? For most of his professional life, Williams faithfully followed the “analytic” script written (or cowritten) by Gilbert Ryle, his teacher and mentor. According to this script, Collingwood (and any other academic who thought too much about history) deserved to be neglected, consigned to the dustbin of discredited Hegelian charlatans who never deserved the name of “philosopher.”² Even when Williams started to deviate from the script, he would typically focus on Nietzsche rather than Collingwood.³ It is refreshing, then, to find Williams acknowledging, at the end of his days, that Collingwood is unjustly neglected, and that he qualifies as a philosopher.

If we switch our focus from Bernard Williams to Bernard Lonergan, we will see that the latter recognized Collingwood’s genius long before 2002. To be sure, Lonergan is not the only prominent thinker of the century to appreciate Collingwood. One can find hints, and sometimes more than hints, in Gadamer and MacIntyre.⁴ But an unprejudiced reader of the eighth and ninth chapters of

¹Bernard Williams, *Truth and Truthfulness* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 237.

²As Collingwood mentions in his autobiography, the articles on historical thinking that he published in “philosophical periodicals” were “rendered useless by the fixed determination of the persons who read such periodicals not to think about history.” R. G. Collingwood, *An Autobiography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1939), 116 n. 1.

³See, for example, the essays in *Making Sense of Humanity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995). This verdict may seem unfair, in light of the fact that a posthumously published essay collection of Williams does include a mostly appreciative essay on Collingwood. (Myles Burnyeat, ed. *The Sense of the Past* [Princeton: Princeton University Press: 2006]), 341-58. One wonders why Williams never published the essay when he was alive.

⁴See H.-G. Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, rev. trans. Joel Weinsheimer and Donald G. Marshall (New York: Continuum, 1984), 370-76; *Reason in the Age of Science*, trans. Frederick G. G.

Method in Theology (I do not, of course, mean a reader with an empty head) may well conclude that Lonergan's appreciation of Collingwood is more acute than that of MacIntyre or even Gadamer. According to its index, *Method in Theology* devotes thirty-three pages to Aristotle, twenty-two to Thomas Aquinas, thirteen to Collingwood, and four to Nietzsche.

In this paper, I would like to interrogate Collingwood's thinking about "historical knowledge," and Lonergan's appreciation thereof, as follows. First, I will lay out the notion of historical knowledge as contained in Collingwood's *The Idea of History*. Second, I will mention some key areas of convergence between Lonergan and Collingwood, gesturing toward Lonergan's appropriation of Collingwood in *Method and Theology*. Third, I will identify and elucidate the main criticism that Lonergan levels against Collingwood. Fourth, I will suggest ways to defend Collingwood against this criticism, while leaving open the possibility that Lonergan may develop Collingwood in important ways.

COLLINGWOOD ON HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

What is "historical knowledge?" Collingwood begins by trying to "delimit" its proper sphere, to describe its distinctive object. He does so, first, by excluding natural events. Although it is true that the world of nature is ever changing, always in becoming, it does not have a history. "Change and history are not at all the same" (210).⁵ The natural scientist observes an "event of nature," in itself and in relation to other events, and "brings it under a general formula or law of nature." Such events are "mere events," whereas "the events of history are never mere phenomena, never mere spectacles for contemplation, but things which the historian looks, not at, but through, to discern the thought within them" (214).⁶

Lawrence (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1981), 45-47. Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 3-4 and 265. Especially apt is MacIntyre's *First Principles, Final Ends and Contemporary Principles* (Milwaukee, Wisc.: Marquette University Press, 1990), 64: "The history of philosophy is still too often written as if it were exclusively a matter of theses and arguments. But we ought by now to have learned from R. G. Collingwood that we do not know how to state, let alone to evaluate such theses and arguments, unless we know what questions they were designed to answer."

⁵ Parenthetical references are to page numbers in R.G. Collingwood, *The Idea of History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956).

⁶ For a parallel passage, see *An Autobiography*, 127-28.

Historical *res* differ from “mere events” by having an “inside” and an “outside.” An event’s outside is “everything belonging to it which can be described in terms of bodies and their movements: the passage of Caesar, accompanied by certain men, across a river called the Rubicon at one date, or the spilling of this blood on the floor of the senate-house at another” (213). But what is the deeper thing expressed by these actions? “By the inside of the event I mean that in it which can only be described in terms of thought: Caesar’s defiance of Republican law, or the clash of constitutional policy between himself and his assassins” (213). Events with insides and outsides are not mere events, but *actions*. The proper object of historical knowledge, then, is human action – not as opposed to human thought, but as the expression of human thought. Historical knowledge is not occupied simply with the inside or outside of an action, but the relation between them. “An action is the unity of the outside and inside of an event” (213). The historian is “interested in the crossing of the Rubicon only in its relation to Republican law, and in the spilling of Caesar’s blood only in its relation to a constitutional conflict” (213). When historians content themselves with mere knowledge of externals, for example, by making statistical research their master rather than their servant, they “neglect their proper task of penetrating to the thought of the agents whose acts they are studying” (228). Events as such do not interest the historian; they are important only insofar as they are “the outward expression of thoughts” (217). According to Collingwood, this conception is the alternative to “the false view of history as a story of successive events or a spectacle of changes” (220). Such a view is a “positivistic conception, or rather misconception, of history, as the study of successive events lying in a dead past, events to be understood as the scientist understands natural events, by classifying them and establishing relations between the classes thus defined” (228).

If the adequate object of historical knowledge is human action, by what means is such knowledge obtained? Clearly, the historian cannot simply accept testimony as it comes to him. Some documents are authentic, some are inauthentic. Of those that are taken as authentic, questions arise. What does the document tell us? What event is it reporting? Of what thought is the event the outward expression? Answers to these questions cannot be had merely by cobbling together the statements of various authorities, in the manner of what Collingwood calls the “scissors and paste” historian. Rather, the historian must perform acts of *judgment*. The first recognition of this necessity is the “critical history” that has its beginnings in the seventeenth century and becomes “officially

acclaimed in the nineteenth as the apotheosis of historical consciousness" (259). But critical history, despite its pretensions, is "still only a form of scissors and paste" (259).⁷ The reason is that, while critical history makes judgments, its judgments are of a primitive character. The critical historian examines a statement and decides either that it is true, and therefore "fit for the scrap-book," or false, and therefore "consigned to the waste-paper basket" (259). Critical history sorts documents into sheep and goats; "one class is disqualified from giving testimony; the other is treated exactly as authorities were treated under the old dispensation" (269).

The great liberator from scissors and paste history, on Collingwood's account, is Vico. Many statements that appear in historical documents, even if literally false, are nonetheless revealing. But under what conditions do they reveal their meaning? Here we arrive at Collingwood's "logic of question and answer."⁸ We cannot passively expect documents to reveal themselves; we have (as Bacon says) to put them to the torture, interrogating them until they give us answers, much as a good detective asks questions until he finds that his investigation is "getting somewhere." The attribution of the logic of question and answer to Bacon and Descartes suggests that while the *objects* of natural science and history are different in kind (see 217), their *methods* are continuous.⁹

When one moves from scissors and paste to critical history, and from critical history to scientific history, one moves from authorities to sources, and from sources to evidence. What is evidence? "Anything is evidence which enables you

⁷Does Lonergan perceive this clearly? A stray comment suggests that he may not appreciate the sense in which Collingwood *rejects* "critical history." Lonergan comments: "Note that the word, critical, has two quite different meanings. In precritical history it means that one has tested the credibility of one's authorities before believing them. In critical history it means that one has shifted data from one field of relevance to another. On this topic R. G. Collingwood is brilliant and convincing" (*Method in Theology*, 188 n. 9). Lonergan later says, echoing Collingwood's own borrowing of the phrase from Kant, that "there has been ... a Copernican revolution in the study of history inasmuch as history has become both critical and constructive (205). The Copernican revolution, however, in Collingwood's understanding occurred after history made the transition from being "critical" to "scientific."

⁸See Collingwood, *An Autobiography*, 29-43, 55, 122; *An Essay on Metaphysics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940), 21-48; *The Idea of History*, 269-74; *The New Leviathan* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1942), 253-56.

⁹The *kind* of questions one asks of natural processes differs from the kind of questions that one asks of human actions, even as each differs from the kind of questions asked by detectives. But the *activity* of question asking is "the dominant factor in history, as it is in all scientific work" (*The Idea of History*, 273). Scissors and paste is "pre-Baconian history"; the history that arises from applying the logic of question and answer is "scientific history" that stems from a "Baconian revolution" (see *An Autobiography*, 133).

to answer your question – the question you are asking now” (281). Which questions should be asked? Sensible questions, that is, questions “which you think you have or are going to have evidence for answering” (281). Developing the comparison to a detective, Collingwood praises Hercule Poirot for scorning the “‘human bloodhound’ who crawls about the floor trying to collect everything, no matter what, which might conceivably turn out to be a clue.” The path to knowledge is not to collect facts, and then start thinking about them.¹⁰ Rather, we ask questions, and collect evidence as we ask questions, since “nothing is evidence in relation to some definite question” (281). Potentially, anything is evidence. Actual evidence is what enables you to answer a question.

LONERGAN AND COLLINGWOOD: FOUR IMPORTANT AGREEMENTS

We have given a brief, but not misleading, summary of Collingwood’s description of “historical knowledge.” In *Method in Theology*, Lonergan expressly preserves the category of “historical knowledge,” and endorses most of what Collingwood says about it. Here are four basic convergences.

A. *Nature and history.* The object of history is “the field of meaningful speech and action,” whether of individuals or groups (178).¹¹ By contrast, the “study of physical, chemical, biological nature” concerns things that may be changing but are in no sense conscious, intentional acts. Collingwood says that “the processes of events which constitute the world of nature are altogether different in kind

¹⁰“First the facts were ascertained; then they were classified” (Collingwood, *An Essay on Metaphysics*, 44). As Collingwood knows, this idea belongs to positivism rather than Bacon. Whether MacIntyre understands this is unclear. The first paragraph of chapter 7 of *After Virtue* is less than reassuring.

¹¹Parentetical references are to page numbers in Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (originally published in 1971, reprinted by University of Toronto Press in 1994). Compare with Collingwood, *An Autobiography*, 109: “History and pseudo-history alike consisted of narratives: but in history these were narratives of purposive activity, and the evidence for them consisted of relics they had left behind (books or potsherds, the principle was the same) which became evidence precisely to the extent to which the historian conceived them in terms of purpose, that is, understood what they were for; in pseudo-history, there is no conception of purpose, there are only relics of different kinds, differing among themselves in such ways that they have to be interpreted as relics of different pasts which can be arranged on a time-scale.”

from the processes of thought which constitute the world of history" (217).¹² Lonergan makes the same point. "There is a difference in their objects, for the objects of physics, chemistry, biology are not in part constituted by acts of meaning" (179). Although the objects are different, the methods used to study them are similar. "There is similarity inasmuch as both types of study consist in an ongoing process of cumulative discoveries, that is, of original insights, of original acts of understanding" (179).

B. *Knowledge is not just "taking a good look."* It cannot be, if it essentially involves the questioning activity. Collingwood identifies a Copernican revolution in history; Lonergan agrees. What drives this revolution, according to Lonergan, are the "constructive activities of the historian" (204). In this connection, Lonergan cites both Collingwood and the German historical school that precedes him. The latter is "empirical without being empiricist" (208). It is not empiricist, because it is "fully aware that historical knowledge was not just a matter of taking a good look, that, on the contrary, it involved some mysterious, divinatory process in which the historian came to understand" (208). Not to be empiricist means to reject the "principle of the empty head." Lonergan connects this rejection with Collingwood's critique of "scissors-and-paste-history." Lonergan comments: "There are notions of knowledge and of reality that are formed in childhood, that are in terms of seeing and what's there to be seen, that down the centuries have provided the unshakable foundations of materialism, positivism, sensism, phenomenalism, behaviorism, pragmatism, and that at the same time constitute the notions of knowledge and reality that idealists know to be nonsense" (213).

As much as Lonergan, Collingwood rejects the principle of the empty head. There is no presuppositionless science.¹³ For example, even if Plato radically reinterprets the Greek ideal, he inevitably presupposes certain things that are part of that ideal. While this may be a limitation, an indicator of Plato's finitude, it is not a defect, "as if a more powerful thinker than Plato would have lifted himself clean out of the atmosphere of Greek politics" (229). On the contrary, it is a "sign of merit." The best authors are doing "the only thing that can be done when an

¹²Compare with *An Autobiography*, 110: "all history is the history of thought." You are thinking historically, Collingwood adds, when "you say about anything, 'I see what the person who made this (wrote this, used this, designed, this, &c.) was thinking.'" He provides three illustrations: political history, the history of rhetoric, military history.

¹³"The idea got about that metaphysics must be a science with no presuppositions whatever, a science spun out of nothing by the thinker's brain. This is the greatest nonsense" (*An Essay on Metaphysics*, 63).

attempt is made to construct a science of the human mind. They are expounding the position reached by the human mind in its historical development down to their own time" (229). Similarly, Lonergan identifies the folly of demanding "of the historian a pure receptivity that admitted impressions from phenomena but excluded any subjective activity" (232). And again: "To say that the historian should operate without presuppositions is to assert the principle of the empty head, to urge that the historian should be uneducated, to claim that he should be exempted from the process variously named socialization and acculturation, to strip him of historicity" (223). It is not enough for the historian "merely to present all the facts and then let them speak for themselves." Collingwood's grasp of this point, Lonergan observes, drives his attack on "scissors and paste history" (see 204).

C. *The importance of the question-asking activity.* One might reject the principle of the empty head, but nonetheless fail to have an adequate understanding of what the non-empty head contains. Whatever else the historian brings to the data he studies [transcendentals, presuppositions], he brings questions. Lonergan knows this. He approvingly attributes to Collingwood the "insistence that knowledge consists, not just in propositions, but in answers to questions, so that to understand the answers one has to know the questions as well" (164). Insights are never gained by sitting and staring. They come by asking questions. When interpreting a text, Lonergan says, "the key to success is to keep advertent to what has not yet been understood, for that is the source of further questions, and to hit upon the questions directs attention to the parts of aspects of the text where answers may be found." Questions are put to some particular datum. If it leads to an insight into the datum, "the insight is expressed in a surmise, the surmise is represented imaginatively, and the image leads to a further related question." Like a detective, one may be on the "right track," or one may be following a "false trail." If the question does not lead to an insight, one should try a different question. In any case, the antidote to the empty head is the head that thinks hard and poses questions.

D. *The reflective historian is not philosophically naïve.* The competent historian has presuppositions. Many historians have only the vaguest idea of their presuppositions. Often they are "content to write history without raising any questions about the nature of historical knowledge" (197). Lonergan acknowledges that they may be excellent historians, "just as M. Jourdain might

“speak excellent French without knowing that his talk was prose” (225). But what happens when they have to explain themselves? What do they say when they feel the need to “defend their practice against encroaching error”? (197). In those cases, “whether they wish it or not, they are using some more or less adequate cognitional theory, and easily they become involved in some philosophic undertow that they cannot quite master” (197). In the Introduction to *The Idea of History*, Collingwood distinguishes between the person who has experience of historical thinking and the person who has reflected upon that experience. It is possible, Collingwood says, that the person who has only done the former may be “quite a good historian,” but his lack of reflection will prevent him from ever being “an historian of the highest order” (8).¹⁴

LONERGAN’S CRITIQUE OF COLLINGWOOD’S “IDEALISM”

Lonergeran does not hesitate to express his agreement with Collingwood on any number of points. Indeed, the catalog of convergences could be lengthened.¹⁵ In spite of all this, his affirmation of Collingwood’s conception of historical knowledge is qualified. Historical knowledge, as a category, depends on some adequate cognitional theory. Does Collingwood have one? “The view of historical knowledge under examination,” Lonergan says approvingly, “cannot be assimilated on naïve realist or empiricist premises” (206). But he adds:

As presented by Collingwood, unfortunately it is contained in an idealist context. But by introducing a satisfactory theory of objectivity and of judgment, the idealism can be removed without dropping the substance of

¹⁴For an example, see his tribute to Francis J. Haverfield, “least philosophical of historians,” who revolutionized the archaeology of Roman Britain but “cared nothing about the principles or the potentialities of the revolution he was leading” (*An Autobiography*, 83). Collingwood was the only student of Haverfield’s to survive the First World War.

¹⁵For example, more could be said about Lonergan and Collingwood’s common recognition of the “ecstatic” character of knowledge, or about the sense in which knowledge is a “web of construction.” (An interrogation of the latter motif in some medieval and early modern authors may be found in my *Truth in the Making* [New York and London: Routledge, 2004].) And what reader of Lonergan can fail to be struck by the following passage? “The reason why the civilization of 1600-1900, based upon natural science, found bankruptcy staring it in the face was because, in its passion for ready-made rules, it had neglected to develop that kind of insight which alone could tell it what rules to apply, not in a situation of a specific type, but in the situation in which it actually found itself. It was precisely because history offered us something altogether different from rules, namely insight, that it could afford us the help we needed in diagnosing our moral and political problems” (*An Autobiography*, 101).

what Collingwood taught about the historical imagination, historical evidence, and the logic of question and answer (206).

Specifically, Lonergan praises the first three sections contained in the “epilegomena” of *The Idea of History* – Nature and History, The Historical Imagination, and Historical Evidence – as “right on the point.” But the fourth section on History as Re-Enactment is “complicated by the problems of idealism” (175 n. 1). What is Lonergan up to here? By “idealism,” Lonergan means a perspective that is quite at home in the realm of thought, the land of bright ideas, but never succeeds in making the transition to reality. Experience and understanding are not enough; taken together, these “yield not knowledge but only thought. To advance from thinking to knowing there must be added a reflective grasp of the virtually unconditioned and its rational consequent, judgment. There is an insufficient awareness of this third level of cognitional activity in the authors we have been mentioning and a resultant failure to break away cleanly and coherently from both empiricism and idealism” (213).

On the surface, the charge is clear. Collingwood was (I think) mostly happy to accept the “idealist” tag. But, as students of Lonergan are keenly aware, the mere designation of someone as an “idealist” is no substitute for reasoned argument. Let us accept the premise that any satisfactory account of knowing must pay due regard to not only sensing and thinking, but also judging. Let us also ask this question: Is the conception of historical knowledge advanced by Collingwood, whether in its notion that history is re-enactment or anywhere else, insufficiently attentive to the necessity for rational judgment? To address this question, I will make the case that Collingwood does understand and express this necessity, although perhaps in terms somewhat different from those known to Thomists or Lonerganians.

JUDGMENT IN COLLINGWOOD’S CONCEPTION OF HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

An easy way to make an error is not to be aware of its possibility, either in oneself or in others. Is Collingwood aware of the possibility that philosophers, especially those of an idealist stripe, have the tendency to get so lost in the abstractions of thought that they forget about the need for judgment? He is, we argue, because he clearly identifies its presence in other thinkers. In the course of dissecting

positivist errors about the nature of history, he describes one of its primary rules as follows: "The historian must pass no judgement on the facts: he must only say what they were" (131). Expounding Oakeshott's thought, Collingwood asserts that the historian is "master in his own house," adding that the "house is not built and furnished out of mere ideas of his own," because the house "consists not of ideas about history but of history itself" (155). Philosophy, likewise, does not consist in the contemplation of mental structures but in judgments about truth and falsehood. "The only question that matters about a philosophy is whether it is right or wrong" (173). "Philosophy handled from this psychological point of view" – here Collingwood is criticizing Dilthey¹⁶ – "ceases to be philosophy at all" (173). Mentioning what he regards as a "general prejudice against metaphysics (a prejudice partly neo-Kantian and partly positivistic)," he concludes: "the German movement, however much it talks about history, is always thinking about it in terms of epistemology: its real interest is in the historian's subjective mental processes" (184). A better view, Collingwood thinks, may be found in Lachelier, "one of the greatest of modern French philosophers." According to Collingwood, Lachelier shows that "psychology, as a naturalistic science, cannot grasp mind as it actually is; it can only study the immediate data of consciousness, our sensations and feelings; but the essence of mind is that it *knows*, that is, has as its objects not mere states of itself but a real world" (186). The mind is not merely conscious; it *knows*.

"To advance from thinking to knowing" – this is the imperative of which Lonergan takes Collingwood to be insufficiently aware. But given the latter's trenchant criticism of those who fail to make this advance, it is hard to sustain the position that Collingwood was simply unaware of the error. Collingwood is not only aware of the possibility of the error; he identifies those who actually make it and explains why. He proposes to improve upon these thinkers by showing how historical knowledge, as *knowledge*, must have for its *telos* judgment about the real. Perhaps Collingwood was unaware that judgment consists not merely of generalities but has an irreducibly particular character. But how can this be reconciled with Collingwood's praise of Croce on these grounds? "History is thus not longer conceived as mere intuition of the individual; it does not simply apprehend the individual, in which case it would be art; it judges the individual" (196). How do we maintain that Collingwood is unaware of the necessity of

¹⁶Gadamer holds that Collingwood is here criticizing a straw man, rather than the *echt* Dilthey. This does not affect the substance of our argument.

judgment, when he writes that “the act of thought in affirming itself affirms the distinction between truth and falsehood”?(197) History is not the “bad idealist” contemplation of thoughts but its antithesis. According to Collingwood, Croce “points out that whenever historians indulge in conjecture or permit themselves to assert mere possibilities they are in fact giving way to the temptation of poeticizing or romanticizing history” (204).

What does all this prove? It certifies that, by intention, Collingwood does not have a view of historical knowledge that does away with judgment. On the contrary, of the work that he calls “mere learning or scholarship,” it may be said that “there is no criticism, no interpretation, no reliving of past experience in one’s own mind” (204). But here we arrive at a potentially stronger criticism of Collingwood. Criticism requires interpretation, and interpretation requires “reliving of past experience in one’s own mind.” Lonergan claims that Collingwood’s conception of “history as re-enactment” is “complicated by the problems of idealism” (175 n. 1). To know whether this is true, we have to understand history as re-enactment more deeply. To do this, we must in turn follow Collingwood’s method: we must know the question to which “re-enactment is an answer.”

Collingwood identifies the question in clear terms. “How is historical knowledge possible? How and under what conditions can the historian know facts which, being now gone beyond recall or repetition, cannot be for him objects of perception?” (133). The question arises, because there is no prospect of immediately perceiving historical things (which is another reason for denying that its object could be collapsed into that of natural science). “There is no such thing as empirical history, for the facts are not empirically present to the historian’s mind: they are past events, to be apprehended not empirically but by a process of inference according to rational principles from data given or rather discovered in the light of these principles; and there is no such thing as the supposed further stage of philosophical or scientific history which discovers their causes or laws or in general explains them, because an historical fact once genuinely ascertained, grasped by the historian’s re-enactment of the agent’s thought in his own mind, is already explained” (176-77). “Re-enactment” is a summary of Collingwood’s answer to the question: “how, or on what conditions, can the historian know the past?” More elaborately: “If then the historian has no direct or empirical knowledge of his facts, and no transmitted or testimonial knowledge of them, what kind of knowledge has he: in other words, what must the historian do in order that he may know then?” (282)

What can be said against this view? In *Method in Theology*, Lonergan writes: "Collingwood has conceived history as re-enacting the past. Schleiermacher has contended that the interpreter will understand the text better than the author did. There is something in these statements but they are not quite accurate and so may be misleading" (165). Lonergan adds: "It is true that the interpreter or historian reconstructs but it is not true that in thought he reproduces the past. In our example, what Aquinas was doing, was developing the doctrine of grace. What the interpreter was doing, was building up the evidence for an element in the history of the theology of grace and, while he can arrive at a grasp of the main movement and an understanding of many details, he rarely achieves and never needs an understanding of every detail. Judgment rests on the absence of further *relevant* questions" (166).

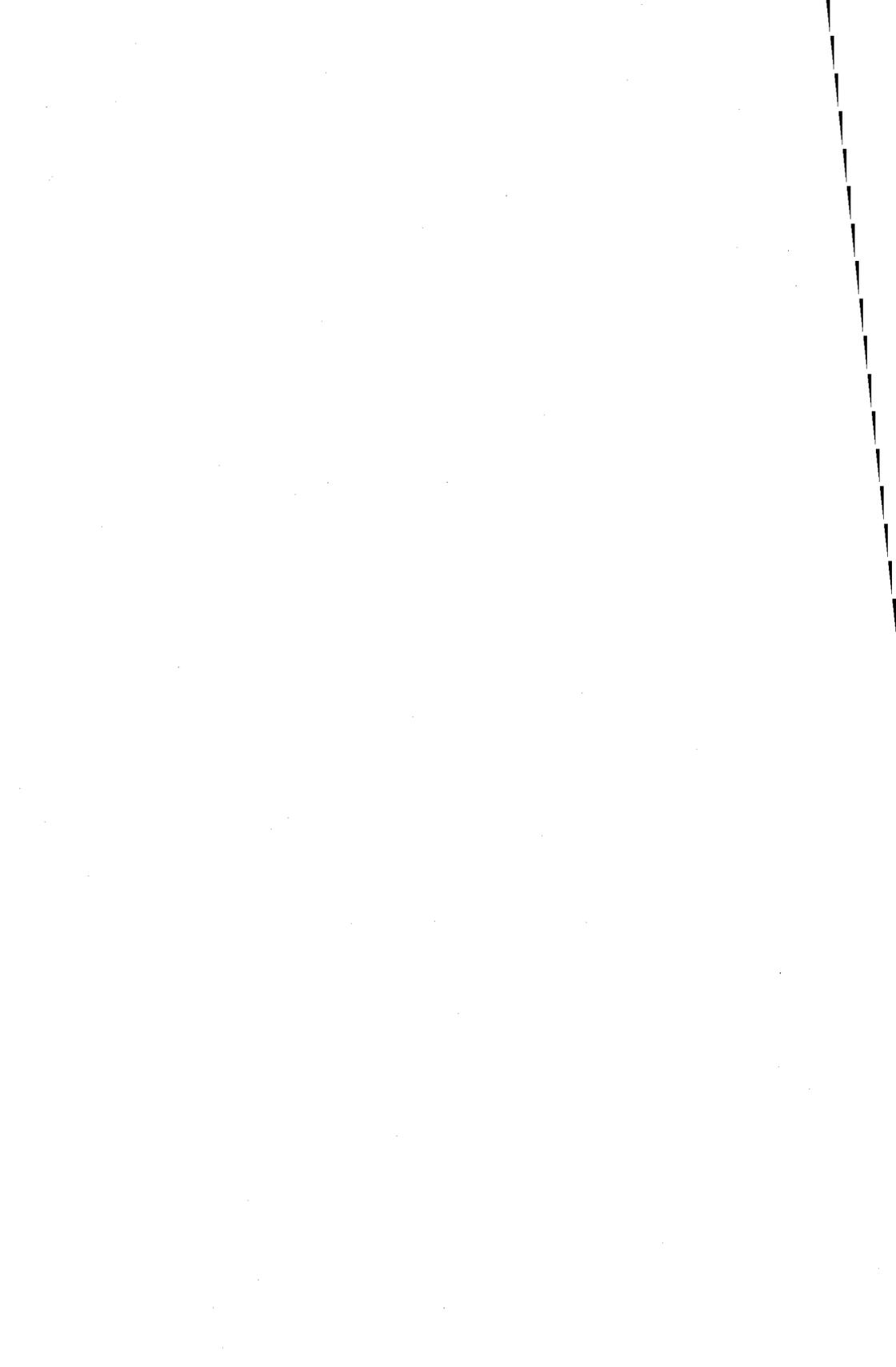
The insinuation that re-enactment means "reproducing the past" in any simple manner is unfair. Very clearly, Collingwood identifies the specific ways in which the historian *cannot* reproduce the past. He knows that the historian will confine himself to the relevant questions, rather than try to interrogate everything he can regarding the thinker's particular circumstances. The reader confronting Plato's text cannot reproduce the immediate experience undergone by Plato when he wrote the text. But to understand the thought of Plato, as opposed to the unrecoverable experiential context surrounding that thought, we have to reactivate in our own minds the acts of thinking of which the Platonic dialogues are so many expressions. It may be true, of course, that the intellectual content of these dialogues exceeds what Plato was consciously thinking. (Gadamer, of course, emphasizes this point.) But if we are simply incapable of thinking what Plato thought, of re-enacting his thinking, we should abandon any pretension of interpreting Plato. Indeed, it would be nearer the truth to say that we are at a picnic where Plato brings the words and we bring the meaning.

In short, the theory of re-enactment, when it is properly understood (rather than parodied) appears not as an obstacle to historical judging but as its necessary condition.¹⁷ To put the point syllogistically: historical understanding is impossible without re-enactment; judgment is impossible without historical understanding; therefore, judgment requires re-enactment.

¹⁷We do not claim that Lonergan himself parodies the theory, although there is no shortage of commentators who have done so.

CONCLUDING QUESTIONS

We have suggested a way of defending Collingwood against the particular criticism leveled at him by Lonergan. Of course, it remains possible that Collingwood's account is deficient, or else stands in need of development. Let us, then, conclude with some questions. What does Collingwood leave unsaid that needs to be said, and perhaps has been said (distinctively?) by Lonergan, if "historical knowledge" is to be preserved? In what ways does Lonergan help us to develop the insights of Collingwood on historical knowing? How might Collingwood and Lonergan be read together, so as to transform "occasions of disagreement into occasions of non-agreement and eventually of agreement"? (*Method in Theology*, 357).



TRIVIUM PURSUIT: LONERAGAN ON AQUINAS

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1. INTRODUCTION

AS I BEGAN my research for this paper, a friend and colleague who is a biblical scholar – though sympathetic to medieval theology, and even interested in patristic and medieval exegesis, he is by no means an expert in any of these areas – came to me with a report of an encounter he had recently had with an acquaintance in the University of Toronto’s philosophy department. Since Michael Vertin is here, I have changed some details of this story to protect the parties involved. My friend had told his acquaintance about his interest in Aquinas’s exegesis and opined that he might find some help at Regis College. She responded, and I quote, “Oh well, you know, they read Aquinas through Lonergan over there.” Though he is not an expert on either Aquinas or Lonergan, my friend did catch in his acquaintance’s voice a somewhat dismissive tone, a hint of a suggestion that there might be something wrong or irresponsible in “reading Aquinas through Lonergan.” And so my friend came to me for a second opinion.

I think many of us have been privy to similar dismissals of Lonergan as a Thomist. Behind such dismissals there may lie some notions of Lonergan as distorting Thomas in a Kantian direction, or as imposing his own theological or philosophical agenda on Thomas’s text. At the same time, I know as a student of both Thomas and Lonergan that my reading of Thomas takes for granted that Lonergan has settled once and for all some key issues in the interpretation of Aquinas’s theology. It is this situation that set me on the path to this presentation. I do not pretend to discuss all the possible ways of relating Lonergan and Aquinas; nor do I make an exhaustive treatment of Lonergan’s vast corpus of Thomist studies. What I propose instead is a kind of explanatory schema for understanding Lonergan as an interpreter of Aquinas, one that refutes accusations

of distortion and bias and suggests why Lonergan's reading of Aquinas is so fruitful. Some of this material, I am sure, will be "old news" to those of you who belong to an earlier generation; I hope that the schema I propose, along with some developments I articulate at the end of the paper, will nevertheless be of interest to everyone.

2. THE BASIC LINEAMENTS OF THE STORY

The basic outline of how Lonergan came to the study of Aquinas has been ably narrated by Lonergan himself in "Insight Revisited," and supplemented by Fred Crowe in the prefaces to both *Grace and Freedom* and *Verbum* in the Collected Works editions of these volumes. I will rehearse it quickly here by way of providing an orientation to the material and complete it with a rapid summary of Lonergan's self-named apprenticeship to Aquinas and his efforts to promote a renewed Thomism.

Lonergan's philosophical training at Heythrop College, as both he and Crowe tell us, was not Thomist but Suarezian in its orientation.¹ At this time, Lonergan, though interested in philosophy, was "extremely critical of the key position accorded universal concepts" in the philosophy taught at Heythrop, and thought of himself as a nominalist.² When he was leaving Heythrop to proceed to his three years of high school teaching at Loyola in Montreal, he was invited to consider seriously taking up the study of philosophy or theology as a service to the Society of Jesus. When he raised the objection that his nominalism would make him ineligible to teach in the seminaries of the Society of Jesus – nominalism being precisely the denial that universals possess a foundation in reality, and therefore considered by the dominant Catholic philosophy of the day a lapse into skepticism and a modernist error – he was told "no one remains a nominalist very long."³

This reply, as Lonergan himself admitted, was to prove prophetic. During his regency at Loyola College in Montreal, he discovered J. A. Stewart's *Plato's*

¹"Insight Revisited," in *A Second Collection*, ed. William Ryan and Bernard Tyrell (London: Darton, Longman Todd, 1974), 263

²"Insight Revisited," 263.

³Letter to Fr. Henry Keane, Provincial Superior of Upper Canada, January 22, 1935, p. 3. All quotations from Lonergan's correspondence in this essay are made with permission of the Trustees of the Lonergan Estate.

Doctrine of Ideas, which led him to read Plato's early dialogues. Just as Augustine's therapeutic encounter with Platonism liberated him from his materialism, so Lonergan's encounter with Plato as a "methodologist" freed him to consider the operations of human understanding, though he was not able to articulate this to himself until later.⁴ Toward the end of his regency, Lonergan picked up the earlier works of Saint Augustine and in his own words "found [Augustine] to be psychologically exact."⁵

Before beginning his theological studies at the Collège de l'Immaculée Conception in Montreal, Lonergan began to "study the *Summa* at first hand and began to suspect that St. Thomas was not nearly as bad as he is painted."⁶ This was 1933, and that summer during his vacation with other Jesuits on Wolfe Island near Kingston, Ontario, Lonergan produced a 25,000 word essay on the act of faith to test out his emerging synthesis of the issues. Fragments of the essay can be found in the archives of the Lonergan Research Institute.⁷ According to Fred Crowe, it may also be during this time that Lonergan read Peter Hoenen's *Gregorianum* essay on what intellect abstracts from the phantasm. Two months into his studies in Montreal, Lonergan was transferred to Rome to finish his basic theology. It was during this time that he encountered – in his own words, by osmosis – the thought of Maréchal, which taught him "to speak of human knowledge as not intuitive but discursive with the decisive component in judgment."⁸ This understanding cohered with Lonergan's reading of Augustine on *veritas*, and with what he was taught in Christology about the real distinction between essence and existence, which alone could make sense of the hypostatic union.⁹ One and a half years into his basic theology studies, in January 1935, Lonergan was already able to write with some confidence to his provincial superior: "I can give you my present position in a few words. It is definite, definitive, and something of a problem. The current interpretation of St. Thomas is a consistent misinterpretation.... I can prove out of St. Thomas himself that the current interpretation is absolutely wrong."¹⁰

⁴"Insight Revisited," 264-65.

⁵Letter to Henry Keane, p. 3.

⁶Letter to Henry Keane, p. 3.

⁷See the reference and description of the essay in Michael Shield's introduction to his translation of Lonergan's "Analysis Fidei," in *METHOD: A Journal of Lonergan Studies*, 20, 2 (2002):121-24.

⁸"Insight Revisited," 265.

⁹"Insight Revisited," 265.

¹⁰Letter to Henry Keane, p. 4.

After his final year of spiritual formation at Amiens in France, Lonergan was slated to begin a doctorate in philosophy at the Gregorian University in the fall of 1938. At the last minute, he was told to switch from philosophy to theology, with the result that, as Fred Crowe writes "... he arrived in Rome somewhat at a loss for a dissertation topic, and so readily accepted a suggestion of Professor Charles Boyer that he study a knotty question of divine grace in the writings of St Thomas."¹¹

The rest of the story of Lonergan's relationship to Aquinas is easy to trace from Lonergan's writings. Following upon the work on his dissertation on *gratia operans* in Aquinas, Lonergan published the series of *Theological Studies* articles that would become *Verbum*; it is in these articles that he gave a full articulation to what he had understood about Aquinas as the result of his personal development between 1930 and 1935. During his time of teaching theology in Montreal, Rome, and Toronto, Lonergan published several sets of course notes in which he interpreted and developed Thomas's theological positions. He also used several book reviews submitted during this period as opportunities to develop his interpretation of Thomas. A number of them were gathered in *Collection*.¹² That volume, first published in 1967, also gathers papers on various questions of Thomist interest.¹³ Of particular interest are the lectures, "The Future of Thomism," first given in Pittsburgh in 1968 and then published in *Second Collection* in 1974, and "Aquinas Today: Tradition and Innovation," given at the University of Chicago in 1974 and subsequently published in *A Third Collection* in 1985.

Such is the basic narrative of Lonergan's relationship to Aquinas. What I propose to do in what follows is move from this descriptive account to a more explanatory grasp of Lonergan's evolving relation to Aquinas. I shall posit that Lonergan's relation to Aquinas is threefold, or has three related moments. These moments are roughly chronological, but their intelligible connection is one of genetic emergence. I shall further posit that a fourth relation has emerged between Lonergan and Aquinas since Lonergan's death in 1984.

¹¹Frederick E. Crowe, "Editors' Preface," *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, vol. 2 (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1997), ix.

¹²Compare with "On God and Secondary Causes," and especially "Theology and Understanding," *Collection*, ed. By Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, vol. 4 (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1988), 53-65, 114-132.

¹³Compare with "The Natural Desire to See God" and "Isomorphism of Thomist and Scientific Thought," *Collection*, 81-91, 132-41.

3. AN EXPLANATORY ACCOUNT IN THREE MOMENTS

3.1 Preliminary Remarks on the Trivium

The early decades of the twentieth century saw an explosion of patristic and medieval historical scholarship by both Catholic and secular historians, culminating – among Catholic scholars of the Middle Ages – in the work of the German and French scholars of the *ressourcement* movement, along with the creative work of the Jesuits of Lyon and the *nouvelle théologie*. Alongside this Catholic scholarship, the secular achievements of the *Annales* historians has given us a profoundly transformed understanding of what can no longer be called the “dark ages.” One of the more recent retrievals of this ongoing historical scholarship is in the area of medieval pedagogy and spiritual formation and concerns the significance of the medieval trivium as a set of both spiritual and intellectual methodologies. Gordon Rixon’s paper explains the methodological significance of the trivium in great detail, and here I will simply highlight a few important facts.

The three disciplines of the trivium are grammar, dialectic, and rhetoric. Together, these three disciplines are the methodological foundation of all medieval thought. Grammar, which is a much broader term than what is intended by our present-day usage, is “the art of correct speech,” that is, the set of techniques for determining or fixing the meaning of texts: techniques of etymology, semantics, figures of speech, textual criticism, techniques for determining historical context, and so on. Grammar is the preferred mode of the patristic period, finding rich expression in the work of an Origen, an Athanasius, a Basil, a Jerome, or an Augustine.

Dialectic, “the art of true speech,” concerns not only logic, but the method of the *quaestio* which proved such a flexible and fruitful instrument, as many scholars including Lonergan have noted, in the hands of medieval systematic theologians such as Abelard, Anselm, Peter Lombard, and Aquinas.

Rhetoric, “the art of good and pleasing speech,” was ordered to human experience, and we must be careful not to limit it, as often happens today, to a shallow manipulation of tropes that make a text “pretty” or convincing despite its lying or immoral content. Contemporary advertising would be condemned by the medieval rhetorician as an evil failure of rhetoric. Ancient and medieval rhetoric concerned itself with effects of meaning at the level of experience; it was the set

of techniques that evoked those images and affects that would make understanding possible for the hearer or the reader, that would create the spiritual and intellectual paths to understanding by which persons could be transformed.

Until recently, it was assumed that Aquinas, like other medieval scholastic thinkers, was mainly a dialectician, and that grammar and rhetoric were not significant in his theological method. But closer study of his scripture commentaries has revealed a master grammarian at work, which in turn has led to a renewed awareness of the significance of narrative and literary approaches to fixing meaning in his work, particularly in the *Summa Contra Gentiles*.¹⁴ Similarly recent studies in medieval rhetoric have shown him to be a very sophisticated rhetorician, particularly in his liturgical poetry but also in the *Summa Theologiae*.¹⁵ The picture that now emerges of Aquinas is of a scholar comfortable in all three realms of the trivium and able to fulfill all three basic responsibilities of the *magister in sacra pagina* with ease and delight: *lectio* on the sacred page, which brought grammar to the fore though not at the expense of the other two; *disputatio* in the classroom and in public, to determine the truth behind the conflict of authorities by means of dialectic; and *predicatio*, the fruit of all *sacra doctrina*, where the meaning determined in *lectio* and the understanding developed by means of the *quaestio* found its expression in speech that sought to participate in the transformation that God was working by grace in the church and the world. It will be important to remember this renewed understanding of Aquinas's facility with the disciplines of the trivium in what follows.

¹⁴See, for example, the work of Thomas Hibbs in *Dialectic and Narrative in Aquinas: A Reinterpretation of the Summa contra Gentiles* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), and that of Thomas F. Ryan in *Thomas Aquinas as Reader of the Psalms* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2000).

¹⁵See the work of Alain Michel and Mary Carruthers on medieval rhetoric: *Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images 400-1200* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998), especially Carruthers's *The Craft of Thought*; one of Alain Michel's students, Olivier-Thomas Venard, is publishing a massive three-volume study entitled *Thomas d'Aquin Poète Théologien*, and another French scholar, Gilbert Narcisse, has produced *Les Raisons de Dieu: Argument de Convenance et Esthétique-théologique selon Saint Thomas d'Aquin et Hans Urs von Balthasar*. *Studia Friburgensia* 83 (Frigourg: Éditions universitaires, 1997), a study of *convenientia* as an argument form in Aquinas. See also my own doctoral dissertation *Embracing Wisdom: The Spiritual Pedagogy of Thomas Aquinas* soon – I hope! – to be published.

3.2 Lonergan and Aquinas: The First Moment

The first moment in our explanatory account of Lonergan's relation to Aquinas roughly corresponds to the writing of *Gratia Operans* and *Verbum*, though as we shall see, it is rooted in developments that precede them both.

3.2.1 Grace and Freedom

Lonergan writes, in the historical introduction to *Gratia Operans*, that his inquiry is "confined to the history of theological speculation...."¹⁶ Already in this text we see evidence of Lonergan's usual practice in historical analysis: the close reading of texts in light of their methodological elements, noticing the genetic and dialectical relations between texts, "what was going forward" in intellectual history. Pages 14 and 15 of *Grace and Freedom* contain his standard account of the emergence of theory from common sense. We often note Lonergan's learning from Maréchal, but *Gratia Operans* reveals a Lonergan who has appropriated key historians of the *ressourcement* movement: Dom Odon Lottin, Marie-Dominique Chenu, Artur Landgraf, Johann Schupp, and Herbert Doms. We also see the seeds of key notions that will bear fruit later in Lonergan's work, for example, the notion of redemption as God's initiating of a new line of development in history, here termed "a new continuity in justice."¹⁷

What is perhaps most significant for our purposes here, however, is Lonergan's grasp of the significance of the emergence of the theorem of the supernatural and its effects in a kind of "Copernican revolution" that will only be mastered by "the genius of St. Thomas Aquinas."¹⁸ One of Lonergan's key discoveries here is how the theorem of the supernatural grounds Aquinas's use of Aristotle. When one reads *Grace and Freedom*, one sees a man who can read Aquinas existentially, just because he understands the methodological role of metaphysics and Aristotelian psychology within the analogy that obtains between natural and supernatural realities. He knows that Aquinas is speaking of grace as a real and concrete event in a human life, and he can relegate the methodological apparatus to its proper role within Aquinas's theological schema. This may be of no great significance to us after the publication of *Method in Theology*, but in the

¹⁶Bernard Lonergan, *Grace and Freedom: Operative Grace in the Thought of St Thomas Aquinas*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, vol. 1 (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2000), 160.

¹⁷*Grace and Freedom*, 57-58.

¹⁸*Grace and Freedom*, 15-19.

1940s such a position could – and did – cut through a morass of pseudo-problems in the interpretation of Aquinas, and did so in a revolutionary way. All we have to do to get a sense of the radical nature of Lonergan’s proposal is recall the theological and ecclesial controversy that greeted Henri de Lubac’s initial publication of his studies on the mystery of the supernatural in 1947. It was not until 1965, with the publication of his second volume on the subject, that de Lubac would consider himself fully vindicated.

3.2.2 *Verbum*

The developmental arc that reaches its goal in the *Verbum* studies begins with Lonergan’s dissatisfaction with the conceptualism of his philosophy training at Heythrop and proceeds through his reading of Newman, Plato, Augustine, and Aquinas prior to theology. It reaches a significant station in the essay on the act of faith sent to Fr. Henry Smeaton and alluded to in the letter to Fr. Keane, the Jesuit provincial superior, in 1935. It is worth turning again to this letter, to hear Lonergan explaining himself:

The current interpretation of St. Thomas is a consistent misinterpretation.... I can prove out of St. Thomas himself that the current interpretation is absolutely wrong. Not only can I prove it, but the issue has already been raised decisively though not completely or altogether satisfactorily by Fr. Marechal [*sic*] whose views reign in our house at Louvain but are somewhat frowned upon here.... [What] the current Thomists call intellectual knowledge is really sense knowledge; of intellectual knowledge they have nothing to say; intellectual knowledge is, for example, the “seeing the nexus” between subject and predicate in a universal judgment: this seeing a nexus is an operation they never explain.¹⁹

This break with the surrounding conceptualism and intuitivism gave Lonergan the lever to grasp Augustine’s and Thomas’s account of *intelligere*. In *Verbum* he understands Thomas’s challenge to have been relating the Augustinian *mens* to the Aristotelian *anima*. The method Lonergan chooses in the *Verbum* studies makes use of literary and historical instruments but also posits a necessary moment of verification in one’s own operations of what Augustine and Aquinas meant. This is rooted in the conviction that Aquinas and Aristotle knew in themselves the operations they were talking about: “Aquinas explicitly appealed

¹⁹Letter to Fr. Keane, p. 4.

to inner experience and... Aristotle's account of intelligence.... has too uncanny an accuracy to be possible without the greatest introspective skill.... [But] they did not thematize their use [of inner experience]."²⁰ Lonergan's grasp of the fundamental importance of Augustinian and Thomist *intelligere* governs his fruitful resolution of a whole series of interpretive issues in Aquinas's account of *verbum* and grounds his turn away from a metaphysical starting point to a starting point in the psychological content – the operations themselves – of Thomas's theory of intellect. Along the way, Lonergan can reinforce the strictly theological reading of Aquinas begun in *Grace and Freedom*; give a much more fruitful account of Thomas's sublation of Aristotle in light of Augustinian insights, show how satisfying Thomas's analogical explicitation of *emanatio intelligibilis* in the Trinity really is, and much more.

3.2.3 Summary of the First Moment: Developing an Upper Blade

The Lonergan Research Institute archives in Toronto have copies of two letters, one dated April 21, 1963, and the other dated January 31, 1965. Both of these letters are addressed to Fred Crowe and allude to Lonergan's plans for the publication of *Grace and Freedom* and *Verbum*. In the 1963 letter, it is clear that Lonergan plans to have both studies published as one volume: he even calls the proposed book "Two Thomist Studies." In the 1965 letter, he realizes that it may not be possible to publish the two studies together and is unhappy with this fact: "I have my reasons," he writes, "for wanting them together, but though I see the moon I do not reach for it."²¹

I would like to propose, by way of summary, one possible reason for holding these two texts together to constitute a first moment in the relation between Lonergan and Aquinas. The two insights relevant to this first moment are the discovery of the significance of the theorem of the supernatural in *Grace and Freedom* and the bringing to full expression his grasp of the Thomist *intelligere* in the *Verbum* studies. Taken together, these two insights articulate a fundamental interpretive stance that Lonergan will consistently take before the text of Aquinas. This basic interpretive stance is an upper blade that enables Lonergan to advert to the whole range of methods Aquinas deploys in his practice of theology. Lonergan himself was explicit on a number of occasions about his awareness of Aquinas's use of dialectic, but his interpretive stance also directed his attention –

²⁰*Verbum*, 5–6.

²¹Letter to Fred Crowe, January 31, 1965, p. 1.

though he does not thematize this – to the results of Aquinas’s use of grammar. It also allowed him to intuit the importance of inner experience in Thomas’s theology, which pointed him in the direction of Thomas’s use of rhetoric. We can thus call the first moment of Lonergan’s relation to Aquinas the development of an upper blade sensitive to Aquinas’s sophistication in the deployment of the whole trivium in the practice of theology.

3.3 The Second Moment: Using the Upper Blade

The second moment in the relation between Lonergan and Aquinas emerges from the first in the way that concrete performance emerges from theoretical understanding, or application from general principle. It simply consists in the fruitful use of the upper blade on the lower blade provided by actual difficulties in understanding Aquinas. This moment includes the very fruitful interpretations contained in *Grace and Freedom* and *Verbum* and continues through a whole series of articles from the 1940s onward. Of the articles contained in *Collection*, one might single out “On God and Secondary Causes,” “The Natural Desire to See God,” “Theology and Understanding,” and “Isomorphism of Thomist and Scientific Thought.” But this moment also includes the published texts for his theology courses: *De Constitutione Christi*, *De Deo Trino*, *De Verbo Incarnato*, among others.

In the process of preparing this essay, I was reminded of just how extensive this body of work is – by my very rough count, there are twenty-one major and minor works that either directly comment on Aquinas or make significant use of Aquinas’s theological insights – and how significant a portion of Lonergan’s scholarly output it represents. Taken as a whole, this body of work makes of Lonergan an important twentieth-century commentator on Aquinas. It also gives the lie to any notion that reading Aquinas in light of Lonergan introduces distortions or misinterpretations in our understanding of Thomas’s theology. Lonergan is not engaged in a selective or tendentious reading of the texts. He does not construct elaborate secondary arguments to defend his reading of Aquinas, nor does he multiply entities and concepts to justify his position. The interpretations stand on their own terms; one is only required to verify them in the text and make one’s own judgment about their adequacy.

3.4 The Third Moment: A Reflective Call for a Renewed Thomism

The third moment emerges from the first and the second moments as self-understanding emerges from operating in the world. The labor of understanding and interpreting Aquinas over a period of eleven years, however, is only one condition of the emergence of this third moment; the process of writing *Insight* and subsequently lecturing on it are the other conditions. What *Insight* adds to the interpretation of Aquinas is the set of operations necessary to transpose the old and augment and perfect it with the new, the full range of operations required by Lonergan's appropriation of Leo XIII's *vetera novis augere et perficere* as his personal motto.

This moment is captured in two texts: the first, a lecture given in 1968 and published in *A Second Collection*, is entitled "The Future of Thomism;" the second, a lecture given in 1974²² in Chicago and published in *A Third Collection*, is entitled "Aquinas Today: Tradition and Innovation."²³ Much of "Aquinas Today" echoes the fuller treatment contained in "The Future of Thomism," so I will mainly concentrate on this first essay.

In "The Future of Thomism," Lonergan proceeds in three basic steps: first, he gives an account of Aquinas's practice of theology in its own context; then, he reviews the characteristics of what he calls classical Thomism; finally, he articulates his program for what he calls a "Thomism for tomorrow." The whole lecture is a making explicit of his own practices in interpreting, transposing, and developing Aquinas's theology. He reexpresses the key elements of his upper blade and states his personal conviction that "a mature Catholic theology of the twentieth century will not ignore [Aquinas]; it will learn very, very much from him; and it will be aware of its debt to him..."²⁴ What better description can there be of Lonergan's own work in interpreting Aquinas? The third part of the lecture proposes a set of five transpositions which a renewed Thomism will perform: from logic to method; from an Aristotelian to a modern conception of science; from soul to subject; from human nature to human history; and from first

²²Bernard Lonergan, "The Future of Thomism," in *A Second Collection*, ed. William F. J. Ryan and Bernard J. Tyrrell (London: Darton, Longman Todd, 1974), 43-53.

²³*A Third Collection. Papers by Bernard J. F. Lonergan*, ed., Frederick E. Crowe (Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press and London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1985), 35-54.

²⁴"The Future of Thomism," 49.

principles to transcendental method.²⁵ Again, is this not a description of Lonergan's own labors in writing *Insight*?

Before finishing this discussion of the third moment of the relation between Lonergan and Aquinas, let me say something about Lonergan as a so-called transcendental Thomist. Lonergan himself, as we have just seen, calls for a shift from first principles to transcendental method. What he means by the phrase "transcendental method" is the same thing that he means by "generalized empirical method" or, as he says elsewhere in this lecture, "possessing the basic method." This use of the term "transcendental" differentiates Lonergan from others like Coreth or perhaps Rahner, whose approach to Aquinas is marked by Kant and Heidegger, and perhaps Husserl. This difference becomes glaringly obvious once we read Lonergan's Thomist corpus.

4.0 Conclusion: A Renewal in Thomas Studies

Lonergan's complex relation to Aquinas, as we have just seen, can be understood as an emergent series of three moments. The first moment entails the development of an upper blade sensitive enough to direct Lonergan's attention to all three sets of methods from the trivium deployed by Aquinas: grammatical, dialectical, and rhetorical. The second moment, the actual use of the upper blade, emerges from the first moment as application and performance of theoretical understanding. The third moment emerges from the first and second as self-understanding from performance, though it also requires the writing of *Insight* as a necessary condition for its emergence.

The third moment constitutes a program of renewal for theology that learns from Thomas, but it is also the condition for the emergence of a renewal in Thomas studies proper. This renewal in Thomas studies, which I believe constitutes a fourth moment in the relation between Lonergan and Thomas, depends not just on the program outlined in "The Future of Thomism," but adds to it the whole range of development in Lonergan's own thought on history, theology, and method. These are the developments contained in *Method in Theology*, along with a few late essays, where Lonergan develops his understanding of religion and of an empirical/anthropological notion of culture, along with his account of the scale of values and his complex theory of meaning. To these key elements we can add Robert Doran's development of some of them. At the same time, historical studies of the medieval university in particular and

²⁵"The Future of Thomism," 48-52.

the medieval period in general have multiplied, filling out the account available to Lonergan. Finally, the last twenty years have seen a multiplication of historical studies of Thomas, though with hit-and-miss notions of history and historical method.

Taken together, all these elements constitute a fourth moment in the relation between Lonergan and Aquinas, a moment we can call applying Lonergan's own methodological apparatus to the study of Thomas. In some cases, the greater knowledge we have of the medieval period and the medieval university allows us to verify Lonergan's reading of Aquinas from independent sources. As an example of this we can take recent developments in understanding the medieval mechanism of satisfaction as a component of social order, which allows us to confirm Lonergan's position in *De Verbo Incarnato* regarding Anselm's and Aquinas's use of the notion of satisfaction to understand the redemption effected by Christ.²⁶ In other cases, we can move beyond Lonergan's reading by honing or extending his upper blade, particularly in terms of a greater understanding of medieval rhetoric, and of the trivium in general. This enables us to achieve a much more complete grasp of Aquinas's theology as a response of soteriological constitutive meaning to shifts in the dialectic of culture from cosmological to anthropological constitutive meaning. A wider range of Aquinas's writings, including his correspondence and his social and cultural tracts, becomes relevant to understanding his theology. In other words, our understanding of Aquinas becomes more concrete, which in turn makes more nuanced transpositions possible.²⁷ Finally, the fourth moment contributes to a historically-conscious enterprise of Thomas studies in general, offering other scholars a set of sophisticated methodological reflections and tools that can correct mistaken notions of history and augment their repertoire of approaches to the text.

²⁶See my paper, "Retrieving a Lost Tradition: The Law of the Cross," presented at the 2005 Lonergan Workshop (forthcoming).

²⁷See my paper "Religion and Culture in Aquinas," presented last fall at the Boston College Lonergan Forum, Boston College (forthcoming); see also my doctoral dissertation.

JOYFUL SORROW

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LONERAGAN OUTLINES THE heuristic structure of the solution to the problem of evil in chapter 20 of *Insight*, in which he describes the nature of a good will. The good will Lonergan envisions subsumes the good will of Kantian ethics. It not only strives to do its duty with rational consistency, it has been infused with the absolutely transcendent habit of charity. This good will, which can be called “the transcendent will,” is in love with God in such a way that it “so embraces the order of the universe as to love all men with a self-sacrificing love.”¹ The first fruit of such love is repentance. Lonergan distinguishes repentance from mere feelings of guilt. Feelings of guilt and remorse accompany repentance, but repentance is not exhausted in such feelings. Rather, it issues in acts of good will in line with the dictates of intelligence and reasonableness. Repentance, then, is both a fruit of the transcendent habit of charity and a matter of rationally self-conscious freedom.

While the transcendent will, in its repentance, is to be distinguished from what Lonergan calls “the vagaries of mere feelings,”² it is characterized, nevertheless, by specific and profound feelings. Lonergan writes of the sorrow and the joy of the transcendent will in his analysis of its temporality. As regarding the past, the repenting will is sorrowful. The more one is called to love of God, the more one recognizes one’s wrongs as sin, that is, as disruptions of one’s personal relation to the One loved above all and in all. In the present the will embraces sacrifice and shares the “dynamic resilience and expectancy” of the universe of being. As regarding the future, the will wills the emergent order of the universe, and “so it wills that order’s dynamic joy and zeal.”³ Ultimately in its

¹Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, vol. 3 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press [1957], 1997), 722.

²*Insight*, 722.

³*Insight*, 722.

every temporal aspect, “Good will is joyful. For it is love of God above all and in all, and love is joy.”⁴

In Lonergan’s beautifully spare passage on the conjugate form of charity, he calls attention to joy and sorrow as the attendant feelings of transcendent will. Lonergan echoes here a long tradition of writers on spirituality dating from the first centuries of Christianity. St. Paul comforted the Colossians: “I am now rejoicing in my sufferings” (Colossians 1: 24). St. Thérèse, in the nineteenth century, recalled in her autobiography:

After Holy Communion next day...I was seized with a passionate longing to suffer. I felt absolutely certain that Jesus had many, many crosses in store for me. My soul was flooded with such consolation that I regard it as one of the greatest graces of my life. I was drawn to suffering. It had about it a charm which delighted me....⁵

One writer in particular who wrote extensively on this topic is John Climacus, a desert monk of the sixth century revered by the Eastern Orthodox Church. He wrote of the joy and the sorrow of the monastic life in his book *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*. (Readers of Kierkegaard are familiar with the lyrical dialectician Johannes Climacus, pseudonymous author of both *Philosophical Fragments* and *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*. Kierkegaard adopted the name for this pseudonym from this early monk.) John Climacus wrote *The Ladder* as a spiritual guide for a select audience, the abbot and community of a monastic settlement on the Gulf of Suez. *The Ladder* consists of thirty steps of concrete directives for the aspiring monastic beginning with “Step One: On Renunciation of Life” and culminating in “Step Thirty: On Faith, Hope, and Love.” While the monastic steps consist of austere demands and restrictions, Climacus introduces them with a gentle humor. He describes, for example, one who is inconsistent in his renunciation, as “like someone who pelts the dog of sensuality with bread. It looks as if he is driving him off when in fact he is actually encouraging him to stay by him.”⁶

In “Step Seven: On Mourning” he describes the melancholy of the soul, which passionately seeks God and is filled with compunction and remorse. This

⁴*Insight*, 722.

⁵Thérèse of Lisieux, *The Autobiography of Saint Thérèse of Lisieux*, trans. John Beevers (New York: Image Books, 1957), 42-43.

⁶John Climacus, *The Ladder of Divine Ascent*, trans. Colm Luibheid and Norman Victor Russell (New York: Paulist Press, 1982), 138.

mourning permeates one's soul and ever deepens. In its wake all one's former pursuits and concerns pale in significance, as Climacus quips: "A man who has heard himself sentenced to death will not worry about the way theaters are run."⁷ In the course of describing the profound sorrow of one mourning in repentance, Climacus introduces the experience of the "gift of tears." "The fruits of the inner man begin only with the shedding of tears."⁸ These tears are not merely physical nor are they merely spiritual, but rather, they are a manifestation and a moment of the spiritualization of the body. With this central idea of the gift of tears, Climacus reveals his implicit hylomorphism.

The profound grief Climacus describes has a fundamental dialectical structure. Climacus advises that "God does not demand or desire that someone should mourn out of sorrow of heart, but rather that out of love for Him he should rejoice with the laughter of the soul."⁹ Yet, the laughter is not to be understood as supplanting the tears in this life anyway. The remorseful person is like a child who cries, yet smiles in the midst of her tears.¹⁰ Neither are sorrow and laughter single alternating affects; rather, they are interwoven. He writes:

As I ponder the true nature of compunction, I find myself amazed by the way in which inward joy and gladness mingle with what we call mourning and grief, like honey in a comb.¹¹

Climacus coined a term for the dialectical feeling of joyful sorrow or sorrowful joy, *χαρμολόπη*,¹² from the Greek *χαρμονή* (joyful) and *λύπη* (pain or distress).

Χαρμολόπη bears a curiously familiar dialectical structure, one that is characteristic of the fundamental mood of *Angst*. In *Anxiety: The Affectivity of Moral Consciousness*,¹³ I arrived at the conclusion, on the basis of an analysis which applied Lonergan's transcendental method to a typology of affectivity, that *Angst* is the fundamental mood of the fourth level of conscious intentionality – rational self-consciousness or moral consciousness. In other words, *Angst* is the very feeling of freedom.

⁷Climacus, *The Ladder*, 143-44.

⁸Climacus, *The Ladder*, 26.

⁹Climacus, *The Ladder*, 141.

¹⁰Climacus, *The Ladder*, 143.

¹¹Climacus, *The Ladder*, 140.

¹²Climacus, *The Ladder*, 24.

¹³Elizabeth A. Morelli [Murray], *Anxiety: The Affectivity of Moral Consciousness* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1985).

As Kierkegaard, Heidegger, and Sartre all attest, this mood or state of mind is dialectical: it is the felt tension of one's nature as finite and infinite, temporal and eternal, subject to necessity and yet freely open to possibility. Insofar as the self will always be a human being, even after death we do not become angels, the self is ever subject to *Angst*. One of the final sections of my work was devoted to the question of the ineluctable nature of *Angst*, and I argued then in agreement with the noted existentialists that though we may try to evade or deny *Angst*, we can never escape it. Just as we can never not be human, never cease to be defined by the pull and counterpull of existence, so *Angst* is unavoidable. I argued then that even religious conversion does not trump *Angst*. As evidence, there is St. Theresa of Avila's confession of her reluctance to pray born out of her dread of encountering yet again her beloved Christ in person. The dialectical dread is also manifested in Christ's solitary agony in the garden followed by His unflinching advance to meet his betrayer and the cohort sent to arrest Him.¹⁴ Yet at this point, I am not so sure of the conclusion that even for the blessed *Angst* is ineluctable.

Three clues have raised this question for me. The first is a line prayed in the order of Mass: "In your mercy keep us free from sin and protect us from all anxiety as we wait in joyful hope...." Over the years, it has been easy for me to brush this aside as a prayer formulated by the existentially unenlightened; or as really meaning "protect us from all 'neurotic' anxiety." But could it be possible for the self to be actually saved from *Angst* as hoped for in this prayer? The second clue was Sebastian Moore's account of the dread of death as the self's enslavement to death. Insofar as we tremble before death as God's threat, we are held back from the freedom of perfect obedience to God.¹⁵ Could the ineluctable nature of *Angst* be limited to a horizon of death? The third clue is the dialectical nature of the complex feeling of joyful sorrow, introduced above. How is the phenomenon of joyful sorrow, which is characteristic of the spiritual life, related to the fundamental mood of anxiety?

To answer these questions regarding the relation of *Angst* to joyful sorrow, it will help to recall the basic nature of a mood, because both of these complex feelings are moods. A mood or fundamental disposition is a feeling state. Scheler in his critical work, *Formalism in Ethics and Non-formal Ethics of Value*,

¹⁴"Knowing everything that was going to happen to him, Jesus came forward and said, 'I am he.'" John 18: 4-5.

¹⁵Sebastian Moore, "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Freedom," *Loneragan Workshop: Redeeming Time: In Honor of Sebastian Moore, OSB*, 14 (1998): 190-91.

distinguishes feeling states from feeling acts.¹⁶ An example of a feeling act or an intentional response to value or disvalue is fear, which is a response to a threat. A feeling state, on the other hand, may be intentional or nonintentional; as nonintentional it has a cause but no intended object. Nausea and fatigue are examples of nonintentional states inasmuch as they have physical and psychological causes but no intentional objects. They may occasion the emergence of intentional feelings and cognitive acts – indeed, when one feels nauseated everything is nauseating – but they themselves are nonintentional. In my work *Anxiety*, I present a case for the intentional nature of the feeling state of *Angst*. While this mood is typically understood to be a response to nothing (and for this reason commonly mistaken as pathological), it nevertheless has an object and its object is not mere nothing. The nothing of *Angst* is an Aristotelian nothing rather than a Parmenidian nothing. The object of *Angst* is the nothing of possibility, of oneself as one is to be, and hence, of the future and of freedom.

A feeling state has a pervasive permanence. It underlies other conscious acts and contents, both cognitive and affective. So one's isolated feeling acts as well as one's inquiry, rational reflection, and deliberation occur in the context of one's fundamental mood. A mood persists and underlies conscious intentionality. Imagine the effect of a somber or bright hue coloring everything of which we are aware. Perhaps, a more effective image is the difference that the addition of music makes to a movie. A horror movie loses half of its suspense when one mutes the soundtrack. The existentialists from Kierkegaard to Sartre all concur that one is never without a mood, even if it is just the rushing emptiness that accompanies mundane practical tasks or the cool superiority of the detached scientist or scholar at work. They insist that the one fundamental mood underlying all our feelings and actions is *Angst*. It is the very quality of moral consciousness, what it feels like to exist.

Joyful sorrow has all the characteristics of a mood. It is permanent and pervasive and hence a state rather than an isolated act. The mourning, repentance, compunction described by Climacus in his Step Seven, is not left behind as one mounts subsequent steps in one's spiritual development. Climacus warns:

When we die, we will not be criticized for having failed to work miracles.
We will not be accused of having failed to be theologians or

¹⁶Max Scheler, *Formalism in Ethics and Non-formal Ethics of Value*, trans. Manfred S. Frings and Roger L. Funk (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1973).

contemplatives. But we will certainly have some explanation to offer to God for not having mourned unceasingly.¹⁷

Remorse and its correlative sorrow is a function of the nature of our temporal and fallen existence, and as such, not to be outstripped.

The habit of ceaseless mourning and the sorrow and suffering it entails is not a morbid, other-worldly asceticism for the sake of asceticism. The sorrow that is unceasingly felt is, in Climacus's words, "the grief that comes from loving God."¹⁸ (When a critic such as Nietzsche views the trappings of the monastic life without any sense of the love at its core, he can only judge it to be corrupt and nihilistic.)

As just indicated, joyful sorrow is a response to one's sinfulness and distance from God, hence sorrowful, but at the same time it is a response to loving God, hence joyful. Love is joy, as Lonergan writes in chapter 20 of *Insight*. The emotional response of joyful sorrow, then, is intentional – its object: God in relation to the self/the self in relation to God. As permanent and pervasive, it is an intentional feeling state, a fundamental mood like *Angst*. How are these two fundamental feeling states related?

If we are convinced by the accepted view of *Angst* as ineluctable, and yet, accept that there is such an experience as joyful sorrow and that it has the structure of a mood, an intentional feeling state, we could conclude that joyful sorrow is a mode of *Angst*. In his aesthetic works, Kierkegaard treats melancholy and boredom as modes of *Angst*. In the phenomenology of *Angst* provided in his work *The Concept of Anxiety*, he distinguishes the historical emergence of four modes of *Angst*. The dominant experience of *Angst* for the ancient Greeks was fate; for the ancient Jews, guilt; for the Christians, sin in two modes – either a dread of falling into sin or a dread of moving out of sin. For Heidegger, *Angst* is fundamentally one's being towards death. It is as inescapable as death is inevitable, but there are countless modes of fleeing *Angst*; and *Angst*, then, is manifested in a variety of unauthentic feelings and behaviors. Sartre too differentiates modes of *Angst*. His analysis is primarily temporal – forms of *Angst* in the face of the past and forms of *Angst* in the face of the future. In light of this variety of manifestations of *Angst*, we might be tempted to assume that joyful suffering is just another way in which the rationally self-conscious self

¹⁷Climacus, *The Ladder*, 145.

¹⁸Climacus, *The Ladder*, 128.

experiences her dreadful freedom, one more mode of existential anxiety. But, the dialectical nature of these two moods suggests otherwise.

Angst is dialectical insofar as in it one experiences the tension of the two sides of human nature – the physical and the psychological in Kierkegaard's terms or material and spiritual in Lonergan's. As material, we are finite, temporal, and subject to the emergent, laws of nature. As spiritual, we are infinite in our desire to know, eternal as grounded in intelligence, and free as rationally self-conscious and self-constituting. The Aristotelian hylomorphism of this view commits us to accepting *Angst* as fundamental to human existence. We are never going to resolve the tension on one side or the other – never become merely beasts or angels.

Joyful sorrow is also dialectical. The opposition may be described in terms of temporality. The sorrow of repentance and remorse for one's sins and for the sins of others regards the past. The joy of hope and love regards the future. As past and future merge, we experience the tension of joyful sorrow in the present. But an analysis of the dialectical opposition in terms of temporality does not take us far enough. The true dialectic of this mood, I submit, does not reside within the structure of man's temporal nature, but rather it lies in the opposition between that nature and a transcendent nature.

Pascal writes:

Nothing is so unbearable to a man as to be completely at rest, without passions, without business, without diversion, without study. He then feels his nothingness, his falseness, his insufficiency, his dependence, his weakness, his emptiness....¹⁹

In this experience of oneself without diversions and projects, one faces in *Angst* (and commonly in boredom) one's nothingness. Conversely, one may experience what the author of *The Cloud of Unknowing* calls the deep interior sorrow of realizing not one's nothingness, but that one is:

The sorrow I speak of is genuine and perfect, and blessed is the man who experiences it. Every man has plenty of cause for sorrow but he alone understands the deep universal reason for sorrow who experiences *that he*

¹⁹See Thomas Merton's discussion of this quotation in *The Inner Experience: Notes on Contemplation*, ed. William H. Shannon (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 2003), 50 ff.

is. Every other motive pales beside this one. He alone feels authentic sorrow who realizes not only *what he is* but *that he is*.²⁰

But profound existential sorrow alone is not *χαρμολόπη*. This sorrow only prepares the heart, according to the author of *The Cloud*, for that joy through which he transcends his being. These two passages describe two moments of a turning point, *Angst* in the face of one's nothingness and profound sorrow in the face of one's very existence. One feels *Angst* in the midst of one's self; one feels sorrow as one transcends oneself.

The dialectical opposition of joyful sorrow is that of one's self as existing in the natural order and one's self as transformed by the gift of God's love. The first self exists in the horizon of death and the second self exists in the horizon of transcendence. The horizon of death, in Moore's terms, is being dominated by the dread of death, being enslaved to death. Within this horizon the self is free, but so entangled with death that it not only forgets God, but considers God wrongly, as untrustworthy, that is, as threatening death.²¹ Within the horizon of death, one's fundamental mood could only be *Angst*. One faces one's possibilities, and as Heidegger resolutely insists one's "ownmost possibility" is death.

The self in the horizon of transcendence is sketched by Lonergan in chapter 20 of *Insight*. The self as transformed by its relation to God, is not made other than human; it is not *der Übermensch*. One's central form remains unaltered, while new conjugate forms are introduced. These conjugate forms are the transcendent or supernatural habits of love, hope, and faith. The self in the horizon of transcendence remains rationally self-conscious and free, and so these habits are actualized with the originality of deliberate self-conscious repetition.²² Because one remains the human self one has always been but now finds oneself in this new horizon, one feels simultaneously the sorrow of having sinned and sinning and the joy of being in love. One finds oneself in a state of joyful sorrow.

For those familiar with Kierkegaard, we can use his famous definition of the self to differentiate these two fundamental moods in terms of their respective dialectical oppositions. The self is defined as "a derived, established relation, a relation that relates itself to itself and in relating itself to itself [it] relates itself to

²⁰*The Cloud of Unknowing*, ed. William Johnston (New York: Image Books, Doubleday, 1973), 103.

²¹Moore, "Where the Spirit...", 190-91.

²²For a discussion of the difference between earnest repetition and habit as mere mindless succession, see Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Anxiety*, trans. Reidar Thomte (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 149.

another.”²³ As the original relation the self is that unity in tension of the physical and the psychological, the finite and the infinite. This is the dialectical opposition experienced in *Angst*. As relating oneself to another, the self as creature stands transparently before God, its Creator. The dialectical poles of this transcendent relation is the opposition experienced in joyful sorrow – the self both in itself and in relation to God.

In addition to the dialectical structure joyful sorrow shares with *Angst*, a second characteristic of fundamental moods can be noted briefly. Existential philosophers are in agreement that the most common experience we have of *Angst* is flight from it. Kierkegaard, Heidegger, and Sartre each provide rich descriptions of modes of flight from *Angst*, from simple unconsciousness of it to vigorous theoretical arguments against it. (I recall a professor in graduate school who inquired about my dissertation topic. When I told him “anxiety,” he responded: “I myself have never experienced anxiety”!)

Do we similarly avoid or refuse to acknowledge the experience of joyful sorrow? We might immediately think that sorrow, of course, is avoided, for as Aristotle teaches all animals avoid what is painful. But, what about joy? Why would anyone flee from or avoid a feeling of joy? Categorically and especially for the theoretically differentiated, there is a distrust of feeling in general, and correlated with this, through mistaken attribution, a dread of the feminine.²⁴

Specifically, joyful sorrow in both of its aspects has an infinite, ecstatic quality. Paul Bowles in *The Sheltering Sky* describes his protagonist awakening one afternoon: “There was the certitude of an infinite sadness at the core of his consciousness.”²⁵ As fundamental sorrow can be infinite, so also can be the joy experienced when one’s heart is flooded with the love of God. Thomas Keating reassures students of his method of centering prayer that the reluctance to experience intense bliss is a common reaction.²⁶ Fear of ecstasy of either profound sorrow or joy is fundamentally a fear of loss of control, loss of self: “Ecstasy is OK as long as I’m the one feeling it!” A final note: flight from joyful sorrow like flight from *Angst* in no way eliminates the fundamental state. Flight simply masks the mood.

²³Soren Kierkegaard, *The Sickness Unto Death*, trans. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1980), 14.

²⁴Elizabeth Murray, “Women’s Intuition: A Lonergan Analysis,” in *Lonergan and Feminism*, ed. Cynthia Crysdale (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 72-87.

²⁵Paul Bowles, *The Sheltering Sky* (New York: The Library of America, 2002), 5.

²⁶Thomas Keating, *Open Mind, Open Heart* (New York: Continuum, 2002), chap. 6, 53-70.

In conclusion, joyful sorrow is not another mode of *Angst* but a distinct fundamental mood with its own dialectic. According to Lonergan, the introduction of the transcendent conjugate forms transform not only one's intellect and will, but also one's sensitivity.²⁷ Joyful sorrow is the transformed fundamental mood of human existence. Indeed, the two moods of dread and joyful sorrow are contraries. As Moore observes, when we are in love, "Anxieties hitherto not even acknowledged are dispelled."²⁸ Conversely, as Climacus states simply, "Fear shows up if ever love departs."²⁹ *Angst* is transcended when one falls in love with God, and one's fundamental mood becomes that of joyful sorrow. In terms of intentionality analysis, the will of chapter 18 of *Insight* is described as the affectivity of the fourth level of conscious intentionality. And as we have seen, the fundamental intentional state of rational self-consciousness is *Angst*. The transcendent will of Lonergan's chapter 20 of *Insight* becomes the fundamental intentional state of joyful sorrow.

²⁷*Insight*, 718-19.

²⁸Sebastian Moore, "Christian Self-Discovery," *Lonergan Workshop 1* (1978): 97.

²⁹Climacus, *The Ladder*, 287.

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED AT VATICAN II – A RESPONSE TO O’MALLEY AND SCHLOESSER¹

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In a higher world it is otherwise; but here below to live is to change,
and to be perfect is to change often. –John Henry Newman²

JOHN O’MALLEY’S PROVOCATIVE article, “Vatican II: Did anything happen?”³ and the enthralling response by Stephen Schloesser, “Against Forgetting: Memory, History, Vatican II”⁴ present us with a profound historical analysis of the context and documents of the Second Vatican Council. Both are exemplary works in their fundamental discipline of church history. In light of continuing disagreement over the “basic interpretation” of the council, of questions of continuity and discontinuity, O’Malley raises the question, “Did anything happen at Vatican II? Anything of significance?”⁵ O’Malley identifies a school of thought which so stresses the continuity of the council with the tradition as to suggest that nothing really significant happened at all.⁶ He argues strongly that something in

¹This is the text that was prepared for presentation at the workshop. A fuller, more detailed response to the two articles by O’Malley and Schloesser is appearing in the December 2006 issue of *Theological Studies* under the title “The times they are a’changing – a response to O’Malley and Schloesser.”

²John Henry Newman, *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* (London: Longmans, Green and Co, 1909), 40

³John W. O’Malley, “Vatican II: Did Anything Happen?” *Theological Studies* 67 (2006): 3-33.

⁴Stephen Schloesser, “Against Forgetting: Memory, History, Vatican II” *Theological Studies* 67 (2006): 275-319.

⁵O’Malley, “Vatican II,” 8.

⁶Specifically O’Malley, “Vatican II, 3-5, mentions the book by Archbishop Agostino Marchetto, *Il concilio ecumenico Vaticano II: Contrappunto per la sua storia* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2005), in which Marchetto attacks the “Bologna school” for its interpretation of the council as a point of rupture.

fact did happen, focusing our attention in particular on the shift in literary genre of the council documents and the significance of that shift for the life of the church. Schloesser affirms O'Malley's basic insight about "how the council, while keeping faith with tradition, also broke with the past ... And yet, seeing *how* the council did this has made me wonder only more insistently *why* such a rupture was not only conceivable but necessary."⁷ Schloesser then goes on to provide a number of examples of the major social and cultural forces operating prior to and during the council which necessitated the changes that occurred. Both authors strongly affirm the reality of change arising from the council. Something did happen, and indeed something had to happen, for the good of the church.

It is not my intention to take issue with any of the arguments or conclusions of these two articles. Rather I want to take them as a starting point for further reflections. In a number of articles I have argued, following the lead of Joseph Komonchak and Robert Doran, for the need to develop an historical ecclesiology grounded in a systematics of history.⁸ To further such a project requires active engagement with, and reorientation of, the social sciences.⁹ In this article I would like to take the results of these two articles and present how they might appear within the type of project I am envisaging. In doing so I wish to illustrate that while the two articles make for excellent church history, they are not yet at the level of a theological analysis of the material they have considered.¹⁰ A historical ecclesiology is not just a historical narrative of the church. It "should be empirical/historical, critical, normative, dialectic and practical."¹¹

As I have noted above, both articles focus on the fact of change in the church as a result of Vatican II. Change in something that the church has always found difficult to account for and acknowledge. As Ben Meyer noted of the early church, "they did not *acknowledge* development. They overlooked it. They suppressed its novelty, intent on ways of relocating the creative aspects of their own historical experience, safely and objectively, in God's eschatological saving

⁷Schloesser, "Against Forgetting," 277.

⁸Neil Ormerod, "System, History, and a Theology of Ministry," *Theological Studies* 61, 3 (2000): 432-46; Neil Ormerod, "The Structure of a Systematic Ecclesiology," *Theological Studies* 63 (2002): 3-30.

⁹Neil Ormerod, "A Dialectic Engagement with the Social Sciences in an Ecclesiological Context" *Theological Studies* 66 (2005): 815-40.

¹⁰This is not meant as a criticism of these articles in any way. It is simply to argue for a collaborative division of labor as envisaged in Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (New York: Seabury, 1971).

¹¹Ormerod, "The Structure of a Systematic Ecclesiology," 10.

act.”¹² And one might well argue, so it has been every since. As O’Malley notes, “the Church is by definition a conservative society.”¹³ This is not just a sociological observation; it is a theological necessity, given the church’s foundation in the historical events of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection. While Schloesser identifies an implicit anxiety in the documents of Vatican II about “fragmentation and disunity,”¹⁴ there has also been a constant anxiety about change itself.

This anxiety about change finds theological expression in a type of idealistic ecclesiology that takes the church out of history and places itself in some ideal realm. Whether it be the “perfect society” ecclesiology of Robert Bellarmine, the “mystical body of Christ” ecclesiology of Pius XII or the *communio* ecclesiologies of more recent times, they are characterized by their lack of interest in historical details and events. They present a timeless unchanging church, often a very attractive church, but one disconnected from any actual historical community. In contrast to this are a growing number of ecclesiologies that take the historical data seriously and hence must come to terms with the reality of historical change.¹⁵ Walter Kasper has characterized the distinction between these two approaches as one between a Platonic and an Aristotelian theology:

The conflict is between theological opinions and underlying philosophical assumptions. One side proceeds by Plato’s method; its starting point is the primacy of an ideal that is a universal concept. The other side follows Aristotle’s approach and sees the universal as existing in a concrete reality.¹⁶

While one is deeply suspicious of change, which can only mean a movement away from an ideal state, the other takes change for granted. As change is a key issue in this division, this is where I shall begin my investigation.

¹²Ben F. Meyer, *The Early Christians: Their World Mission & Self-Discovery* (Wilmington, Del.: Glazier Press, 1986), 23.

¹³O’Malley, “Vatican II,” 8.

¹⁴Schloesser, “Against Forgetting,” 279.

¹⁵Notable works that have adopted this approach are Edward Schillebeeckx, *The Church with a Human Face: A New and Expanded Theology of Ministry* (New York: Crossroad, 1985), and David Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1991). Perhaps the most significant of recent attempts, if somewhat flawed in my opinion, is the work of Roger Haight, *Christian Community in History*, 2 vols. (New York: Continuum, 2004-2005).

¹⁶Walter Kasper, “A Friendly Reply to Cardinal Ratzinger on the Church,” *America* 184 (April 23, 2001): 8-14. It is ironic that Kasper himself promotes a *communio* ecclesiology despite its idealistic overtones.

THE QUESTION OF CHANGE

Change is a complex notion, particularly when one is dealing with historical communities such as the church. At present, for example, there is considerable debate about the issue of globalization. Is it a reality? What is driving it? Is it primarily economic, political, or cultural? Where is it taking us? When we look at the church it is obvious that some things have changed. The priest now faces the people; the liturgy is in the vernacular; the pope travels by jet airplane, and the Vatican has a web site. Such changes are obvious and undeniable. Clearly those who want to minimize claims to change are not suggesting these changes have not occurred. Perhaps they want to suggest that nothing “essential” has changed, but then that simply opens up questions about what is essential and what is “accidental,” with all the attendant difficulties of essentialist thinking.

In fact understanding change is a key issue in any study of human communities. In his often noted but as yet unpublished “File 713 – History,” Bernard Lonergan sought to develop elements for a *summa sociologica* that would “throw Hegel and Marx, despite the enormity of their influence on this very account, into the shade.”¹⁷ Perusing this file some ten years ago, a cryptic throwaway line caught my eye, “constants disappear when you differentiate.” Here Lonergan was drawing an analogy between the task of a social theory and Newton’s first law of motion. Newton’s key insight was that constant motion needed no explanation – bodies at constant velocity continued in that motion unless acted upon by an external force.¹⁸ Lonergan is suggesting something similar in the field of the social sciences. Human communities are complex realities that aim to some extent at “self-reproduction,” Constancy in human communities does not as such require explanation. What requires explanation and analysis is change. Central to his account of history was an analogy drawn from Newton’s account of planetary motion. It consists of a series of three approximations. In the first approximation, the ideal line of history, people “always do what is intelligent and reasonable” and there results pure progress. In

¹⁷Frederick E. Crowe, *Lonergan: Outstanding Christian Thinkers* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1992), 22-23.

¹⁸In Lonergan’s terms this was an inverse insight, recognizing that there was no need to find an explanation for constant velocity. See Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, vol. 3 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 43-50.

the second, one grasps the presence of the unintelligible, unintelligent surd in human affairs, whereby people are unintelligent and unreasonable in their decisions, and there results decline. In the third, there is renaissance or redemption, which, through the assistance of God's grace, moves humanity closer to the ideal line of history, of pure progress. In its own way this basic heuristic structure reappears throughout Lonergan's career, certainly in *Insight* and in *Method in Theology*, but also in various occasional pieces as well. The most significant of the latter would be the essay, "Healing and Creating in History."¹⁹ This essay is a sophisticated transposition of the classical grace-nature distinction into social and historical categories.

Robert Doran has built on Lonergan's proposals by developing Lonergan's notion of a hierarchical scale of values – vital, social, cultural, personal, and religious – by identifying dialectic structures of transcendence and limitation at the social, cultural, and personal levels, which, together with Lonergan's notion of healing and creating in history, provides a heuristic structure for ordering history:

Taken together these three processes constitute ... the immanent intelligibility of the process of human history ... [H]istory is to be conceived as a complex network of dialectics of subjects, communities and cultures. Insofar as these dialectics are integral, history is intelligible. Insofar as these dialectics are distorted, history is a compound of the intelligible and the surd.²⁰

In a more recent work, Doran adds to these elements four created communications of the divine nature, corresponding to the four Trinitarian relations, to develop what he calls a "unified field theory" for a systematic theology of history.²¹

Four things should be noted on the proposal being put forward by Doran, built on Lonergan's foundations. The first is that the structure is thoroughly dynamic. Lonergan's three overarching categories of progress, decline, and redemption are all categories of change. The dialectic structures Doran develops at the personal, cultural, and social level are structures that involve personal, cultural, and social change. There are creative movements up the scale of values

¹⁹Bernard J. F. Lonergan, "Healing and Creating in History," in *A Third Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press and London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1985), 100-109.

²⁰Robert M. Doran, *Theology and the Dialectics of History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 144.

²¹Robert M. Doran, *What Is Systematic Theology?* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006), 62-66. Doran derives the terminology of a "unified filed theory" from unpublished papers of Daniel Monsour.

and healing movements down the scale. They acknowledge integrative forces that seek to maintain stability but also operative forces that move in the direction of self-transcendence. Change is built in from the start.

Secondly, the structure is normative. The normative force of Lonergan's transcendental precepts operates at all levels of the structure. The social order arises as a normative response of practical intelligence seeking recurrent solutions to the need for a just and equitable distribution of vital values. The cultural order arises as a normative response of the human need to find meaning and purpose in our daily living. The personal order is our own normative orientation to meaning, truth, and goodness which raises us above our social and cultural context, to move beyond personal satisfaction to ask about the truly good that is yet to be achieved. The dialectics at the personal, cultural, and social levels identify a normative order of self-transcendence, an operator that relentlessly transforms all our current settled situations.

Thirdly, the structure is dialectical. It recognizes not just the normative order of self-transcendence but also the real and indeed factual possibility of historical decline. Lonergan speaks of the short and longer cycles of decline, while Doran analyses the potential breakdowns in the personal, cultural, and social dialectics. These patterns of breakdown and decline provide a rich set of conceptual tools for analyzing particular historical situations and the problems they embody.

Fourthly, the structure is both thoroughly "social scientific" *and* theological. It recognizes the autonomy of the social, cultural, and personal levels but only as a relative autonomy. The social is open to the cultural, the cultural to the personal, and the personal is ultimately open to the possibility of grace. The healing vector of grace initiates religious conversion, then moral conversion (personal level), and in some cases intellectual conversion (cultural level). Moral conversion raises questions of social justice and equity (social level), and so transforms societies "from above." As such, the structure rejects the conceptualist assumptions of methods of correlation that tend to disconnect the sociocultural from the religious as separate realms or spheres, only then to have difficulty in reconnecting them in any meaningful way.²²

²²See Neil Ormerod, "Quarrels with the Method of Correlation," *Theological Studies* 57 (1996): 707-19, for a more detailed analysis of this issue.

TRAJECTORIES OF CHANGE

If the issue is one of change, what then does this structure developed by Lonergan and Doran tell us about change? What are the major trajectories of change that will provide us with a heuristic structure for analyzing not only what happened at Vatican II but any other major historical event? In seeking to respond to this I shall focus on the social and cultural levels of the scale of values as most relevant to the problem of historical change. I take Lonergan's notion of healing and creating and generalize it to movements from "below up" and "above down." I have already written about this in an earlier article and repeat much of what I said then.²³

Trajectory 1 – From Practical Insight to Cultural Change

The trajectory begins with a new practical insight that alters the social situation. This may be a new technological development, for example, the invention of computers; or a new economic insight, such as the free market; or a new political insight such as representative democracy. If the practical insight works, that is, if it increases the flow of basic goods, improves the efficiency of the distribution of those goods, or increases the sense of belonging in society, on a recurrent basis, then it will lead to the development of lasting institutions that embody this practicality. This in turn will lead to new meanings and values that incorporate those practical insights as part of the social story, as part of the social identity, as part of the way things should be done. In this way the cultural superstructure may respond to developments in the social infrastructure by incorporating new meanings and values consonant with the social change. A conflictualist sociology invariably understands such a process as ideological but it need not be considered so.²⁴ Generating meaning is essential for fully human living – human beings do not live by bread alone – and while it occasionally may be distorted, without it our lives would be less than human. The process may however be ideological if the practical insights neglect other communal values or the meanings and values, or perhaps also justify that neglect by denying the

²³Ormerod, "The Structure of a Systematic Ecclesiology," 19-20.

²⁴For a fuller treatment of the different styles of sociology and their theological significance, see Ormerod, "A Dialectic Engagement," 815-40.

validity of those communal values. Thus with liberation theology and critical theory we must ask, "Who are the victims of this social change? Who is marginalized? Whose voice has not been heard?" We must ask whether the practical insight suffers from bias, either individual, group, or general. All these are possibilities. But ideally, new practical insights give rise to cultural shifts which, recognizing their own contingency, can avoid ideological pretensions and distortions. Culture is then a creative, contingent, indeed artistic expression of the human spirit helping us make sense of our social world. We arrive at a new relatively stable social and cultural state, which incorporates the shift brought about by practical intelligence.

Trajectory 2 – From Cultural Change to Practical Insight

The second trajectory begins with the emergence of new meanings and values. How may this happen? It may occur when one culture comes into contact with another, as when European culture "discovered" the East and developed new art; or when Islam brought Aristotle to the Christian Middle Ages. It may happen when a creative human being develops a new philosophy or even a new religion. Most significantly it may occur when God communicates new meanings and values into human history through revelation. This revelation is most evident in the incarnate meaning of the person of Jesus Christ, his life, death and resurrection. It is then further carried in the hearts and minds of his followers, particularly the saints. It finds written expression in the Scriptures, definitive judgment in the dogmas of the church, and deeper understanding in the writings of theologians. Whatever their source, new meanings and values may be incompatible with the present social ordering. New insights into the meaning of human dignity may be incompatible with slavery, with denial of women's voting rights, with child labor. These insights grow among people through debate, discussion, and art. Cultural institutions are formed to promote a certain vision of life around these new meanings and values. People begin to envisage a new social ordering through a multiplicity of practical insights that are more expressive of the emerging meanings and values by which people give purpose to their lives. This new emerging meaning may of course represent the bias interests of a particular group. It may reflect a distorted meaning such as racism. But it may also represent a greater attunement to the intentional goals of truth, goodness, and beauty. Such an attunement will lead to a healing of distortions in the social order.

I would now like to "complicate" this basic proposal by bringing it into dialogue with a suggestion made by Christopher Dawson in which he identifies

five “main types of social change.”²⁵ The merit of Dawson’s proposal is that has emerged not from theoretical a priori consideration as above, but a posteriori, on the basis of his historical investigations. Also I shall change the order of his presentation to suit the current context.

Case 1: “The simple case of a people that develops its way of life in its original environment without the intrusion of human factors from outside.”²⁶ This is a case of relative stability where the two trajectories outlined above move a society incrementally.

Case 2. “The case of a people which comes into a new geographical environment and readapts its culture as a consequence.”²⁷ A new geographical environment demands new practical insights to meet the needs of survival. Inevitably this has an impact on the culture of the group. New stories must be told, new cosmologies developed, even new theologies. This is an example of trajectory 1.

Case 3: “The case of a people that adopts some element of material culture which has been developed by another people elsewhere.”²⁸ Dawson notes how rapidly elements of material culture can move from one society to another, instancing the spread of the use of metals, of agriculture and irrigation in the ancient world. However he adds, “it is remarkable how often such external change leads not to social progress, but to social decay.”²⁹ This again is an example of trajectory 1, in which the practical insight has been borrowed from others. Dawson’s observation about the possible negative impact perhaps reflects instances in which the disparity between the two levels of technology is such that it causes a fundamental collapse of the world of meaning of the recipient society.

Case 4: “The case of a people which modifies its ways of life owing to the adoption of new knowledge or belief, or to some change in its view of life and its conception of reality.”³⁰ The way in which Dawson puts this makes it clear that

²⁵Christopher Dawson, *The Age of the Gods* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1933), xvi. Dawson lists his cases as A, B, C and so on, whereas I have enumerated them.

²⁶Dawson, *The Age of the Gods*, xvi.

²⁷Dawson, *The Age of the Gods*, xvii.

²⁸Dawson, *The Age of the Gods*, xviii.

²⁹Dawson, *The Age of the Gods*, xviii.

³⁰Dawson, *The Age of the Gods*, xviii.

this “new knowledge” is not just a new technique or product of practical intelligence, what he previously referred to as “some element of material culture.” What he is indicating is a major cultural shift, a new “conception of reality.” The source of this new conception is “reason” or the “mind of man.”³¹ This is clearly an example of trajectory 2.

Case 5: “The case of two different peoples, each with its own way of life and social organization, which mix with one another usually as the result of conquest, occasionally as a result of peaceful contact.” Dawson describes this case as “the most typical and important of all causes of cultural change.”³² It is clearly also the most complex, as it involves elements of all the above types, movements “across” as well as “up and down.” There are exchanges at the level of practical intelligence and at the realm of meanings and values. The communities must develop new forms of intersubjective identification, as well as new stories, myths, philosophies, and theologies to accommodate the new context. Dawson speaks of this case as initiating a “period of intense cultural activity, when new forms of life created by the vital union of two different peoples and cultures burst into flower.”³³ He warns that it can also result in “violent conflicts and revolts of spasmodic action, and brilliant promise that has no fulfillment.”³⁴

While Case 5 is complex, there is a certain sense in which the previous four cases constitute component elements within it. Moreover each case is greatly clarified by bringing it into dialogue with the perspective of the two trajectories drawn from Lonergan and Doran. Taken together they provide a good set of heuristic tools for an analysis of major social and cultural change. In light of our present discussion, we may ask not just *how* change happened (O’Malley) or *why* it happened (Schloesser), but “what *type* of change happened at Vatican II?”

VATICAN II: WHAT HAPPENED?

In order to assess what type of change happened at Vatican II one must first have some account of the situation prior to the event. Such an account is not simply a

³¹Dawson, *The Age of the Gods*, xix.

³²Dawson, *The Age of the Gods*, xvii.

³³Dawson, *The Age of the Gods*, xvii.

³⁴Dawson, *The Age of the Gods*, xviii.

matter of identifying the historical conditions antecedent to the council, but also of providing some analytic framework for understanding this cluster of conditions. Both O'Malley and Schloesser make use of Lonergan's notion of a transition from classicism to historical consciousness in order to provide some understanding of the nature of the prior situation of the church.³⁵ The church had locked itself into classicist understanding of culture as a normative ideal, which it possessed and others must attain. This is certainly evident in the church's missionary endeavors that were as much about planting European culture as they were about preaching the Gospel.³⁶ As Schloesser notes, this had a particularly negative impact on the church's missionary endeavors in Asia. I would now like to make this account of the church prior to Vatican II more explanatory by drawing on the notions of the dialectics at the cultural and social levels of value as provided by Doran.

As noted above, these are conceived as dialectics of transcendence and limitation. The normativity of the structure dictates that these two poles be held in dialectic tension, while recognizing the priority of the transforming power of the transcendent pole of the dialectic. A breakdown of the dialectic occurs when a community moves in one direction or the other of the dialectic, to the neglect or even rejection of the opposing pole. Given the two dialectics at the two levels, there are four distinctive antitypes of breakdown in the sociocultural context of any community. I have analyzed these typologies elsewhere and here will draw attention to what I call the classic conservative antitype.³⁷

Classic Conservative Antitype

³⁵O'Malley, "Vatican II," 16n.27. Schloesser, "Against Forgetting," 308 n. 109. Bernard J. F. Lonergan, "The Transition from a Classicist World-View to Historical Mindedness," in *A Second Collection*, ed. William F. J. Ryan and Bernard J. Tyrrell (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 1-9.

³⁶This classicism is evident in the Apostolic Constitution of Benedict XV to the 1917 Code of Canon Law where he states that the Church "promoted also most effectively the development of civilization. For not only did she abolish the laws of barbarous nations and remodel on more humane lines their savage customs, but likewise, with God's assistance, she reformed and brought to Christian perfection the very law of the Romans, that wonderful achievement of ancient wisdom." See Edward N. Peters, *The 1917 or Pio-Benedictine Code of Canon Law* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2001), 21.

³⁷Neil Ormerod, "Church, Anti-Types and Ordained Ministry," *Pacifica* 10 (1997): 331-49. In this article I had simply numbered the four antitypes which I now refer to as classic conservative, neo-conservative, semiprogressive, and totally progressive.

This antitype represents a distortion of both the cultural and social dialectic in the direction of limitation.

At the cultural level there is a strong emphasis on tradition. The past is normative, not as a prototype for future development, but as an archetype to be endlessly repeated. The tradition sets the standard for theology, philosophy, art, literature, and so on. Any innovations at the cultural level, such as new theologies or new philosophies, are seen as a threat to the purity of the tradition. This distortion of the cultural dialectic in the direction of limitation may go hand in hand with a strong sense of transcendence, but there is a compensatory distortion in the way in which such transcendence is conceived. Because it is not in touch with the reality of actual cultural self-transcendence, it may conceive of transcendence in some purely "spiritual" sense, as in an extrinsicist account of grace, or some other "other-worldly" understanding of religion.

At the social level there is present a rigidity of social organization. The distortion towards limitation does not mean a lack of social organization. Rather it implies the inability of that organization to adapt to changing social circumstances with new solutions arising from practical intelligence. Instead, problems are met with a reliance on old "tried and true" methods. Such groups have a strong sense of community and social identity. There can be genuine experiences of warmth and fellowship. However, the distortion of the dialectic in the direction of limitation can mean that the intersubjective warmth can be perverted into shared anxieties or psychotic fantasies, particularly those of a strong leader. Again there is a compensatory distortion of the way in which social transcendence is conceived. Rather than regarding it as practical intelligence resolving new problems through new social structures, it may be assessed only in terms of "growth," becoming a bigger group. Mission then means "others joining our group."

The coherence between the two distortions, both in the direction of limitation, means that such communities are highly resistant to change and strongly successful in self-reproduction. There is a tendency to see the world in hostile terms; hence one must separate oneself from the world. This antitype corresponds, perhaps, to the sociological understanding of a sect.³⁸ As a breakdown in the integrity of the social and cultural dialectics this typology is not

³⁸According to Peter L. Berger, *The Social Reality of Religion* (London, Faber, 1969): 166: "The sect, in its classical sociology-of-religion conception, serves as a model for organising a cognitive minority against a hostile or at least non-believing milieu." The limitation of this conception lies in its failure to distinguish hostility at the cultural and social levels.

just an analytic category, it represents a failure of a church community to effectively realize its mission.

It is not difficult to mount a case that before Vatican II the Catholic Church approximated such an antitype. In the wake of the Reformation, the Catholic Church adopted a defensive attitude toward its ecclesial opponents. This defensiveness spread to emerging sciences, political changes, philosophical approaches, and eventually the whole of modern society. It found its peak expression in the Syllabus of Errors of Pius IX.³⁹ The church defined itself by its rejection of the modern world. Theologically the era was marked by an increasing extrinsicism that separated grace from nature and viewed the spiritual life as one cut off from the world.⁴⁰ The mission of the church was conceived as “saving souls,” focusing on the beatific vision, but not so much on the resurrection of the body.⁴¹ Socially the church presented itself as strongly cohesive but it expressed its chronic anxiety about the “other” through its scapegoating treatment of the Jewish people.⁴² Its social forms of organization displayed remarkable persistence through the centuries from Trent to the twentieth century.⁴³ Overall the church displayed extraordinary stability to the point of being static, resistant to the forces that were effectively reshaping the world. Indeed it even made a virtue of this stability, stressing its unchanging nature.

As I noted above, such a type of community is highly resistant to change. It does not allow for human creativity to operate either at the social level of organization and practical intelligence, nor at the cultural level of philosophy, theology, and critical reflection. The community of the church represented a relatively self-enclosed subcommunity of the larger society. It is likely that change can only occur in such a community where it is sanctioned and even initiated “from above.” Even so, such a community will face change with considerable resistance because of its long-term commitment to suppressing novelty. On the other hand, there is an increasing disconnectedness between the

³⁹Schloesser, “Against Forgetting,” 297-301, on the church’s rejection of modernity and its struggle to shift at Vatican II in the area of religious tolerance and pluralism.

⁴⁰The *nouvelle theologie* movement and the theologies of Rahner, Lonergan, and Doran are all attempts at overcoming the extrinsicism of neo-Scholasticism.

⁴¹Dennis M. Doyle, *Communion Ecclesiology: Vision and Versions* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2000), 41-42, on the ecclesiology of the manual tradition.

⁴²Schloesser, “Against Forgetting,” 289-94, on the “Jewish question” as a context for Vatican II.

⁴³Perhaps the most notable example of this persistence is that of the tridentine seminary.

church and the world, one that creates great tension between its members who must live both “in” the church and “in” the world.

In this situation it seems appropriate to compare the change initiated in the church at Vatican II to that of the fifth case considered above. The change was not a simple shift at the level of practical intelligence or of culture. Rather it was a complex interaction with the prevailing society at the social and cultural levels, the conditions for the possibility of which had been established by centuries of separation from, and resistance to, the changes taking place in the world. In such circumstances it is not unusual that the council initiated a “period of intense cultural activity, when new forms of life created by the vital union of two different peoples and cultures burst into flower,” but also the possibility of “violent conflicts and revolts of spasmodic action, and brilliant promise that has no fulfillment.”⁴⁴ Indeed Dawson’s words here have an almost prophetic character in relation to the aftermath of Vatican II. It has been a period of intense cultural activity but also a period of increasing conflict over the basic interpretation of the council leading some to feel that the initial brilliant promise of the council has not been fulfilled.

CONCLUSION: A MISSIOLOGICAL IMPERATIVE TO CHANGE

Above I suggest that a church that approximates the classic conservative antitype represents a community that effectively fails to realize its mission. This assertion is full of theological judgments that need further unpacking. As I have suggested in a previous article, the church is defined teleologically, that is, by its mission.⁴⁵ In contemporary writings that mission is expressed heuristically by the symbol of the Kingdom of God. The mission of the church involves the building of God’s kingdom. Nonetheless this mission is not exclusive to the church. As John Paul II put it:

The Kingdom is the concern of everyone: individuals, society, and the world. Working for the Kingdom means acknowledging and promoting God’s activity, which is present in human history and transforms it. *Building the Kingdom means working for liberation from evil in all its*

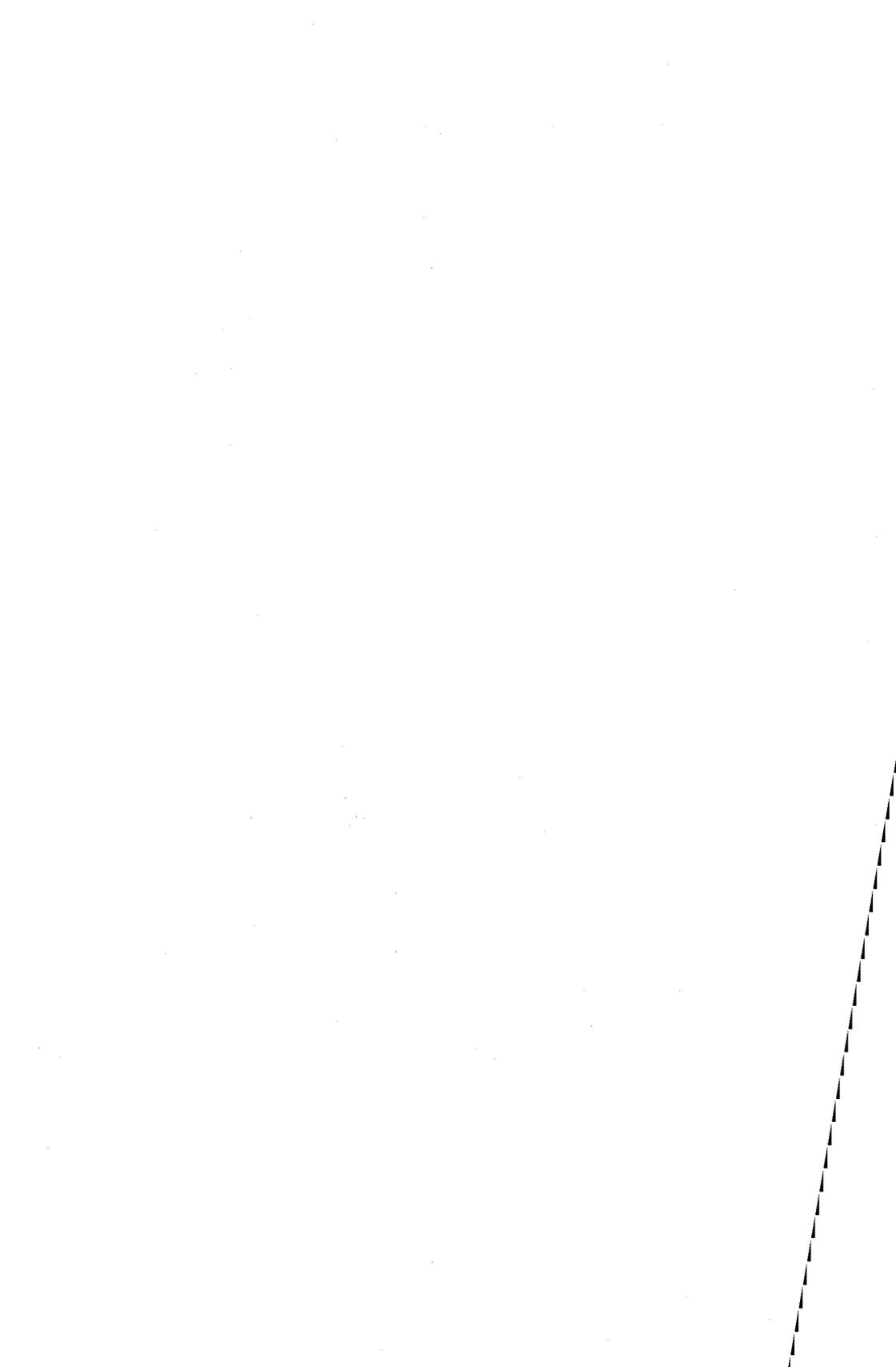
⁴⁴Dawson, *The Age of the Gods*, xvii-xviii.

⁴⁵Ormerod, “The Structure of a Systematic Ecclesiology,” 8-9.

forms. In a word, the Kingdom of God is the manifestation and the realization of God's plan of salvation in all its fullness.⁴⁶ [emphasis added]

Now if the antitypes represent a breakdown in the integral dialectics of the scale of values, if such breakdown represents a movement away from the ideal path of progress and into the path of decline, then they are a manifestation of social and cultural evil, what Lonergan refers to as the social surd. The church cannot and does not contribute to working for the Kingdom by manifesting evil in its own life and operations. There is a missiological imperative, therefore, for the church to change.

⁴⁶See the Pope's Encyclical, *Redemptoris Missio*, n. 15



GRATIA CHRISTI, THE HEART OF
THE THEOLOGY OF KARL RAHNER:
IGNATIAN INFLUENCES IN THE CODEX
DE GRATIA CHRISTI (1937/38)
AND ITS IMPORTANCE FOR
THE DEVELOPMENT OF HIS WORK

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IN MY PAPER I want to examine the Ignatian roots of the theology of Karl Rahner in a very special way. In my opinion¹ these roots can be found not just in the articles that deal explicitly with Ignatian themes. The research of Klaus Peter Fischer, Karl Heinz Neufeld, S.J., Harvey Egan, S.J., and recently of Arno Zahlauer and Andreas Batlogg, S.J., have made such an impressive case in connection with Rahner that it is impossible to overlook this relationship in each of their investigations.² Today it is no longer possible to neglect this tradition in understanding the work of Karl Rahner.

Karl Rahner, S.J., himself has a very clear idea of his dependence on his founder, even in the context of speaking about Martin Heidegger: "But I think that

¹On my understanding of Karl Rahner, see Andreas R. Batlogg S.J., Paul Rulands, Walter Schmolly, Roman A. Siebenrock, Günter Wassilowsky, Arno Zahlauer, *Der Denkweg Karl Rahners. Quellen – Entwicklungen – Perspektiven* (Mainz: Mathisa-Grunewald, 2003, 2004). See also Roman A. Siebenrock, "Karl Rahner SJ (1904–1984)," in Friedrich W. Graf, ed., *Klassiker der Theologie*. Bd. 2: *Von Richard Simon bis Karl Rahner* (München: C.H. Beck, 2005), 289–310.

²"Ignatius of Loyola Speaks to a Modern Jesuit," *Ignatius of Loyola*, ed. P. Imhof (London: Collins, 1979), 11-38; Karl H. Neufeld, *Die Brüder Rahner. Eine Biographie* (Freiburg-Basel-Wien: Herder, 2004); Klaus P. Fischer, *Der Mensch als Geheimnis. Die Anthropologie Karl Rahners. Mit einem Brief von Karl Rahner* (Freiburg-Basel-Wien: Herder, 1974); Philip Endean, *Karl Rahner and Ignatian Spirituality* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); Arno Zahlauer, *Karl Rahner und sein "produktives Vorbild" Ignatius von Loyola*, *Innsbrucker Theologische Studien* 47 (Innsbruck-Wien: Tyrolia, 1996); Harvey D. Egan, "Karl Rahner: Theologian of the Spiritual Exercises" *Thought* 67 (1992): 257-70; Andreas R. Batlogg, *Die Mysterien des Lebens Jesu bei Karl Rahner. Zugang zum Christusklauben*. *Innsbrucker Theologische Studien* 58 (Innsbruck-Wien: Tyrolia, 2001).

the spirituality of Ignatius himself, which one learned through the practice of prayer and religious formation, was more significant for me than all philosophical and theological erudition inside and outside the order.”³ In his later years Rahner often reflected on this topic. But this influence does not appear in his work simply as a repetition of a spiritual tradition but as a rethinking of it. On the other hand, when Rahner was asked, for example, by Leo J. O’Donovan, how he would describe the center of his theology, he answered: “That’s hard to say. The center of my theology? Good Lord, that can’t be anything else but God as mystery and Jesus Christ, the crucified and risen one, and the historical event in which this God turns irreversibly toward us in self-communication. So in principle, you can’t name just one center.”⁴ And in response to the question about how he would characterize his “systematic” theology, he added: “One should never stop thinking too early. The true system of thought really is the knowledge that in the end humanity is directed precisely not toward what it can control in knowledge but toward the absolute mystery as such; that mystery is not just an unfortunate remainder of what is not yet known but rather the blessed goal of knowledge which comes to itself ... In other words, then, the system is the system of what cannot be systematized.”⁵

Guided by Rahner’s own characterisation of his work, mainly in his key concept of “self-communication,” we have to be aware of the whole dynamic of his thinking, which is hidden and present in all his writings and in the witness of his life.

Therefore I have decided to proceed in the following steps.

First I will explain that Karl Rahner’s work and its immanent development is founded on a plurality of sources, which I want to call Rahner’s “*loci*,” to use the term of the tradition after Melchior Cano. Second, among these sources both the spiritual tradition of St. Ignatius of Loyola and the academic formation in the Society of Jesus are very important. The academic training in the post-Tridentine theology of his order and the heart of his spirituality formed a basic guiding insight or idea (in Newman’s capacious sense) that we can recognize in the background of his work. I will call this “the hidden link or basic structure” of his writings. I will explain the basic intention (“*Grundintention*”) of Karl Rahner in the second step. Third, because, according to my understanding of Karl Rahner’s

³*Karl Rahner in Dialogue. Conversations and Interviews 1965-1982*, ed. Hubert Biallowons, Harvey D. Egan, and Paul Imhof (New York: Crossroads, 1986), 191.

⁴*Karl Rahner in Dialogue*, 196.

⁵*Karl Rahner in Dialogue*, 197.

work, the theology of grace is the heart of his theological project, I will unfold my interpretation by explaining the first three theses of his first handbook for students (he called it a “codex”): *De Gratia Christi* of 1937/38.

I will focus your attention, therefore, not on his well-known articles on Ignatius Loyola and the long discussion of his relationship to the founder of the Society of Jesus, but on his first course as a lecturer in dogmatic theology, when he started teaching in Innsbruck. Of course, he happened to be lecturing on grace, but this starting point of his academic career as a teacher was very important, because the new orientation of the Catholic systematic theology in the twentieth century took place in rethinking the theology of grace, especially the relationship between nature and grace. Coincidentally, in these years Bernard Lonergan’s thesis in theology was dedicated to the topic of grace.⁶

1. THE WORK AND ITS SOURCES (“*LOCI*”)

Because Rahner’s work is presented to us in so many essays, it seems important to me not only to investigate specific themes but first of all to have an overview of the most important references or *loci* in his work. These references are grounded in what in German is called a *Leitidee* (guiding insight, idea, or image). This guiding idea, profoundly rooted in Ignatian spirituality, is expressed in Rahner’s theology of grace.

1. *The Sources or Loci of Karl Rahner’s Work*

Rahner was a “theologian of the school” in a good sense. He not only called himself a schoolmaster (*Schulmeister*), but he was brought up in a strong academic and spiritual formation. At the end of his life he recalled this education in a positive manner. This education shapes his seven *loci*. Rahner’s principal theological sources are as manifold as they are heterogeneous. In this, they reflect the complexity of Catholic theology, which may not be confined to any particular historical epoch or any one particular authority. We can identify different starting points.

a. *Ignatian Roots*

⁶Bernard Lonergan, *Grace and Freedom: Operative Grace in the Thought of St. Thomas Aquinas*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, vol. 1 (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2000), 1-149.

The rediscovery of Ignatius the mystic in the context of the Jesuit way of life orientates the spiritual contemplation of scripture toward a choice of life that is personal and in which God deals directly (immediately) with his creature,⁷ not only during the time of special spiritual training or of special experiences, but first of all in everyday life. Because a Jesuit is a *socius Jesu* (companion of Jesus) it is not surprising that Christology constitutes the background of all the significant themes of Karl Rahner,⁸ especially the theology of grace.

b. The Spiritual or Mystical Tradition and the Faith-Subject

In Rahner's youth the debate on modernism was still going on. Rahner addresses the question modernism raised concerning the faith-subject and the role of experience by having recourse to the tradition of the spiritual senses rooted in the church fathers. The article, "Experience of Grace,"⁹ bore fruit later on in his work on mystagogy and on the unmediated nature of the experience of God.¹⁰ Rahner had a life-long interest in the question of spirituality. But he did not describe this experience, because he was more interested in how to understand an immediate experience of God. Therefore, for him, spirituality is not contrary to thinking and understanding.

c. Rethinking the Sacramental Practice and Devotion of the Church

Rahner's theology of sacramental practice and piety reflects his theology of grace and revelation and emphasizes the historicity of grace. In this early theology of the sacraments we can discover Rahner's first theology of history. He elaborated this in contrast to the modern philosophy of religion's preoccupation with the self and conceived of it in terms of a Christological-ecclesiological mediation of salvation, as first treated in "The Meaning of the Devotion of Frequent Confession."¹¹

⁷Spiritual Exercises, # 15.

⁸See Roman A. Siebenrock, "Christology," in *The Cambridge Companion to Karl Rahner*, ed. Declan Marmion and Mary E. Hines (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 112–27.

⁹*Theological Investigations 3: Theology of the Spiritual Life* (New York: Seabury Press, 1967), 86–89.

¹⁰*Theological Investigations 11: Confrontations* (New York: Seabury Press, 1974), 149–65.

¹¹*Theological Investigations 3*, 177–89.

d. Fides Quaerens Intellectum

Rahner daringly explored (1) the question concerning the possibility of metaphysics in relation to acts of cognition that remain dependent on the senses or indeed the world,¹² (2) the foundation of a philosophy of religion grounded on revelation as fundamental theological anthropology,¹³ together with (3) a critique of modern philosophy from Kant to Heidegger in a systematic new interpretation of the thought of Thomas Aquinas, who, since the time of Leo XIII's "Aeterni Patris" of 1879, was regarded as the theological and philosophical authority setting the standard against modern errors. Even so, Aquinas helps Rahner to structure his thinking in response to the challenges of present-day philosophy. For Rahner, Thomas provides a bridge to the questions of the day, which are the questions of modern philosophy as well.

e. The Post-Tridentine Debate on Grace (and Nature)

Without committing himself to any one particular school – not even the Molinist school of his own order – Rahner operates in the context of the scholastic problematic of post-Tridentine systematics. There he develops the theology of grace and repentance in terms of their inner dynamics, especially in view of contemporary questions. The course on *De Gratia Christi* was the first he taught in theology.¹⁴ The first article Rahner published on this topic constitutes a remarkable advance on post-Tridentine doctrine. In contrast to the neo-Scholastics, the primary meaning of grace for Rahner is not created grace (*gratia creata*) but uncreated grace (*gratia increata*): God's universal salvific will and his

¹²*Sämtliche Werke 3: Spiritualität und Theologie der Kirchenväter*, ed. A. R. Batlogg, E. Farrugia, K.-H. Neufeld (Freiburg: Herder, 1999): *Geist in Welt (Spirit in the World)*, trans. William Dych [New York: Continuum, 1994].

¹³*Sämtliche Werke 4: Spiritualität und Theologie der Kirchenväter*, ed. A. R. Batlogg, E. Farrugia, K.-H. Neufeld (Freiburg: Herder, 1997): *Hörer des Wortes: Schriften zur Religionsphilosophie*, ed. A. Raffelt; (*Hearers of the Word*, trans. A. Tallon and M. Richards [New York: Continuum, 1999]).

¹⁴The contents of these lectures were published for the private use of his students: *De Gratia Christi. Summa Praelectionum in usum privatum auditorum ordinata* (Oeniponte 1937/38, republished or reprinted in 1950/51, 1955, and 1959 (Hereafter referred to as *De Gr Chr*); the second edition is still outstanding). Rahner's publication of this material is noteworthy, because Lercher's manual in dogmatics, *Institutiones Theologiae Dogmaticae*, remained in use in Innsbruck until Vatican II.

revelation in Christ.¹⁵ From this vantage he will work out his conception of the self-communication of God in grace and in revelation in and through Christ as divinization of the whole creation.

f. Church Fathers (Greek!)

His reception of the church fathers in his work, in cooperation with his brother Hugo Rahner, S.J. (1900-68), on the history of spirituality and dogma takes place within the then current *ressourcement* of patristic theology. So it is important to note that Rahner is familiar with the origin of the individual themes and theological options presented in the so-called *theologia perennis* of Neo-Scholasticism and of Western theology.¹⁶

g. Theology Oriented toward Pastoral Responsibility

A pastoral awareness of the rapidly changing faith situation broadens his theological development because he is especially concerned about the crisis of faith and because invoking the authority of scripture and/or church tradition alone is no longer intellectually credible. The process of anchoring his theology pastorally begins with the theological deepening of the sacramental and existential practice of faith. This was intensified in Vienna, particularly while doing pastoral work with Prelate Rudolf in the *Seelsorgeamt* (office of pastoral concern) of Cardinal Innitzer (1940-44). Thus, Rahner's theology can be understood most genuinely as a theological accompaniment to a church in radical transformation.

**2. URINTENTION (ORIGINATING INTENTION):
THE TWOFOLD-UNIFIED MOVEMENT OF CREATOR AND
CREATION CENTERED IN THE HUMAN PERSON'S ECSTASY
AND SELF-TRANSCENDENCE**

The completely diverse sources and starting points of Rahner's work are underpinned by an *Urintention* (originating intention) capable of integrating the varied perspectives into an integrating insight or image. This *Urintention*, articulated in a verse from the Letter of James, was used as the title of Rahner's

¹⁵See Karl Rahner, "Some Implications of the Scholastic Concept of Uncreated Grace," *Theological Investigations* 3, 319-46.

¹⁶See Karl Rahner, *Sämtliche Werke* 3. See note 12 for the full title of this volume.

first published essay: “Draw near to God and he will draw near to you. (James 4: 8).” In this quotation the twofold-unified movement of the Ignatian Exercises and the fundamental thrust of Karl Rahner’s theology come together.

The movement of God toward humankind is traditionally referred to by the terms *kenosis*, *descensus Dei*, or *katabasis* as basic metaphors for understanding the Incarnation and the life of Jesus, which – according to St. John – is accomplished (John 19: 30) on the cross. It is the descent of God into the world, which in patristic and scholastic theology is conceived of as grace in the two most influential soteriological theories, namely, of recapitulation and satisfaction. However, God’s descent into the world enables the movement of creation and of human begins in particular toward God. Rahner understands this as an *ek-stasis* or transcendence of people into the infinity and incomprehensibility of God. Since the movement of God toward humankind logically and temporally precedes the movement of humankind toward God, it can subsequently be described as transcendental, that is, as a condition of the possibility of transcendence in humankind. Inasmuch as this God-enabled movement into grace reaches God’s self, this “transcendental moment” can be interpreted as transcendence in the sense of *ek-stasis* in God.¹⁷ In later works, particularly in *Grundkurs (Foundations of Christian Faith)*, the different components of the meaning of “transcendental” merge inseparably into one another, which presents a permanent source of confusion.

These movements are central to the Exercises of Ignatius. God will act within each person immediately:¹⁸

still in the Spiritual Exercises, when seeking the Divine Will, it is more fitting and much better, that the Creator and Lord Himself should communicate Himself to His devout soul, inflaming it with His love and praise, and disposing it for the way in which it will be better able to serve Him in the future.

And in the final meditation on the “*contemplatio de amore*,” we can also recognize this twofold movement. In the first point he reflects that God gave himself to me. In the form of prayer the faithful one should answer:

¹⁷Besides these two meanings Knoepffler recognizes also the classical aspect of the term “transcendental.” See Nikolaus Knoepffler, *Der Begriff ‘transcendental’ bei Karl Rahner. Zur Frage seiner Kantischen Herkunft*, *Innsbrucker Theologische Studien* 39 (Innsbruck-Wien: Tyrolia, 1993).

¹⁸Spiritual Exercises, # 15.

The First Point is, to bring to memory the benefits received, of Creation, Redemption and particular gifts, pondering with much feeling how much God our Lord has done for me, and how much He has given me of what He has, and then the same Lord desires to give me Himself as much as He can, according to His Divine ordination. And with this to reflect on myself, considering with much reason and justice, what I ought on my side to offer and give to His Divine Majesty, that is to say, everything that is mine, and myself with it, as one who makes an offering with much feeling: Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my intellect, and all my will – all that I have and possess. Thou gavest it to me: to Thee, Lord, I return it! All is Thine, dispose of it according to all Thy will. Give me Thy love and grace, for this is enough for me.¹⁹

In the following meditation he used a vocabulary that in one sense is foreign to the tradition of spirituality but on the other hand will be very important in the future:

The third, to consider how God works and labors for me in all things created on the face of the earth – that is, behaves like one who labors – as in the heavens, elements, plants, fruits, cattle, etc., giving them being, preserving them, giving them vegetation and sensation ...²⁰

The movement of God to me is expressed by Ignatius with the word “labor.” God is engaged in saving me. This personal inclination to the single person will continue to be some significance for Karl Rahner.

Erhard Kunz discerns, and I agree, a double movement within the Exercises: “God’s movement to the person, and the person’s movement to God. Neither movement happens apart from the other; rather each occurs in the other: God moves to the person, and in that movement, the person is then able to move to God.”²¹ This double movement, of God to the human – *kenosis*, descent – and of the human to God – *ek-stasis* or transcendence – also marks the basic dynamic of Karl Rahner’s theology. In this early period, the key moment, in which the twofold movements converge, is expressed by means of the concept of *atingere* (“touching”).

¹⁹Spiritual Exercises, # 234.

²⁰Spiritual Exercises, # 236.

²¹Erhard Kunz, “Bewegt von Gottes Liebe. Theologische Aspekte der ignatianischen Exerzitien und Merkmale jesuitischer Vorgehensweise,” in *Ignatianisch. Eigenart und Methode der Gesellschaft Jesu*, ed. M. Sievernich and G. Switek. (Freiburg-Basel-Wien: Herder, 1990), 75-95, 95.

3. DE GRATIA CHRISTI: THE CENTER AND FORM OF RAHNER'S THEOLOGY

In 1937, without any choice in the matter, Rahner starts on the prescribed course – and finds in it his lifelong theme, the theological center of his thought, *Gratia Christi* (Grace of Christ).²² In this investigation, he revolutionizes the then current Catholic theology of grace, while sometimes employing the words of his teachers. A basic Trinitarian structure permeates what he has to say: God desires the salvation of all (1 Timothy 2, Ephesians 1-2). This universal salvific will touches us in Christ and in the church.²³ Grace is first of all uncreated grace, the person of Jesus Christ himself. In the Holy Spirit this grace touches the whole of humankind in Jesus Christ, as the head of redeemed humanity, and intends to transform it by redemption into the life of God. Therefore, the world exists that Christ can be. The hypostatic union is the goal (*finis*) of creation. Because in Christ, as the new Adam, this goal of creation has been realized in history, the completion of the life and love of Christ becomes the distinguishing sign of (“supernatural”) salvation: “Our supernatural life is the prolongation and explication of the life of Christ.”²⁴ The target of God’s saving action is the whole of humanity. The church is, in Christ, the sign of this among people. In Christ it is the “*unum magnum sacramentum*” (one great sacrament). Rahner’s concept of church is thus, from its very beginnings, analogous.²⁵ The theology of grace is what formulates the dynamic that gives his work its decisive character: God’s universal salvific will desires to reach out from the head of renewed humanity to all its members. In this finality of grace, humankind and all reality is oriented to the immediacy of God. This horizon (“supernatural formal object”) is where man stands. Thus grace is co-experienced in the most diverse experiences, thus overcoming the traditional nature-grace diastasis.

The complete work is located in the dynamism of God’s universal salvific will in Christ, which Rahner conceives as the self-communication of God, and understands both as a universal offer of grace and as an act of revelation. Traditional themes such as martyrdom (baptism by blood), the prayer of the

²²See note 14 above.

²³See Thesis 3, *De Gr Chr*, below.

²⁴*De Gr Chr*, 22.

²⁵See Thesis 3, *De Gr Chr*, below.

church (*votum ecclesiae*), the Jesuit Ripalda's thesis that a moral act is a salvific act, and the discrimination between the visible and invisible church are further developed in light of Pius XII's "Mystici Corporis" (1943) into the thesis of a church membership ranked in relation to "objective redemption."²⁶ In the further unfolding of the work the options in the theology of grace are linked with the structures of the human spirit that have been opened up and rendered accessible by a transcendental analysis. But the individual who is directed to God in an ecstatic form of existence does not find his way to perfection through abandoning the world, but solely by means of a "conversion as a historical being," ultimately, in the following of Christ through love for the neighbor. In acknowledging the existence of utterly diverse forms of following the acceptance of this offer by humankind always heads toward a *fuga saeculi* or an acceptance of death.²⁷ Because, according to Rahner, the nature of humankind must be broken open and indeed broken to pieces by the life and death of Christ,²⁸ all salvific acts are therefore not only related to Christ but explain an aspect of both his historical and his eternal life. Redemption is only possible in a relation with Christ and his historical reality as church.

We have to systematically evaluate two basic movements in Rahner's early work. Walter Schmolly has investigated these two movements as a fundamental double-structured axiomatic that it is not possible to integrate into a higher synthesis²⁹.

Because of the divine universal salvific will, the movement has to be regarded as irrevocable and victorious (Christology, Mariology) from God's perspective. From the human perspective it must, however, always be seen as under threat, due to guilt and sin. Thus God's unconditional and utterly serious will to save humanity wills the plan of salvation with the same decisive power as that with which, in his glory, he determined the outer world of his creation. As far as human beings are concerned, that divine salvific will is open, because God respects human freedom unconditionally. Only in the constant exposure to the danger of human freedom is it possible for humanity to give a response in love

²⁶*Sämtliche Werke* 10: *Kirche in den Herausforderungen der Zeit: Studien zur Ekklesiologie und zur Kirchlichen Existenz* (Frieberg: Herder, 2003), 3-81; 657-66.

²⁷Ulrich Kühn, *Natur und Gnade* (Luther Verlag-Haus, 1961).

²⁸Kühn, *Natur und Gnade*.

²⁹Walter Schmolly, *Eschatologische Hoffnung in Geschichte. Karl Rahners dogmatisches Grundverständnis der Kirche als theologische Begleitung von deren Selbstvollzug*, *Innsbrucker Theologische Studien* 57 (Innsbruck-Wein: Tyrolia: 2001).

and friendship to God's preexisting love. For this reason the history of salvation is a dramatic story between God and humankind, which Rahner describes in his article, "*Theos* in the New Testament," as follows:

God's activity in the course of saving history is not a kind of monologue which God conducts by himself; it is a long, dramatic dialogue between God and his creature, in which God confers on man the power to make a genuine answer to his Word, and so makes his own further Word dependent upon the way in which man does in fact freely answer. God's free action never ceases to take new fire in the activity of man ...; the creature is a real co-performer in this humano-divine drama of history.³⁰

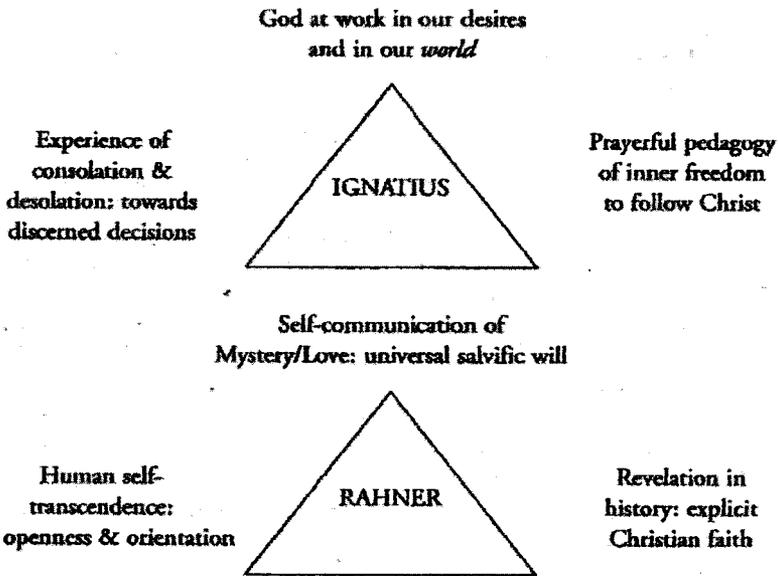
In view of these statements and the sacramental-historical foundations of his doctrine of grace and revelation, there can be no question of Rahner's leaving history out of his account. The transcendental form of thinking does not leap-frog history but analyzes its meaning and serves the preaching of the word of God, because it asks how the word of the Gospel can truly reach people today. To this extent a theology of preaching necessarily demands this transcendental mode of thinking.

4. CHAPTER I OF *DE GRATIA CHRISTI* AND ITS HIDDEN IGNATIAN INFLUENCE

In his his article, "The Ignatian Dimensions of Rahner's Theology," Michael Paul Gallagher used a diagram with two triangles to exhibit the parallels and contrasts between Karl Rahner and Ignatius Loyola.³¹

³⁰*Theological Investigations I: God, Christ, Mary and Grace* (New York: Seabury, 1974), 111.

³¹Michael Paul Gallagher, "Ignatian Dimensions of Rahner's Theology," *Louvain Studies* 29 (2004): 77-91, 81.



According to his construction, Rahner's theology of grace as revelation reinterprets the top of the triangle, God at work in our desires. Gallagher says: "The universal salvific love of God echoes the meditation on the Incarnation in the Exercises where the three persons of the Trinity are envisaged as looking down on the world's tragedy with compassion and as planning, as it were, the Incarnation as the form of our redemption."³² I want to explain how Rahner, working in the tradition of the school, translated this spiritual experience theologically by explaining the first chapter of his first lecture in his course, *De Gratia Christi*.

At the start of his lecture Rahner takes a completely new approach based on the "universal salvific will of God." With this beginning he began to overcome the post-Tridentine tradition, which initially understood grace as created grace. Instead of this, Rahner introduced the idea of "uncreated grace." Let us look briefly at his Latin codex. He clarified his understanding in three theses.

³²Gallagher, "Ignatian Dimensions of Rahner's Theology," in reference to, *Spiritual Exercises*, 106-108. We can read how Rahner reflects on this when he gave the exercises himself. See Karl Rahner, "The Incarnation," *The Priesthood* (New York: Crossroad/Herder & Herder 1973), 73-85.

First statement: *Existit in Deo voluntas obligans et operosa quoad omnium hominum salutem supernaturalem.* (In God a will exists that is obligating and efficacious in relation to the supernatural salvation of all people.)

This seems to me a very clear statement. God is engaged for the salvation of all people. The word “powerful” or efficacious (*operosa*) includes action, the history of salvation, and deals implicitly with Jesus Christ. But Rahner clarified the word *obligans* in a (perhaps) surprising way. Each and every human person is obligated. We are obligated to seek this goal. As I understand it, this entails that each human person has to strive after the will of God. This obligation is binding not only for Christians but for all people. Hence, Rahner had to ask how this would be possible for people who never know Jesus and the biblical tradition.

In this first period of his thinking, he interpreted this *obligans* as a rule imposed from without as a decree. And of course he was familiar with the implications of the distinction between *voluntas antecedens* and *voluntas consequens*.

More interesting for our special concern is his second thesis: *Haec vero voluntas Dei salvifica non est erga omnes homines aequalis, cuius voluntatis inaequalitas est mysterium divinae predilectionis.* (But this salvific will of God is not equal for all people, the inequality of whose will is a mystery of divine predilection.) But what does unequal mean? Of course, it could not mean a negative predestination. This will of God in favor of each person is unequal with respect to the uniqueness of a special situation and with regard to a particular biography. This is of course quite Ignatian. God does a lot of work for me; he does it for me personally as the *contemplatio de amore* makes clear. Rahner then interpreted this notion in scholastic terminology as *providentia specialis*.

Rahner’s concern here corresponds with the Jesuit tradition of respecting the personal freedom of persons. It is the strength of the Molinist account of the relationship between grace and nature to reinforce this concern. In his codex Rahner is merely repeating the traditional arguments. But more interesting for us is his interpretation of the classical phrase: *gratia supponit naturam*. Only a few have pointed out what Rahner said about this. Because, as a consequence of sin, the nature of man is not open to the Word of God but rejects it, man’s nature has to be broken in confrontation with the cross of Jesus Christ.³³ At this early stage

³³The Protestant theologian Ulrich Kühn has noted this very Lutheran tradition in Rahner (Kühn, *Natur und Gnade* 24f): “perfectio supernaturalis ... in statu viae pro natura, quae ut completa semper habet quasi tendentiam innatam sese in seipsa perficiendi, apparenter videri et sentiri potest ut destructive naturae. Id eo magis, quia gratia ut gratia Christi crucifixi, ab ratione

of his theology, Rahner also discards Ripalda's opinion that each *actus humanus* is a salvific saving act (*actus salutaris*).³⁴

In the third statement of the opening chapter of his course on grace he explained how this salvific will of God is mediated. In this statement we find Rahner's initial theology of the sacraments, which encompasses a theology of history.

De medio obiectivo voluntatis salvificae Dei Thesis 3: *Haec Dei voluntas salvifica nos attingit in Christo et in ecclesia.* (On the objective means pertaining to the divine salvific will. Thesis 3: This salvific will of God touches us in Christ and in the church.) From the very beginning, therefore, Rahner was aware of the importance of history, because he saw the great importance of the concrete mediation of God's gracious will. God himself is communication³⁵ through Christ and the Church in history. The unity of Christ and Church Rahner can call *unum magnum sacramentum gratiae* (one great sacrament of grace) (*De Gratia Christi*, 19).

Thus Rahner felt compelled to explain our own supernatural life in terms of a profound relationship with Christ. In his wonderful explication, we can recognize the whole idea of the Ignatian Exercises: *Nostra vita supernaturalis est prolongatio et explicatio vitae Christi* (Our supernatural life is the prolongation and the explication [unfolding] of the life of Christ).³⁶

Although the first thesis already can be found already in the text of Rahner's teacher Hermann Lange (and in the Innsbruck manual written by Father Lercher), it is worth mentioning that this third thesis is a completely new chapter, personally written by him.

We should not be astonished that Rahner's mysticism is a mysticism that has a deep relation to the mysteries of the life of Jesus. I would sum up the Christological heart of his teaching on grace in the first period of his work in this

pollentibus haberi nequit nisi in participatione crucis Dominicae ("supernatural perfection ... in the condition of pilgrimage apparently can seem and feel for nature, which as complete always possesses a sort of innate tendency to perfect itself in itself, as destructive of nature. This, all the more, because grace as the grace of Christ crucified, cannot be possessed by those strong in reason except by participating in the Lord's cross") (*De Gr Chr*, 108). See also: *Schriften zur Theologie* 3, (Einsiedeln: Benziger, 1964) 198f; 339.

³⁴Later on he will agree with this opinion. (See J. F. Perry, "Juan Martínez de Ripalda and Karl Rahner's Supernatural Existential," *Theological Studies* 59 (1998): 442-56.

³⁵In Rahner's words, "communicates himself to every single person" (*De Gr Chr*, 19).

³⁶*De Gr Chr*, 22.

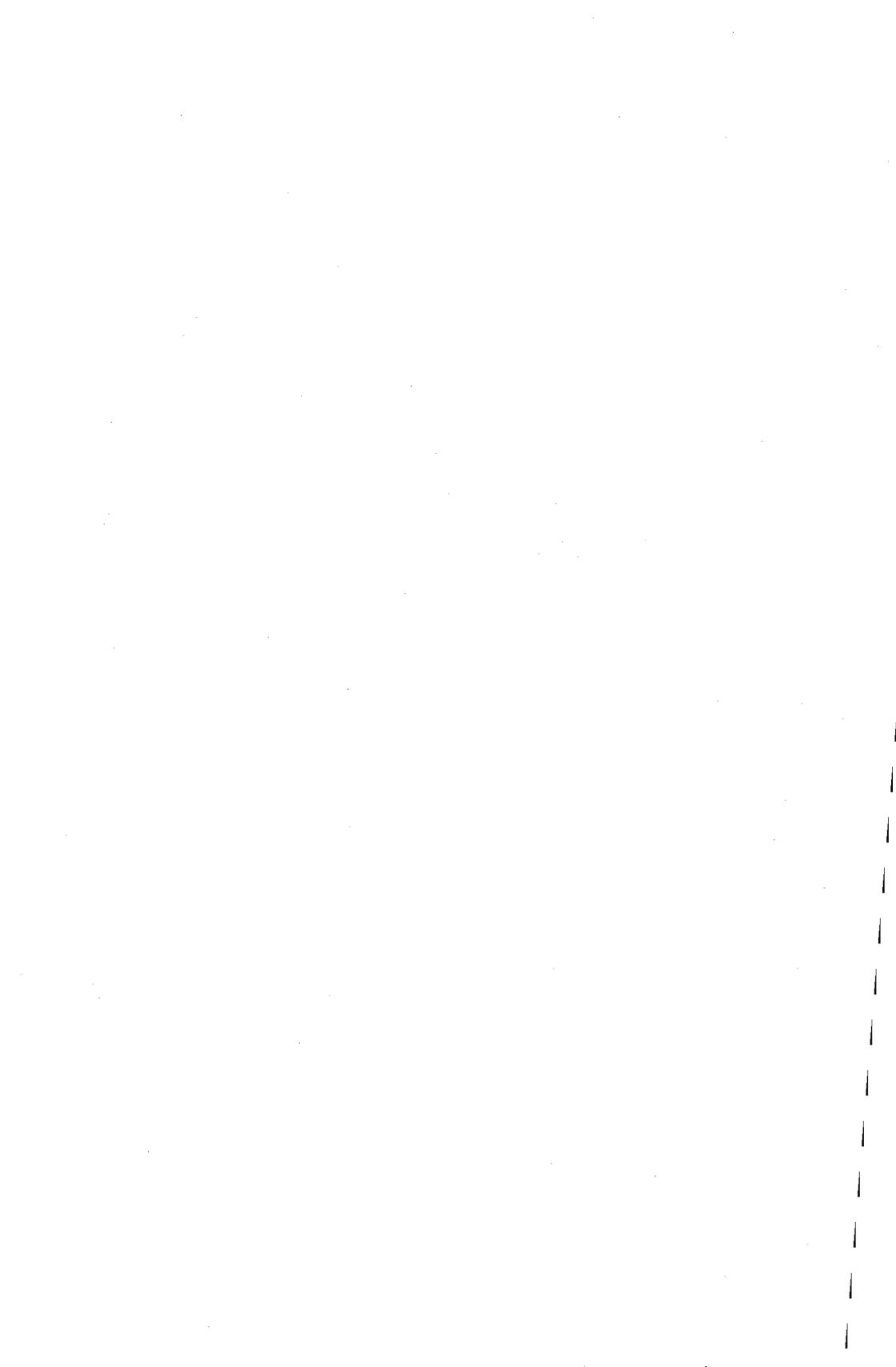
way: We can understand Rahner's theological thought as a translation of Christian life as saved by the relation from and to Jesus Christ.

Already in this early period, however, Rahner's theology of grace was shaping his entire understanding of Christianity, in which the salvific will of God transforms not only all of humanity but also the whole of reality:

Christianity is first and last Christ himself. It is not, ultimately, a collection of doctrines and laws, dogmas and regulations, but a reality which is there, and which is present in our lives ever anew: Christ and his grace, the reality of God which, in Christ, becomes our own reality. ... For Christ is God's will for our salvation made historical, made flesh; God's personal, loving will does not encounter man in some unattainable, intangible "inner realm"; since Christ, since the One who became man, all grace is Christ's grace with a body, grace dependent on the historical event that at one particular space time point in our human history the Word became man and was crucified and rose again. ... But an essential constituent of this visibility of Christ's grace is the word. ... Further, the saving reality of Christ is the consecration, in principle, of the whole creation. If anything was not assumed, neither was it redeemed; ... But everything has been assumed, for Christ is true man, true son of Adam, truly lived a human life in all its breadth and height and depth, has truly become a star of this cosmos in which everything depends on everything else, a flower of this earth which we love. And hence everything, without confusion and without separation, is to enter into eternal life; there is to be not only a new heaven but a new earth. Nothing, unless it be eternally damned, can remain outside the blessing, the protection, the transfiguration of this divinization of the world which, beginning in Christ, aims at drawing everything that exists into the life of God himself, precisely in order that it may thus have eternal validity conferred upon it. This is the reality of Christ, which constitutes Christianity; the incarnate life of God in our place and our time. A reality to which belongs the word; a reality in which all human reality is called to God and blessed.³⁷

In the spiritual tradition of the church, theologians are often named with a clarifying epithet, for example, Juan de la Cruz. In my opinion, on the basis of his theology Rahner should be called: Karl Rahner of the Mystery of the Victorious Grace of God through Christ.

³⁷This early summary of Christianity and of his Christology is part of an essay on the mission of the parish priest written originally in Vienna in about 1943/44. See *Mission and Grace. Essays in Pastoral Theology*, vol. 2 (London-New York: Sheed and Ward 1964), 39-42.



THE FINALITY OF HUMAN SPIRIT: FROM MARÉCHAL TO LONERGAN¹

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INTRODUCTION

THE FINALITY OF human spirit is an important though often neglected theme in the history of explicit philosophy. It is the spiritual hunger to which Aristotle alludes when, in the first line of his *Metaphysics*, he asserts that all humans by nature desire to know. It is the primordial yearning to which Augustine alludes when, in the first paragraph his *Confessions*, he observes that our hearts are restless until they rest in God. It is the basic longing to which Aquinas alludes when, throughout Book One of his *Summa contra gentiles*, he speaks of our natural desire to know the divine essence. It is the fundamental tendency to which Kant alludes when, in Part Two of his *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*, he describes our given inclination to choose what is morally good. It is the inexorable orientation to which Hegel alludes when, in his *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, he traces the progression of spirit from sense-certainty to absolute knowledge.²

Spiritual finality is also a key theme in the writings of Bernard Lonergan. Phenomenologically speaking, it receives its most basic articulation in his account of the transcendental intentions of intelligibility, reality, and real value. Metaphysically speaking, it is a central element in his account of the broader vertical finality of the created universe as such.

¹An earlier version of this essay appeared as "La finalité intellectuelle: Maréchal et Lonergan," in Paul Gilbert, ed., *Au point de départ: Joseph Maréchal entre la critique kantienne et l'ontologie thomiste* (Bruxelles: Éditions Lessius, 2000), 447-65.

²The point of these examples is to illustrate widespread recognition of a radical spiritual dynamism, not to suggest that all the thinkers mentioned envision that dynamism and its goal in exactly the same way.

Now, if the principal inspirations for Lonergan's notion of spiritual finality are the writings of Augustine and Aquinas, it remains that an important proximate inspiration of his stance on the specifically cognitional dimension of spiritual finality is the work of his Jesuit predecessor Joseph Maréchal.³ Given that the aim of this Workshop is to celebrate Jesuit contributions to the university, the church, and the world, it seems entirely appropriate to highlight some distinctive features of Maréchal's philosophical writings and how they are extended by Lonergan.

Maréchal's central philosophical project is to make explicit the basic speculative validity of human knowing and thus to vindicate the starting point of realist metaphysics.⁴ In pursuing this project, the key theme that Maréchal develops is the natural finality of the human intellect. Against Kant and those endorsing Kant's agnostic conclusion about human knowing, he argues that our concrete cognitional acts are indeed speculatively valid, though he agrees that they are never intellectually intuitive. Conversely, against certain so-called intuitive realists in the Ancient, Medieval, and Early Modern philosophical traditions,⁵ he argues that our concrete cognitional acts are never intellectually intuitive, though he agrees that they are indeed speculatively valid. And against all these thinkers, he argues that the speculative validity of human knowing does not require its intellectual intuitivity. On the contrary, speculatively valid human knowing is intellectually finalistic rather than intuitive. Speaking now in metaphysical terms and now in phenomenological⁶ terms, Maréchal maintains

³Maréchal, a Belgian, was born in 1878 and died in 1944. For a helpful account of his personal history and scholarly work, see *Mélanges Maréchal*, vols. 1 and 2 (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1950). For a more recent and quite extensive multiperson study of Maréchal's sources, thought, the debates he occasioned, and his subsequent influence, see the volume cited above in note 1.

⁴Maréchal's best-known philosophical work is *Le point de départ de la métaphysique*, five "cahiers" that appeared in original and later editions from 1922 through 1949. My references are to the most recent editions (Bruxelles: L'Édition Universelle): 1 (1944); 2 (1944); 3 (1944); 4 (1947); and 5 (1949). On some "natural, spontaneous" affirmation as the starting point of (realist) metaphysics, see *Le point de départ*, vol. 1, 14, 19, 47, 53-57, 98; vol. 5, 13, 184n, 553, 568. (As befits a brief essay, my references to the works of Maréchal and Lonergan are representative rather than exhaustive.)

⁵Intuitive realists who figure prominently in Maréchal's account include Plato, Duns Scotus, and Descartes.

⁶By the *phenomenal* features of the cognitional process I mean its *apparent* features, its features simply as manifest in consciousness. To speak of cognitional features as phenomenal leaves open the issue of whether they are merely phenomenal or genuinely epistemic. By (cognitional) *phenomenology* I mean the enterprise of making explicit the phenomenal features of the cognitional process. Note that phenomenology in this sense includes but is not limited to the philosophical approach commonly attributed to Husserl and his followers. (Both Maréchal and

that human intellectual cognition is essentially active, dynamic, and goal-oriented, rather than passive, static, and receptive. Most importantly, the judgment of real existence, the culminating step of human cognitional process, is discursive or affirmational and not intuitive or perceptual. To judge is not intellectually to *intuit* or *perceive* the real existence of some concrete content. On the contrary, to judge is to *posit* or *affirm* that concrete content as really existing. More precisely, it is to attribute to that concrete content a relation to the ultimate objective term of intellectual striving, the terminal cognitional goal that one anticipates a priori and that is the plenitude of what in fact one means, at least implicitly, by the words "real existence." Nor is the actual occurrence of such affirmations in doubt. Through extended historical and systematic arguments, Maréchal claims to show that a transcendental condition of our *inevitable awareness* of various contents as *phenomenal* objects is our *implicit affirmation* of those contents as radically *real* objects. Or, negatively, he claims to show that anyone who denies that the objects of his awareness are fundamentally real is implicitly contradicting himself.

Like Maréchal, Lonergan is characteristically concerned to show that human knowledge possesses basic speculative validity.⁷ Also like Maréchal, Lonergan implements this concern by elaborating an account of intellectual finality, an account that he claims is inspired by Maréchal's work.⁸ Now, it is my judgment that there are indeed at least two respects in which Lonergan's account is similar to Maréchal's. At the same time, however, there are at least six respects in which Lonergan's account differs from his predecessor's. These differences are not so much disagreements as they are reflections of Lonergan's further development of Maréchal. Nonetheless, they deserve careful attention, both because they are important in themselves, and because neglecting them has sometimes led writers

Lonergan occasionally employ these words in the aforementioned senses; and in any event the words' precision makes them useful.)

⁷Lonergan's best-known philosophical work is *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, originally published in 1957. My references are to the fifth edition, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, vol. 3 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992). Lonergan's own lectures on this book, originally given in 1958 and first published in 1980 as *Understanding and Being*, are an invaluable interpretative resource. For the second edition, see *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, vol. 5 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990).

⁸It was in responding orally to questioners at conferences that Lonergan frequently recounted his debt to Maréchal, though he was careful to point out that his knowledge of the Belgian Jesuit's writings was largely secondhand, coming "by osmosis" from a Louvain-trained fellow theology student (Stephanos Stephanou) rather than acquired through firsthand study. For a written account, see Lonergan, *A Second Collection* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1974), 265, 276. Compare with *Understanding and Being*, 177, 179, 276-77, 348-50, 371-72.

to assimilate Lonergan too closely to Maréchal and others more extensively influenced by him, often under the label “transcendental Thomist.”⁹

In this essay, then, my goal is fourfold: (1) to sketch Maréchal’s account of intellectual finality; (2) to indicate the two respects in which I think Lonergan’s account of intellectual finality is similar to Maréchal’s; (3) to explain five respects in which I think Lonergan’s account further develops Maréchal’s; and (4) to recount a recent discovery on my part of an additional important difference between the two thinkers that I had previously overlooked.

1. MARÉCHAL ON INTELLECTUAL FINALITY

1.1. *My Notion of Being in General*

Perhaps Maréchal’s most distinctive claim is what he says about the basis of my general notion “being,” my idea of all that is.¹⁰ In his view, that notion is a priori or preempirical, not a posteriori or empirical. That is to say, it is a notion that I have by nature, not one that I acquire through, say, intuiting being in its universality, or through subsequently generalizing my knowledge of particular beings. At the same time, however, the content of this a priori notion is not a formal content, a determinate content I cognitively possess. Rather, it is a finalistic content, an indeterminate content whose determinations I cognitively anticipate. My notion of being in general is the content of my transcendental – a priori and transcategorical¹¹ – intending. It is the notion of the exhaustive objective term of my radically preempirical and global intellectual striving. It is the notion

⁹See, for example, Otto Muck, *The Transcendental Method* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1968); Leslie Dewart, “On Transcendental Thomism,” *Continuum* 6 (1968: 389-401; Eric Mascall, “Transcendental Thomism,” in *The Openness of Being* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1971), 59-90; and Gerald McCool, “The Philosophical Theology of Rahner and Lonergan,” in *God Knowable and Unknowable*, ed. Robert Roth (New York: Fordham University Press, 1973), 123-57. Compare with Michael Vertin, “Maréchal, Lonergan, and the Phenomenology of Knowing,” in *Creativity and Method: Essays in Honor of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Matthew Lamb (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1981), 411-22, esp. notes 2-3.

¹⁰Here and throughout, I employ first-person pronouns and adjectives to emphasize that Maréchal is talking not about idealized knowers but rather about concrete knowing subjects. Obviously I do not intend those words in any narrowly autobiographical sense.

¹¹As used by both Maréchal and Lonergan, the word *transcendental* commonly incorporates both the Scholastic sense of transcendental, namely, “transcategorical,” and the Kantian sense of transcendental, namely, “a priori” (as in “the a priori condition of the possibility of a phenomenal object”).

of the fullness of what in fact I mean, at least implicitly, whenever I employ such words as “real existence.”¹²

1.2. My Knowing of Particular Beings

Presupposing and following on Maréchal’s account of my notion of being in general is his account of how I know particular beings, particular real existents. My speculatively valid knowing of particular beings does not culminate with any type of intellectual perceiving or intuiting. Instead, it culminates with judgmental positing or affirming. I know a particular thing as really existing not insofar as I intuit the real existence of a particular cognitive content but rather insofar as I affirm its real existence, where “affirming its real existence” means bringing the particular content under my apriori notion of being in general, attributing to the particular “concretive synthesis” a relation to the terminal cognitional goal of my naturally given intellectual finality.¹³

1.3. My Primitive Self-Awareness

Of the five remaining elements in Maréchal’s account of intellectual finality that I shall present, I suggest that the most fundamental is his view of my radical self-presence, my primitive self-awareness. Maréchal thinks that by contrast with divine awareness, in which there is perfect identity of act and content, all human awareness is exclusively intentional, object-oriented, a radical nonidentity of act and content. This means that my intentional awareness and, more profoundly, myself as intending subject become self-aware only insofar as that intentional awareness takes itself as object, turns back upon itself, reflects upon itself. When such reflection is “partial,” reflection merely “in the wide sense,” what emerges is “implicit” self-consciousness, self-consciousness that is “lived” or “exercised,” the awareness of subject but not yet *as* (expressly objectified) subject. And when such reflection is “complete,” reflection “in the strict sense,” what emerges is “explicit” self-consciousness, self-consciousness that is “recognized” or “signified,” the awareness of subject *as* (expressly objectified) subject. On such an account, however, where self-awareness is strictly correlative with reflection, even primitive self-awareness manifests my intentional awareness and myself as intending subject only *after* they have been at least initially constituted. As a Maréchalian subject, the basic features of my intentional orientation that first

¹²*Le point de départ*, vol. 1, 119-20, 250; vol. 5, 21-27, 223, 235-36, 276, 376.

¹³*Le point de départ*, vol. 5, 296-315, 346-61, 524-26.

becomes self-conscious at the start of the reflexive, “centripetal” moment of my activity have already been determined in a prior, prereflexive, merely natural and not yet self-conscious “centrifugal” moment.¹⁴

1.4. My Affirming of Particular Beings

Maréchal’s view of my primitive self-awareness exerts a subtle but profound influence on his account of my acts of particular affirming, the culminating steps of my speculatively valid knowing of particular beings. Since my primitive self-awareness is essentially reflexive, none of my intentional acts becomes even primitively self-aware, even implicitly self-conscious, until after it has been at least initially constituted. But what is not self-aware cannot be consciously self-constituting. Hence, the initial being-constituted of my intentional acts is merely natural, never a conscious self-constituting. And so with my acts of particular affirming: since these culminating steps of my speculatively valid knowing are not even primitively self-aware until after they have been at least originally constituted, at root they are *not consciously self-constituting*. On the contrary, they are originally constituted prior to their emergence into self-awareness, radically constituted not consciously by self but non-consciously by mere nature¹⁵. By the same token, acts of particular affirming that stand forth as contents of even just primitive self-awareness are mere expressions, not original versions. They simply manifest acts of particular affirming that have been originally constituted previously; and their speculative validity is wholly dependent on the speculative validity of the acts that they express.¹⁶

1.5. My Transcendental Intending of Being

If my acts of particular affirming are originally constituted by mere nature, prior to their becoming even primitively self-aware, how exactly do they qualify as *speculatively valid*? Maréchal’s answer to this question brings out an important nuance in his account of my notion of being in general, something beyond what we have already seen above in Section 1.1. If my acts of particular affirming as

¹⁴*Le point de départ*, vol. 5, 110-30, 210-14, 242-43, 396-405, 408-409. On the difference between divine and human awareness, see vol. 5, 512-13, 605-606. As he elaborates his account of how self-awareness emerges, notice Maréchal’s qualified but positive and frequent appeal to the work of Fichte: vol. 5, 37-38, 64, 403n1, 460n2, 511-13. Compare with vol. 4, 335-455.

¹⁵Nature comprises *conscious* nature and *non-conscious* (or *mere*) nature.

¹⁶*Le point de départ*, vol. 5, 210-14, 301-302, 452-61, 481, 556. Compare with vol. 3, 122-24n, 161; vol. 4, 118, 131-34, 315.

originally constituted are to be speculatively valid, they must disclose something of what-is: they must be acts of knowing *being*. But we have already observed that Maréchal envisages my acts of particular affirming as acts of bringing particular cognitive contents under my a priori notion of being in general, acts of attributing to particular concrete syntheses a relation to the terminal cognitive goal of my naturally given intellectual finality. Now the further nuance: the a priori notion of being under which I bring particular concrete syntheses is more than a *mere notion*, a *bare idea*, a *simple intention*. It is my naturally given *primordial knowledge* of being. Correlatively, my transcendental intending of being is more than *mere intending*. It is my transcendental *affirming* of being, identically my naturally given *primordial knowing* of being, my natural and actual but wholly indeterminate grasp of being in its plenitude. More exactly, then, in bringing particular cognitive contents under my notion of being, my originally constituted particular acts of affirming treat those contents as incremental explicitations of my primordial knowledge of being. And the acts themselves are incremental explicitations of my transcendental affirming.¹⁷

1.6. *Speculative Validity*

To facilitate a later comparison, let us briefly recapitulate Maréchal's stance on speculative validity. In his view, my acts of particular knowing culminate in acts of particular affirming. The acts of particular affirming that stand forth in even my just implicit self-consciousness are manifestations of acts of particular affirming originally constituted by mere nature. And those originally constituted acts of particular affirming are speculatively valid because they posit particular concrete syntheses as incremental expressions of an actual but utterly indeterminate knowledge of being that I possess by nature.

1.7. *Transcendental Criteriology*

A fundamental condition of realist metaphysics' speculative validity is the speculative validity of its starting point, my act of knowing some particular being. Let us label as "criteriology" the enterprise of determining *what* are the conditions of the possibility of speculatively valid human knowing and *whether* some act

¹⁷*Le point de départ*, vol. 1, 24-25, 41-56, 254-55; vol. 5, 81-99, 500, 503, 513, 532-68, 603-605. Like my particular intentional acts, my transcendental intending is not radically self-present; hence, at root it cannot be consciously self-constituting. Instead, it is originally constituted by mere nature. See vol. 5, 210, 259, 365, 403 n. 1, 404, 456, 525.

does in fact fulfill those conditions.¹⁸ As we have seen, then, Maréchal's criteriology concludes that my acts of particular knowing are speculatively valid because their contents articulate something of a naturally possessed primordial knowledge of being. But exactly what type of argument is it by which Maréchal reaches this conclusion? Just what is the basic kind of evidence to which his criteriology appeals?

In fact, Maréchal envisions his criteriology as twofold. *Metaphysical* criteriology begins by accepting the basic speculative validity of my acts of particular knowing. It purports to arrive at the aforementioned conclusion through applying general principles of realist metaphysics to those acts as natural occurrences. And the basic evidence for the conclusion is the allegedly undeniable speculative coherence that is manifested by applying the general principles to the particular acts. By contrast, *transcendental* criteriology begins by prescinding from (but not denying) the basic speculative validity of my acts of particular knowing. It purports to arrive at the aforementioned conclusion as the a priori condition of the possibility of the emergence of those acts simply as self-aware. And the basic evidence for the conclusion is that if I attempt to deny it, the content of my denial allegedly is always contradicted by my act of asserting that content.

Exactly how are these two criteriologies related? The Maréchalian answer to this question has two parts. First, transcendental criteriology provides a transcendental vindication of explicit realist metaphysics, including explicit metaphysical criteriology. Conversely, explicit metaphysical criteriology implicitly includes transcendental criteriology as explicit whole includes implicit part. Hence, the *results* of the two criteriologies are *complementary*. Second, however, because of his view that primordial knowledge of being is naturally given, Maréchal envisages all explicit cognitional enterprises, including criteriological ones, as partial articulations of that primordial knowledge. This means that the fundamental basis of transcendental criteriology, like that of metaphysical criteriology, is my actual though just implicit primordial knowledge of being. Moreover, the concrete process of transcendental criteriology, like that of metaphysical criteriology, unfolds in light of that knowledge. That is to say, the radical *foundations* and concrete *processes* of both criteriologies are *common* – and *essentially metaphysical*.¹⁹

¹⁸Maréchal's own word is "critique." See *Le point de départ*, vol. 1, 14; vol. 5, 17n, 47-48, 83n, 109-10, *et passim*.

¹⁹*Le point de départ*, vol. 5, 16, 47-71, 491-504, 516-19, 567-68.

2. WHAT LONERGAN TAKES FROM MARÉCHAL

2.1. My Notion of Being in General

Lonergan unreservedly endorses Maréchal's contention that I have my notion of being in general, my idea of all reality, by nature rather than by acquisition. The notion is radically pure, fundamentally a priori. It is grounded in my cognitional structure as such, rather than emerging from any employment of that structure. Nonetheless, that notion in no way articulates being. It only prefigures being in its determinate plenitude, it merely foreshadows reality in its explicit fullness. For my notion of being in general is identically the content of my natural, radically unrestricted, and terminally open cognitional intending of everything about everything. It is the notion of the integral objective of my a priori, subjectively unlimited, and objectively unspecified desire to know whatever is inherently knowable. It is the idea of that which, if I were to grasp it exhaustively, would put my essentially unbounded and undetermined curiosity to rest by completely satisfying it.²⁰

2.2. My Knowing of Particular Beings

Lonergan also vigorously embraces the most prominent element in Maréchal's account of how I know particular beings. The culminating step of this process is never a matter of confrontation, perception, taking a look. It is never a matter of sensory intuition, or of broadly intellectual intuition, or even of specifically judgmental intuition. On the contrary, my knowing of particular beings always culminates with judging, where judging is positing, asserting, affirming. Having grasped certain data of sense or consciousness as intelligibly unified, I know a particular real existent precisely insofar as I posit or assert or affirm that intelligible synthesis, bring it under my naturally given notion of being in general.²¹

²⁰*Insight*, 372-98; *Understanding and Being*, 145-70. Compare with Lonergan, *Collection: Papers by Bernard Lonergan*, 2nd ed. Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, vol. 4 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 81-91, 145-47. Notice that in these works Lonergan often subdistinguishes my notion of being as the notion of both unrestricted intelligibility and unrestricted reality.

²¹*Insight*, 296-340, 410-15; *Understanding and Being*, 109-32, 185-88. Compare with *Collection*, 214-19.

3. HOW LONERGAN DEVELOPS MARÉCHAL

3.1. *My Primitive Self-Awareness*

Just as earlier I suggested that Maréchal's view of my primitive self-awareness is the most fundamental of the last five elements in his account of intellectual finality as I am presenting it, so now I suggest that Lonergan's view of my primitive self-presence is the most fundamental of the five points on which he develops Maréchal's account. By contrast with Maréchal, Lonergan maintains that my primitive self-awareness and my fuller self-awareness differ not merely in degree (of reflection): they differ in kind. My fuller self-awareness is indeed reflexive. It is intentional self-presence, introspective self-presence, my awareness of myself *as objectified subject*. But my primitive self-awareness is not reflexive at all. Instead, it is nonintentional self-presence, nonobjective internal experience, my awareness of myself *as nonobjectified subject*. Among other things, this means that the original features of my intentional orientation as a Lonerganian subject are not determined in preconscious, merely natural fashion. On the contrary, the original features of my intentional orientation are inherently, intrinsically self-aware in their very being-determined.²²

3.2. *My Affirming of Particular Beings*

Lonergan's view of my primitive self-awareness undergirds an account of my acts of particular affirming that differs crucially from Maréchal's account. If my primitive self-awareness is nonintentional, nonobjective, nonreflexive self-presence, then my intentional acts are intrinsically self-aware in their very being-constituted. But if they are intrinsically self-aware in their being-constituted, then they *may* also be consciously self-constituting. And such indeed is the case for my acts of particular affirming, according to Lonergan. These culminating steps of my cognitional process are consciously self-constituting. Furthermore, their self-constituting is not just conscious: at best it is rational, reasonable, critical. That is to say, at best my acts of bringing intelligible syntheses under my naturally given notion of being in general are consciously self-determining in a way that expresses my essential rationality, reasonableness, critical-mindedness. They are consciously self-specifying in a way that is faithful to my immanent criterion of

²²*Insight*, 344-52; *Understanding and Being*, 109-32, 137-39; *Collection*, 163-75, 208-11; and *Method in Theology* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972), 7-10.

shrewdness, sagacity, wisdom. They are consciously self-shaping in a way that is affirmationally authentic.²³

3.3. My Transcendental Intending of Being

If at best my acts of particular affirming are affirmationally authentic, what in more detail is the basic criterion of affirmational authenticity that they meet? Lonergan's answer to this question brings out two significant features of his account of my notion of being in general, features beyond what we have already seen above in Section 3.1, and which distinguish his account from Maréchal's. First, the a priori notion under which I bring particular intelligible syntheses is my naturally given *mere notion, bare idea, simple intention*, of being. It is not at all *primordial knowledge* of being. Correlatively, my transcendental intending of being is my *mere intending* of being. It is not at all a transcendental *affirming* of being, not at all a *primordial knowing* of being. It is my naturally given but simply heuristic orientation toward being in its plenitude, an orientation that by nature is consciously self-constituting and, indeed, rationally, reasonably, critically self-constituting.

Second, the basic criterion of my affirmational authenticity is nothing other than my transcendental intending of being, this intending that is mere intending. I affirm intelligible syntheses authentically if and only if the conscious self-constituting of my acts of particular affirming reflects the intrinsically rational, reasonable, critical self-constituting of my transcendental intending. My affirming is related to my mere intending of being as particular acts of answering are related to the radically unrestricted desire for answers. And the intelligible syntheses I affirm are related to my pure intention of being as actual but incremental answers are related to the bare anticipation of all answers, as determinate but partial knowledge is related to the simply heuristic grasp of all that is.²⁴

3.4. Speculative Validity

If at best my acts of particular affirming are critically self-constituting, affirmationally authentic, faithful to my transcendental intending of being, their

²³*Insight*, 304-40; *Understanding and Being*, 109-32; *Collection*, 205-208, 222-31; *Method*, 14-20.

²⁴*Insight*, 352-71; *Understanding and Being*, 139-45; *Collection*, 188-203, 211-14; *Second Collection*, 69-86, 165-70; *Method*, 10-13, 23-24, 73-74. Notice that in his later works Lonergan subdistinguishes my notion of being as the notion not simply of unrestricted intelligibility and unrestricted reality but also unrestricted value.

speculative validity is nonetheless a further matter. What then is the connection Lonergan sees between affirmational authenticity and speculative validity? His stance on this issue is the capstone of his account of intellectual finality: speculative validity, or genuine cognitional objectivity, is nothing other than what follows from authentic affirmational subjectivity. In other words, the most fundamental way of characterizing speculative validity is operational or functional, specifying what it *is* by indicating the concrete operations through which it *emerges*. But the concrete operations through which it emerges are nothing other than acts of particular affirming that satisfy my basic criterion of affirmational authenticity, namely, my transcendental intending of being. Conversely, my acts of particular affirming are speculatively valid precisely insofar as they are affirmationally authentic.²⁵

It is worth highlighting precisely how this account of speculative validity differs from Maréchal's account. For Maréchal, my acts of particular affirming are originally constituted by mere nature; and they are speculatively valid *because* they posit particular concrete syntheses as incremental expressions of my naturally given and actual but wholly indeterminate knowledge of being in its plenitude. For Lonergan, by contrast, my acts of particular affirming are consciously self-constituting; and they are speculatively valid *insofar as* they are critically self-constituting, authentically positing particular intelligible syntheses as incremental satisfactions of my naturally given but merely anticipatory intending of being in its plenitude.²⁶

3.5. Transcendental Criteriology

The goal of criteriology is to determine whether some act of particular knowing is speculatively valid and thus to determine whether a basic condition of realist metaphysics' speculative validity is fulfilled. The conclusion of Lonergan's criteriology is that my acts of particular knowing are speculatively valid insofar as their contents authentically satisfy my naturally possessed but simply heuristic desire to know being. But precisely what sort of argument is it by which Lonergan

²⁵*Insight*, 399-409; *Understanding and Being*, 170-80; *A Second Collection*, 76-79, 121-24; *Method*, 238-43, 262-65, 292, 338.

²⁶Because Lonergan's account portrays my acts of particular affirming as consciously self-constituting, it is able to provide something for which Maréchal's account leaves little room, namely, a psychologically nuanced explanation of cognitional error. For Lonergan, my acts of particular affirming are speculatively invalid insofar as they are uncritically self-constituting, affirmationally inauthentic. See, for example, *Insight*, 232-69; *Understanding and Being*, 98-103; *Collection*, 222-28; *Second Collection*, 165-70; *Method*, 6-13, 44, 52-55, 271-81.

reaches this conclusion? Just what is the basic type of evidence that his criteriology invokes?

Lonergan claims to arrive at the aforementioned conclusion through a transcendental criteriology that has two stages. The first stage illuminates invariant elements of the concrete conscious process that culminates with my authentic acts of affirming. The second stage confirms that my authentic acts of affirming are speculatively valid by showing that every other interpretation is concretely untenable. And the basic evidence for both stages is operational or functional: if I attempt to deny any of the criteriology's findings, the content of my denial is always contradicted by my act of asserting that content.²⁷

What is the relationship of transcendental criteriology and metaphysical criteriology, the portrayal of cognitional elements in metaphysical terms? Like the Maréchal answer, the Lonerganian answer to this question is twofold. First, transcendental criteriology provides a transcendental vindication of realist metaphysics, including metaphysical criteriology. Conversely, metaphysical criteriology's treatment of cognitional elements in metaphysical terms may be filled out by transcendental criteriology's treatment of cognitional elements in phenomenological terms. Hence, Lonergan agrees with Maréchal that the *results* of the two criteriologies are *complementary*. Second, however, because he maintains that what is naturally given is my mere intending (rather than primordial knowledge) of being, Lonergan holds that the fundamental basis of transcendental criteriology is my anticipating of knowledge (rather than actual knowledge). Moreover, the concrete process of transcendental criteriology is governed simply by that anticipating. By contrast, the basis of metaphysical criteriology is my subsequent actual knowledge; and its concrete process unfolds in function of that knowledge. That is to say, Lonergan disagrees with Maréchal in arguing that the *foundations* and *processes* of the two criteriologies are *diverse*. The foundation and the process of transcendental criteriology are strictly phenomenological, firmly premetaphysical, whereas those of metaphysical criteriology are properly metaphysical. Hence transcendental criteriology is *methodically prior*; metaphysical criteriology, *methodically posterior*.²⁸

²⁷In his later works, Lonergan often refers to the "three basic questions" of his "transcendental method" – the questions of "cognitional theory," "epistemology," and "metaphysics." The two stages of what I am labeling his "transcendental criteriology" elucidate his answers to the first two of these questions. See, for example, *A Second Collection*, 37, 86, 138; *Method*, 20-21, 83, 238-40, 261, 297, 316. Compare with *Insight*, 434, 443, 449-51; *Understanding and Being*, 185.

²⁸*Insight*, 410-55; *Understanding and Being*, 177-79; 181-99; *Collection*, 142-45, 203-204; *A Second Collection*, 234-37, 276-77; *Method*, 20-25, 81-85, 93-96, 238-40, 258-62, 281-88, 343.

4. A RECENT ADDITIONAL DISCOVERY ON MY PART

I have a confession to make. In 1973 at the University of Toronto I successfully defended a doctoral dissertation entitled “The Transcendental Vindication of the First Step in Realist Metaphysics, according to Joseph Maréchal.” I was put onto Maréchal by Bernard Lonergan, who was living in Toronto at that time; and during the six years I worked on my project I had the good fortune of being able to consult with him from time to time, receiving both feedback and encouragement. What Lonergan found attractive about Maréchal was of course Maréchal’s elucidation of what he labeled “intellectual finality” in the writings of Aquinas. Influenced by some fairly extensive verbal similarities, I assumed that what Maréchal meant by “intellectual finality” was substantially the same as what Lonergan himself in *Insight* meant by “the notion of being,” namely, the dynamic and strictly heuristic cognitional anticipation of whatever is both intelligible and unconditioned.²⁹ That assumption in turn guided certain key steps in my dissertation.

About seven years ago, however, my work on an earlier version of this paper³⁰ forced me to the conclusion that my dissertation’s close assimilation of Maréchal’s “intellectual finality” to Lonergan’s “notion of being” involved a subtle but significant mistake. And about three years ago I discovered what I think is a second mistake on the same issue.

I corrected the first mistake in the aforementioned paper, a correction that is reflected in two previous sections of the present one. In Section 3.3 above, I recount Lonergan’s view that my transcendental intending is merely anticipative, strictly heuristic, not actually cognitional in any way. It is my mere intending of the goal named “being,” in no way my actual knowing of that goal. And in Section 1.5, rather than attributing Lonergan’s view to Maréchal as I did in my dissertation, I point out that for Maréchal my transcendental intending is more than merely anticipative, more than strictly heuristic, more than my mere intending of the goal named “being.” It is my implicit affirming of that goal, identically my naturally given primordial knowing of it, my natural and actual though wholly indeterminate cognitional grasping of it.

²⁹As I think back on my discussions with Lonergan during this period, I recall that he himself also seemed inclined toward this view. Of course he regularly professed his familiar denial of having much firsthand knowledge of Maréchal’s writings.

³⁰See above, note 1.

I wish to use the present opportunity publicly to correct my second mistake. Let me begin by recalling Lonergan's view in *Insight* that the anticipated goal of my transcendental intending, the goal named "being," is transcendental intelligibility, all that is intelligently understandable, *plus* transcendental unconditionality, all that is reasonably affirmable.³¹ Second, let me recall that "being" for the later Lonergan is also transcendental value, all that is responsibly affirmable and choosable.³² Finally, let me set aside the second point, important though it is, in order to focus on the first, which is central to the comparison with Maréchal's view.³³

Next, by contrast with what I presumed in my dissertation, I now distinguish Maréchal's account of my transcendental intending's goal from Lonergan's account of it. For Maréchal, the goal labeled "being" is not more than transcendental *intelligibility*. More exactly, it is the universe of intelligibility that includes the absolute intelligible ("infinite being") and every relative intelligible (every "finite being"), with the latter standing in total intelligible dependence upon the former. That is to say, what Maréchal highlights is the natural inclination of the human questioner "on the second level" (in Lonerganian terminology) to go beyond the grasp of any *formal* or *categorical* intelligibility and to seek a determinate grasp of *transformal*, *transcategorical*, *transcendental* intelligibility – a determinate grasp of every relative intelligible in its relation to the absolute intelligible within the intelligible universe. In this respect, Maréchal's "intellectual finality" is similar to what the later Lonergan characterizes as the "first transcendental intention." However, this finality does not extend to Lonergan's "third level." It is strictly "intellectual" (in Lonerganian terms), not yet "rational," not at all similar to what the later Lonergan characterizes as the "second transcendental intention." It is my yearning for a determinate grasp of the totality of what Maréchal does indeed label "being," but which in fact is just total intelligibility, all that is understandable, not yet total unconditionality.³⁴ To put

³¹*Insight*, 372-96, 664-67.

³²*Method*, 10-12, 23-24, 34-36, 101-103, 115-16, 282; *A Second Collection*, 81-83, 127-28, 147, 273-74, 277.

³³In fact, I think an excellent case can be made that Maréchal's inveterate emphasis on the *practical* character of spiritual finality has strong similarities to the later Lonergan's account of the "third transcendental intention" (the intention of value), including the latter's sublation of the "first transcendental intention" (the intention of intelligibility) but *not* including its sublation of the "second transcendental intention" (the intention of unconditionality). However, that is a topic for another paper.

³⁴In my view, as soon as this interpretation is clearly proposed, innumerable Maréchal's texts seem obviously to illustrate it and virtually none to contradict it. I will content myself here with

the point in historical terms, I am now arguing that Maréchal identifies what Aquinas means by *esse* with the ultimate intelligible dependence of everything upon absolute intelligibility, rather than with an entirely different element, as does Lonergan, the element Lonergan labels “unconditionality.” I anticipate that historians of philosophy will eventually agree that Lonergan is the better interpreter of Aquinas in this regard, and that Maréchal’s stance is more akin to that of Hegel than of Aquinas.³⁵

CONCLUSION

My central contention in this essay has been that Lonergan’s account of intellectual finality agrees with Maréchal’s account in two initial respects and differs from it in six subsequent respects.³⁶ For both Maréchal and Lonergan, my notion of being in general is not a posteriori but a priori, a notion I have not by acquisition but by nature. Additionally, it is not formal but finalistic, the notion not of a determinate content but rather of the exhaustive goal of my intellectual striving. Second, my knowing of particular beings culminates not with intuiting but with affirming the real existence of particular cognitive contents, bringing those contents under my naturally given and finalistic notion of being in general.

noting one especially clear-cut passage. After suggesting that Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel are more sensitive than Kant to the finalistic dimension of the speculative knower’s cognitional activity, Maréchal observes that they nevertheless go astray in presupposing that knower to be totally self-sufficient. He then goes on to say that this is their *only* major mistake, and that once it is corrected their transcendental analyses reduce to one that, like Maréchal’s own, implies a metaphysics not greatly different from traditional Aristotelian realism (where, as the preceding and following passages make clearly, “Aristotelian” means “Aristotelian-Thomist”).

Liberés du présupposé de l’Idéalisme absolu (ou de la totale immanence), les grands systèmes transcendantalistes, grâce à leur perception pénétrante du Devenir et de la Finalité active, rejoindraient l’Aristotélisme traditionnel. (*Le point de départ*, vol. 4, 455; compare with 453-55 and vol. 5V, 553)

That I did not correctly interpret such texts previously is a testimony to the power of presuppositions.

³⁵Since both Karl Rahner and Emerich Coreth are influenced importantly by Maréchal, correction of my previous oversights regarding Maréchal’s work has enhanced my grasp of the differences between the basic philosophical claims made by Rahner and Coreth, on the one hand, and by Lonergan, on the other. It also has strengthened my suspicion that the same differences constitute an important but overlooked component of the theological differences between Rahner and Lonergan on such issues as the place of the psychological analogy in Trinitarian theology (peripheral at best, for Rahner; central, for Lonergan).

³⁶In the following summary, the additional difference that I recently discovered is listed just after the third difference of the five I initially presented.

The first of the six differences is the most fundamental. Maréchal views my primitive self-awareness as a partial return of my intentionality upon itself, as incomplete reflection, as incipient self-objectification. Lonergan, by contrast, views it as essentially nonintentional, as intrinsically nonreflexive internal experience, as radically nonobjective self-presence. The remaining differences follow on this first difference and are grounded by it. The second is that for Maréchal my acts of affirming particular beings are radically constituted not consciously by self but non-consciously by mere nature. For Lonergan, by contrast, those acts at best are critically self-determining, self-presently self-shaping in a way that is affirmationally authentic, consciously self-constituting in a way that reflects the intrinsically rational self-constituting of my transcendental intending. Third, for Maréchal my naturally given notion of being in general is primordial knowledge, and my transcendental intending is primordial knowing. For Lonergan, by contrast, my naturally given notion of being in general is a mere notion, not at all knowledge; and my transcendental intending is mere intending, not at all knowing. Fourth, for Maréchal the goal of my transcendental intending, the goal named “being,” is not more than transcendental intelligibility. For the Lonergan of *Insight*, by contrast, “being” is transcendental intelligibility plus transcendental unconditionality. Fifth, for Maréchal my particular acts of affirming are speculatively valid because they posit particular concrete syntheses as incremental expressions of my primordial knowledge of being. For Lonergan, by contrast, they are speculatively valid insofar as they authentically posit particular intelligible syntheses as incremental satisfactions of my merely anticipatory intending of being. Sixth, for Maréchal transcendental criteriology and metaphysical criteriology are methodically simultaneous. For Lonergan, by contrast, transcendental criteriology is methodically prior to metaphysical criteriology.

In sum, Lonergan’s account of primitive self-awareness not as inchoate reflection but rather as intrinsically nonreflexive internal experience enables him to present intellectual finality not as constituted wholly by mere nature but rather as in large part critically self-constituting. The goal-seeking orientation of the human intellect is established by mere nature, but the orientation thus established is radically self-present. Moreover, it is radically self-determining – rationally, reasonably, critically. In its natural intending, the human intellect self-consciously orients itself wholly toward whatever would satisfy its own inherent desire, and wholly away from whatever would not. And in its authentic affirming, the human

intellect self-consciously deems some particular contents as incrementally meeting that inherent standard, and other particular contents as not meeting it.

As author of this essay, I favor Lonergan's account of intellectual finality over Maréchal's account insofar as the two accounts differ. In saying this, however, I do not see myself as taking one side of a direct disagreement. In my judgment, it would be anachronistic to think that Maréchal differs from Lonergan on certain issues as though he saw the Lonerganian alternatives clearly, considered them thoroughly, and nonetheless rejects them. On the contrary, Maréchal envisions his primary challenge as that of critically vindicating the starting point of realist metaphysics. The principal and most distinctive element of his response to that challenge is his contention that the speculative validity of human knowing is a matter of intellectual finality rather than intellectual intuitivity. And in elaborating that contention, he takes certain auxiliary ideas that were familiar to him and employs them consistently but without scrutinizing them extensively in turn. The most notable of these auxiliary ideas is the notion that my primitive self-awareness arises insofar as my intentional activity begins to return upon itself, a notion especially well-known to him from his work on Fichte.³⁷

For his part, Lonergan does not so much disagree with Maréchal's account as develop it. Just as Maréchal endorses the intuitive realists' contention that my knowing is speculatively valid, but goes on to develop their account by correcting the contention that my knowing culminates with intuiting, so Lonergan endorses Maréchal's contention that my knowing culminates with affirming, but goes on to develop his account by correcting the contention that my primitive self-awareness arises insofar as my intentional activity begins to return upon itself. And just as Maréchal's advance results from a penetrating study of the concrete cognitional subject, a study that is primarily phenomenological and only secondarily epistemological, so Lonergan's additional advance reflects an even more nuanced effort of cognitional phenomenology. Like Maréchal in relation to the intuitive realists, Lonergan extends Maréchal by assiduously following the Delphic oracle's advice to Socrates: Know thyself.

It remains that Lonergan's development presupposes Maréchal's breakthrough, a breakthrough whose originality and power are manifest in the variety of fruitful and ongoing developments it has engendered, with Lonergan's being just one of the many. As Lonergan himself observes, in paraphrasing Emerich Coreth:

³⁷Recall above, note 14.

What has come from Fr Maréchal is not a school but a movement, not a set of ready-made opinions repeated in unison by members of a uniform group, but a basic line of thought that already has developed in various manners and still continues to do so.³⁸

³⁸*Collection*, 189.

THE TRANSFORMATION
OF CONSCIOUSNESS:
WALTER J. ONG AND
THE PRESENCE OF THE WORD
IN THE MAKING OF CULTURE

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IT WAS IN 1993 that I had the great joy of meeting Walter J. Ong. I was in Saint Louis participating in the Annual Meeting of the American Catholic Philosophical Association. At the time I was also in the process of starting my dissertation on Judah Abravanel and the *Dialoghi d'amore*.¹ As it happens, I had just heard about Walter Ong. I decided on the spur of the moment to give him a call when I arrived in town. I told him I would like to see him for a moment. He was very forthcoming. I went to his room and we spoke for a while. I certainly was impressed with his hospitality and kindness. I mentioned my thesis topic and he commented on it. He dwelt a bit on the Portuguese translation of some of his books, which, to my shame, I knew nothing about. Indeed, I really did not know much about the great scholar in whose presence I was. It was, thus, a missed opportunity: my questions were probably rather annoying to him. Yet he always answered me jovially and cordially. I came out of the meeting with a deep sense of gratitude. This meeting had the marks of a grace-filled moment. I did not yet know the scholar, but I learned a great lesson in loving-kindness and attention to a stranger of sorts, even though we shared our common bond in the Society of Jesus. Walter Ong's generosity and positive attitude towards me notwithstanding, I could certainly have learned more in that meeting had I been better prepared. I was in the presence of a great man and a great Jesuit. For me, then as now, is more than enough to be joyous about. Thus with deep gratitude, I now reflect on a few aspects of the work of a very prominent figure of the humanities in the

¹Vila-Chã, João J. – *Amor Intellectualis? Leone Ebreo (Judah Abravanel) and the Intelligibility of Love*. Braga: Publicações da Faculdade de Filosofia, 2006.

twentieth century. To celebrate Walter J. Ong is also a magnificent way of bringing alive the Jesuit Jubilee as the great opportunity for Jesuits and Friends of the Society all over the world remember the original inspiration of Ignatius of Loyola, Francis Xavier, and Peter Faber.

Walter J. Jackson Ong Jr. was born November 30, 1912, in Kansas City, Missouri. He majored in Latin at Rockhurst College, where he received a Bachelor of Arts degree. Prior to entering the Society of Jesus in 1935 he worked for a while in printing and publishing. He was ordained a priest in 1946. At Saint Louis University he earned a master's in English with a thesis supervised by Marshall McLuhan.

After earning his doctorate in English at Harvard University in 1955, Ong returned to Saint Louis University, where he would teach for the next thirty-six years. Prior to his appointment as University Professor of Humanities, Ong was the William E. Haren Professor of English and Professor of Humanities in Psychiatry at the Saint Louis University School of Medicine.

Ong's books have been translated into many languages, and his scholarship widely quoted, including by the man that was the mentor of his master's degree.² Among the many honors he received, the French government decorated Ong for his scholarly work on Pierre de la Ramée (Peter Ramus), and President Lyndon B. Johnson made him a member of the National Council on the Humanities (1968-74). In 1978 he was elected president of the Modern Language Association of America. Walter Ong died at the age of 90 on August 12, 2003.

William E. Biernatzki, the editor of *Communication Research Trends*, notes in his introduction to an issue of the journal dedicated to Ong's work in 1996, that as an intellectual, Walter Ong "ranks with Eric A. Havelock and Marshall McLuhan [as one of the] earliest and most incisive explorers of two major transitions in human communication."³ The first major cultural transition explored by Ong is the movement from the primary orality of nonliterate cultures to literacy. The second is the change from a culture dominated by print to one pervaded by communication media that accentuate sound, which constellation of communication media Ong refers to as secondary orality.

²McLuhan, Marshall. – *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962.

³*Communication Research Trends*, 16 (1996): 3.

According to Robert A. White,⁴ the scholarly work of Walter Ong can be ranged alongside that of the chief figures of the Frankfurt School, the Jesuit Michel de Certeau, and many others of the structuralist and poststructuralist movement in France such as Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Jacques Lacan, and Roland Barthes, an author with whom Ong identified in a particular way. In the end, Walter Ong's intellectual contribution has to do with one of the central questions for us today: What kind of culture are we creating? Are we certain that this is the kind of culture that we want to create? And if not, what would the alternatives be?

In line with thinkers like Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, or Jürgen Habermas, Walter Ong believes that the answers to these questions must be sought at the very beginning of modernity. We will be able to understand our cultural evolution only if we come to understand the fundamental shift in the method of scientific inquiry and the profound change that took place in the intellectual life of Europe during the sixteenth century. It was no accident that his doctoral thesis and other earlier publications dealt with Peter Ramus, the famous teacher undoubtedly considered to be one of the single most influential figures in this shift and who also symbolizes other vast changes that took place at the dawn of modernity.

In his reading of the intellectual history of Europe, Ong considered that Peter Ramus introduced a method of inquiry that tended to eliminate public dialogue and discussion at the level of deeper philosophical and social issues. Ramus accelerated the tendency of public scientific discourse toward the analytical and the quantifiable, leading into a lesser emphasis on the symbolic dimension. Ramus and the many others who followed him were fascinated with "method": finding the quickest, most mechanical and efficient means of attaining some goal. "In Ramist rhetoric, dialogue and conversation themselves become by implication mere nuisances ... the role of voice and person-to-person relationship in communication is reduced to a minimum."⁵ For Ramus, attaining truth is primarily not a matter of public debate but a silent internal consultation with one's own individual consciousness of right and wrong. This set the stage for a modern public culture in which values are

⁴Farrell, Thomas J. – *Walter Ong's Contributions to Cultural Studies: The Phenomenology of the Word and I-Thou Communication*. Introduction by Robert A. White. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press, 2000, p. xviii.

⁵Ong, Walter J. – *Ramus: Method, and the Decay of Dialogue; From the Art of Discourse to the Art of Reason*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1958, p. 289.

relegated to the private sphere of opinion, and the only basis for public discussion is value-free quantified and positivist discourse. Because of this transformation the public sphere becomes the sphere of purely pragmatic relationships.⁶

Together with Paulo Freire, the Brazilian author of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*,⁷ Walter Ong is no doubt one of the few twentieth century intellectuals to argue that the *agon*, the contest, is fundamental for the formation of human consciousness. Although he would certainly not deny that we must seek to reform political economic structures, the final goal end of a process of political-economic liberation can only be achieved through a process of liberation occurring in the depth of our conscious human existence.⁸ Ong's deeply humanistic anthropology is centered upon an insistence upon the role of the senses in the formation of our interior consciousness due to his insight that the realization of our humanity lies in the harmonious development of all our human senses and capacities. The oral-aural dimension of our human existence is fundamental for this balance precisely because it is the basis for conversation, dialogue, and community. By listening to the voice of the other, we develop a sense of the inestimable value of the other person because that is how we discover another human being's personhood. The bonds of community reside in love, compassion, justice, respect, and social responsibility. Therefore, even though the visual-spatial dimension is recognized as being immensely important, particularly due to the sense of objectivity it conveys to our spontaneous anticipations, according to Ong, we cannot achieve the goal of our humanity unless the oral-aural dimension of consciousness is adequately promoted.⁹

Ong was particularly aware of the fact that technologically mediated communication is now central to the project of creating human community. Hence his constant reminder about the need for the social sciences and philosophy in particular seriously to deal with the issues raised by the media. Ong was certainly a pioneer in thinking about the media in a way that avoids the mistake of reducing them to the condition of mere instrumental and mechanistic effects. Rather, he was mainly interested in studying media from the perspective of inquiring how the media technologies interact with the formation and the transformation of human consciousness.

⁶Farrell, *op. cit.*, p. xix.

⁷Freire, Paulo – *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Translated by Myra Bergman Ramos; with an introduction by Donald Macedo. 30th anniversary ed. New York: Continuum, 2000.

⁸Farrell, *op. cit.*, p. xx.

⁹*Ibid.*

Ong's deeply humanistic philosophy that approached popular culture, and television in particular, developed key concepts now widely used in our contemporary understanding of communication. He characterized television as a form of "secondary orality" because, while incorporating many of the aspects of print media, it brings together both the aural and the visual. Television is more oral and community-forming than cinema because it embraces more of the ongoing conversation of the local and national community. Television manifests most clearly, massively, and deeply the breakdown of the relatively closed systems associated with verbal art forms generated by writing and print.¹⁰ In Ong's view, television, more than any other media technology so far, has created a sense of real community presence and an overall sense of community.¹¹

Ong's reflexion has a deeply personalistic character. In truth, for him the restoration of dialogue is not just for the sake of external freedom and a greater amount of interaction but, rather, for becoming a full person. This, however, implies heightening our awareness of the dynamic forces operating within our consciousness so that we can increasingly appropriate what we are as persons in greater freedom and creativity. Having discovered and expressly made the person that we are our own, we would then be in a position to respond to others as persons and in so doing to touch others in the way that enables them to also discover their personhood. For Ong, therefore, *society* is not just a series of individuals relating pragmatically to one another in the pursuit of their own interests, but the result of the interrelation of persons mutually seeking and encouraging the freedom and creativity of all.

The organizing question of Ong's thought is: What does it truly mean to become a human being? His answer was always connected with the notion of "interiority," that is, the idea of becoming explicitly aware of the dynamics within our own consciousness so that we can take possession of them. For Ong the uniqueness of the human being in the universe is always associated with the possibility of reflexive consciousness. Our privileged position in the realm of being is inseparable from the ability to say that *I know*, and, even more, *I know that I know*. After all, the crisis of contemporary culture for Ong is deeply linked to a loss of our sense of interiority, something that for the Jesuit and man of the Church is intrinsically related to the loss of people's ability to see and interpret events and objects in the world as signs of a God that acts in the depths of human

¹⁰Ong, Walter J. - *Interfaces of the Word: Studies in the Evolution of Consciousness and Culture*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1977, p. 315.

¹¹Farrell, *op. cit.*, p. xxi.

consciousness. But when people are no longer aware of God's presence in all things, then their very human being as such becomes lost. It is a great mistake, therefore, to relegate the question of interiority to the private sphere and to the realm of the strictly personal.

The discovery of authentic interiority is inseparable from a deepening of our awareness of the word.¹² Precisely in *The Presence of the Word*, Ong affirms that

[t]he word as sound signals interiority and mystery (a certain inaccessibility even in intimacy) ... two aspects of existence that we need to keep alive today. It also signals holiness ... inaccessibility, a sense of distance to be maintained.... The spoken word is ... coming from the deep interior; it comes from a region to which we have no direct entry, the personal consciousness of another, the consciousness that utters the mysterious "I" that means something utterly different from what it means in the mouth of anyone else.¹³

To be human means to be open. Openness means spontaneity, readiness for the unexpected, the openness of one consciousness to another in trust and love.¹⁴ Openness leads to dialogue, sociability, cooperation, and, in ecclesial terms, to ecumenism. Openness implies trust in the evolution of culture, the very opposite of the fundamentalism that clings to some unchanging reference point and narrows its focus on that. Ong also insists that writing and print promote objectivity and constitute the basis for what he calls secondary orality. Sound and voice, in contrast, are the most powerful signs of our structural openness to the future.

In this regard, Ong defends the fact that the electronic media have brought the whole globe into contact all at once, thus countering all in-group feeling. Large organizations make possible "the multiple contacts between large numbers of individuals absolutely necessary in today's world while not breaking down the privacy that modern man has finally achieved."¹⁵ In our age a far wider variety and choice of personal contacts is available than had been the case for the tribal person, whose world was kept intimate almost by default. Today intimacy must coexist with greater openness.¹⁶ This explains why, at a time when so many

¹²Ibid., p. xxii.

¹³Ong, Walter J. – *The Presence of the Word: Some Prolegomena for Cultural and Religious History*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967, pp. 314-315.

¹⁴Ibid, p. 298.

¹⁵Ibid, p. 303.

¹⁶Farrell, *op. cit.*, p. xxiii.

intellectuals tended to decry the advance of technology, Walter Ong always affirmed the possibility that a balanced human existence would be supported by the great technological developments of our era. His humanism presupposes a strong awareness of the interface between technology and consciousness. But the realization of such an interface is possible only in the realm of the human person.

In a variety of ways Ong insists upon the idea that hope and belief in the continual emergence of community in the midst of conflict becomes possible through the presence and openness of the word. The stereotypes that create spatial distance between human beings can be effectively overcome in the measure that dialogue is fostered. Through dialogue – as Ong conceives it, through voice-to-voice, interior-to-interior, person-to-person contact – the permanent renewal of the human community becomes possible. For him, “all true communication takes place in the interior of the individual.”¹⁷ He describes this process as follows: “As he composes his thoughts in words, a speaker or writer hears these words echoing within himself and thereby follows his own thought, as though he were another person. Conversely, a hearer or reader repeats within himself the words he hears and thereby understands them, as though he were himself two individuals”.¹⁸ This ability to echo and follow one’s own thought as if one were another person is markedly influenced by one’s interior attitude toward the other.

The depersonalization of the word and what Ong referred to as *hypervisualism* constitute major causes for the development of modernity and secularization. If Ong did not properly make an apology for secularization, neither did the Jesuit scholar see himself as contesting modernity as was frequently the case in Catholic circles before Vatican II. Ong did not think that it would be enough to retrieve models, such as the thought of Saint Thomas Aquinas, from the past in order to renew the spiritual dimension of life in Western culture; but instead he always insisted upon the need to focus on the specific nature of the oral-aural type of communication of today’s world.¹⁹ After all, the study of speech and verbal expression represents a major evidence of human consciousness, the central phenomenon to be considered in studying the evolution of the cosmos. Like Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, Ong argued that speech and

¹⁷Ong, Walter J. – *In the Human Grain: Further Explorations of Contemporary Culture*. New York: Macmillan, 1967, p. 182.

¹⁸Ong, Walter J. – *The Barbarian Within: And Other Fugitive Essays and Studies*. New York: Macmillan, 1962, p. 51.

¹⁹Farrell, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

verbal expressions constitute evidence not only of the development of human consciousness but also of the evolution of the entire universe.

The philosophical dimension of Ong's work is quite evident. Books like *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue* (1958), *The Presence of the Word* (1967), *Fighting for Life* (1981), and *Hopkins, the Self, and God* (1986) are works of major philosophical relevance; and Ong's project has a clearly personalist dimension. Ong's account of the oral-aural communication cannot but be profoundly indebted to the major insights of the so-called philosophy of dialogue.²⁰ But it also has a strong relation with the thought of Bernard Lonergan. As we know, Lonergan outlines two positions that he characterizes as differences "in total mentality".²¹ The mentality he calls the classicist worldview has perhaps most influenced Western philosophy and science as well as Christian theology. Lonergan's classicist worldview correlates with Ong's *world-as-view* orientation toward life, which he associates with Greek literacy and literate modes of thought²² in contrast to the *world-as-event* life-orientation, which he associates with *primary orality*. But what Lonergan refers to as historical-mindedness does not correspond to anything Ong explicitly names, even if Ong does acknowledge that new orientation toward life may be emerging today as a result of our *secondary orality*.²³ Thus, the two Jesuit thinkers are well aware of the dangers of the perceptualism and conceptualism oriented toward the fixed, the static, the immutable.²⁴

On the other hand, and in a way similar to Havelock²⁵, Ong also stresses that Greek literacy and literate thought enabled and advanced a sense of the

²⁰Ibid, p. 7. – In this regard, see CASPER, Bernhard – *Das dialogische Denken: Eine Untersuchung der religionsphilosophischen Bedeutung Franz Rosenzweigs, Ferdinand Ebners und Martin Bubers*. Freiburg i. Br.; Basel; Wien: Herder, 1967.

²¹Lonergan, Bernard – "The Transition from the Classicist World-View to Historical-Mindedness" (1974), p. 2.

²²Ong, Walter J. – "World as view and world as event". In: *American Anthropologist*. 71 (1969), pp. 634-647.

²³Farrell, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

²⁴Ibid, p. 12.

²⁵Havelock, Eric Alfred – *The Muse Learns to Write: Reflections on Orality and Literacy From Antiquity to the Present*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986; Id. – *The Literate Revolution in Greece and Its Cultural Consequences*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1982; Id. – *The Greek Concept of Justice: From Its Shadow in Homer to Its Substance in Plato*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978; Id. – *Preface to Plato*. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press; Harvard University Press, 1963; Id. – *Origins of Western Literacy*. Four lectures delivered at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Toronto, March 25, 26, 27, 28, 1974. Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1976.

separation of the knower from the known. Writing enables the verbal representation of the object of knowledge in a form separate from the knower. This twofold objectification (first through the inward making explicit of the object; and second of the written representation of the object of knowledge) facilitated the development of the sense that the known is separate from the knower. There is need to have a strong sense that the knower is in a way distinct from the known, because the strong identification of the knower and the known in merely tacit knowing limits the development of knowledge. But (like many other things in life) this sense of the separation of the knower and the known can be overdone. Lonergan constantly reminds us, particularly in *Insight*, that we need to develop a strong reflective sense of what it means to be a knower, that is, we need to become reflectively aware of the various cognitional processes we are using as we understand the object of knowledge and as we affirm the known through our various proportionate affirmation and predications. Although there is a way in which a strong sense of the separation of the knower from the known is desirable, we need an equally strong sense of the knower as knower to avoid equating knowledge and objectivity with the “already-out-there-now.” Hence, a philosophy that is adequate to the reality of life must not dispense itself from the injunction *Know thyself*. We are called to reflectively appropriate what we are when we know what we know.²⁶

In philosophical terms, moreover, Ong especially stresses the fact that because we are our bodies, human consciousness is always embodied consciousness. In consciousness, therefore, we find the realm in which the person’s interior meets the exterior world. In the person’s body the cosmos itself becomes embodied. The interior world of consciousness and the exterior world of the cosmos interface in the body of the human person. Our bodies are made up of matter that has evolved over the enormous period of cosmic and organic evolution, so that the entire cosmos is at home in us – in our bodies.²⁷ The cosmos is part of us, and we are part of the cosmos.

The success of Ong’s phenomenology of the cultural world is due to the fact that he reads the process of cosmic and organic evolution as leading directly into human consciousness. In this sense, the field of cultural studies becomes a

²⁶In order to explore the epochal importance in contemporary philosophy of Lonergan’s *Insight*, see in particular Flanagan, Joseph – *Quest for Self-Knowledge: An Essay in Lonergan’s Philosophy*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997.

²⁷Ong, Walter J. – “Church and Cosmos: Reflections and frames of reference”. In: *Review of Ignatian Spirituality*. 27 (1996), n. 3, pp. 9-17.

paradigm for the understanding of human society and its growth.²⁸ His investigations of communication and media, for example, enable us today to understand much better the close relationship between the changes within human consciousness and the historical process that produced science and technology.

Ong's interpretation of *visualism* constitutes, no doubt, a genealogical statement regarding the origins of modern science. Not only that. His phenomenology of Western culture brings to light the fact that the long human effort that led to the development of modern science and technology occurred at the price of a serious underdevelopment of the affective dimension of the human life. The *visualism* of the Western culture gave consciousness a structure centered for the most part on an imaginal, feeling-laden separation between the *knower* and the *known* that Ong thinks contributed greatly to the extraordinary development of the thinking function in our culture. On the other hand, it also implied a severe deficit in terms of the feeling function that constitutes the best access to the vital depths of the soul.²⁹

Ong's exploration of the more recent conditioning of human consciousness by communication media that accentuate sound may very well turn out to be truly decisive in the process of enabling today's human being to achieve a renewed experience of the depths of the human soul. This is, perhaps, one of the major discoveries of a work like *The Presence of the Word* (1967), particularly if we understand how, because of Ong's account of the human *sensorium*, we are now enabled to enter into experiences of true dialogue with one another, regardless of our cultural or ethnic origins, more than ever before.³⁰ Probably unlike any other intellectual in the Catholic Church, Walter Ong can certainly lead us through the process, much needed especially in Western culture, of recovering the anthropological functions of feeling and valuing. Nothing in the human drama is perhaps more poignant than the overwhelming feeling of being lost in the cosmos.³¹ The magnitude of Walter J. Ong's phenomenological contribution to the understanding of modern culture resides in his prophetic awareness of the path that can lead us to the oasis of meaning inscribed in (the desert of) contemporary culture(s). This great and faithful Jesuit deserves the most heartfelt and sincere gratitude from each and every intellectual in our day who is committed to Love – of God and of the World.

²⁸Farrell, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

²⁹*Ibid.*, p. 194.

³⁰*Ibid.*, p. 194.

³¹*Ibid.*, pp. 112-113.

IN THE BEGINNING WAS RAMISM

Ong's major breakthrough to understanding the cultural history of the West was attained in *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue*,³² the crowning achievement of his long scholarly career.³³ According to Ong's thesis, the advent of the printing press enabled Peter Ramus and his many followers to print and disseminate the dichotomized (that is, binary digital) schematization of thought with an effectiveness that would have been impossible in manuscript culture. Similar, though relatively rare and simple, schematizations had appeared in manuscripts before print, since obviously such elaborately outlined structures are very difficult to copy accurately by hand. Elaborate diagrammatic structures could not be dictated to a large group of scribes to produce manifold copies in the manner that a straightforward printed text could be produced. But once a Ramist outline was set up in a printer's form, the most elaborate diagrammatic dichotomized outlines could be printed in thousands of exact copies with no more trouble than ordinary lines of continuous text. Thus, in Ong's view, Ramus exerted his influence only because of printing. The geometrical quantification of thought, which had certainly undergone slow development for centuries was fully developed through typographically heightened visualization and spatialization of thought in Ramus's work. Only print could enable the widespread visual duplication of Ramus's ordered geometric dichotomies.³⁴

Ong considers Ramus's fascination with certitude symptomatic of a deep-seated *visualist* bias. It is based on an analogy with vision: we imagine that what we see at any given moment is fixed, certain. Ong distinguishes the visualist bias from mere visualism, which merely accentuates visual perception. *Visualism*, therefore, tends to privilege strongly visual analogues for intellection to the exclusion of other sensory analogues. In Ramus's time, deductive logic was central to the study of philosophy for anyone who received a formal university education, and the terms "logic" and "dialectic" were used almost interchangeably, despite Aristotle's efforts to distinguish one from the another.³⁵

³²Ong, Walter J. – *Ramus: Method, and the Decay of Dialogue: From the Art of Discourse to the Art of Reason*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1958.

³³Farrell, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

³⁴*Ibid.*, p. 28.

³⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 71-72.

Because of his study of the antecedents of Ramist logic Ong knew just how substantially medieval logic contributed to the eventual emergence of the modern scientific mentality. He also suggests other interactions in the gradual emergence of the scientific method: "I believe that there is no doubt of an intimate connection between mental habits encouraged by medieval logic and the emergence of printing, which is a curious phenomenon in the extreme, for the reason that all the elements necessary for its use had been known from antiquity – lead castings, brass dies, paper or its equivalent, ink, and presses, none of these were new."³⁶ He would later make a similar observation about the advent of Copernican geometrical cosmic space: "It is certain that Copernicus' new approach was in some measure tied up with subtle psychological forces, for it depended on no new discoveries – these were to come later as corroboration – only on a new way of thinking about what everyone already knew."³⁷ Ong noticed that the advent of Copernican geometrical cosmic space was due in part "to the general build-up of the visual sensibility symptomized by the emergence of printing in the West."³⁸

Ong also contrasts the visual sensibility, with its roots in ancient Greek thought (notably in Plato's *Ideas*), with the religious orientation of the Hebraic tradition:

Inasmuch as the world of science is a world of objects, which are exteriorities or surfaces, conceived of by analogy with the data of visual apprehension, it is not a world of persons, or interiorities manifesting themselves by a word. For even in this sub-lunar world, sound or voice comes from the interior of things, not so as to exteriorize this interior but to enable it to communicate with other interiors. Little wonder that in the post-Newtonian object-world, God's voice, too, is silenced, that revelation becomes meaningless, and that the Creator – a visible's God – becomes no more than a kind of mechanical brain. You need no person to run a machine. But you need a person to utter a word. You also need a person to elicit from you an act of faith. For there is no way to believe an object, or even to believe "in" an object in a purely objectified, impersonal context.³⁹

³⁶Ong, Walter J. – *The Barbarian Within: And Other Fugitive Essays and Studies*. New York: Macmillan, 1962, p. 74.

³⁷Ong, *Idem*, p. 81.

³⁸Farrell, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

³⁹Ong, Walter J. – *The Barbarian Within*, p. 84.

Renaissance scholars and other historians of culture have long confirmed that “no contemporary treatment of the European Renaissance or Ramism is complete without reference to Walter J. Ong’s *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue*.⁴⁰ Oddly, *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue* can be read as a kind of sequel to Eric A. Havelock’s *Preface to Plato*⁴¹ and *The Greek Concept of Justice*⁴² as well as to Frances A. Yates’s *The Art of Memory*,⁴³ despite the fact that Ong’s book was the first to be published in 1958. And if we ask *why*, an answer can be found in Farrell’s interesting suggestion that a suitable subtitle for *Preface to Plato* would be simply “The Separation of the Knower from the Known.” Cultures that are strongly oral tend to have a much greater sense of immediacy, so that they do not have a strong sense of the separation of knower from the known. But the moment such a culture starts to frame its insights in the form of proverbs that function as rules of thumb, so to speak, it moves toward the separation of the *knower* from the *known*.

One of Ong’s interesting historical observations has to do with the unveiling of the fact that one of the favorite targets of Renaissance humanists were the *Summulae Logicales* by Peter of Spain, a Portuguese contemporary of Thomas Aquinas in thirteenth-century Paris, who became Archbishop of Braga and then a short-lived Pope John XXI. For some 200 years the *Summulae* were taught to first-year students at the University of Paris and “ran through at least 160 editions between the invention of printing and 1530.”⁴⁴ Ong notes that Peter of Spain was “a hundred times more read than his contemporary St. Thomas and [was] famous also as a doctor of medicine, [but] is almost unknown even by name in neoscholastic circles [in the 1950s].”⁴⁵ To be sure, Paris was then the theological capital of the world, and works of the theologian Thomas Aquinas were indeed taught there. The masters of arts who taught scholastic philosophy at Paris, however, “commonly outnumbered teaching doctors of theology ten to one.”⁴⁶ As

⁴⁰Palmeri, Anthony J. – “Ramism, Ong, and modern rhetoric”. In: Farrell, Thomas J.; Soukup, Paul A. (ed.) – *Media, Consciousness, and Culture: Explorations of Walter Ong’s Thought*. Newbury Park, Ca.: Sage, 1991, pp. 50-63 (p. 50).

⁴¹Havelock, Eric Alfred – *Preface to Plato*. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press; Harvard University Press, 1963.

⁴²Havelock, Eric Alfred – *The Greek Concept of Justice: From Its Shadow in Homer to Its Substance in Plato*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978.

⁴³Yates, Frances Amelia – *The Art of Memory*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966.

⁴⁴Ong, Walter J. – *Frontiers in American Catholicism: Essays on Ideology and Culture*. New York: Macmillan, 1957, p. 59.

⁴⁵Ibid, p. 59.

⁴⁶Ibid, p. 58.

Ong wrote in 1957, “today practically none of these scholastic philosophers is known in neoscholastic circles.”⁴⁷ This could not but be a problem within the framework of the Catholic intellectual life in the years before Vatican II. Ong responded to the problem by producing a major work about Renaissance Scholasticism.

THE AGONISTIC STRUCTURE OF CONSCIOUSNESS

In 1981 Cornell University Press published Walter Ong’s Messenger Lectures entitled, *Fighting for Life: Contest, Sexuality, and Consciousness*.⁴⁸ Besides reworking material from his study of Ramism, Ong develops insights about polemic that he had explored in *The Presence of the Word*,⁴⁹ a work we will treat more fully later. Remarkably, *Fighting for Life* constitutes an important addition to the literature in sociobiology inasmuch as it offers an account of life that pays attention to Christian theology and grants place of honor to the call for a spiritual orientation of the human being in the world.

Although Ong rejects Edward O. Wilson’s speculative theories, he draws repeatedly upon data from *Sociobiology*.⁵⁰ Moreover, Ong accepts Wilson’s definition of sociobiology as “the systematic study of the biological basis of all social behavior.” This definition covers Ong’s book as a work of sociobiology, even though it goes beyond other works in sociobiology to include an express account of mental behavior. For that reason, Ong calls his book a work in *noobiology*, which he defines as “the study of the biological setting of mental activity (Greek *nous*, mind).”⁵¹

On Ong’s account, the agonistic dynamisms present in human beings fosters a wholesome, creative sense of struggle, the deeper evolution of the self, and the emergence of human freedom.⁵² He argues that the psychological and cultural

⁴⁷Ibid, p. 58.

⁴⁸Ong, Walter J. – *Fighting for Life: Contest, Sexuality, and Consciousness*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981.

⁴⁹Ong, Walter J. – *The Presence of the Word: Some Prolegomena for Cultural and Religious History*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967.

⁵⁰Wilson, Edward Osborne – *Sociobiology: The New Synthesis*. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1975.

⁵¹Ong, Walter J. – *Fighting for Life*, p. 11.

⁵²Farrell, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

phenomena associated with contests are rooted in biology.⁵³ The studies in ethology to which he refers point out that in higher animal species agonistic attitudes play a much more critical role in the lives of males than of females. Nevertheless, the display of agonistic behavior in the males also signifies insecurity. Ong contends that males are both ontogenetically and phylogenetically more insecure than females.⁵⁴

Ong also appeals to other sources to establish his case concerning the human need for conflict in order to grow. For example, the Jesuit scholar notes that the human psyche as portrayed in Erich Neumann's *The Origins and History of Consciousness* is agonistically structured.⁵⁵ Moreover, Johan Huizinga's *Homo Ludens*⁵⁶ as well as his own studies of Ramism, orality, and literacy also show the manifold character proper to the cultural manifestations of this agonistic dynamic of the human psyche. Thus, a major sign of the way primary oral cultures are strongly oriented toward contesting behavior is evident in epics such as the *Iliad* or the *Aeneid* from cultures that are close to primary oral cultures. As Ong emphasizes, the teaching tradition of classical rhetoric in the West was strongly oriented toward contesting behavior, as was the tradition of teaching logic.⁵⁷ For Ong then the development of modern scientific method results from a transformation of the most salient features of the polemical style in dialectic and rhetoric that sought to establish varying levels of probability (verisimilitude). Modern scientific method thus culminates the process (associated with the development and interiorization of literacy) in which contest is intellectualized

⁵³Ong, *Fighting for Life*, p. 15: "Contest is a part of human life everywhere that human life is found. In war and in games, in work and in play, physically, intellectually, and morally, human beings match themselves with or against one another. Struggle appears inseparable from human life, and contest is a particular focus or mode of interpersonal struggle, an opposition that can be hostile but need not be, for certain kinds of contest may serve to sublimate and dissolve hostilities and to build friendship and cooperation."

⁵⁴Farrell, *op. cit.*, p. 170.

⁵⁵Neumann, Erich – *Ursprungsgeschichte des Bewusstseins*. Mit einem Vorwort von Carl G. Jung. 1. Aufl. Zürich: Rascher, 1949; Neumann, Erich – *The Origins and History of Consciousness*. Translated from the German by R. F. C. Hull. With a foreword by Carl G. Jung. New York: Pantheon Books, 1954.

⁵⁶Huizinga, Johan – *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture*. New York: Roy Publishers, 1950; Huizinga, Johan – *Homo Ludens: Versuch einer Bestimmung des spielementes der Kultur*. Basel: Pantheon akademisch Verlagsanstalt, 1944.

⁵⁷Ong, Walter J. – *The Presence of the Word*, pp. 207-222.

and objectified.⁵⁸ Science is simply the result of the growing accent upon the thinking function in Western culture.

On the other hand, Ong traces not only genetic sources but also the conscious roots of the adversarial structuring of human culture. Hence, contest is also something the human being can cultivate, because in fact the deepest roots of intellectual development, particularly in the West, lie in the deliberate cultivation of the adversarial dimension of human life.⁵⁹ Adversarial attitudes are deep-seated in all cultures and personalities.

No other culture has made a more careful use of the spirit of combativeness besides that in Greece. The Greeks were masters in the use of contest both as an analytic tool and as an operational intellectual procedure. In fact, it is from the spirit of disputation that the Greeks were led to develop that contribution that was going to have the greatest effect on the world, namely, formal logic and the entire *instrumentarium* that goes with it. According to Joseph Bochenski, formal logic did not grow, as the concept of logic itself might suggest, out of a dispassionate or irenic setting,⁶⁰ but precisely from reflection on the verbal and intellectual contest of disputation. No wonder that formal logic remains committed to diaeretic procedures over the ages. Moreover, says Ong, neither is it accidental that those dedicated to formal logic tend to be rather disputatious.

When ancient Greek thought began to apply itself to analogies or likenesses rather than to adversarial contrasts, it proceeded normally by emphasizing differences or contrasts, as well as resemblances, within the analogies themselves. When giving logic to the world, ancient Greece was simply formalizing the adversarial character of speech as no other culture had done. For language to be fully processed into logical format means simply resolving it into a clear-cut yes or no – the very binary opposition that is the principle upon which the computer of today has been conceived.⁶¹

Furthermore, Ong also shows how deeply the fate of agonistic structures is tied into the history of verbalization, and in particular into what he calls the *technologizing of the word*. Words are essentially oral events, originating in sounds from which they can never be entirely disconnected. Fully to realize the

⁵⁸Ong, Walter J. – “The agonistic base of scientifically abstract thought: Issues in *Fighting for Life: Contest, Sexuality, and Consciousness*”. In: *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association*. 56 (1982), pp. 109-124.

⁵⁹Ong, *Fighting for Life*, p. 20.

⁶⁰Bochenski, Joseph M. – *A History of Formal Logic*. Translated and edited by Ivo Thomas. Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1961.

⁶¹Ong, *Fighting for Life*, p. 22.

meaning of a word, whether the written or printed, one must in speech or in imagination refer it, directly or indirectly, to the oral world. The technologies of writing, print, and electronics convert, or seem to convert, the sound or event that constitutes a real word into a kind of thing, permanent and fixed. Through this technologizing conversion of the verbal performance, the word and the thought it supports effect a restructuring of the human psyche. For example, Ong claims the romantic cult of solipsistic and, at least in principle, irenic “creativity” of the human subject is merely the product of a sensibility deeply shaped and structured by print.⁶²

For Ong, the roots of verbal combat go far deeper than consciousness, to the emergence of which they are the prior condition. His noobiology, thus, examines some of the relationships between intellectual activity and biological activity as centered around contest, a reality that is not only a major factor in organic evolution, but also turns out to be an essential factor in intellectual development.⁶³ Since the element of contest looms so large in the evolution of consciousness, Ong also recognizes the difficulty of giving a full account of all that the dimension of contest means to the psyche. Nevertheless it is clear that the development of agonistic activities and structures in the noetic world is complexly related to their development on other fronts. Typically, the verifiable connection between the romantic abandonment of ceremonial contest as a privileged means of transmitting of conceptual knowledge across generations and social phenomena like women’s liberation movements, or certain forms of pacifism.⁶⁴

For Ong, the male’s psychological tendency to fight is based in the adversarial biological relationship that male embryo and fetus in the womb have with the environment. Human males tend to feel a kind of “againstness” toward an environment, including other individuals of the species, which makes it something to be fought against and altered. On the other hand, that environment is by nature feminine, and women typically find they can rely on it as it is or comes to them.⁶⁵ Hence, woman tends to possess the basic prerogative of interiority, self-possession. Fundamentally, the woman is the being that relates to herself interiorly, as so others – her lovers, her children – relate to her through her interiority. This underlies the powerful meaning of virginity, whereby the virgin

⁶²Ibid, p. 27.

⁶³Ibid, p. 28.

⁶⁴Ibid, p. 29.

⁶⁵Ibid, p. 77.

remains a symbol of interiority and self-possession, a manifestation of the inviolate secret of the soul, of the woman's freedom.⁶⁶

Masculinity, on the other hand, has difficulty with interiority and the male remains a stranger to the psyche. Consequently, since being human means above all the ability to live from interiority, masculinity represents for Ong an acute human problem.⁶⁷ Chivalric literature, for example, shows abundantly the "futile" character of masculinity when it presents a multitude of men that are doomed to die, while at the same time contrasting it with *das ewige Weib* – the eternal feminine.⁶⁸ The masculine strikes outward, is directed to changing things, to countering what is constant; the feminine feels rather the urge to incorporate and to keep.⁶⁹

Men always must demonstrate that they are not identified with what they came from. Boys, like girls, emerge from a female environment (the uterus); and at first both boys and girls are totally dependent on female nurturing. The boys must demonstrate that they are not what they came from – that is, that they are not feminine – in order to achieve a specifically masculine identity. Such an achievement would be successful were it to happen without subtle or not so subtle, forms of hostility toward the feminine. Hence, Ong argues that it is important to teach males how to fight fiercely but not lethally, with other males.

This shall in no way imply that Ong considers women immune from agonistic behavior. They are certainly not. Nor does he deny that a girl's achievement of personal identity is any less difficult than a boy's. The challenge for a boy is to assert that he is not a female without rejecting the feminine side of his soul. But for the girl the task is to establish herself independently of her mother while remaining like her in being feminine. In any case, Ong makes the case that all human beings, male and female, need to internalize agonistic drives in order to foster the deeper discovery of self and freedom.⁷⁰ Similarly, Anthony

⁶⁶Ibid, p. 90.

⁶⁷Ibid, p. 98.

⁶⁸Ibid, p. 99.

⁶⁹Ibid, p. 102.

⁷⁰Ong's recognition of the importance of the agonistic drives in the formation of the human self can also be seen in connection with a very interesting example used by Thomas Aquinas in his *Commentary on the Nicomachean Ethics* (Book 1, Lecture XII, Section 153) to illustrate why it is better to do something well, than just to be able to do something well: "Concerning this we must know that in Macedonia there is a very high mountain called Olympus where certain competitive sports, called Olympic games, were held. In these, not the strongest and best looking athletes but only the winning contestants received the crown, for those who did not compete were ineligible for the prize. So also, of those who are good and best in virtuous living, only those are illustrious

de Mello used to say that, granted that we learn how to fight in a form that is proper and fair, we cannot really integrate anything that we have not personally attacked, challenged, questioned.⁷¹ Hence, Ong's intellectual project stresses the crucial importance of contesting in education. Indeed, for him it would be simply out of question to suggest the complete avoidance of contesting behavior in favor of an alleged irenic spirit. To be sure, the pointless fight (that is, all forms of strife that are unnecessary and unjustified) ought to be avoided. After all, who does not know the importance of good arguments on the part of both the prosecution and the defense in our courts of law? The educated person must be in a position to recognizing arguments that are spurious, especially when they may have the appearance of being good.⁷²

Particularly interesting is Ong's recognition that the agonistic structure of the self is related crucially to the fact that the ancient Greeks and Romans knew and used alphabetic writing; and that the universities of the Middle Ages remained basically oral and deeply agonistic in their life-style and intellectual way of proceeding, even though their learning was based on texts. It is thus significant that, as a rule, there were no assigned papers, no written examinations in the universities of the Middle Ages. The exams were conducted orally, frequently in the form of a disputation.⁷³ For the same reason St. Thomas Aquinas cast his *Summa theologiae* in agonistic form, organized in the form of "questions," each one of them to be handled in such a form that first objections to the answer would be presented, then an answer and the corresponding proof would be given, followed by the responses to the objections. Even subjects like physics and medicine were taught much in this agonistic form.⁷⁴

In the Renaissance, the orality and the accompanying agonistic style inherited by academia from its past were simultaneously reinforced, weakened, and endlessly complicated. The humanist revival of classical antiquity necessarily gave renewed life to the ancient rhetorical (oral) ideal. The humanists of the Renaissance were much taken with Cicero's apotheosis of the orator as ideally the

and happy who actually perform good deeds. Hence it is better to say that happiness is a virtuous operation than virtue itself." Aquinas, Saint Thomas – *Commentary on the Nicomachean Ethics*. Translated by C. I. Litzinger, O.P.; Foreword by Ralph M. McInerney. Notre Dame, Ind.: Dumb Ox Books, 1993, p. 50.

⁷¹Farrell, *op. cit.*, p. 176.

⁷²Ibid, p. 176.

⁷³Ong, *Fighting for Life*, p. 126.

⁷⁴Ibid.

most learned and accomplished among all human beings.⁷⁵ But at the same time, and despite this reinforcement of the oral, the humanists also intensified the preoccupation with texts they inherited from the previous age – for which print was tremendously helpful.⁷⁶ Accordingly, Ong’s “hero,” Peter Ramus (1515-72), thought of his lectures on the various “arts” (logic, arithmetic, and so on) not as positive explanations of the arts themselves, which were supposed to be limpidly clear because of the “methodized” way they were presented, but as defenses against his adversaries, real or imagined.⁷⁷

Curiously, Ong also associates the beginning of the end of the strong agonistic structures of the Middle Ages with the entrance of women onto the academic scene. The schools for girls, says Ong, definitely made a point of rejecting the most evident agonistic structures, up to the point of dropping Latin from the curriculum and replacing the thesis method of teaching with less combative methods. Together with the arrival of girls in the academic system public oral disputations and examinations start to be replaced by written examinations. Concomitantly, more brutal forms of physical punishment are increasingly minimized or suppressed.⁷⁸

The crucial thing to recognize is that his study of the agonistic structures present, for example, in academia, led Ong to understand that there were deeper movements taking place beneath the changes in teaching methods and curricula and classroom populations throughout educational history, and even below the surface of articulate theories concerning the nature of education and of the mind; these movements reveal a much longer cultural and psychic history of the human being – not least that *agonia*, a structure that becomes apparent not only in academia but also throughout the events of everyday life, lies at the heart of the evolution of consciousness.⁷⁹

Since at least the time of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Western philosophy has been aware of the drive of human consciousness to greater and greater interiority. Consciousness focuses on and affects the exterior world. The ecological crisis has brought home how much conscious subjects have done to the surrounding world, both intentionally and unintentionally. But the course of history consciousness, even as it continues to affect the outer world, pushes in an

⁷⁵Ibid, p. 127.

⁷⁶Ibid, p. 127.

⁷⁷Ong, Walter J. – *Ramus: Method, and the Decay of Dialogue*, p. 193.

⁷⁸Ong, *Fighting for Life*, pp. 135-136.

⁷⁹Ibid, p. 140.

ever-accelerating pattern toward increasing inwardness. This growth in inwardness becomes apparent on many cultural fronts, from plastic arts to city planning and architecture.⁸⁰

If as conscious beings we were isolated, we could never enter directly into one another's personal awareness, and yet through love the gap between the selves can be overcome. For Ong, therefore, authenticity in human communication must involve some kind of love, communion, union, in other words, a deep regard for the other person as a person. Needless to say, love may always be mingled with attitudes like disdain, fear, brutality, so that it may even become cruel. However, even in its negative forms, love must always be present. Ong notes that even verbalized hostilities show some kind of union or affection between enemies.⁸¹

According to Ong, the distinctive mark separating the human from infra-human animal species resides in the ability to say "I" along with the sense of self, the other, and community that the saying of "I" involves. The leap into human existence can be traced back to the moment when some beings appeared in the series of anthropoids and pre-hominids who were capable of the reflective self-possession expressed in saying "I."⁸² The present focus of attention on the human person as such signals a deep reorganization of consciousness, which obviously has implications for the role of contest in the future psychic development of human beings.⁸³ Ong notices that manifestations of the inward turn of consciousness in narrative, scholarly work, and, above all, in explicit attention to the person as person indicate that the place of contest in the human life world may be constantly shifting,⁸⁴ but it will not disappear. In fact, he says, when the human ego is threatened with dissolution, there may often be nothing like a good nonlethal fight, a contest, to consolidate it again, even if the contest is lost. This is especially so when the psyche is threatened by dissolution from mere neglect, from not being recognized, or simply noticed, by others.⁸⁵

Contest, therefore, constitutes a basic ingredient of human existence, even if in forms constantly adjusting from the biological base of this existence to its noetic peaks. The agonistic structures that derive from man's distant evolutionary

⁸⁰Ibid, p. 186.

⁸¹Ibid, p. 198.

⁸²Ibid, p. 199.

⁸³Ibid, p. 201.

⁸⁴Ibid, p. 202.

⁸⁵Ibid, p. 203.

past now condition even the intimacies and ecstasies of self-consciousness.⁸⁶ Ong does not think that establishing connections with the biological realm in any way subverts human freedom, no more than such connections subvert human thought. Human beings make free decisions, but we have to acknowledge the base that conditions them to understand whatever goes into our decisions for the sake of making them more humanely and effectively. Our free choices depend on the given: we cannot create the world in which we exercise free choice. Nor can we freely choose to have another history than that which we actually have. In this sense, contest is not only a part of humankind's long past but also a part of the future evolution of consciousness itself.⁸⁷

THE PRESENCE BEYOND THE TRANSFORMATIONS OF THE WORD

Ong returns in *The Presence of the Word* to the contrast (exploited by the field of religious studies) between ancient Hebrew thought's orientation toward sound and ancient Greek philosophy's privileging of sight to develop further his account of the cultural and religious history of the West.⁸⁸ Ong acknowledged that this contrast suggested the basis for his phenomenology of the senses in *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue*, even though he did not explicitly mention it there. That contrast is explicitly mentioned and further developed in *The Presence of the Word*⁸⁹ in which Ong investigates the role of the Word of God in Hebrew and Christian tradition, and in doing so pays particular attention the phenomena of human word and sound. For him, the human word is sound, an event in time and space. Sound is "more real" or existential than other sense objects, despite the fact

⁸⁶Ibid, p. 206.

⁸⁷Ibid, p. 207. – According to Walter Ong, the future of human consciousness holds especially the promise of a new synthesis between the *masculine* and the *feminine*, a synthesis that will certainly be more comprehensive and different from earlier syntheses, as well as different for men and for women. For good reasons, Ong places the idea that each and every distinct age in the evolution of human consciousness has been marked by a new synthesis of *masculine* and *feminine* at the center of his hermeneutic reading of the past. In other words, for him the entire history of consciousness can be read and narrated in terms of an ongoing dialectic between *male* and *female*, in terms of syntheses that necessarily differ in each and every age.

⁸⁸Boman, Thorleif – *Hebrew Thought Compared With Greek*. Translated by Jules L. Moreau. London: SCM Press, 1960; Id. – *Das hebräische Denken im Vergleich mit dem Griechischen*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1952.

⁸⁹Farrell, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

that it is "more evanescent."⁹⁰ The data of hearing has a vibrant sense not available with the data of sight. This view presupposes that the two most important types of sensory data are sounds and sights. Sight data situate the human person "in front of" things. Sound puts the person in the middle of what is happening with a fuller simultaneity.⁹¹ Within what Ong calls the *sensorium* either oral-aural or visual data can dominate the synthesis of all sensory data. However, the respective or relative domination of auditory or of visual synthesis fosters different personality structures and creates different anxieties.⁹²

Oral-aural dominance is associated with cyclic concepts of time; visual dominance, with linear or spatial concepts of time. Ong uses the term synthesis to refer to the overall composition or mix of sensory data within the person. Auditory synthesis is associated with the tendency to believe and be instructed by established or received authority; visualist synthesis, with the tendency to question received knowledge and with the drive to seek new knowledge. However, the predominantly *visual* orientation fosters individualism, whereas the predominantly *audial* orientation fosters a strong sense of social or corporate bonding.⁹³ Sound unites groups of living beings as nothing else can, for sound is imaginably more related to interiority than to exteriority.⁹⁴

Ong claims that literacy provides a kind of permanence to verbalization that orality cannot match. The primacy of orality over literacy is not based on the historical fact that orality came before literacy; it means above all that even for literate people talking constitutes the *Ur-experience*, the experience that indeed writing itself is designed to imitate.⁹⁵ Hence, by privileging talk over writing, Ong does not imply that we should try to return to some pristine form of primary orality. Rather, he simply calls us into the dynamic world of live interaction and relatedness with other human beings. In contrast with personal interaction and relatedness, writing fosters distance and seems impersonal because written words are detached from the writer. This is why for Ong writing has been associated with privileging the visual as well as with the concomitant philosophical and theological fascination with *certitude*.⁹⁶

⁹⁰Ong, Walter J. – *The Presence of the Word*, p. 111.

⁹¹*Ibid*, p. 128.

⁹²*Ibid*, pp. 130-138.

⁹³*Ibid*, pp. 111-138.

⁹⁴Farrell, *op. cit.*, pp. 124-125.

⁹⁵*Ibid*, p. 132.

⁹⁶*Ibid*, p. 133.

The suggestions either that oral cultures were in some kind of paradise, or that secondary orality will allow us to retrieve some kind of past paradise, therefore is out of question. Ong believes that secondary orality constitutes a *new* phenomenon in the cultural and religious history of humankind, not a regaining of primary orality.⁹⁷ The primary oral sense of life is grounded in the *world-as-event*, a vital sense to be distinguished from the static notion of *world-as-view*, a sense of life that has been associated in the West with reading and writing.⁹⁸

The age of literacy corresponds to the *world-as-view* sense of life in contrast to the *world-as-event* sense of life characteristic of primary oral cultures. If the age of literacy is coming to an end, then we would expect a new sense of life to emerge. Of course, a novel sense of life comparable to the *world-as-event* sense of life or the *world-as-view* sense of life is not likely to be constructed easily or readily. Nor will the *world-as-view* sense of life be easily replaced. We have no indication that for the foreseeable future modern science and contemporary businesses, for example, are going to dismiss thinking processes based on quantification and spatialization.⁹⁹

Ong does not regard the world of sound as having the same importance in all cultures. Clearly, cultures vary greatly in their exploitation of the various senses and in the way in which they relate their conceptual frameworks to the various senses. As already mentioned, it is now quite commonplace that the ancient Hebrews and Greeks differed in the value they set on the auditory.¹⁰⁰ The Hebrews tended to think of understanding as a kind of hearing, whereas the Greeks thought of it more as a kind of seeing.¹⁰¹

As mentioned above, through the Middle Ages *visualism* as deeply connected with the invention of the alphabet and writing came to play an increasing role until it was suddenly raised to a new intensity in the fifteenth century with the invention of alphabetic typography.¹⁰² This *visualism*, encouraged by print, explains the increased use of maps and, simultaneously, the physical exploration of the globe, which necessarily depended on visual control of space in maps and imagination. And so the inauguration of the modern age came

⁹⁷Farrell, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

⁹⁸Ong, Walter J. – “World as view and world as event”. In: *American Anthropologist*. 71 (1969), pp. 634-647.

⁹⁹*Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰See also Chalier, Catherine – *Sagesse des sens: Le regard et l'écoute dans la tradition hébraïque*. Paris: A. Michel, 1995.

¹⁰¹Ong, *The Presence of the Word*, p. 3.

¹⁰²*Ibid.*, p. 8.

about.¹⁰³ This means that for Ong, much more than it has commonly been made out to be, the modern age is the child of typography. But for this reason, too, we can say that the modern age has become increasingly a thing of the past. But how do we know that? Simply because our postmodern era is deeply affected by a new stress on the auditory. Today people seem to be unable to live without gadgets like telephone, radio, television or iPods. In our day, the use of voice reached a perfectly unthinkable degree for the typographic man.¹⁰⁴

This does not mean, however, that we are returning to an earlier “oral-aural world.” After all, there is no way back to the past for the simple reason that the successive verbal media do not abolish but overlap one another. Accordingly, the significance of a word may remain unaltered.¹⁰⁵ The understanding of what we are as human beings is, therefore, inseparable from the history of the word itself, that is, from the history of human communication.¹⁰⁶ For Ong, the evolution of the communications media and the corresponding moments in the history of human culture can be divided into three successive stages: (1) oral or oral-aural, (2) script, which reaches critical breakthroughs with the invention first of the alphabet and then later of alphabetic movable type, and (3) electronic. These are for Ong the stages in the process of verbalization. They represent the transformations of the word.¹⁰⁷ And the fact that we are now so well aware of them is nothing but the consequence of our having entered into the age of electronics.¹⁰⁸ To recognize the importance of the media is a correlate to a growing sense of the word as word, and that means of the word as sound.¹⁰⁹

The process of transformation of the word and, concomitantly, of consciousness, had its inception with the invention of the alphabet. Ong wonders about its tardy appearance and suggests that this tardiness simply reflects the relationship of the alphabet to the spoken word as well as the psychological distance that mediates between the spoken and the alphabetized medium. But the ultimate reason has to do with the fact that speech is irrevocably committed to time and tends to leave no discernible direct effect in space, which, on the other hand, is constitutive for the formation of the alphabet. Of words we can say that

¹⁰³Ibid, p. 8.

¹⁰⁴Ibid, p. 9.

¹⁰⁵Ibid, p. 9.

¹⁰⁶Ibid, p. 15.

¹⁰⁷Ibid, p. 17.

¹⁰⁸Ibid, p. 17.

¹⁰⁹Ibid, p. 18.

they come into being through time and exist only so long as they are going out of existence.¹¹⁰

The second stage in this process of the transformation of the word and consciousness is the invention of printing. Significantly, like the alphabet itself, printing from movable alphabetic type was a relatively late invention. All the individual component operations and materials necessary for the invention of printing had been in place for centuries: the technique for printing from dies and plates had been known since antiquity, and movable nonalphabetic type had already been in use for quite some time. Nevertheless, some curious psychological factor obstructed the breakthrough to the movable letters.¹¹¹ This means that the lodging of speech in space that culminated in the development of alphabetic typography was by no means an isolated phenomenon. Rather, it was part of a widespread reorganization of the entire human *sensorium* in favor of the visual in communication procedures.¹¹² Ong certainly does not suggest that typographic man used his eyes more than earlier human beings. No, what happened with the invention of alphabetic typography was not man's discovering the use of his eyes but the start of linking visual perception with verbalization to a degree previously unknown.¹¹³

When the alphabet developed out of earlier scripts, at first it served almost exclusively practical social and economic purposes. Its literary use was to come only later. Ong theorizes that the modes of communication both result from social, economic, psychological and other changes, and cause such changes. For example, Ong associates the development of writing and print with the breakdown of feudal societies and the rise of individualism. Writing and print created the isolated thinker, the individual alone with the book, hence degrading the network of personal loyalties that oral cultures favor as matrices of communication and as principles of social unity. Feudalism died very slowly and from a variety of causes, but the fact is that it came under serious threat only after the invention of script. Inevitably, record-keeping could not but enhance the sense of individuality, and a corresponding sense of property as opposed to communal forms, as well as

¹¹⁰Ibid, p. 40. – For the relation between the event of language and temporality, see: Casper, Bernhard – “O Agir da Linguagem: Observações a propósito dos últimos livros das *Confessiones* de Agostinho”. Tradução de João J. Vila-Chã. In: *Revista Portuguesa de Filosofia*. 44 (1988), pp. 63-80.

¹¹¹On this topic see also, for example, Carter, Thomas Francis – *The Invention of Printing in China and Its Spread Westward*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1925, pp. 218, 228.

¹¹²Ong, *The Presence of the Word*, p. 49.

¹¹³Ibid, p. 50.

a deeper sense of individual rights. Printing transformed even words in property. After all, only after the invention of printing did the notion of copyright come into being; after a while, it was readily taken for granted.¹¹⁴

By the eighteenth century the commitment of sound to space initiated with alphabetic script and intensified by movable alphabetic type had deeply altered human feelings toward the world. According to Ong, by the eighteenth century Descartes's logic of personal inquiry had ousted dialectic (a rhetorical art involving vocal exchange) as the sovereign over human intellectual activity. The new logic was not the art of discourse (*ars disserendi*) as dialectic was understood to be in earlier ages. Instead it became the art of thinking – that is, of individualized, isolated intellectual activity, putatively uninvolved with communication.¹¹⁵

Thirdly, the twentieth century brought the word into a new stage. For Ong this stage is beyond orality and script and print and is characterized by the use of electronics for verbal communication.¹¹⁶ Ong discerns a sequence within this stage, too: telegraph (electronic processing of the alphabetized word), telephone (electronic processing of the oral word), radio (first for telegraphy, then for voice – an extension first of telegraph and then of telephone), sound pictures (electronic sound added to electrically projected vision), television (electronic vision added to electronic sound), and computers (word silenced once more, as thought processes become almost completely reorganized by quantification).¹¹⁷

The study of the development of the new media makes Ong readily agree with Marshall McLuhan, particularly when he describes our being-in-the-world of today in terms of a common belonging to a global village. But for Ong the talk of a global village does not at all mean a return to the *tribal* village. After all, there is a vast difference between tribal existence and our own, for tribal man had neither known nor yet fully assimilated writing and print. Present electronic culture, even with its new activation of sound, has to rely on both, because, as we have argued previously: the different stages do not cancel one another out but build one on another.¹¹⁸ For example, when humans began to write, they did not cease talking. Rather, they began to talk more than ever. Similarly, when print was developed, human beings certainly did not stop writing. Quite to the contrary: with print it

¹¹⁴Ibid, p. 54.

¹¹⁵Ibid, p. 63.

¹¹⁶Ibid, p. 87.

¹¹⁷Ibid, pp. 87-88.

¹¹⁸Ibid, pp. 88-89.

became imperative that everybody learn how to write. After all, universal literacy, knowledge of reading and writing, has never been the objective of manuscript cultures but only of print cultures. In the same way, we shall not cease to write and print now that we have electronic communication. We see to the point of satiety how our present electronic stage of life would become impossible without vast quantities of writing and print.¹¹⁹ All the evidence points to the fact that in the age of electronics the activity of printing is greater than ever before.

But why does Ong insist that the oral-aural still should be so meaningful? The chief reason has to do with the fact that sound signals the present use of power, precisely inasmuch as sound must be actively produced in order to exist at all. Sound tells us that something is going on. In contrast with vision and touch, hearing registers force and what is dynamic. Ong uses the following example to make his case. A primitive hunter may see, feel, smell, and taste an elephant when the animal is dead. But if he hears an elephant trumpeting, he better watch out! Sound brings with it the realization that something is really going on, that *force* is at work.¹²⁰ Hence, in an oral-aural culture words are inseparable from actions that are almost always sounds.¹²¹ Moreover, as has been mentioned, sound has the innate capacity of revealing the interior without physical invasion.¹²² Through sound more than anything else, groups of living beings can be united.¹²³

Because of the very nature of sound in general, voice has a kind of primacy in the formation of communal life among human beings. A common language is essential for a real community to form. Only language can bind the human beings in large groups. To address or communicate with other persons is to share their inwardness as well as in our own.¹²⁴ Proper to the spoken word is its capacity to promote as nothing else the encounter between persons. Of course, there are other modes of encounter as well – a glance, a gesture, a touch, even an odor; but nothing is able to bring two interiorities together like the spoken word.¹²⁵

Writing, later enormously enhanced by printing, allows individuals to first become aware of themselves as beings truly capable of thinking for themselves, something virtually impossible for tribal man. Without literacy human beings tend

¹¹⁹Ibid.

¹²⁰Ibid, p. 112.

¹²¹Ibid, pp. 112-113.

¹²²Ibid, p. 118.

¹²³Ibid, p. 122.

¹²⁴Ibid, pp. 124-125.

¹²⁵Ibid, p. 125.

to solve problems in terms of what people do or say – normally, in accord with the tradition of the tribe, without much personal analysis. Hence, the importance feelings such as “shame” ascribed to nonliterary cultures. Such cultures tend to institutionalize specific forms of public pressure on the individuals in order to ensure their conformity to the communal modes of behavior. With the advent of literacy, however, individuals discover the ability to think through a situation by their own minds, using any other personal resources available.¹²⁶

In all cultures the spoken word is regarded the closest sensory equivalent of fully developed interior thought for the very simple reason that thought is nested in speech.¹²⁷ Accordingly, nothing like the study of the origins of thought and language evinces the radically social, or dialogical, nature of thought itself. As Franz Rosenzweig has shown, our thinking is inseparable from its linguistic setting. Ong confirms that human thought is never something strictly private.¹²⁸ Wordless thoughts are simply not possible; only in an individual who in one way or another knew at least some words can something like wordless thoughts come into being; They would do so as framed or bound, if not in words, at least in a universe of consciousness actualized through verbal activity and experience.¹²⁹

THE EFFECTS OF THE PRESENCE OF THE WORD

For Ong the desacralization of our culture is inseparable from the above-mentioned sequential development of the verbal media. The migration of the word from the world of sound into the spacial world via the alphabet lies at the base of modern technology. Indeed, technology without recourse to written records and the productive use of the alphabet is perfectly unimaginable. Yet the shift of conscious focus from the spoken word and the habits of auditory synthesis to the alphabetized written word and visual synthesis brings with it a weakening of the sense of *presence* in the human world. Thus, Ong concludes that the alphabetized word contributes in a major way to the process of rendering this world profane, transforming it into a mere agglomeration of things.¹³⁰

¹²⁶Ibid, pp. 134-135.

¹²⁷Ibid, p. 138.

¹²⁸Ibid, p. 145.

¹²⁹Ibid, p. 145.

¹³⁰Ibid, p. 162.

The greatness of sound has to do with the fact that, even when unintended, it can generate the most powerful sense of mystery. Unlike time and space, which may or may not suggest activity, sound, as an outgoing phenomenon, registers the actuality of power. Still more importantly, it manifests *interiority*. Voice, the paradigmatic sound, discloses the actual use of power by the most interior of interiors, a person. In a universe conceived in terms of auditory synthesis, the sense of personal activity is truly overwhelming. Within a tradition such as the Hebreo-Christian in which God himself is deeply personal, this oral-aural dimension of existence is, of course, absolutely crucial.¹³¹

Christianity claims that the Word of God enters history through a process culminating in the advent of the person of Jesus Christ. But the Christ-event is not simply a matter of a given number of actions following each other upon an imaginary time line, but above all of the human psyche arriving at the point of a fundamental self-reorganization in relation to events and to the world around it. The Word of God comes to man and is present among men within an evolving system of communication.¹³² The fact that the Word came to us in the fullness of time does not mean that God simply intended to assure maximum presence through history, but that such an event would only be possible when the oral-aural sense was still dominant even while the alphabet could give divine revelation among men a new kind of endurance and stability. For the Jesuit scholar, therefore, it is truly providential that divine revelation set down its roots in human culture and consciousness *after* the alphabet was devised but *before* print had overthrown major oral structures and *before* our electronic culture could further obscure or transform the basic nature of the word.¹³³

Ong is keen to underscore the importance of the relationship existing between the word and the human quest for peace, since nothing like the word has the capacity to move us toward peace, precisely inasmuch as that nothing like the word has the capacity to mediate between person and person. No matter how much it gets caught up in currents of hostility, the word can never be turned into a totally warlike instrument. As mentioned before, so long as two persons keep talking, they cannot be totally hostile, even in spite of themselves.¹³⁴ This, says

¹³¹Ibid, p. 163.

¹³²Ibid, p. 317.

¹³³Ibid, p. 191.

¹³⁴Ibid, p. 192. – Ong repeatedly calls our attention to the fact that today the word is in unprecedented ways positively mobilized for the work of peace on a scale hitherto unknown. For example, there is no pretechnological equivalent to today's massive literature and debate devoted to the cause of international peace. Early oral-aural cultures or residually oral-aural cultures

Ong, explains why hateful talk can hurt so much. Such talk may be punishing someone with whom one is somehow still in some form of communion, as is attested to by the fact that one is maintaining verbal contact with an individual, who, at the very moment of replying establishes communion with one. Hostile talk, therefore, might very well enact hatred in the midst of (perhaps wounded) love.¹³⁵

This is a further reason why Ong contends that the history of the word, particularly in the West, is intimately bound up with polemics, even though speech as such both signals and fosters accord. His conception of the history of verbal communication is therefore focused carefully on the history of the many changes affecting the uses of hostility throughout human culture. Such changes have a relevance that is both secular and religious. For example, Ong correlates a major shift from a more polemically textured culture to a less polemically textured one – from a culture in which personality structures are expressly organized for combat, real or imaginary, to one in which hostilities are less publicly exploited and personality structures become organized in function of greater “objectivity” and, ultimately, of a process for making decisions under maximally quantified and neutralized control – with the movement from oral to typographic culture. The computers of today are nothing more than an intensified implementation of such neutral and quantified control.¹³⁶

Ong also clarifies how oral-aural cultures, because they are for the most part unable to control or assemble details, tend to believe that things are as they are simply because somebody has done something, or made some sort of decision. For example, when unable to identify the physical causes for meteorological phenomena, the person living in an oral-aural culture tends to account for such phenomena in terms of motivations and resulting decisions on the part of living beings, ordinarily the gods: Zeus has a bad day and shows it by making thunder. Accordingly, gods tend to be multiplied as convenient sources of explanation. In

generally favored peace only abstractly. Even the Christian message itself was ordinarily not thought of as applicable to the political sphere except in brief-lived truces. Psychological structures were not such that permanent political peace could be planned for realistically and war was taken as the normal and continuous state of mankind. In fact, peace was rather regarded as something undesirable, since it led to softness and degeneracy, which in turn provoked more war! Life had to include strife with one's fellows! (*Presence of the Word*, p. 261). But today, language itself tends to be seen as a phenomenon which can and should be managed to ensure peace (*Ibidem*, pp. 261-262). Our sensibility is decidedly marked by a deep sense of openness, something that is unmistakably associated with the experience of *dialogue*.

¹³⁵Ibid, p. 192.

¹³⁶Ibid, p. 194.

other words, Ong is in agreement with Havelock that cultures based on orality tend to favor polytheism and animism. If monotheism is much more compatible with science than with myth, so too the Bible has long shown how important literacy is in the economy of revelation.¹³⁷

Ong's conceives of the Middle Ages as representing a major reorganization of the human *sensorium*, a process that for the most part happened without explicit awareness. The struggle between *hearing* and *seeing* was clear. In this process, the invention of printing technologies is nothing but the consequence of the victory of *seeing*, whose major result is the start of a large-scale campaign in favor of clarity and distinctness" that, as we have already seen, found in Peter Ramus its first pioneer and that would be refocused by René Descartes soon thereafter. Ong regards the complex Ramist charts and Cartesian schemata as unofficial replacements for ancient cosmic harmonies. Knowledge is now increasingly understood as being solely intellectual and henceforth conceived almost solely in analogy with vision. Thinking was for the most part seen as taking place in private, within one's own isolated head, and, presumably, without language and without history.¹³⁸

Be that as it may, the human presence in the world is for Ong deeply determined by the *presence* of the word – not merely in relation to the presence of man to man but also in relation to the presence with which things themselves are invested. Things become part of the human world not just insofar as they are known to one or another person but rather as their knowledge becomes a part of shared human experience, and so an experience is focused in the word.¹³⁹ In this sense, discourse about the predicaments of the word purely and simply means speaking about what the human being as such is.

In this context, it is no surprise that for Ong, a thinker deeply engaged in the mission of the Society of Jesus, Christianity, as a religion entirely centered on the Word, becomes an event of axial importance. God's Word is not man's word,

¹³⁷Ibid, pp. 206-207.

¹³⁸Ibid, p. 221. – Marshall McLuhan, like others before and after him, demonstrated how our present sense of simultaneity (that fits very well into Pierre Teilhard de Chardin's noosphere) depends for the most part on the electronic revival of sound. For example, it might still be impossible for a newspaper to create the sense of immediacy and simultaneity produced by radio and television. This *orality*, unlike its tribal counterpart, actually becomes possible only through a sustained reliance on *visual* constructs. For the same reason, we are justified to say that computers, at least in the foreseeable future, will not eliminate writing or print. But they are already drastically changing the kinds of things we inject into the more traditional media. (Cf. *Ibidem*, p. 260).

¹³⁹Ibid, p. 306.

whether we take God's Word in the sense of God's communication to human beings through either the Scriptures or the Church or through some special visitation, or in the sense of the person of Jesus Christ, who is for the Christian God's own Word and God's final communication. And yet, says Ong, we must think of God's Word in accordance with what Jesus can make of the word in his own life, even though at the same time he is aware that God's Word transcends his own as much as God's word is God's word and not a projected visual image.¹⁴⁰ Presenting Himself to us in his Word, God enters our own process of self-awareness, of reflective presence in and to the world, into the interior structure of history as reflected within the human psyche. Accordingly, the Incarnation becomes an event not only in the objective world but also enters into the history of communication, or rather, into the mystery of sound.¹⁴¹

CONCLUSION

Walter J. Ong was positively hopeful about the conditioning of human consciousness by the communication media that accentuate sound. For him, the *oral-aural* conditioning of consciousness was profoundly attuned with the religious or spiritual dimension of life. We can say that Ong always considered, even when not seeming to do so, the spiritual dimension of life as being the focal point of his attention in his work as an intellectual in the Society of Jesus.¹⁴² The *Spiritual Exercises* of Saint Ignatius and the Jesuit spirituality in general have always been of paramount importance for him.¹⁴³ But this in no way keeps him from appropriating Plato's imagery in the *Phaedrus*, where love appears as the charioteer guiding the soul. For him, love is needed to guide the horses, just as the horses are needed to draw the soul onward on its journey. It is the human composite in its wholeness that is called to draw nearer to God. But for that to

¹⁴⁰Ibid, p. 321.

¹⁴¹Ibid, p. 324. – However, this does not mean that the mystery of sound constitutes the only mystery among the senses. We can certainly not deny that there is boundless mystery, even if yet of another sort, in vision, or in touch, as well as in taste and smell. But for Ong, the mystery of sound is the one that is the most productive of understanding and unity, the most personally human, in a word, the one sense that brings us closer to the divine.

¹⁴²See, for example, Ong, Walter J. – *Hopkins, the Self, and God*. Toronto; Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1986.

¹⁴³Farrell, *op. cit.*, p. 184.

happen we need temperance and courage, and a substantial amount of self-discipline.¹⁴⁴ The many works of Ong, therefore, can be regarded as a powerful and convincing reminder of our need to grow in the spiritual life. The following passage by Franz Josef van Beeck, a Dutch Jesuit working for many years in America, assesses with great efficacy the substantial importance and relevance of Walter Ong's intellectual contribution:

If Ong's work ... has demonstrated anything, it is that the human spirit, natively (if largely unthematically) attuned to the living God, is also attuned to the countless "presences" that surround it in the cosmos – presences to which it must keep itself responsive. Inspired by the basic (and, in the last resort, mystical) intuition, Ong has both argued and demonstrated, implicitly and explicitly, that the human spirit has the inner resources to handle the knowledge explosion that it has unleashed in recent centuries, especially in the form of natural and social science; that it can face the vehemence and even violence it has discovered, both in the universe and in humanity; that it can face even the violence humanity has positively inflicted on itself and the cosmos; that the proliferation of information so characteristic of modernity, if dubious at times, need not daunt us; that it is indeed possible to welcome it, provided we take it as an invitation to understand its dynamics – that is, the fierce dynamics of human communication in word and gesture; that, given that understanding, we can afford to open ourselves to all that is particular, specialized, curious, strange, far-fetched, and even barbarous, because (if we persevere) we will discover that the forces of harmony, integration, and coherence run deeper, both in the universe and in ourselves, than the forces of contention, dissipation, and disintegration; that, finally, all this is within our reach because all that exists finds its unity and reconciliation in God, to whom we are more deeply attuned than we are to the universe or even to ourselves and each other, and who, therefore, is capable of enlightening honest seekers in such a way as to keep them from getting lost.¹⁴⁵

For his part, Thomas Farrell also helps us sum up major reasons to keep interest in Ong's work alive. In the first place, he has called our attention to the importance of intentionality and the structure of the process of decision-making in our lives. As a Jesuit of mind and heart, Ong understood very well the lemma of

¹⁴⁴Ibid, p. 187.

¹⁴⁵Beeck, Frans Jozef van – *God Encountered: A Contemporary Catholic Systematic Theology*. 1st ed. San Francisco; Collegeville, Minn.: Harper & Row; Liturgical Press, vol. 2, part 2, p. xi.

Ignatius of Loyola and his Companions – *AMDG: Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam* – by interpreting it to mean that in all our decisions we are called to be personally directed toward God by means of the intentionality of our consciousness and the desire to be “*oned*” with God in and through all things.¹⁴⁶

Secondly, Ong also has the great merit of stressing the importance of the “I-you” communication in the context of Catholic thought. He certainly saw extraordinary potential in *dialogue* for the enhancement of personal growth and maturity. In his anthropological vision, the human being is structured in terms of a productive division between *self* and *other*. The human sense of *self* is inseparable of a deep sense of relation to others. On the other hand, our own sense of the *other* is inseparable from something that lives *within* us. Accordingly, the more honestly and fully we accept ourselves, including our psychological baggage, the more we will tend to accept others.

Hence, Ong also alerts us to the dangers implicit in all the forms of depersonalizing the word. For example, when spoken language is transformed into written language, the written form turns into an object. Thus, language becomes objectified, an objectification that will only accrue with the triumph of print culture. Ong has shown how the social enactment of a depersonalized word can seriously diminish, or even stifle, our sense of voice in what we read or say, resulting in the loss of interiority, and the situation of *crisis* associated with the inability to enter into the realm of authentic dialogical communication. In his accounts of the development of logic, dialectic, and rhetoric, as in *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue* (1958), *Rhetoric, Romance, and Technology* (1971), and elsewhere, Ong achieves the extraordinary goal of adverting contemporary humanity’s attention to the many aspects involved in the development of the thinking function in Western culture from antiquity to the twentieth century in such a way that his many works are a constant reminder of our need for a more reflective appropriation of our own thinking function.¹⁴⁷ He also called our attention to several of the cultural factors that over the centuries have contributed to the emergence of modern science, particularly the different “technologies of the word,” in which he established a sequence of, first, writing,

¹⁴⁶Ong, Walter J. – “A.M.D.G.: Dedication or directive?” In: *Review for Religious*. 11 (1952), pp. 257-264.

¹⁴⁷We have already shown that this might very well function as one of the crucial points of proximity between Walter Ong and Bernard Lonergan, whereby special attention should be given to the common call of the two Jesuit philosophers for the need to construct an adequate philosophy of scientific activity. In this regard, see especially Lonergan, Bernard – *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1978.

and then (much later) print, without forgetting the importance of the role played by the agonistic structure of teaching and learning during the Latin Middle Ages.

Ong's suggestion that both Romanticism and the Industrial Revolution are outgrowths and by-products of the storage and retrieval of information in and through printed books explains how this kind of storage and retrieval freed human energies that had for centuries been devoted to storing and retrieving knowledge through human memory. The more recent developments of computer storage and retrieval further enhance trends associated with print. Indeed, for this reason Ong anticipated that in the foreseeable future we will remain deeply embedded in Romanticism.

Yet another aspect of Ong's contribution is his formidable intuition about the importance of agonistic structures and practices. We must always "keep up the good fight," since *agonism* plays an essential role in the constitution of the human self. Hence, the extraordinary importance for him of learning how to argue well – a task for which he challenged the engagement of Catholic schools and universities.

We must also celebrate this deeply humanistic thinker's always very positive attitude toward science and technology.¹⁴⁸ His developmental scheme of the various forms of communication is intimately connected with technological developments as carried out through the use of material instruments, from writing devices and the technology of printing up to the development of computer hardware.

In an essay in the collection *Knowledge and the Future of Man*, Walter Ong writes that the "advances in the humanities and social and behavioral sciences have combined with advances in the physical sciences to affect radically man's sense of his life-world and sense of identity," especially if we take "sense of identity to mean the sense of where one comes from and how one relates to those other than oneself, how one fits into what one knows of the universe."¹⁴⁹ Undoubtedly, Ong's work help thoughtful persons in the twenty-first century through his great insight that history is deposited as "personality structure,"¹⁵⁰ something that means deep inside ourselves we carry our culture's history and

¹⁴⁸Farrell, *op. cit.* pp. 190-193.

¹⁴⁹Ong, Walter J. – "Knowledge in time". In: Ong, Walter J. (ed.) – *Knowledge and the Future of Man*. New York: Rinehart & Winston, 1968, p. 13.

¹⁵⁰Ong, Walter J. – *In the Human Grain: Further Explorations of Contemporary Culture*. New York: Macmillan, 1967, p. 48.

configurations. So we must constantly examine our own cultural history with all possible care and rigor.

The purpose of this paper is to explain Ong's conviction that human consciousness is deeply conditioned by the media that support communication, particularly the ones that accentuate sound. The *telos* of his work must not be separated of his pragmatic goal of helping person's of today learn how to experience in the depths of their own psyches their deepest and most personal connection with God. Ong taught that we can come to experience in ourselves a "flow of existence" that is no more mere "existence in time," an experience that might be brought to the realm of consciousness primordially through the depths of our psyche.¹⁵¹ As did Ignatius of Loyola, Francis Xavier, or Peter Faber, Walter Ong recognized in the depths of human subjectivity, even if in an unthematic manner, a structural attunement of the human creature to the creative *power* of the living God.

¹⁵¹Farrell, *op. cit.*, p. 193.

RAYMUND SCHWAGER, S.J. DRAMATIC THEOLOGY

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1. BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

RAYMUND SCHWAGER WAS born November 11, 1935 into a Swiss farming family as the second of seven children. He joined the Society of Jesus in 1955, studied philosophy (1957-1960 near Munich, Germany), and theology (1963-1967 in Lyon-Fourvière, France) and was ordained a priest on July 31, 1966. He completed his doctorate in theology in 1969 in Fribourg, Switzerland. During those years he also spent some time in Spain, the home country of the Jesuits' founder, St. Ignatius of Loyola, on whom he wrote his thesis. In 1977 he became professor of dogmatic and ecumenical theology at the faculty of Catholic Theology in Innsbruck; he was a cofounder of the *Colloquium on Violence & Religion* (1991). At the end of the spring semester 2004, he was scheduled to retire, an event he had long anticipated in order to return to full-time research on his planned book "Dogma and Drama," when he unexpectedly died in February of that year.

Raymund Schwager's thinking was above all inspired by three sources: first, his deep Christian faith and spirituality in the tradition of St. Ignatius and nourished by biblical writings; second: a mode of arguing he called "dramatic," a term he took from Hans Urs von Balthasar but to which he gave new meaning in his theology; third: mimetic theory and the friendship he sustained with its author, René Girard. His theology never was an ivory-tower type of abstract thinking but one that had clear repercussions for a believer's personal life but even more so for the political realm, for questions of war and peace, and for all degrees of violence between them.

2. LIFE AND MAIN WORKS¹

2.1 Early Monographs

2.1.1 *The Dissertation and a First Glimpse of Dramatic Theology*

In his dissertation, *Das dramatische Kirchenverständnis bei Ignatius von Loyola* (1970), we can find the origins of Schwager's specific way of dramatic thinking. He was influenced by the French philosopher Roland Barthes (1915-1980). Schwager argued that St. Ignatius's understanding of the church cannot be elicited from his writings alone but one must also take into account his actions, which, however, were often in tension with his words.

Thus "unity with the church occurs in the interaction of persons [...] among whom all aspects of a drama – development, conflict, tension, crisis, defeat, and eventual reconciliation – may, even 'must' occur. [...] This drama, however, is not tragic in the Greek sense, but it is imbued by the certain hope for an eventual reconciliation. Yet, when the courage to engage in this drama is missing and reconciliation is sought prematurely, that might be a sign that it is not the workings of the all-encompassing Spirit but an idolatrous deification of visible structures."² At the same time, however, "The fact that the unity of the people of God is willed by God never entitles one to the conclusion that it should be vigorously brought about by force. On the contrary: just because it is willed by God, it must be divine itself, which means it must include a broadness and pluriformity only possible to God."³

This is a clear prefiguration of Schwager's basic understanding of the history of revelation and of theology as a dramatic process, including the two ways of being tempted – frightened avoidance of conflict or violent termination of it – to flee this drama prematurely.

¹A complete bibliography of Schwager's works and of literature about him can be obtained from the *Bibliographisch-biographisches Kirchenlexikon*, vol. 26, ed. F. W. Bautz, (Herzberg: Bautz) [forthcoming 2006, available online: http://www.bautz.de/bbkl/s/s1/schwager_r.shtml]

²Raymund Schwager, *Das dramatische Kirchenverständnis bei Ignatius von Loyola. Historisch-pastoraltheologische Studie über die Stellung der Kirche in den Exerzitien und im Leben des Ignatius* (Zürich, Einsiedeln, Köln: Benziger, 1970), 186f.

³Schwager, *Das dramatische Kirchenverständnis bei Ignatius von Loyola*, 187.

2.1.2 *In Search of a Criterion for Genuine Revelation*

In 1973 Schwager published *Following Jesus: By What Does Faith Live?*⁴ In it he tries to use the New Testament to develop a foundation of the Christian faith. His criterion for discerning genuine revelation regards the clarity and ease with which it can be distinguished from common human expectations and projections. He sees this fulfilled in the New Testament accounts of Jesus, because they show how Jesus acted in independence from all human authorities, and how the narratives of his death differ very much from those in other religious traditions. Schwager interprets the Christological councils accordingly and warns against images of Jesus that are closer to pagan heroes than to that of the biblical witness. Believers today can share in this faith by following Jesus in a Spirit-given way, which enables them to partake in Jesus' resurrection.

2.2 *Meeting a Kindred Spirit*

Nineteen seventy-three was a very important year in the development of Schwager's thought. For it was then that he met the French-American literary scholar, historian, and anthropologist René Girard (1923-) and became acquainted with his mimetic theory.⁵ Girard views imitation (mimesis) of the desire of others as the basic motor of human desire. It facilitates cultural progress but also engenders the severest of conflicts, eventually endangering the existence of the whole human species once it starts. However, it also allows for the overcoming of the violent crisis by the so-called scapegoat mechanism (a shifting of the blame and unloading of the violence on to a single, innocent member of the community). According to Girard, the collective killing of the excluded person brings about a sudden end to violence; the consequent spread of universal peace is experienced as supernatural and this quality is ascribed to the murdered victim; thus the victim becomes divinized. This process constitutes the beginning of pagan, mythic religions that channel violence by focusing it on a single victim. In that sense they actually minimize overall violence in a society and endow the social body with stability and ensure its survival, but at the expense of the scapegoat victimized by the violence channeled against her or him.

⁴Raymund Schwager, *Jesus-Nachfolge: Woraus lebt der Glaube?* (Freiburg: Herder, 1973).

⁵For two introductions with extensive bibliographies see Michael Kirwan, *Discovering Girard* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2004) and Wolfgang Palaver, *René Girards mimetische Theorie. Im Kontext kulturtheoretischer und gesellschaftspolitischer Fragen, Beiträge zur mimetischen Theorie 6* (Münster: LIT, 2003).

In Girard's view, only biblical revelation and the Jewish-Christian tradition established by it unveil this mechanism and expose its perverted character: it is not God who demands bloody sacrifices; on the contrary God sides with the victims of human violence, as the Book of Job, the many psalms of lamentation, and other biblical writings testify. The clearest depiction, however, occurs in the Deutero-Isaian songs of the suffering servant and in the New Testament accounts of the passion of Christ. Schwager soon realized that Girard's theory had a great deal in common with his own intuitions about the relationship between religion and violence.

2.3 Another Step in Developing Dramatic Method

In 1976 Schwager published *Faith that Transforms the World*,⁶ which elaborates on the question of how a faith that transforms everything can be possible in today's world and continues the themes set forth in *Following Jesus*. Again Schwager's main point of reference is the New Testament narratives on Jesus of Nazareth's life. According to these narratives, says Schwager, Jesus understood himself and his mission above all on the grounds of his experience of and relationship to God. Here Schwager again invokes the category of drama, thereby understanding revelation as a dramatic process involving several agents/actors and as an experiential path and not a matter of intellectualist proclamation. Only by viewing the whole process can one grasp what it means to say that Jesus is the Son of God. According to Schwager's model at that time, this dramatic process occurs in three phases: Jesus' words and deeds before the passion, during the passion, and at the resurrection (we will see how his model evolved in the future).

Schwager then traces the considerable influence that the Christian faith has had on Western culture. At the same time, he attempts to find answers to the most pressing problem of our time, namely, the possibility of human self-destruction on a world scale. In this book Schwager, first refers explicitly to Girard's mimetic theory by interpreting the passion on the model of the scapegoat mechanism. He emphasizes, however, that unlike all other scapegoats, Jesus was a victim selected arbitrarily, but who, by his actions before and during his passion exposed and criticized the scapegoat mechanism. Thus it was almost as if it were a logical conclusion that it hit him with full force. In this process, however, Jesus has

⁶Raymund Schwager, *Glaube, der die Welt verwandelt* (Mainz: Grünewald, 1976).

irrevocably shown that God sides not with that mechanism but identifies with the victims of the scapegoat mechanism.

2.4 *Bringing Dramatic Method to Fruition*

2.4.1 *Must There Be Scapegoats?*

Schwager's next book, *Must There Be Scapegoats*,⁷ is a direct fruit of his ongoing conversation with Girard. Here Schwager applies Girard's heuristic tools to an in-depth study of the relationship between violence and God's actions in biblical writings. The first result is that the problem of violence indeed plays a central role in the Bible, a role that until then had been largely neglected in both biblical and other theological literature. Schwager notices a development in which that God is seen more and more on the side of the victims of violence and less on the side of violence in the Old Testament. However, this development is not linear but dramatically fragmented.

Schwager argues that from an Old Testament-perspective alone one could not reach a clear conclusion about God's relation to violence, because the Old Testament does not indicate which of its writings should be given priority. He therefore calls the Old Testament a "mixed text," that is, though as a whole it is God's word, it contains both genuine, direct revelation as well as human projection and distortion of that revelation in a seamless mix.⁸ Thus the old hermeneutical rule that the Old Testament should be read through the lens of the New Testament is of paramount importance for Christian theology. Schwager reads the passion of Christ in the context of the history of human scapegoats: while in all other cases a person who is innocent of the crimes she or he is accused of is burdened with carrying the mob's guilt and killed for it, in the passion of Christ the one person who is absolutely innocent is burdened with carrying all of humanity's guilt; moreover, while all other scapegoats become involuntary victims of this process, Christ voluntarily took it on himself to expose the scapegoat mechanism and thereby to overcome it.

This accounts for the uniqueness of Jesus' passion. Schwager diagnoses an unconscious grudge against God in all sinners, which unloads upon Jesus in his

⁷Raymund Schwager, *Must There Be Scapegoats? Violence and Redemption in the Bible*, trans. M. L. Assad (New York: Crossroad, 2000). German Original: Raymund Schwager, *Brauchen wir einen Sündenbock? Gewalt und Erlösung in den biblischen Schriften* (Thaur: Kulturverlag, 1978 / 1986² / 1994³).

⁸Compare with Raymund Schwager, "Biblische Texte als *Mischtex*te. Das hermeneutisch-spirituelle Programm der *Entmischung*," *Katechetische Blätter* 119 (1994): 698-703.

passion because he stands in absolute unity with God. The fact that Jesus is the Son of God is thus of central importance in this interpretation of his life and death.

2.4.2 Highlights of Soteriology in the History of Theology

From 1980 to 1986 Schwager published ten historical-systematic essays on the soteriologies of great theologians through the centuries (Marcion and Irenaeus, The Doctrine of Victory over the Devil, Athanasius, Gregory of Nyssa, Augustine and Pelagius, Maximus Confessor, Anselm of Canterbury, Martin Luther, Karl Barth, Hans Urs von Balthasar) and republished them again as a collection in 1986.⁹ In this collection he analyzes these theologians' views on soteriology quite accurately from a historical perspective, but then he reinterprets them from the perspective of mimetic theory. Thereby he succeeds in eliciting these theories' importance for theology today.

2.4.3 The Christ Event as a Condensed Drama of Salvation

In 1990 Schwager's main work, *Jesus im Heilsdrama*, appeared for the first time in German.¹⁰ Here he continues his earlier attempts at dramatic thinking and his adaptation of mimetic theory to theology. With these tools, and in discussion with historical-critical exegesis, he aspires to solve important problems in systematic theology: for example, the question of the right image of God – how do God's love and God's wrath go together; the question of whether Christianity should embrace an eschatological soteriology based on Jesus' message of the Kingdom of God, or a stauological soteriology based on the cross; the question of a right understanding of Jesus' death – was it a sacrificial death and if so, in what sense; the question of the interrelation between Old and New Testaments.

To tackle these questions Schwager returns to the New Testament accounts of Jesus' life and death and analyzes them again with his newly sharpened methodological tools. Now he views the Christ event as a drama unfolding in a five act play rather than in three phases, as he had done before. These acts correspond to situations in which the characters of the drama act, and which

⁹Raymund Schwager, *Der wunderbare Tausch. Zur Geschichte und Deutung der Erlösungslehre* (München: Kösel, 1986).

¹⁰Raymund Schwager, *Jesus im Heilsdrama. Entwurf einer biblischen Erlösungslehre*, *Innsbrucker theologische Studien* 29, (Innsbruck: Tyrolia 1990/1996). English: Raymund Schwager, *Jesus in the Drama of Salvation: Toward a Biblical Doctrine of Redemption*, trans. J. G. Williams and P. Haddon (New York: Crossroad, 1999).

prefix their actions and words, thereby determining their meaning. Thus the actions of the persons in the play cannot be understood adequately without taking proper consideration of these acts.

The five acts are the following: (1) Jesus announces the Kingdom of God, the *Basileia* of a merciful and unconditionally forgiving father; by this he aspires to gather Israel anew (the symbolism of the twelve); (2) Jesus reacts to public rejection of this message by the religious and political establishment, proclaiming a judgment on sinners in parables of judgment and even of hell; (3) Jesus himself is judged, convicted, and put to death. He becomes his adversaries' victim. He responds with nonviolence and forgiveness: he gives himself up; (4) By raising Jesus from the dead, the heavenly Father makes a final ruling about the image of God, which is in dispute by Jesus and his adversaries; the Father rules in Jesus' favor, thus corroborating Jesus' image of God. Since that image is of the merciful and forgiving father, this ruling in favor of Jesus on a cognitive level is at the same time good news for Jesus' adversaries on a soteriological level: salvation is still possible for them, too. In the appearances of the risen Lord the tensions in the previous acts are resolved. In addition, the disciples gain a new perspective on Scripture (our Old Testament): a Christological criterion for interpreting them emerges;¹¹ (5) A distinct working in the world by the Holy Spirit, who until then had dwelled in Jesus in a special way, commences. The Spirit of Pentecost continues Jesus' movement of gathering throughout the world on two levels: in the growing community of believers, the visible church; but also throughout humanity beyond the visible church. The fifth act, according to Schwager, has no end before the end of times and contains all other acts like a hologram.

Each of these acts is defined by its own initiating action: Act I is initiated by Jesus' untainted proclamation of God's unconstrained love, forgiveness, and nonviolence. Act II is initiated by the public rejection of this message. Act III commences with the authorities' initiative to annihilate the insolent preacher. To start Act IV the heavenly Father, who had so far appeared to be absent, takes a new initiative by raising Jesus from the dead. Act V is initiated by the coming of the Spirit. Looking back to *Faith that Transforms the World* we notice that Acts I and II, and Acts IV and V have evolved out of what had been the first and third phases of the drama of revelation there, while the second phase has remained unchanged as the third act of the drama.

¹¹For a more thorough explanation see below, 100-104.

As a result of this process Schwager gains differentiated solutions to the aforementioned problems, which show that these are not to be answered by simple either-or-responses, but by more complicated patterns of priorities conditioned by certain circumstances imply the secondary solution. Thus a staurological soteriology is not an alternative to an eschatological one, but eschatological soteriology implies the staurological, if and when humans create a situation in which the Kingdom of God is rejected. Thus staurological soteriology does not replace the *basileia* message but clarifies its new shape of the Kingdom of God in the situations when the message is rejected.

Schwager deems the clarification of the image of God as essential, for even the New Testament is not free from the tension between God's love and God's wrath. Schwager rejects the denial that Jesus used any judgment parables on historical grounds. He is convinced that this cannot be historically sustained, but even if it could be, it would not help the systematic theologian's task of dealing with the biblical canon as it exists, and not with a hypothetical construct arrived at by historical criticism. Yet it is paramount to Schwager to avoid a contradiction in the image of God because such a contradiction would "cancel itself"¹² and thus render all talk about God futile. Contradiction can be avoided by a special reading of the five acts. The image of God conveyed by Jesus in Act I (merciful father) is taken directly to represent Jesus' own image of God, while the image of God conveyed in the Act II (judgment parables) is taken to mirror his adversaries' image of God in order to warn them that unless they convert their image of God they will inevitably undergo an imminent self-judgment necessitated by the logic of that image of God as wrathful, which they have. In this vein, the judgment parables are not Jesus' threat of a judgment originating in the Father, rather they are his warning against a judgment originating from human beings themselves arising from their deformed view of the Father.

This interpretation is validated by Jesus' own behavior in his passion, which completely corresponds to the image of the merciful father, and by Jesus' subsequent restoration through the resurrection. Jesus thwarts the course of events indicated by the judgment parables by taking the human self-judgment upon himself in his death and resurrection. This is illustrated by the parable of the wicked vinedressers (compare with Mark 12:1-12 and parr.). The pivotal event prophesied by the parable, the killing of the son, occurs. Yet the reaction of the heavenly Father to Jesus' death is completely different from that of the vineyard

¹²Schwager, *Jesus in the Drama of Salvation*, 163.

owner in the parable to his son's murder: instead of revenge it is doubled forgiveness.

Schwager argues that a Christian notion of sacrifice has to be developed in accord with the image of God that is developed through the drama. He rejects all models that construe Jesus' death as a substitute achievement for Christ to accomplish in order to assuage God's wrath. The image of God shown in Acts I and IV makes clear that it is not God who has to be assuaged by the death of his son; rather the son reveals in his behavior during his passion (especially in his prayer for forgiveness for his persecutors on the cross, compare with Luke 23: 34) that the father is still willing to forgive.

Nevertheless the cross is necessary in Schwager's soteriology, and he also thinks that the notion of Christ's death as a sacrifice is indispensable. The cross, however, is not necessary because of any demand made by God, but because of the dynamics of human sinful action; it is a necessity that arises from humanity's entanglement in sin. Because of this entanglement humans could not be reached by Jesus' message of the *basileia*. So the only option that allows Jesus to fulfill his mission – that is, the will of the Father – is to take human self-judgment upon himself by undergoing this violent death. In that sense Jesus' suffering conformed to the will of the Father and indeed the Father even gave Jesus up to suffering. In this way, Jesus

allowed himself to be drawn into the process initiated by the self-judgment of his adversaries, in order, through participation in their lot, to open up for them from inside another way out of their diabolical circle and hence a new path to salvation. He did not pay back [...] violent attack with the same coin, but he turned around the intensified evil and gave it back as love redoubled.¹³

Thus Jesus transformed his violent death into a voluntary giving up of his life to God.

It is decisive in this interpretation that the handing over by the Father [...] is seen entirely in connection with the message of the kingdom of God and with the actions of Jesus. From this perspective it cannot be said that the Father handed over the Son because he wanted to judge him and punish him in place of sinners. The judgment did not start from God but from humankind, and the will of the Father was only that the Son should follow sinners to the very end and share their abandonment, in order thus to make

¹³Schwager, *Jesus in the Drama of Salvation*, 117.

possible for them again a conversion from the world of hardened hearts and distance from God.¹⁴

It is in this sense and in this sense only that Christ's death can be called a sacrifice; yet it also needs to be called a sacrifice because that is the only way to transform the pagan notion of sacrifice that had originated from the scapegoat mechanism.

An interdisciplinary conference in 1991¹⁵ discussed the results of *Jesus in the Drama of Salvation* and Schwager also published them in a more accessible form for a wider public.¹⁶

2.4.4 Original Sin and the Theory of Evolution

Schwager's last monograph addressed the doctrine of original sin in order to interpret it anew in light of the results of modern science, especially evolution theory and genetics, and with a view to Christian apocalypticism.¹⁷ In this work Schwager polemicizes against modern theological currents that want to abandon the doctrine of original sin or interpret it in such a way that there is no connection with the historical and biological constitution of humanity. He opposes the separation of nature and freedom that has occurred in modernity and argues that modern science and the theory of evolution refute this separation, because they explain plausibly how a contingent single event at a certain decisive moment in the development of humanity could have influenced all further development in a constitutive way and thus could also have modified human freedom from within. In this vein he even considers a genetic aspect of original sin, but it would be a misunderstanding to take that as a negation of other important (sociological or psychological) aspects.

Schwager devotes special attention to developing models for imagining the Christian doctrine of creation and the fall within the framework of the theory of evolution. He argues that this requires on the one hand an interpretation of

¹⁴Schwager, *Jesus in the Drama of Salvation*, 118.

¹⁵*Dramatische Erlösungslehre. Ein Symposium*, Innsbrucker theologische Studien 38, ed. J. Niewiadomski and W. Palaver, (Innsbruck – Wien: Tyrolia, 1992).

¹⁶Raymund Schwager, *Dem Netz des Jägers entronnen. Wie Jesus sein Leben verstand*, erzählt von Raymund Schwager, Herderbücherei 8812 (Freiburg: Herder, 1994).

¹⁷Raymund Schwager, *Erbsünde und Heildrama. Im Kontext von Evolution, Gentechnologie und Apokalyptik, Beiträge zur mimetischen Theorie 4* (Münster: LIT, 1997/2004). English: *Banished from Eden: Original Sin and Evolutionary Theory in the Drama of Salvation* (Leominster: Gracewing, 2005).

evolution that allows for teleology. On the other hand he suggests that theology should realize that a conception of creation as evolving rather than static corresponds much better to the biblical narratives of creation, which clearly interpret the bringing forth of one type of creature by another type as God's creative artistry (compare with Genesis 1: 24-25).

For that purpose Schwager supposes – in agreement with Thomas Aquinas, Karl Rahner, and Pierre Teilhard de Chardin – that God has created a world that transcends itself and thus evolves through the interactions of real created secondary causes under the guidance of God's primary causality. He argues that God's providence should not be construed on the model of human purpose-oriented action but rather – in analogy to the understanding of revelation in the drama of salvation – on the model of a retrospective interpretation from the end. Schwager also adds to the biblical grounding of the doctrine of original sin by reinterpreting the Old Testament passages traditionally used for that purpose by utilizing mimetic theory and the Christological criterion. Thus he reinterprets them through the lens of the New Testament, specifically by referring to the narrations of Jesus' temptations in the desert where primordial sin appears not so much as the transgression of an outside law but rather as a false response to an inner experience of one's own identity as a gift of the divine; and this false response then has subsequent distorting and falsifying repercussions for the experience of oneself and the divine.

Step by step Schwager gains a dramatic understanding of the fall and of redemption that is specifically influenced by the New Testament and also leads him to a new conception of human freedom. This conception is critical of the view of the Enlightenment and idealist, which interprets freedom as a capacity of the autonomous individual. Schwager's idea corresponds much better to the biblical emphasis on a human self-determination in relation to the whole of humanity and to the experience of the breakdown of human freedom. Schwager then proceeds to develop historic-symbolic scenes of hominization and the fall, which situate these events within a primitive humanity that has only just crossed the threshold from the animal realm to humanity, in accord with evolution.¹⁸

¹⁸For a more detailed account of Schwager's theology of original sin compare with Nikolaus Wandering, *Die Sündenlehre als Schlüssel zum Menschen. Impulse K. Rahners und R. Schwagers zu einer Heuristik theologischer Anthropologie, Beiträge zur mimetischen Theorie* 16 (Münster: LIT, 2003), 245-306 and Nikolaus Wandering, "R. Schwager's New Look at the Biblical Basis for the Doctrine of Original Sin," *Milltown Studies* 54 (Winter 2004): 86-103.

2.5 Theology and Politics

Because the problem of violence played a central role in Schwager's dogmatic theology, a politically engaged Christianity is not an appendage to his dogmatic theology but an integral part of it.¹⁹ Thus he advocated for strategic prior concessions in arms reductions on the side of the West at the height of the cold war.²⁰ In the past years he became especially concerned with questions of peace and the contribution of religions to a peaceful world order – especially in relation to the Israel-Palestine conflict, outbursts of Islamist terrorism, and the Western “crusades” against it. He took very seriously the potential for violence within religions, especially when they presume to be the executor of a divine judgment. Yet he clearly opposed the hypothesis that the monotheistic religions as such were especially prone to violence and tended by their very nature toward intolerance and force. He initiated numerous discussions and publications on the matter. Many are contained in a volume of collected essays, *Religion – Violence – Communication – World Order*, from the research project developed at his behest.²¹ It contains not only texts on the political importance of religion for establishing and keeping the peace but also a text grounding dramatic theology within various philosophies of science.²² Schwager's last drafts about Pope John Paul II's soteriology and his public ministry as a sign were published posthumously.²³

¹⁹Compare with Raymund Schwager, *Für Gerechtigkeit und Frieden: Der Glaube als Antwort auf die Anliegen der Gegenwart* (Innsbruck – Wien: Tyrolia, 1986).

²⁰Compare with Raymund Schwager, “Der heilige Stuhl und die Abrüstung,” *Internationale Katholische Zeitschrift, Communio* 7 (1978): 543-53.

²¹Compare with *Religion erzeugt Gewalt – Einspruch! Innsbrucker Forschungsprojekt, Religion – Gewalt – Kommunikation – Weltordnung, Beiträge zur mimetischen Theorie* 15, ed. J. Niewiadomski and R. Schwager, (Münster: LIT, 2003). For a summary see Nikolaus Wandinger, “Religion Evokes Violence – Objection! A Forthcoming Book by the Innsbruck Research Group on Religion – Violence – Communication – World Order,” *COV&R: The Bulletin of the Colloquium on Violence & Religion* 22 (March 2003): 2-4.

²²Raymund Schwager and J. Niewiadomski, “Dramatische Theologie als Forschungsprogramm,” in *Religion erzeugt Gewalt* 40-77; English translation online: <http://theol.uibk.ac.at/rgkw/xtext/research-0.html>

²³Raymund Schwager: “Kirche als universales Zeichen,” in *Kirche als universales Zeichen. In memoriam Raymund Schwager S.J.*, ed. R. Siebenrock and W. Sandler, *Beiträge zur mimetischen Theorie* 19 (Münster: LIT, 2005), 19-62; Raymund Schwager, “Erlöser des Menschen. Soteriologie und Verkündigung von Johannes Paul II. und die Herausforderungen unserer Zeit” in *Kirche als universales Zeichen*, 63-98.

A final grand scheme for a book with the working title *Drama and Dogma* remains as an unfinished legacy. I hope the Raymund Schwager Archive located at the theological faculty of the University of Innsbruck will be able to publish it in an appropriate manner.

3. DRAMATIC THEOLOGY – A METHODOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

In developing his ideas on dramatic theology, Schwager of course drew on other theologians, among them Karl Barth, Hans Urs von Balthasar, and Karl Rahner. Yet he further refined and modified their dramatic approach, thus establishing his own dramatic theology. That way he developed a school of thinking, a method for tackling problems of coherence within a biblical revelation but also in the later history of theology and its future development. So far I have given a brief overview of that method in my summary of *Jesus in the Drama of Salvation*. In reading Schwager's work one can see his method in action. Surprisingly, however, Schwager never gave a theoretical overview of that method in his writings, so that I took up that task in my dissertation,²⁴ which he supervised. In this concluding part of my paper I want to give a modified English version of this analysis.²⁵

3.1 In a Nutshell: Revelation as Dramatic Interaction

Let me start with a simple question: What is revelation? The traditional model of revelation has undergone major revisions during the past centuries, first, through Enlightenment critique, then through historical criticism, and finally through a reconception in pre-Vatican II theology and in the Council itself. While I fully acknowledge and appreciate these developments, I nevertheless want to ask two questions. On the one hand, is revelation still often conceived of as an historic monologue? And on the other hand, do we still take seriously the biblical notion that God is an agent in history? One prevalent conception thinks God speaks from eternity, and humanity listens in history. Some human beings or epochs and cultures might be better listeners than others, but their role is merely passive while the message always remains the same. In spite of the fact that the human listening

²⁴Nikolaus Wandering, *Die Sündenlehre als Schlüssel zum Menschen. Impulse K. Rahners und R. Schwagers zu einer Heuristik theologischer Anthropologie*, 173-201.

²⁵A shortened version of this part was presented at the Lonergan Workshop in Boston in 2006.

process is subject to the conditions of history, the divine act of revelation is above and beyond that. The alternative conception, which is gradually displacing the former one, does not allow for divine action within history, but sees history as a merely human affair, so that talk about God's action or revelation is merely a figure of speech.

Neither approach is satisfactory. If one consistently adheres to the first alternative in dealing with the biblical witness to revelation, one will come to opposing notions of God: the God of wrath who demands sacrifice, and the God of Love who protects victims. Then the God of violent retaliation and the God of nonviolent reconciliation are granted equal validity. This notion of revelation blurred the idea of God and is sometimes even self-contradictory. Ultimately, faith based on such contradictions would scarcely be indistinguishable from belief in any arbitrary myth.²⁶ When human speech becomes completely arbitrary, it has become completely futile too. Therefore, theology must find a way to avoid clear-cut contradictions in its talk about God, even if mystery and paradox cannot and should not be eliminated from theological language. If theology fails in this task, the view that God cannot play an active part in history will prevail.

To find such a way, it is imperative to accept at least hypothetically the biblical claim of an active divine role and to develop a concept of revelation that is modeled not on monologue but on dialogue and to regard this dialogue as not just verbal but dramatic. God reveals himself not simply in words but in deeds, but he reveals himself not just in his own deeds but also in the deeds of human agents throughout human history.

Schwager's "dramatic" view of revelation takes very seriously that it occurs in dialogical interaction between God and humanity, through both words and deeds; yet this interaction occurs both in acting and also in being acted upon, in action as well as in passion.

Although Karl Rahner is not the first person to come to mind when one thinks of "dramatic theology," he has summed up what it essentially means in a strikingly clear way:

Humanity is in real *dialogue* with God. ... God's acting throughout the history of salvation is not like a monologue that God performs on Himself, but a long dramatic dialogue between God and His creatures, in which God offers the human person the possibility to really respond to His word and thus in fact makes His own future word dependent on the free

²⁶Compare with Schwager, *Jesus in the Drama of Salvation*, 1.

response of the human person. ... History is not just a play that God enacts for Himself in which creatures would only be His puppets, but the creature is a real co-actor in this divine-human drama of history....²⁷

In spite of its event-character, diversity and plurality, God's acting throughout history has a coherent inner structure, an inner teleology, so that every act of this history of salvation only is intelligible as an element of the whole.²⁸

Thinking in retrospect from the NT we can even say: God exercises His Lordship over the whole of creation by entering into the world with His own personal initiative, He gives up His sovereign grandeur above everything finite by becoming a co-actor in this world Himself.²⁹

What distinguishes dramatic theology from other types of theology is that it makes this insight the linchpin of its theologizing. In dramatic theology no topic can be adequately dealt with without taking this dramatic nature of revelation into account.

Let me now make this more concrete by developing four of its most important elements.

3.2 Interdependent Agents

When God and humans really are coactors and coagents in this drama, God's future actions are conditioned by human responses to his prior actions. Prophecies are not unalterable predictions but extrapolations based on certain patterns of human conduct. That Christ *must* die on the cross is not some divine imperative independent of human action – it is the consequence of human action, which God knows all too well. There are instances in biblical revelation that clearly exhibit the contingent character of prophecy. The most interesting and also amusing example of that is certainly the prophet Jonah, who has to prophesy the imminent destruction of the great city of Nineveh. Yet its inhabitants unexpectedly use their freedom to repent and God rescinds his condemnation of them. As a result, Jonah is really angry because his prophecies turned out to be wrong, and he made a fool of himself. In Jonah we have a prophet who himself

²⁷Karl Rahner, "Theos im Neuen Testament," in *Schriften zur Theologie* 1 (Einsiedeln-Zürich-Köln: Benzinger 1954, ⁸1967), 91-167, here 126f. English: "Theos in the New Testament," in *Theological Investigations*, vol. 1. (London 1961), 110f. My own translation of the German original. Italics are Rahner's; boldface is my emphasis.

²⁸Rahner, "Theos im Neuen Testament," 100 (my translation).

²⁹Rahner, "Theos im Neuen Testament," 138 (my translation).

does not understand the dramatic nature of the prophetic voice, which is an instance of the dramatic nature of revelation: God's future actions are dependent on human responses to his earlier initiatives.

One might object, however, that, if revelation is seen in such a way, with God as dependent upon human action, it would seem that his sovereignty – to say nothing about his traditional attributes of omniscience and immutability – cannot be sustained. God would become one player among many. To respond to this possible objection, we have to deal with the relationship between the divine author of the drama and the agents within it.

3.3 Author and Agents

To do that, I want to use a comparison of a real literary play, "The Life of Henry V," and its playwright, William Shakespeare. Let us consider two questions: What is the relationship of William Shakespeare to the words and actions of the characters in this play? And what do we learn from it about Shakespeare's thoughts on war and peace?

Let us prescind for a moment from the fact that this drama is based on real persons and real events, and let us concentrate on the fact that Shakespeare wrote the drama. Then we can say that everything the characters say or do or suffer, everything that happens in the plot happens because Shakespeare made it happen. It is his word, and once he has written it he knows its outcome. And Shakespeare is completely unaffected by the events in the drama, because he is beyond its universe.

But is he also an agent within his drama? Does he interact with the characters of the drama? Certainly not directly as its author, but he can have characters express his views in the play, and he can have them act as he would act in the situation. Can we then infer Shakespeare's views on war and peace from a single character of this play? Does King Henry express those views when he wanders incognito through the English camp in Act 4, Scene 1? Or, in that same scene, do Bates or Williams? Or does Burgundy, who in Act 5, Scene 2 praises peace and laments war? Or is the mere enumeration of casualties and atrocities in Act 4 Scenes 7 and 8 the best guide to Shakespeare's opinion about war and peace?

I am not competent to decide that but I can confidently say that we actually cannot reach a judgment by looking at merely one of these passages. Shakespeare's opinion will not simply coincide with one of his characters' opinions, because every character contributes certain aspects that are well worth

considering. Also, there could be characters who express attitudes that contrast completely with Shakespeare's. The moral of Shakespeare's play cannot be inferred from any of the characters' single statements or actions. One would have to refer to the whole play or, as good Shakespeare interpreters tell us, we have to take his complete works into account in order to know what Shakespeare thinks about something.³⁰

Let us now compare the Shakespeare example with God as the divine author of salvation history and the agents in that history. The author is beyond the universe of this story and yet everything that happens within it is his creation, and so is, in that sense, his word. Still not every word uttered or every deed committed reflects his omniscient wisdom: acts full of his wisdom are intertwined with those full of human stupidity and sinfulness, and we can try to elucidate the meaning of this drama only in light of the whole.

Yet two important elements in dramatic theology's understanding of salvation history differ significantly from the role played by Shakespeare in my comparison. First, Shakespeare's characters have no free will but have to do what Shakespeare makes them do. As was already emphasized in the quotation from Rahner, the human agents of history do have a choice: they are not puppets. Second, though world history is still going on, for the Christian theologian the meaning of salvation history is already discernible, because the divine author – in contrast to Shakespeare and other human dramatists – has put a character into the play that represents him completely: Jesus Christ, the ultimate revealer.

For a Christian dramatic theology, Christ is the key for unlocking the mystery of the drama of salvation history. He is the ultimate representative of the divine author, though not in the role of author. His acts are conditioned by the limitations and the perspectives of a character within the drama, but this character acts in perfect harmony with the author of the drama, who is the Lord of history. Therefore he can be history's key.

³⁰René Girard has emphasized "the dramatic unity of Shakespeare's theater and its thematic continuity." R. Girard, *A Theater of Envy: William Shakespeare* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 6, and Klaus Reichert demonstrated that Shakespeare's histories are interconnected by the same mimetic themes, so that their meaning only becomes clear in their succession (compare with K. Reichert, "Shakespeares mimetische Rivalen," in *Das Opfer – aktuelle Kontroversen. Religions-politischer Diskurs im Kontext der mimetischen Theorie*. [Deutsch-Italienische Fachtagung der Guardini Stiftung in der Villa Vigoni 18.-22. Oktober 1999], *Beiträge zur mimetischen Theorie* 12, ed. B. Dieckmann, (Münster: LIT, 2001), 207-23, esp. 207-215.

In accord with Christian tradition and Catholic doctrine,³¹ dramatic theology offers a framework of interpretation that allows us to view the whole Bible and all of its parts as authored by God, while accepting at the same time that human agents, acting as human coauthors or narrators (as I suggest calling them) of the story, have added their distinct understandings and misunderstandings in a way that makes them an inseparable part of divine revelation. However, inseparable does not mean indistinguishable. The Christological criterion allows us to distinguish between direct revelation and revelation *sub contrario*, between God's undistorted image and human projects that combine unblemished revelation with human error and sinfulness.

3.4 Acts as the Conditioning Framework of the Action

I only need to remind readers here about what I have said already about the function of the five Acts in Schwager's interpretation of the Gospels (see above in Section 2.4.3 *The Christ Event as a Condensed Drama of Salvation*). Therefore it suffices to summarize how the movement through the five Acts transforms the image of God conveyed. According to the rationale of the five-Act model, we have to reinterpret Jesus' earlier sayings retrospectively from Act IV. Sometimes their original thrust will be corroborated and even deepened (Acts I-IV), sometimes they are exposed as resulting from a deformed image of God and becoming part of human self-judgment and thus corrected (Acts II-IV), sometimes the appearance of God's passivity is disproved (Acts III-IV). In this interpretation, the judgment parables retain their importance, inasmuch as the process of human self-judgment that they expose is also shown to actually occur in sinners, unless God takes some new initiative.

The image of God proclaimed by Jesus thus remains consistent with the message of the *basukeia* while being further clarified and deepened. At the same time all theological concepts that depend on the image of God and his way of relating to human persons – such as “grace”³² or “sin”³³ or “divine

³¹Compare with Second Vatican Council, *Dei Verbum* [Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation] 11.

³²Compare with Petra Steinmair-Pösel, *In einem neuen Licht ... Konturen einer dramatischen Gnadenlehre* (dissertation, Innsbruck, 2005).

³³Compare Nikolaus Wandinger, *Die Sündenlehre als Schlüssel zum Menschen. Impulse K. Rahners und R. Schwagers zu einer Heuristik theologischer Anthropologie*. Full reference at note 18.

omnipotence”³⁴ – are also clarified and, if necessary, transformed, as the five Acts progress.

This way two extremes are avoided: The conflicting images of God are not regarded as equally true. Yet none of the texts containing these conflicting images becomes irrelevant but those of a wrathful God – are now understood to be warning of the real consequences of human resistance against the call to repentance and conversion.

3.5 Characters and Persons

Another important aspect of dramatic theology is the relationship between the persons and the characters they enact. When little children watch a movie or see a stage play, they often cannot distinguish between the villain they see on the screen and the actor who plays that villain. We know that Sir Peter Ustinov did not set fire to Rome, although we might have seen him do just that, when playing the Emperor Nero in *Quo Vadis*. In literary dramas we can clearly distinguish between the character that is embodied by an actor or actress, and the person that this actor or actress is. It is worth noting that through the influence of Christian and especially Trinitarian thinking the expression *person* as understood today is the counterpart to *character in a play*, whereas the ancient term *persona*, from which *person* derives, meant the character played by an actor.

How are we to regard that which is largely not an invented story but the theological interpretation of real history? What is the relationship between the real person and the character in the biblical drama?

First of all, the nature of biblical revelation requires that the important characters are not fictitious but real persons. Once again, in comparison with Shakespeare’s historical plays, we want to stress exactly the fact that the characters are not purely fictitious because the Bard had to stick to factual history, as far as the line of succession of kings and queens was concerned. An historical drama about a king who never existed would not make much sense. But Shakespeare was quite free in formulating the private dialogues or even most personal thoughts expressed in soliloquies. He could put into his characters’ mouths whatever he chose to, as long as their actions concurred with the known historical facts. And yet Shakespeare’s genius was that he did not put petty trivialities into their mouths but thoughts that mirror and depict the greatness and

³⁴Compare with Nikolaus Wandinger, “Is Divine Omnipotence (Non-)Violent?” *Jnanadeepa – Pune Journal of Religious Studies* 8, 1 (2005): 50-64.

abysses of Western thinking. Many believe that by his creative and fictive writing Shakespeare revealed the deeper meaning of history.

If we compare this with the biblical drama, there, too, the main characters must have been real persons that basically lived in the way the story is narrated. Yet it is not necessary that every detail be historically correct. The Bible interprets real events to reveal the deeper meaning of these events. This also means that the characters in the biblical drama do not in the first place represent themselves as individuals but play a revelatory and/or salvific role in salvation history. In Jesus the two completely coincide: his person is his character. Yet in all other agents person and character may overlap or even fall apart, for example, in Judas, the traitor. The gospels show him as the one who betrayed his master and – according to Matthew’s account (Matthew 27: 3-5) – kills himself as a consequence of his desperation.³⁵ Judas embodies a person who falls into utmost delusion, sin, despair, and in the end commits himself into hell. Yet, surprisingly perhaps, there is no church doctrine teaching his damnation. In fact, the universal hope for salvation, which the church (at least since Vatican II) teaches, challenges us to hope for his salvation, and for the salvation of all the other villains of world history.³⁶ This tension between the biblical account and church doctrine becomes understandable when we distinguish the role Judas plays in the drama from the core of his person. Of course, these are not as separate from one another as Sir Peter Ustinov and the Emperor Nero. Judas did not just play the traitor in a movie; he was a traitor in real life. Yet we can distinguish his very person from the revelatory role he plays. Judas’s end and its theological interpretation do not just show us what became of Judas; it reveals to us the danger that the Judas within us poses for ourselves and for the world.

Dramatic theological interpretation enables us to understand other biblical sayings that seem very harsh or unbalanced (for example, against those that cause the little ones to sin, against Scribes and Pharisees, against the Jews) and the dramatic models’ assignment of a negative image of God to Jesus’ opponents in the same way: they do not refer to individuals or whole classes of individuals, but

³⁵The account in Acts 1: 16-18, which is part of a sermon by Peter, mentions no suicide. So this historical detail can be seen as insignificant. The theological qualifications of Judas’s death by the Gospel of Matthew and by the Acts of the Apostles concur, however, so on this level we have a common understanding.

³⁶Compare with Second Vatican Council; *Ad Gentes* [Decree on Mission Activity of the Church] 7; *Nostra Aetate* [Declaration on the Relation to Non-Christian Religions]1; *Lumen Gentium* [Dogmatic Constitution on the Church] 16; *Gaudium et Spes* [Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World] 22.

to a mind-set and activity that is depicted in a revelatory role by these persons or groups, but that may be repeated until the end of time. This does not make these references unproblematic, yet I do think it places them in a different perspective.

4. CONCLUSION

I hope I have provided an overview of Raymund Schwager's type of dramatic theology and suggested his importance as a Jesuit thinker. I cannot elaborate on all the repercussions his approach, but let me mention some possible areas of its significance for future theological exploration: a new contribution to the discussion between historical-critical exegesis/biblical theology and systematic theology, a suggestive construction of the relationship between Old and New Testaments within Christian theology, and, analogously, of the relation between Christianity and Judaism. Schwager's dramatic theology takes a clear stance on the meaning of the cross and God's will in the crucifixion with consequences ranging from everyday spirituality to the understanding of Christian martyrdom, and it offers an illuminating reframing of questions about war and peace. Notice that the few named are all related to the notion of sacrifice.

But above all it is a way of showing theology's relevance for everyday life, for reading and deciphering one's own ongoing drama with God and the world, and thus it is part of St. Ignatius's endeavor to find God in all things.

