

LONERGAN WORKSHOP

Volume 25

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Fred Lawrence

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## EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

The theme of the thirty-eighth Lonergan Workshop was *The Mind and Heart of Hope*.

*David Burrell, CSC*, is Notre Dame's lately emeritus theologian, comparative theologian, and philosopher. His talk on "Lonergan on the Human Good in an African Idiom" gives us a taste of the international thrust of his career, usually in the Middle East, and more recently at his congregation's house of studies associated with the Ugandan Martyrs University, described more fully in his book, *Questing for Understanding*.

*Patrick H. Byrne*, then chair of Boston College's Department of Philosophy and now director of the Lonergan Institute, had been working for some time on a monograph on ethics from Lonergan's perspective – an area where Lonergan left so many hints-to-be-further-developed. "Moral Value, Personal Value, and History" represents one of Byrne's exploratory soundings on the way to the recent completion of *The Ethics of Discernment*.

Since the completion of *Lonergan's Quest: A Study of Desire in the Authoring of Insight*, *William Mathews* of Milltown Institute, Dublin, has been reflecting further upon the cultural, social, and personal dynamics he discovered to be crucially at play in Lonergan's writing of *Insight*. Such would be a natural for one who has become utterly at home in generalized empirical method. He has been paying close attention to creative figures in diverse fields precisely as people who are "present-to-themselves as present-to-the-world" both as "worded" but also as structured imaginally, as we see in his "Windows on Living, Writing, and Reading the Self."

The centrality of generalized empirical method also characterizes the paper by *Luca Sinibaldi*, an Italian student of the late patrologist, expert on the *Spiritual Exercises*, and philosopher, Natalino Spaccapelo, SJ. Luca was an archivist in the Lonergan Center at the Gregorian University. As we now know by hindsight, when he expanded his

discussion of the "notion of being" into the "protean notion of being" in chapter 17 in *Insight*, Lonergan made the "hermeneutic turn." "The Polymorphism of Consciousness as a Higher Viewpoint on Modern Philosophy," elucidates how "foundational methodology" incorporates the hermeneutic perspective in a critical manner into a higher viewpoint of and on philosophy.

"The Classical Question of Immortality in Light of Lonergan's Explicit Metaphysics" by *Elizabeth Murray* of Loyola Marymount University also explores the virtualities of Lonergan's methodically grounded philosophy. Through the years Murray has benefitted the Workshop greatly with papers on such existential themes as feelings in Sartre and *ressentiment* in Nietzsche. In this paper she shows the perhaps unexpectedly existential relevance of Lonergan's metaphysics for the issue of immortality.

A third paper that applies and develops Lonergan's philosophical perspective is "Performing Differently: Lonergan and the New Natural Law," by *R. J. Snell* of Eastern University. Such thinkers as Germain Grisez, Robert George, and Martin Rhonheimer pioneered this development of Thomistic natural law philosophy in opposition to moral relativism and "consequentialism." In an elegantly expressed clarification-by-contrast with Lonergan's approach, Snell concentrates on perhaps the most comprehensive and profound thinker of this school, John Finnis.

Two speakers used literary resources to explore and communicate topics in Lonergan's philosophy and theology that are often considered too recondite for the ordinary mortal. *Randy Rosenberg*, who did a dissertation comparing the soteriologies of Lonergan and Hans Urs von Balthasar, and now teaches at St. Louis University, does this in "Meaning, Language, and the Mystery of the Human Person: A Conversation with Walker Percy and Bernard Lonergan." *Mark Miller* of the University of San Francisco, who has turned his doctoral dissertation into an introduction to Lonergan (now available as *The Quest for God and the Good Life. Lonergan's Theological Anthropology*), also alludes to literature effectively in order to cast light on Lonergan's central special category of "Conversion as Life, Death, and Resurrection."

*Patrick Daly* is a physician who decided to study philosophy at Boston College to acquire a higher viewpoint on issues in health care. In keeping with the theme of this Workshop, Daly's paper incorporates his long experience and concern with the end-of-life and death issues in the "The Possibility of Hope." *Robert Luby*, another physician, who has been influenced by Lonergan, and by the annual Workshops, and by Boston College's four-year Perspectives Program, which he gradually assimilated by dint of serious study over the years. The real-world clinical conditions with which he was confronted as a medical doctor made him acutely aware of counterpositions and biases infecting mainline American medicine. Not content with identifying what Ivan Illich spoke of as the "medical nemesis," "Restorative Medicine: Defensive Schemes and Re-emergent Probability," offers radical suggestions for a reorientation of that enterprise.

Also in a therapeutic context – but this time in the field of practical psychology – Metropolitan University's *Richard Grallo's* "Expanding Horizons of Question and Insight: Some Conditions and Correlates of Personal Development" both applies and expands key points in Lonergan's thought in the fields of psychology and counseling. It also suggests concrete ways to think about the current emphasis on *critical thinking* by complementing the too exclusive focus on logic with insights into personal and interpersonal situations.

Shifting to a theological key, "Essays in Systematic Theology 39: The Theological Virtues and Participation in Active and Passive Spiration," speculates on transposing the supernatural gift of charity or friendship in relation to the overall situation of grace. *Robert M. Doran, SJ*, (Marquette University) adumbrates aspects of the approach unfolded at length in his *The Trinity in History. Volume One: Missions and Processions* (Marquette University Press), creatively applying valuable contributions of such thinkers as N. T. Wright and René Girard in the task of taking seriously the so-called four-point hypothesis, which, along with the hypothesis of contingent predication, is the key to Lonergan's 1960s Trinitarian theology of the divine missions as created participations in the intra-trinitarian relations.

Boston College's *Matthew Petillo* wrote a dissertation comparing Lonergan's and Karl Rahner's respective ways of moving from analogies based on faculty psychology to the "third stage of meaning" in the theology of grace. The dissertation's experiential focus culminated in a valuable comparison of a Christian approach to religious experience with a Buddhist one. This highlighting of the experiential dimension from the perspective of human intentional consciousness is a hallmark of his "Love and Light: A Hypothesis Regarding Lonergan's Four-Point Hypothesis."

The paper of *Gilles Mongeau, SJ*, also at Regis College, Toronto, illumines the topic of grace from another perspective in "The State of Grace and the Law of the Cross: Further Insights into Lonergan from René Girard." By putting Lonergan's theology of grace in the context of his soteriology, Mongeau explores Girard's understanding of Jesus's sacrifice as "the sacrifice to end all sacrifices" for the purpose of enhancing our understanding of the sacrificial love that is integral to Lonergan's Law of the Cross, thus eliminating every connotation of vengeance by means of the grace-enabled transformation of mimetic desire.

Not many people interested in the fields of liturgy and sacramental theology would suppose that Lonergan's thought would have any relevance for those matters. But *Joseph Mudd* (Gonzaga University) disagreed. During his graduate theological studies, Mudd was immersed in French Dominican Louis-Marie Chauvet's postmodern *Symbol and Sacrament*. Mudd's study of Lonergan's thought inspired him to "make the best" of Chauvet's contributions in his dissertation. Now everyone is aware that the Sacrament of Reconciliation has fallen into desuetude since Vatican II. In "Church Penitent: A Sacramental Re-imagining of the Church in a Time of Crisis," Mudd explores underlying causes of, as well as possible solutions to, this problem *via* a renewed liturgical theology.

Just as many of the contributors at the Lonergan Workshops share the results of their studies by developing Lonergan's aperçus, *Paul Kidder* of Seattle University has done that in relation to Lonergan, to

be sure, but also in relation to the thought of Joseph Flanagan, SJ, the entrepreneur of Lonergan-inspired institutions at Boston College (e.g., the PULSE and Perspectives Programs and the Lonergan Institute). As Fr. Flanagan's teaching assistant during his graduate studies, Paul was able to appreciate (as only one already deeply interested in art and aesthetics could) Flanagan's pedagogical exploration through courses on symbols and images in science and art, and the Perspectives' module, "Modernism in the Arts" of manifold ways to transform students' "phantasms" to evoke insights in them. "Joseph Flanagan and the Philosophical Hermeneutic of Modern Art" is a lovely tribute to his late mentor.

At Lonergan Workshop 38, three scholars explored Lonergan's work on economics in relation to diverse contemporary reference points. Boston College Economics Professor, *Francis McLaughlin*, was an indispensable aid to the (non-economist) editors of *Macroeconomic Dynamics* (volume 15 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan), Pat Byrne, Charles Hefling, and Fred Lawrence, for learning about past and present economics. Because Lonergan spoke of his contribution to economic theory in terms of correctly understanding economics as a "good of order" – that is, the aspect of his structure of the human good that has to do with the cooperative pursuit of the good within institutions, McLaughlin's reference to John R. Commons – the great American institutional economist – in his "Communicating with Economists" – was both illuminating and overwhelmingly appropriate. McLaughlin was inspired as a student at Boston College to pursue economics studies at the graduate level by the Papal Encyclicals that formed the backbone of the Catholic tradition of social justice. *Michael Shute* (now retired from Memorial University in Newfoundland) had already published studies on the early Lonergan's efforts to formulate a philosophy of history to provide a Christian alternative to Hegel and Marx for the sake of affecting the course of history, and on Lonergan's archived papers from his fourteen years' work on economics. Hence, his remarks on "Lonergan's Economics and the Catholic Social Justice Tradition." Finally, *Paul St. Amour*, chair of philosophy at St Joseph's University in Philadelphia, is one of those who have been studying Lonergan's economics while trying to make sense of the world economic

collapse of 2007-08. With the appearance of Thomas Picketty's *Capital in the 21st Century*, Paul's paper, "Income Inequality and the Problem of the Basic Expansion" could hardly be more timely and helpful.

Finally, Bob Doran's technical assistant at the Lonergan Research Institute and at Marquette, *Greg Lauzon*, is an extraordinary inventor, builder of, and experimenter with novel musical instruments. He has used Lonergan's insights to reflect upon his performance of music-making – in the strongest possible sense. "Lamenting at the Abattoir and Elemental Meaning and Bowsticks" is really an essay in the philosophy of music. Those who had the good fortune to be present for Greg's lecture had a unique opportunity to experience music's capacity to touch the innermost parts of the human being in astonishing ways. His written comments help to explain the thought behind that experience

Finally, our gratitude to Regina Gilmartin Knox, our manuscript editor, who patiently shepherds this journal into print, and to Kerry Cronin, our business manager.

Fred Lawrence  
Boston College, 19 May 2014

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## LONERAGAN ON THE HUMAN GOOD IN AN AFRICAN IDIOM

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*Prefatory remarks:* My connection with Bernard Lonergan dates from 1956 in Rome, when we were initiated on arrival into his “*Verbum* articles” (later published as a monograph as an act of gratitude: *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas* (1967). These offered a preliminary sketch of his daunting *Insight: A Study in Human Understanding* (1957). I shall not try to summarize that work but rather display some of the skills we can learn from it, as well as from his later *Method in Theology* (1972).

BERNARD LONERAGAN’S FRANK INTELLECTUALISM reflects a mind suffused with eros, an unstinting desire for understanding. One of his first students, John Dunne, C.S.C., contrasts this “quest for understanding” with the “need for certitude.” Since that contrast can often starkly polarize religious groups, Lonergan’s insistence on “searching for understanding” can speak a healing word to us today. Let me illustrate the contrast from another Jesuit, Jean Daniélou, writing on mission some sixty years ago, well before Vatican II. He insists, in his landmark *Salvation of Nations*, that we will have carried out mission authentically to the extent that we become instruments of the Spirit, yet a conventional way of thinking about mission can easily eclipse the Spirit. Were we to think of ourselves as “bringing Christ to India,” for example, we would soon discover, as we tried to do it, that we had brought our own culture right along with us! So the only reasonable way to *think* about mission is that we will be meeting Christ there. And of course that is what happens to those open to the Spirit, and it is as simple as “reader-response” criticism: whoever tries to speak of Jesus

to someone formed as a Buddhist will be confronted with questions difficult to answer. Then the Spirit will have a chance to enter into that cognitive dissonance to reveal to us a new face of that very Jesus. And is that not how mission opens the Christian community to a continual learning process? Jesus' promise that "the Spirit will lead you into all truth" (John 16:13) will only be effective once we realize that truth can never be our possession but calls us to an ever richer understanding. So mission will only succeed in revealing a new face of Jesus so long as it follows the contours of an unceasing "quest for understanding."

If we are to respond the way Daniélou outlines and Lonergan confirms, authentic mission is the very antithesis of colonization, despite the fact that missionaries often came in tandem with colonizers, and that colonizers called their efforts a "civilizing mission." They did so thinking of themselves as possessing a higher species of the human intelligence and human good, which they were anxious to share with others. But "sharing" for colonizers could only mean "uplifting" those less endowed, so effectively depriving everyone – themselves and their recipients – of the *good* – by presuming they possessed it already, as so many of those intent on "bringing Christ to Africa" presumed they possessed the truth they sought to bring to others. Yet if neither the *good* nor the *true* can be possessed, something is radically wrong with a mind-set which thinks they possess them. So we can see how a contingent collusion between colonizing and mission could infect both: Enlightenment presumptions of superiority endemic to Western culture deprived mission of the humility needed to be "instruments of the Spirit," while promoting a greater share in the same enlightenment assumed messianic proportions. A decidedly unholy alliance!

How can an Africa coming into its own rectify this distorted picture, and how can Bernard Lonergan guide us in this daunting "postcolonial" project of finding our way to the human good? First, by detaching us from that *certitude* regarding our own perspectives that fueled colonialism, and then by offering us ways to replace the *need for certitude* with searching, questing, learning. Lonergan helps us do that not by answers but by questions. Let me illustrate by two examples: one tracing the sinuous path by which our tradition developed, to bring us to a profoundly flexible grasp of the revelation given to us, notably in the face of other faiths; the other from current thinkers opening

the minds and hearts of those who have received a notable Western education to practices of hearing and of recognizing "the other."

Bernard Lonergan's forté was to lay bare the dynamics of Christianity becoming what it is; that is, the first five centuries of the church, replete with clarifying and contested councils.<sup>1</sup> He showed us how everything turns on the way we interpret the "way to Nicaea," the tortuous path three centuries long, not without rancor and bloodshed, culminating in the introduction of a non-biblical Greek term of art, *homoousion*, into the Christian creed. In the face of virulent objections of nineteenth-century Protestant critics against such a "Hellenization" of the community of followers of Jesus, Lonergan reached for a deeper dynamic, locating it in the human desire to understand and to make sense out of what was delivered to us in revelation and handed on by subsequent practice. That very quest for understanding which turns doctrine (or received teaching) into theology, as "faith seeking understanding," pushed the early church to seek help in interpreting the scriptures, and in turn asks us to assimilate critically what has been delivered to us as the community's consensus in conciliar documents. At a time when *hermeneutics* was the rage, Lonergan formulated its central strategy succinctly: if the statements of Nicaea (and other councils) are presented to us as *answers*, it is incumbent upon us (if we are to understand *how* they are answers) to come to know the *questions* they proposed to answer.

By learning to inquire into our tradition in this way we can be instructed by strategies developed in these councils, and so begin to gain the intellectual skills required to do theology, rather than simply repeat the formulas. Introducing students into theology as a mode of inquiry, whereby faith is constantly seeking understanding, also allows us to participate in what makes a tradition live, so learn how to differentiate *tradition* from *ideology*, by appropriating its self-critical *ethos*. And Lonergan's philosophical theology offers a critical appropriation of a tradition as well as displays the continuing vitality of that tradition. It will also help us see how that same tradition can respond creatively to challenges posed by both the other two "Abrahamic religions," Judaism and Islam.

To delineate this potential, we should move from Nicaea to

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<sup>1</sup> *The Way to Nicaea*, trans. Conn O'Donovan (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976).

Chalcedon, assisted by Thomas Weinandy's illuminating rendition of the four centuries it took to reach some consensus on the ontological constitution of Jesus: *Does God Change?*<sup>2</sup> The verve with which Weinandy delineates the conflicts which emerged reflects a philosophical acumen close to Lonergan's, showing how the acrimonious controversies in fact delineated most of the logical possibilities for understanding who and what Jesus is for us. If the discussion often had to borrow terms from Hellenic philosophy, the issues are starkly biblical: How can this community of believers in Jesus pray to Jesus without making him "something alongside God?" For our prayer to Jesus dare not entail that we be idolaters to Jews, and (later on) infidels to Muslims, by engaging in *shirk*: associating a creature with the creator. The central tenet of Judaism is at work: "Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God is one Lord" (Deuteronomy 6:4). The insistence that our God is One – an insistence shared from the outset with Jews and later with Muslims – explains why it took the community of Christians four centuries to clarify the central tenet of their faith: the reality of Jesus. So what is called "the doctrine of the trinity" represents a strenuous achievement on the part of a worshiping community in the face of Arius and the influence of Arian Christianity.

Yet the torturous path to that "doctrine" will provide a salient opening to show how current interfaith reflection may extend our rich theological tradition, once we realize exchange with other faiths has continually been part of Christian tradition. Moreover, the fact that the formulation which Weinandy shows to be so remarkable an achievement failed to be accepted by the entire community of Christian believers testifies to factors which continue to muddy intellectual exchange now, as they did then.<sup>3</sup> Yet the crucible in which were forged what we now call "doctrines," the patristic period, will prove help us to

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Weinandy, *Does God Change?: The "Word" Becoming in the Incarnation* (Still River, MA: St. Bede's Publications, 1985).

<sup>3</sup> When I asked a Latin priest in Amman (in 2004), why so many Latin clergy had come from his village in Jordan, he told me that his grandfather had become angry with the Orthodox priest and led the village community to Rome. Knowing how clergy can foment such conflicts, I showed little surprise at that reaction. Yet he moved smoothly across fourteen centuries to go on to inform me: "And when those people came from the Arabian peninsula we know nothing about Islam; we just knew they were not Greeks!" So much for the fate of astute formulations, in the face of overwhelming power.

approach Judaism and Islam by showing how comparative inquiry can enrich our tradition today.

When it comes to neuralgic points of doctrine, both Jews and Muslims more readily balk at the incarnation than at trinitarian teaching, since the Word's becoming human represents a direct broaching of "the distinction" between creator and creatures, whereas trinitarian claims are far less clear and tend – as Christians themselves know so well – to be rendered in abstruse language. Again, this can prove instructive to Christians, for we have seen how early conciliar statements focused on Jesus, whereas more explicit assertions regarding the divinity of the Holy Spirit would derive from those regarding the Son's "being of one substance with the Father" (Nicaea). Yet in fact, however offensive "the incarnation" may prove to Muslims, they can rest far more easily with Jesus than can Jews, for two obvious reasons. First, Jesus was a Jew, and as a Jew intended to bring the Hebrew scriptures to an unprecedented focus – the Christian trope is "to fulfill them" – so in his person and teaching Jesus represents a challenge to Jews; so much so that rabbinic "Judaism" developed largely in reaction to the Jesus movement among Jews, so appears chronologically later than "Christianity." Second, because the Qur'an recognizes Jesus as a prophet, whose miraculous birth from the virgin Mary was a portent of God's continuing revelation confirmed in the Qur'anic account.

Yet of course this prophet Jesus can hardly be the one whom Christians worship, so irenic conciliation around Jesus proves misleading, especially as it can lead to putative comparisons between Jesus and the Prophet, Muhammad.<sup>4</sup> In fact – and this is utterly crucial to comparative work between Islam and Christianity – the salient comparison is rather between Jesus and the Qur'an! Two parallel formulae offer the prime example of the similarity-cum-difference which will structure our comparison, demanding that it always be analogous: Christians believe that Jesus is the Word of God made human, while Muslims believe the Qur'an to be the Word of God made "book."<sup>5</sup> Parsing these parallel formulae will elucidate similarities and

<sup>4</sup> See Roger Arnaldez's *Three Messengers for One God* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995) for a distinguished Catholic Islamicist's valedictory comparative work, despite the misleading title.

<sup>5</sup> Wilfred Cantwell Smith first introduced me to this salient comparison, which Daniel Madigan has amply developed in "God's Word and the World: Jesus and the Qur'an,

differences in such a way as to deconstruct misunderstanding from the outset. The manifest differences allow Christians to underscore what makes their revelation distinctive among the Abrahamic faiths: that it resides primarily in a person. It is the "ontological constitution" of that man Jesus, which Bernard Lonergan's work so carefully details, that we have just dramatized to show how the controversies attending that elaboration can help us find ways to mediate what can look like contradictions between Christianity and Judaism or Islam. Differences there are, and even stark contrasts, but probing just where those differences emerge can lead us to a better understanding of ourselves – even better than Lonergan himself attempted, though he helps us carry his own work a step farther – the sure sign of a good teacher!

Our second example details the way Lonergan's work can prepare us to profit from the way some current thinkers have shown us how to open the minds and hearts of Western educated people to practices of hearing and of recognizing "the other." The thinkers in question include (among others) John Henry Newman and represent a trend away from modernist reliance on reason alone (Descartes) to a postmodern appreciation of the need for faith and trust in any intellectual inquiry. Lonergan's later work, *Method in Theology*, especially helps us develop the skills we need to appreciate how postmodern inquiry can actually return us to medieval thinkers like Thomas Aquinas, who never separated philosophy from theology, reason from faith, or intellectual inquiry from trust. His guide here is John Henry Newman, whose recent confirmation as "blessed" in Birmingham, England, by Pope Benedict, abundantly illustrates his contribution to our discussion of faith and reason. Lonergan's cryptic comment that "I had become something of an existentialist from my study of Newman's *A Grammar of Assent*," offers a clue to his guiding observation at the beginning of *Insight* defining it as a "performative" work, whose pointers must be executed if one ever hopes to grasp their point.<sup>6</sup>

So Lonergan's work, *Insight*, is not a treatise on epistemology, but a recipe for becoming conscious of the act which defines us our reach as humans: understanding. That guiding inspiration clearly comes

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Incarnation and recitation," in Terrence Merrigan and Frederik Glorieux, eds., *Godhead Here in Hiding: Incarnation and the Mystery of Human Suffering* (Leuven: Peters, 2008).

<sup>6</sup> *Insight*, preface, note 11.

from Newman, exhibited in the way he distinguished *real* from merely *notional* assent (in the work Lonergan cites, *A Grammar of Assent*). What distinguishes “real assents” is

that they are of a personal character, ... proper to the individual” (Lash edition, 82). After all, man is *not* a reasoning animal; he is a seeing, feeling, contemplating, acting animal. [Indeed,] life is not long enough for a religion of inferences; we shall never have done beginning, if we determine to begin with proof. [Yet] why we are so constituted that faith, not knowledge or argument, is our principle of action, is a question with which I have nothing to do; but I think it is a fact. (90-91)

So the *understanding* that comes as a result of a quest will engage the whole inquiring person, so is properly contrasted with the *certitude* grasped as a result of a need. Where “understanding” is intentional; “certitude” is psychological, though when understanding culminates in a judgment that this is indeed the case, it brings its own certitude with it (as Newman insists), yet the certitude resulting from understanding remains open to revision, while that stemming from psychological need quickly hardens into an ideology – a difference we readily recognize between debate and conversation. Debate quickly turns to “scoring points,” while conversation remains open to seeking a way through apparent disagreement and conflicts. This is especially true when we meet persons who are different from us. For debaters sure of their “position,” that difference represents a challenge to be overcome by persuasion; for inquirers, difference can help to clarify the gaps that conversation has helped them recognize in their own understanding. So we can see how Lonergan’s way of proceeding illustrates “seeking understanding,” as it contrasts with “needing certitude,” and why genuine inquiry itself becomes a “spiritual exercise” designed to minimize what Augustine called “pride,” or we might characterize as the stubbornness attendant upon that certitude stemming from need. (Paul J. Griffiths offers a penetrating analysis of this difference in his *Intellectual Appetite: A Theological Grammar* [Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2009]).

Let me suggest that Lonergan’s call to each one of us to seek understanding is the very antithesis of colonialism, and so points a

way for us in Africa to discover afresh who we are. Yet such a quest will require a courageous capacity to think for oneself, to resist the "canned" answers of "knowing" instructors or flashy media, for they come to the same: media fueled by super-salesmen intent on telling us what we really want; and teachers attempting to tell us answers, so loading us with deadening certitudes. For what marks a colonialist attitude (and justified it as well) is the certitude that one's way is the right way, while Lonergan's way of teaching rather provides us with skills needed to find our way: a path of discovery like the early church had to undertake to understand more effectively the way God chose to reveal God's hidden face in Jesus. And his strategy in focusing on the early church was anything but antiquarian; he is a theologian, not an historian, though historians always helped to keep him honest. For it is too easy for an exciting and penetrating inquiry into our faith to settle into a "doctrine," that is, a *teaching* which needs to be passed on. Yet, as we have noted, it is too easy to pass on the formulations as *answers*, detached from the questions that elicited an inquiry that resulted in answers. To short-circuit that is to engage in mere catechesis; indeed, a deformed catechesis. I am thinking here of our Cape Coast cardinal, Peter Kodwo Appiah Turkson, who sharply critiqued Christianity in Europe for replacing evangelizing with catechizing, by which he meant supplying formulas as ready-made answers. So let us watch a contemporary Ugandan theologian, Emmanuel Katongole, direct Lonergan's "quest for understanding" to Christianity as it has evolved in Africa since the early missionaries, toward a properly evangelizing strategy. His recent *Sacrifice of Africa* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011) offers a fresh pattern for evangelizing as he exhibits Lonergan's celebrated "quest for understanding" by challenging practices which have become accepted for church in Africa.

Some of these practices reflect a colonial legacy, beginning with the ingrained conviction that Africa has "nothing to offer"! So in trying to do theology, as in undertaking any other craft, we feel we must import the methods to do it properly, and in his field of Christian ethics, that means skills for correcting and improving things. But that presumes that the things we are seeking to improve, like "civil society" and "democracy," once transferred to Africa, can be described in the same way as they are in the cultures from which they were originally

imported. Yet here he challenges us to a fresh understanding of our situation by contrasting "skills" with "stories," prescriptive programs for improving things (often accompanied by "packaged" solutions from the West [51]) with a fresh way of imagining human associations ("polities") latent in a rich archive of African stories. (Much has already been written about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa, calling attention to the cultural factors which made it possible – see Antjie Krog, *Country of my Skull* (1998), Terri Phelps, *Shattered Voices* (2004).) And his trenchant inquiry into African ecclesial practices, many of which have been inherited, pushes him to scrutinize how ostensibly neutral institutions, imported from the West, bring a story along with them, often trenchantly in conflict with African experience, yet which practitioners and analysts in Africa feel impelled to overlook, since "Africa has nothing to offer."

The institution central to African politics, the "nation-state," can be seen to be a rather recent European "story" for organizing human polities, yet a social ethics focused on skills will simply presume the central role this institution has acquired and search for ways of improving it: greater accountability, more transparent elections, and so on, with church agencies simply following suite. But were we sensitive to current critiques of that very institution – the nation-state – we would not only resist taking it for granted but seek to enlarge our imagination for alternatives. Yet imagination requires us to move beyond analysis to fresh practice, which he provides by exhibiting three persons challenging standard ways of statecraft by developing alternative strategies as well as institutions: Bishop Paride Taban and the Kuron Peace Village in Sudan, Angelica Atyan's developing the Concerned Parents Association in Acholiland, and Maggy Barankitse's "Maison Shalom" in Burundi. Moreover, it is signal that two of the three are women, consistently marginalized in the conventional nation-state. In fact, these three "exhibits" effectively culminate a trenchant critique of the direction nation-states invariably take in whatever culture, illustrating how attempts to improve its functioning – the stock-in-trade of standard social ethics – may have misgauged their host institution. Indeed, Katongole insists, African nation-states hardly need much improvement; they are working just as nation-states do most everywhere: catering to the elites and marginalizing the poor. So is

it Christians' job to help them do that better, or to provide alternatives nourished by an imagination that resists the presumptions central to nation-state power?

Yet before he showcases three signal alternatives to nation-state power in the individual initiatives of Bishop Taban, Angelica Atyan, and Maggy Barankitse, Katongole bolsters his analysis of the devolution of the nation-state by reminding us of the "madness of Thomas Sankara," the daring populist leader of Burkina Faso (who gave the country its new name), who was assassinated for the bold steps he took in mobilizing people to take responsibility for their new polity. Without disguising his admiration for the tenor of Sankara's initiatives, however, Katongole adduces the example of the prophet Joel to bolster his insistence that fresh imagination without a faith-filled story is destined before long to evaporate into the sands of nation-state politics. Sankara's demise (and with him the dream of Burkina Faso) can only confirm that conviction. Here he uses the creative social theology of Jean-Marc Éla to remind us that "religion" can be as deadening to church as the modern nation-state is to politics. In fact, reducing faith communities to supplying other-worldly "religious" needs of a people simply leaves political space to the nation-state to pursue its oligarchic pre-emption of human life. Hence the executives of the nation-state – one forbears calling them "leaders" – readily remind "religious leaders" to "keep out of politics" and keep to the "religious" domain. But doing so spells the death of the church we know from the rich archive of Catholic social teaching, subjecting the African church to the same critique cardinal Turkson made of late European Christianity!

But I simply wanted to give you a taste of the quality of analysis displayed in Emmanuel Katongole's new *Sacrifice of Africa*, to exhibit how timely is Bernard Lonergan's search for understanding, as it helps us call into question settled habits, subject institutions to trenchant critique, in an effort to recover their original vitality. Katongole's call for re-imagining social ethics offers a signal illustration of Lonergan's insistence that all understanding is personal, and that the truth of an analysis can only be tested in practice. And what connects all this to "the African context" is precisely that it takes one formed in the turbulent world of east Africa, deeply disturbed by the way postcolonial practice seems fated to reproduce colonial depredations in disregard

for human dignity – though now on the part of an African elite – to lead us in an inquiry into the ways imaginative practices of individual Christians can challenge both church and state to discover new ways of fulfilling their God-given destinies.

## MORAL VALUE, PERSONAL VALUE, AND HISTORY

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### THE QUESTION OF MORAL VALUE AND THE SCALE OF VALUES

OUR CONTEMPORARY PUBLIC DISCOURSE is filled with controversies about moral values. There are those who decry the decline of moral values in contemporary culture, and call for public measures to restore and uphold these values. There are those who argue that moral values are after all purely private matters at best, and ideological masks of exercises of arbitrary power at worst. Hence they advance the opposing arguments that there should be no legislation of morality and that the discourse about lost morality is just "politics." (Ironically, their use of the word "should" of course signals that this itself is a public pronouncement of a moral value.) Given this discord of opinions about moral issues, those who have found great value in the work of Bernard Lonergan may well ask how his great achievements might bring some light to these controversies about moral values.

Yet when we turn to his works, there is virtually no mention of "moral value." Indeed there is something puzzling about the scale of values that Lonergan sets forth in *Method in Theology*: moral values are not assigned a place in that scale. According to him,

Not only do feelings respond to values. They do so in accord with some scale of preference. So we may distinguish vital, social, cultural, personal, and religious values in ascending order.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972), 31.

What are we to make of this absence? Where in Lonergan's thought on values are we to find guidance as we make our way through contemporary controversies about moral values?

There are several possibilities. One is that Lonergan did not think that the question of the moral was an important one. But this is belied by his treatment of morality in *Insight* and his repeated discussions of the importance of moral self-transcendence and moral conversion in *Method in Theology*. So perhaps instead Lonergan thought it necessary to replace concern about moral values with attention to moral self-transcendence and moral conversion instead. Perhaps "moral" has to do with the whole attitude toward values in general, rather than with a particular class of moral values having a definite place in the scale of values instead.

Brian Cronin has considered this possibility in his book *Value Ethics: A Lonergan Perspective*,<sup>2</sup> and I will return to reconsider this possibility later in this article. But Cronin himself situates this possibility within a fuller and richer context, in which he argues persuasively that moral values are indeed present implicitly in Lonergan's scale of value preference. In a brilliant statement that pulls together many strands of Lonergan's thinking about moral matters, Cronin writes:

In its specific sense, moral value refers to the value of the person as a whole person sublating all other values, to the person as a centre of interpersonal relations, to the person as deciding freely and responsibly, to produce the first and only edition of himself.<sup>3</sup>

So according to Cronin, moral value is equivalent to what Lonergan calls personal value, rightly understood. This paper will explore and extend Cronin's proposal. In the first section, I will summarize Cronin's argument. Next I will look at Lonergan's writings for further support of his proposal. I will then make explicit and fill out the links between Cronin's proposal and the other elements in his statement: moral conversion, personal responsibility for what one is to be, originating

<sup>2</sup> Brian Cronin, *Value Ethics: A Lonergan Perspective* (Nairobi: Consolata Institute of Philosophy Press, 2006).

<sup>3</sup> Cronin, *Value Ethics*, 164.

value, and personal relations. Finally, I will explore how this all relates to the value of history and to love, and the implications these hold for a fuller appreciation of moral and personal value.

### CRONIN ON MORAL AND PERSONAL VALUE

Cronin raises the issue of moral value in the context of his discussion of Lonergan's scale of value preference. There he quite rightly comments that it "is not so easy to formulate the question of moral value clearly"<sup>4</sup> and so devotes a special section to this topic. He works his way up to equating moral and personal value by first considering a series of puzzles about moral decision making: Is every human activity in some sense moral? Are some acts morally neutral ("indifferent"): for example, learning a skill, buying a computer, the training soldiers receive? Are the accounts of decision making offered by Aristotle and Aquinas adequate? Are moral values reducible to other kinds of value? That is to say, he begins with ordinary quandaries about the morality of certain kinds of decisions and considers the different kinds of decisions and difficulties that have arisen as a preliminary to an intentionality analysis of the acts and structures underlying our common notions about morality.

Following his reflections on these puzzles, Cronin comes to his own point of departure by asking, "What is the intentionality proper to the fourth level [of consciousness], what is the perfection of the activities at that level and what good is to be achieved?" His answer is that the fourth level of consciousness "sublates the other levels, *brings them into a unity*," and that this unity is the unity of "the person as a whole, not just as parts."<sup>5</sup>

In illustration of his emphasis on unity and wholeness, Cronin focuses on the activities of deciding and acting. Many acts of consciousness precede the acts of deciding and acting – for example, experiencing, understanding, and judging the facts of the situation; having insights and feelings about what might be done; reflecting and arriving at value judgments about the right thing to be done. Yet, Cronin observes, this set of activities is not yet complete until a decision

<sup>4</sup> Cronin, *Value Ethics*, 149.

<sup>5</sup> Cronin, *Value Ethics*, 158 (emphasis added).

is made and carried out in action. The prior activities are parts of the process. They are also parts of the thinker and deliberator, but they are not yet parts of a whole. Until the acts of thinking and deliberating are completed and made whole when a free and responsible decision is made and carried out, they are experienced as an incomplete set. Until the thinker and deliberator becomes a decider and doer, there is a lack of wholeness of self made manifest in the incompleteness of his or her unfinished acts of consciousness.

As Cronin puts it, one does have to be moral in order to authentically carry out all of the prior acts of consciousness, but these acts alone are not yet wholly moral. Rather, "We become complete moral persons only when we have decided and carried out our decisions."<sup>6</sup> In other words, it is not just some detached set of activities that is incomplete – not some set of ethereal activities floating around somewhere. Rather, it is the subject enacting those activities who is incomplete until she or he decides and acts. Conscious acts can only *be as* the acts of some concrete conscious subject. They cannot occur apart from being the acts of a concrete, conscious subject. Reciprocally, the performance of the acts constitutes the subject who performs them. So to the extent that the activities lack wholeness and completion, so too does their subject lack wholeness. A unity is lacking from both the pattern of acts and their subject, until both are simultaneously completed in authentic deciding and acting. The resulting wholeness, says Cronin, *is* the value of person:

when we speak of a morally good person, we do not refer to the goodness of the activities, we refer to the goodness of the whole.<sup>7</sup>

Moral value, then, is the value realized in a decision and action that culminates authentic thinking, deliberating, and valuing. Simultaneously, moral value is associated with wholeness rather than with parts of the decider and actor. One could be considered a good thinker or a good deliberator (both would be judgments of value). But being a good thinker or good deliberator lacks the wholeness of being a good decider and actor. To be good in one's decisions and actions is what

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<sup>6</sup> Cronin, *Value Ethics*, 159.

<sup>7</sup> Cronin, *Value Ethics*, 161.

is commonly meant by "moral." Cronin is able to equate moral value in this sense with the value of person by showing that moral value is equivalent to a wholeness of personhood that is realized precisely in the culminating acts of deciding and acting. That is to say, the realization of moral value is the realization of personal value.

### MORAL AND PERSONAL VALUE IN LONERGAN

There are some important confirmations of Cronin's position in Lonergan's own writings in *Method in Theology*, although Cronin does not mention them. The most central and most important is Lonergan's remark that

the development of knowledge and the development of moral feeling lead to the existential discovery, the discovery of oneself as a moral being, the realization that one not only chooses between courses of action but also thereby makes oneself an authentic human being or an unauthentic one. With that discovery, there emerges in consciousness the significance of personal value and the meaning of personal responsibility.<sup>8</sup>

Here Lonergan clearly and explicitly draws the connection between "moral being" and personal value. The discovery of oneself as a moral being is equivalent to the recognition of the value of oneself as a person.

Moreover, to the best of my knowledge, this is the only place in *Method in Theology* – and one of the few places in his *oeuvre* – where Lonergan speaks of moral feelings.<sup>9</sup> Given his correlation of values and the feelings of intentional response that apprehend them, this is a very strong indication that Lonergan regarded moral values as the *noematic* contents of acts of moral feelings. In other words, awareness of the value of personal responsibility is manifest in the feelings of moral value. Such feelings signal that the value at stake is the value

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<sup>8</sup> *Method in Theology*, 38.

<sup>9</sup> One other place is where Lonergan mentions moral feelings in the context of dramatic bias, sexuality, and psychotherapy, but there he offers no account of what moral feelings are. See Bernard Lonergan *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, vol. 3 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 223.

of whether to be or not to be one's authentic self, to realize or not to realize oneself as an instance of true personal value.

Moreover, Lonergan says that as we become mature in our "knowledge of reality and especially human reality,"<sup>10</sup> and as our moral feelings develop, we come to the realization that our choices and actions not only produce external effects but also inescapably constitute us as authentic or inauthentic. What does the word "realization" mean here, in terms of Lonergan's intentionality analysis? Certainly it includes insight – there is a new understanding that emerges from the new data on oneself, which in turn arise once one has attained a certain level of maturity. But it is clear that "realization" here also refers to one or more judgments of value. There is a judgment about the value about being a self-constituter (what Lonergan elsewhere calls "originating value"<sup>11</sup>). There is a further value judgment calling for decision – that one ought to choose to be authentic in response to the fact and value of self-constitution. Further, I would suggest, there are elements of feeling here as well – the realization Lonergan speaks of is not full without some feeling about the value of being a self-constituter. The feelings that are central to this realization, then, are moral feelings, as both Lonergan's words and our own experiences reveal. So the discovery, the realization, of oneself as "a moral being" is the revelation to oneself of one's own personal value, as a value to be chosen and lived out, or a value from which to flee in various modes of inauthentic existence. Even though Lonergan does not say so explicitly, this is strong support indeed for Cronin's claim that moral value rightly understood is indeed equivalent to what Lonergan himself meant by personal value.

Further support for this equivalence comes indirectly, when we consider the contexts where Lonergan uses the adjective "moral" most frequently and with the greatest importance – namely, in his discussions of moral self-transcendence and moral conversion.

As with all other forms of self-transcendence, Lonergan initially locates the capacity or potential for moral self-transcendence in our capacity for questioning: "on the final level of questions for deliberation, self-transcendence becomes moral."<sup>12</sup> A person is "self-

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<sup>10</sup> *Method in Theology*, 38.

<sup>11</sup> See *Insight*, 624-28, and *Method in Theology*, 51-53, 116, 241-42.

<sup>12</sup> *Method in Theology*, 104.

transcendent morally inasmuch as he *sought* what was worth while,"<sup>13</sup> and such seeking initially has the form of moral questioning. All transcendence is "going beyond," but for Lonergan the proper paradigm for transcendence, for going beyond, is neither spatial nor temporal. It is the phenomenon of questioning, of asking after what we have not yet already attained in our previous inventory of answers.<sup>14</sup> This means that our capacity for moral self-transcendence is never just an abstract potentiality. It is not just a potential that we come to know only after the fact, only once we have actuated that potential in a truly moral act. The potential for moral self-transcendence is always already consciously operative in our questioning about the right thing to do, the right way to live, what is truly not just apparently worthwhile. The capacity for moral self-transcendence is operative even before we judge, decide or act in response to those questions.

Moral self-transcendence, then, arises when we ask questions that go beyond our knowledge of natural and human realities.

When we ask whether this or that is worth while, whether it is not just apparently good but truly good, then we are inquiring, not about pleasure or pain, not about comfort or ill ease, not about sensitive spontaneity, not about individual or group advantage, but about objective value. Because we can ask such questions, and answer them, and live by the answers, we can effect in our living a moral self-transcendence.<sup>15</sup>

But as this remark indicates, moral self-transcendence is only minimally present in moral inquiry. While our capacity for moral self-transcendence is ever operative, moral self-transcendence itself consists in going still further beyond moral inquiries to arrive, first, at objective judgments of value. But even judgments of value are only an "initial thrust toward moral self-transcendence."<sup>16</sup> Moral questions are for decision and action, not for value-knowledge alone. The moral self-transcendence set in motion by moral inquiry presses even beyond objective value knowledge toward "real self-transcendence"

<sup>13</sup> *Method in Theology*, 289 (emphasis added).

<sup>14</sup> *Insight*, 658.

<sup>15</sup> *Method in Theology*, 104.

<sup>16</sup> *Method in Theology*, 38 (emphasis added).

in which we actually live by these answers.<sup>17</sup> Lonergan refers to the achievement of moral self-transcendence as “real” because it is not just about transcending from experiences and hypothetical understandings into objective judgments about realities other than oneself. Moral self-transcendence as achieved is the constituting the reality of oneself as a whole. So implicit in the whole movement of moral self-transcendence is the realization of oneself as a whole person – personal value as Cronin contends – through fidelity to the promptings of moral self-transcendence as a dynamism.

There is then a distinction between moral self-transcendence as a capacity or a potential or an inescapably operative dynamism on the one hand, and on the other hand moral self-transcendence as realized, more and less perfectly.<sup>18</sup> This more or less perfect realization of moral self-transcendence relies upon, or perhaps is realized, as a new starting point in moral conversion. As Lonergan puts it,

moral conversion goes beyond the value [of factual] truth, to values generally. It promotes the subject from cognitional to real self-transcendence. It sets him on a new, existential level of consciousness and establishes him as an originating value.... now his pursuit of [factual truth] is all the more meaningful and significant because it occurs within, and plays an essential role in, the far richer context of the pursuit of all values.<sup>19</sup>

This means, of course, that we do not become personal values by accident. We may be originating values<sup>20</sup> in the limited sense that we cannot avoid asking moral questions, or that we cannot we avoid making decisions, however well or badly, in response to moral questions. But we become originating values in Lonergan’s fuller sense – that is personal values – only as the result of deliberately choosing to become fully committed, serious and consistently faithful to the dynamism of our own moral self-transcendence. Moral conversion is the decision to cooperate with the dynamic pattern of activities that move us from potentially to actually moral self-transcending. Lonergan describes the moment of the decision

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<sup>17</sup> *Method in Theology*, 242.

<sup>18</sup> *Method in Theology*, 240.

<sup>19</sup> *Method in Theology*, 241-42.

<sup>20</sup> On originating value, see *Insight*, 624-28, and *Method in Theology*, 51-53, 116.

for moral conversion in several places, for example:

One has to have found out for oneself what one is to make of oneself; one has to have proved oneself equal to that moment of existential decision; and one has to have kept on proving it in all subsequent decisions, if one is to be an authentic human person.<sup>21</sup>

The decision for moral conversion comes at some point in the life of each human being. It comes only after a sufficient degree of "development of knowledge" and especially knowledge about human reality, "and the development of moral feeling."<sup>22</sup> At that point the subject finally has gotten beyond childhood and has had enough experience of self-transcendence to understand and affirm its reality, and to realize that its continuation will occur only through deliberate choice. This discovery and realization of what is at stake is the moment of choice for moral conversion:

Then is the time for the exercise of vertical freedom and then moral conversion consists in opting for the truly good, even for value against satisfaction when value and satisfaction conflict.<sup>23</sup>

Elsewhere he remarks that "Moral conversion changes the criterion of one's decisions and choices from satisfactions to values"<sup>24</sup> and the deeds that manifest exactly this shift are the surest signs of moral conversion.

This further underscores the holism of moral self-transcendence and moral conversion – the intrinsic connection between moral value and the wholeness of personal value. It is not as though one can be a morally converted agent and still ignore what superficially seem to be the unrelated values. For moral conversion is a decision for the "the pursuit of all values"<sup>25</sup> including the values of health and athletic excellence, of virtuoso musical and dramatic performances, of

<sup>21</sup> *Method in Theology*, 121.

<sup>22</sup> *Method in Theology*, 38.

<sup>23</sup> *Method in Theology*, 240.

<sup>24</sup> *Method in Theology*, 240.

<sup>25</sup> *Method in Theology*, 242.

masterpieces of fine art, of great discoveries in science and scholarship, of achievements in human social organization, and of the all-surpassing value of the sacred.

Moral conversion places one's own decisions and acts in a much larger whole universe of values, replete with its apparent and true rankings of value priorities. The questions that set moral self-transcendence in motion are questions about true rather than apparent values. Satisfactions are what appear to be of value, what appear to be more and less important in relation to oneself. But moral questioning challenges satisfaction and complacency, and moves us onward toward judgments about true values. It sometimes brings us therefore to difficult judgments about our own selves and the need for profound and difficult changes. Questions about true values pursued without restriction bring up the questions about which values are truly and objectively greater or lesser. In particular, we raise questions about the value of ourselves as agents of moral self-transcending activities, and where we are situated in order of importance in relation to other values (and disvalues).

Moral conversion, then, is the realization of oneself as a valuable whole situated in relation to other values. What Lonergan says about moral conversion and the value of factual truth – that it “is all the more meaningful and significant because it occurs within, and plays an essential role in, the far richer context of the pursuit of all values” – can be equally said of the pursuit of moral (that is, personal) value. For moral conversion also reveals “the significance of personal value and the meaning of personal responsibility.” Hence moral conversion has a very peculiar kind of reflexivity. On the one hand the decision for moral conversion is the basic realization moral self-transcendence. On the other hand, it simultaneously contains a recognition of itself as sublating all other values, and yet as standing within, but not at the pinnacle of, the true scale of value priorities – of vital, social, cultural, personal and religious values. Moral conversion reveals that my personal value, grand though it be, is not itself the highest or most comprehending value.

Moral conversion as this fuller realization and acceptance of what it means to be a deciding being need not be framed in the language of Lonergan or this essay. Many people have made and continue to

make decisions for moral conversion without using the sophisticated language of intentionality analysis. The need for this language arises when there are confusions about just what is involved in human deciding. But moral conversion is certainly not limited to scholars of Lonergan's thought, and such scholars have much to learn from those who are the living incarnations of moral conversion.

### MORAL IN THE SPECIFIC AND THE GENERAL SENSE

This brings us back to the suggestion mentioned in the introduction – namely that perhaps for Lonergan morality has to do with the whole attitude toward values in general, rather than with a particular class of values having a definite place in the scale of values. Yet these alternatives are not mutually exclusive. Cronin developed a way of thinking about their complementarity in terms of a distinction between a specific and a general sense of the term “moral.”<sup>26</sup> The specific sense is that already explored – namely that moral value is realized in the fullness of personal value achieved in decisions and actions that accord with moral self-transcendence. The general sense according to Cronin derives from the notion that “In all decisions we should seek the good and avoid evil, of whatever kind.” Cronin continues that this mandate is implicit in the transcendental precepts: Be attentive. Be intelligent. Be reasonable. Be responsible. He suggests that the first three levels in the scale of value preference (vital, social and cultural values) correspond to the first three transcendental precepts. This implies, he continues, that there is “an obligation towards development on all levels,” but that the first three levels do not “represent a specific moral obligation.”<sup>27</sup>

I think Cronin is correct in drawing this distinction, but in my view the way in which he has drawn it requires some refinement. There are two difficulties. The first is that the transcendental precepts are all expressed as moral imperatives; they do express “an obligation” at each of the levels after all, contrary to what Cronin says. That means that they exhort courses of action that the whole person should commit to and enact on each of the levels, if he or she is to be fully a morally

<sup>26</sup> Cronin, *Value Ethics*, 163-64.

<sup>27</sup> Cronin, *Value Ethics*, 164.

self-transcending person. The second difficulty concerns whether or not the proper grounding for levels and ordering of the scale of values is to be found in the levels of consciousness. I have discussed this problem elsewhere, and so will not pursue it further here.<sup>28</sup>

Nevertheless, I think Cronin's distinction is quite correct, and can be reformulated more precisely. The key to reformulating the distinction between the specific and general senses of "moral" comes from Lonergan himself – namely, that moral conversion involves a commitment to *all* values. This commitment is already implicit in his observation that "one not only chooses between courses of action but also thereby makes oneself an authentic human being or an unauthentic one."<sup>29</sup> In each authentic decision, one does realize moral-personal value. But virtually every authentic decision also realizes a course of action at the same time. So almost every decision involves the simultaneous realization of a moral value along with some other value – the value that pertains to the affairs realized apart from oneself as a result of one's action. So, for example, if the course of action is to open a health clinic, and this course is indeed known to be the virtually unconditional value for me to undertake as a morally self-transcending person, then simultaneously I realize a moral-personal value along with a vital value (health) and a social value (the clinic as an institution in the good of order).

This is why moral conversion involves a commitment to all values, not just to moral values. Indeed we can legitimately say that the moral thing to do in most concrete circumstances is to realize some value – be it vital, social, cultural or religious – that is distinct from personal value. It is for this reason, then, that moral conversion is a choice of *all* values, not just personal value. Unless we are willing to realize *whatever* value distinct from us that the situation and moral self-transcendence call for, then we are not yet fully morally converted. We are not yet committed to following the call of moral self-transcendence without restrictions or reservations or limitations.

So in the general sense "moral" does have to do with a whole attitude toward values in general. But this is because the proper

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<sup>28</sup> See "Which Scale of Value Preference? Lonergan, Scheler, von Hildebrand, and Doran," in *Meaning and History in Systematic Theology: Essays in Honor of Robert M. Doran*, S.J. ed. John Dadosky (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2009), 19-49.

<sup>29</sup> *Method in Theology*, 38.

realization of all such values in courses of action are grounded in the moral value of the person who decides and acts in accord with the normativity of moral self-transcendence.

### MORAL CONVERSION VERSUS PERFECTION

Of course, our decisions for moral conversion are only the "basic" actualizations of our moral self-transcendence. As Lonergan puts it:

Such conversion, of course, falls far short of moral perfection. Deciding is one thing, doing is another. One has yet to uncover and root out one's individual, group, and general bias. One has to keep distinct its elements of progress and its elements of decline. One has to keep scrutinizing one's intentional responses to values and their implicit scales of preference. One has to listen to criticism and protest. One has to remain ready to learn from others. For moral knowledge is the proper possession only of morally good men and, until one has merited that title, one has still to advance and learn.<sup>30</sup>

A person can make a real and genuine decision of moral conversion, with all that implies. That is to say, one can decide for values over against mere satisfaction, decide to cooperate with one's innate desire to know true *versus* apparent values, and commit to living according to all true values, not just some, in their real and objective scale of preference. Although each of these implied components may become clear only gradually, and one's decisions in favor of them may not come all at once, nevertheless, a person can make the basic decision for moral conversion really and genuinely. And yet, it can still take the rest of one's life to do the hard work of readjusting the actual horizon of feelings and scale of preferences about values that one has acquired up to that point. In some sense, then, although moral conversion has a decisive beginning, it is also an ongoing process. There will be struggles to remain firm in one's basic resolve of moral conversion. Most people will fail, even fail miserably at times. Those failures can become so discouraging that for a time people will give up on the effort of moral

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<sup>30</sup> *Method in Theology*, 240.

renewal. Most, however, will eventually recover and renew their commitment to live a life of authentic moral conversion and try again.

In summary, Cronin proposes the equivalence of moral value and personal value on the basis of the wholeness of the value of the person. He also proposes a distinction between a specific and a general sense of the term, moral. I have argued that the general sense is best understood by noticing that in every act of decision that realizes personal value also simultaneously involves a moral commitment to the realization of other values as well.

In these sections we have seen that there is ample support for Cronin's position in Lonergan's own writings. We now turn to a further element mentioned by Cronin, namely that the value of being a person is also "a center of interpersonal relations."<sup>31</sup> The significance of this further dimension of personal value and its relation to moral value will be the subject of the next sections.

### PERSONAL VALUE AND PERSONAL RELATIONS

People sometimes speak of having or not having personal relations. But in fact our lives are inescapably permeated by personal relations. We have good and bad personal relations, and when we have bad relations with some people, we sometimes speak as though we had no relations with them at all. We are acutely aware of some of our personal relations, but we also have personal relations about which are only dimly aware as well as personal relations we do not acknowledge at all. But in fact we always live our lives within an environment formed by personal relations, some of which we recognize but many which we do not. Of those we recognize, some really are good or bad, even contrary to our view of them.

Lonergan's interest in the phenomena of personal relations traces back at least to the publication of *Insight*. In its concluding "Epilogue," he remarked:

Since I believe personal relations can be studied adequately only in [a] larger and more concrete context, the skimpy

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<sup>31</sup> Cronin, *Value Ethics*, 164.

treatment accorded them in the present work is not to be taken as a denial of their singular importance in human living.<sup>32</sup>

Some years later he explained that he had originally intended *Insight* to extend into theological areas including the question of personal relations, but his appointment to a teaching post at the Gregorian University in Rome compelled him to "round off" the book short of that intended objective.<sup>33</sup>

He provided at least a glimpse of what he had in mind regarding personal relations in a summer lecture course in the year following the publication of *Insight*. In that course, now edited and published as *Topics in Education*,<sup>34</sup> he set forth an intermediate version of what he came to call the structure of the human good. He proposed this as a heuristic structure or framework for analyzing human social arrangements in terms of their value dimensions. That structure identifies three interrelated levels: a level of "particular goods" that a given social arrangement makes available; a level of institutional order ("good of order") that is the intelligible cooperative pattern of social arrangement; and a level of value in which personal relations play the key role.

(i) The level of "particular goods" concerns specific satisfactions of human needs and desires. The most obvious instances of particular goods are those which meet recurring biological needs for comfort, health, exercise, rest, reproduction, protection, and survival. Yet particular goods also include the satisfactions of the needs and desires for education, guidance, leadership, legal assistance, transportation, expression, recreation, entertainment, beauty, worship, etc. that arise in organized societies. All these examples of goods are called "particular" because they occur at and are limited to particular individuals at

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<sup>32</sup> *Insight*, 754.

<sup>33</sup> Bernard Lonergan, "Insight Revisited," in *A Second Collection*, ed. William F. J. Ryan, S.J. and Bernard J. Tyrrell, S.J. (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1974), 268. The main body text of *Insight* was 748 pages in its 1958 edition; it is 770 pages in the 1992 University of Toronto Press edition.

<sup>34</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *Topics in Education*, vol. 10 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993); the structure of the human good is found on pages 32-43. The most mature, although not the most detailed, version of his theory of the structure of the human good is found in *Method in Theology*, 47-52.

particular times and places. A particular meal is limited to me today; it does not satisfy your need for nourishment today nor mine tomorrow. Or, if I take a class, it satisfies for me one of my particular needs for education in a particular way. (On the other hand, the course itself is a component in the good of order, over and above the ways that it satisfies my individual needs for education.) The same can be said of any person's particular satisfactions of even higher particular needs as for, say, sympathy, legal advice, aesthetic enrichment, or worship.

(ii) The satisfaction of our biological as well as higher needs is, however, a recurring need, even in the most elementary societies. The recurrence of our needs calls for the creation and ongoing adaptation of institutions and networks of institutions that form a second level that Lonergan calls "good of order." At this level, particular goods that satisfy particular needs are provided on a regular, reliable basis by intelligently organized institutional patterns. By "institutions" Lonergan denotes a very broad class of informal as well as formal social arrangements. Families, neighborhoods, groups of friends getting together each week to play sports, and publicly administered beaches are institutions – as are the more obvious formal instances of businesses, banks, schools, courts of law, hospitals, and churches. Without such institutions, the satisfactions of particular needs would remain largely matters of blind chance.

These institutional patterns originate in insights. People have insights that discover ever new ways of doing things (skills), and ever new ways to organize skills into roles, and roles into institutional patterns of cooperation. Such insights make it possible to achieve by cooperation and organization what could not be achieved individually or separately. At their best institutions are the products of these human acts of ingenuity and practical intelligence that co-ordinate diverse human activities into efficacious patterns of cooperation and organization. The regularities of institutions result from the insights that produce informal as well as formal guidelines, norms, rules, and laws that channel human activities into cooperative patterns. Institutions continue to operate at their best when their members are able to use their insights and their intelligent and critical capacities for self-correction to adapt the institutions to changing conditions. Institutional patterns are "good" to the extent that people freely work together on the basis of mutual understanding, and to the extent that

these patterns constantly adapt, improve, and are continually refined through implementation of further new insights. An institutional order is not good if it operates only with rigid universal concepts of how things must be done, regardless of changing circumstances.

Just as institutions co-ordinate human skills and roles into regular patterns of cooperation, "goods of order" coordinate institutions into coherent and effective patterns of mutual dependence. A good of order is a sort of ecosystem of human institutions. Goods of order are

concrete, dynamic, and ordered totalities of desirable objects, of desiring subjects, of operations, and of results. So, for example, ... [in] the economic order of the region as a whole ... particular economic goods are greatly increased or diminished according to whether the overall economy is becoming better organized or is deteriorating.<sup>35</sup>

When we apply the language of rights to particular goods such as food, shelter, protection, health care and education, we must bear in mind that these rights are made real and delivered by institutional orders. Institutions not only ensure "entitlement" (positive) rights by delivering particular goods; they also (although less obviously) protect "immunity" (negative) rights such as freedom from interference with personal action. Moreover a great many rights actually pertain directly to the very participation in institutions. Rights to peaceful assembly, to vote, to due process, to work, to unionize, to freedom of the press, to obtain and dispose of personal property all refer to activities and roles that occur within institutional orders. Who is allowed to participate in the institutions and in what fashion are all matters of the how the institutions are organized and regulated. In a very real sense, then, it is more accurate to say that human rights exist and reside in institutional patterns (goods of order), than to say that they reside in individuals, as the discourse of political liberalism tends to do.

(iii) The level of personal relations pertains to *how* people treat one another. Two people can be performing exactly the same roles and tasks (e.g., nurse) in the very same kind of institution (e.g., hospital)

<sup>35</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics*, vol. 12 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert M. Doran and H. Daniel Monsour and trans. Michael G. Shields (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 493. For a more extended discussion of the good of order, see *Insight*, 237-39.

in two different cities, but they might be relating to their patients and co-workers in very different ways. Those different ways of interacting with the people involved in the same institutional patterns constitute the concrete patterns of personal relations. The ways that people relate to one another in, say, their hospital roles usually reflect the pattern of personal relations of the local culture – say the local municipality. One hospital will feel warm and welcoming while another will feel cold and business-like, even though both hospitals might be equally good at treating medical problems. How groups of people relate to one another while performing their institutional roles constitutes their networks of personal relations.

Personal relations originate in feelings (i.e., intentional responses to values), but they do not reside merely internally in sentiments. Personal relations also depend upon insights, but they do not reside in some merely idealistic realm. Personal relations reside in *how* people actually deal with one another *in doing* activities in their institutional and social settings.

Furthermore, the lived reality of personal relations is the most concrete embodiment of the values of social institutions. An institution may proclaim lofty values in its mission statement, but the reality of its mission-value is revealed in its pattern of personal relations. A group of people reveals the values to which they are collectively committed in the ways that they relate to one another and to those with whom they deal outside the institution. This is particularly true of the value of personhood. Lonergan observes that there is an intimate connection between the level of personal relations and the intelligible patterns of cooperation that occur in the institutional level of the good of order:

the two can also be united insofar as the person emerges with personal status within the [good of] order. Then the order is an order between persons, and the good of order is apprehended, not so much by studying the [institutional] schemes ... but by apprehending human relations... [T]he simplest and most effective apprehension of the good of order is in the apprehension of personal relations.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> *Topics in Education*, 41 (emphasis added).

Lonergan's use of the phrase "personal status" here refers to how a person is actually valued in a culture. That valuation is effected and constituted socially by the entire pattern of personal relations. An individual's personal value ("personal status") is implicitly defined by her or his place in a concrete, really existing pattern of relations among other persons. The meanings and values of recurring patterns of institutional interactions are what Lonergan calls cultural values.<sup>37</sup> Cultural values are carried in the ways that people in that culture (or sub-culture) relate to one another, in the pattern of their intricate and intimate personal relations. This pattern of cultural values may be expressed in stories, legends, gestures, rituals, monuments, and so on, but those expressions derive their meaning from and live on in the ongoing pattern of personal relations. The cultural valuation of a person is constituted by the cultural pattern into which she or he is thrown.

Certain values will hold the highest place in the culture of one set of personal relations, while other values will be prominent elsewhere. In one society success in business or competitive sports will predominate, whereas *joi d'vivre* will be preeminent in another. Likewise, economic efficiency, love of the motherland or fatherland, love of the proletariat can and have been extolled as the predominant values in various cultures. Other values (e.g., hard work, intellectual pursuits, artistic creativity, family affection, honesty, loyalty, modesty, generosity, etc.) rank nearer or farther away from the preeminent value, forming a particular culture's scale of value priorities. The preeminent value and its associated scale of values is to be discerned in the ways that certain people and their actions are honored, while others are ignored, or even despised. Every actual historical culture has valued some people more highly than others, even in spite of its discourse about universal human rights that affirms an unconditional value (dignity) of every human being. In concrete cultural patterns of how people are treating each other, each person is valued more highly, or more lowly, or outright devalued, in terms of the scale of values that is implicit in these patterns of interpersonal regard and interaction. A person's personal value is the value bestowed upon (or denied to) that person in the particular, concrete network of personal relations within which they live and move and have their being.

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<sup>37</sup> *Method in Theology*, 39.

Clearly this account of personal value and personal relations stands in some tension with the account offered in the previous sections of this paper. Up to this point, personal value has been understood as a matter of self-origination, not of cultural constitution. However, our exercise of moral self-transcendence always occurs in an interpersonal setting. Even hermits and recluses grow up in cultural settings and carry with them the experiences, memories, insights, judgments and feelings cultivated during the early stages of their lives. And in fact almost all hermits and recluses continue to interact in minimal ways from the margins of some cultural pattern, with its good of order and pattern of personal relationships.

For the rest of us, the ongoing flow of experiences that form the points of departure for our exercises of moral self-transcendence overwhelmingly derives from our experiences of the actions of other human beings. We try to make sense of what they are doing and what they mean. We try to determine the right things to do in response to our estimation of the patterns of personal relations within which we operate. In particular our feelings for values are cultivated by our interactions with the pattern of personal relations. This cultivation happens well before we have the intellectual maturity to notice or to criticize our affective formation. So powerful and pervasive is this cultivation of our feelings by the pattern of personal relations that our ability to think about it is always already formed by it. Almost no one can think about her or his cultural pattern apart from the powerful influence of its cultivation of feelings, unless she or he happens to become involved in a different pattern of personal relations that is strong enough to begin reshaping the horizon of feelings.

Thus, while in principle personal value is the value of a person originating the meaning of her or his being through the authentic exercise of the dynamism of moral self-transcendence, in fact that originating is powerfully shaped and even dominated by the concrete cultural pattern of personal relations. Virtually no one can constitute the value of her or his personhood (her or his personal value) all alone. Rather than coming independently to know and value oneself as an originator of value through authentically exercising moral-self-transcendence, concretely we use those activities to understand, feel, and accept the personal value that is communicated to us by our culture.

Hence the personal value that is proper to human beings as originators of value is not always validated by the concrete personal relations in institutions and cultures. Just as individuals can and do fail to affirm or chose themselves as an authentic personal value, even more frequently do cultures will fail to communicate and cultivate personal value in its full and proper sense in and through their concrete practices of personal relations. They may place this or that cultural ideal as the highest goal, almost completely ignoring the distinct and higher value of the person to which cultural ideals may be compared and in terms of which they may be criticized. Then there will be aberrations in the culture that lead to more overt or more subtle dynamics of oppression, alienation, and resentment, which will fester and grow. The pattern of personal relations will become ever more distorted in response, and the disparity between personal value in the normative sense and the values assigned to human beings by the culture will ever increase.

Nor is it possible to just dismiss these aberrant the valuations of persons effected by cultures as mere illusions. Even when shamefully flawed, such valuations still enter powerfully into the constitutions of the self-valuations of the members of cultures. A certain kind of stoicism might counsel one to ignore what society and culture say and to just be oneself. But what does it mean to be oneself? No one is a *solus ipse*. Whether or not this advice is taken seriously will depend upon the personal relations that form the hearers of such counsel. Self-appropriation itself relies upon a certain kind of community to cultivate the insights, judgments and feelings needed to arrive at this alternative evaluation.

To put the matter another way, the real possibility of moral conversion is heavily conditioned by one's community of personal relations. As Lonergan remarked, the possibility of coming to the existential moment for a decision of moral conversion is conditioned by the prior developments of feelings and knowledge, especially about the human condition. But both of these developments are massively mediated by personal relations. So if there is to be self-appropriation in Lonergan's full sense, it will have to be facilitated by entry into a community of personal relations where genuine self-appropriation is given high priority. This priority cannot be solely a matter of ideas and pronouncements or even papers at conferences. The priority will have

to be manifest in the ways that the members of such a community treat one another.

### THE MORE CONCRETE PATTERN OF HUMAN-DIVINE PERSONAL RELATIONS

Lonergan himself, of course, did not have a Lonergan-inspired community to bring him to his own decisions for conversion, moral as well as intellectual, religious and affective. He did however did have access to an intellectual historical community of personal relations that included Aquinas, Newman, Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Hegel, Marx, Chesterton, the existentialists, the phenomenologists and others. But what he made of their ideas was something that few others could have made. What, then, was the community of personal relations that enabled Lonergan himself to come to his own clarity about his call to moral conversion?

This is certainly a question beyond my ability to answer in any really meaningful way. But I would like to suggest something that I think Lonergan himself would endorse – namely, that his achievements were absolutely dependent upon the fact that he was part of a powerful and still wider pattern of human-divine personal relations that transcended his or any particular culture. More than anything else, Lonergan's participation in the human-divine personal relations contributed to his own ability to make his own great converting decisions.

This means of course that the preceding account of personal relations is incomplete. The divine dimensions of personal relations has not yet been included. These divine dimensions lift the patterns of personal relations above the sorts of cultural limitations and prejudices that the philosophy and language of universal human rights seek to remedy.

During his teaching career at the Gregorian University, Lonergan offered courses on the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, which have now been edited and published as *The Triune God: Systematics*.<sup>38</sup> Most of his work on this topic focused on developing a quite technical analogical theory about the personal relations among the three divine Persons within the oneness of God. The details of that theory would require

<sup>38</sup> See "General Editors' Preface," *The Triune God*, xvii-xxii.

a lengthy tangential digression, which must be foregone for present purposes. Two key points however are immediately relevant: (i) that the divine Persons are constituted by their mutual personal relations arising from the two "processions" ("generation" and "spiration");<sup>39</sup> and (ii) that those personal relations are relations of unconditional love and unrestricted mutual understanding.<sup>40</sup>

Using his explorations of the relations internal to God among the three divine Persons, Lonergan then developed his theology of the divine missions. Through the missions of the Son and Spirit, the personal relations among the three divine persons are communicated to human beings. In speaking of divine missions Lonergan had in mind such scriptural passages as: "As the Father has sent me, so I send you." (John 20:21); and "When the Advocate comes whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of truth that proceeds from the Father, he will testify to me." (John 15:26). These and similar passages affirm that the First Person of the Trinity (whom Jesus called Father) sends forth on missions to humanity the Second and Third Persons (Son and Holy Spirit). Further, as the Gospel passages indicate, human beings are gradually incorporated into and participate in these divine missions ("so I send you").

Lonergan explores what it means for the purely divine personal relationships of unconditional love and understanding to enter into the network of finite human relationships by God's initiative. Because the Son is sent to humanity, and because to be the Son is to be in relationship to the Father and the Holy Spirit, these divine relationships enter into and transform human relationships through the mediation of the Son.

Likewise, the mission of the Holy Spirit also brings the divine

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<sup>39</sup> *The Triune God*, 180-89.

<sup>40</sup> Lonergan's theology offers no more than an "imperfect understanding," for Lonergan affirmed the utter transcendent mystery of God. Hence, his theology did not pretend to offer a direct explanation of the divine Trinity. The best that this theology could offer was an analogous ("imperfect") understanding of the Trinity. Following traditional lines, Lonergan sought the best possible analogous understanding of the Persons by means of the relations, or "processions," within the one eternal God. He explores how the processions of unrestricted understanding and unconditional loving constitute the relations among the divine Persons both as divine and as Persons. In their relationships they love, value, understand, and constitute one another unconditionally. As Lonergan puts it, "we call the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit *persons*... [among other things] by reason of relations both among themselves and to us" (*Triune God*, 313).

relationships of unconditional love and unrestricted mutual understanding into play within the pattern of human personal relationships. In this regard, Lonergan frequently quoted the passage from St. Paul's *Letter to the Romans* (5:5): "God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us." Lonergan identified the gift (mission) of the Holy Spirit with the religious experience of "being in love in an unconditional fashion."<sup>41</sup> He agreed with St. Paul that this experience is not primarily a matter of our love for God. It is, rather, God's own love poured into us. It is God's infinite and unconditional love of everything about every thing and every one – in all of our particularities, concretely situated as we are, living out our lives in performing our responsibilities in very concrete institutions.

Lonergan was nevertheless quite emphatic that the self-gift of God's love in the mission of the Holy Spirit is not at all restricted to Christianity. Lonergan argued that this gift and the experience of it is transcultural, and that it is the transcendent basis of all genuine religions, non-Christian as well as Christian.<sup>42</sup> As Lonergan put it, the Holy Spirit has an "invisible" mission that touches the inner heart of every human being and thereby transforms the pattern of human personal relations in many different religious settings. On the other hand, while Christ is also for all humankind, still Christ has a specific "visible" mission that originates at a particular place and time, and emanates outward as His disciples outwardly preach the good news of God's personal entry into our personal relations.<sup>43</sup>

The ultimate goal of the divine missions, as Lonergan put it, "is the divine good itself."<sup>44</sup> The divine missions ultimately draw humanity ever more into the fullness of the loving embrace of the personal relations among the three divine Persons. The divine missions achieve this by transforming all aspects and all levels of human interactions.

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<sup>41</sup> *Method in Theology*, 105-106.

<sup>42</sup> *Method in Theology*, 108-109, 278-83. See also Frederick E. Crowe, S.J., "Lonergan's Universalist View of Religion," *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 12 (1994): 147-79. Elsewhere Crowe writes: "Whereas the Son of God was given once and for all in a particular place and at a particular time, the Spirit is not given once and for all, but continues to be given over and over, in every place and at every time, in an ongoing Pentecost." *The Lonergan Enterprise* (Cambridge, MA: Cowley Publications, 1980), 89.

<sup>43</sup> *The Triune God*, 491ff.

<sup>44</sup> *The Triune God*, 495.

Loneragan described this transforming effect of divine personal relations in the following way:

although the other goods of order externally imitate that supreme good of order that we observe in the Holy Trinity, nevertheless ... the economy of salvation, which is ordered to participation in divine beatitude itself, should not only imitate the order of the Holy Trinity but also in some manner participate in that order. For this reason the very divine persons who from eternity proceed from the Father are also in time sent by the Father to initiate and strengthen new personal relations of reconciliation and love with human persons.<sup>45</sup>

Loneragan interprets Christian images, such as the "Kingdom of God" and the "economy of salvation," as pertaining to this entry of the divine personal relations into human personal relations. This newly inaugurated pattern of personal relations "is called a kingdom because of its similarity to a good political of order" or to be "an economy [of salvation] because of its similarity to the good of order in acquiring, producing, and managing material things."<sup>46</sup> In other words, the transformed divine-human personal relations are lived out in institutional patterns (goods of order) in which persons cooperate with one another to meet their needs and realize their highest values. Reciprocally, the transformed personal relations determine what kinds of institutional patterns will be appropriate to the living out of these relations.

For we want to communicate what is good to those whom we love; we gladly cooperate with them to bring about what is good; to make our cooperation more effective, we acquire the necessary habits and detest the contrary defects; and so, supposing the union of love, all the other things follow that make for the good of order, as is most plainly seen in marriage.<sup>47</sup>

The loving personal relations of a family guide the planning of how to organize tasks and roles so as to meet the needs of the family. Likewise,

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<sup>45</sup> *The Triune God*, 497.

<sup>46</sup> *The Triune God*, 495.

<sup>47</sup> *The Triune God*, 495.

as new needs and conditions come along, love of one's school, company, neighborhood, city, or country also guides the ways that people exercise their intelligences in improving and adapting institutional structures, in order to maintain the commitment to the those that they love. But of course in his discussion of the divine missions, Lonergan was primarily focused upon the love of God and the love of all that God understands and loves in the way that God loves them because God loves them. When God's unconditionally loving personal relations gain a foothold, then human beings use their intelligences, their critical reasoning, and their personal responsibility to devise the organizations and institutions, roles and skills that are needed to nourish and foster those divine loving relations on this earth.<sup>48</sup>

In this way, the entry of God's divine personal relations into human personal relations establishes the most profound foundation for personal value. Because of God's unconditional understanding, God knows each and every human being as she or he is situated in all her or his unique, concrete, institutional relations with all other beings. Through God's unconditional love, God values each and every person as she or he exists in her or his unique network of relationships. Through the divine missions God communicates that unconditional value of each person. That unconditional love for each of us establishes an unconditional worth that is the most profound and unsurpassable meaning of human personal value. Because the love is unconditional, and because it grounds the value of persons that depends on nothing other than God's love, even a person's failures to fully and realize herself or himself as an authentic instance of true personal value cannot annihilate that deeper sense of personal value. Every person will always be valued by God as unconditionally lovable, no matter what. That is most fundamental meaning of human dignity – the value with which God endows each person in light of God's unconditional love.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> John C. Haughey, S.J. rightly points out that responsibility for rights "can and should be located foundationally within what Lonergan describes as 'the invariant structure of human consciousness,'" in his "Responsibility for Human Rights: Contributions from Bernard Lonergan," *Theological Studies* 63 (2002): 770-71.

<sup>49</sup> Technically of course God does not "see"; God's knowledge of our value is had in God's unconditional love for us.

By entering into the network of human personal relations, God shares with human beings that unconditional valuation of personal value, which is to be lived out in appropriate institutional patterns of cooperation. God's transformation of personal relations bestows a radically new valuation of the personal value of each human being, and also sets in motion the quest for the social, economic, political and cultural institutions that will make it concretely possible to value and to relate to one another as God values us.

Given this sense of personal value, human rights may be understood as norms that make it possible for human beings to participate in patterns of institutional cooperation that promote this transcendent value of human dignity. Human rights are concerned with making it possible for human beings to intelligently, creatively, and critically adapt and develop those institutional patterns for the sake of living together in God's transformed personal relations.<sup>50</sup> For example, economic rights to property, housing, food, health care have to do with securing the biological conditions needed for the sake of living out divinely transformed personal relations. Civil rights of speech, assembly, press, are normative because people need to be free from coercion so that they can use their imaginations, come up with insights about how to cooperate ever better, and to communicate and perfect those ideas through mutual criticism and dialogue, for the sake of better realizing the divinized personal relations.<sup>51</sup>

## LOVE AND PERSONAL VALUE

While we can offer philosophical and theological accounts of the value of the person as a whole, it is only in and through love that people actually come to consciousness of personal value – the value of a person as a

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<sup>50</sup> See Haughey, "Responsibility for Human Rights," 770-73.

<sup>51</sup> My use of the idea of viewing rights as "minimal conditions" for participation in social goals is certainly not original; see for example Mary Ann Glendon, *The World Made New: Eleanor Roosevelt and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (New York: Random House, 2001), 313, and David Hollenbach, S.J., *Claims in Conflict* (New York: Paulist Press, 1979), 48. What is original here is the proposal that rights are to be understood as guarantees and conditions for promoting the participation in the personal relations transformed by the divine missions.

whole – in the most complete and most concrete way.<sup>52</sup> This is because unconditional love is the most complete of all personal relations.

When two persons are completely in love and so long as they remain completely in love, they are one. Being-in-love *is* their oneness, their wholeness, the wholeness of their value as persons. Yet being-in-love is not the merger or absorption of one person *into* the other – a merger that would obliterate the identity of the first person. Rather, both are *in* one and the same complete loving. Falling in love is the coming to awareness of what has always been true all along, though not recognized. Falling in love is discovery that the value of both the lover and the beloved person has always abided in love. Each is conscious of the value of the wholeness of the other (and also of her or his own value) as the love they are in. The value of each is the value of unrestricted being in love. The lover is conscious of the value of the beloved because the beloved *is in* the love, and the lover is in that same love.

Complete and unconditional love is the unified value which differentiates itself into persons. Their differences as distinct persons emerge as differentiations within the unity of love that both are in and remain in unconditionally. The value of persons is most fully and completely the value of the unity of love out of which they are called to be emissaries and agents. To love another person unconditionally is to become one consciously with the love-liness, the love-ableness, which is the value of that person. Love knows a value of the person as a whole that goes beyond the person's obvious or hidden faults – the disvalues that mar the fullness of their moral value.

This being-in-love is a oneness not just with the one other person upon whom one's loving attention is fixed. In complete love we to become one with *all* with whom we *are* in-love, whose value is to-be-in-love. This is the community persons in the network of personal relations that constitute the value of the totality of history. To love one person unconditionally is to become conscious of that person as a love-able member of the unified value that is the love-ableness of the historical community of persons. However, while being in love is a

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<sup>52</sup> Beginning with Kant, modern ethical and political philosophy has attempted to ground to supreme value of personhood in respect. While this is an important development in the history of human culture, it would require a separate article to adequately argue the insufficiency of this approach. It will, however, be addressed briefly in §10 of this article.

consciousness of this unity with all persons in the personal relations of history, it is not yet a knowledge or a deliberate acceptance of that unity. Acknowledging that this is so takes considerable further developments in understandings, feelings, judgments and decisions.

Jesuit Gregory Boyle brings this to light in his sensitive reflections on his work with gang members in Los Angeles. His book *Tatoos on the Heart* witnesses to the loveableness of each and every person, even those who have been involved in heinous gang-related crimes. He reports how recognition of such love has been transformative of the lives of hundreds of people. He writes that this transformative power comes from

the loving, caring adult who pays attention. It's the community of unconditional love, representing the very "no matter whatness" of God... Sometimes resilience arrives in the moment you discover your own unshakeable goodness. Poet Galway Kinnell writes, "Sometimes it's necessary to reteach a thing its loveliness."<sup>53</sup>

Boyle attests that the loveliness of persons is constituted by the unconditional love of God. Falling in love with another person is falling into that love, and finding the value of the beloved in there as well. Of course this does not necessarily mean that the lover thinks of the love that she or he is in as the love of God. Most often lover's attention is directed toward the beloved, rather than toward the love that they are in.

It is in love that the value of a person as a whole is revealed. Other feelings feel the value of a person's physical appearance, physical strength or healthy vigor, their intelligence, practical know-how, wit, generosity, courage, self-control, aesthetic creativity, compassion, nobility and other moral qualities. But beyond these values of persons there is the value of personhood as a whole, and this is known fully only in love. Love of the value of the wholeness of someone as a person is not limited to love for their achievements. It is love of a wholeness that precedes and in fact is the condition of achievements.

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<sup>53</sup> Gregory Boyle, *Tatoos on the Heart: The Power of Boundless Compassion* (New York: Free Press, 2010), 87.

Tad Dunne remarks that in love “we appreciate the value of one another simply for being.”<sup>54</sup> His phrase, “simply for being” is apt, and yet invites fuller analysis. The being of a human person is the existence of an intelligible “unity, identity, whole” as Lonergan puts it.<sup>55</sup> But ontologically a human person is not just any sort of intelligible unity. Human persons are special kinds of unities. The special kinds of unities that we are, are characterized by the special acts of consciousness that we perform. What makes our acts of consciousness special (and so also we as the persons who perform them) is the fact that they are constituted as oriented toward complete and unlimited value and goodness – the value of unconditional love.<sup>56</sup>

Thus it is the wholeness of the value of human personhood analyzed in the previous sections that is grasped concretely in unconditional love. That is to say, we meet our experiences with questions for understanding, and then meet our acts of understanding with questions of factual truth or questions of the value of pursuing our idea about a course of action, and then respond to our judgments of value with decisions and actions. If those decisions and actions do not contribute to the realization of unconditional goodness, they, too, are met with further questions and feelings that leave us discontented or even guilty. For that reason, each person as the wholeness who performs acts so structured is a whole intimately bound up with the profound value of unconditional goodness. We are intrinsically connected with unconditional goodness by our characteristic way of performing. Dietrich von Hildebrand makes this point when he writes:

In the case of great love, we experience the lovability of the beloved as the only reason of our love; his beauty and goodness come as a complete surprise. But at the same time we experience that the beloved is the fulfillment of everything for which in an indistinct way and with our entire being we have always longed.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Tad Dunne, *Doing Better: The Next Revolution in Ethics* (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2010), 33.

<sup>55</sup> *Insight*, 343.

<sup>56</sup> See also Dietrich von Hildebrand, *Christian Ethics* (New York: David Mackay Co., 1953), 222.

<sup>57</sup> von Hildebrand, *Christian Ethics*, 222-23.

It is in love that the wholeness of personal value is neither just longed for or argued for, but brought to full awareness.

The fact that the value of our personhood is constituted by love in no way guarantees that we will respond with decisions and actions that are worthy expressions of that value. Tragically, we can and do betray the value that we are as persons, not only before we come to consciousness of that fact by falling in love, but even afterwards. We can disfigure our personhood as well as that of others by decisions and actions that fail to meet all the questions that would be requisite for fully authentic actions. Nevertheless, these actions manifest our value as unconditionally loved precisely as disfigurement of that value of unconditional love. This is why it is possible to love another person even knowing full well their flaws and even the evils they have done. Loveableness as the value of a person is even is the condition of the possibility that persons can deliberately betray and reject love.<sup>58</sup>

### A CASE STUDY: PERSONAL RELATIONS AND THE U.S. CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT<sup>59</sup>

Lonergan's account of how God's personal relations constitute an evaluation of human personhood can be discerned in another very concrete way at a key moment in the American Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s. In his 1963 "A Letter from a Birmingham Jail," Martin Luther King, Jr. answers the criticisms leveled at him in an open letter from eight prominent Alabama clergymen.<sup>60</sup> These critics accused King

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<sup>58</sup> Max Scheler acknowledges this when he speaks of the "endurance" of a value apart from changing vicissitudes. "When we execute the act of loving a person (on the basis of his personal value) ... [the] *phenomenon of endurance* is implicit in both the [personal] value to which we are directed and the experienced value of the *act of love*." *Formalism in Ethics and the Non-Formal Ethics of Value*, trans. Manfred S. Frings and Roger L. Funk (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1973), 91. It should be noted, however, that Scheler makes it sound as though personal value somehow preexists acts of love, rather than that human acts of falling in love are acts that bring to consciousness personal value precisely as lovely.

<sup>59</sup> An earlier version of this and the preceding section can be found in "Universal Rights or Personal Relations?" in *Christianity and Human Rights: Christians and the Struggle for Global Justice*, ed. Frederick M. Shepherd (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2009), 99-118.

<sup>60</sup> See <http://www.virtualology.com/virtualmuseumofhistory/hallofusa/>

both of inciting violence, and of betraying his ministerial obligation to uphold moral uprightness by breaking the city's laws. King's famous letter is his response, where he draws upon his learning and weaves together an impressive lesson on the nature of just and unjust laws. It has become a classic in moral reflection in the United States.

Before turning his attention to the question of whether the laws were just, however, King begins his letter by answering the charge of inciting violence. There King explains the theory of nonviolent direct action that he had learned from Mohandas K. Gandhi. King explains that nonviolent direct action requires careful completion of four basic steps: assessment, negotiation, self-purification, and direct action. Assessment, in King's words, is the "collection of the facts to determine whether injustices are alive."<sup>61</sup> Genuine negotiation, or at least the sincere effort to negotiate, must precede any escalation to the level of direct action. This is so because direct action itself "seeks to create such a crisis and establish such creative tension ... [in order to] dramatize the issue [so] that it can no longer be ignored."<sup>62</sup> If these direct actions were not preceded by sincere attempts at negotiation, then they could not justifiably be called actions of the last resort, and the resulting crisis would lose its moral stature and its potential for creative resolution.

Still, it is the third step, self-purification, that is the most essential of all. Without self-purification, direct action could not be nonviolent. Nor could it be the source of the sort of *creative* tension that King envisioned.

So we had no alternative except that of preparing for direct action, whereby we would present our very bodies as a means of laying our case before the conscience of the local and national community. We were not unmindful of the difficulties involved. So we decided to go through a process of self-purification. We started having workshops on nonviolence and repeatedly asked ourselves the questions, "Are you able to accept blows without retaliating?" "Are you able to endure the ordeals of jail?"<sup>63</sup>

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famousamericans/martinlutherkingjr.info/mlk/, accessed April 7, 2011; cited hereafter as "Letter."

61 "Letter," 290.

62 "Letter," 291.

63 "Letter," 291.

Of course, effective workshops on self-purification entail much more than asking these questions. They involve practices of prayer, scriptural reflection, meditation, imaginative anticipation, role-playing, and imitation (e.g., imitating Christ or St. Francis or Gandhi). These practices include rehearsing bodily behaviors and in so doing they are indispensable preparations for nonviolent demonstrations.

Self-purification is a process whereby "natural" impulses of self-protection give way to other actions. The meaning of these alternative actions is a dramatic meaning. Actors in nonviolent demonstrations deliberate about and choose to introduce these actions into the ongoing human drama of personal relations of the local culture. In Birmingham and in other nonviolent demonstrations, these were actions deliberately chosen in order to dramatically portray the injustices of racial segregation. The nonviolent protestors simply performed roles of free assembly at various institutions that white people performed day in and day out. The nonviolent protestors did so knowing that they would expose themselves to arrests and physical injury. In eliciting these responses, they allowed the underlying violence that enforced segregation laws to rise to the surface, and thereby they made the full reality of the dramatic pattern of distorted personal relations much more evident.

African-Americans were profoundly devalued by the prevailing pattern of segregated personal relations. In a racist network of personal relations, African-Americans were assigned the value of being less than fully valued persons, although it took the Civil Rights Movement in the United States to make this fact powerfully evident to all. A network of personal relations can be violent, without this being obviously so. The nonviolent demonstrators intended to reveal both the devaluation of human beings and the underlying violence of these patterns of personal relations. Where there are such patterns of personal relations, there is no real outer peace. There is at best the illusion of peace – the peace that the world gives.

Still, we may ask, if the valuation of a person is constituted by the cultural pattern into which she or he is thrown, how is it possible for a devalued person to overcome this degradation? From whence spring the individuals who know and value themselves more positively? Fortunately, no one cultural pattern of personal relations will be fully

determinative. Alternative and counter-cultural patterns of personal relations can exist and do arise within dominant patterns. It was no accident that the Civil Rights Movement sprang primarily from the African American churches, and this has now been well documented. Humanly, these churches are patterns of personal relations that constitute a positive valuation of persons. They constitute patterns of personal relations that are counter-cultural to the prevailing racist patterns of personal relations. Yet churches are not merely human organizations. African American churches are institutions that incorporate the fuller array divine-human personal relations. Like other religious organizations, at times the African American churches did this imperfectly, better at some times and locations than at others. Nevertheless, it was the real albeit often submerged evaluation of persons by God that made it possible for people to know and value themselves as God knows and values them, and the churches manifested this divine valuation. Their acceptance of God's valuation of them as persons made possible the alternative dramatic actions of civil rights demonstrators, and that made possible the dramatic (though not yet completed) transformation of personal relations in the United States.

At its deepest level, then, the Civil Rights Movement was an effort to effect a revolution in personal relations. King used to say that his objective was not merely the legal reform of civil rights, but the "beloved community."<sup>64</sup> In Lonergan's terms, the Beloved Community refers to patterns of human interaction where God's personal relations determine how people are valued. In that community, God's personal relations inform and govern human participation in institutional cooperation at all levels. This is why King did not stop with legislation such as the Civil Rights Act (1964) and the Voter Rights Act (1965), but went on to demonstrate for transformations in economic institutions as well.

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<sup>64</sup> See James H. Cone, *Martin & Malcolm & America: A Dream or a Nightmare?* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991), 63-66, 297. This is the profound dimension of King's movement that Malcolm X failed to recognize in his criticisms of King.

## MORAL VALUE AND HISTORY

In order to bring this essay full circle, let us return to the point from which we began, and let us ask in a new way why the high, sovereign, and solemn qualities that we associate with moral value should be properly equated with personal value. Morality is thought of as posing a very high standard, and often is thought of as detached and impersonal, even harsh and unsympathetic, indifferent to the concrete difficulties faced by persons in people in the circumstances of their ordinary lives. By way of contrast, the language of personal relations carries connotations of compassion, warmth and adaptability to such circumstances and difficulties within which persons find themselves. But again, the language of moral obligation seems to rise above persons toward a much more lofty and sovereign perspective.

Have we not, perhaps, somehow gone wrong in equating moral value and personal value? What might it be about personal value that legitimates placing it at the austere level of moral value? The arguments presented previously may be intellectually satisfying and convincing, but what about the moral feeling tone of this connection? Does the felt sense of personal value really correspond with the felt sense of moral value?

Some guidance can be had in this matter, if we turn to the thinker who was perhaps the first to equate moral worth and the dignity of personhood – namely, Immanuel Kant. The moral concept of duty, said Kant, “already dwells in the natural sound understanding and needs not so much to be taught as merely to be elucidated.”<sup>65</sup> He set himself the task of providing precisely this kind of elucidation in his moral philosophy. Duty for Kant – and for many still today – carried the profound sense of something quite sovereign. Duty makes great demands on persons, so much so that Kant attributed its high imperative quality to the necessity and universality of law: “Duty is the *necessity* of an action done out of respect for the law.”<sup>66</sup>

But Kant quickly moved from the formulation of the categorical imperative in terms of universality to more complete formulations in terms of the respect due persons and their autonomy. Kant argued that,

<sup>65</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. James W. Ellington (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing, 1981), 9 <397>.

<sup>66</sup> Kant, *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*, 13 <400> (emphasis added).

precisely because the moral law of duty arises in human consciousness from the self-legislation of practical reason, therefore rational beings have the same high moral status and deserve the same respect as is due moral law. That is to say, since by practical reason we give the law to ourselves, our reception of moral law by constitutes us as carriers of moral law. As rational beings we thereby possess its worth and therefore are due the same respect as is due moral law: "All respect for a person is properly only respect for the law ... of which the person provides an example."<sup>67</sup> On this basis Kant sets forth one of his famous formulations of the categorical imperative: "Act in such a way that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of another, always at the same time as an end and never simply as a means."<sup>68</sup>

But just as importantly, we *give* the moral law to ourselves. This means that we are self-legislating, autonomous lawgivers (*auto* = self; *nomos* = law). We are not only carriers of moral law, but we are also the very authors of it, for we enact it upon ourselves. As self-legislators, we are once again persons deserving of the respect due the worth of moral law.

Now it is not difficult to recognize strong parallels between Kant's notion of the supreme dignity of persons and rational autonomy on the one hand, and Lonergan's account of originating value and personal value on the other. Where for Kant persons have the high moral status of dignity because they both give and receive moral law, for Lonergan persons are penultimate in the scale of values because by authentically thinking, valuing, deciding and acting they originate both the values of courses of action and also themselves as authentic moral, personal values. Like Kant, Lonergan also endeavored to elucidate the structure of moral self-transcendence that is always already immanent and operative in human thinking, deciding and acting. There are great differences, of course, in their diverging accounts of reasoning and the kinds of values originated. But here we can begin to feel more clearly how it is that a person as originator of value through the processes of moral self-transcendence deserves the lofty place in the order of values associated with moral value.

But Kant went still further, setting forth what he regarded as the

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<sup>67</sup> Kant, *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*, 14 <401> n14.

<sup>68</sup> Kant, *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*, 36 <429>.

most concrete formulation to the categorical imperative. Insofar as every person legislates the universal law for herself or himself, he or she thereby belongs to a "kingdom of ends." That is to say, persons are "ends in themselves," but also their very self-legislation places them in relationships with every other person-as-end. This is so because every person is autonomously self-legislating that every person is to be treated as an end and not solely as a means. Because the content of this self-legislation is universally the same, willed individually but shared by all, all persons are brought into the "systematic union" that Kant calls the kingdom of ends.<sup>69</sup> Even though each member of the kingdom of ends wills the moral law independently and autonomously, the content of the law is the same for all, because it is the universal content of respect for the dignity of all persons. This means that the dignity and respect for persons is closely linked with their membership in something grander than any one person individually, namely the possibility of a fully moral society.

Just as Kant drew out the implications of dignity and autonomy for the normative social order of the kingdom of ends, so also we may follow Lonergan in drawing out the consequences of moral self-transcendence for the order of history. As with so many things, Lonergan's definition of history is heuristic. That is to say, Lonergan does not define history directly – who could, given the vast details of history in its concreteness and the amazing variations in social and cultural patterns? Instead, Lonergan's definition of history is indirect, second order, and heuristic. That is to say, his definition of history is formulated in terms of how history is realized. History as Lonergan envisioned it is the "human good as developing object" that is realized through "human apprehension and choice."<sup>70</sup>

"Apprehension" here abbreviates the pattern of activities that make up human thinking and valuing; "choice" abbreviates deciding and acting. Human history, then, is the *sequence* of events brought about through the multiplicity of human apprehensions, choices and actions. This resulting sequence of events has the structure of a narrative, a story. *Each and every human decision and action is an indispensable ingredient in this actual story.* Change the decisions and actions, and

<sup>69</sup> Kant, *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*, 39-40 <433-34>.

<sup>70</sup> *Topics in Education*, 32

you change the story. But what kind of story does human history have?

Loneragan spent a good deal of his career rethinking and revising his theory of history. On a couple of occasions, he likened his approach to history to Newton's work on the solar system. As Lonergan put it, Newton's first law of motion would mean that in the absence of any external forces, a planet would move uninterrupted in a perfectly straight line as a first approximation. But under the influence of the gravitation force of the sun, the second approximation be that of a planet deviating from a straight line into an orbit of one of the conic sections. But the third approximation would incorporate the lesser gravitation forces of other bodies in the solar system, yielding a complex, wobbly sort of an orbit that deviates from a perfect conic section.

Loneragan suggested that the story of human history could likewise be thought of in terms of a series of three sets of approximations. In the first approximation, human history could be regarded as resulting solely from the authentic exercise of moral self-transcendence, and yielding therefore a pure uninterrupted line of progress. But the second approximation takes into account the vast number of human actions that result from biases and that abandon the path of moral self-transcendence. The result of these two approximations, therefore, would not be a pure stream of ever improving human lives, social arrangements, and culturally enriched patterns of personal relations. Rather, the result would be the "social surd," a complex mixture of values and disvalues determining the forms of human social interaction. Human social situations therefore become fragmented, and the next wave of responses to this fragmentation will itself be fragmented. Human history becomes a distorted dialectic, a mixture of progress and decline. Whether decline or progress or stalemate will ultimately prevail is unknowable from the point of view of moral self-transcendence alone. The third approximation, of course, comes from taking into account the ways that the divine personal relations enter into human hearts and human actions. This entry slowly heals the devastating effects of bias and sin, and yields an even more complex picture of the transitions from one social situation to the next. This very concrete series of transformations is the story of human history.

This brings us, then, to a still deeper felt apprehension about why personal value stands so high in the order of values. Personal value

is what we do with the gifts of originating value (grounded in the transcendental notion of value) and unconditional love. In our deciding and acting, we constitute ourselves as we simultaneously contribute to the unfolding of the human story. We make of ourselves the persons, authentic or inauthentic, who play indispensable roles in the story of human history. Out of a false sense of humility, we might think that our small and petty actions do not change the course of history. But we do not know that. In fact, we should know the exact opposite. We should know that history is what it is in all of its concreteness. Change an episode or change a character in that story, and the story itself is changed. If the ultimate story of human history is one of development and progress, then it becomes so through the multitude of authentic human actions. If the ultimate story is one of decline, it is because inauthentic actions have overwhelmed the authentic. If the ultimate story is the overcoming of decline, then it is because the personal relations of God have empowered human actions to effect such an achievement.

When we look out at the great forces and momentums of history, we can be tempted to say nothing we can do will change its outcome. But this is because we are trapped in our imaginations rather than engaging in self-transcendence to concretely think and evaluate the reality and value of history. I might wish and imagine that I could stop an impending war or end poverty by some action I might take. I might imagine that such actions are the only actions I could do that would affect the outcome of history. But those are just fantasies about history. They are not engaging with the reality or true value of history or of my actual decisions and actions and their consequences for the story of history.

In reality and in value, each and every human decision and action affects the story of human history. It affects how the story as a *whole*, how the *whole* story turns out (not just the last episode with which the story ends). The good of that story is to be discerned in the history of the ever-changing patterns human and divine personal relations, just as the real mission of an institution is to be discerned in the personal relations among its members and those it encounters.

Because the decisions and actions of each and every human being constitute some part of that dynamic pattern of personal relations,

what is at stake in each of our decisions and actions is human destiny, the story of humanity. We constitute ourselves as persons in and through our exercises of and evasions of moral self-transcendence. But just as concretely, we affect the constitution of the history of personal relations within which we emerge as persons. As Kant elucidated the full meaning of the moral worth of all human persons by means of their places in the kingdom of ends, so also Lonergan elucidates the meaning of the value of persons by means of the indispensable contributions they make to the ultimate destiny of human history. But that is a value that is ultimately found in the unconditional love of God – the unconditionally loving divine personal relations that constitute the loveableness of the whole of human history unconditionally, and thereby the unconditional loveableness of each person.

Suppose we were to look back from the end of history and ask ourselves, "Am I proud of who I am in the story of human history?" How will we respond?

This, I suggest, is a way apprehending that the austerity of the felt sense of moral value is indeed equivalent to the feeling of personal value. Constituting oneself as a person is intrinsically bound up with constituting something much grander than my individual self. It is the discovery of the value of oneself as having a responsibility for the outcome of human history, and that realization certainly evokes feelings of "ever new and increasing admiration and awe" as Kant said of the starry heavens and the moral law.<sup>71</sup> This is an awesome sense of the value of what it means to be a person, an agent in bringing about that austere good. It is also the discovery that constituting oneself as personal value is a response to God's unconditional love which constitutes one's participation in the loveableness of history. This discovery further intensifies one's awe with at the value of being a person. Discovering that to be a person is to be much more than being an individual, with much more at stake, is implicit in that moment of what Lonergan calls the existential decision for or against moral conversion – the decision to follow or not to follow the call of moral self-transcendence.

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<sup>71</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, trans. Mary Gregor (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 133; I have substituted "awe" for "reverence" as translation of *Ehrfurcht*.

## THE POSSIBILITY OF HOPE

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Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and reverence.

1 Peter 3.15-16

I AM CONCERNED TO UNDERSTAND what "the mind and heart of hope," the theme of this year's workshop, means.<sup>1</sup> Since this theme relates directly to my work as a hospice physician, I talk first about some of my experiences with dying patients and then tie this to my study of Lonergan. I believe that I am working in the functional specialty, interpretation. I beg the indulgence of theologians among my readers, for though as a physician I swim every day in the waters of hope, when it comes to speaking systematically about hope, I am definitely a fish out of water.

My paper is in three sections: the first, based on my hospice experience; the second, on my study of Lonergan; and the third, on the subject of grief in Augustine's *Confessions*. Along the way, I advance three theses regarding hope based on Lonergan's work. As will become apparent, these theses arise not only out of my own experience and

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<sup>1</sup> I am not aware that Lonergan actually used this phrase himself. In "The Future of Christianity," he does say, "While God may be conceived rationally as the ground of the universe, and personally as the 'Thou' we interiorly address, still these movements of the human mind and heart are held to be inadequate to reveal what God is," and he refers to love as a "dynamic state" and to hope as "security and confidence" in relation to God. But these statements are not sufficient to fix the terms and relations of the "mind and heart of hope." See Bernard Lonergan, *A Second Collection*, ed. William F. J. Ryan, S.J. and Bernard J. Tyrrell, S.J. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), 150-54.

study, but in dialogue with several papers delivered at last year's workshop on the theme of faith.

**Thesis 1:** Theological virtues transpose to "orientation" at the 3rd level of the human good, analogous to the transposition of acquired virtues to "skills" at the 2nd level of the human good.<sup>2</sup>

**Thesis 2:** The mind and heart of hope orient our actions toward ultimate goodness, just as faith and belief orient our knowing toward the truth.

**Thesis 3:** While the experience of God's love flooding our hearts precedes the knowledge of God in faith, the experience of the "abyss" of God, particularly in suffering grief and loss, precedes our ultimate decision to act with hope in God or not.

## HOSPICE

I am medical director for hospice and palliative care at the VA Medical Center in Augusta, Maine. When I think about how my interest in caring for dying patients developed, there are a few incidents that stand out for me. My father got sick and went away for treatment when I was about four years old. I got my first notion to become a doctor when I found out that doctors were going to make my father better. From that early age, I understood that illness affects the patient's family as much as it affects the patient. My grandfather came to live with us around that time. When I was in eighth grade, he started going to the doctor, which was a big change for him. I asked my mother about it and she said, "Oh, you know that bump that he has on his forehead," – which was a cyst that he had forever – "it has something to do with that." One day I came home from school and my Aunt Rene and Aunt Florence were there, my grandfather's sisters. The only time that my Aunt Rene and Florence came to our house was for Sunday dinner or Thanksgiving. So I asked my mother what was wrong and she told me that my grandfather had died and that his body had already been taken away. Years later in

<sup>2</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971), 48.

college, when I was writing about my grandfather, I realized how much I regretted not being able to say goodbye to him. I was a doctor a long time before I realized how much this experience motivated me to share information with patients to prepare them for dying and allow them to say goodbye to their loved ones.

The problem for dying patients and their families is not just finding a way to say goodbye; it is much more a problem of maintaining a sense of meaning. Several years ago I took care of a patient – John Brown, let's say – a 71-year-old man who had prostate cancer for about twelve years. He had radiation treatments initially and then hormone ablation and chemotherapy that extended over many years. He developed lung metastases several years before I met him and recently had a tube placed in his bladder because of local cancer recurrence. He did reasonably well through all of this. He lived at home with his wife, he had good relations with his family and his church, his pain was easily managed with medication, he had a good appetite and enjoyed food, he went for walks, sometimes needing oxygen, sometimes not.

About a month before he died, he came to see me more upset than usual. He had just seen the urologist, who told him that the tumor was putting pressure on one of his kidneys and that he should have a nephrostomy tube to relieve this. I asked what he wanted to do and he said that he felt that one tube – the one he had in his bladder – was enough. I called his oncologist to let him know the situation and he saw John a few days later and went along with his decision not to have the nephrostomy. Shortly after this John decided to stop all treatments. The oncologist went along with this decision, too, and said that he remained interested in John's care and would be available, if he was needed. I talked to John about a referral to hospice, but he said that he was not ready. I encouraged him to arrange an initial interview to find out what they had to offer and so that they could be involved on short notice, if necessary. He agreed to the initial meeting.

A week later John was dead. I called his wife to see how she was doing and to ask what happened. She told me that he spent most days that week sitting on his porch looking at the ocean. Then one morning he woke with chest pain. She gave him a couple nitroglycerin tablets, which helped only briefly. He did not want to go to the local hospital by rescue, so she drove him about forty-five minutes to a hospital in

Bangor. The admitting doctor told them that he did not recommend a heart catheterization since John did not have the nephrostomy. He asked John if he would like to be admitted or go home, and John asked to go home. It was about 5 pm when they left the emergency room. They had not eaten since breakfast, so they stopped to eat on the way home, even though John was not hungry. About a mile down the road, Mrs. Brown heard a funny noise and turned to see John's eyes roll back. She called his name, but he didn't answer. She made a quick decision to turn around and drive back to the emergency room. An ambulance crew was at the door when she arrived and helped her to get him inside. He was pronounced dead on arrival. She was mostly composed as she talked about these events. She was grateful for the care her husband had through the years. She did not express any hard feelings about his last hours. But as I heard her tell his story, I felt that it highlighted in many ways how we struggle to put off the finality of death.

Some of you may know the movie, "The Death of Mr. Lazarescu," that came out several years ago. It was written and directed by Cristi Puiu, who gave a very interesting interview on the DVD version of the movie. Puiu recounts that he based his story partly on his own experiences with a prolonged period of hypochondria when he read a lot about medicine and disease and partly on the story of a man who was refused by six different hospital emergency rooms one night in Bucharest in the 1990s and was finally dropped by the ambulance driver by the side of the road where he was found dead the next morning. This created a big kerfuffle, but the only person held accountable was the ambulance driver who was still in prison 10 years later. Puiu mentions that he was making deliberate religious reference to Dante and Lazarus when he named the main character and also when he named the last doctor to turn the patient away, Dr. Anghel. Then he said something along these lines, "I am comfortable thinking about everything in the universe being related in some way to everything else in terms of mathematics or physics – but when I think about our human subjectivity, well, you know, we all die alone."

I am saying that is a choice we make – I mean, whether we die alone or not. I suspect that Mr. Brown struggled with that choice as he sat there on his porch looking at the ocean.

Here is another example. I have a picture of a group of us from work gathered around one of our patients to celebrate his 85<sup>th</sup> birthday. All of us are smiling, but the patient looks like he is wondering, in typical downeast fashion, "What's so funny?" We all came to love this man, his humor, his patience, his company. He had lung cancer that had been progressing slowly for six years, as well as paraplegia due to an unrelated neck problem. He relied on one of his daughters to care for him, but she developed brain cancer, so he came to our unit while she was under treatment. A second daughter moved back to Maine around this time and shortly afterward had to undergo chemotherapy for recurrent breast cancer. He stayed with us for a little over a year and during that time, we watched him watch his daughters, one getting worse, the other gradually getting better. When the daughter with brain cancer made her last visit, and it was apparent that she was not going to be able to speak much longer or to visit again, the patient stopped eating and drinking and died two weeks later. The physician-philosopher, Daniel Sulmasy, writes:

Health care professionals...need to remember that hope is sustained and nurtured in relationship and community. The ultimate end of human hope is a living relationship with God. But patients can catch glimpses of that ultimate relationship if health care professionals provide them with evidence that they are still very much a part of the human community. People often build walls around the sick. They project onto the sick their own lack of faith, lack of hope, and lack of love. People can deny their own death by portraying dying persons as essentially different from them. But the dying are part of the living...Hope is the healing of the dying.<sup>3</sup>

I believe that our patient was surrounded by loving staff and loving family and that he returned that love each day. But Puiu is right about one thing: while we are related in our subjectivity, nevertheless we are distinct; in our dying we converse with God one-on-one.

Much current writing about spiritual care of dying patients confirms the fundamental importance of hope. In the latest volume of

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<sup>3</sup> Daniel Sulmasy, *A Balm for Gilead* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2006), 129-30.

Hospice Foundation of America's *Living with Grief Series*, Jennings and Berlinger write about the difference between wishing and hope; both look forward to something good, but wishing stops short of asking what is reasonable considering the circumstances. In other words, wishing stops short of the "mind of hope." Still, while genuine hope is reasonable, it is fundamentally "associated with uncertainty, and therefore with possibility."<sup>4</sup> A great deal hinges on what possibilities we consider reasonable. By way of anticipating what Lonergan brings to this discussion, think for a moment about the significance of hope as a foundation for his key notions of finality and method.

We are potentially all things in our minds and we spend our lives finding out and choosing who and what we will actually be. As Sulmasy says, "Death is not a simple momentary event at the end of life. It is the summit of the finitude that characterizes every moment in each person's unique human drama."<sup>5</sup> It is a drama that involves our freedom in all its authenticity and inauthenticity, in all its history of sustained or frustrated development. Rahner lays out the spiritual possibilities of dying in these terms:

[T]hrough death there comes to be the final and definitive validity of man's existence which has been achieved and has come to maturity in freedom...In the temporal duration of life which is to end completely, eternity is actualizing itself towards its fulfillment. Anyone who has ever made a morally good decision in a matter of life and death, radically and uncompromisingly, so that absolutely nothing redounds to him from it except the presumed goodness of this decision, he has already experienced in this decision the eternity which we mean here.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Nancy Berlinger and Bruce Jennings, "Ethical Delimmas and Spiritual Care near the End of Life," in *Living with Grief: Spirituality and End-of-Life Care*, ed. Kenneth Doka and Amy Tucci (Washington, DC: Hospice Foundation of America, 2011), 55.

<sup>5</sup> Sulmasy, *A Balm for Gilead*, 121

<sup>6</sup> Karl Rahner, *Foundations of Christian Faith*, trans. William Dych (New York: The Seabury Press, 1978), 272.

## LONERGAN

I have been speaking personally, descriptively, rhetorically. What opportunities does Lonergan provide to advance our understanding of hope – the mind and heart of hope – in explanatory terms? I deal with this question according to my first two theses.

**Thesis 1:** Theological virtues transpose to “orientation” at the 3rd level of the human good, analogous to the transposition of acquired virtues to “skills” at the 2nd level of the human good.

Jeremy Wilkins delivered a very interesting paper at last year’s workshop dealing with grace and development, in the third section of which he remarks, apropos Lonergan’s omitting any account of virtue from his chapter on the human good in *Method in Theology*, that this omission “would be incredible, were it not obviously deliberate.”<sup>7</sup> He proceeds to argue that the “Thomist theory of operative habits transposes to the concept of skill Lonergan partly adopted and partly adapted from Piaget.”<sup>8</sup> Evidence in support of Wilkins’s argument comes from Lonergan himself in the first lecture of his July 1962 Regis College Institute “On the Method of Theology.” Where Aristotle and the Scholastics divide habits according to metaphysical potency, Lonergan notes with approval that Piaget analyses habit on a strictly empirical basis.

If one reads the *Secundae secundae* one finds a terrific list of virtues, and one wonders how one gets them all together into one man...[But Piaget] does not deal with isolated habits in the intellect, in the senses, in the sensitive appetites, in the will, and so on. These operations are total operations of the whole child, and the development of operations amounts to a unified development of habits. So, instead of comparing habit and operations as *actus primus* and *actus secundus*, in Piaget’s analysis what one has are habits and groups of operations. The set of habits corresponds to a group of operations, that is,

<sup>7</sup> Jeremy Wilkins, “Grace and Growth: Developing Virtue ‘in a Friendly Universe,’” in *Lonergan Workshop*, vol. 24, ed. Fred Lawrence (Chestnut Hill, MA: Boston College, 2010), 463-64. The quote is from Wilkin’s lecture, not the published essay, and apparently represents an early stage in his thinking about this subject.

<sup>8</sup> I quote again from Wilkin’s lecture.

the totality of combinations of differentiated operations; and beyond the group there is the group of groups. In other words, as the child goes on he combines the lower groups into the new totalities that involve differentiations in the lower groups.<sup>9</sup>

However, this analysis leaves unanswered questions concerning (1) the relation of acquired and infused virtues and (2) the relation of grace and nature in terms of the development of virtue (or living authentically). My first thesis addresses the relation of acquired and infused virtues directly and, insofar as I can support the thesis in terms of intentionality analysis, it sets the stage for an explanatory account of grace as a vector of human development. My argument runs thus. Lonergan did not speak specifically of natural and theological virtues in *Method in Theology*, but he did speak of faith, hope and love, especially in chapter 5 on religion, separate from his discussion of skills in chapter 2. The term, "skills," maps directly to the structure of the human good that Lonergan presents in chapter 2 of *Method in Theology*.<sup>10</sup> Considering what he said in the lecture quoted above, it seems reasonable to conclude that he intended to transpose the metaphysical notion of *acquired virtues* to the empirical notion of *skills* in developing his method for doing theology. Where does this leave the infused virtues of faith, hope and love?

The structure of the human good as it appears in *Method in Theology* has a lengthy history, but in the present context – understanding faith, hope and love in terms of intentionality analysis – comparing it with his treatment of the structure of the good in the 1942 article, "Finality, Love, Marriage,"<sup>11</sup> is most instructive. Here Lonergan states that he is "engaged in establishing a basic system of reference for the discussion of any hierarchy of human ends,"<sup>12</sup> and he refers to this basic system in the next paragraph as a "skeletal structure of all human process."<sup>13</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *Early Works on Theological Method 1*, ed. Robert M. Doran and Robert C. Croken, vol. 22 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 7.

<sup>10</sup> *Method in Theology*, 48.

<sup>11</sup> Bernard Lonergan, "Finality, Love, Marriage," in *Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, vol. 4 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988).

<sup>12</sup> "Finality, Love, Marriage," 40.

<sup>13</sup> "Finality, Love, Marriage," 38.

He speaks of three "levels" in relating "the three human ends – life, the good life, and eternal life" – to "three levels of human activity," namely, nature, reason and grace. While, at the level of nature, the "emergence and maintenance of human life is repetitive...the attainment of the human good life is a historical development, a unique process, not repeated for each individual."<sup>14</sup> Carrying out his pursuit of a basic system of reference for the study of all human process thirty years later in *Method in Theology*, Lonergan is explicit about the unified intention linking his efforts: "Our account of the structure of the human good is compatible with any stage of technological, economic, political, cultural, religious development."<sup>15</sup>

Some interesting things happen along the way from 1942 to 1971 that are reflected in changes in his model of human affairs. Prior to comparing terms in the two models, I note the following structural changes: (1) the top-down order of levels is reversed between the two schemes; (2) individual and social are not separated in the earlier scheme; (3) having developed a metaphysics of proportionate being based on his intentionality analysis of cognitional structure in the intervening years, Lonergan approaches his scheme in the latter work in terms of the human good,<sup>16</sup> so that horizontal ends are proportioned in the first scheme to "abstract essence"<sup>17</sup> and in the latter, to intentional objects; (4) similarly, the subject of the scheme in *Method* is the "temporal subject,"<sup>18</sup> so that the actual unfolding of each level of the good is to be understood concretely, not abstractly, and the highest level of the good under consideration, the human good, is framed in terms of historical culture rather than eternal life.<sup>19</sup> In "Finality, Love, Marriage," Lonergan places sanctifying grace at level 3 and virtue at

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<sup>14</sup> "Finality, Love, Marriage," 38.

<sup>15</sup> *Method in Theology*, 52

<sup>16</sup> "The good can be considered in its total range, or one can limit oneself simply to the human good. It is with regard to the human good that development occurs fundamentally." *Early Works on Theological Method 1*, 35.

<sup>17</sup> "Finality, Love, Marriage," 22.

<sup>18</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics*, ed. Robert M. Doran and H. Daniel Monsour and trans. Michael G. Shields, vol. 12 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 401.

<sup>19</sup> Lonergan already references the "great republic of culture" in the 1942 article. "Finality, Love, Marriage," 39, 262n.q.

**Table 1**  
The Basic Scheme ("PQR") based on "Finality, Love, Marriage"\*

Potential	Actuation	End	Levels of human activity	Time
P = Mystical body on earth	P' = Sanctifying grace	P'' = Mystical body in heaven	Grace	Eternal - Definitive
Q = Life of knowledge and virtue	Q' = Advance in knowledge and virtue	Q'' = Attainment of historically unfolding good life	Reason	Ordinal - progressive
R = Sensitive spontaneity	R' = Actuation of spontaneity	R'' = Emergence & maintenance of human life	Nature	Measurable - repetitive

\*Headings, symbols, and descriptions are taken directly from the text unless otherwise indicated. "Potential" is implied by the description of "movement" on the level of nature from "spontaneity" to "actuation" ("Finality, Love, Marriage," 40-41); also, by his reference to "sex" as a "capacity" (CWL 4:43). "Actuation" and "end" are drawn directly from descriptions of R', Z', and Z'' ("Finality, Love, Marriage," 41).

**Table 2**  
The Structure of the Human Good

Individual		Social	End
Potentiality	Actuation		
Capacity, need	Operation	Cooperation	Particular good
Plasticity, perfectibility	Development, skill	Institution, role, task	Good of order
Liberty	Orientation, conversion	Personal relations	Terminal good

(from *Method in Theology*, 48)

level 2 of his analytic scheme, while in the scheme of the human good in chapter 2 of *Method*, he makes no direct reference to grace, which is an order over and above human intentionality and the specifically human good. I have already quoted Lonergan linking the notions of *virtue* and *skills*. Both terms are tied to the 2nd level of their respective schemes. Other than an analogy based on their relative position in each scheme,

is there any reason to link – which is not to say identify – *sanctifying grace* and *orientation* at the 3rd level of these schemes? If so, what is the nature of the linkage?

Lonergan makes a revealing statement in this regard in the same 1962 lecture on the human good where he spoke about virtue and skills. After discussing the structure of the human good, he proceeds to talk about meaning and then development in terms of what he will later call realms of meaning. At this time, he identifies a series of antitheses that mark off fundamental breaks in development: sacred and profane, subject and object, common sense and theory. To illustrate the contrast between subject and object he refers to the admonition of Thomas à Kempis that it is more important to feel compunction than to define it. Talking about compunction is not feeling it. Feeling it is on the side of the subject, as is the “inner experience of being alive,” and, as he goes on to say, “Being-in-love is not simply an act of will, or a combination of acts of will, or habits of acts of will, but the total *orientation* of one’s interiority.”<sup>20</sup> Similarly, in “Mission and Spirit” he says, “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.”<sup>21</sup>

In *Method in Theology*, Lonergan also speaks of faith in terms of orientation. The apprehension of transcendent value by faith consists in “our *actuated orientation* towards the mystery of love and awe.”<sup>22</sup> It is interestingly, but not surprising, that he waits until the chapter on religion to open up the structure of the human good, a matter of “human apprehension and choice,”<sup>23</sup> to the experience of transcendent value.

Where before an account of the human good related men to one another and to nature, now human concern reaches beyond man’s world to God and to God’s world...Human development is

<sup>20</sup> *Early Works on Theological Method 1*, 48 (emphasis added).

<sup>21</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *A Third Collection* (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), 32, emphasis added.

<sup>22</sup> *Method in Theology*, 115, emphasis added.

<sup>23</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *Topics in Education*, vol. 10 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert M. Doran and Frederick E. Crowe (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 32.

not only in skills and virtues but also in holiness. The power of God's love brings forth a new energy and efficacy in all goodness, and the limit of human expectation ceases to be the grave.<sup>24</sup>

This experience of transcendent value, the felt experience of grace – the gift of God's love – which opens our horizons and orients or reorients (converts) the exercise of our liberty – in relation to God, ourselves and neighbor – is fundamentally a matter of interiority and feeling. This is the link at the third level between the schema of 1942 and that of 1971, between *sanctifying grace*<sup>25</sup> and *orientation / conversion*.<sup>26</sup> In terms of human consciousness, this is the transition between the natural and the supernatural.<sup>27</sup> I discuss this further under the heading "reasons of the heart" in relation to my second thesis. In answer to the question about the relation between acquired and infused virtues, therefore, it is reasonable to propose that schemes of recurrence or conjugate forms, called *skills*, actuated at the level of the good of order, correspond to acquired virtues; and that schemes of recurrence or conjugates, called *orientations*, actuated at the level of terminal value, correspond to the infused virtues.

What is the relation of grace and nature in terms of development, especially development-from-above? In the fourth section of his paper, Wilkins says that "development may be said to be *from above* whenever developments on the higher levels initiate corresponding developments on the lower. In this precise sense, *from above* specifies a vector of the functional interdependence of human development across three or four explanatory genera."<sup>28</sup> I believe that development-from-above is primarily a function of conscious intentionality, not just

<sup>24</sup> *Method in Theology*, 116.

<sup>25</sup> That is, the state of receiving and accepting God's gift of love (*Method in Theology*, 289).

<sup>26</sup> "Operative grace is religious conversion. Cooperative grace is the effectiveness of conversion, the gradual movement towards a full and complete transformation of the whole of one's living and feeling, one's thought, words, deeds, and omissions" (*Method in Theology*, 289).

<sup>27</sup> *A Third Collection*, 23. In terms of functional specialization, foundations emerge as conversion is "explicitly objectified." (*Method in Theology*, 131). "Foundations provides a basic orientation. This orientation, when applied to the conflicts of dialectic, becomes a principle of selection" (*Method in Theology*, 142).

<sup>28</sup> "Grace and Growth," 18, emphasis added in place of single quotation marks.

in terms of the influence of spirit upon psyche and bios, but also in terms of the interdependence of specific (differentiated) operations within the genus of spirit.<sup>29</sup> I am thinking of the way that decision creates opportunities for experience, understanding and judgment; or the way that one's scale of values sets the stage for the functioning of the good of order or the choice of particular goods. Even more so, I am thinking of the influence of parents on children, teachers on students, mentors on neophytes. As Crowe says in his essay, "An Expansion of Lonergan's Notion of Value," the operator of development-from-above is not just the individual subject, but more importantly subjects acting upon one another as subjects in personal relations.<sup>30</sup> While Lonergan put increasing emphasis on development-from-above in the last 10 years of his life, he also pairs discussion of movement or development from above and below in earlier work.<sup>31</sup> In *Insight*, he incorporates the operation of subject upon subject, and implicitly development-from-above, in his discussion of development. For example, in chapter 6, subject-to-subject communication is an important element in the self-correcting cycle of learning as a vector in human history. Similarly, in chapter 15, he comments that the "generic consciousness of the infant becomes differentiated in the process of sensitive living at home, in school, at work, and the traditional laws of the development are the power of example and the maxim that practice makes perfect."<sup>32</sup> These laws appear to imply that, regardless of the direction of development, "integration cannot precede the unfolding of its underlying manifold; just as the accumulation of insights follows the successive presentations of relevant data, so psychic integration has to follow the stages of development of the organic and neural basis."<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> As expected, this reverses the sequence of development-from-below in which "one finds that the initial integration can be understood only in a generic fashion (and) that subsequent integrations are increasingly specific intelligibilities." See *Insight*, 478.

<sup>30</sup> Frederick E. Crowe, "An Expansion of Lonergan's Notion of Value," in *Lonergan Workshop Journal*, vol. 7, ed. Fred Lawrence (Chestnut Hill, MA: Boston College), 42n4.

<sup>31</sup> "An Expansion of Lonergan's Notion of Value," 38. Besides the references to *Verbum*, *Insight*, and the Latin Trinitarian writings that Crowe cites here, see also *Topics in Education*, 256.

<sup>32</sup> *Insight*, 482.

<sup>33</sup> *Insight*, 483.

I believe that expanding Lonergan's notion of value along the lines of liberty and personal, *subject-to-subject* relations, as Crowe suggests, offers an opportunity to approach the subject of grace in terms of intentionality analysis.<sup>34</sup> In the Epilogue to *Insight*, having just confronted the problem of evil in chapter 20, Lonergan says self-reliance must give way to a "new and higher collaboration of minds" in communion with God.<sup>35</sup> In a footnote, he confesses, "Since I believe personal relations can be studied adequately only in this larger and more concrete context, the skimpy treatment accorded them in the present work is not to be taken as a denial of their singular importance in human living."<sup>36</sup> A few pages later, he identifies the supernatural as a fourth level of human development regarding our cooperation with God in faith, hope and charity that offers a solution to the human problem of evil. He says that development on this level leads to a "transformation of sensitivity and intersubjectivity [that] penetrates to the physiological level."<sup>37</sup> In his essay, "Time and Meaning" from 1962, Lonergan says, "The proper division is that *esse reale*, the real, divides into the 'natural' and the 'intentional'; the intentional order is the order of meaning. Now in God the natural and intentional reality are identical... In us there is not that identity... One mistakes the whole significance of meaning if one does not get that point correct: 'intentional' is not opposed to 'real'; it is opposed to 'natural.'<sup>38</sup> The editors warn the reader that there is a "difficulty" in translation and terminology here, especially in Lonergan's use of "natural,"<sup>39</sup> but it would appear in some sense that in God the intentional and the natural are not opposed, while in humans they are. You might say,

<sup>34</sup> Regarding Aquinas's treatment of grace, Kobusch writes, "What at first sight seems to be an enlargement of the ancient concept of motion soon stands out as just what it has to be seen as historically: a transfer of a category from the world of nature...to the world of freedom." Theo Kobusch, "Grace (Ia Iae, Qq.109-114)," in *The Ethics of Aquinas*, ed. Stephen J. Pope (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2002).

<sup>35</sup> *Insight*, 753.

<sup>36</sup> *Insight*, 754.

<sup>37</sup> *Insight*, 762-63.

<sup>38</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1958-1964*, vol. 6 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert Croken, Frederick Crowe, and Robert Doran (Toronto University of Toronto Press, 1996), 105.

<sup>39</sup> *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1958-1964*, 105n16.

when we cooperate with God to put on the "new man" of Paul, we are transforming ourselves, our "nature," in some fundamental way.<sup>40</sup>

In his 1959 lecture on the human good, Lonergan observes, citing variant statements of Aquinas in regard to relative excellence, that there is a "conflict between order and person... [But] the two can also be united insofar as the person emerges with personal status within the order."<sup>41</sup> The relation between order and person stands in relief of his discussion of development in chapter 15 of *Insight*, where Lonergan talks in some instances of world order and in other instances of individual development. In the first instance: "Inasmuch as the goal of the genetic sequence is fixed by the initial manifold, only oaks from acorns grow. But in large numbers of instances over long periods of time, there is an effective probability of different initial manifolds and so of diverse objectives for genetic sequences."<sup>42</sup> In the second: "The principal illustration of the notion of development is, of course, human intelligence."<sup>43</sup> Now it would appear that there is development in things and development in world order (relations between things, including our understanding of things); that in human things the operator of development is the conscious subject operating as subject; and that in world order (including humans as part of world order) the "quasi-operator" is the passionateness of being.<sup>44</sup> So I offer the following corollary to my first thesis:

**Corollary 1.1:** In orienting ourselves toward God in acts of faith, hope, and love, we cooperate in the transformation of our nature at all generic levels, including psyche and bios, so that we emerge as persons in ultimate relationship with God, the source of all order.

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<sup>40</sup> "Note that temporal subjects really and truly change and yet remain the same in their subsistent identity through both substantial changes (death, resurrection) and accidental changes" (*The Triune God*, 401).

<sup>41</sup> *Topics in Education*, 40-41.

<sup>42</sup> *Insight*, 480.

<sup>43</sup> *Insight*, 483.

<sup>44</sup> *A Third Collection*, 29. See also mention of finality as "unconsciously operative" at *Insight*, 501.

All development is a matter of limitation and transcendence, a law of tension "that becomes in man a conscious tension."<sup>45</sup> As temporal subjects, we live at a threshold where the passionateness of created being is given the opportunity, the essential freedom, to become intentionally unified with the Creator if we, in the concrete exercise of our freedom, cooperatively and effectively so choose. Sulmasy says that we are enacting the drama of our finitude – our capacity for development – every moment of our lives and the final moment of death is the culmination of that drama.<sup>46</sup> Regarding our pilgrim state, Josef Pieper says: "It would be difficult to conceive of another statement that penetrates as deeply into the innermost core of creaturely existence as does the statement that man finds himself, even until the moment of his death, in the *status viatoris*, in the state of being on the way."<sup>47</sup> When we as humans share with other human subjects our insights into *data* as given, we share the gift (*donum*) of intelligence, participating not only in divine light but in divine love.<sup>48</sup> But God's gift (*donum*) of relationship to us immediately in our own subjectivity is entitatively different. It is a gift freely given to free subjects, filled with possibility and the awesome expectation of a response to accept and develop the relationship within our limitations, or not. "Human action is a matter of insight into situations. The insight yields possible courses of action. And we are free because there is no way of demonstrating that one must take this course rather than that course."<sup>49</sup> Is the limit of human expectation the grave? Do we cease to be intentionally related to all things as a result of natural death at the organic and psychic levels? Do we die alone? Our answer to this question, in the way we conduct our lives and deal with finitude, defines our relationship with God, and

<sup>45</sup> *Insight*, 497.

<sup>46</sup> Sulmasy, *A Balm for Gilead*, 121.

<sup>47</sup> Josef Pieper, "Hope," in *Faith, Hope, Love* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1997), 92. See also Karl Rahner, *On the Theology of Death*, trans. C. H. Henkey (New York: Herder and Herder, 1961), 71. Rahner analyzes the opportunity for transformation that is finalized at death in terms of the restoration or redemption of our fallen nature, so that faith, hope, and charity are not "mere feelings accompanying the brutal reality of death, lasting only until death really occurs, persisting powerlessly beside the hard reality which is death. They are, rather, because transformed by grace, the true reality which transforms death."

<sup>48</sup> On *donum* as distinct from *datum*, see "Grace (Ia Iae, Qq.109-114)," 218n60.

<sup>49</sup> *Topics in Education*, 256.

all things in God, for all time. But answer it we must, yes or no, within the range of possibility open to us.

**Thesis 2:** The mind and heart of hope orient our actions toward ultimate goodness, just as faith and belief orient our knowing toward the truth.

Faith and hope are a response in the actual orientation of our consciousness to God's gift of liberty. Knowledge and action are one and the same in God; obviously such is not the case for us. According to Lonergan, the thrust of human self-transcendence falls into two phases marked by a question of fact – what is going on? – and a question of value – what do I do about it? The judgment of faith concerns what is going on in light of valued testimony, human or divine. The decision to hope concerns the value of the future we choose to enact among many possible courses of action amidst the many actors of human history. In seeking a better world, we intend an ultimate, an absolutely transcendent, goodness. Yet, as temporal subjects, we ponder whether what we do here and now is truly good; in absolute terms, whether it is acceptable to God. The resolution of our quandary awaits our death. In the meantime, in human terms, how do we choose our next step? I draw an analogy between faith and hope in my second thesis not to establish that hope is oriented toward goodness, which I believe is a matter of implicit definition, but by way of suggesting that Lonergan's extended treatment of faith and belief as a basis of knowing what is going on may open a way to a more explicit understanding of hope as a basis for deciding what to do. Although Lonergan wrote much more about faith than he did about hope, I believe that his whole life's work can be understood as a testament to hope, both a reminder that we are not alone in our subjectivity and a challenge to collaborate intelligently and effectively – that is to say, functionally and hopefully – on the way to freedom in God.

In the section on faith in chapter 4 of *Method in Theology*, Lonergan references Pascal's saying that the "heart has reasons which reason does not know" in order to define reason as the "compound of the activities on the first three levels of cognitional activity," and heart as the "subject on the fourth, existential level of intentional

consciousness."<sup>50</sup> He then proceeds to discuss the *experience* of God's love by the subject "at the existential level of consciousness" preceding the *knowledge* of God by faith that is worked out on the "first three levels of cognitional activity." This is an example of development-from-above, although he does not name it as such at this time. Lonergan goes on to distinguish faith at the level of mind ("knowledge born of religious love") from belief at the level of heart (the decision to value the word of another, whether human or divine). In chapter 20 of *Insight*, Lonergan divides his theorem on the possibility of belief into a remote part, regarding the criterion of truth, and a proximate part, regarding the fact that humans can and to some extent do collaborate "in the advancement and dissemination of knowledge."<sup>51</sup> The criterion of truth also has proximate and remote elements; the first, regarding "reflective grasp of the virtually unconditioned"; the second, regarding the "proper unfolding of the detached and disinterested desire to know" in the process of the self-correcting process of learning in human history.<sup>52</sup> It is important to keep in mind how thoroughly the influence of subject upon subject, the *heart* if you will of development-from-above, permeates the operations of faith and belief.

What would be the corresponding analysis of hope? Faith is primarily oriented toward knowledge of what is going on; hope is primarily oriented toward deciding and bringing about what is yet to come. Both involve mind and heart. Just as faith does not occur as a way of knowing divorced from the subject who does the knowing, so hope does not occur as a blind act, but as an act informed by the mind of the intelligent, questioning, critical subject. Additionally, both faith and hope originate in transcendent, as opposed to immanent, experience and, to the extent that we as subjects respond authentically to this experience, both faith and hope expand the field of lower cognitional operations thereby creating opportunities for development-from-above. At the level of mind, hope leavens our judging of value with confidence in the face of evil; at the level of heart, hope binds our individual actions to a greater good subject to the wisdom of God. In reference to Lonergan's theorem on the possibility of belief, is there a corresponding

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<sup>50</sup> *Method in Theology*, 117.

<sup>51</sup> *Insight*, 729.

<sup>52</sup> *Insight*, 571.

theorem on the possibility of hope? To my knowledge, this has yet to be explicitly formulated. But first, I believe that it is wise to reflect on the context of Lonergan's theorem on the possibility of belief.

Lonergan's exposition of judgment of fact and the objectivity of knowing culminates an argument that he sustains through the first 13 chapters of *Insight* and his explanation of "reflective grasp of the virtually unconditioned," the proximate criterion of truth, is one of his fundamental contributions to the history of thought.<sup>53</sup> Furthermore, his account of belief is a fundamental contribution to the theory of the sociology of knowledge,<sup>54</sup> based on his observation that truth remotely entails the unobstructed operation of the self-correcting cycle of learning and proximately the fact that people sometimes do collaborate in their learning. It is interesting that his account of the sociology of learning unfolds in a series of unexpected leaps in understanding our dialectical relationship as human subjects to truth and goodness. In this paper, I can only touch on this series in a very schematic way.

In *Insight*, chapter 20, "Special Transcendent Knowledge," Lonergan interrupts the flow of his exposition of a potential solution to the problem of evil to introduce an excursus on the "notion of belief." This falls between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> points of the heuristic structure of his solution; between the statement that the "solution to the problem of evil would involve man's intellect"<sup>55</sup> and the statement that the "solution in its cognitional aspect will consist in a new and higher collaboration of men in the pursuit of truth."<sup>56</sup> While Lonergan focuses the remainder of his argument on faith and knowledge in working out his account of a solution to the problem of evil, he repeatedly says that faith, hope and charity combine to effect the conjugate form of the solution.<sup>57</sup> So, his 13<sup>th</sup> point regards the "species of charity"<sup>58</sup> and his 14<sup>th</sup> point the "hope by which the will makes the intellect good."<sup>59</sup> Under this latter heading

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<sup>53</sup> Mark D Morelli, "Lonergan's Debt to Hegel, and Critical Realism," in *Meaning and History in Systematic Theology*, ed. John D. Dadosky (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2009), 420.

<sup>54</sup> *Method in Theology*, 41.

<sup>55</sup> *Insight*, 724.

<sup>56</sup> *Insight*, 740.

<sup>57</sup> *Insight*, 740, 744, 745, 746, 747, 751.

<sup>58</sup> *Insight*, 720.

<sup>59</sup> *Insight*, 724.

he says that hope is the conjugate form of a willingness that "aids, supports and reinforces"<sup>60</sup> the desire to understand correctly. Then, under point 15 in transition to discussing the conjugate form of faith, he says that "there is needed in the present a universally accessible and permanently effective manner of pulling men's minds out of the counterpositions."<sup>61</sup> Keep in mind under point 14, referring to what I now call the heart of hope, he says:

[T]he secret of the counterpositions is not the superficial confusion generated by the polymorphism of human consciousness but the deeper hopelessness that allows man's spirit to surrender the legitimate aspirations of the unrestricted desire and to seek comfort in the all too human ambitions of the Kantian and the positivist.<sup>62</sup>

This statement is a clue that a theorem on the possibility of hope would be expected to arise as a subtext to the theorem on the possibility of belief. Lonergan says that his argument in chapter 20 is intended to offer a solution to the problem of moral impotence raised in chapter 18, "The Possibility of Ethics."<sup>63</sup> There he concludes his analysis of social decline as a fact of history, saying:

The solution has to be a still higher integration of human living...It may eliminate neither development nor tension yet it must be able to replace incapacity by capacity for sustained development...And only a still higher integration than any that so far has been considered can deal with the dialectical manifold immanent in human subjects and the human situation.<sup>64</sup>

He compares the moral impotence of the essentially free subject to the scotosis of the dramatic subject, neither of which is "grasped with perfect clarity nor totally unconscious."<sup>65</sup> Lonergan introduces the notion of scotosis in our daily living in terms of dramatic bias in

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<sup>60</sup> *Insight*, 724.

<sup>61</sup> *Insight*, 724.

<sup>62</sup> *Insight*, 723.

<sup>63</sup> *Insight*, 716-17.

<sup>64</sup> *Insight*, 655.

<sup>65</sup> *Insight*, 650-51.

*Insight*, chapter 6. He then elaborates a threefold bias of common sense in chapter 7, dramatically interrupting the flow of the exposition of his theory of knowing. This is not unlike his interruption of the flow of the argument in chapter 20. It is worth noting the relation of dialectic, which he introduces in chapter 7, to the role of belief in the solution of bias and counterpositions in chapter 20. Lonergan bases his analysis of belief on the criterion of truth, a criterion which he introduces in chapter 17, "Metaphysics as Dialectic." What this manifests, I believe, is a moving viewpoint concerning a fundamental fact: as human subjects we are not alone. Not only is history a collaboration of human subjects in the self-correcting process of learning. In our most intimate selves, there is also the voice of conscience. As Lonergan says at the conclusion of chapter 20:

The task of identifying the solution is not the same for all... Anyone that has found himself in error on one point can initiate a scrutiny that cumulatively will bring to light any other errors in which he happens to be involved. *Nor will he labor alone* in the purification of his own mind, for the realization of the solution and its development in each of us is principally the work of God.<sup>66</sup>

In light of these contextual remarks, then, I advance the following considerations in support of a theorem on the possibility of hope. First, concerning the mind of hope, in "The Goodness of Being in Lonergan's *Insight*," Byrne develops an explanatory account of the virtually unconditioned in relation to the internal term of practical reflection and judgment of value.<sup>67</sup> In doing so, he provides a proximate criterion, operating in genuine subjects, to know and choose what is truly good. At the same, in identifying the good as the object of our knowing and choosing that is beyond criticism,<sup>68</sup> he provides a remote criterion for the proper unfolding of judgments of value in human history. But when it comes to an explanatory account and critique of the heart of hope – the dialectical interplay of subjects upon one another in choosing and

<sup>66</sup> *Insight*, 751 (emphasis added).

<sup>67</sup> Patrick H. Byrne, "The Goodness of Being in Lonergan's *Insight*," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 81 (2007): 59-60.

<sup>68</sup> Byrne, "The Goodness of Being in Lonergan's *Insight*," 64.

enacting value in the development of world order – we run into the problem of general history. In his 1959 lecture on history, Lonergan speaks about “regional culture” as a “single whole, in an organic way of living...that provides the basic unit in thinking about history.”<sup>69</sup>

If we want to apprehend this unity, this organicity, we have to think in artistic terms. It is the unity, not of an intellectual theorem, but of a style, a mode, an orientation...Life is an art...This is the fundamental problem in general history: the reality with which it deals is not a conceptualization, not the realization of clearly formed concepts, and consequently it cannot be adequately represented by a conceptualization...It can be communicated artistically, not conceptually.<sup>70</sup>

He goes on to say that his account of the invariant structure of the human good provides a heuristic tool, a “philosophic a priori for the study of history,”<sup>71</sup> and that the intelligibility that the historian seeks is more a matter of possibility than necessity, that there is to be expected a pluralism of accounts since the intelligibility involves many peoples exercising their freedom. At the same time, there is an “interlocking, an interdependence, of the different exercises of freedom.”<sup>72</sup> Acedia, or sloth, which Snell addressed at last year’s workshop, denies the possibility that this interdependence is meaningful. Yet hope allows us to confront our mistaken judgments of value and strive to uproot their distortion of our better nature. As such, hope is a “supreme force in history...a fundamental and unchangeable ground that enables ordinary mortals to stand by the truth, and stand by what is right, no matter what the consequences.”<sup>73</sup>

Concerning the heart’s reasons on which the mind and heart of hope (as well as faith) operate, how do we account for the *experience* of subjects at higher levels of consciousness, both individually and socially, by which we apprehend transcendent values? As I said earlier, approaching this question along the lines of personal relations between

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<sup>69</sup> *Topics in Education*, 252.

<sup>70</sup> *Topics in Education*, 252-54.

<sup>71</sup> *Topics in Education*, 255.

<sup>72</sup> *Topics in Education*, 257.

<sup>73</sup> *Topics in Education*, 257.

**Table 3**  
Isomorphism of the Levels of the Human Good and the Modes

Individual		Social	End	Mode of subjective presence	
Potentiality	Actuation			Individual	Social
Capacity, need	Operation	Cooperation	Particular good	Subject-to-object	Subjects-to-object
Plasticity, perfectibility	Development, skill	Institution, role, task	Good of order	Subject-as-object	Subjects-as-object
Liberty	Orientation, conversion	Personal relations	Terminal good	Subject-as-subject	Subject-to-subject

subjects offers an opportunity to explain the experience of grace in terms of intentionality analysis. In his 1959 lecture on "The Human Good as Object: Its Invariant Structure," Lonergan identifies a number of correspondences to the three levels of the human good: cognitive activity (experiencing, understanding, judging), the division of societies (sensate, idealistic, ideational), existential subjectivity (ethical, religious, aesthetic).<sup>74</sup> I suggest another correspondence, the mode of subjective presence: subject-to-object, subject-as-object and subject-as-subject. The mode of conscious intentionality at the level of freedom and personal relations fundamentally concerns the subject-as-subject. In this mode, we may be aware (that is, *experience*) any and all levels of intentional consciousness at which we are operating. But it is in personal relations that we *experience* reasons of the heart, the "reasons that reason does not know." Crowe suggests broadening the meaning of *intersubjectivity* to include intentionally conscious operations.<sup>75</sup> I think that this undermines the dialectical tension that Lonergan explicitly intends in contrasting *intersubjectivity* as a form of attachment with the detachment of the pure desire to know.<sup>76</sup> I suggest an alternate term; namely, operating in the mode of *subject-to-subject*.<sup>77</sup> Operating

<sup>74</sup> *Topics in Education*, 41-42.

<sup>75</sup> "An Expansion of Lonergan's Notion of Value," 42 n4. "I use the word, intersubjectivity, to refer here to the full range of relations between subjects."

<sup>76</sup> *Insight*, 749.

<sup>77</sup> Patrick Byrne, in his forthcoming *Ethics of Discernment*, notes that Lonergan uses the term "subject-to-subject" in a lecture given in Montreal in March 1968, where, among other remarks, he says, "Beyond human intersubjectivity, then, there is a subject-to-subject relationship that is unique and that differs from human intersubjectivity much

in this mode of consciousness is shot through with feelings, the "heart's reasons," which function as data of consciousness potentially shared by each member of the subject-to-subject dyad, much as free images are shared by subjects operating in the mode of subjects-to-object.<sup>78</sup> Feelings take on profounder dimensions (in the love of friends, for instance) according to the level of consciousness at which the subject operates, culminating in the *experience* of God in love and awe as the absolutely transcendent source of our subjectivity.<sup>79</sup>

### AUGUSTINE

**Thesis 3:** While the experience of God's love flooding our hearts precedes the knowledge of God in faith, the experience of the "abyss" of God, particularly in suffering grief and loss, precedes our ultimate decision to act with hope in God or not.

The experience of God is not the experience of yet another human subject. It is the experience of another order of being putting our present order into question, stirring the restlessness with which Augustine opens his *Confessions*, the tension between limitation and transcendence by which Lonergan characterizes human consciousness. This restlessness is a daily affair, but reaches toward a limit in the experience of profound grief at the loss of a loved one or in the experience of moral impotence in the face of the depths of evil.<sup>80</sup> Ultimately, it is a question of our dying, whose depths, in Karl Rahner's analysis, are fundamentally dialectical.

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more than it resembles it." See Bernard Lonergan, *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1965-1980*, ed. Robert C. Croken and Robert M. Doran, vol. 17 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 22-23.

<sup>78</sup> Regarding *free images*, see Bernard Lonergan, *Understanding and Being*, ed. Elizabeth A. Morelli and Mark D. Morelli, vol. 5 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 314.

<sup>79</sup> I acknowledge that this is a condensed statement on a controversial topic in Lonergan studies that warrants fuller discussion to itself.

<sup>80</sup> I concentrate on Augustine's story in this paper. For a contrasting story about the loss of youthful faith, see John Rawls essay, "On my Religion," in John Rawls, *A Brief Inquiry into the Meaning of Sin and Faith: With "On My Religion,"* ed. Thomas Nagel (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009).

The end of man as a spiritual person is an active fulfillment from within, the final act of self-completion...At the same time, inseparably, and in a way which affects the whole human being, the death of man as the end of a material biological being is a destruction...an accident which strikes man from without, unforeseeably, with no assurance that it will strike him at the moment in which interiorly he has completed his life...It is not possible to say whether the full term of life reached in death is not in fact the emptiness and futility which till then was concealed, or, conversely, whether the emptiness apparent in death is only the outward aspect of a true plenitude.<sup>81</sup>

Rather than demarcate a Neoplatonic transition from a worldly to an acosmic state, Rahner says that death may actually finalize our pancosmic relation to the universe,<sup>82</sup> according to how we respond to the depths, the "radical seriousness," of our temporal existence, suspended "between a genuine beginning and a genuine end."<sup>83</sup>

Augustine remarks that he was fortunate to come to the study of scripture after he had already been moved by the "books of the Platonists" to give up his corporeal notion of truth. Otherwise, he conjectures, he might have interpreted his conversion to a personal relationship with God as a disposition that "could have been acquired from those books if a man studied them alone" [7.20.26]. Such solitary pride, he says, distorts our awareness of God in our very consciousness, the awesome abyss of being formed in God's image and the abyss out of which God communicates love for us in the intimate reaches of our hearts. According to McMahon, Augustine structures his *Confessions* in a mystical pattern based on a Trinitarian ratio of 9:3:1. Book 13 unifies, and its themes and images penetrate, the whole work; in the words of Psalm 42 (41), which echo throughout the text, deep calls to deep, *abyssus abyssum invocat*. Books 10-11-12 take the form of an ascent from memory to time to the heaven of heavens that abide eternally with God. Prior to these, Augustine lays out particular memories of his life leading to his conversion and baptism into the Christian faith in nine books that form an intricate chiasmic pattern. The *exitus* of Books

<sup>81</sup> Rahner, *On the Theology of Death*, 40-41.

<sup>82</sup> Rahner, *On the Theology of Death*, 19.

<sup>83</sup> Rahner, *On the Theology of Death*, 27.

1-4 turns on the fulcrum of Ambrose's preaching in Book 5 toward the *reditus* of Books 6-9.<sup>84</sup> As an example of the chiasmic structure – and the transformation wrought by his conversion – Augustine's story of the death of his childhood friend in Book 4 stands in counterpoint to that of Monica's death in Book 9. In order to highlight similarities and differences, I summarize the stories from each book in parallel.

Book 4	Book 9
<b>Prelude</b>	
I had in an interest in divination but was fortunate to meet someone practiced in these arts who taught me that successful prediction takes advantage of chance, which is "spread out through the nature of things" [4.3.5-6]. <sup>85</sup>	While I was in Milan before I decided to be baptized, Ambrose introduced singing into the liturgy to bolster the spirits of Catholics under threat of persecution by the Empress Justina [9.7.15-16].
<b>Remembrance of Relationships</b>	
I went to school with a boy and played with him as children do, but we really became close friends in the year that I started to teach in Thagaste. We studied together and I persuaded him to become a Manichaean [4.4.7].	My mother died when we came to Ostia. Before I rush on to other memories, I want to tell you more about her. She grew up in a Catholic household under the influence of a strict, but devout and loving older

<sup>84</sup> Robert McMahon, *Augustine's Prayerful Ascent: An Essay on the Literary Form of the Confessions* (Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 1989), 138-48.

<sup>85</sup> All quotations in English are from Augustine, *Confessions*, ed. Michael P. Foley and trans. F. J. Sheed, 2nd ed. (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 2006). Those in Latin are from Augustine, *Confessions*, ed. Jeffrey Henderson and trans. William Watts, 2 vols., The Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1912). Specific references to this work are bracketed in the text according to book, section, and paragraph.

maidservant who had helped to raise her father [9.8.17]. While young, in the process of drawing wine for her parents, my mother developed a habit for drinking wine herself, but she stopped abruptly after being rudely rebuked by a young maidservant. This goes to show that the "insult of an enemy can sometimes correct" [9.8.18]. She was obedient to her parents and when she married she was obedient to her husband. He had a hot temper, but she chose wisely the time and place to speak to him about differences and was able to maintain a peaceful household [9.9.19]. She won her husband to the Church before he died [9.9.22]. Not long before she became ill at Ostia, we stood alone by a window overlooking an inner garden and talked about eternal life. "With the mouth of our heart we panted for the high waters of your fountain" [9.10.23] and rose in love beyond our own souls "to the region of richness where You feed Israel forever with the food of truth" [9.10.24]. At the end of our conversation my mother asked me why she remained in this world [9.10.26].

<b>Circumstances of Dying</b>	
<p>He developed a high fever and was baptized while in a sweat. I stayed at his bedside and when he awoke I mocked him about being baptized, which made him angry with me. I wrote this off to his illness and planned to take it up again when he recovered. But in a matter of days, the fever returned and he died [4.4.8].</p>	<p>Within a few days of our conversation, she developed a fever and briefly became unconscious. On waking she asked, "Where was I?" She rallied enough to tell my brother and me to bury her at Ostia, not in Africa, and then her illness overtook her. I was pleased that her attachment to God was stronger than her attachment to her deceased husband. We learned that she had recently told our friends God will know where to find her wherever we bury her. Nine days into her illness she died [9.11.27-28].</p>
<b>Immediate Response</b>	
<p>I was overcome by the torment of grief. Everything around me reminded me of death and the absence of my friend. I was a "question to myself" and asked why my soul was sad, but lacked an answer. The friend I lost was more real to me than the God of my imagination [4.4.9].</p>	<p>My sorrow was immeasurable, but I held my tears in check. Adeodatus wept. Why did I grieve if she did not wholly die? I was wounded by the loss of her comfort to me [9.12.29-30].</p>

### Intermediate Response

Time dulled the ache. I was torn between praying for my woe and grieving my lost friend. I was weary of life and afraid of death. I was a place of unhappiness, but could not flee myself, so I went to Carthage where I would not be reminded of him [4.7.10-12].

We prepared for her burial and then buried her. Still, I held my tears in check. Alone, before retiring, I bathed and read one of Ambrose's verses. Then I wept and made a pillow of my tears. Kindly hear these words in charity and not in criticism [9.12.32-33].

### Remote Response

Time brought new memories and hopes, new friends and the pleasure of their company. The flame of love fused our souls from many into one [4.8.13]. Just as the words of a sentence make way for others to convey a larger unity of meaning, so I understood an individual's passing to be part of a larger whole [4.11.17]. I wrote a book about the love of beauty and the relation of part to whole, *De Pulcho et Apto*, which somehow I have lost [4.13.20]. I sought the approval of a famous orator, whom I never met, all the while seeking the approval of those who thought well of him [4.14.21]. I thought of God in terms of human nature [4.15.26]. I knew the taste of death [4.15.26], but not our home, which is your Eternity [4.16.31].

I pray now for my mother's sins and for God's mercy in judging her. I ask you to pray as well at the Lord's altar for my mother, Monica, to rest in peace with Patricius, her husband [9.13.34-37].

The contrast between the beginning and the end of each story stands out graphically; at the beginning, the fullness of Augustine's memory of his mother compared to the sketchiness of his memory of the friend; at the end, the lengthy, but inconclusive search for meaning after the loss of his friend compared to the simple appeal to pray for the peace of his mother. McMahon distinguishes between Augustine the speaker and Augustine the author.<sup>86</sup> Augustine the speaker meaningfully reconstructs his memories of Monica's life, but searches haphazardly in time to recover from the death of his friend. In the process he even loses the book that he wrote to make sense of who and what we love and why. Augustine the author, on the other hand, contrasts the significance of his experience of losing these two loved ones – "First descend that you may ascend, ascend to God" [4.12.19] – and the difference in meaning between divine providence and chance. Augustine the speaker recounts his interest in divination before telling us the story of the loss of his friend, but Augustine the author acknowledges a spiritual potency (or divine energy) that perturbed his soul during this time [4.4.8], a potency to which we also can attach ourselves, but which we cannot usurp.

Augustine's memory of being moved by liturgical hymns – "I wept at the beauty of your hymns...and I was happy in them" [9.6.14] – prior to his remembrance of Monica's life and death, reflects indirectly on another thematic pattern in the *Confessions*.<sup>87</sup> In the process of examining his conscience in Book 10 regarding "pleasures of the ear," Augustine says: "I observe that all the varying emotions of my spirit have modes proper to them in voice and song, whereby, by some secret affinity, they are made more alive. It is not good that the mind should be enervated by this bodily sensation" [10.33.49]. At the end of this section, Augustine prays to God to heal his infirmity in this matter, "Thou in

<sup>86</sup> Augustine's *Prayerful Ascent*, 14-15.

<sup>87</sup> LaChance identifies another chiasmic pattern in the *Confessions*, different from McMahon's (who acknowledges multiple patterns of correspondence). This one is based on the *Aeneid*, encompasses all thirteen books, centers on the conversion from the pride of the Platonists to the way of humility in book 7, and sets up a correspondence (among many others) between book 4 and book 10. See Paul LaChance, "Theology as Praxis in Augustine's *Confessions*: A Community Founded on the Humanity of Christ," in *Loneragan Workshop Journal*, vol. 20, ed. Fred Lawrence (Chestnut Hill, MA: Boston College, 2008), 197-232.

whose eyes I have become a question to myself" (*mihi quaestio factus sum*) [10.33.50]. This echoes his lament in Book 4 in the immediate aftermath of his friend's death, "I became a great enigma question to myself" (*factum eram ipse mihi magna quaestio*) [4.4.9]. However, when he remembers his enjoyment of liturgical singing in Book 9, he does not question himself; his awareness of pleasure and significance are properly joined in his preparation for baptism. In Book 10, when he examines his conscience in reference to the sense of hearing, he laments his enjoyment of music, not uniformly, but specifically when he allows the pleasure of sound to baffle his spiritual awareness of what he is doing. In recollecting this "infirmity," he is prayerfully aware that he is questioning himself "in God's eyes." Regarding the malady of his grief in Book 4, Augustine writes: "Where are you going? The good that you love is from Him: and insofar as it is likewise for Him it is good and lovely; but it will rightly be turned into bitterness if it is unrightly loved and He deserted by whom it is [4.12.18]." Before his conversion, in trying to answer the question why he was so grieved, Augustine looked for an answer in the sensible, the ephemeral, and he came up empty. He realized what this meant: he was bounded by death and the fear of death. After his conversion, his horizon became the unknowable depths of God, and his answer to the question of God became a prayer to heal his wound. Despite Augustine's immeasurable sorrow when Monica died, in orienting his questioning to God, he was not lost. Similarly, in questioning his sinfulness in all its concreteness on the way to God, he is not lost.

For those bounded by death, the question remains: where is your God? Is the best that one can manage a mystical prayer without content, a wordless music, at once an enticement and a consciousness of damnation?<sup>88</sup> Or is the capacity to question, arising from the passionateness of being, the very possibility of hope? As Lonergan says,

[T]he question of God...is not a matter of image or feeling, of concept or judgment. They pertain to answers. It is a question...(that) lies within man's horizon... The reach, not of his attainment, but of his intending, is unrestricted. There lies within his horizon a region for the divine, a shrine for ultimate holiness. It cannot be ignored. The atheist may pronounce it

<sup>88</sup> Samuel Beckett, *Proust* (New York: Grove Press, 1957), 71-72.

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empty. The agnostic may urge that he finds his investigation has been inconclusive. The contemporary humanist will refuse to allow the question to arise. But their negations presuppose... our native orientation the divine.<sup>89</sup>

Our actual experience of God in the awesomeness of grief and the joy of love is not a matter of logical proof or of simple chronological order. It is a call to reorient our lives, in all their concreteness and specificity, to what is really true and good.

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<sup>89</sup> *Method in Theology*, 103.

## THE THEOLOGICAL VIRTUES AND PARTICIPATION IN ACTIVE AND PASSIVE SPIRATION

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I HAVE BEEN ATTEMPTING FOR SOME TIME to work out the meaning of Bernard Lonergan's statement that sanctifying grace may fittingly be understood as a created imitation of and participation in divine active spiration, that is, in the Father and the Son as together they breathe the proceeding Love that is the Holy Spirit, and that charity may fittingly be understood as a created imitation of and participation in divine passive spiration, that is, in the Holy Spirit breathed as the proceeding Love of the Father and the Son.<sup>1</sup> The particular precision that I wish to bring to this theological hypothesis in the present paper has to do with the place of the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity in our participation in active and passive spiration, that is, in divine life. That development occurs in section 3 of the paper. What precedes and follows it is a restatement of positions that I have suggested more fully elsewhere, including in previous papers presented at this Workshop.

### ACTIVE AND PASSIVE SPIRATION

The opposed mutual relations of the Father speaking the Word and the Word spoken by the Father (that is, of the notional acts *dicere* and *dici*, "to speak" and "to be spoken") together, and precisely in and because of the mutual opposition of generating and generated, are the principle

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<sup>1</sup> See Bernard Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics*, vol. 12 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert M. Doran and H. Daniel Monsour and trans. Michael G. Shields (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 470-73.

of another relation that is opposed to both of them considered together, because it proceeds from them precisely as they *are* paternity and filiation. As such a unified principle – *duo Spirantes, unus Spirator* – they are said actively to breathe Love, and the Love that is breathed is the Holy Spirit. For the Father to beget the Son and for the Son to be gotten of the Father *is* for the Father and the Son together to breathe the Spirit of love. That is the meaning of the theological doctrine that active spiration, while conceptually distinct from paternity and filiation, is really identical with those two relations together. Two really distinct mutually opposed relations (Speaker and Word, *Dicens* and *Verbum*, Father and Son) together constitute one relation (active spiration) only conceptually distinct from Father and Son, a relation that stands as principle to the relation of Love that proceeds from *dicere* and *dici* together. That proceeding Love, as relation, is thus appropriately called passive spiration.

### PARTICIPATIONS IN ACTIVE AND PASSIVE SPIRATION

The Holy Spirit is thus God's first gift, so much so that 'Gift' is a personal name for the Holy Spirit, a proper and not appropriated name.<sup>2</sup> The Holy Spirit is the gift that the Father and the Son eternally give to each other as together, precisely as the Father generating and the Son generated, they communicate the divine nature to the relation of love that unites them.

If the Holy Spirit is God's first gift, a theology of the divine missions would begin, in the order of teaching as contrasted with the order of discovery, with the mission of the Holy Spirit, with the first gift.<sup>3</sup> All other supernatural divine gifts, including the visible mission of the incarnate Word and the indwelling of the Father and the Son, are somehow 'in' the Holy Spirit as first Gift.

<sup>2</sup> See Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, 1, q. 38, aa. 1 and 2. The implications for dialogue with some postmodern concerns with "gift" remain to be worked out.

<sup>3</sup> This is the basic thesis in Frederick E. Crowe's programmatic essay, "Son of God, Holy Spirit, and World Religions," on which my work has drawn extensively. The essay appears in *Appropriating the Lonergan Idea*, ed. Michael Vertin (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006), 324-43.

If the divine missions *are* the divine processions linked to created, contingent terms that are consequent conditions of the truth of the affirmation of the missions,<sup>4</sup> then the mission of the Holy Spirit historicizes and universalizes the eternal Gift uniting the Father and the Son. The issue here is the nature of the created term that is the consequent condition of the truth of any contingent affirmation that the uncreated Gift has been given to us.

If one follows Lonergan in the hypothesis under consideration – and I must admit that there is evidence that Lonergan himself in his later work did not regard the hypothesis as being as important as I and others have taken it to be – that consequent condition has two components. The first is consequent upon the Father and Son giving the eternal Gift, and the second is consequent upon the Holy Spirit, the eternal Gift, being given. The first component, then, consequent upon Father and Son giving the eternal Gift, must be some created base of a created relation to the uncreated Gift that has been given. That created base thus imitates and participates in divine active spiration, since it establishes a created relation to the Holy Spirit. The second component, consequent upon the Holy Spirit, the eternal Gift, being given in time, must be the base of a created relation in return, as it were, to the Father and the Son. That created base thus imitates and participates in divine passive spiration, since it establishes a created relation to the Father and the Son.

The first component has been known in the tradition as sanctifying grace and the second as charity. Sanctifying grace is to charity as active spiration is to passive spiration. Created habitual grace has a trinitarian structure.

The offer of this gift of participation in active and passive spiration through created relations to the three divine persons, relations whose created base is, respectively, sanctifying grace and charity, is universal. It is offered to all men and women at every time and place. It is differentiated, however, and made explicit through the divine revelation recorded in the Jewish and Christian scriptures. As Christians profess in the creed, the Holy Spirit 'spoke through the prophets.' And as the letter to the Hebrews affirms, in the visible mission of the incarnate

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<sup>4</sup> For the argument to this effect, see *The Triune God*, 454-67.

Word God speaks to us through the Son. This visible mission occurs 'in' the Holy Spirit and in relation to the Holy Spirit's universal mission.

Thus, the mission of the Holy Spirit, that is, the gift of divine love, is not only intensified but also revealed, made thematic, in the visible mission of the Son, where it plays a constitutive role. Moreover, a visible mission of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost fulfills the twofold mission of the Son and the Spirit and enables a public acknowledgment that what happened in Jesus was indeed the revelation of the triune God in history. That fulfilment and confirmation are the birth of the church. The Pentecostal mission of the Holy Spirit is precisely the mission of giving birth to the church, whose own mission it is to carry to the ends of the earth and to the end of time the invisible mission of the Spirit and the revelation of that mission in the visible mission of the Son. The mutual interplay of divine and human freedom can now be carried on in explicit recognition of what, prior to the revelation that comes to its fulfilment in the mission of the incarnate Word, necessarily remained *vécu* but not *thématique*, implicit but not recognized, conscious but not known, or to employ a Scholastic designation, present *in actu exercito* but not *in actu signato*. The visible mission of the incarnate Word is the explicit revelation through linguistic and incarnate meaning, and drawing on the other carriers of meaning as well, of what God has always been doing and continues to do in the inner word of the invisible mission of the Holy Spirit. The church is born in the visible, tangible, audible, palpable mission of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, precisely to proclaim both divine missions. 'As the Father has sent me, so I send you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."'

### FAITH, CHARITY, HOPE

Sanctifying grace is *gratia gratum faciens*, the grace that makes us pleasing to God in a special way, so that we are elevated to become participants in the divine nature. That participation shares in active and passive spiration, in active spiration through sanctifying grace and in passive spiration through the charity whereby God is loved in return. This gift of mutually reciprocal relations can be made available

to consciousness in several ways, one of which is through recollection or memory providing evidence sufficient for the silent, indeed ineffable, judgment of value that assents to being on the receiving end of unqualified love. The unqualified love that one receives is what Aquinas calls the 'notionaliter diligere' of Father and Son actively making us lovable in this special way. Participation in divine life is conditioned by the created relation to the Holy Spirit, a relation whose base is the elevating grace known as *gratia gratum faciens*. There is a graced *memoria*, a transformed state in which the mind finds itself (Augustine), a transformed *Befindlichkeit* accompanying *Verstehen* (Heidegger), a transformed affective movement of life in which the operations of intentional consciousness find direction (Lonergan, Voegelin, Doran). This graced *memoria* or recollection functions in an analogy based in grace as the analogue for the divine Father, precisely as it provides evidence grasped as sufficient for the judgment of value that assents to the gift of divine love. That assent changes everything in a person's life. The proceeding judgment of value is the faith born of religious love, and it establishes a new horizon for everything.<sup>5</sup> It functions in the same analogy as the analogue for the divine Word. From *memoria* and faith breathing love operating (*operans*) together, there proceeds charity, a disposition of universal willingness that is love of the givers of the gift in return. As Christians grow in the Christian life, that love becomes more and more an explicit relation of companionship with the divine Word made flesh and an explicit relation of hope for the vision of the divine Father. For those who do not have the revelation that makes all this explicit, that love is a love of wisdom and a hope that keeps the quest for truth alive against all odds. The trinitarian structure of active and passive spiration is present in the graced dimensions of all who have received the gift, whether or not it is articulated thematically as trinitarian on the basis of God's revelation in the incarnate Word.

In this way, it may be maintained, we can affirm the presence of the theological virtues in the lives of all who have assented to the gift, whether that assent be *vécu* or *thématique*, implicit or explicit, *in actu exercito* or *in actu signato*, merely conscious or also known. Once a supernatural existential is acknowledged to be part

<sup>5</sup> See Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, multiple printings), 117-18.

of the transcendental interpersonal structure of *Dasein*, an equally transcendental functioning of the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity may be discerned, whether that functioning be simply conscious or also known. It is the revelation given in the visible mission of the incarnate Word that makes it known, but it is present and operative independently of that revelation and that knowledge. This does not make the outer word of revelation superfluous, no more, says Lonergan, than the words 'I love you' spoken by two human beings to one another are superfluous to their relation of love.<sup>6</sup> Those words are constitutive of the relation, as are the explicitations, made possible by the Incarnation of the Word, of the dimensions of the divine gift.

This, I believe, is one way to constitute the basic structure of a Catholic and trinitarian theology of the world's religions. The implications for systematic theology are at least the following.

### IMPLICATIONS FOR SYSTEMIC THEOLOGY

First, the functional specialties now become specialties for a world theology. The eight functional specialties are now to be applied precisely by Catholic theology to the universal religious situation of humankind. The relevant data for research *precisely in Christian theology* and not just in religious studies include all the data on the religious living of men and women at every time and place. They are to be interpreted by a critical realist hermeneutics. The history relevant to Christian theology includes the religious history of all people. Religious studies would stop there, but theology will go on to the remaining functional specialties, sorting out positions and counterpositions, articulating the horizon for direct discourse, deriving the categories to be employed in that discourse and in ever renewed interpretation of the data and in histories of what was going forward, stating doctrinal positions that will now include what is judged positional from other traditions, working these into systematic coherence, and contributing to the church's mission in the world, precisely and mainly by clarifying the religious situation itself in which that mission is to be fulfilled.

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<sup>6</sup> See *Method in Theology*, 112-13.

Second, the structure specifies only the relations between religious values and personal values in the integral scale of values that in earlier work I tried to establish as providing a central set of categories for a theology of history.<sup>7</sup> It is above all participation in the invisible mission of the Word that will extend grace to cultural values and to the social mediation of the human good, so that we may speak of social grace. One way in which this will happen is through the reorientation and integration of common sense and of the other sciences on the basis of an explicit articulation of the normative horizon. I want to speak of an invisible mission of the Word, not just by appropriation, but with proper predication.<sup>8</sup>

Third, the four-point hypothesis from which I take the basic set of relations that I have been concerned with here constitutes what I am calling the contemporary dogmatic-theological context for the collaborative construction of a systematic theology. In addition to the participations in active and passive spiration that I take as my starting point, the hypothesis includes specifications regarding the 'secondary act of existence' of the Incarnation and the 'light of glory' opening upon the beatific vision. These I cannot go into here. But in the order of teaching the starting point of any systematics, on a macro level, would treat the Trinity, the gift of the Holy Spirit, the Incarnation, and the promise of beatific knowing and loving in eternal life, and, I propose, would do so in that order. These are the absolutely supernatural realities in which God is attained as God is in God's own triune being. Moreover, they have already received firm and clear doctrinal status in the church's own development of its constitutive meaning. Further development will inch theology and the church toward an equally firm dogmatic-theological framework including positions on revelation, original sin, redemption, creation, the church, the sacraments, and the very large category of praxis, which we have already touched upon in speaking of the reorientation of commonsense living in harmony with an integral scale of values, and also of the interdisciplinary collaboration that would head toward reoriented human science and a new formulation of philosophy's contribution to the articulation of

<sup>7</sup> See especially Robert M. Doran, *Theology and the Dialectics of History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990, 2001).

<sup>8</sup> In contrast, see *The Triune God*, 498-99.

foundational reality. In other words, the dogmatic-theological context will expand as systematics does its work.

Fourth, the same hypothesis is one of two parts in what I am calling the unified field structure for systematics. Systematics has to start somewhere, and following Lonergan it has to follow the order of teaching, as opposed to the order of discovery. Aquinas's master edifice was the result not only of his biblical commentaries and Philip the Chancellor's theorem of the supernatural – these gave him the special categories in his theology – but also of his appropriation of Aristotle's metaphysics and, by extension, of Aristotle's psychology, ethics, and even physics. Because he brought these general categories into systematic integration with the transformative realities expressed in the special categories, he transformed Aristotle's philosophy into the systematic *Begrifflichkeit* that could provide the integration that made his own theology systematic. His unified field structure, if you will, was a function of the combined power of the theorem of the supernatural and his appropriation of Aristotle. I am suggesting that it is continuous with Aquinas that a contemporary unified field structure for systematics be composed of the four-point hypothesis, which differentiates the theorem of the supernatural, and what Lonergan calls the *Grund- und Gesamtwissenschaft*, the total and basic science, which represents the culmination to date of the effective history of Thomas's Aristotelianism: namely, Lonergan's cognitional theory, epistemology, metaphysics, and existential ethics. I have also suggested that this general-categorical component to the unified field structure be further specified by bringing Lonergan's basic and total science to bear on the construction of a theory of history, so that systematics may take as its mediated object precisely what Lonergan at the time of his breakthrough to functional specialization said it should take as its mediated object, namely, *Geschichte*, the history that is lived and written about. So the four-point hypothesis and a theory of history based in Lonergan's fundamental achievement would constitute the unified field structure for a contemporary systematic theology.

This unified field structure is not fixed for all time any more than Aquinas's corresponding structure was fixed for all time. Both components in the structure will develop. The special-categorical domain in the realm of the supernatural will unfold as secure

achievements in understanding revelation, sin, redemption, creation, the church, and so on, go forward. And the general-categorical domain in the realm of history will unfold as the human sciences, including economics, are reoriented and incorporated into that part of the unified field structure that constitutes a theory of history. The scale of values frames that theory of history, and the four-point hypothesis, especially as it names the immanent constitution of life in God, constitutes the realm of 'religious values' in that understanding of history. Fidelity to the work of participating in the invisible mission of the divine Word will enable the systematics of history to develop its understanding of the other levels of value: personal, cultural, social, and vital, in an ongoing mediation between an increasingly global cultural matrix and the significance and role of religious living in that matrix.

But the expansion of the specification of religious values themselves will also go forward as a Catholic trinitarian systematic theology finds its home in the midst of the explicit application of the functional specialties to a world theology, a theology that would discern, locate, and appropriate the gifts of the universally bestowed Holy Spirit in the religious living of all people. Such, I think, was what Lonergan was anticipating in his 'Prolegomena to the Study of the Emerging Religious Consciousness of Our Time,'<sup>9</sup> where he may legitimately be interpreted as implying not only that a contemporary systematics must be grounded in interiorly and religiously differentiated consciousness, and not only that it must take the form of a theology of history, but also that it must be expressed in the explicit context of the interreligious and multi-religious world in which we live.

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<sup>9</sup> Bernard Lonergan, "Prolegomena to the Study of the Emerging Religious Consciousness of Our Time," in *A Third Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1985), 55-73.

## EXPANDING HORIZONS OF QUESTION AND INSIGHT: SOME CONDITIONS AND CORRELATES OF PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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We can distinguish the known, the known unknown, and the unknown unknown. The distinction is applicable to any stage of development....

The horizon is the boundary. What is beyond my horizon is meaningless for me, though it may not be meaningless in itself. It is not worthwhile for me, but it may be worthwhile in itself.

One's own horizon is the limit, the boundary, where one's concern or interest vanishes. As one approaches the horizon, one's interest, attention, concern is falling off to the vanishing point. At the horizon it has ceased altogether. What one does not attend to at all, ever, one knows nothing about, and that settles one's horizon.

Moreover, the matter of going beyond one's horizon is not simple. There is an organized resistance to going beyond one's horizon. Within one's horizon, one's ready-made world, one is organized, one has determinate modes of living, feeling, thinking, judging, desiring, willing, deliberating, choosing and acting. But to move beyond one's horizon in any but the most casual and insignificant fashion calls for the reorganization of the subject, a reorganization of his modes of living, feeling, thinking, judging, desiring, fearing, willing, deliberating, choosing. Against such a reorganization of the patterns of the subject, there come into play all the conservative forces that

give our lives their continuity and coherence. The subject's fundamental anxiety, his deepest dread, is the collapse of himself and his world. Tampering with the organization of himself, reorganizing himself, gives rise to such a dread.<sup>1</sup>

WHAT ACCOUNTS FOR THE DIFFERENCES in people in terms of significant personal development? Why is it that, for some people, personal development is clear and sustained over long intervals, whereas for others it hardly seems to exist at all? What accounts for a dramatic start-up of development in some people, whereas before there seemed to be no progress at all? These questions are of interest to students of Bernard Lonergan, to contemporary applied psychologists, and to educators.

This paper explores these questions with the aid of: (1) selected ideas in the work of Bernard Lonergan and (2) some recurring topics currently being researched in various branches of applied psychology. In particular, Lonergan's work on cognitional *structure*, *intentionality analysis*, *generalized empirical method*, and *bias* are given special emphasis. From applied psychology, the topics of *complex human problem solving*, *self-directed learning*, *personality*, *self-regulation* and *habit* are important in a variety of contexts where human development is central, including educational, counseling, and developmental contexts.

As with a paper that preceded it<sup>2</sup>, this work is part of an ongoing program to incorporate Lonergan's ideas into applied psychology. In the previous paper Lonergan's ideas regarding cognitional and moral self-transcendence were considered in relation to some contemporary applied psychological theories. This paper considers specific examples of development and nondevelopment in relation to those ideas and related contexts of hope and hopelessness.

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<sup>1</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *Topics in Education: The Cincinnati Lectures of 1959 on the Philosophy of Education*, vol. 10 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993).

<sup>2</sup> Richard Grallo, "Reframing Applied Psychology in Terms of Self-transcendence: Selected Challenges, Problems, and Prospects" in *Lonergan Workshop Journal*, vol. 24, ed. Fred Lawrence (Chestnut Hill, MA: Boston College).

### PERSONALITY AS CONTEXT AND EFFECT OF COMPLEX HUMAN LEARNING

Chaplin indicates that despite disagreement regarding specific definitions of *personality*, "there is a core agreement in considering personality as an integration of traits that can be investigated and described in order to render an account of the unique quality of the individual."<sup>3</sup> For psychologists, "traits" are aspects of the person that are relatively stable over time. Personality traits include those that are cognitive, emotive, and behavioral. Cognitive traits pertain not only to thought patterns but to the cognitive processes that produce them. Emotive traits refer to characteristic or predictable affective responses. Behavioral traits refer to recurrent patterns of observable behavior.

To the extent that traits are automatic, they are often rooted in habits not only of behavior, but habits of thought and emotion as well. Like all habits, they can be engaged without thinking, practiced easily and efficiently, and enjoyed in the process. Yet not all habits lead to greater success and integration of the person. For those habits that do, the person possessing them can easily, effectively, pleasantly, and almost without thinking increase the probability of achievement and become more skilled in the process. Yet for those persons with destructive habits, they easily, effectively, pleasantly, and almost without thinking increase the probability of failure or mediocrity and become more damaged in the process – in effect, they become really efficient at self-destruction. This more or less stable constellation of cognitive, emotive, and behavioral habits constitutes the system we refer to as "personality." As system, a change in any one of its aspects is likely to reverberate with other changes throughout the system. Hence distinctive changes in thought will likely result in changes in affect and behavior. Marked changes in emotion will likely result in changes in thought and behavior. Conversely persistent changes in behavior will likely result in changes in affect and thought.

Since personality is a background for complex human learning, some of its traits may influence attempts at such learning and may even interfere with those attempts. For example, a student who adamantly retains the thought that they "are no good at math" is less

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<sup>3</sup> J. P. Chaplin, *Dictionary of Psychology*, 2nd ed. (New York: Laurel Books, 1985), 334.

likely to be successful in that domain regardless of the truth or falsity of the claim. Or, a counseling client with unacknowledged anxiety may be less successful in achieving goals related to personal development. While Lonergan indicated that bias is a major interference with an unfettered comprehensive learning, the examination of the larger context of personality (including its emotive and behavioral aspects) gives rise to a broader understanding of what might reinforce and drive the operation of bias.

### COMPREHENSIVE LEARNING AS CENTRAL TO PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Lonergan has described in some detail the activities, events, and operations involved in complex human problem-solving and knowledge acquisition. These activities, events, and operations seem to cluster into four major groups and form recurrent patterns in our efforts to learn. In addition, the four groups can be functionally related to one another by presupposing the work of a previous group and using it to address a new intention. Lonergan and a number who have followed him have described and distinguished the four groups as *experiencing*, *understanding*, *judging*, and *deciding* and have argued for their functional relation as "levels of consciousness" integrating with one another through "sublation."<sup>4</sup>

Each group is distinguished from the others by a specific intention related to comprehensive human learning. *Experience* is the source for the operation of all the other groups and can most accurately be identified with consciousness. Experience may vary from the passive state of dreaming through the very active state of focused attending. With *understanding*, a new intention emerges in consciousness – the intention to seek meaningful possibilities through asking and answering a variety of questions. The search for possibilities ceases with the shift in intention of the *judging* group – to resolve issues of fact and value. And the intention shifts again, in the *decision* group with the intention to transform situations (and self) through specific actions.

<sup>4</sup> See Brian Cronin, *Foundations of Philosophy: Lonergan's Cognitive Theory and Epistemology* (Nairobi, Kenya: Consolata Institute of Philosophy, 1999); T. Tekippe, *What Is Lonergan Up to in Insight?* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1996); ΜΕΤΗΟΒ: *Journal of Lonergan Studies* 13, no. 2, Topography and Economy of Consciousness, 1995).

Each group of activities, events, and operations is associated with some conscious act or event that moves thinking forward (an "operator") as well as some process or product that brings a kind of closure or fulfillment of intention appropriate for that group (an "integrator"). The entire sequence of said activities and events constitutes a process which may unfold easily or which may be interfered with. To move forward a sustained desire to know must be present, thus "maintaining the intention to learn."<sup>5</sup>

Learning that results from the active operation of all four groups (functioning as levels) may be said to be comprehensive learning. As such it is experientially based (level 1), insightful and relevant (level 2), critical of fact and value (level 3) and transformative of situations and self (level 4). As Table 1 indicates, each group, as it unfolds, involves passive (or receptive) states as well as active (or productive) states. For example, while one may pursue a specific insight, one cannot produce it at will. In addition, some questions come unbidden. Yet we do maintain a choice in whether or not we pursue them, in effect preserving the intention to learn, and increasing the likelihood of transitioning from a state of not knowing to a state of knowing. We may also choose not to proceed. Having received an insight, we may choose not to formulate it. Having collected evidence, we may avoid judgment. Having weighed pros and cons, we may refuse to decide. With each interruption, we affect the quality of what we learn.

Comprehensive human learning, then, if we are to take it seriously, will engage us in a dance between acts, events, and operations, both active and passive, that make up the entire process. In some instances, we will need to exercise patience and preparation in waiting for the relevant insights; and, when they emerge, we will need to cooperate with them by active pursuit in formulation, or testing, or deliberating, or acting – whichever the case may be.

This active-passive shift occurs in all groups: whether it is a focusing of *attention* in group 1, or the emergence of an *intention* (encapsulated in a question) in the other groups. For example, an important instance of the active-passive dance occurs in groups 2, 3, and

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<sup>5</sup> Linda Corno, "Student Volition and Education: Outcomes, Influence, and Practices," in Dale Schunck and Barry Zimmermann (eds.), *Self-Regulation of Learning and Performance: Issues and Educational Applications* (Florence, KY: Routledge, 1994).

4, where a learning sequence is often initiated by some sort of *question* (understood as a cognitive event). The question itself may have simply occurred to us receptively or it may be a part of an active program of questioning. If we choose to pursue the question, it functions as an *operator* by initiating a series of events likely to result in some sort of answer borne by an insight. The insight serves to bring previous gains together, and is thereby an *integrator*.

The alternating emergence of question and insight in different groups (functioning as complementary levels) and regarding different experiences and concerns, if unhindered, will likely lead to a very thorough form of learning. That type of learning that may be labeled as "comprehensive" because of its rootedness in experience, its insightfulness, its critical handling of fact and value, and its transformative nature. Moreover, as has been argued, each advance from question to insight, from question to knowledge, from question to

**Table 1**

Level	Passive → ACTIVE Sequence	Integrator
Group (Level) 4 – DECIDING	QUESTION-FOR-DELIBERATION ↔ FORMULATION ↔ LISTING PROS-CONS ↔ WEIGHING PROS-CONS ↔ Deliberative Insight ↔ DECISION	-deliberative insight  -DECISION  -ACTION
Group (Level) 3 – JUDGING	QUESTIONS FOR-REFLECTION (Fact, Value) ↔ FORMULATION ↔ COLLECTING ↔ WEIGHING ↔ Reflective Insight ↔ JUDGMENT	-reflective insight  -JUDGMENT
Group (Level) 2 – UNDERSTANDING	QUESTIONS-FOR-INTELLIGENCE ↔ FORMULATIONS ↔ Insights ↔ FORMULATIONS	-insight as ENCODED FORMULATION
Group (Level) 1 – EXPERIENCING	Dreaming → Alertness → ATTENTIVENESS	-perceived events  -images  -memories

reasoned action represents a transcendence of a new more comprehensive self over a less-developed, prior version.<sup>6</sup> Lonergan refers to this in his discussion of intellectual and moral self-transcendence.<sup>7</sup> The developing self here described faces the challenge of an ever expanding horizon, suggested to consciousness by the ongoing question-insight dance.

Yet since comprehensive learning involves so many acts, events, and operations in sequence, the real possibility emerges for interference with it and for breakdowns of it.<sup>8</sup> Systematic exclusion of relevant further questions and insights, as *basic bias*, prevents the emergence of more comprehensive learning and thereby ensures non-growth for the persons involved. The emergence of a more developed version of self is also blocked. The stalled and nondeveloping self here described faces the challenge of a static horizon, which happens to be the boundary of knowledge and concern up until the time the person stopped growing – up until the time the ongoing question-insight dance stopped.

Such systematic exclusion of the relevant as occurs in bias is not simply a cognitive event. Rather it is a cognitive event that occurs within a larger context of personality with its emotive and behavioral aspects. Those emotions and behaviors, especially if they are habitual and unnoticed, can work to reinforce the extended operation of bias and make it seem natural. Working with self and others to move beyond the limitations associated with basic bias may be facilitated by exploration to the larger contexts of personality and personalities.

### SOME ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES OF PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND NONDEVELOPMENT

As illustrations of personal development and non-development, consider the following three paired examples drawn from education, counseling, and life planning. Each pair involves a person stuck in a non-growth pattern of living contrasted with another who is in a growth pattern. For persons in a “non-growth” pattern, the horizon of

<sup>6</sup> Gallo, “Reframing Applied Psychology.”

<sup>7</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (New York: Herder & Herder, 1972), 35.

<sup>8</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, vol. 3 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), chap. 6.

knowledge and concern is likely to remain what it was the day the learning stopped. In contrast, for anyone in a "growth" pattern, the horizon of knowledge and concern is likely to expand into ever more comprehensive viewpoints and a more developed self.

### **Education**

Student A reports that she is "not good at mathematics," that she has never done well with it, that she tends to avoid the subject and sees no value in it. Consequently, any college work that remotely approaches mathematics is anxiety provoking and something to be avoided. Should that continue, Student A will likely develop a viewpoint that is biased against most things mathematical, and thereby far less comprehensive than it might have been. Student A is in a non-growth pattern, at least in regard to mathematics.

Student B reports that at one time he had no interest in math and tended to avoid it. He then came to the conclusion that in order for him to do better in life he would need to finish high school through a G.E.D. program and then go on to college. As part of the G.E.D. preparation he worked hard on practice problems. In the process, he came to the conclusion that understanding the nature of the problems was more satisfying and interesting than merely memorizing formulae. He generalized his conclusion to think that probably most math is an attempt to solve some type of problem. This led the question "What were those problems?" In his freshman year in college, this student is looking forward to his early math classes. Student B is in a growth pattern in relation to mathematics.

### **Counseling**

Client C came to counseling with the stated goal of "learning better communication skills." During sessions he explored this topic with the counselor, identified areas for projected improvement, and practiced specific communication skills with the counselor. He also agreed to practice these skills in between counseling sessions. After seven weekly sessions, it became apparent that Client C was not practicing between sessions, and he admitted as much. In addition, C indicated several

disagreements with the counselor's approach and he reported that he really "just wanted someone to argue with." It appears that as long as Client C is not forthcoming about his goals and as long as he will not practice what he agrees to he is likely to continue in a non-growth pattern. He will not likely take up the challenge of going beyond his currently constituted, but dysfunctional, self.

Client D reports having difficulty with anger and seeks to find constructive ways of dealing with it. He reported some details of getting angry while being delayed in traffic. With the counselor, he explored ways of changing the anger to mere annoyance, or better yet to curiosity while stuck in traffic in the future. He agreed to try out the new strategies and to report the results. It appears that as long as Client D is consistent about his goal of dealing more constructively with anger and as long as he is willing to practice new approaches to dealing with it, he is likely to continue in a growth pattern at least in respect to his anger. Client D, if he continues, will likely take up the challenge of going beyond his currently constituted, but dysfunctional, self.

## **Life Planning**

Student E is a grandmother in her mid-sixties who is completing her undergraduate degree and is enrolled in a life planning seminar for seniors in college. In this seminar, students are encouraged to develop a "Ten Year Plan" wherein they do the following: (1) map out areas of their life as they would desire it to be in ten years, (2) write a mission statement for their life, (3) for each identified life area formulate at least one goal, (4) develop strategies and alternates to reach each goal, (5) identify resources and barriers associated with each goal, and (6) relate their plans to selected literature.<sup>9</sup> Early in the course, Student E announced that she was graduating and a grandmother and that "nobody could make her have any goals." It appears that as long as Student E is not willing to even consider new goals for herself and as long as she acts on that unwillingness she is likely to continue in a non-growth pattern. She does not seem likely to take up the challenge of going beyond her currently constituted self.

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<sup>9</sup> Richard Grallo, "Exploring Long-term Self-regulation through the Use of a 'Multi-Year Plan.'" *Journal for the Advancement of Educational Research*, 4, no. 1 (2008): 69-74.

Student F is a 72-year-old grandmother who is also completing her undergraduate degree and is enrolled in a life planning seminar for seniors in college. Late in the course, Student F announced that she was contemplating graduate school but wondered whether or not she was "too old." It appears that as long as Student F is willing to consider new goals for herself and as long as she acts on that willingness she is likely to continue in a growth pattern. She seems likely to take up the challenge of going beyond her currently constituted self, to achieve a more comprehensive and integrated self of the future.

What accounts for the differences in each of these pairs? We may get some clues if we approach them all from the viewpoints of (1) personality development, (2) personality functioning, and (3) comprehensive learning.

From the point of view of personality development, it is clear that B, D, and F are on an upward developmental trajectory. They possess openness to new ideas and experiences, and a willingness to experiment and to persevere, an attentiveness to detail. In short, they exhibit many of the positive traits elucidated in Costa and McCrae's "Big Five Model of Personality": openness, conscientiousness, engagement, agreeableness, and emotional stability.<sup>10</sup> Their upward trajectory will value creativity over comfort, and high performance over coping, hope over hopelessness. In contrast, A, C, and E appear to be stalled and perhaps on a downward developmental trajectory. In terms of the "Big Five" traits they appear quite different: defensive rather than open, unwilling to examine details rather than being conscientious about them, not really engaged (even though they are "signed up"), more disagreeable than agreeable, and more moody than emotionally stable. Their flat or downward trajectory will value some form of hopelessness over hope, comfort over creativity, and coping over high performance.

From the point of view of personality functioning, we can examine cognitive, emotive, behavioral, and habitual activities. Cognitively, the non-developers (A, C and E) have been carrying around certain defective controlling ideas for a long time. Often such ideas are fundamentally

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<sup>10</sup> Robert McCrae and Paul Costa, *Personality in Adulthood* (New York: Guilford Press, 1990).

vague, false, un-testable, or self-defeating. For example, the idea that "I am not good at mathematics" is often an overgeneralization based on a rather limited set of interactions in prior math courses. Or, the idea of "just wanting someone to argue with" may actually get in the way of learning real communication skills. The developers in contrast, tend to test their ideas and move to work with ideas that are precise, true, testable, and growth-promoting.

Emotively, the developers show clear signs of the desire to know by asking and pursuing further relevant questions and insights. They experience hope as a desire for a better state,<sup>11</sup> and as such it is both an emotion and motivator. The non-developers do not show such signs. The emotions they experience may be some form of boredom, depression, or a debilitating form of anger or anxiety. Such emotions can serve to block growth and to reinforce biases that exist.

Behaviorally, the developers take actions that are designed to assist with the pursuit of their goals. They experience hope as a decision for a better state<sup>12</sup>, sustained by related actions. In contrast, the non-developers are remarkably passive, and display few actions that run developmentally counter to their current state of affairs. For the brighter ones among them, this may be supplemented by a theory that indicates why the current situation is either necessary or desirable.

Finally, all of these aspects, when practiced for sufficiently long periods, become habits. Habits as a kind of second nature are marked by their efficiency, automaticity, ease and pleasantness. In a popular adaption of some older Aristotelian ideas<sup>13</sup> about virtue, vice and happiness, Stephen Covey has delineated seven habits for effective learners.<sup>14</sup> The developers (B, D, and F) appear to have these habits or to be on their way to developing them. In contrast, the non-developers (A, C, and E) do not have growth promoting habits, nor do they seem to be on their way to developing them. In fact, they seem to have habits

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<sup>11</sup> *Insight*, 723.

<sup>12</sup> *Insight*, 723.

<sup>13</sup> Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968).

<sup>14</sup> Stephen Covey, *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People: Restoring the Character Ethic* (New York: G. K. Hall, 1997).

that seek to maintain stasis or tend towards decline. Developmental psychology has described how fully human development is a lengthy process. By the time self-knowledge and self-control emerge as real possibilities, it appears that habits of all sorts have been well-established and tend to pull in a variety of directions, some of them pro-growth and some of them anti-growth. Consequently, it can be expected that for many adults, their current "personality" is a hodgepodge of conflicting forces and loyalties – a situation that drains energy and tends toward mediocrity or destruction, not high achievement or wisdom.

From the viewpoint of comprehensive learning, we can study the learning group of activities where each individual spends most time. We can also explore the operation of *basic bias* over the long term to discover the kinds of experiences, images, insights, questions, and evidence that are being systematically excluded from consciousness, thereby resulting in truncated future development. If these matters are traced and documented, it is possible to develop a "comprehensive learning profile" for each person that indicates the extent to which they engage in Lonergan's transcendental precepts regarding attentiveness, asking further relevant questions, affirming facts and values based on reflection, and being moved to responsible action by verified knowledge and authentic values. Finally, such a profile would provide a useful basis for self-directed learning as well as for teaching and counseling interventions.

### IMPLICATIONS AND APPLICATIONS

By way of implication, if these understandings of *personality development*, *personality functioning* and *comprehensive learning* are correct, then it is possible to: (1) identify specific instances of learning and mis-learning in self and others, (2) trace long-term learning and mis-learning paths, (3) organize experiences to stimulate specific learning components and to disengage conditions of mis-learning and (4) trace teaching interventions and their consequences.

By way of application, these can be put into practice with the examples considered. Regarding (1), the identification of specific instances of learning and mis-learning, some approaches have emerged

to assist individuals to identify the acts, events, and operations that promote their learning and those that interfere with it.<sup>15</sup> For example, math Student A, who reports a difficult history with mathematics, could be invited to reflect on a few dramatic instances of "failure" with a purpose of identifying and exploring the cognitive, emotive, and behavioral components of them. In addition, she could brainstorm about how those specifics might be changed for the better. For math Student B, who is already on a growth trajectory, this task of identifying learning components could have the purpose of reinforcing his recent successes in this area in order to develop stronger learning habits that would serve him well in any learning context.

Regarding (2), the tracing of long-term learning and mis-learning paths could prove useful for both Client C and Client D. For example, for Client C, who simply wanted to argue, the identification of specific questions concerning the usefulness or desirability of that approach to date might prove useful in at least presenting him with the kinds of data that might detail what has been going on his life. The question of the usefulness and desirability of that pattern could be introduced. For Client D, who was seeking to deal with his anger while being frustrated in traffic, this would involve the outlining of his history with the specific emotion of anger and the thoughts that might be associated with it when delayed in traffic. Since the history is time limited, he could note when it began and when it seemed to intensify. From there one could raise the possibility of constructing a new pattern for the future. This might involve a shift to the image of a calm self in the same situation and the exploration of ways that might be achieved, perhaps through changing thoughts or behaviors.

Regarding (3), the organization of experiences to stimulate specific learning components and to disengage conditions of mis-learning will be important for Life Planners E and F, but in different ways. For E, who is resisting the setting of goals, daily living itself will present new experiences that may invite growth. As these experiences accumulate, if she continues to desire to remain unchanged, then increasing amounts of energy will become invested in resistance to growth. This results in a depletion of energy for other tasks and becomes a kind of natural cost

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<sup>15</sup> Donald Schon, *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action* (New York: Basic Books 1984).

for refusing growth. For F, in contrast, in addition to experiences that simply come her way, she will also manage to seek out new learning experiences. Since her learning is expanding, she is increasing the likelihood of introducing a synergistic effect between the experiences she receives, those she seeks, her current self, and envisioned self.

Those who teach or counsel anyone who might be like persons A through F are likely to be interested in (4), tracing their teaching or counseling interventions and their consequences. This is a task that is not easy, since it may involve large amounts of self-report data.<sup>16</sup> Such data presuppose that the person reporting is ready, willing, and able to accurately represent events of their own consciousness. In addition, the consequences sought may be immediate, medium-term, or long-term, thus requiring extended and well-planned efforts at data collection. Yet this type of data can reveal patterns of learning that are at alternating times incremental and dialectical, halting and progressive, and spiraling in different directions.

In all cases, these implications placed into practice involve exploring the concrete details of a person's current landscape of concerns and personality factors.<sup>17</sup> Inevitably, it will involve the physical, social, and technological environments within which the person operates.

Whether we choose to assist others in personal development or not, we can promote our own growth by becoming familiar with and working with the basic phenomena of our own learning experiences – images, questions, insights, reflections, judgments, decisions, actions, consequences, and habit change. In turn, our own growth does prepare us for entry into the community of persons who struggle with the challenges of producing the “one and only edition of themselves.”

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<sup>16</sup> Anders Ericsson and Herbert Simon, *Protocol Analysis: Verbal Reports as Data* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press 1984); S. I. Hayakawa, *Language in Thought and Action*, 5th ed. (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1990).

<sup>17</sup> K. Lewin, Defining the “Field at a Given Time,” *Psychological Review* 50 (1943): 292-310.

## JOSEPH FLANAGAN AND THE PHILOSOPHICAL HERMENEUTIC OF MODERN ART

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THE PHILOSOPHICAL THOUGHT OF FR. JOSEPH FLANAGAN was constantly focused on the phenomenon of development and was always, itself, developing. For this reason there was a danger in any attempt to interpret the essentials of Flanagan's philosophy while he was pursuing it in this mortal life. The possibility was always looming that a series of new breakthroughs might undermine whatever one had to say about the core of his thinking. But with Fr. Flanagan's passing in 2010, there is a need to make the difficult shift from a vital, developing, oral tradition to its embodiment in our memories and in his written works. It is this task that I undertake, in the present essay, with regard to Flanagan's philosophy of art. There are several dimensions to the task. I want to characterize Flanagan's thought in relation to, but also – importantly – in distinction from, that of Bernard Lonergan. I want to give the reader something of a roadmap through the relevant argumentation, showing how Flanagan's aesthetics is integrated, to an extraordinary degree, with the fields of cognitional theory, metaphysics, and the philosophy of science. I want to emphasize the particular place of importance that modern visual art holds in Flanagan's way of characterizing the nature of art in general. In pursuing these aims, I shall focus almost exclusively on the media of painting and sculpture, in part for the sake of expediency, but also because this focus will connect Flanagan, in interesting ways, to Hans-Georg Gadamer's hermeneutic approach to art. It is hoped that my account will provide some clarity and structure for those who have experienced difficulty finding their way through Flanagan's aesthetics, and some enticement for those who

have wondered how much depth and significance there might be to Flanagan's thinking on the question of art.

### THE SCOPE AND STRUCTURE OF FLANAGAN'S AESTHETICS

Were one to judge entirely from his works in print, one might say that Flanagan's goal as an aesthetician is to provide commentary on Lonergan's ideas regarding art, which receive some mention in *Insight*, are elaborated more completely in *Topics in Education*, and become fully integrated into Lonergan's intentionality analysis in *Method in Theology*.<sup>1</sup> But if one adds information from Flanagan's teaching, his lectures and afternoon sessions at the Lonergan Workshop, and the conversations on art that he was constantly initiating, one must say that while Flanagan thoroughly absorbed Lonergan's perspective on art, he also developed it in ambitious and remarkable ways. Let me identify three of them.

First, it would be fair to say that Lonergan's primary ambition with regard to the philosophy of art is to find the place for artistic creation and experience within the larger existential task of self-appropriation – locating aesthetic experience and artistry initially within a theory of patterns of experience, but eventually within an intentionally analysis that integrates the full range of human knowing and doing. An example of one key way that Lonergan does this is his claim that art is “the objectification of a purely experiential pattern.”<sup>2</sup> In commenting on this formulation, Flanagan emphasizes the way that art, in objectifying the experiential, puts us in touch with the feelings that are the “mass and momentum of our lives.” Hugo Meynell has similarly explored the ways in which art stimulates and releases the passions that accompany activity at the level of human understanding.<sup>3</sup> Flanagan, along with Richard Liddy, Glenn Hughes, and Tad Dunne, has stressed the role

<sup>1</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, vol. 3 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992); *Topics in Education*, vol. 10 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993); *Method in Theology* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972).

<sup>2</sup> *Topics in Education*, 211.

<sup>3</sup> Hugo Meynell, *The Nature of Aesthetic Value* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1986).

of this affective activity in liberating the mind and heart for new kinds of possibilities – the release, for example, from limitations of the imagination that inhibit understanding, or confine one to a narrow range of feeling, or keep one from seeing the things of the visible world as ciphers for their invisible origins.<sup>4</sup> But Flanagan also went beyond this project of “finding the place,” or the specialized function, of art. His ambition was to appropriate the experience of art as a general means of access to the entire range of human concern that Lonergan’s philosophy addresses. Thus, just as the central insights of Lonergan’s thought may be presented as the worldview of emergent probability, then may be reformulated as an intentionality analysis, then as a metaphysics, then as a theological method or a philosophy and theology of God, so Flanagan saw art and aesthetics as a context with corollaries to all of these dimensions of Lonergan’s thinking. Again, one does not see this ambition explicitly pursued in Flanagan’s published pieces, but if one is aware of it one can begin to see a great deal of Flanagan’s published analysis of Lonergan as preparation for the task.

Secondly, in exploring the meaning of art, Flanagan immersed himself in a greater range of authors than did Lonergan. Flanagan read more extensively in some of the sources on which Lonergan drew, such as Eliade, Kierkegaard, Marcel, Merleau-Ponty, and Ricoeur. He was remarkably astute, in conversation, on art theorists such as E.H. Gombrich and Rudolph Arnheim. Among his favorite authors were a host of art critics and historians that Lonergan never studied, or at least never wrote about, such as John Russell and Robert Hughes on painting, Anne Hollander on fashion, Charles Moore and Christian Norberg-Schulz on architecture, Maxine Sheets-Johnson on dance, Ruth Butler on sculpture, Aaron Copeland on classical music, Alec Wilder and William Youngren on jazz, and Northrop Frye and Anthony

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<sup>4</sup> Joseph Flanagan, S.J., “Lonergan’s Philosophy of Art: From *Verbum* to *Topics in Education*,” in John D. Dadosky, ed., *Meaning and History in Systematic Theology: Essays in Honor of Robert M. Doran, S.J.* (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2009), 113-44; Richard Liddy, “What Bernard Lonergan Learned from Susanne K. Langer,” *Lonergan Workshop Journal*, vol. 11, ed. Fred Lawrence (Chestnut Hill, MA: Boston College, 1995), 53-90. Glenn Hughes, “Lonergan and Art,” *Revisita Portuguesa de Filosofia*, 63 (2007): 183-92; Tad Dunne, “What Do I Do When I Paint?” *Метод: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 16, no. 2, 103-32.

Burgess on literature.<sup>5</sup> He was immersed in these authors and he raved about their insights. They are what makes Flanagan's philosophy of art more fully interdisciplinary than Lonergan's – though always as an extension or application of Lonergan's own interdisciplinary intentions.

Thirdly, at the heart of Flanagan's aesthetics is a particular conception of psychic conversion – one that is analogous to, and overlapping with, the better-known conception developed by Robert Doran.<sup>6</sup> As Lonergan explicitly acknowledged, Doran's work on this topic extends Lonergan's ideas in ways that Lonergan himself did not, and this may equally be said of Flanagan's contributions to the question of psychic conversion.

### ART IN HUMAN HISTORY

For the bulk of human history art has been regarded as a privileged avenue to ultimate truth. Throughout this history art has been intimately tied to religious practice and often nearly inextricable from it. Even as art makes meanings more immediate and vivid, it typically renders them more significant, more excellent, more revelatory. Even as art speaks immediately to emotions, it exhibits a natural tendency toward the universal and the transcendent. Beginning in the Enlightenment, however, there emerges a stream of aesthetic thought that subjectivizes the truth of art. As Gadamer's *Truth and Method* recounts in detail, the power to know the world, during this

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, John Russell, *The Meanings of Modern Art* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1981); Robert Hughes, *The Shock of the New* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1981); Anne Hollander, *Seeing through Clothes* (New York: Viking Press, 1978); Kent C. Bloomer and Charles W. Moore, *Body, Memory, and Architecture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977); Christian Norberg-Schulz, *Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture* (New York: Rizzoli, 1980); Maxine Sheets-Johnstone, *The Phenomenology of Dance* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1966); Ruth Butler, *Western Sculpture: Definitions of Man* (Boston: New York Graphic Society, 1975); Alec Wilder and James T. Maher, *American Popular Song: The Great Innovators, 1900-1950* (London: Oxford University Press, 1972); Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957); Anthony Burgess, *Re Joyce* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1965).

<sup>6</sup> See Robert M. Doran, *Subject and Psyche: Ricoeur, Jung, and the Search for Foundations* (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 1994); *Theology and the Dialectics of History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990); *Psychic Conversion and Theological Foundations* (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2006).

time in Western thought, was granted more and more exclusively to natural science, with the result that thinkers such as Kant and Schiller begin to shift the significance of artistic truth to the realm of subjective meaning. The source of artistic meaning, according to this line of thinking, is the genius of the artist; the source of the grasp of that meaning is the cultivated taste of the audience for that art. The "beyond" that art gives us is one that leaves behind the world that is known in ordinary experience and analyzed through science. Art, in one variation of this aesthetics, serves no master but itself. Art exists for art's sake alone.<sup>7</sup>

Flanagan is allied with a range of twentieth-century thinkers who sought, with full cognizance of post-Enlightenment theory, to recover the ontologically disclosive power of art – a list of thinkers that would certainly have to include Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, Gadamer, Voegelin, Eliade, and Ricoeur.<sup>8</sup> The significance of art in premodern culture, as Lonergan, Flanagan, and many of these thinkers have observed, is as a compact expression of the whole of human and cosmic meaning. The myths of the Egyptians or early Babylonians did not simply move the emotions with imaginative narratives and captivating images; they made present the whole cosmogony by which the world was formed, humanity emerged, and mortal existence assumed its place. The myths live in a tension between the familiar home of the mundane and the mysteries of the beginning and the beyond, the dark earth and the vast heavens, the unknown of death and the unknown of eternity.<sup>9</sup> Art, in this undifferentiated context, moves easily through

<sup>7</sup> Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, 2nd ed., trans. and rev. J. Weinsheimer and D. G. Marshall (New York: Crossroad, 1990), 81-100.

<sup>8</sup> See, for example, Martin Heidegger, "Origin of the Work of Art," in *Basic Writings*, 2nd ed., ed. D. F. Krell (New York: Harper and Row, 1993); Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "Eye and Mind," in Galen A. Johnson, ed., *The Merleau-Ponty Aesthetics Reader: Philosophy and Painting* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1993); Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, Part One; Eric Voegelin, "Equivalences of Experience and Symbolization in History," in *Published Essays 1966-1985*, vol. 12 of the *Collected Works of Eric Voegelin* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1990), 115-33; Mircea Eliade, *Symbolism, the Sacred, and the Arts*, ed. Diane Apostolos-Cappadona (New York: Crossroad 1985); Paul Ricoeur, *The Symbolism of Evil*, trans. Emerson Buchanan (New York: Harper and Row, 1967).

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Voegelin, "Immortality: Experience and Symbol," in *Published Essays 1966-1985*, 52-94.

multiple realms of reality. To hold the Venus of Willendorf in one's hand is to possess a thing of multiple origins: it is stone formed deep in the earth, but shaped by human craft and invoking the forces of cosmic fertility. In existing simultaneously in the chthonic, human, and sacred realms it grants the power to enter those realms.<sup>10</sup> The truth of art in undifferentiated culture is a protean kind of truth that condenses multiple dimensions of existential meaning into symbolically charged images, objects, and stories.

To attempt to retrieve, in our own time, something of this traditional sense of the truth and ultimacy of art is to rediscover these same symbolic powers, but within the context of a fully differentiated culture. Such a recovery does not require a complete return to compact consciousness, but it does require a reassertion of artistic experience as bearing a quality of compactness. As the objectification of a purely experiential pattern, art takes one out of intellectually – or practically – patterned experience in order to re-immense one into the primordial experience of identity with one's world. This primitive identity is not the identity achieved in knowing, yet it anticipates that identity in affectively charges ways. In this identity neither the known and unknown nor the subject and object are clearly distinguished, because, for as long as the experience lasts, questions of objectivity are more or less irrelevant.<sup>11</sup> It is in this ecstatic experience of identity that the thrill of aesthetic experience is to be found – the intensity, the fascination, the delight. The experience stirs the emotions with a sense of a deeper, or further, or stranger mode of being. As an experience of identity, it is an intimation of truth; but as an undifferentiated experience, it is an encounter with a world of possibilities. Because its nature is compact, the work of art is never univocally declarative; it always compounds multiple connotative, symbolic meanings within itself. Yet by virtue of being patterned, it does not just mean whatever one wants it to mean; it initiates play, and heads that play in some directions more than others. When a work is ambitious, its suggestiveness will point

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<sup>10</sup> Mircea Eliade, *Symbolism, the Sacred, and the Arts*, 5-6; Flanagan, "Lonergan's Philosophy of Art," 138-40; Joseph Flanagan, *Quest for Self-Knowledge* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 240-45.

<sup>11</sup> *Topics in Education*, 216-17.

to meanings far larger than itself; it will have what Lonergan calls "ulterior significance."<sup>12</sup>

In this description one can see how it is possible to think of art as continuing to speak with the unique authority that it has had in previous ages. The description acknowledges art's ambiguity, its sensuousness, and its grounding in feeling; but it also connects art with every kind of truth-seeking. To separate art from that truth-seeking is to confine its power to the realm of "the aesthetic." Art, in this realm, may be no less transporting, no less emotionally absorbing than art that has ties to truth, but as Kierkegaard demonstrated at length through his own great artistry, such a deracinated aestheticism must also confine art to a lesser and more precarious existential role than it might otherwise have had.

### ART AND INTEGRAL ONTOLOGY

These points, which draw heavily from Lonergan's *Topics in Education* and Flanagan's commentary on it, return us to the question of the truth of art and its ontological status. In emphasizing that artistic meaning is elemental, multivalent, and suggestive, Lonergan locates that form of meaning within his larger treatment of human intentionality. But to flesh out the vision of art as a means of access to being one must emphasize, as Flanagan's teaching has, the ways in which the patterning in works of art sends us back into questions for differentiated consciousness.

To explain how this happens it is necessary to recall some of the peculiarities of the notion of being as it may be found in the history of philosophy and in Lonergan's own ontology.

From the earliest times in the Western philosophical tradition, philosophers have observed that the concept of being behaves like no other concept. Whereas most concepts function as categories delimiting certain qualities of things and excluding others, "being" exhibits an utter comprehensiveness and exceeds every sort of demarcation. The white stone here now in my hand "is," but this word, "is," does not behave like the other words that describe the thing. "White" is not "stone," and "here" is not "now"; but all of these qualities "are." Furthermore, while I

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<sup>12</sup> *Topics in Education*, 221-22; Flanagan, "Lonergan's Philosophy of Art," 140, 144.

can associate the word "is" with very familiar things such as whiteness and stones, I must acknowledge that being is also always more than any of these qualities that I articulate within it.

Being, we could say, is always a known-unknown: manifested in all the things I know and simultaneously pertaining to more than I know. But let us put this more emphatically: being is uniquely the most intimately known and the most utterly unknown. It is invoked in nearly every utterance, and yet to name it fully and truly would require saying, at the very least, everything about everything, which no human being can actually do.

For Lonergan this state of affairs calls for an exceptional humility in the field of ontology: being must be thought of as an objective, an index, rather than an idea possessed by finite beings like us.<sup>13</sup> And from such an ontological humility there follows an epistemological one: the being of even the most ordinary of things, while it may be partially known with the conclusiveness of the virtually unconditioned, is only partially known. Knowledge moves by series of approximations, such that there is always more to be known of the nature of things, the origin of things, the meaning of things. In the realm of ontology and epistemology, then, there resides, as in art, the constant indication of a further, ulterior significance.

Let us meditate a bit further on the implications of this approach to the notion of being. It suggests that being is known, in all of the particular ways that it is known, yet at the same time that being is unknown in ways that are even more particular (given that knowing inevitably abstracts from the richness of the concrete). It suggests that being can be heuristically anticipated as the totality of intelligibility (since it is that which is intended in any and every question and assumed in every action), but with the proviso that our actual knowledge of that intelligibility is so feeble that we cannot even say, with much confidence, what the categories are into which the beings of the universe should ultimately be divided. It suggests a radical finitude, in that we inhabit but a small fragment of reality and know less of it; but it holds that this finitude is *de facto* rather than essential, for there is no intelligibility to which the mind is not naturally open. We dwell in mystery, but for

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<sup>13</sup> See *Insight*, chap. 12.

Loneragan it is less the mystery of an obscure darkness than that of a blinding light.

If art is ontologically disclosive it is because, in its compact and multivalent way, art opens us to the mysteries that ground the familiar. But it does so by engaging us in a play of patterns, and the disclosure occurs because the patterns have a *telos* to them. The symbol gives rise to thought. The patterns which, in art, are encountered experientially are patterns that may also be interrogated, described, explained, and appropriated. When one does so one produces something other than art; one does mathematics, or biology, or practical problem-solving, or political theory, or theology. To make progress in these areas may require working oneself free of imaginative confines in order to achieve explanatory insights, and thus may seem to move decisively away from the artistic products of the imagination. But overcoming the limits of the imagination is not the same as neglecting the imagination. On the contrary, one may need to do a great deal of work *with* the imagination to get it in such supple shape that it is capable of loosening its grip on one's thought. One may need to return repeatedly to the richness of aesthetic consciousness and artistic expression in order to find the relevant questions and recover the affective weight of the matters of one's intellectual concern.

Observations such as these help to explain some of the more obscure of Flanagan's statements with regard to art. For example, he was known to repeat (at times to the point of annoyance) that one cannot understand sculpture without mathematics, and especially calculus. But what could be so crucial about bringing together such radically different fields? Part of the answer is that a work of sculpture succeeds by taking command of three dimensional space, drawing the viewer out of his or her personal space and into the space of the work. As a result, to think what sculpture is doing is implicitly to raise all kinds of mathematical questions about how things take form in multi-dimensional ways, how reference frames and centers are established within a spatial-temporal manifold, how this centering can be reversed to produce decentering, shifting command from one reference frame to another. Reflections of this sort show how questions about sculpture can lead into all of the topics that Lonergan explored in the first five chapters of *Insight* – or for that, matter, throughout the whole of the

book. The connection can be made because Lonergan's ontology is an integral ontology, one in which all of the disciplines, the arts included, are concerned with being.

An integral ontological approach to art, then, connects art with being *qua* being, but at the same time, and to the same end, it connects art with every fruitful way that human beings have found to pursue the intelligibility of being. If we were to go one step further, to ask why, ultimately, there is such an integral unity to all of the various forms of inquiry, the appropriate theological answer is to say that God is in all things, and that the pure desire to know, in all of its forms, is at heart a desire to know God face to face. This vision is, by no accident, the same vision that grounds the Jesuit mission in education.

### THE ROLE OF PSYCHIC CONVERSION

The nature of conversion creates obstacles for rhetorical exposition. What makes sense before conversion is very different from what makes sense afterwards. Words that have little meaning on one side of the conversion acquire utterly decisive meaning on the other. As is well known from the case of religious conversion, there is a sense in which teaching can only begin once the conversion has taken place. When Lonergan begins speaking of "intellectual conversion" he radicalizes the idea of "moving viewpoint" that guided the argument in *Insight*. Though everything at the beginning of the book is preparation for metaphysics and transcendent knowing, those topics cannot be mentioned at the beginning because they would seem strange and unfounded. When Doran and Flanagan, then, speak of "psychic conversion" we must always have in mind something equally dramatic and difficult to communicate. There are assumptions that precede the conversion that are so deeply ingrained, so thoroughly incorporated into our way of living and interpreting our living, that the alternatives seem altogether peculiar.

Doran's notion of psychic conversion centers on the finality of human intentionality. It extends Lonergan's brief accounts of the relation of the unconscious to conscious intentionality by drawing on traditions in psychology to elaborate imaginative structures that provide symbolic and affective content for the upwardly directed

dynamism of the psyche.<sup>14</sup> As Doran's theory extends Lonergan in this way, so it reorients the psychological theories on which it draws, for it shifts the conception of unconscious activity from that of a foundation on which the conscious ego is constructed to that of a lower manifold of patterns that are integrated, in the healthy psyche, through conscious activity. Flanagan's approach, while affirming this role of the unconscious, focuses on the powers granted to consciousness by means of the upward dynamism, particularly as they are realized in artistic creation. Both approaches stress that their implications go beyond theory of psychological interpretation to the process of appropriating the natural patterns of the psyche in practical living. All of this is easily said. The great difficulty comes in confronting the prejudices of both common sense and theory that put up gale-force resistance to any such reorientation. Because the psyche is a sensory-motor system that encounters the world with a vivid immediacy and performs so many of its functions automatically, nothing seems more obvious than to say that our sense experience and our bodily functioning grant us knowledge of what matter is, showing us that matter establishes the limit of our experience, convincing us that the limit is an absolute one. These are the prejudices that are thematized as the ocular theory of truth and the metaphysics of the already-out-there-now real, but they run far deeper than any theory. Since early childhood they have worked their way into nearly every manner in which we experience our involvement with the world and other people. They have molded our most basic self-understanding and the feelings that go along with it. To shift these habitual prejudices, Flanagan was known to remark, is like trying to move the planet Jupiter out of its orbit.

Intellectual conversion can assist in the task. Through intellectual conversion one begins to experience one's immediacy to being through pure question rather than through the extroversion of the sensitive psyche; the material limits that had seemed so absolute begin to be understood in their intelligible variability. The conceptualism by which intelligibility seemed confined to a perennial set of categories falls away and intelligibility acquires an unrestricted scope. The experiences of the senses and imagination continue to function as limits, but limits understood, now, as potencies, which are always potentialities just as

<sup>14</sup> See Doran, *Theology and the Dialectics of History*, 46ff.

much as they are limits. Intellectual conversion encounters the world anew, with a new startling strangeness, and in this new world the strangeness of artistry that makes and remakes experience in ever new ways seems more appropriate than ever. One may realize that the artist is not only playing, but is reveling in the power that human intelligence grants to fix the variables under which the human psyche operates. This is the path that leads from intellectual conversion to psychic conversion.

But intellectual conversion itself is never an easy or straightforward process. The planet Jupiter is moving along in the realm of intellect as well as anywhere else. One may not be able to keep the prejudices at bay without experiencing the way mathematics and science render terms as variables. One may need to be reminded again and again of what, for Flanagan, is the grounding principle of any Thomist metaphysics of knowledge: that all knowing is by identity – that is, that “grasping” intelligibility, to the extent that one does grasp it, is becoming identical with it. Perhaps only when we believe that the process of coming to know does not just change what we *have* but transforms what we *are* will we believe that the higher-order intelligibilities really do grant freedom over lower-order manifolds of the psyche. Furthermore, we may do well to immerse ourselves in the world of art, where the creators engage, in an intuitive way, in turning the whole of experience into variables. Encounters with psychic conversion, in other words, may help effect or reinforce intellectual conversion.

Perhaps at this point I have said enough to help explain why Flanagan always seemed to be moving in two directions at once: ever more doggedly into the explanatory and ever more richly into the visual, the auditory, the kinetic, the narrative, and the lyrical. In his mind the two were entirely complementary, contributing equally to the one lifelong task of self-appropriation.

### THE HERMENEUTIC OF MODERN ART

Modern painting and sculpture function as something of a crucible for any aesthetic theory that emphasizes the ontological character of the work, for the modern forms of these arts move away from what had been their most obvious connection to reality: their representation of

recognizable objects. These arts had traditionally used imitation of the look and feel of objects to create a bridge to a narrative content in the work. One could first determine "what it is a painting or statue of" and then go on to appreciate the scene or story being depicted. The visual qualities of the piece would enhance the experience of the narrative and the narrative would give content and significance to the visual composition. In modern art the connection to narrative is often much more difficult to recognize. Its depictions are unusual or abstracted; it may contain nothing that is exactly recognizable as an object. Modern works often deliberately seek to frustrate our ordinary habits of "seeing as," trying to get us to see something altogether unexpected, or to see in a new way.

In the course of the development of modern art, moreover, many artists ceased simply to learn a set of conventions and then to work within that style; they sought, instead, to make the conventions themselves the object of creative transformation. Style, which had been the form of the art, now became the material of art. The impressionists generated whole new ways of combining colors and seeing things through light and atmosphere, thus creating a new style, but the post-impressionists began mixing and matching elements of impressionism with more traditional styles, and at the same time with Japanese composition or the art of the Pacific Islands. A famous anecdote is told of the artist Paul Serusier. He had a lesson in painting from Paul Gauguin, who instructed him, as he painted a small landscape on a cigar box lid, to identify the colors that he saw in his subject and then to use the brightest, most saturated versions of those colors in his painting. The result was so stunning that Serusier called it "The Talisman," and it became a kind of sacred object for a whole school of painters. In this example Gauguin is following the impressionists in brightening the palette, but he is also granting a new role to color, giving it an independence from the things it depicts, drawing upon its suggestive powers to compound meanings in the painting. Vincent Van Gogh also sought to free art for its connotative symbolic potentiality, but at the same time he invoked conventions of Dutch still life, the peasant paintings of Millet and Daumier, and the compositional techniques of Japanese woodblock prints.<sup>15</sup> The liberation of color

<sup>15</sup> See Debora Silverman, *Van Gogh and Gauguin: The Search for Sacred Art* (New

moves further in the work of Matisse, where the representation becomes so stylized it seems to have been subordinated to the powers of raw color and compositional structure. It was under the inspiration of the inherent emotional force of color that Wassily Kandinsky began dissolving the representation altogether, eventually creating canvases that communicate their meaning in the manner of a symphonic piece of music, resisting the tendency to attribute any traditional sort of representation to them. In all of these cases there is a shift from the introduction of new color conventions to the ongoing pursuit of ever new ways to rethink the function of color. The conventions themselves become malleable materials in the artists' hands.

Something analogous to the transformation of color in modern art takes place with the use of three-dimensional space. Cezanne began incorporating multiple perspectives in his paintings, capturing in a single view the active way in which we orient ourselves with relation to objects and landscapes. Picasso and Braque radicalized this innovation in their invention of cubism, wherein things are only seen through a prismatic, disassembled and reassembled spatiality. A new kind of sculpture emerges, sometimes bringing the new spatiality to traditional forms of casting bronze, sometimes employing new techniques of cutting and welding, or incorporating found objects into the process. There is a deep attraction, in artists such as Picasso, Matisse, and Brancusi to the exploration of the primordial spatialities expressed in traditional and non-European cultures, where figures may be put together in dramatically unfamiliar ways or may be stylized in ways that capture the pure forces that drive them. Here again, the pace of inventiveness reaches a point where we can no longer speak of the conventions of a movement, or even of a single artist, because the artists are continually seeking new ways to reinvent the spatiality of their works.

Such examples, I said, form a crucible for an ontological philosophy of art. The extraordinary creativity in these cases would seem to support the common tendency to equate the modernization of art with its subjectivization, with individual geniuses inventing idiosyncratic worlds out of their own inner resources. But on this point Flanagan's hermeneutic of art again parallels Gadamer's. What modern art reveals to us, says Gadamer, is that artistic mimesis was never really founded

in representation in the ordinary sense. The artistry of art was never a matter of simply making things look the way they do in ordinary experience; it was always in presenting things in ways that enhance their being.<sup>16</sup> The challenge for the artist is always to find the way to structure the work so as to occasion a moment of recognition – a kind of Socratic *anamnesis* wherein something odd and unfamiliar becomes oddly familiar. An artist could not do this were he or she to simply create out of the solitary self. The artist must play with words, images, conventions, and traditions in a manner that is more discovery than invention. The effects that one is seeking are always also the effects of cultural histories. This is the deeper meaning of mimesis that Gadamer finds fully present in even some of the most experimental forms of modern art, for if it is an experiment there must be something that is meant by the experiment being a success, and this is the achievement of a communication, a recognition of something true and worthwhile.<sup>17</sup>

The same point is made in Flanagan's terms by saying that modern art reveals how all art partakes of elemental meaning. Traditional painting and sculpture did not simply depict the ordinary but sought the elemental in the ordinary; the innovations of modern painting and sculpture do not construct arbitrary patterns of line, volume, and color, but seek elemental constructions. Over and over again one finds these artists undertaking their projects with a great sense of the importance of the task and a great feeling of connection to those traditions wherein art has been thought to convey exceptional insight into reality. They pull one out of the ordinary ways of seeing and the comfortable representational conventions that lull us into believing that there is no particular urgency to the pure desire to know. Modern art thus serves well as a partner in the attempt to work toward psychic conversion; the upheavals that it introduces into received ways of image making are corollary to the way conversion upsets the entrenched power of habitual concepts and categories. The boldness with which it refashions the functioning of canvas, paint, metal, clay, stone, and other materials should be inspiration for what can happen when all matter comes to be understood as intelligibly ordered.

<sup>16</sup> See Hans-Georg Gadamer, *The Relevance of the Beautiful and Other Essays*, ed. R. Bernasconi (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 24, 36, 103, and 128.

<sup>17</sup> Gadamer, *Relevance of the Beautiful*, 22-25, 90, 92, 128.

### ART AS SPIRITUAL EXERCISE

By virtue of their potential contributions to psychic conversion and integral ontology, the arts, and in particular the modern arts, find more than a place within a philosophy. Matters are rather as Merleau-Ponty describes them:

What is irreplaceable in the work of art, what makes it, far more than a means of pleasure, a spiritual organ whose analogue is found in all productive philosophical or political thought, is the fact that it contains, better than ideas, *matrices of ideas* – providing us with emblems whose meaning we never stop developing. Precisely because it dwells and makes us dwell in a world we do not have the key to, the work of art teaches us to see and ultimately gives us something to think about as no analytical work can....<sup>18</sup>

As art joins with philosophy in granting occasions for wonder, it assumes a very important place in a philosophically integrated liberal arts education. Immersion in the arts becomes more than a way to round out one's interests and cultural awareness; they are a way to complete our wondering, to pursue ever more deeply the great mystery of being.

The liberal arts education to which Flanagan was so fervently dedicated was not just any curriculum; it was the Jesuit vision of liberal arts education. Hence one can recapitulate his conception of the function of art in terms that are very familiar to those who work in that tradition. Jesuit institutions are committed to the education of the whole person, but Flanagan understood this in a very active way: as a collaboration among educators who are themselves constantly developing in their own mastery of the liberal arts. Jesuit education pursues a transformative vision that sees God in all things; but you cannot see God in all things if you are not very good at seeing things in the first place. The arts, in expanding our abilities to experience, allow us to experience more fully the transcendent in the here and now. Jesuit education seeks to produce excellent researchers,

<sup>18</sup> Merleau-Ponty, "Indirect Language and the Voices of Silence," in Galen A. Johnson, *The Merleau-Ponty Aesthetics Reader: Philosophy and Painting* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1993), 114.

successful professionals, and citizens committed to social justice above all; but in all of these areas, too, the arts have a role, for many of the failures in research, in professional life, and in civil society are failures of imagination. The active, ongoing reversal of such failures is not something achieved by acquiring a body of knowledge, or even by instilling an abiding faith in the value of education; it must be maintained by constant practice. It requires cultivation of the habit of spiritual exercise.

Pierre Hadot has reminded us just how far back the tradition of spiritual exercise goes. In Plato's earliest accounts of Socratic conversations one finds Socrates developing the analogy between the gymnastics that condition the body and the complementary work with questions of truth, love, and virtue that condition the mind and direct it toward what is worthwhile. Philosophy, in the Socratic way of thinking, is a way of life and a preparation for death. The Stoics similarly viewed philosophy as a means of mastering one's expectations and desires so as to be free of the endless buffeting of fortune, and to be more capable of singular dedication to what is truly valuable. The church fathers despoiled these philosophical schools, putting spiritual exercise in service to the project of seeing the world from the perspective of the kingdom of God. The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius are one kind of culmination of this long tradition. Ignatius understood that one cannot be both "in the world" and "not of it" without a structured way of life and an ongoing training of the spirit.<sup>19</sup>

It is an error to interpret any of these iterations of spiritual exercise as a simple movement away from the body, the imagination, or the psyche. The Ignatian Exercises, for example, are particularly focused on cultivating the imagery of the divine drama of sin, salvation, resurrection, and judgment. It is this drama that Flanagan sought to uncover in every topic to which his mind turned. But he did so by expanding the scope of the imagery that the religious mind contemplates, expanding it, indeed, to embrace all forms of art and a potentially endless range of human and divine creativity.

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<sup>19</sup> Pierre Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life: Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault*, ed. Arnold I. Davidson (London: Blackwell Publishing, 1995), chaps. 3 and 4.

## LAMENTING AT THE ABATTOIR: MEDITATIONS THROUGH RHYTHM

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*In Memory of Leonard J. Ryan*  
*1935 – 2009*

THE EVOLUTION OF MUSIC IS PUSHED FORWARD through the expansion of various parameters. These expansions are the operators that set the stage for further insights. That is the pattern of emerging probabilities. There are several operators. In a previous paper, "Emerging Probabilities and the Operators of Musical Evolution," I examined four in particular:

1. New technologies
2. New playing methods
3. Radical combination of seemingly unrelated musical styles
4. Role of audience

I created an instrument that I called the spring dulcimer – a hammered dulcimer that used springs instead of wires like a traditional hammered dulcimer. I considered it to fall under the category of new technology as an operator because it was a new instrument. It had a rather industrial sound. I had an interest in further exploring the sounds within factories and metallic objects up to that point. I found an abandoned brick factory. I made recordings of several rhythms within the factory that I played on the various machines. I had theorized up to that point about a way to bring the industrial sounds of factories into a methodical coherent form of instrumentation.<sup>1</sup> This would eventually

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<sup>1</sup> Greg Lauzon, "Emerging Probabilities and the Operators of Musical Evolution," in *Meaning and History in Systematic Theology*, ed. John D. Dadosky (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2009), 253.

lead to the creation of what I now call the spring pan kit.<sup>2</sup>

The spring pan kit combines the spring dulcimer played with one hand, a modified steel pan drum with the other hand and a customized oil drum for the kick drum played with the foot. This allows the percussionist to combine both melody and rhythm into one instrument. Percussion instruments up to this point have strictly been for either rhythm or melody but not both. I recall some years ago working at various factories during the summer months away from school and hearing vague melodies in the cacophony of machinery. The combination of steel pan drum and spring dulcimer allows for some approximation of that experience.

A custom fitted piece of sheet metal is placed around the steel pan drum. This is struck in a similar way to a snare drum. The oil drum has a triangular shape indented perimeter on the lid area. I derived this design from traditional pan drum making techniques and applied it to the design of a kick drum.<sup>3</sup> The intention was to create low frequencies in the range of a traditional kick drum but with a metallic industrial sound. In addition I put a custom fitted resonator made from sheet metal inside the oil drum to give it a bit more clash. Due to the hardness of the metal the felt beater on the kick pedal was replaced with a rubber ball dog toy.

Urban exploration is the interest in exploring old and abandoned sites. They are often sites with historical or cultural significance. The philosophy of urban exploration is to take nothing but pictures and leave nothing but footprints. I have taken a slightly different approach to this activity. In addition to taking pictures I also record rhythms that I play on the machinery of abandoned factories. I use padded drumsticks appropriate for banging on metal and the kick pedal also used for the spring pan kit.

One site of particular interest to me was an abandoned slaughterhouse. Being an animal lover I have pondered over why I

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<sup>2</sup> There is an interactive PDF for *Lamenting at the Abattoir: Meditations through Rhythm*, containing pictures and audio of the Spring Dulcimer with the Spring Pan Kit, Fig. 1-5, p. 2. It can be found at [www.lonerganresource.com/conference.php?1](http://www.lonerganresource.com/conference.php?1). Also see [www.greglauzon.com](http://www.greglauzon.com). See Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press), 356-57.

<sup>3</sup> Ulf Kronman, *Steel Pan Tuning: A Handbook for Steel Pan Making and Tuning* (Stockholm: Musikmuseet, 1992).

felt such a connection to this site. There are certainly many technical reasons given the wealth of sounds that I have found in the machinery. But there is also a symbolic attraction to the site, a desire to somehow connect to it to convey through rhythm the suffering of the animals that died there.

One approach I have tried with some success is a meditative technique by Eugene Gendlin called focusing.<sup>4</sup> This is a method for getting in touch with emotions that are stored as tension in the body. By focusing on these subtle bodily sensations or felt sense as it is called, one can experience a release of tension referred to as a shift. This shift is accompanied by insights into the cause of that tension. In Lonergan terms it is elemental meaning that has been brought to fruition and identified. The identification is the "ah ha" moment, the second level of Lonergan's cognitional theory on the four levels of consciousness. The four levels being experiencing, understanding, judging, and deciding. The level of understanding is an insight.<sup>5</sup> The above process is a concrete example of Robert Doran's psychic conversion.<sup>6</sup> There are records of correspondence in the Lonergan Archives between Lonergan and Gendlin. They were very much interested in each other's work. Robert Doran also used Gendlin's early work in developing his theory of psychic conversion.

I have used focusing successfully in creative writing through a technique developed by Sondra Pearl in her book, "Felt Sense: Writing with the Body."<sup>7</sup> I wondered if this could be applied to creating music and drumming. I have found that trying to focus for rhythm is significantly different than focusing for written language. Unlike written and spoken language there is no universally understood symbolism of what a given rhythm or percussive sound represents. The interpretation of the rhythm is highly subjective and personal.

A further difficulty for me was that I was attempting to mediate the experiences of others through myself. I needed to understand what it was like to be an animal being poked and prodded onto the

<sup>4</sup> Eugene T. Gendlin, *Focusing* (New York: Bantam Books, 1981), 3-9.

<sup>5</sup> *Method in Theology*, 74

<sup>6</sup> Robert M. Doran, *Theology and the Dialectics of History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), chap. 2.

<sup>7</sup> Sondra Pearl, *Felt Sense: Writing with the Body* (Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook, 2004).

killing platform struggling while being secured into position. And then the final moment while ultimately being slaughtered. I watched slaughterhouse footage of animals killed in various ways. What was the moment of death like? What was their pain? What was their anxiety? I also thought of the inhumane conditions of modern factory farming, the privation, overcrowding, and cruel treatment. Their existence could quite accurately be called hell on earth.

Four-legged mammals such as cows, pigs, horses and goats are required by the Humane Slaughter Act to be rendered unconscious first by captive bolt gun or electric stunner to the head. Only then can they be hoisted and bled by a worker called a "sticker" who cuts the main arteries and veins. Cows are then dismembered, skinned heads removed, eviscerated to remove internal organs and then cut in half. Pigs are submerged into a scalding tank to remove hair before legs and heads are removed. Then they are eviscerated and organs removed. Poultry are not protected under the Humane Slaughter Act and can therefore be scalded alive to help remove feathers. Poultry that is sick, injured, or of no commercial value such as male baby chicks are often ground up alive by way of rendering.<sup>8</sup>

I entered the abandoned slaughterhouse with camera and recording equipment. I set up my equipment near the main kill floor where pigs were slaughtered. I lit a candle in remembrance of the millions of animals who died there. I had some idea of what kind of rhythms I would play through attempts of partially developed techniques of focusing meditation for rhythm. A common theme to the rhythms I played that night involved the gradual rise in tempo and volume of a drum roll played on the machinery with the padded sticks that ended suddenly with a thump using the kick pedal. The rise in volume and speed represents the building of tension until the moment of death represented by the sudden loud bang with the kick pedal. One of the challenges I faced was to not challenge myself. I have always tended to play rhythms that were technically complex and difficult. That type of rhythm had no place here. I tried to play nonrhythmically and follow my emotional responses instead of intellectualizing how a rhythm is supposed to be played so that people would be impressed.

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<sup>8</sup> Gail Eisnitz, *Slaughterhouse* (Amherst, MA: Prometheus Books 1997), 20-23, 64-65, 165-67.

The last rhythm I recorded that night had the most significance to me. It was also one of the less remarkable in terms of technical performance. Just moments before recording the rhythm inside the scalding tank I took a picture of my setup arrangement as I often do to keep a record.<sup>9</sup> On the camera screen I noticed several orbs in the picture. I had seen these on ghost tracker shows on TV. Orbs are transparent balls of light that show up in the picture after it has been taken. I became quite excited at the prospect that animal spirits were there to help me since I was attempting to connect with the site in some way to tell their stories through rhythm. I played the rhythm with the conviction that I was having a mystical experience.

Through subsequent research on the orb phenomena I learned that they were not spirits after all. Orbs are caused by the camera flash reflecting off particles in the air such as dust or pollen that is then refracted off the camera lens in low light conditions.<sup>10</sup> This discovery reminded me of the disappointment I felt as a child when I learned that there was no Santa Claus. However, this experience demonstrates the importance of how belief brings meaning to experience.

This has some significance in theodicy. I am reminded of explanations of the difference between transformative suffering versus destructive suffering. Transformative suffering being that which strengthens the victim or ultimately bears some fruit. Destructive suffering being that which offers nothing in return leaving the victim to suffer in vain. What fruit can livestock have but emancipation through death? The only good coming of destructive suffering is the deep compassion and love it fosters in those who are witness to the victim.<sup>11</sup>

But then one is left to ask why it takes such extremes to foster such depth. What does that say about the human condition? The suffering of livestock is generally met with indifference by society. It

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<sup>9</sup> There is an interactive PDF of *Lamenting at the Abattoir: Meditations through Rhythm* containing audio of the rhythm recorded in the scalding tank, Fig. 6, p. 5. It can be found at [www.lonergranresource.com/conference.php?1](http://www.lonergranresource.com/conference.php?1).

<sup>10</sup> Rosemary Ellen Guiley, *Encyclopedia of Ghosts and Spirits*, 2nd ed. (New York: Checkmark Books, 2000), 269-70. See also Troy Taylor, "Orbs Debunked," *American Hauntings*, 2008 at <http://www.prairieghosts.com/trouble.html> (25 March 2011).

<sup>11</sup> Michael Stoeber, "Transformative Suffering, Destructive Suffering and the Question of Abandoning Theodicy," *Studies in Religion / Sciences Religieuses* 32, no. 4, 2003: 433.

would seem that for humans who are in a similar situation the only thing that might bring any chance of hope or meaning to that kind of suffering is through belief in a greater power that can somehow rectify this seemingly impossible situation in some eschatological way. But what of the livestock who do not have a belief in eschatology? It would seem that they can only suffer without hope?

Loneragan offers a possible explanation for purely destructive suffering. "Now God's plan, the reason why God chooses such a world as this, can best be conceived as a self-manifestation – or that is one way of conceiving it. The end of creation is the glory of God, the manifestation of God. The degree of manifestation that occurs in a universe will vary with the type of perfection that is desired in that universe. As St Augustine says, divine wisdom thought it better to permit evil rather than to create a world in which no evil would exist. In evil in its fundamental form, which is sin, there is the irrational, the 'what has no reason.' God doesn't cause that, he permits it. Dealing with that question, so that it has a meaning, is a rather technical point, but I believe it can be established. And he permits it, perhaps one might say, because insofar as it is permitted, you can have in a finite universe, something of the tension that represents and expresses the infinite good."<sup>12</sup>

In addition to the suffering of animals there is also the human and environmental cost. Deregulation and non enforcement of antitrust laws under the Reagan administration resulted in faster production rates and smaller meat packing companies being forced out of the market by larger companies. More animals are now being slaughtered by fewer and larger companies. Workers are under great pressure to keep up with the demanding pace of the increased line speeds. The result of this trend has led to greater extremes in animal cruelty and more injuries and deaths of slaughterhouse workers as well as an increase in cases of food poisoning among consumers. The USDA has failed to enforce the Humane Slaughter Act. The number of prosecutions are extremely low for the number of violations that actually occur.<sup>13</sup> The meat processing

<sup>12</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *Understanding and Being: The Halifax Lectures on Insight*, vol. 5 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Elizabeth A. Morelli and Mark D. Morelli (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1995), 374-75.

<sup>13</sup> See Eisnitz, *Slaughterhouse*, 62, 158, 269-75.

industry is one of the most dangerous jobs in the United States. One in three plant workers suffer from work-related injury or sickness each year.<sup>14</sup> There is also the relationship between world hunger and the use of arable land in developing countries to grow feedstock that is shipped to first-world factory farms.<sup>15</sup> And then there is the environmental impact of meat production, which is responsible for 18 percent of greenhouse gasses.<sup>16</sup>

I discovered a book called, "Slaughterhouse" by Gail Eisnitz in which numerous slaughterhouse workers from many different meat packing plants throughout the United States were interviewed. They all gave very similar graphic depictions of the extreme animal cruelty as well as dangerous working conditions for employees and how the USDA failed to do anything about it. Cows were beaten with pipes, dragged to the kill floor often resulting in broken bones, improperly stunned, leaving them to endure having their throats cut, being dismembered and skinned alive. Pigs also were beaten, dragged, improperly stunned leaving them to endure having throats cut and submerged into the scalding tank while still alive.<sup>17</sup> I realized that my current method of creating sounds to tell their story was not strong enough to convey this kind of hell.

I needed to find a rhythmic representation that went beyond clang, bang, and clattering sounds. I tried to imagine the sickening feeling of being hung upside down and my throat cut, convulsing while the blood spewed from my veins. Animals that are bled while conscious will constrict their muscles in an attempt to hold the blood in. I imagined myself tensing my body in futility as I became weaker and weaker slowly losing consciousness. I tried to imagine the shock as the worker cuts off my limbs. I imagined the sensation of my skin being removed with an air knife. I tried to imagine the excruciating pain of being slowly submerged into a scalding tank. Through these dark meditations I realized that I needed to create rhythms using scrapes, scratches, and

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<sup>14</sup> Eric Schlosser, *Fast Food Nation* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Books, 2001), 172.

<sup>15</sup> Francis Moore Lappe and Joseph Collins, *Food First* (London: Souvenir Press, 1980), 21-25.

<sup>16</sup> Henning Steinfeld, Pierre Gerber, Tom Wassenaar, and colleagues, *Livestock's Long Shadow* (Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2006), 112.

<sup>17</sup> See Eisnitz, *Slaughterhouse*.

screeches. That seemed to convey the meaning of extreme emotional states better than merely hitting objects

I tried attaching a turkey caller to the resonator piece on my steel pan drum. I scraped the turkey caller with one hand to mimic the sound of chickens being slaughtered, while making scraping sounds across the springs of the spring dulcimer with the other hand to mimic the sound of cutting and slicing. I used a bow on the spring dulcimer with one hand while scraping the pan drum resonator with the other. The bowing of the spring dulcimer was meant to mimic the sounds of cows bellowing while being bled, dismembered, and skinned alive. The screeching high-pitched sounds were an attempt to mimic the pig screams I heard in slaughterhouse footage I had watched.

Through this experimentation I began to suspect that there was a natural psychological and physiological connection between our responses to rough abrasive sounds and extreme emotional states. For me, the meaning seemed to come from the quality of the sounds as well as the rhythms. As a comparison, a scream has a meaning that is immediately understood because of the harshness of its sound.

I also found meaning in the emotional expression created in the rise and fall in speed and volume of the drum rolls played on the machinery at the slaughterhouse, although the sound lacked the intensity created through the use of a bow on springs. The drum roll simulated the emotional expression that could also be created by elongating the sounds through the use of a violin bow. The meaning expressed through the use of a violin bow seemed to come through in the attempt to mimic the vocal expressions of the suffering animals. It is through the mimicking of vocal expressions that, I, the listener, can viscerally identify with the sounds in a way that I do not with a mere drum pattern.

I decided to try a different approach to meditation. Repetitive drumming of approximately 4 to 7 beats per second found in shamanic-like ritual drumming seems to stimulate alpha theta waves in the brain associated with trance states.<sup>18</sup> I wondered if a drum-induced trance state might help me find a way to connect with the site to convey the story of the animals who died there. I began practicing drum-induced trance states by listening to a recording of repetitive shamanic

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<sup>18</sup> Michael Harner, *The Way of the Shaman* (New York: Harper Collins, 1990), 51.

drumming. Further investigation into shamanic culture has given me a greater understanding of why I felt so drawn to drum at this site. In a symbolic way I began to see my role as that of a quasi makeshift priest/shaman who had been called to perform a funerary rite. The shaman will often perform a ceremony using the drum to help the dead be at peace and leave the physical world behind.<sup>19</sup>

After several weeks of practicing the shamanic drum journey I finally met some farm animals during a vision quest who seemed to be trying to communicate with me. A cow repeatedly stretched out her head while looking at me. I saw a pig walk over to a mud pit and start rolling around while also looking at me. I then saw a chicken repeatedly stretching out its wings in front of me. Through subsequent investigation I found out that chickens do in fact stretch their wings under normal circumstances but they cannot when they are crowded into cages their whole lives. Cows cannot engage in natural movement and behavior because they spend most of their lives in cramped stalls. Pigs who must wallow in mud to keep cool cannot because they are tightly caged and unable to move. What I interpreted from the vision quest was that the events of the slaughterhouse are not necessarily the worst of what the animals endure. I had been so focusing on the events of the slaughterhouse that I had forgotten the impact of the factory farm.

And so I set out to find a way to convey through sound and rhythm the mental anguish of languishing in claustrophobic conditions for an entire lifetime, which drives the animals insane. I decided to visit the slaughterhouse one more time to find a way to convey this using the new methods that I had developed since the last visit. I found a large metal plate in the pen area where the pigs were kept. I stretched a spring across it and stuck a bridge piece under the spring. I stroked it with a violin bow. The sound was interesting and eerie but did not quite convey the feeling of captivity that I was looking for. However, it did convey a sense of darkness and macabre that I associated not only with the site but also with the manner in which the entire meat industry functions with respect to world hunger, disease and pollution as well as animal cruelty.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Mircea Eliade, *Shamanism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1964), 209-10, 212.

<sup>20</sup> There is an interactive PDF for *Lamenting at the Abattoir* containing the audio of

It is important to remember that current practices threaten both animals and humans because we are both connected in some way. The Center for Disease Control has confirmed that there is a link between the current H1N1 virus and a strain that emerged on a North Carolina hog farm. North Carolina incidentally has the densest population of factory farm pigs in North America.<sup>21</sup>

After some experimentation with various parts of the machinery I settled for the sounds I got from scratching the turkey caller while holding it against the wall of the scalding tank. I played it in a way that I felt conveyed a sense of tension with sudden bursts of frustration. These are the feelings that I associated with prolonged exposure to extreme crowding conditions. The large metal structure of the scalding tank added a harmonic resonance to the sound.

I decided to further explore a way to correlate Sondra Pearl's method of focusing for writing with focusing for music. I looked at photos, watched slaughterhouse footage, and read accounts of the animal cruelty. The next step was to freely explore whatever sounds and rhythms came to mind without judgment while recording them. I used the spring pan kit for making bowing and scraping sounds. While listening to them being played back I began to carefully feel my way through them selecting the sounds I recorded that seemed to resonate with what I was feeling. I asked myself what experiences in my own life came closest to the suffering of the animals, for example, an injury, emotional distress, a traumatic event. Anything that I could extrapolate from that would approximate the experience of the animals the most. At this point the line between subject and object became more blurred. I would then try to recreate the sounds and rhythms that I selected to see if there had been a shift in how they made me feel. Perhaps a slight modification in the sound would be necessary. I would then record and listen to the sound again repeating this process delving deeper into the feeling and the sound. The goal was to find a sound that was effective for both the feelings derived from the screams of the suffering animals and the feelings derived from my own experiences of suffering.

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the spring played with the violin bow in the abandoned slaughterhouse, fig. 7, p. 8. It can be found at [www.lonerganresource.com/conference.php?1](http://www.lonerganresource.com/conference.php?1).

<sup>21</sup> Michael Greger, M.D., "CDC Confirms Ties to Virus First Discovered in U.S. Pig Factories," *The Humane Society of the United States*, 2009 at [http://www.humanesociety.org/news/news/2009/04/swine\\_flu\\_virus\\_origin\\_1998\\_042909.html](http://www.humanesociety.org/news/news/2009/04/swine_flu_virus_origin_1998_042909.html) (25 March 2011).

It was not as difficult to find personal experiences to extrapolate from to convey the experience of a pig being submerged into a scalding tank or chickens pecking at each other in a crowded cage. We have all experienced the sensation of stepping into a shower or bathtub of water that was too hot. And many of us have experienced the claustrophobic feeling of being a crowded subway train with people pushing and shoving. Another common but more extreme example might be the experience of being smothered by someone bigger than you during an attack.

However, the experience of a cow or pig being bled to death required a bit more thought since none of us has likely experienced anything like it. The closest thing that I could think of to approximate this experience was nausea and vomiting. The manner in which animals will constrict their muscles in a vain attempt to hold the blood in during exsanguination would seem to be similar to the behavior of humans during vomiting.

To convey the suffering of the cows being bled I used a violin bow on springs. I managed to create convulsive sounds that could either represent the bellowing of a cow being bled or the experience a human vomiting. I also used bow on spring to express the screams of a pig being scalded alive. To express the claustrophobic conditions of caged chickens I used a turkey caller held against the side of the scalding tank at the abandoned slaughterhouse.<sup>22</sup>

What this process amounts to is an attempt to use Gendlin's focusing technique on behalf of a cow or pig by mediating their experiences through my own experiences. This would seem to be a rather complicated undertaking just to create a sound. However, this method is actually not much different from what musicians and composers do naturally. What I have attempted to do is to provide some sort of phenomenological description of the process. In Lonergan terms this process would be a form of self-appropriation.<sup>23</sup> Understanding this process would hopefully create a more efficient way of composing music.

It is hard to imagine how the level of animal cruelty and disregard for human well-being could be allowed to have such free reign. I am

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<sup>22</sup> There is an interactive PDF for *Lamenting at the Abattoir* containing the audio of these sound expressions put to video, p. 10. It can be found at [www.lonerganresource.com/conference.php?1](http://www.lonerganresource.com/conference.php?1).

<sup>23</sup> *Understanding and Being*, 3-4.

reminded of the Milgram experiments and Stanford Prison experiment where ordinary people were coerced into torturing and degrading other human beings.<sup>24</sup> It would certainly be easy for the same to be done to animals. It would seem that the slaughterhouse is an example of how power can be used to coerce people into committing unspeakable cruelty to animals even at the expense of their own well-being as well as the public's.

In the process of examining this issue I have had to ask myself where the fine line is between being gratuitous and genuinely artistic. I feel the need to convey the suffering of the animals yet in some way I feel as though I am telling my own story through them. We need to share our pain with others so that we do not suffer alone. There would appear to be a Solomon's baby mentality to this. I am reminded of Girardian theories of mimetic violence and how figuratively speaking Satan casts out Satan by imitating. The desire to shock people can be sadistic. I could be asked whether I am gratuitously imitating the violence of slaughterhouse workers upon my audience through my music out of a need for power in the wake of feeling powerless to stop the suffering. But perhaps I am merely imitating the suffering of the animals in an attempt to foster empathy and compassion? Regardless of the motive we can only hope that humankind will one day learn to live in peace with one another and the world and that one day all the animals in the forest will be happy.

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<sup>24</sup> Philip Zimbardo, *The Lucifer Effect* (New York: Random House, 2007).

## RESTORATIVE MEDICINE: DEFENSIVE SCHEMES AND RE-EMERGENT PROBABILITY

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### THEMATIC STATEMENT AND CONTEXT

IN THIS YEAR'S LONERAGAN WORKSHOP we are asked to adhere to the theme "The Mind and Heart of Hope" by using the following passage from Lonergan as the catalyst:

Georg Simmel, the German sociologist, coined the phrase, *die Wendung zur Idee*, the shift to the idea, to denote the tendency and even the necessity of every large social, cultural, or religious movement, to reflect on itself, to define its goals, to scrutinize the means it employs or might employ, to keep in mind its origins, its past achievements, its failures.

Now this shift to the idea is performed differently in different cultural settings. While a historical tradition can retain its identity though it passes from one culture to another, still it can live and function in those several cultures only if it thinks of itself, only if effects its shift to the idea, in harmony with the style, the mode of forming concepts, the mentality, the horizon proper to each culture.<sup>1</sup>

Preceding this passage in the original essay Lonergan speaks of "religionless Christianity."<sup>2</sup> Analogously, with its overriding emphasis on disease rather than physiological equilibrium, on pharmaceutical

<sup>1</sup> Bernard Lonergan, "The Future of Christianity," in *A Second Collection*, ed. William F. Ryan and Bernard J. Tyrell, 1974, Darton, Longman and Todd, reprinted in 1996 by the University of Toronto Press for Lonergan Research Institute, 159.

<sup>2</sup> "The Future of Christianity," 158.

intervention rather than nutritional and lifestyle modulation, there is a manner in which conventional medicine could be considered "healthless medicine."<sup>3</sup> Lonergan, goes on further to state:

In general, then, what is going forward in Catholic circles is a disengagement from the forms of classicist culture and a transposition into the forms of modern culture.

This is a matter involved in considerable confusion. The confusion arises mainly because classicist culture made no provision for the possibility of its own demise. It conceived itself not empirically but normatively, not as one culture among many, but as the only culture any right-minded and cultivated person would name culture.<sup>4</sup>

There is an analogous manner in which health care in this country, in order to go forward, in order to "shift to the idea," must disengage from conventional medicine because the disease and pharmaceutically oriented "culture" of modern medicine has made no provision for the possibility of its own demise. It conceives itself not empirically but normatively, not as one form of medicine among many, but as the only form of medicine any scientifically minded physician would name medicine.

The necessity for the medical profession to conceive of itself in a different manner is also evident when one considers the disparity between the resources spent and the outcomes achieved by the U.S. health care system (Figure 1). In this paper the work of two philosophers will be utilized to mediate this shift, with the intent of providing a theoretical foundation for a more effective methodology. This engagement in a "Simmelian shift to the idea" will focus upon the first three elements of the thematic passage.

Initially, we will review how the medical profession reflects upon, or characterizes itself, states a definition of its goals, and describes the means it employs to achieve those goals. The work of Hans Georg Gadamer will then be called upon to provide a re-characterization of

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<sup>3</sup> For a more thorough explanation, see Robert Luby, "Upstream Medicine," *Lonergan Workshop Journal*, vol. 21, ed. Fred Lawrence (Chestnut Hill, MA: Boston College, 2008).

<sup>4</sup> "The Future of Christianity," 160.

**Figure 1. Healthy Life Expectancy Total Population and Total Healthcare Expenditure/capita, 2003/2006**



the medical profession which leads to a very different conception of the goals of medical practice.

Gadamer did not extend his analysis to the point of revising the means employed by medicine to achieve its goals. For this we turn to the work of Bernard Lonergan. Lonergan's concepts of "schemes of recurrence," "conditioned series of schemes of recurrence," "defensive schemes," "emergent probability," and "survival probability" are well-suited as heuristic tools for conceptually explaining the ineffectiveness of some of the means currently employed. These tools, with the addition of the newly coined concept of "re-emergent probability" will provide a framework for understanding and judging the validity of means which might be employed by the medical enterprise of the future.

Finally, to present the "shift to the idea" with "A Mind and Heart of Hope," the implications of the emerging field of epigenetics will be explored. When Lonergan's concepts and terminology are applied to recent discoveries in this field, it will become apparent that the medical enterprise must be prepared to engage in philosophical, humanitarian, and theological "shifts" if it hopes to authentically define itself, its goals, and its means.

### MEDICINE REFLECTS UPON ITSELF

In "reflecting upon itself," allopathic medicine typically perceives that it is one of the natural sciences. A natural science, in broad terms, is interested in producing an effect upon nature. More specifically, the natural sciences utilize technology for bringing about "...the artificial production of effects which would not come about simply of themselves." The knowledge base of a natural science allows it "...to calculate and to control natural processes to such an extent that it finally becomes capable of replacing the natural by the artificial."<sup>5</sup> Upon which "natural processes" does medicine endeavor to impart its effects?

### MEDICINE REFLECTS UPON ITS GOALS

Medicine considers itself to be a science with the goal of producing effects upon disease. This demands an examination of the definition of disease. "Disease" is: "A morbid entity characterized usually by at least two of these criteria: an identifiable group of signs and symptoms, recognized etiologic agent(s), or consistent anatomic alterations."<sup>6</sup>

Symptoms are the subjective sensations (usually unpleasant) experienced by the patient. Signs are abnormal findings on physical examination or diagnostic test results. Etiologic agents are those entities, which, when present, are believed to cause disease. Anatomic alterations are those changes in the structure of the body sufficient to cause symptoms, signs, and/or changes in function. The corresponding goals of medicine are to alleviate symptoms, reduce the signs of disease, normalize diagnostic test results, eradicate etiologic agents, and correct anatomic alterations.

### MEDICINE REFLECTS UPON ITS MEANS

Clinical trials of subjects identified with specific diseases are the basis of the means of medical research. The usual methodology involves subjects split into two groups, one of which receives a single intervention (often a pharmaceutical agent), and one of which receives

<sup>5</sup> Hans Georg Gadamer, *The Enigma of Health* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1996), 38-39.

<sup>6</sup> *Stedman's Medical Dictionary* (Baltimore: Lippincott, Williams & Wilkins, 2000), 509.

a placebo. Underlying this paradigm is a two-part assumption; that diseases are "entities" and "unities," and thus have similar etiologic agents and manifestations in different individuals. Following upon this assumption, a sine qua non of medical research is single-intervention methodology. It will become evident as we progress that research methodology which tests multiple therapeutic interventions simultaneously possesses unrecognized merit.

The educational means of medicine emphasize the acquisition of knowledge organized by organ systems and diseases. This is associated with the production of a plethora of "specialists"; practitioners who limit their practice to the treatment of specific diseases or organs.

The diagnostic means of the conventional medicine paradigm largely involve the analysis of bodily substances or images believed to be "disease markers." It is critical to note that many of these diagnostic means are better suited for measuring the severity of the effects of the disease rather than for detecting the underlying reason(s) for the disease. The validity of this approach is further undermined by "normal" reference ranges which are often too broad to be relevant to specific individual optimal values.<sup>7</sup>

Any reflection upon the therapeutic means employed by conventional medicine must conclude that pharmaceutical agents and surgical procedures distinguish it from other healing traditions. Pharmaceutical agents are used with the intention of alleviating symptoms, improving physical signs of disease, normalizing the results of diagnostic tests, and eradicating etiologic agents of disease. Surgical procedures are most often employed to effect similar results by addressing and correcting anatomic alterations.

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<sup>7</sup> For a more extensive explanation, see Robert Luby, "Method in Medicine for the Age of Syndromes and Genomes," *Lonergan Workshop Journal*, vol. 36, ed. Fred Lawrence (Chestnut Hill, MA: Boston College, 2009).

## THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF GADAMER TO MEDICINE'S SHIFT TO THE IDEA

### Gadamer's Counter-Reflection on Medicine

Gadamer reaches an entirely different conclusion when he reflects upon the character of medical practice. He rejects the notion that medicine is a science concerned with having an effect upon the natural process of disease. Although he does not concern himself with whether or not disease is a natural process (as will be challenged later), he also disagrees that "replacing" the natural with the artificial is the *raison d'être* of medicine. Shifting the emphasis from "producing an effect" and "replacing the natural," he concludes that medicine is an "art of healing..." with "...an ability to *re-produce* or *re-establish* something."<sup>8</sup>

Prior to describing what this "something" is, it is also worthwhile to note that Gadamer cannot fully reconcile himself to medicine as an "art" in the conventional sense because the practitioner of medicine produces no artifact, as does the artist.

Gadamer's reflections upon medicine are best summed up his own words:

And that is why medicine represents a peculiar unity of theoretical knowledge and practical know-how within the domain of the modern sciences, a unity moreover which as such cannot be understood as the application of science to the field of praxis. *Medicine itself represents a peculiar kind of practical science for which modern thought no longer possesses an adequate concept.*<sup>9</sup>

### GADAMER'S COUNTER-REFLECTION ON THE GOALS OF MEDICINE

For Gadamer, then, the goal of medicine is that very "something" which medicine seeks to reproduce or reestablish. *The goal of medical intervention* "must be understood as an attempt to *restore an*

<sup>8</sup> Gadamer, *The Enigma of Health*, 32 (italics mine).

<sup>9</sup> Gadamer, *The Enigma of Health*, 39.

*equilibrium* that has been disturbed."<sup>10</sup>

Parenthetically, this goal leads to a further distinguishing feature between the natural sciences and medicine. Implied in the notion of "producing an effect on natural processes" or "replacing the natural with the artificial" is the continued presence of the scientist or the means of the science. Not so with medicine. If the goal is to reproduce or reestablish physiological equilibrium, then "the doctor's contribution consummates itself by disappearing as soon as the equilibrium of health is restored."<sup>11</sup>

Gadamer labors to adequately describe the subjective experience of the attainment of equilibrium. It is encountered by the patient "as a kind of sudden reversal" or "a sudden change of state."<sup>12</sup> Equilibrium has more in common with the concepts of harmony, flow, and balance than it does with the "production of effects." Finally, for an adequate illustration of this notion, Gadamer accedes to the poet Rilke who alludes to an encounter:

...where the pure too little incomprehensibly transforms itself,  
springs over into the empty too much."<sup>13</sup>

Pursuant to this revision of the goals of medicine, our shift to the idea demands a second reflection, or a second opinion, upon the means employed by medicine. The analysis of medicine's means was not the focus of Gadamer's work. A necessary prolegomenon to this analysis is a more thorough examination of the nature of equilibrium. Bernard Lonergan provides the necessary tools.

## THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF LONERGAN TO MEDICINE'S SHIFT TO THE IDEA

### Equilibrium and Insight

It is interesting to note that Gadamer's description of the attainment of equilibrium in the body is similar to Lonergan's

<sup>10</sup> Gadamer, *The Enigma of Health*, 36.

<sup>11</sup> Gadamer, *The Enigma of Health*, 37.

<sup>12</sup> Gadamer, *The Enigma of Health*, 36

<sup>13</sup> Rainer Maria Rilke, *The Duino Elegies* (Frankfurt am Main: Insel Verlag, 1923).

description of the attainment of an insight in the mind. An insight: (1) comes as a release to the tension of inquiry, (2) comes suddenly and unexpectedly, and (3) is a function not of outer circumstances but of inner conditions.<sup>14</sup>

Further, an effective teacher may render the emergence of an insight more probable by the quality of the suggestive questions and evocative images presented to the student.<sup>15</sup> Correspondingly, an effective physician may render the emergence of physiological equilibrium in a diseased patient more probable by the nature of the means employed.

Using Lonergan's terminology it is possible to foreshadow a refinement of Gadamer's analysis of the goals of medicine. The goal of preventive medicine is *to employ those means which are capable of increasing the survival probability of physiological equilibrium*. The goal of therapeutic medicine is *to employ those means which are capable of increasing the re-emergent probability of physiological equilibrium*.

### **Physiological Equilibrium and Lonergan's Schemes of Recurrence**

To elucidate this, a more detailed analysis of physiological equilibrium is in order. Walter B. Cannon, in the first half of the twentieth century, coined the phrase "homeostasis" to describe the internal bodily equilibrium of which we speak:

All the vital mechanisms, however varied they may be, have only one object, that of preserving constant the conditions of life in the internal environment.<sup>16</sup>

The term "homeostasis" has more recently been revised to "homeodynamics" to emphasize the dynamic, rather than static nature of these processes. For our purposes, in the remainder of this paper the

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<sup>14</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *Insight*, 1957 (London: Longmans, Green, & Co., reprinted in 2000 by the University of Toronto Press for Lonergan Research Institute, Toronto), 28.

<sup>15</sup> Joseph Flanagan, *Quest for Self-Knowledge* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 17-18.

<sup>16</sup> Walter B. Cannon, *The Wisdom of the Body* (W. W. Norton & Co., 1932), 106.

terms "homeostasis" and "homeodynamics" shall be considered on par with "equilibrium."

In Lonergan's terms, the biological processes which maintain physiological equilibrium function as "schemes of recurrence" and "conditioned series of schemes of recurrence." The simplest example of a scheme of recurrence is as follows:

If event A occurs, then event B will occur.

If event B occurs, then event C will occur.

If event C occurs, then event A will occur (Figure 2).

A conditioned series of schemes of recurrence would be illustrated as follows:

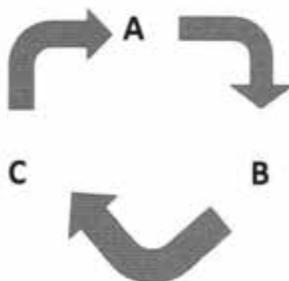
Scheme P can function though neither Q nor R exists.

Scheme Q can function though R does not exist.

Scheme Q cannot function unless scheme P is already functioning.

Scheme R cannot function unless scheme P is already functioning<sup>17</sup> (Figure 3).

**Figure 2. Schemes of Recurrence**

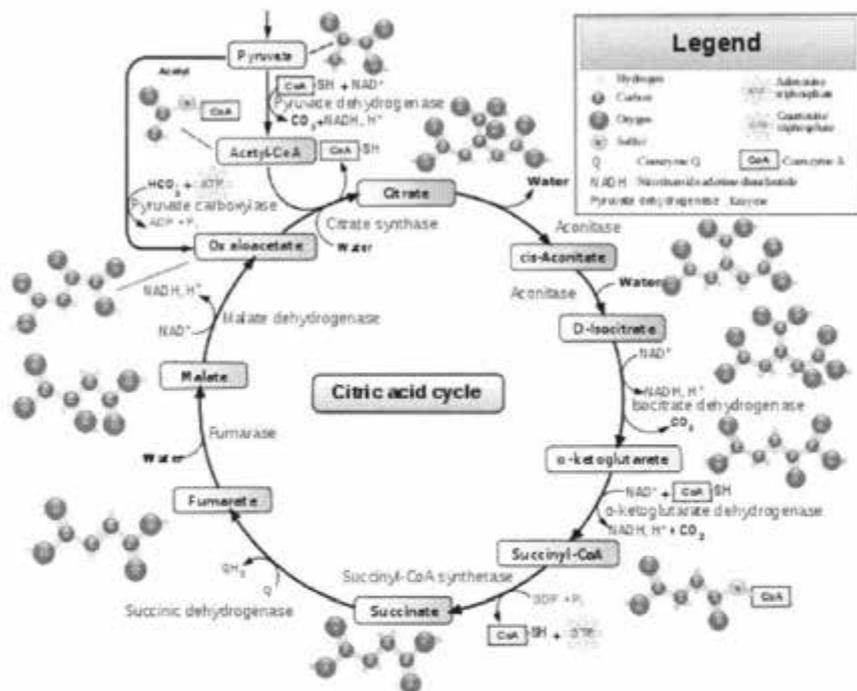


**Figure 3. Conditioned Series of Schemes of Recurrence**



<sup>17</sup> *Insight*, 141-48.

Figure 4. Citric Acid Cycle (Krebs Cycle)

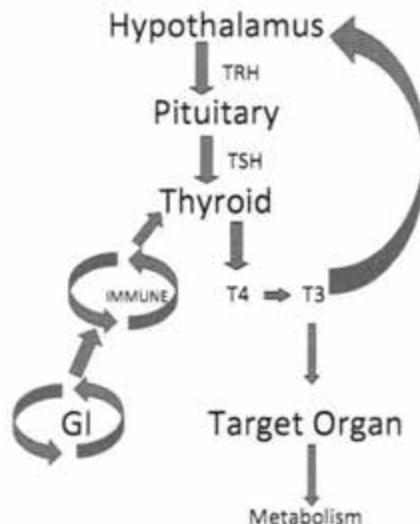


To apply these nonspecific terms to physiology, Lonergan's "event" would be represented by a single biochemical reaction, usually transforming one molecule into another. Lonergan's "scheme of recurrence" would be a cycle of biochemical reactions such as the Krebs, or citric acid, cycle (Figure 4). Conditioned series of schemes of recurrence are functionally interconnected biochemical cycles such as those governing the regulation of thyroid hormone production (Figure 5).

### Defensive Schemes of Recurrence

Lonergan states that every scheme of recurrence has a "survival probability." When a related set of biochemical reactions ceases to perpetuate itself, it would represent the lack of survival of a physiological scheme of recurrence.

Figure 5



There also exists a probability for the survival of schemes that have begun to function..." which is "...the probability of the nonoccurrence of any of the events that would disrupt the scheme.<sup>18</sup>

When "events that would disrupt the scheme" do occur, equilibrium is no longer maintained. It is then that the reparative processes of the body emerge to reestablish equilibrium. Lonergan describes these corrective homeodynamic processes as "defensive schemes of recurrence." Thus, the emergent probability of a defensive scheme of recurrence is inversely related to the survival probability of the scheme of recurrence which it is capable of correcting. Stated another way, a defensive scheme of recurrence emerges when a scheme of recurrence ceases to survive *and functions in such a way as to increase the re-emergent probability of the original scheme.* In Lonergan's own words:

In illustration of schemes with defensive circles, one may advert to generalized equilibria...a generalized equilibrium is such

<sup>18</sup> *Insight*, 144.

a combination of defensive circles that any change within a limited range is offset by opposite changes that tend to restore the initial situation.<sup>19</sup>

### Conditioned Series of Schemes of Recurrence

In order to effectively "shift to the idea," the practice of medicine needs to be based on a deeper understanding of conditioned series of schemes of recurrence. Very often the "event that would disrupt" a physiological scheme is the cessation of the survival of a "predecessor scheme." For example, the lack of survival of scheme P or Q is "an event which would disrupt" scheme R. Moreover, physiological schemes exhibit abundant redundancy and matrix-like connections. For example, schemes P and Q may also serve as necessary predecessors for schemes X, Y, and/or Z, which may be relatively unrelated to scheme R. Therefore, interventions which aim to reestablish the function of any scheme without considering the role of predecessor schemes is likely to be of limited merit compared with interventions which aim to modulate the *most foundational of the predecessor schemes*.

### A LONERGANIAN REVISION OF THE GOALS OF MEDICINE

It is now possible to speculate upon how Lonergan would revise the goals of medicine. Gadamer stated that the goal of medicine "must be understood as an attempt to *restore an equilibrium* that has been disturbed." Using Lonergan's terminology, it is possible to expand upon this and propose a set of more refined goals:

1. To increase the survival probability of physiological schemes of recurrence.
2. To reverse or reduce the effects of events that disrupt physiological schemes, and/or to increase the efficacy of defensive schemes of recurrence in order to increase the re-emergent probability of the original physiological schemes of recurrence.
3. To restore the function of the most foundational scheme of recurrence in a conditioned series of schemes of recurrence.

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<sup>19</sup> *Insight*, 141.

## **DIABETES AS AN EXAMPLE OF SCHEMES OF RECURRENCE AND DEFENSIVE SCHEMES**

Type 2 diabetes will be used as an example to illustrate these concepts. When food is ingested, blood glucose (sugar) levels increase. When blood glucose increases, insulin production increases. When the blood insulin level increases, glucose entry into cells increases. This causes blood glucose levels to return to normal. This will serve as our prototype for a physiological scheme of recurrence.

Diabetes begins when insulin sensitivity decreases in the setting of some combination of obesity, lack of physical activity, inflammation, genetic factors, and toxins. In other words, these are the "events that would disrupt" glucose equilibrium and decrease the survival probability of its scheme of recurrence (and increase the emergent probability of its corrective, defensive scheme of recurrence).

The defensive scheme in this case involves increasing the production of insulin to the point where the blood glucose levels return to normal, resulting in the re-emergence of the original conditions of the physiological scheme.

But defensive schemes in general are not designed for chronic, sustained operation. That is, they have a finite survival probability, and inevitably falter. In this case, the pancreas does not have an unlimited capacity to produce abnormally high levels of insulin. As insulin sensitivity continues to decrease, ever-increasing amounts of insulin will need to be produced. This extra insulin will eventually be insufficient to control glucose levels. Finally, the ability of the pancreas to produce extra insulin will decrease as the reserve capacity of the pancreas becomes exhausted.

This dire outcome could be avoided if the factors which decrease the survival probability of the glucose equilibrium scheme of recurrence were modulated. In other words, the defensive scheme of recurrence known as diabetes would be rendered unnecessary if physicians and patients strove for the nonoccurrence (or at least the modulation) of the "events that would disrupt" glucose equilibrium (loss of weight, increased physical activity, decreased inflammation, genetic modifications, and toxin elimination/avoidance).

## A LONERGANIAN REFLECTION UPON THE MEANS OF MEDICINE

### **Therapeutic Means that Target Mediators of *Physiological Schemes of Recurrence***

Now we may continue with an exploration of how Lonergan would have evaluated the means employed by medicine to achieve its goals. Recall that the goals of medicine are to alleviate symptoms, reduce the signs of disease, normalize diagnostic test results, eradicate etiologic agents, and correct anatomic alterations. The therapeutic means utilized to achieve these goals are most often pharmaceutical agents and surgery.

For our purposes we will focus on pharmaceutical means, as these are most often employed in the management of chronic disease. Pharmaceutical agents may act upon the mediators of physiological schemes of recurrence, defensive schemes of recurrence, or the etiologic agents of disease. Each of these will be scrutinized in turn. An analysis of how Lonergan would have reflected on the diagnostic, research, and educational means of medicine will follow.

The use of insulin-sensitizing medicines provides an example of a pharmaceutical "means" which acts upon a mediator of a physiological scheme of recurrence. These medicines, in the short-term, increase the body's sensitivity to insulin to forestall increases in insulin and blood glucose levels.

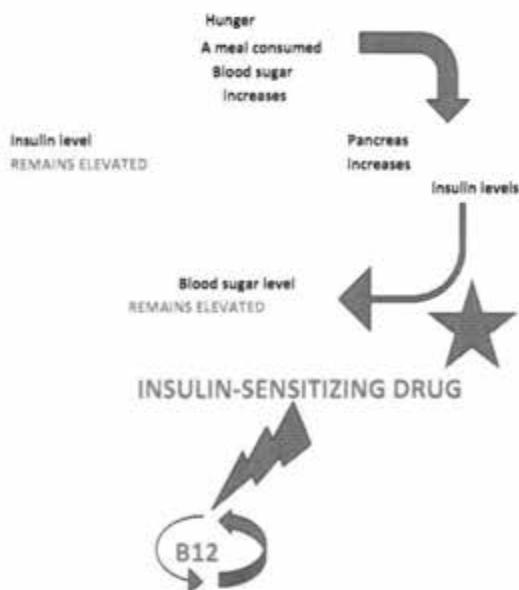
There are three problems with this approach worth noting:

1. The pharmaceutical agent does nothing to retard the inexorable decline in insulin sensitivity. It may postpone, but it is not capable of preventing, the emergence of the defensive scheme of recurrence (the eventual need for increased insulin production). This shortcoming may be generalized to all pharmaceutical means which correct a defect in a physiological scheme but do not modulate the antecedents which cause the defect.
2. Some of the "events that would disrupt," or decrease the survival probability of the glucose equilibrium scheme (e.g., inflammation) will be factors which also decrease the survival probability of other physiological schemes of recurrence. Stated another way,

factors which are capable of disrupting one physiological scheme will invariably disrupt multiple physiological schemes. The sole reliance on pharmaceutical agents, coupled with neglect of these "upstream" factors, condemns the patient to decreasing the probability of survival of these other physiological schemes, thereby increasing the emergent probability of other "diseases."

3. The pharmaceutical agent itself is a factor which decreases the probability of survival of other important physiological schemes of recurrence. In other words, pharmaceutical agents are often "events that would disrupt" other schemes. In plain language we speak here of "side effects." For example, the most widely used insulin-sensitizing pharmaceutical agent causes levels of vitamin B12 to decrease. Thus, this diabetes medicine decreases the survival probability of all physiological schemes of recurrence in the body which require vitamin B12, thereby increasing the emergent probability of other "diseases" (Figure 6).

**Figure 6. Pharmaceutical Means May Act as "Events That Would Disrupt" Other Schemes**



This illustrates how pharmaceutical agents, consistent with the goals of the natural scientist, may exert "an effect upon a natural process" by exerting an effect upon a physiologic scheme of recurrence. But this strategy fails to fulfill the first two of Lonergan's goals. In the long run it does not increase the survival probability of the physiological schemes of recurrence upon which it has an effect. It also does not reverse or reduce the effects of "those events that would disrupt the scheme". This results in both a decrease in the re-emergent probability of the original physiological scheme, and a decrease in the survival probability of other seemingly unrelated physiological schemes.

### **Pharmaceutical Means Targeting the Mediators of *Defensive Schemes of Recurrence***

Pharmaceutical agents that act upon defensive schemes of recurrence appear in two general forms. The first type replaces or augments levels of one of the mediators of the defensive scheme. Insulin itself is one such example. When insulin-sensitizing medicines (acting upon the original glucose equilibrium scheme of recurrence) are no longer effective in controlling glucose levels, insulin itself is often employed as a medical means of augmenting the efficacy of the corresponding defensive scheme.

There are two problems with this approach worth noting:

1. High levels of "corrective mediators" are often beneficial in the short run, but harmful in the long run. In our example, administering exogenous insulin may, in the short run, "restore the initial situation" (normal glucose levels). But in the long run it decreases the re-emergent probability of the original scheme of recurrence (the scheme of glucose equilibrium). This is because high levels of insulin act to promote weight gain (a factor which decreases not only the survival probability, but also the re-emergent probability of the original scheme).
2. The mediators of defensive schemes of recurrence, when present in excessive levels or for prolonged duration, inevitably decrease the survival probability of other physiological schemes of recurrence.

For example, insulin in high levels, while beneficial for maintaining glucose equilibrium in the setting of insulin resistance, promotes inflammation. Inflammation is perhaps the most common "event that *also* would disrupt" various other physiological schemes of recurrence involved in complex chronic disease. In other words, insulin itself, in high enough levels, promotes the "events that would disrupt" other physiological schemes of recurrence.

This strategy also contradicts Lonergan's first two goals. It decreases, rather than increases, the re-emergent probability of the original physiological scheme of recurrence. Secondly, it acts to decrease the survival probability of other physiological schemes of recurrence.

The second type of pharmaceutical agent which acts upon defensive schemes of recurrence blocks, retards, or diminishes mediators of the defensive scheme. It is counter-intuitive to block the action of a corrective mediator, so an explanation is in order. Recall that the goals of medicine include reduction of the signs and symptoms of illness. These signs and symptoms, by and large, are produced by the mediators of corrective/defensive schemes of recurrence. Entropy is silent. Restoration is not.

For example, we are all exposed to common cold viruses on a daily basis, yet only occasionally develop "a cold". This is because one of the schemes of recurrence of our immune system involves the surveillance for, and the elimination of, any viruses so encountered. The events that would disrupt this scheme and decrease its survival probability (or allow an individual to "catch a cold") include lack of sleep, poor nutrition, and any other number of stressors which reduce the functional efficacy of the immune system.

When the virus is not eliminated by the normal surveillance activities of the immune system, it establishes an "infection." In this scenario, a defensive scheme of recurrence emerges. This includes fever (to increase the activity of white blood cells and weaken the virus), the release of caustic chemicals to kill the virus (sore throat), the release of pro-inflammatory chemicals to enhance the short-term function of the entire immune system (fatigue, aches, and malaise), the production of mucus to protect bodily tissues and flush out the dead viruses and immune cells (runny nose), and mechanical means of eliminating

the invading virus and preventing it from invading deeper levels of the body (coughing, sneezing). The usual medicines utilized to "help" the patient (fever-reducers, decongestants, and cough-suppressants) reduce the effectiveness of the defensive scheme.

Thus, pharmaceutical agents that block the action of the mediators of defensive schemes directly contradict the second of Lonergan's revised goals of medicine. Though they may reduce the signs and symptoms of illness in the short term, they either temporarily retard the re-emergence, or permanently decrease the re-emergent probability of the original physiological scheme.

### **Pharmaceutical Means that Target the Etiologic Agents of Disease**

Another previously stated goal of medicine was the eradication of the etiologic agents of disease. Efficacious means of eradicating viruses are not presently available. However, vaccinations can "prime" the immune system to avoid ever having to initiate a defensive scheme of recurrence (that would be significant enough to be recognized as "disease") in response to the future presence of an individual virus. In contrast, antibiotics are quite effective at eradicating the bacterial "agents" of disease. In so doing, they also abort the complete implementation of defensive schemes of recurrence. There are at least three disadvantages of employing vaccinations and antibiotics to eradicate infectious agents of disease.

1. Antibiotics also eradicate the beneficial bacteria in the intestine which are involved with the digestion and absorption of nutrients, the elimination of toxins, the control of systemic inflammation, the control of the immune system, the integrity of the intestinal lining, and many other beneficial schemes of recurrence. The potential results include diarrhea, rashes, allergic reactions, malnutrition, toxin-related illnesses, inflammation-related illnesses, immune system suppression, and autoimmune illness, to name a few.
2. The full implementation of defensive schemes of recurrence against viruses and bacteria early in life appears to benefit the overall function and balance of the immune system later in life. There is

now ample evidence that the overuse of antibiotics and vaccines negates the benefits derived from these exposures. This has led to a corresponding overreaction of the immune system to exogenous irritants and endogenous tissues, resulting in an increase in the prevalence of asthma, allergies, eczema, autoimmune conditions, et cetera.<sup>20</sup> This is an intriguing example of the matrix-like nature of physiological schemes, where a defensive scheme of recurrence acts as a necessary “predecessor” for a seemingly unrelated conditioned series of schemes. It also highlights the limitations of pharmaceutical means which target the etiologic agents of disease. They contradict Lonergan’s third goal in that they do not *restore the function of the most foundational scheme*.

3. It is well-known that the mere presence of the etiologic agent is insufficient to cause disease. The factors which determine the susceptibility of the host to the etiologic agent are more influential. Therefore, therapeutic means which support, optimize, and increase the survival probability of the schemes of recurrence which decrease host susceptibility (e.g., the surveillance activities of the immune system) are potentially more efficacious and less toxic than the administration of vaccinations and antibiotics.

### **Pharmaceutical Means that *Normalize* the Results of Diagnostic Tests**

The remaining goal of medicine to be examined in this manner is the goal of normalizing the results of laboratory evaluations and diagnostic test results, that is, “disease markers.” Recall that diagnostic and laboratory tests are of two general types; those which produce an image of a bodily structure, and those which measure the amount of an analyte from a sample of bodily liquid or tissue. We will concern ourselves here with the latter type of test. In this final reflection on therapeutic means it will become apparent that the diagnostic means of the conventional medicine paradigm are also in need of revision.

It is crucial to recognize that the analytes of conventional laboratory tests are often the mediators involved in defensive schemes

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<sup>20</sup> *Textbook of Functional Medicine* (Gig Harbor, WA: The Institute for Functional Medicine, 2010), 299-326.

of recurrence. We have already explored how the means of medical intervention are misdirected when employed in reducing or blocking the mediators of defensive/corrective physiological schemes. Therefore, an overreliance on the laboratory analysis of substances involved in the function of defensive schemes is also likely to be misguided.

Diagnostic studies which focus on mediators of defensive schemes of recurrence should not be abandoned altogether. Rather, they should be utilized with more selectivity. What the conventional laboratory diagnostic paradigm too often fails to recognize is that the mediators of defensive schemes at abnormal levels are often temporarily necessary to increase the re-emergent probability of the original physiological scheme.

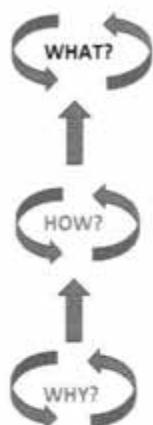
Diagnostic tests which focus on the mediators of physiological schemes of recurrence, rather than defensive schemes, should be more widely implemented (keeping in mind the caveat in the subsequent paragraph). Appropriate medical interventions to modulate these mediators are more likely to increase the re-emergent probability of physiological schemes of recurrence (i.e., restore homeodynamic equilibrium). This is likely to lead to therapeutic interventions which rely more on lifestyle modifications and nutritional interventions than does the current paradigm. Cost-savings and a reduction in side effects is also likely.

With regards to *conditioned series* of schemes of recurrence, it must be pointed out that the extant diagnostic tests of this type too often analyze "downstream" physiological schemes, rather than foundational predecessor schemes. To illustrate, diagnostic medical means must shift to emphasize tests of the mediators of scheme P rather than the mediators of scheme R. In general, diagnostic tests focused on scheme R are only capable of answering the question "What?" Diagnostic tests focused on the mediators of scheme P are more likely to answer the questions "How?" and "Why?" (Figure 7).

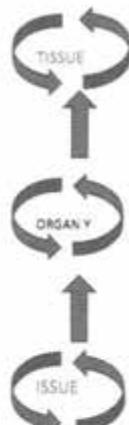
A Platonic analogy is in order. The mediators and the events occurring in scheme R represent the shadows on the wall of Plato's cave. Modern medicine must turn its focus diagnostically and therapeutically to the more foundational schemes which determine how and why the shadows are cast.

To state this in another manner, conventional medicine, with its focus on downstream schemes of recurrence (scheme R), tends to think

**Figure 7. Diagnostic Tests and Therapeutic Means after the Shift to the Idea**



**Figure 8. Issues with Tissues**



that disease is a matter of "*Tissues with issues.*" If medicine shifts its focus to upstream schemes of recurrence (scheme P), it will enable a shift to the mind-set that disease represents "*Issues with tissues.*" The point is subtle, but all important. What is at stake is Lonergan's third goal: To restore the function of the most foundational scheme of recurrence in a conditioned series of schemes (Figure 8).

Finally, a greater emphasis is needed for the laboratory analysis of those "events that would disrupt" physiological schemes. Although laboratory tests for the detection of infectious agents are widely available, the same cannot be said for other exogenous and endogenous toxins (broadly defined) which decrease the survival probability and the re-emergent probability of physiological schemes. Additionally, as has already been noted, in a conditioned series of schemes of recurrence, the failure of survival of a predecessor scheme is often an event that would disrupt a subsequent scheme. This reemphasizes the need for greater utilization of diagnostic tests which measure the mediators of the foundational schemes of conditioned series of schemes.

The preferred diagnostic tests, therefore, are those which focus on the measurement of analytes which lead to interventions most capable of increasing the survival probability and/or the re-emergent

probability of physiological schemes. These analytes are most likely to be either of the following: nonoptimal levels of the mediators of, or the "events that would disrupt" the most foundational of, conditioned series of physiological schemes.<sup>21</sup>

### A LONERGANIAN REVISION OF THE DIAGNOSTIC AND THERAPEUTIC MEANS OF MEDICINE

The previous discussion implies that the means utilized by modern medicine are *physiologically coercive* rather than *physiologically restorative*. To use a political analogy, pharmaceutical means are to human physiology what "nation building" is to foreign policy. Taking this all into account, the following is an encapsulated proposal for the revision of the therapeutic and diagnostic means of medicine in light of Lonergan's schemes of recurrence, defensive schemes of recurrence, and conditioned series of schemes of recurrence:

1. Therapeutic means which target the mediators of a physiological scheme of recurrence must be capable of increasing the survival probability of that scheme, and of indefinitely decreasing the emergent probability of its respective defensive scheme of recurrence, rather than merely postponing it in the short run.
2. Therapeutic means which target the mediators of a defensive scheme of recurrence must be capable of increasing the re-emergent probability of the original physiological scheme of recurrence *without decreasing the survival probability of other schemes*.
3. Therapeutic means which target the etiologic agents of disease (or "those events that would disrupt the scheme") must be capable of increasing the survival probability of schemes which render the host less susceptible to the agent or the event, must not decrease the efficacy of the host's defensive scheme, and must not decrease the re-emergent probability of the original physiological scheme nor decrease the survival probability of other physiological schemes.

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<sup>21</sup> For a more in-depth treatment of these principles, see *Laboratory Evaluations for Integrative and Functional Medicine* (Atlanta, GA: Metamatrix Institute, 2008) and *Textbook for Functional Medicine*, 33-39.

4. Diagnostic means must analyze those mediators of physiological and defensive schemes which lead to medical interventions capable of increasing the survival probability of physiological schemes, decreasing the emergent probability of defensive schemes, and/or increasing the re-emergent probability of original physiological schemes of recurrence.
5. For conditioned series of schemes of recurrence, therapeutic and diagnostic means will be most effective when targeting or analyzing the most foundational schemes.

### **A LONERGANIAN RE-DEFINITION OF DISEASE**

Recall the conventional definition of disease as "A morbid entity characterized usually by at least two of these criteria: an identifiable group of signs and symptoms, recognized etiologic agent(s), or consistent anatomic alterations."

Loneragan would take issue with this definition. In the first place, when viewed through the lens of physiological and defensive schemes of recurrence, he would challenge the notion that a disease is an entity. Physiological schemes of recurrence are entities, but not diseases.

Secondly, Lonergan would object to etiologic agents being more foundational than host susceptibility in any definition of disease. In Lonergan's terms, the survival probability of a given physiological scheme, and the efficacy of its corresponding defensive scheme(s) determine whether or not the mere presence of "an event which would disrupt the scheme" does in fact disrupt the scheme.

Thirdly, Lonergan would argue that signs and symptoms are often the observable stigmata of the operation of defensive schemes of recurrence. As such, it is illogical to include them in the definition of disease. Defensive schemes of recurrence and their attendant signs and symptoms, though often mistaken for disease, are but the appropriate manifestation of the body's attempt to counteract "disease" by increasing the re-emergent probability of the original physiological scheme(s) of recurrence. This is most valid in the realm of chronic diseases, which often represent the manifestations of the inappropriate long-term activation of defensive schemes of recurrence. Recall that entropy is silent, but restoration and repair are not.

In Lonergan's own words:

...a remedy has to be on the level of the disease; but the disease is a succession of lower viewpoints that heads towards *an ultimate nihilism*; and so the remedy has to be the attainment of a higher viewpoint.<sup>22</sup>

Disease represents a state of ultimate physiological nihilism. True "disease" would be defined as a state in which defensive schemes capable of increasing the re-emergent probability of original physiological schemes are no longer operant.

Finally, Lonergan would object to the notion of disease as a "natural process" upon which physician-scientists endeavor to impart an effect. Rather, he would argue that physiological schemes of recurrence and defensive schemes are *the natural processes of health*, the processes that the body relies upon to maintain and restore equilibrium. It must be the goal of medical practice to assist these processes.

### A LONERGANIAN REVISION OF THE RESEARCH MEANS OF MEDICINE

This reflection has implications for the means of medical research. The validity of the conventional research paradigm, as noted above, is based upon an accurate definition of disease. Yet the diagnostic criteria of many chronic diseases are determined by the proceedings of a human committee, rather than by any physiological criteria. Lonergan's concepts challenge the prevailing definition of diseases as distinct entities and provide a more physiologically based model. If the definition of disease is inaccurate, then the practice of studying patients who "have" the same "disease" is too simplistic.

Moreover, the Lonerganian model of disease invalidates a research paradigm which restricts clinical trials to single interventions. Single-intervention trials are only capable of recognizing the therapeutic value of those substances which act alone and require no cofactors, namely, pharmaceutical drugs. However, the great majority of the innate mediators of physiologic schemes and defensive schemes require cofactors. Therapeutic means to increase the survival or re-

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<sup>22</sup> *Insight*, 259.

emergent probability of physiological schemes will often require supplementation with these substances *and* their cofactors. Therefore, single-intervention clinical trials (which exclude the necessary cofactors) of these substances will underestimate or fail to recognize their therapeutic value. The current normative standard of single-intervention clinical trials is tantamount to demanding that the effectiveness of parachutes be evaluated without the benefit of rip cords.

Thus, Lonergan's revision of the definition of disease must in turn lead to a revision of the means of medical research. If carried out, a revised research paradigm would stratify clinical trial subjects on the basis of disrupted physiological schemes rather than arbitrary and/or contrived definitions of disease, and it would allow for multiple-intervention trials to accurately assess the effectiveness of therapeutic agents which require cofactors.

This, in turn, would imply a shift in the quality of therapeutic means. Generally, conventional medicine seeks to provide single therapeutic interventions which have dramatic effects on the reduction of disease. But if the conventional goals of "disease reduction" are replaced by the goals of augmenting the survival probability and re-emergent probability of physiological schemes of recurrence, then multiple interventions with individually modest but collectively robust effects will become the new *modus operandi*. To use a military analogy, the quest for "magic bullets" will be replaced by the quest for "magic shrapnel."

### **A LONERGANIAN REVISION OF THE EDUCATIONAL MEANS OF MEDICINE**

Medical education produces specialists who limit their practice to the treatment of specific diseases or individual organs. Lonergan would object to this on the basis that conditioned series of schemes of recurrence involve multiple organ systems. Autoimmune disease provides a fitting example. The optimal function of any organ (scheme R) is dependent upon the optimal function of the surveillance activities of the immune system which induce tolerance to the organ (scheme Q), which in turn is dependent upon optimal surveillance and repair functions of the

intestine to prevent hyper-permeability of the intestinal lining (which is in turn at least partly dependent on proper nutrition).<sup>23</sup>

Therefore, a "specialist" who is not addressing the function of the immune system, the gastrointestinal system, and the nutritional status of the patient with autoimmune disease (in the organ of their specialty) will be unable to initiate therapeutic interventions which target the most foundational predecessor schemes in a conditioned series of schemes. The educational means of medicine are in need of a shift away from an organ-based or disease-based approach and toward an approach which emphasizes optimal physiological function based on an understanding of conditioned series of physiological schemes of recurrence.

Based upon these reflections, we have now arrived at a characterization of medicine and its goals which would satisfy Gadamer. The Lonerganian language of schemes of recurrence, defensive schemes, survival probability, emergent probability, and re-emergent probability have laid the foundation for a refinement of the goals of medicine, a revision of the means of medicine, and a redefinition of disease. The task which remains is to anticipate the future role of medicine as a social movement, in order that it may undergo a "shift to the idea" which will enable it to "live and function in those several cultures." Here we will invoke the theme of this year's Workshop, and do so with "A Mind and Heart of Hope." The emerging field of epigenetics will be pivotal for this task.

## EPIGENETICS

Originally it was believed that genes inherited from parents were all-important in determining the traits of the offspring. In essence it was believed that any and all genes which were inherited were invariably activated and expressed. However, recent research has discovered that environmental factors determine whether and when genes are expressed. That is to say, genes may be "turned on" or "turned off." This influence of environmental factors on gene expression is termed "epigenetics."

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<sup>23</sup> *Textbook of Functional Medicine*, 305.

## **Epigenetics, Schemes of Recurrence, and Re-emergent Probability**

Genes provide the “blueprint” for the production of proteins and enzymes. Many of the mediators which increase the survival probability of physiological schemes of recurrence and the effectiveness of defensive schemes are proteins or enzymes.

Therefore, environmental factors which influence gene expression will affect the survival probability of physiological schemes of recurrence. These environmental factors are crucial for preventive health care. Environmental factors also have the potential to modulate the effectiveness of defensive schemes. That is, they play a role in determining the re-emergent probability of schemes of recurrence after physiological equilibrium has been disrupted.

### **Environmental Epigenetic Modifiers**

What are these environmental factors? Not surprisingly, nutritional factors and chemical toxins have been demonstrated to be epigenetic modifiers. But unexpectedly, recent research has discovered that “social factors” such as significant or repetitive stressful/traumatic events, especially in utero and the earliest years of life, can also affect the expression of genes. These epigenetic modifications are capable of increasing the probability of disease and may even be passed along to future generations of offspring.

Human studies have found connections between highly stressful experiences in children and increased risk for later mental illnesses, including generalized anxiety disorder and major depressive disorder. Atypical stress responses over a lifetime can also result in increased risk for physical ailments, such as asthma, hypertension, heart disease and diabetes.<sup>24</sup>

It is not only “negative” events which have epigenetic capacity, but positive events as well. There are data to indicate that the degree of

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<sup>24</sup> National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, *Early Experiences Can Alter Gene Expression and Affect Long-Term Development, Working Paper 10*, Center on the Developing Child (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 2010).

*maternal nurturing* is capable of determining genetic expression of the offspring. Although more research is warranted, it is not inconceivable that all personal interactions, negative and positive, are capable of influencing genetic expression.

...supportive environments and rich learning experiences generate positive epigenetic signatures that activate genetic potential..." and "...establish a foundation for more effective learning capacities in the future."<sup>25</sup>

To view this issue "with a mind and heart of hope," it must be emphasized that there is every reason to believe that epigenetic changes induced by negative experiences are potentially reversible.

Experiments in animals have shown that certain types of epigenetic modifications that were thought to be permanent can be reversed under certain conditions.<sup>26</sup>

There is an even more tantalizing possibility here. Most of the epigenetic research has focused on the "recipient" of the action, but what of the initiator? For example, is the act of nurturing (or loving, or forgiving) another individual also capable of altering the genetic expression of the one who nurtures, or loves, or forgives? It is my opinion that further research will demonstrate that the "good Samaritan" also accrues epigenetic benefits.

### **Medical, Public Health, and Theological Implications of Epigenetics**

The implications of these findings have ramifications for personal health, public health policy, and theological discourse. When Lonergan's terminology is applied to epigenetics, it is evident that the manner in which one treats one's fellow beings influences the survival probability and the re-emergent probability of physiological schemes of recurrence.

For any individual seeking to prevent disease or favorably alter its course, it is possible that adherence to religious or spiritual teachings is as important as attention to proper nutrition and avoiding toxins.

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<sup>25</sup> *Early Experiences.*

<sup>26</sup> *Early Experiences.*

Caring for and nurturing other individuals may be more important for achieving optimal health than any medical prescription or lifestyle modification. At the very least, these factors are synergistic.

The society intent upon improving the health of its population must be influenced by epigenetics. Epigenetic research strongly implies that stress, abuse, neglect, and violence, in all their guises, lead ultimately to costly medical conditions. Public health would benefit from policies and programs which promote "care and nurturing" of the kind known to favorably alter genetic expression.<sup>27</sup>

So it is that the scriptural invocation to "Love one's neighbor as oneself" is important not only for social harmony and spiritual sanctity, but also for the establishment, maintenance, and restoration of optimal health. Theologically, the ancient question, "Am I my brother's keeper?" cannot but be answered in the affirmative from epigenetic and physiological perspectives.

## CONCLUSION

Simmel stated that there is a "necessity of every large social, cultural, or religious movement, to reflect on itself, to define its goals, to scrutinize the means it employs or might employ..." The works of Gadamer and Lonergan may be utilized to re-characterize the practice of medicine, to redefine its goals, and to propose shifts in emphasis to render more effective the means it employs in educational, research, diagnostic, and treatment modalities.

The work of Gadamer enables a re-characterization of medicine from an enterprise seeking to produce an effect upon disease to one which endeavors to restore physiological equilibrium. In short, medicine would do well to shift to the idea of being a physiologically restorative, rather than a physiologically coercive enterprise.

The contributions of Lonergan are several and are derived from his terms and concepts which may be introduced into this discourse. These terms and concepts allow for a more explicit analysis of physiological equilibrium. They serve heuristically to propose a redefinition of disease and a corresponding restatement of the goals of medicine.

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<sup>27</sup> For a more thorough analysis of this issue, see Bethany Hays, MD, "Prenatal Programming of Adult Disease," *Integrative Medicine* 10, no. 2 (2011): 22-29.

This restatement places less emphasis on etiologic agents, signs, and symptoms. It lays more emphasis on the optimization of physiological function and the restoration of equilibrium. If the contributions of Gadamer and Lonergan come to fruition, the looming disengagement between the health care system in general, and allopathic medicine in particular, may be averted, and a "shift to the idea" may be successfully effected.

Finally, the discoveries of epigenetics, when viewed through a Lonerganian lens, provide evidence that interpersonal interactions may have genetically mediated effects upon the survival and re-emergent probabilities of physiological schemes of recurrence. Stated another way, the manner in which I treat thou, and thou treat I, may alter gene expression and impart profound effects on the health of both I and thou. The horizons of the field of medicine must be expanded by this revelation, and by the understanding that the restoration of physiological equilibrium involves the promotion of theological and humanitarian values. Even from a physiological and genetic perspective, love can deter evil. Modern medicine's "shift to the idea" must embrace this perspective.

## WINDOWS ON LIVING, WRITING, AND READING THE SELF

*William Mathews, S.J.*  
*Milltown Institute*  
*Dublin, Ireland*

To speak [or write] about Existenz, on being oneself, is to speak in public about what is private, intimate, more intimate perhaps than one has explicitly conceived ... It is what the Germans call a *Besinnung*, a becoming aware, a growth in self-consciousness, a heightening of one's self appropriation, ...<sup>1</sup>

The interpenetration of knowledge and expression implies solidarity, almost a fusion, of the development of knowledge and the development of language.<sup>2</sup>

### THE LINGUISTIC SELF

#### **Insight and Language Use**

The blind and deaf Helen Keller has described her sense of self before she was brought by Anne Sullivan's use of the deaf alphabet hand code to the insight involved in naming objects in her world. It was like being

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<sup>1</sup>"Existenz and Aggiornamento," Bernard Lonergan, in *Collection*, vol. 4 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1988), 221 (240). The present paper continues explorations opened up in papers presented in Boston in June 2009 entitled "On Memoir, Biography, and the Dynamism of Consciousness," and in Naples in November 2010 entitled "Self Appropriation through Intersubjectivity in Bernard Lonergan." In different ways they are efforts to open up the chapter on Meaning in *Method in Theology*.

<sup>2</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, vol. 3 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1992), 577, (552)

at sea in a dense fog, when it seemed as if a tangible white darkness shut you in, and the great ship, tense and anxious, groped her way toward the shore with plummet and sounding line, and you waited with beating heart for something to happen? I was like that ship before my education began, only I was without compass or sounding line, and had no way of knowing how near the harbour was. "Light, Give me Light!" was the wordless cry of my soul, and that light of love shone on me in that hour.<sup>3</sup>

What we are getting here is an account of a person who has the potential for language and its meanings, but as of yet has been excluded from its domain. Not only did she have the potential to enter the domain but later wrote her autobiography. Her breakthrough moment came after a time of frustration on the part of her teacher. It involved understanding the relation between a complex finger code and objects such as water in her world. It was for her possibly the most vivid, dramatic, and unforgettable moment in her entire life. Within that understanding is locked up the secret mystery of language missed by the greatest of linguists and philosophers.

For most of us the experience of the moment of our language birth was a process we underwent in our infancy and of which we have little memory. I know of two persons who clearly remembered the first occasion when they made sense of a whole sentence, but that I consider exceptional. As a result being a member of the linguistic community is something we tend to take totally for granted. How could there possibly be anything strange or mysterious about such normal daily activities as speaking, writing, and reading, about the relation between linguistic words or signs that we use and their meaning and reference? As a result the very real but elusive distinction between our conscious and intentional activities and their linguistic correlates in our daily use of language gets obscured.

My own early experience of languages was that there were two. Irish was the basic language of the Christian Brother school through which I had most of my early education, including Euclid,

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<sup>3</sup> Helen Keller, *The Story of My Life*, with Ann Sullivan and John Macy (New York: Doubleday, 1903), chap. 4. Comparable to Keller's eureka moment by the well was Champollion's deciphering of the phonetic code of the Egyptian Cartouches.

until I was twelve. English was the language spoken in our home and everywhere else. The national myth was that Irish was "our" language, our possession and identity, English was an alien imposition whose renaming of the country in recent history has been so dramatically illustrated in Brian Friel's *Translations*. The central drama revolves around, on the one hand, the power of the renaming translator and on the other the destructiveness of falling in love with someone from the opposite linguistic tribe.

The later discovery of the most famous sentence in linguistics by Sir William Jones in 1786 came as a surprise. Considerable in length and composed some seventy-three years before Darwin's *Origin of the Species*, it reads:

The Sanskrit language, whatever be its antiquity, is a wonderful structure: more perfect than Greek, more copious than Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either; yet bearing to both of them a stronger affinity, both in the roots of verbs and in the forms of grammar, than could possibly have been produced by accident; so strong indeed, that no philologist could examine them all three without believing them to have sprung from some common source, which, perhaps, no longer exists.<sup>4</sup>

The question posed by Jones and subsequent work has made clear that all the languages of the world have common attributes which point back to an ancestral language, a proto mother tongue.<sup>5</sup> Celtic Irish and Anglo Saxon English all share a common language ancestor some 6,000 thousand years ago.<sup>6</sup>

David Anthony in his *The Horse, the Wheel, and Language* identifies a strong common linguistic grammatical core in all the Indo European languages running right back to the Proto Indo European.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> David Anthony, *The Horse, the Wheel, and Language: How Bronze-Age Riders from the Eurasian Steppes Shaped the Modern World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), 7.

<sup>5</sup> Anthony, *The Horse, the Wheel, and Language*, chap. 2, provides a fascinating account of the phonetic mutations involved in the transition from Latin to the romance languages.

<sup>6</sup> Anthony, *The Horse, the Wheel, and Language*, 12. Luigi Luca Cavalli-Sforza, *Genes, People, and Languages* (London: Penguin Press, 2000), 164.

<sup>7</sup> Anthony, *The Horse, the Wheel and Language*, 37. Anthony shows how the verb to be

As Darwin searched for an explanatory theory of the interrelation of biological species, so linguistics now has to task of working out a genetic explanation in terms of operators and integrators of the tree of languages.

Anthony's explorations claim that wheeled vehicles did not exist before 4000 BCE. Language about wagons, cartwheels, axels, spokes, horses, bit wear and their relations arose in Macedonia after the era of the proto-mother tongue. In these emergences of what Lonergan termed the direct mode of cognition an oral linguistic code and process was set in motion. Eventually it would result in Euclid's elements in the second century BC with its well-known written definition of the circle. An essential product of the direct mode of cognition it is the articulation of the intelligibility that has been understood in the image in some form of sensory symbolic expression such as words or the variables in an equation.

Within this movement Lonergan, in 1957, drew creatively on the language of cartwheels, axels, spokes, and Euclid's definitions in order to explain what it is that a relatively new and recent word in our vocabulary, insight, refers to and names.<sup>8</sup> What, he asked, is the explanation of uniform roundness? In our imagination suppose the thickness of the rim and diameter of the axel to shrink and the number of the spokes to increase indefinitely. In the limit the imagined image enables us through insight to understand a uniformly round curve. Centrally, his focus is on illuminating the role of insight in understanding the intelligibility of the Euclidean definition of uniform roundness, or of the classical and statistical laws in empirical science or more generally being.

What also needs to be appreciated is the foundational role of insight or understanding in conceptualization and language formation, both the everyday descriptions of wheels and wool and in the technical definitions of geometry and the laws of science. The ultimate product of

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with its first, second, and third person components goes right back to the beginning of the Indo European tree.

<sup>8</sup> It is a central category in Jonah Lehrer's recent *Imagine: How Creativity Works* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2012). In chapter 6 Lehrer holds that the source of new insights is a shift in networks of neurons in the brain. His illustrations of moments of insight are fascinating, but he avoids the hard problem of consciousness studies, how the neural level produces sensations of purple or ideas.

all direct insights is the linguistic expression of the *verbum mentis*, the inner word of meaning or thought which emerges from it and perfectly reflects what it has understood in the phantasm or data. It is this linguistic expression of the *verbum mentis* that remains long after the elusive insight experience has effected its subtle transformation. It is such tangible expressions of the insight and its related thought that enter into the process of communication.

It follows that you cannot communicate and teach what it is that the word insight refers to and names in quite the same way as you can for the names of wheels, wagons, sheep, and wool. You can only understand it through the manner in which it bestows meaning on our linguistic signs; that is to say in language formation. Correctly understanding the insight event is central to a proper understanding of the intelligibility of linguistic meaning in and through the entire formation of the tree of languages. There is an insight involved in understanding the intelligibility of the spatial relations characteristic of different geographical shapes, triangles, ellipses, helices, and the imagined ideal curve. That insight mediates between the pattern of relations grasped in the image and the meaning of the words in the subsequent definition. Understanding insight is at the heart of the foundations of the meaning of language. Language emergence and mastery is the phantasm in which it comes to be understood.

### **Authoring Insight**

On a distinct branch of the linguistic tree of life we find the German Old English emergence of the words, self, seolf, sylf, syllan, proto German selbaz, which so dominates recent philosophy and psychology.<sup>9</sup> An outgrowth of the medieval conscience, the term consciousness enters in Descartes and German Idealism, only to find its very existence questioned by William James at the beginning of the twentieth century.<sup>10</sup> Only after he had written *Insight* did Lonergan acknowledge the unimaginable and elusive nature of the data of consciousness and

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<sup>9</sup> It was also in this branch of the linguistic tree that the word insight had one of its origins..

<sup>10</sup> William James, "Does Consciousness Exist?," *Journal of Philosophy, Psychology, and Scientific Methods* 1 (1904): 477-91.

the subsequent problem it posed for the phrase insight into insight. What I believe was overlooked by him was the essential rather than the incidental nature of linguistic expression or meaning in understanding the data of consciousness.

In *Insight* Lonergan initially defines the self as "a concrete and intelligible unity identity whole." It is I believe the opening expression of what will become a moving viewpoint. What I would now like to explore is the relation between that definition and Lonergan's remarks that as author of the book he was writing from a moving viewpoint. Within that moving unity it will contain a sequence of related sets of coherent statements. It began by introducing insight as an interesting event in human conscious and went on to it as a central event in the genesis of mathematical knowledge. "Earlier sections and chapters do not presuppose what can be treated only later; but later sections and chapters do presuppose what have been presented in the successive, ever broadening stages that precede."<sup>11</sup> Through the process of authoring the linguistic meaning of the text of the book is produced; in the process of authoring the concrete intelligibility of the self of the author grows. It is through apprehending this sense of movement both in the author and in the way the work was intended to be read that the question of the dynamic and emergent intelligible unity of the self of the author will come to be appreciated.

About authoring *Insight* Lonergan has remarked: "You slowly work out what is in your inspiration. ... You write, and you read, and you see something is wrong. You perhaps go and have a little walk and come back and find a phrase that will twist the thing around more to what you want, and so on." The inspiration for authoring the book emerged as a result of his Thought and Reality course in the Thomas More Institute in 1945-46. From the notes taken, which encompass his first ever lecture on the meaning of the word, insight, it is clear that he had a very rough and primitive vision of the project. The word insight occurs in "Forms of Inference," "Finality, Love, Marriage" and the *Verbum* articles. At some point in his continuing use of it, it became the lead word in the title of the book. Work on it would have been put on hold while he was finished the *Verbum* articles, but no doubt in the depth of his psyche a process of cogitation had begun.

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<sup>11</sup> *Insight*, 613, (591).

From this perspective it is interesting to trace some of the developments in his language use in the process of authoring *Insight*. In the *Verbum* articles human knowing was a process unifying many distinct activities. In his Intelligence and Reality lectures it was a structure unfolding on different but interrelated levels. Reading Newman in his Heythrop days and his encounter with Leeming on the problem of nature and existence in Christ left Lonergan with a good grasp of the distinction between understanding and judgment. But only in his lecture notes on Intelligence and Reality do we see him introduce the language of the virtually unconditioned. "Virtually unconditioned = sufficient evidence." Again, in his *Verbum* days he seems to have had a concept of being, but again only in the Intelligence and Reality lectures do we find him introducing a notion of being, the dynamic principle of the mind that holds the process of inquiry together, unifying its different levels. Related to that development he also uses the terms, intellectual conversion to make sense of it, terms which disappear in *Insight* only to return in *Method in Theology*.

The autograph was composed after the Intelligence and Reality notes and in it we see him introducing a further series of linguistic terms. Inverse insight occurs in the opening chapter. In the course of working out the relation between classical and statistical insights in science he makes the breakthrough to the notion of emergent probability for the first time. In chapter seven we see him introducing the notion of a generalized empirical method, in chapter 8 of higher integrations related to the distinct levels of the sciences from physics to psychology. In chapters 13 and 14 there is added the notions of isomorphism and polymorphism. Genetic method follows and the notion of the developmental unity of the human being with its operators and integrators. In the late entry of his exploration of the expressions and reinterpretations of the meanings of texts and cultures we find again the new emergence of the notion of a universal viewpoint.

In these brief glimpses of the process of the process of authoring there is presented a sense of its dynamism, of the interpenetration of knowledge and linguistic expression, and of the growth of the reality of the linguistic self. The linguistic self that completes the book is unrecognizably different from the self that began it. An incredibly dynamic process, a great cycle of creativity emerged in the final stage

of authoring in which all kinds of new insights emerged. In glimpsing this potential for creative and original linguistic development it becomes possible to enter into the core processes that are at work in the emergence of the linguistic tree of languages in human cultural history. Addressing the question, who was the author of *Insight*, the narrative response can be naturally connected with the categories of meaning in *Method in Theology*.

### WRITING THE SELF IN SCIENTIFIC AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Despite the wide ranging taboo of interest in subjectivity in the recent modern scientific community and enterprise it has in recent times produced a series of memoirs/autobiographies of startling originality. In them we find *The Autobiography of Charles Darwin* (1892), Raymon y Cajal's *Recollections of My Life* (1901-17), Albert Einstein's *Autobiographical Notes* (1949), James Watson's *The Double Helix: A personal account of the discovery of the structure of DNA* (1968), Wilder Penfield's, *No Man Alone* (1977), Francois Jacob's *An Autobiography: The Statue Within* (1987), Francis Crick's, *What Mad Pursuit: A Personal View of Scientific Discovery* (1988), E. O. Wilson's, *Naturalist* (1994), Eric R. Kandel's, *In Search of Memory: The Emergence of a New Science of Mind* (2006), and Craig J. Venter's, *A Life Decoded; My Genome, My Life* (2007). To these could be added Kary Mullis's Nobel lecture which narrates his three eureka moments on his way to the invention of the PCR machine while driving at night from San Francisco to Montecito. All, I believe articulate something profound about us human beings, that is to say of anthropological significance.

The preface to a series of such memoirs by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation makes clear that

Yet an understanding of the scientific enterprise, as distinct from data, concepts, and theories, is certainly within the grasp of us all. It is an enterprise that is conducted by men and women who are stimulated by the hopes and purposes that are universal, rewarded by occasional success, and distressed by setbacks. Science is an enterprise with its own rules and customs, but an understanding of that enterprise is accessible for it is essentially human. And an understanding of the

enterprise inevitably brings with it insights into the nature of its products.<sup>12</sup>

It also lists the titles and authors of fourteen works on which it has published in pursuit of a clarification of science as a human enterprise which, as we shall see in the perspective of Progoff and Smuts, will take on a considerable significance. It could be argued that Lonergan's *Insight* and these writings relate to each other as the two sides of the same coin. A central interest for the research scientists was in narrating how the journey to their eureka moments unfolded. That of Lonergan was in giving some kind of explanation as to what is happening in such moments. Each illuminates the other.

The source of such books are the lives of scientists in science as they lived in their historical periods with their university system, various scientific research laboratories, learned meetings attended, books and journals, contacts established, and special interests developed. Some memoirs and autobiographies are composed as a result of an invitation from an external source or a personal conviction, both of which acknowledge the value of recounting what it is like to live this kind of life. Involved is an invitation to allow one's curiosity to engage through memory with the significant events which have shaped the life as such. This arises, not when one is setting out on the road ahead or in mid-stream on a project, but after something worthwhile has been accomplished after the usual dark struggle.

The resulting autobiographies are presented in and to the world as linguistic meanings, words on pages. Each has its own unique pattern of words and related meanings that correlates with what it is that it wishes to communicate. Those words attempt to communicate an understanding of the intellectual scientific dimension of the life of the subject as lived up to a particular time or through a particular chapter in it to a contemporary audience. All autobiographies are answers to the question: what is the life story of X as interpreted at a time t by X or Y for an audience, Z? The scientists have to judge how much and how little technical information to include for the particular audience envisaged. Within the narrative an interesting distinction can emerge between language describing the emerging state of the research

<sup>12</sup> Francis Crick, *What Mad Pursuit: A Personal View of Scientific Discovery* (Basic Books: Perseus Book Group, 1988), ix.

problem in the world and the persons associated with it, and the self-narrative dimensions which describes self-conscious awareness of the author of how their understanding of the problem a problem grew. As with language about insight, the language of the self-narrative seems derivative of the language of the broader narrative of the problem situation in the world.

Many recount the strange and even sometimes hazardous paths by means of which their vocation as scientific researchers evolved. Darwin's real path to his vocation as a scientist only began with the unexpected opportunity to accompany Fitzroy on the voyage of the *Beagle*. The eventual outcome depended on his "uncle offering to drive me thirty miles to Shrewsbury... and on such a trifle as the shape of my nose." Yet his directionless life up to that point has strangely prepared him for the trip. Still, even when the voyage was over he was not assured that his future as a scientist would be acceptable and the major question of evolution was only beginning to emerge in him. Einstein's contrasting path involved an intense teenage curiosity about the conflict in the foundations of physics between Newton and Maxwell. His interest in this problem seems to have been so much at odds with the educational system he was in that he had to become a dropout from it in order to make progress.

François Jacob and Francis Crick were both involved in the Second World War, Crick in a scientific capacity and Jacob in North Africa. Both found themselves at the start of their thirties addressing the question about the path of the rest of their lives. Rather tentatively at this late age both made the decision to go into scientific research. Crick's focal interest at the time was in cross-disciplinary questions, between the living and the nonliving and the conscious and the nonconscious. It was in the course of a failed suicide attempt in Vietnam that Craig J. Venter came to the decision that he wanted to understand the meaning of (biological) life. Later he had the insight into how to sequence the genome. Eric Kandel was initially interested in Freudian psychiatry but Ernst Kris's emphasis on experimentation redirected him toward thinking of mind in biological terms.<sup>13</sup> Watson in his early years became obsessed with a desire to understand the genetic material.

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<sup>13</sup> Eric Kandel, *In Search of Memory: The Emergence of a New Science of Mind* (New York: Norton, 2006), 40ff.

It is one thing to make the decision to pursue a life in scientific research, it is another to find or be found by the specific problem(s) to be solved which one will encounter and personally take responsibility for on that road. What are most likely to stimulate the curiosity of the potential researchers are the known unknowns in the scientific community, be they in normal or revolutionary science. Many argue for instance that the problem of understanding consciousness and the manner in which it is so hugely dependent without being reducible to its neural correlates is a problem in revolutionary science. Known unknowns are areas in which we have the language to pose questions but no language in which to answer them. In this sense these are crucial experiments for the philosophy of language. Equally, the acknowledgement that there are currently unknown unknowns, questions that we cannot currently put language on but future generations will, poses further the question of the transformative powers in the human mind to effect these transitions.

The curiosity, wonder, consciousness of a generation of molecular biologists was profoundly transformed by an encounter with Schrödinger's book of lectures, *What Is Life?* What he set down in that work was a heuristic notion in relation to the problem of the explanation of hereditary qualities. It was, he speculated, contained in a coding within a chemical molecule in the cell. As such it became a known unknown. There was a suspicion that something could become known and come under our linguistic control but at the start there was no specific language for it. The heuristic notion was filled out by Avery's speculation that the molecule was DNA, by Rosalind Franklin's gathering of the crucial experimental data, and by Pauling's speculation that the molecule was a form of helix. This was the world entered by Crick and Watson. What we learn in Watson's book, *The Double Helix: A Personal Account of the Structure of DNA*, was the story of how their self-consciousness grew from a hugely ignorant beginning through a series of mistakes to a mastery of the set of questions to be answered in the final solution. This growth into the problem is a change in their selfhood in relation to the data; not in the data itself. It also involves a change in their linguistic ability to describe the problem situation.

In such growth there are the significant events, meetings with others, books read, good luck and bad luck, by means of which they are

drawn to the particular scientific problem which has been prepared for them in the world and which, so to speak, has their name written on it. Darwin had to hand the first volume of Leyell's *Principles of Geology* as he set sail, the second turned up on the way. Later at the right time almost by chance he was to come across Malthus's *Essay on the Principles of Population* which sparked one of his key insights. Einstein was nurtured by the tensions he found in his reading between Newton and Maxwell. Human wonder is not transformed internally. It is totally dependent on the unsolved mysteries locked in the data of the natural world and the social and cultural world in which it moves and in which it exists as a seed potential. Once moved, fertilized by the problem in the world, it begins a movement in which its subsequent path becomes interactive, sometimes active and sometimes passive in relation to the problem solving.

Rarely on a major problem of science does the eureka moment come without a period in the desert. François Jacob gives a somewhat more explicit account of what it is like to make the journey of what he calls night science:

Night science, on the other hand, wanders blindly. It hesitates, stumbles, falls back, sweats, wakes up with a start. Doubting everything, it feels its way, questions itself, constantly pulls itself together. Where thought proceeds along sinuous paths, tortuous streets, most often blind alleys. At the mercy of chance, the mind frets in a labyrinth, deluged with messages, in quest of a sign, of a wink, of an unforeseen connection. Like a prisoner in a cell, it paces about, looking for a way out, a glimmer of light.... It is impossible to predict whether night science will ever pass to the day condition. Whether the prisoner will emerge from the dark. When that happens, it happens fortuitously, like a freak. By surprise, like spontaneous generation.<sup>14</sup>

Einstein said to his friend Besso after a day discussing the problems of physics that "I give up."<sup>15</sup> Crick draws a very stark contrast between

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<sup>14</sup> François Jacob, *The Statue Within: An Autobiography* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1988), 296.

<sup>15</sup> Jürgen Neffe, *Einstein: A Biography*, trans. Shelley Frisch (Cambridge: Cambridge Polity Press, 2007), 126.

being in the dark in research: Just a single assumption (that ribosomal RNA was the messenger RNA) had completely messed up his thinking, so that it appeared as if he was wandering in a dense fog. "I woke up that morning with only a set of confused ideas about the overall control of protein synthesis."

The accounts of the transition from the night to the day through eureka or aha moments that eventually emerge do bear a strong resemblance to the experience of Helen Keller. Jacob's came while he was at a boring movie, Crick's into the genetic code in the course of a seminar in which Jacob provided him with the missing clue. It was difficult for him to convey "the sudden flash of enlightenment when the idea was first glimpsed. It was so memorable that I can recall just where Sydney, François, and I were sitting in the room when it happened."<sup>16</sup> The account by Watson of fitting the final pieces of the DNA jigsaw together, the discovery of the correct base structure, illuminates Lonergan's theses that all insights are caused by the bringing together in an imaginatively patterned presentation, a diagrams or model, the complete set of the elements that are part of the solution. It is the pattern of relations on the presentation that gives birth to the insight. Sometimes this can come about in a dream. In a later book Watson describes the imaginative content with the words, "the insight that made it all come together: complementary pairing of the bases."<sup>17</sup> In the intelligibility apprehended in the image of the relational properties of the base structure of the DNA molecule he understood that it could indeed explain human hereditary properties.

Through this transition from ignorance to understanding there emerges a new linguistic dimension to our meaning; where before we could not speak about the known unknown now we can. Through this linguistic meaning communication of the solution begins to spread out in the scientific community. But in many instances it is resisted as in its own way it necessitates a form of intellectual conversation. So it was that Jacob encountered initial resistance from Monod, Venter from his associates after his insight into how to sequence a genome. If in her aha experience Helen Keller was born into the linguistic community, with the emergence of new scientific discoveries the language of the

<sup>16</sup> Crick, *What Mad Pursuit*, 120.

<sup>17</sup> James Watson, *DNA: The Secret of Life* (London: Heinemann, 2003), 53.

community is transformed and enlarged.

At a pace that baffles natural evolution the cultural evolution that is science itself overcomes the guardians of the boundaries of the known and has in recent human history been an enormous force for transformation, socially, culturally, and individually. It is in the autobiographies of the key transformers of our scientific consciousness that the process of transformation is set before us. One such agent of transformation, Albert Einstein, concludes his Autobiographical Notes with the comment that he had presented them in the hope that they would show what made his life hang together, his wonderfully intense curiosity.

### JOURNALING THE SELF

Whereas autobiography objectifies a life remembered, journal writing engages with a life as it presently unfolds. A distinct way of writing the self, it can range from notebooks, diaries, unsent letters, and unstructured psychological workbooks to the highly structured *Intensive Journal* of the later Ira Progoff.<sup>18</sup> At his birth Progoff's grandfather, a rabbi, rose from his prayers at the arc and proclaimed, he will do great things. Like Freud he grew up under the pressure of expectations. His early life was not distinguished, his military service in the Second World War being a dark night of his soul. He returned to New York to the New School for Social Research where he began doctoral studies. Controversially he went against the dominant Freudian school at the time and chose Jung as his PhD topic. Freud he felt was too rooted in pathologies of the psyche and was dismissive of religion which was for him important. It seems that Jung's openness to human creativity and religion attracted him. A first major road taken in his journey in search of his unknown opus, it led to meetings and a time of research with Jung in Switzerland.

He returned to New York in 1953 and began a private practice in the course of which he and his clients came spontaneously to keep

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<sup>18</sup> Different journaling styles can be found in May Sarton's *Journal of a Solitude*, Richard McCrum's *My Year Off*, Rada Shedahah's *Palestinian Journal*, and Michael Mayne's *The Enduring Melody*. These arise in response to a specific situation in life such as bereavement, the end of a relationship, illness, or political confinement. For May Sarton publication was an explicit goal.

unstructured journals. Their purpose was not just descriptive, but a form of deeper engagement and dialogue with their unfolding lives. In the workbook all the relationships and works that are important in one's life can be set down, encountered anew and explored. The gathering of one's insights into the situations unfolding in one's works and personal relations as they unfold can occur spontaneously and accumulate. Most importantly, in this way there can be captured the continuity of development in the person through all the moments of frustration, insight, exaltation, "and especially of those periods of lassitude that intervene when the psyche seems to be in limbo." In this way it enables and supports the processes of the psyche in its forward movement.<sup>19</sup>

A series of books followed in which he found himself challenged and learning from but also moving beyond what he termed the analytical psychology of Freud, Jung, Adler's and Rank. Significant in this movement was the influence of Jan Christian Smuts' *Holism and Evolution*. As his life unfolded the young Smuts was searching for sources of insight and wisdom that would help educate him as to how our human personality evolves in our lives. Not finding anything worthwhile in the psychology of the day his quest led him to a highly personal encounter with the autobiographical writings of Walt Whitman. In them he found an account of how the personality of a particular other individual had evolved in the course of their life. Whitman's otherness challenged him to become himself, not to imitate the other. As a result of this encounter Smuts later came to assert that in a holistic horizon the science of personality would in one of its aspects be founded on the study of the biographies of creative lives.<sup>20</sup> Among the categories of life study Smuts lists creativity, freedom, and wholeness or purity.

In 1959 Progoff became the director of the Institute for Research in Depth Psychology at Drew University in New Jersey while continuing

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<sup>19</sup> Ira Progoff, *The Symbolic and Real* (New York: McGraw Hill Company, 1963), 184-85, 205-206.

<sup>20</sup> J. C. Smuts, *Holism and Evolution* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1926), 285, 293. Much of Progoff's work is an opening up and enlarging of the programme framed by Smuts in these passages. See also H. P. Rickman, *Dilthey: Selected Writings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 207ff., for parallel points between the categories of life, meaning, values, significance and purpose, and autobiography.

with his private practice. Influenced by Smuts's insight he began a study of the process of creativity in the lives of creative personalities.<sup>21</sup> This involved going beyond the study of neuroses and various kinds of psychological case histories and bringing information together on the lives of creative persons from past history, modern times, Western civilization, and other cultures.

Holistic depth psychology required as its source data the whole lives of persons, drawing on human beings in all circumstances and eliminating no one. As the work proceeded it became apparent that the empirical data for holistic depth psychology are to be found not in case histories but in life histories. The question was how to collect the relevant information.<sup>22</sup>

Initially as the information accumulated he had no cohering principle that would make it possible to work with the data. Then followed his breakthrough insight:

In reflecting on what was the turning point of my experience in making the *Intensive Journal* program, I am brought back to the cross road of decision that also marked a major change in my relationship with depth psychology. It was the point at which, instead of making interpretative statements about creativity – in which case creative persons would have become objects of my psychological study – I took the path of trying to structure a non-analytical workbook (The *Intensive Journal* workbook, as it turned out) that could serve as a vehicle for reconstructing the process of creativity as it takes place in an individual life.<sup>23</sup>

It was through his subsequent discerning of the main aspects of growth in the lives of creative persons, and embodying these in the form of journal sections, that the *Intensive Journal* originated. Here Progoff is laying before us one of his key insights, the first steppingstone on his way to his authoring of the *Intensive Journal*. Without that insight, the

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<sup>21</sup> Ira Progoff, *Jung, Synchronicity, and Human Destiny* (New York: Dell Publishing Company, 1973), 18. Also *At a Journal Workshop* (New York: Dialogue House, 1975), 31.

<sup>22</sup> Ira Progoff, *Life Study* (New York: Dialogue House, 1983), 25.

<sup>23</sup> Progoff, *Life Study*, 28-29.

book and its language would never have emerged. It was a transformer of his language and subsequent action.

As the focus of his unfolding life opus became clear, a crucial problem opened up for him, namely the bewildering elusiveness of the conscious elements involved in the growth of persons. Constituted by our subjective desires, feelings, and states of mind and heart, at times we are clearly aware of them only to discover that such self-awareness quickly dissolves and is extremely difficult to remember. Constantly operating in us in the process of human development Progoff agreed with Lao Tse's assertion that the Tao of growth is too elusive to be named or to be grasped at all.<sup>24</sup> The psychological cycles of growth move so slowly and circuitously that even when something very important in germinating underneath, people are often misled into believing that no growth is taking place at all. Especially misleading is the fact that the active germination of a growth process often takes place at the low, seemingly negative, phase of a psychological cycle. How are we to become attuned to this elusive spirit of growth at work in us and establish an explicit relationship with it in our lives?

Progoff began with Lao Tse's metaphor that the growth principle is evanescent, like smoke going out of a chimney. We know the smoke exists but its shape keeps changing in the wind so that we cannot get a fix on it in our minds. As soon as we try, it disappears and then is gone forever. The image became for Progoff a riddle which stayed with him for a notable period of time even to the point of becoming an obsession. He thought of it in terms of Zen Koan, an imponderable conundrum eluding our best efforts to master it. One gets the impression that in relation to this problem he was in a state a bit like that of Helen Keller prior to her eureka moment in relation to the deaf code.

Eventually, by exercising and focusing his imagination on the experience of smoke coming out of a chimney, he discovered that he could verbally describe some small aspects of its shape at a particular time and repeat the exercise at a later time. His efforts led him to understand that by developing his attentiveness and descriptive writing skills he began to get a small fix on the elusive life of the smoke. From it he turned back to the elusive growth principle in the human.

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<sup>24</sup> Progoff, *At a Journal Workshop*, 16ff.

For Progoff a life in journal writing divides between the time in it when its subject has no idea as to what it is going to be about, and a time when the first intimations of the life opus begin to enter self-awareness. The writing follows how the subsequent life divides into successive chapters, each being a new beginning, emergence out of what has gone before. Unexpected stepping-stones can be the stimulus for such new chapters. In this sense the life story is of the form of a moving viewpoint, later chapters transforming the meaning of the earlier. Within the life there are relations with key significant persons, works, one's body, and wisdom figures. One's growth principle lives and moves through these elements and centrally can be identified in the series of roads taken and not taken in relation to persons, works, and beliefs in the life. These are the decisions made both for and by oneself. Progoff's choice of Jung rather than Freud and later of authoring the *Intensive Journal* rather than writing interpretations of creative lives would be examples. That succession of roads taken and not taken illuminates the key values of the subject of the life.

With his observation that we can only see our faces indirectly through the medium of a mirror Progoff points to another dimension of the problem of accessing our self-consciousness. Although our curiosity and wonder can as an experience be the most immediate of all experiences, it seems that the manner in which we come to know and relate to it in our lives is through the medium of language. This brings us back to our opening point in relation to insight and language. Although our aha experiences can be the most intimate and personal of all we can only describe them indirectly through the medium of the new language meanings and uses that they give birth to. Where insights enable us to make things and go on with our actions in the world we can only refer back to them in terms of those new skills and actions. The same is true of our access to and our relationship with the dynamic growth principle of the psyche. Progoff's insight was to the effect that it is through the sense and reference of what we write in a journal whose structure is accommodated to that problem that we can access the presence of the growth principle, the notion of value in our lives, and establish a personal relation with it. But the relation between the linguistic meaning and self-consciousness is nothing like that between a face and a mirror.

### MEANING IN AN ONTOLOGY OF THE SELF

In "Dimensions of Meaning" Lonergan drew a distinction between human nature and human reality. Understanding the former is the ideal of classical science with its what and why questions concerned with understanding the essential and ignoring the accidental and contingent. Its goal was universal laws and relations such as cognitional structure. In contrast human reality is constituted by an irreducible concrete totality of acts of human meaning in its inter-human world. This evokes for him a new human science concerned with understanding "not abstract man but, at least in principle all men of every time and place, all their thoughts and words and deeds, the accidental as well as the essential, the contingent as well as the necessary, the particular as well as the universal are to be summoned before the bar of human understanding."<sup>25</sup> The path to a modern hermeneutic of the human similar to that addressed by Wilhelm Dilthey in his "Drafts for a Critique of Historical Reason" is opening up.<sup>26</sup> The question arises, what exactly does Lonergan mean here by acts of human meaning and what might be the consequences for his open definition of the self and the related invitation to self-appropriation in *Insight*?

The chapter on Meaning in *Method in Theology*, without descending into details, sketches on a broad canvas a wide range of carriers, elements, and categories of human meaning. A first part addresses intersubjective, artistic, symbolic, linguistic, and incarnate carriers of meaning. Further parts take up the elements, functions, realms, and stages of meaning. Through the cognitive function of meaning we learn to speak, read, and write a language; through our subsequent education we move out into the worlds mediated by the media, literature, science, and history. Through the communicative function of meaning we learn the strategies of listening and dialoguing with the range of different characters and significant others in our lives. Through the efficient function of meaning we develop our personal skills and master the art of manufacturing and acting in and on the world. In and through these developments there begins to emerge our constitutive meaning,

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<sup>25</sup> *Collection*, 241 (262). This essay is an important introduction to the chapter on meaning in *Method in Theology*.

<sup>26</sup> Rickman, *Dilthey*, 207ff.

our character, desires, reputation, and the sense of identity that is our personal narrative.

Lonergan now goes on to claim that humanly all of those functions of meaning have an essential "ontological aspect." As constitutive, meaning constitutes "part of the reality of the one that means: his horizon, his assimilative powers, his knowledge, his values, his character. In so far as it is communicative, it induces in the hearer some share in the cognitive, constitutive, or effective meaning of the speaker."<sup>27</sup> Through the emergent unfolding of the dynamic interdependent functions of meaning as both genetic and dialectical processes within our lives, our individuation, and with it our life narrative, comes to be formed.<sup>28</sup> This ontological claim has profound implications for the meaning of self-hood and self-appropriation. The human self is now to be understood as an emergent concrete and meaningful intelligibility formed by the dynamisms of the functions of meaning through its lifetime. Self-appropriation will involve an inner conversation between the functions of meaning as lived and as progressively understood. As the functions of meaning have, at every stage of development, essential linguistic correlates, our engagement with those correlates is essential for and in the conversation.

### READING THE SELF

The reading of memoirs or journals, which can occur from very many perspectives and on many levels, adds a further perspective on the self. On a first level, memoirs, biographies, and autobiographies can be read for entertainment; for the joy or pleasure of an exposure to the dramas of life in a good read. On a second and more probing level lives can be read for the manner in which they can educate us about life. The narrative of the manner in which another person dealt with the challenges and problems and vicissitudes of fate in their life can enable

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<sup>27</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1971), 356. For David Carr: "What we have been arguing, by contrast, is that narrative form is not a dress that covers something else but the structure inherent in human experience and action." *Time, Narrative, and History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), 65.

<sup>28</sup> On meaningful processes see chapter 3, "Process and Inner Experience," in Ira Progoff, *Process Meditation* (New York: Dialogue House, 1980).

us to return inspired to the unsubstitutable issues and challenges of our own unique existence. On a third level we can read the lives of others in order to understand in them the complex question of human conscious intentionality. Linguistic narratives at this level of reading and interpreting become crucial data sources for consciousness studies proper.<sup>29</sup>

Albert Einstein concluded his *Autobiographical Notes* with the remark that he hoped they would show the reader "how the efforts of a life hang together and why they have led to expectations of a definite form."<sup>30</sup> In so doing he posed a hugely interesting question: what makes the efforts of a life hang together? Through it he invites his readers to discover how the particular path of his intense personal curiosity directed his expectations in a certain way throughout his life and held its unpredictable self-conscious creativity together. Einstein's curiosity, a spontaneous feature of all of the major scientific memoirs/autobiographies, reminds us of Lao Tse's Tao or growth principle and Lonergan's pure desire to know. Through their interaction with their research problems in the world the curiosity of the scientist is grown as their awareness and familiarity with the problem itself in the world grows. Through its narration in their memoirs, human curiosity, the otherwise unimaginable and frustratingly elusive dynamic growth principle of self-consciousness, distinct in its quest for verifiable explanations from the instinctive curiosity of animals, becomes almost transparently present to the reader. Scientists exhibit a lifelong fascination with the unknown, be it the origin of the universe, of life and later human life on earth, and currently the explanation of the phenomenon of consciousness, which currently lacks a clear sense of what it is in quest of.

The significance of such memoirs for consciousness studies can be missed for a variety of reasons. A prime case is Francis Crick,

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<sup>29</sup> Crucial here is the distinction in the one text between the narrator and the self-narrator which is related to Lonergan's two modes of knowing – direct and introspective. As narrator the author describes the problem situation in the world: as self-narrator their own growth into it. On this see Jo-Ann Pilardi, *Simone de Beauvoir, Writing the Self: Philosophy Becomes Autobiography* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1999), 107.

<sup>30</sup> *Albert Einstein: Philosopher, Scientist, The Library of Living Philosophers*, vol. 7, ed. Paul A Schilpp (Evanston, IL: The Library of Living Philosophers, 1949), 95.

for whose scientific brilliance I have the highest regard, but whose self-understanding is, I believe, misguided. In his 1994 book, *The Astonishing Hypothesis, The Scientific Search for the Soul*, he set out as a scientist to demolish a largely disembodied Cartesian notion of the human soul and consciousness. In turn, as a scientist, he set forth a new hard core reductionist paradigm for the explanation of the human person as a conscious agent in terms of "a bunch of bunch of neurons." As biological life is the playing out of its chemical correlates, so self-conscious human life is the playing out of its neural correlates in our brains.

Yet in his earlier 1988 autobiography, *What Mad Pursuit*, Crick gives us a most extraordinary account of the unfolding in his own life of his intellectual curiosity, his desire to understand and make sense of some of the major problems in the science of his day. In this personal narrative Crick was articulating a modern case study of what Aristotle meant in his *Peri Psuches (De Anima)* by the agent or active intellect of the psyche or soul which was also for him the life principle of the body. As curiosity or wonder, psyche, or let us call it mind, is also conscious. So in this 1988 work Crick was articulating a real case study of the data of his own self-consciousness, not through an analysis of the neural processes of his brain but in a linguistic narrative, his personal view of the scientific discovery. His later position in his 1994 work makes clear that the scientific paradigm of reductionism, which he had bought into, dismisses as of no significance the implicit anthropology of *What Mad Pursuit*. What is significant for the explanation of consciousness is the neuroscience project. The result is that there is a radical contradiction between what Crick claims a human being is in his *The Astonishing Hypothesis* and the account he actually gives of his own self-consciousness in *What Mad Pursuit*.

Similar contradictory attitudes can be found in Craig J. Venter's *A Life Decoded* and Eric Kandel's *In Search of Memory: The Emergence of a New Science of Mind* to their lives. Kandel's narrative contains two distinct universes of discourse; one about conversations between brain cells and the other about insights and ideas. All his focus is on the brain; the significance of his parallel mind narrative escapes him. Astonishing is his dismissal of the marvellous manner in which Kay Jamison's view of psychotherapy enabled her to pull together in

memory so many strands of the experiences of her depression in her life, *An Unquiet Mind*. This he hopes will be replaced by a rigorous future neuroscience based theory of memory. For Venter and Kandel what counts is the explanation of life sought through the neurosciences, not through the narrative. What is happening in these works is a devaluing of the personal experience of the creative conscious subject of the life and the elevation in its place of a current scientific paradigm.

In their different ways Progoff and Lonergan have helped me to a reading of life narratives at their proper level. Wonder, curiosity, the self-conscious eros of the human mind and heart narrated in the major scientific memoirs cannot be explained in terms of anything less than itself.

## COMMUNICATING WITH ECONOMISTS

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FRED LAWRENCE GAVE ME Michael Shute's volume *Loneragan's Discovery of the Science of Economics*<sup>1</sup> and suggested I might like to review it. Subsequently he gave me Shute's companion volume *Loneragan's Early Economic Research: Texts and Commentaries*.<sup>2</sup> They are both important contributions to advancing understanding of Loneragan's work in economics, and I learned a great deal from reading them. I decided I was not grounded sufficiently in Loneragan's thought to write an adequate review, but there are a number of passages in the first volume that raised questions for me as an economist, and I thought my comments on these passages might contribute to the conversation between students of Loneragan's economic writings and economists unfamiliar with them. I begin by summarizing briefly what I take to be the core of his *Essay in Circulation Analysis*.<sup>3</sup> I follow with comments on aspects of Shute's text about which I had questions.

### CIRCULATION ANALYSIS BRIEFLY

Loneragan's basic proposition is that all economies have two distinct sectors encompassing two distinct circuits of economic activity in which two distinct flows of goods and services are produced. He called

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Shute, *Loneragan's Discovery of the Science of Economics* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010).

<sup>2</sup> Michael Shute, *Loneragan's Early Economic Research* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010).

<sup>3</sup> Bernard Loneragan, *Macroeconomic Dynamics: An Essay in Circulation Analysis*, vol. 15 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Loneragan*, ed. Frederick Lawrence, Patrick Byrne, and Charles Hefling (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999).

these the basic and the surplus sectors. He also envisaged the economy as a competitive market economy. In each sector goods and services are produced for sale and valued in terms of the final money payments made to purchase them. The money prices of these goods and services are established in competitive markets. The payments for all factors of production and all intermediate inputs are included in the payments for the final goods and services. There is no double counting. Intermediate goods and services are thus distinguished from final goods and services in both sectors. The prices of all intermediate goods and services, as well as the prices of the factors of production, are also established in competitive markets.

The goods and services produced in the basic sector contribute directly to the standard of living, the production of which is the object of economic activity. The goods and services in the surplus sector are produced to enhance the productive potential of the basic circuit, and in this way enhance the standard of living indirectly. There is a continuous circular flow in each sector with buyers of goods and services making money payments to business establishments and firms making money payments for productive inputs. Each sector necessarily goes through certain phases and shifts, and there are necessarily crossover relationships between the two sectors. All this regularly recurring movement within and between the two sectors is what Lonergan means by the cyclical nature of economic life that is manifest even when an economy is operating optimally. Since the operation of the economy requires exchange transactions and the use of money there are cyclical and changing flows of money, product, and productive factors within each sector and between the sectors. In the *Essay in Circulation Analysis* Lonergan's purpose was to describe all these necessary operations and processes as completely as possible in theoretical terms.

What reading Shute's text indicated to me is that a fundamental point in Lonergan's theory is that the economic mechanism described in the *Essay* is independent of the price system. Although in practice a price system and the concept of equilibrium are both needed for the operation and functioning of the system, neither the price system nor the concept of equilibrium are concepts intrinsic to the system as they are in standard neoclassical economic analysis. Production and

employment are not understood as the determinant outcome of a system of markets and market prices as they are in standard economics. As Lonergan understands the intrinsic and necessary nature of an economy, prices and money flows must be adapted to the necessary and fundamental rhythms of real production in the two integrated circuits of economic activity.

Put differently, the pure cycle goes through necessary shifts in production, what might be called different phases, and the crossover flows between the two circuits must be balanced in accord with these shifts. Monetary circulation must adapt to the rhythms of production, and monetary payments must be correlated with the dynamics of the pure cycle. Thus, with respect to money Lonergan's focus is on how money functions in the circuits of production and sales. Certain flows of monetary payments related to the necessary rates of flow of production, and the periodic acceleration and deceleration of those rates of flow in both circuits are required if the system is to function well.

In summary, if healthy economic life is to be achieved participants in the economy must act intelligently based on a correct understanding of how the economy necessarily operates. They must conform their behavior intelligently to the requirements of the system, to the rhythm of the necessary flows and exchanges. For this to happen the system must be adequately understood theoretically. But beyond this each of the money flows within and between the two sectors must be identified precisely, and statistical measures of these flows must be developed. Armed with an adequate theoretical grasp of the necessary economic operations of the economy, precise identification of all the critical monetary flows, and precise and timely measures of the changing magnitudes of the flows, participants in the economy will be able to make the intelligent decisions necessary to keep the constantly changing and growing economy on an even keel. Lonergan's object in the *Essay on Circulation Analysis* was to take the first step by presenting an adequate theoretical understanding of the necessary dynamics of monetary circulation that must be achieved if the economic system is to work without breaking down. The whole project envisaged by Lonergan is formidable and daunting. It is predicated on the belief that if what is necessary for the *summum bonum* to be achieved can be adequately understood, men can act intelligently and as they ought to

act. It is the antithesis of Machiavelli's advice that in realistic political analysis men should be taken as they are and not as one would have them be.

### COMMENTS ON SHUTE

In Shute's preface he states Lonergan "realized no one understood the cyclical nature of the economy."<sup>4</sup> What this means should be clear from what I have described above. But on a first reading an economist might assume, as I did when I first attempted to read Lonergan's work, that Lonergan had the movements of the business or trade cycle in mind, and since economists over a long historical period have made efforts to measure, understand, and explain the business cycle an economist reader might conclude Lonergan was poorly informed.<sup>5</sup> To avoid this possible difficulty in communication the precise meaning Lonergan gives to "cyclical nature" should be made clear at the start of any serious conversation, and it should be explained that it was the breakdown in Western industrial economies in the 1930s that led Lonergan to the study of economics. It was only after extensive reading of the economic literature on the business or trade cycle that Lonergan concluded economists had failed to develop a satisfactory general theoretical explanation of what might be called the necessary processes of economic operations. Making Lonergan's distinct use of the term "cycle" crystal clear at the outset of a conversation with economists could reduce the likelihood that economists might be dissuaded from making the effort necessary to come to grips with Lonergan's concept of the pure cycle.

Shute also states in the preface that Lonergan "like the classical political economists of the nineteenth century... wondered how wealth was created."<sup>6</sup> This precise reference to the nineteenth century is misleading. In the eighteenth century Adam Smith followed the path set down by Jacques Turgot and Richard Cantillon and focused in the *Wealth of Nations* on the causes of the growth of wealth. Following

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<sup>4</sup> Shute, *Lonergan's Discovery*, xi.

<sup>5</sup> John Hicks has written regarding the business cycle: "We may perhaps date the beginning of its recognition (in Britain at least) to the work of Jevons in the 1870s." *A Market Theory of Money* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 93.

<sup>6</sup> Shute, *Lonergan's Discovery*.

Smith in the nineteenth century, David Ricardo, the man whose name is most closely identified with classical economics opined in a letter to Robert Malthus that he did not think much could be said about the causes of the formation of wealth, and thus seemed to confine political economy primarily to uncovering the laws governing the distribution of wealth among those who concurred in its formation.

In his introduction Shute states, "As Joseph Schumpeter has observed 'Since technological change is the essence of the capitalist process and the source of most of its problems, this assumption excludes the salient features of the capitalist reality.'"<sup>7</sup> The difficulty with this quotation is that it is not clear what the assumption is that Schumpeter referred to. It is only by looking back at Schumpeter's text that I learned he was referring to a decision made by John Maynard Keynes, in the course of expositing the principal features of his short period income analysis, to hold both methods of production and the amount of industrial equipment constant. But, Keynes's interest was in the short period. His question was: why was it that an economy with ample capacity to produce was not doing so? Given this question Keynes's decision to abstract from technological change was reasonable. It does not indicate the kind of fundamental flaw in economic reasoning that the use of the quotation in Shute's text seems to convey. Keynes was not attempting to provide a theory of economic growth and development. He was not attempting to answer the question of what enlarges the economy's capacity to produce in the long period.

Also in the introduction, Shute stated that "As presently practiced macroeconomic theory remains fundamentally static in approach."<sup>8</sup> Contemporary macroeconomists would disagree strongly with this statement. My departmental colleague Susanto Basu called my attention to a 1944 paper by economics Nobel Laureate Franco Modigliani, which is regarded as a fundamental early contribution to the development of dynamic macroeconomic theory.<sup>9</sup> Susanto also called my attention to another paper in 1955 by Nobel Laureate James Tobin, which is a classic early use of a dynamic model to deal with

<sup>7</sup> Shute, *Lonergan's Discovery*, 7, 8.

<sup>8</sup> Shute, *Lonergan's Discovery*, 14, 15.

<sup>9</sup> Franco Modigliani, "Liquidity Preference and the Theory of Interest and Money," *Econometrica* (1944): 45-88.

the business cycle.<sup>10</sup> The most recent edition of Gregory Mankiw's intermediate macroeconomics text contains a chapter on a dynamic macro model.<sup>11</sup> Mankiw's model is dynamic in the sense that it produces time paths of key economic variables, and from this perspective economists do not think of contemporary macroeconomics as just an exercise in comparative statics.

For Loneragan the term dynamic has a different and perhaps richer meaning than economists give it. It appears to have something to do with a judgment that the use by macroeconomists of the equilibrium concept is incompatible fundamentally with a truly dynamic analysis. It would help communication of Loneragan's economic thought if precisely what Loneragan meant by dynamic is explained clearly and fully. The precise ways in which students of Loneragan's economics believe that the dynamic analytical efforts of contemporary mainstream economic theory are inadequate need to be explained clearly. It is also likely that the matter of whether modern mainline macroeconomics is dynamic or static is a different question than Loneragan's related question about whether economics lacks the fundamental set of terms and relations that it needs to be a genuine full-fledged science. This criticism transcends the question of whether what Loneragan regarded as the inadequate macroeconomic theory that exists is static or dynamic, that is, whether or not it takes account of the process in time in which changes in the economy occur. In any event, it needs to be underscored that modern macroeconomic theory is more than an exercise in comparative statics, and that the two fundamental questions about whether macroeconomic theory is dynamic, and whether it possesses a complete set of all the necessary terms and relations ought to be kept distinct.

This dynamic versus static issue shows up again in chapter 2 in which Shute stated that in *The Theory of Economic Development* Schumpeter derived "the basic structure of his theory from the static analysis of Walras."<sup>12</sup> Shute's perspective, it appears, is that although Schumpeter incorporated some dynamic properties in *The Theory of Economic Development*, and although his work was a move toward

<sup>10</sup> James Tobin, "A Dynamic Aggregative Model," *Journal of Political Economy* (1955): 103-15.

<sup>11</sup> N. Gregory Mankiw, "A Dynamic Model of Aggregate Demand and Supply," chap. 14 of *Macroeconomics*, 7th ed. (New York: Worth Publishers, 2009).

<sup>12</sup> Mankiw, "A Dynamic Model," 67.

dynamic analysis, he did not handle the dynamic process adequately. It is worth making an effort to explain the substance of this criticism carefully. It would help clarify for economist readers the distinctiveness of Lonergan's notion of a dynamic macroeconomics. Knowledge of precisely what Lonergan meant by dynamic economics, and how his understanding of dynamic differs from what economists understand by economic dynamics, is necessary to clarify what may be unique aspects of Lonergan's dynamic macroeconomics.

In chapter 1 Shute states: "In mainstream economics, monetary exchanges are at the center of economic theory. By contrast for Lonergan, monetary exchanges are secondary to production. Money must adapt to the rhythms of production, not the other way around."<sup>13</sup> This statement might bring many mainstream economists up short. In classical economic thinking money often was described as a veil that obscured the real economy, and it was the functioning of the real economy that was the economist's primary preoccupation. Some economists regarded money as neutral, meaning that as an equilibrium condition the size of the money stock was a matter of no concern, that is, that it did not affect the real level and structure of economic activity. Some may have regarded the real sector and the monetary sectors as dichotomous with money having no effect on real economic operations in either the long or the short run. But, the important point is that it was the real economy the economists were interested in understanding. In fact, the neutrality assumption of classical economics was one of the bases of Keynes's critique of the classical economics in which he was trained. Keynes maintained that the classical economists believed that what happened in the monetary sector did not affect the operation of the real economy and argued in opposition that a useful analysis of the economy must incorporate both real and monetary factors. This was a primary objective sought by Keynes in writing the *General Theory*. Monetary exchanges were important from this perspective, but they were important because they could affect real output and real production. From what I have come to understand of Lonergan's pure cycle the same is true. Lonergan's view is that it is important to have the monetary flows between the basic and surplus sector right in order to have the real flows right.

<sup>13</sup> Mankiw, "A Dynamic Model," 49.

The same point comes up again in chapter 3 in which Shute states that Lonergan "knew that production of goods and services is prior to monetary exchange."<sup>14</sup> Economists as a group might agree with this. Smith and the classical economists generally were concerned primarily about the real economy and real production with money considered primarily as an aid to the accomplishment of real production in the sense that it was a facilitator of the exchange process.

If the views on money of Keynes's immediate predecessor Marshall,<sup>15</sup> and the views on money of the predecessors and contemporaries of Ricardo, men like Henry Thornton,<sup>16</sup> James Stuart, John Locke, and Richard Cantillon, and David Hume,<sup>17</sup> are examined closely it can be seen that economists before Keynes had a great deal to say about the effect of what happened in the monetary and financial economy on the real economy. Keynes's work has a polemical quality, and he may have deliberately oversimplified the work of classical economists to make the strong case for a new perspective on the problems of the 1930s. Nevertheless, for the classical economists, and even for economists post Keynes, it is the production and distribution of real goods and services that matters. In advancing the understanding of the uniqueness of Lonergan's economics, is it necessary to burden the exposition of Lonergan with a statement that raises so many questions and can be so readily challenged?

In another place in chapter 1 Shute wrote that for "Lonergan an increased use of leisure, not full employment was a more desired outcome for economic development."<sup>18</sup> These words might raise an economist's eyebrows. From the perspective of standard economics leisure is considered a desirable good that is often freely chosen in preference to additional paid employment, and full employment is a condition where everyone who wants paid employment is able to obtain

<sup>14</sup> Mankiw, "A Dynamic Model," 110.

<sup>15</sup> David W. Laidler, "Alfred Marshall and the Development of Monetary Economics," in John Whitaker, *Centenary Essays on Alfred Marshall* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

<sup>16</sup> Henry Thornton, *An Enquiry into the Nature and Effects of the Paper Credit of Great Britain* [1802].

<sup>17</sup> Douglas Vickers, *Studies in the Theory of Money, 1690-1776* (West Chester, PA: Chilton, 1959).

<sup>18</sup> Shute, *Lonergan's Discovery*, 49

it. Presumably a job for a worker who would otherwise be involuntarily unemployed, and wanted work and income rather than enforced joblessness, would be better than time off. It is a question of having the free choice of a job or unpaid leisure. The full employment leisure dichotomy Shute refers to is misplaced.

In chapter 3 Shute wrote that Lonergan "recognized that the proper goal of an economy was the standard of living and not the maximizing of profit."<sup>19</sup> The implication is that economists see the goal of an economy as the maximizing of profit. But no economist would describe the goal of economic activity as the maximization of profit. Many would define the goal of economic activity in terms similar to those of Adam Smith who regarded consumption as the end of human economic activity. Consumption is at least a close relative of Lonergan's notion of the standard of living. Thus, an economist reading Shute's words might conclude that there is nothing very unusual about Lonergan's recognition of the importance of the standard of living. And mainstream economic theory is built on the behavioral assumption that economic actors maximize utility not profits. Maximization of profits is taken as a practical implication of utility maximization by businessmen, especially in competitive situations where failure to maximize profit in the long run leads to the demise of the business.

In chapter 4 Shute wrote, "The scissors analogy becomes a central image in Lonergan's future discussions of method and was certainly implemented in his approach to economic theory."<sup>20</sup> Perhaps it's worth noting that Alfred Marshall, in his *Principles of Economics*, the text which dominated neo-classical economics from its first publication in 1890 until the 1930s, used a scissors analogy to reconcile a conflict in economics between those who explained market exchange value (relative price) as determined by cost of production (a supply factor) and those who explained it by marginal utility (a demand factor). Marshall likened supply and demand curves to the two blades of a pair of scissors and showed that both supply and demand interacted to determine market price, as both blades of a pair of scissors interact to cut a piece of paper.

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19 Shute, *Lonergan's Discovery*, 110.

20 Shute, *Lonergan's Discovery*, 124.

In chapter 5 Shute states that Lonergan "advances his understanding of the price in the context of economic cycles."<sup>21</sup> What price (or should it be prices) is Shute referring to? What does this sentence segment mean? Does it mean Lonergan developed his understanding of how relative prices (denominated in money terms) of goods, services, and productive factors in both circuits would change in the context of the flows that take place within both circuits and across the circuits in the operations of the pure cycle? If so, the discussion of price in the text needs to be expanded to clarify the meaning of this statement about Lonergan.

Also in chapter 5 Shute states, "If contemporary economic theory was correct, then economic growth, defined by profit maximization..."<sup>22</sup> Economists would not use such language. It would be more accurate to say that economists define economic growth as a continuous increase over time in national income or product per capita. In the same place in chapter 5 Shute wrote: "Lonergan admired in classical economists of the 19th century... the value they placed on the creative effort of the entrepreneur and their (sic) democratic impulse."<sup>23</sup> But, where is the discussion of the entrepreneur in Smith or Ricardo? Cantillon in the early eighteenth century regarded the role of the "undertaker" as of great importance. Smith was familiar with and borrowed from Cantillon's work. Cantillon's book was written in French, and undertaker is the English translation for entrepreneur. In German, entrepreneur is translated as *unternehmer*. But the key function of Cantillon's undertaker was buying at a fixed price to sell at an uncertain price thereby taking on risk in the hope of making a profit, and for Cantillon the undertaker was a key figure in the dynamic process of economic growth. The entrepreneur in the role of innovator does not come center stage until Schumpeter's *Theory of Economic Development*, circa 1911.

In another place in chapter 5 Shute wrote, "Advocates of *laissez-faire* used their influence in the British parliament to enact... the Corn Laws."<sup>24</sup> Attributing the Corn Laws in England to *laissez faire* is puzzling. Agricultural interests were responsible for the English

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21 Shute, *Lonergan's Discovery*, 124.

22 Shute, *Lonergan's Discovery*, 133.

23 Shute, *Lonergan's Discovery*, 133.

24 Shute, *Lonergan's Discovery*, 134n20.

Corn Laws. These laws imposed tariffs on the importation of cheap foreign corn as a means of protecting domestic corn prices from cheaper foreign corn. They restricted free markets and thus were the antithesis of *laissez faire*. The physiocrats in France espoused *laissez faire* and removed barriers to free trade in corn both within France and in dealing with foreign countries.

Also in chapter 5 Shute states, "Those who are willing to contribute for little or no return are brushed aside..." This opinion is attributed to Lonergan, but the phrase is puzzling. What does it refer to and what does it mean? It appears to say that those who offer their productive contributions at a low price or free are brushed aside. Why would this be true? The answer given is "to make the exchange system an exclusive system for businessmen." What does this refer to and what does it mean? It is also hard to know what the sentences that follow mean: "Because human beings are unequal in talent and opportunity, there will always be those who demand more than they can supply. Production can meet demand but the equilibrium of the market demands that needs go unsupplied."<sup>25</sup> Does this simply mean that in a market economy some people are unable to earn enough to obtain what they need in the markets for goods and services?

The identification of Jevons, Walras, and Menger as Austrians is incorrect.<sup>26</sup> Jevons was an Englishman from Liverpool. Walras was a Frenchman who taught in Lausanne. The only Austrian is Menger who is the founder of what is called the Austrian school. In the same footnote it is written that: "With respect to the effort to maximize utility or profit, as more goods are consumed utility or rate of profit, that is, its marginal utility decreases." The language is very imprecise. Utility is not the same as rate of profit, and there is a distinction between marginal utility and total utility. Utility is a subjective phenomenon, and the diminishing marginal utility principle refers to what addition is made to total utility as the consumption of a particular good is increased, *ceteris paribus*. In the same footnote it is also written: "Lonergan discusses the laws of increasing and diminishing terms." The reference is probably intended to be to the phenomenon of increasing

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<sup>25</sup> Shute, *Lonergan's Discovery*. All the quotes in this paragraph are found on page 134.

<sup>26</sup> Shute, *Lonergan's Discovery*, 136n37.

and diminishing *returns* to a variable factor as additional units of the variable factor are employed in production with other factor inputs held fixed. Or perhaps the reference is to increasing and diminishing returns to *scale* when all factor inputs are variable. None of this is very clear. Regarding the reference to "widening and deepening in an economic expansion," these adjectives are used in economics with reference to capital deepening and capital widening. All this language should be clearer.

The extensive discussion of widening and deepening in chapter 5 needs more careful treatment and exposition. Neither the discussion nor the definition of these terms referred to in quotations from Lonergan is clear. In conventional economics the terms capital widening and capital deepening are used. Is this what is meant here? It seems that it might be. For example, "An increased widening followed the law of diminishing returns, for it increases the size and number of existing enterprises.... On the other hand, deepening, because it transforms economic structure, yields increasing returns."<sup>27</sup> The terms widening, deepening, and what is meant by diminishing returns and increasing returns need to be explained more fully. For example, is the reference to increasing returns intended to include changes in scale or is it simply a reference to increasing returns to a variable factor without a change in scale?

Other language on widening and deepening in the text<sup>28</sup> seems broadly consistent with the idea that widening refers to the spreading of capital intensive techniques of production to more and more sectors of the economy gaining economic efficiency benefits in the sense of greater output per unit of input (labor input?), and deepening seems to refer to the increasing of capital intensity within a sector and achieving greater and greater productive efficiency within a sector. If total capital to be allocated is fixed, then capital deepening in one sector comes at the expense of capital widening in many sectors, and for this reason I think in the economic development literature capital widening is perhaps thought of as capital shallowing. The question is asked: Do you spread limited capital widely or concentrate it with greater intensity in certain sectors? I think this may be how the language,

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<sup>27</sup> Shute, *Lonergan's Discovery*, 145.

<sup>28</sup> Shute, *Lonergan's Discovery*, 146.

which is a kind of rough "jargon," is sometimes used. On the other hand a reference to deepening and widening and its relation to cultural development indicates that the narrow use of the language with regard to capital allocation that I have suggested above is not what Lonergan is discussing.<sup>29</sup> But then widening and deepening are used in another place to refer to two ways to increase production.<sup>30</sup> My general point is that if economists are expected to read this it is important to be more precise about just what is meant by the use of such language within the context of Lonergan's economic discussions.

Another place in chapter 5 differs only in the language used (basic production instead of consumption goods, surplus production instead of capital goods production, and improve the efficiency instead of increase in production of consumer goods) from the common place examples used by economists to illustrate the difference between directly producing consumption goods and producing them in a roundabout way by first producing capital goods.<sup>31</sup>

The second paragraph on page 149 also raises some questions.<sup>32</sup> The language of flows is built deeply into standard economics, and economists make sharp distinctions between flows that have a time dimension, and stocks that do not. For example, investment in the production of capital goods is a flow, and capital in the sense of produced means of production is a stock with no time dimension. Economists also describe flows of resources into the consumption goods sector to produce the final goods that are measured in GDP, and GDP itself has a time dimension. It is defined as the flow of final goods and services produced in a given period, usually a year, and investment is a flow of resources into the capital goods sector. And economists recognize that the processes they focus on are continually reoccurring. And economists recognize that there are circuits, with spending by consumers going back into the cash registers of those who sell them the consumption goods, and savings providing the resources that enable investment to reoccur continually. It is true that economists lump final investment and final consumption goods together in GDP and do not give the same

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<sup>29</sup> Shute, *Lonergan's Discovery*, 147.

<sup>30</sup> Shute, *Lonergan's Discovery*, 151.

<sup>31</sup> Shute, *Lonergan's Discovery*, 149.

<sup>32</sup> Shute, *Lonergan's Discovery*, 149.

emphasis given it here. I mention all this because economists might very well say that they recognize much if not most of what is described here in the account of Lonergan's macro economics, and it is important to be very clear on exactly what is new and different about the macro theory presented by Lonergan.

Two separate matters are conflated in a footnote in chapter 6.<sup>33</sup> Marshall's method employed partial equilibrium analysis and the *ceteris paribus* assumption, and Walras's approach involves general equilibrium analysis and a substantial loosening up of the *ceteris paribus* assumption letting all relevant economic variables change as an economy moves from one general equilibrium state to another, and I think that Schumpeter's reference to Walras as the prolegomenon of modern economics is referring to the shift from partial equilibrium analysis to general equilibrium analysis. This is a different matter than a shift from a static analysis to a dynamic analysis. Marshall's analysis was a static analysis. His approach can be called comparative statics. He did not analyze the time paths of the variables being studied, which is what I think economists regard as the fundamental distinction between static and dynamic analysis.

Shute states in chapter 5 that Lonergan "develops a solution to the quantity theory of money."<sup>34</sup> What is the problem with the quantity theory of money that required the solution referred to, and what was the solution? Are readers, whether economists or non-economists, supposed to know what the problem is? It's a puzzling statement as it stands. Shute makes further references to the quantity theory of money in chapter 7 but these references are generally unsatisfactory.<sup>35</sup> The quantity theory of money was developed to explain changes in the general level of money prices. In its simplest form it posits a negative relation, other things held constant, between the size of the money supply and the exchange value of the commodity used as money. Since the nominal exchange values of all other commodities are denominated in money terms, the simplest form of the quantity theory states that a direct positive relation exists between the size of the money supply and the average level of money prices of all other commodities. It thus

<sup>33</sup> Shute, *Lonergan's Discovery*, 160.

<sup>34</sup> Shute, *Lonergan's Discovery*, 129.

<sup>35</sup> Shute, *Lonergan's Discovery*, 190.

provides a theory to explain the phenomenon of inflation defined as a continuing rise in the average level of money prices of marketed goods and services.

Shute presents the equation  $MV = PQ$  as an expression of the quantity theory. But this is manifestly incorrect. The equation  $MV = PQ$  is more properly described as the quantity equation of exchange, and as presented it is a tautology. It contains no theoretical content.  $M$  is simply the size of the money stock.  $V$  is defined as the transactions velocity of money and measures the number of times the basic monetary unit (in the U.S. this is the dollar) is used on average during a span of time, usually a year.  $P$  is the average level of money prices of all final goods and services, and  $Q$  is the quantity of marketed final goods and services in the same span of time. Thus  $MV$  is the money value of all goods and services defined as the number of monetary units (dollars) multiplied by the number of times each is used on average to complete all sales and purchases of final goods and services, and  $PQ$  is the money values of all final goods and services defined as the average price times the quantity of goods and services bought and sold.  $MV$  and  $PQ$  are thus by definition identical. If the time span this equation is intended to apply to is a year then  $PQ$  is equal to what is usually called Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Sometimes the Quantity Equation of Exchange is written as  $MV = PT$ , where  $T$  stands for all monetary transactions that take place in a year. This would be a larger number than is implied by  $Q$ , since  $Q$  only includes transactions for final goods, and  $T$  would include all the intermediate transactions as well. For example, it would include both the transactions for the sale of grain by farmers to millers and the transactions for the sale of the bread to the consumers. Only the final sale of the bread would be included in  $Q$ .  $T$  thus includes a lot of double and triple counting.

Building on the quantity equation of exchange there are several versions of the quantity theory of money. What has been called the crude quantity theory assumes that  $V$  and  $Q$  are constants and hypothesizes a direct and proportional positive relation between changes in the supply of money and changes in the general price level. It can be used to explain what happens in hyperinflation when changes in  $V$  and  $Q$  are swamped by massive changes in  $M$  and can be ignored empirically in terms of the effect they may have on the general price level. This can be

written as  $P=kM$  where  $k=V/Q$  (or  $M=kP$  where  $k=Q/V$ ). There is also a more sophisticated quantity theory in which payment practices are assumed to change very slowly so that  $V$  can be taken as constant, over short to moderate periods of time, and it is also assumed that  $Q$  can be below the full employment production level. This version can be written as  $M=kPQ$  or  $M=kNDP$ , where  $k=1/V$ . This theory assumes that increases in  $M$  will raise  $NDP$ , but the impact might fall at first on  $Q$  leading to increases in real production with  $P$  increases coming about as  $Q$  reaches the full employment level.

Then there is the Cambridge cash balances approach to the quantity theory. This approach is connected especially with the name of Alfred Marshall who held the first chair in economics at Cambridge University in England. Marshall had wanted to explain the general money price level in a demand supply framework analogous to the way in which all other prices were explained. He introduced the idea of a demand for money. The older versions of the quantity theory had no concept of a demand for money as such. Marshall identified the demand for money as a demand for cash balances, and he noted that all money in circulation had to be held in cash balances so he posited that people would wish to hold some of their wealth in its most liquid form, that is, money, and they would wish to do this to have money at hand to engage in transactions and possibly for precautionary motives as well. In this version of the quantity theory, the money price level is determined or explained by the interaction of the demand for and supply of money.

In classical monetary theory the general level of money prices was treated distinctly and apart from the question of the level of the interest rate, which was determined by the relationship between the demand for and the supply of funds in the market for loans. The supply of funds for loans was directly related to the level of savings, and thus an increase in savings would lead *ceteris paribus* to a decline in the interest rate. The interest rate acted as the equilibrating mechanism in the classical system. It was what kept the economy at full employment. Any decline in consumption spending would lead to an increase in savings that would lead to a fall in the interest rate that would lead to an expansion in investment spending that would take up the slack in total spending caused by the initial decline in consumption spending, and the economy would naturally equilibrate at full employment.

The quantity theory of money as a theory of the general money price level survives in modern economic analysis, although it was pushed into the background by the analysis of Keynes in the 1930s. The question of inflation was not on the front burner in the depression of the 1930s, but unemployment was. Keynes put forth a new theory to explain the level of employment, and as part of this he presented a new theory of the interest rate in which, unlike the classical interest rate theory, he explained the interest rate as determined by the supply of and demand for money, and then presented a more complex dependence of total investment spending on the level of the interest rate than had been present in the classical theory. From the Keynesian perspective inflation or the general money price level was explained by an excess of money demand for goods and services relative to the capacity of the economy to supply goods and services. This is the sense in which a quantity theory of money survives in the modern period.

In chapter 7 Shute states that "Milton Friedman's monetarism... argues... that the quantity of money can be equated with the rate of inflation."<sup>36</sup> This language is imprecise. A stock of money cannot be equated logically to a rate of increase of the general level of prices. At the least this statement would have to be of the form that would equate a rate of increase in the size of the stock of money to the rate of increase in the general level of money prices. In addition, the statement, "Friedman argued for a strategy of maintaining price stability by controlling the amount of money through the actions of a central bank,"<sup>37</sup> needs qualification. Friedman opposed a policy of attempting to control the inflation rate by active use of monetary policy to control the size of the money supply. In fact he was opposed to having the monetary authorities tinkering with the money supply. His preferred policy was to set the growth of the money supply in line with the expected long-term growth of full employment GDP and eschew all active use of monetary policy instruments to deal with inflation and unemployment. And to say as Shute does that for Lonergan inflation is not simply a monetary phenomenon needs explanation. Perhaps this means that inflation is not merely the result of changes in the money supply, but of course mainstream economists also would not say that

<sup>36</sup> Shute, *Lonergan's Discovery*, 190.

<sup>37</sup> Shute, *Lonergan's Discovery*, 190.

it is only expansion of the money supply that leads to inflation. What also needs further explanation are the sentences: "As we have seen, the function of money is to bridge the intervals between contributions to the production process and the sharing of the products. Therefore, the velocity of money correlates with the circuit of work, whose goal is production for sale."<sup>38</sup>

Finally, Shute says Lonergan gave considerable thought to disproving mainstream conceptions of equilibrium, in particular as applied to the market and to interest rates. What exactly does this mean? He says Hayek satisfied Lonergan that there was no such thing as an equilibrium rate of interest.<sup>39</sup> What does this mean? And, does Shute's statement about the deficiencies of the quantity theory of money simply refer to the conviction that it is not helpful in grasping the role of money in Lonergan's *Essay in Circulation Analysis*?

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<sup>38</sup> Shute, *Lonergan's Discovery*, 190.

<sup>39</sup> Shute, *Lonergan's Discovery*, 194.

## CONVERSION AS LIFE, DEATH, AND RESURRECTION

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LAST SUMMER WHILE ON AN IGNATIAN RETREAT, I began to read Msgr. Richard Liddy's autobiographical *Startling Strangeness: Reading Lonergan's Insight*. I had been warned by my spiritual director not to bring any work: No theology books, especially no Lonergan. But I figured that since the lives of the saints were allowed, it was alright to bring this. As it turned out, I did not get very far into Fr. Liddy's work. However, I did get far enough to read that Liddy named his book after the feeling Lonergan says accompanies the intellectual conversion that *Insight* seeks to foster. Following this explanation, Liddy quotes a passage from Lonergan's *Method in Theology* explaining intellectual conversion:

Intellectual conversion is a radical clarification and, consequently, the elimination of an exceedingly stubborn and misleading myth concerning reality, objectivity, and human knowledge. The myth is that knowing is like looking, that objectivity is seeing what is there to be seen and not seeing what is not there, and that the real is what is out there now to be looked at.<sup>1</sup>

The myth "that the real is what is out there now to be looked at" Lonergan sometimes identifies with "materialism." So when reading this quote, I thought of the passage in *Insight* where Lonergan affirms that idealism is the "halfway house" between materialism and critical

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<sup>1</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 241, quoted in Richard M. Liddy, *Startling Strangeness: Reading Lonergan's Insight* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2007), xviii.

realism.<sup>2</sup> Coincidentally, this comes at the end of the passage where he mentions the phrase "startling strangeness," after which Liddy named his book.

Since I was in the context of an Ignatian retreat, meditating on the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, I thought of how materialism was in a sense a type of "life": a basic, commonsense approach to human existence, in which we focus on our bodies, our senses, and the rest of the physical world. I thought of how idealism was a kind of death in which we let go of the familiar yet problematic physical world in order perhaps to construct an ideal conceptual system. And I thought of how critical realism's hypothesis verified by data is a kind of a resurrection to the body, but, as Christ's resurrection is not simply a return to the same body he had before death, so critical realism is not simply a return to materialism.<sup>3</sup>

Thinking of returns, I remembered the idea Lonergan borrowed from the historian Arnold Toynbee, "withdrawal is for return," and how advances in society occur when people withdraw from everyday

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<sup>2</sup> The passage is in *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, vol. 3 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 22. There, Lonergan calls realism "intelligent and reasonable," while in *Method in Theology* and other essays he calls it "critical" 264; cf. 238-39. (*A Second Collection* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 30, 239, 243.

<sup>3</sup> The resurrected Christ retains many aspects of the physical body he had during his life: He can be seen and heard (John 20:21), can eat (Luke 24:42-43), move physical objects (Luke 24:30), and perhaps be felt (John 20:2, 27; Luke 37-41). But he also exhibits some traits he did not have during his life, some from his death and some from a further, nonphysical reality: Like a ghost he can enter a room with locked doors (John 20:19), he is not always easy to recognize (John 20:15), and his body bears the wounds of his passion (John 20:20). (While the wounds were received during his life, they certainly indicate something of his death. And the fact that he retains them while alive in a resurrected body indicates that they are not exactly the same as wounds suffered during a normal lifetime or his body is much better able to tolerate such wounds – in either case again substantiating the thought that the wounds indicate his post-resurrected body is not the same as his pre-resurrected one. Another reason in favor of placing the wounds in this second major stage of the Christ story is the traditional meditation on them in the Sorrowful Mystery of the Rosary. The Joyful, Sorrowful, and Glorious mysteries correspond to Jesus' (incarnation and) life, death, and resurrection. The new Luminous mysteries also meditate on his life. The fact that Christ's body seems to include some aspects of his life, some of his death, and some that seem to transcend his life and his death, is consonant with Paul's naming the resurrected body a "spiritual body" (1 Corinthians 15:44).

life to reflect on and gain insight into that life in order eventually to return to everyday life but in a new and improved/improving way.<sup>4</sup> As in intellectual conversion and the Christ story, here again was a semi-oppositional relationship between the first two "parts." As materialism seemed opposed to idealism and life seemed opposed to death, so too did the busyness, noise, social elements, and practical concerns of everyday life seem opposed to the slow pace, silence, solitude, and theoretical reflectiveness of a withdrawal. Furthermore, the third part seemed to transcend the previous two as a kind of higher synthesis that lost or discarded certain elements of the first two but also reached beyond them. Thus, as realism was a transcendent synthesis of materialism and idealism, and the resurrection was a transcendent synthesis of life and death, so the person and her or his situation after return from withdrawal was (ideally) a transcendent synthesis of pre-withdrawal and withdrawal. The busy, noisy, social, practical situation was transformed by acts informed by the experience, insights, judgments, and decisions produced by the withdrawals' leisure, quiet, solitude, and reflection.

These connections excited me. But I had to remind myself that they were simply insights, and "insights are a dime a dozen."<sup>5</sup> Still, they got me wondering about this three-part process of moving from a beginning stage through a semi-oppositional halfway house to a transcendent stage that includes and goes beyond the first two stages. In particular I wondered if Lonergan's other two conversions work this way. In other words, are there a "halfway houses" in moral and religious conversion? Conversions are obviously a transition from one stage to another, but are there three stages in all of Lonergan's conversions?<sup>6</sup> If so, what are they?

The first part of this essay is an attempt to answer these questions, and the provisional answer is "yes." There are three steps in each of his three conversions. This part is provisional, because I have only been

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<sup>4</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *Topics in Education: The Cincinnati Lectures of 1959 on the Philosophy of Education*, vol. 10 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 51-52, particularly editors' notes 9 and 12.

<sup>5</sup> *Method in Theology*, 13.

<sup>6</sup> Lonergan acknowledges a fourth conversion developed by one of his best students, Robert Doran, *S.J. Philosophical and Theological Papers 1965-1980* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 390.

able to note some interesting parallels and state some hypotheses. I have not been able to identify exactly what each state is comprised of in each conversion. Provisional though this first part may be, the second part builds on the first. It wonders if Lonergan's conversions interpreted as following three stages can be used as general and special categories as called for in chapter 11 of *Method in Theology*, "Foundations." Here as well the answer is, "Yes," and it is provisional. In order to test the relevance of the three stages as categories helpful for theological analysis, the paper concludes with some brief sketches of parallels in philosophical, religious, and literary works, namely Plato's "Allegory of the Cave," Ignatius of Loyola's *Autobiography and Spiritual Exercises*, Kierkegaard's *Fear and Trembling*, Taoism's *Daode jing*, and Sartre's *Nausea*.

If conversion is central to the redemption we hope for and these half-baked ideas help us to understand and perhaps even promote conversion, the paper will have contributed something to the conference theme of "The Mind and Heart of Hope." At least, I hope this is true.

## **LIFE, DEATH, AND RESURRECTION IN INTELLECTUAL, MORAL, AND RELIGIOUS CONVERSIONS?**

### **Intellectual Conversion**

Let us begin with the passage in *Insight* mentioned above in which Lonergan explicitly called idealism the halfway house between materialism and realism:

For the appropriation of one's own rational self-consciousness, which has been so stressed in this introduction, is not an end in itself but rather a beginning. It is a necessary beginning, for unless one breaks the duality in one's knowing, one doubts that understanding correctly is knowing. Under the pressure of that doubt, either one will sink into the bog of a knowing that is without understanding, or else one will cling to understanding but sacrifice knowing on the altar of an immanentism, an idealism, a relativism. From the horns of that dilemma one escapes only through the discovery – and one has not made it yet if one has no clear memory of its startling strangeness –

that there are two quite different realisms, that there is an incoherent realism, half animal and half human, that poses as a halfway house between materialism and idealism, and on the other hand that there is an intelligent and reasonable realism between which and materialism the halfway house is idealism.<sup>7</sup>

This is a rather lengthy passage that I would like to consider in parts. The first part is contained in the quote's first sentence, which affirms that "the appropriation of one's own rational self-consciousness... is not an end in itself but rather a beginning." This claim may seem strange in light of the fact that the main purpose of the entire book *Insight* – all 770 pages of it – is, in Lonergan's own words, "an essay in aid of self-appropriation."<sup>8</sup> But an editors' note in the Collected Works edition helps us make sense of how the project of *Insight* is just a beginning. The note points to two passages in *Method* that discuss withdrawal and return in the context of intellectual conversion.

The first of these passages reads, "The withdrawal into interiority is not an end in itself."<sup>9</sup> This passage comes in the context of a discussion of the realms of meaning (common sense, theory, interiority and transcendence), and it maintains that while one should advance from the realms of common sense and theory into the realm of interiority, the withdrawal from these practical and scientific modes of existence into interiority is not a person's final goal. Nor, perhaps surprisingly is it an advance to the realm of transcendence. Rather, the withdrawal from common sense and theory into interiority is for the sake of a return to common sense and theory with the "tools," as Lonergan puts it, for better functioning within these realms.<sup>10</sup>

In the language of life, death, and resurrection, one might say that one's entry into interiority is a "death" to the practical and scientific concerns of common sense and theory in order eventually for a "rebirth" to these concerns. And since the return or rebirth is not merely a return, but in some ways a transcendence of one's previous life in these realms, it parallels the transformation of Christ's resurrection into a spiritual body that can function in a transcendent way, such as entering a room

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<sup>7</sup> *Insight*, 22.

<sup>8</sup> *Insight*, 16.

<sup>9</sup> *Method in Theology*, 83.

<sup>10</sup> *Method in Theology*, 83.

with locked doors (but is not quite as miraculous).<sup>11</sup>

The second passage in *Method* referred to by the editors of *Insight* is "withdrawal is for return."<sup>12</sup> Here, Lonergan is discussing how a withdrawal from the world mediated by meaning into a realm of transcendent mystery is perhaps best expressed by negative or apophatic theology. In this realm one withdraws from "all images and thoughts" of God into a "cloud of unknowing," but eventually one returns to the world mediated by meaning and attempts to "objectify in images and concepts and words" this transcendent mystery and one's experience of it. On the page before this discussion, Lonergan mentions the need for both affirmative/kataphatic and negative/apophatic ways of speaking about God. While Lonergan does not mention this here, it would seem to me that the three major types of knowing and speaking about God – in affirmative/univocal language, in negative/apophatic terms, and with metaphors/analogies – maps out well to the process of life, death, and resurrection. Kataphatic language is simply affirmative, apophatic is simply negative, and analogy is both positive and negative.

As part of the fourth realm of meaning, transcendence, this is a very advanced form of knowing. To return to the most basic form of knowing, we remember that for Lonergan, knowing is generally a combined product of experience, understanding, and judgment. A basic (but not easy) element of intellectual conversion is to affirm that knowing is a combined product of these three operations. They too seem to follow a method of withdrawal and return or life, death, and resurrection, since one withdraws from (or dies to) the data of the senses and consciousness gained in experience to come up with a hypothetical, intelligible patterning of the data in understanding in order eventually to return (or resurrect) to one's data to verify one's hypothesis in a judgment.

This, I believe, is what Lonergan refers to in the middle part of the lengthy passage quoted above, namely when he mentions the need to break "the duality in one's knowing," and realize that "understanding correctly is knowing."

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<sup>11</sup> There are many questions that arise about the difference between Jesus' resurrection and ours. Some of which stems from the fact that Jesus had many abilities (walking on water, etc.) during his life that we do not, if we are to take the Scriptures literally about the miracles of Christ.

<sup>12</sup> *Method in Theology*, 342.

The latter part of the quote further specifies that one breaks the duality in one's knowing by surpassing both materialism and idealism to reach "an intelligent and reasonable realism." The materialist emphasizes that we can know reality, that reality is physical, and that knowing is attained through the physical senses. The idealist is not so sure we can know reality. A Platonic idealist believes we can know reality, which is not physical but ideal, and that such knowledge is through a recovery of the knowledge we have from a time of union with the real, ideal forms. A Kantian idealist thinks we cannot know reality, since while we contact it directly through our senses, our concepts get in the way of any direct knowledge and perhaps any true knowledge. Naming two types of materialism (naïve realism and empiricism), Lonergan discusses in *Method in Theology* the threefold pattern of intellectual conversion:

The naive realist knows the world mediated by meaning but thinks he knows it by looking. The empiricist restricts objective knowledge to sense experience; for him, understanding and conceiving, judging and believing are merely subjective activities. The idealist insists that human knowing always includes understanding as well as sense; but he retains the empiricist's notion of reality, and so he thinks of the world mediated by meaning as not real but ideal. Only the critical realist can acknowledge the facts of human knowing and pronounce the world mediated by meaning to be the real world; and he can do so only inasmuch as he shows that the process of experiencing, understanding, and judging is a process of self-transcendence.<sup>13</sup>

As Jesus's resurrected body (1) contains elements of his life and his death (Not only his body can be touched, so can his wounds.) and (2) surpasses his life and death (As mentioned above, he can enter locked rooms.), so critical realism as the final stage of intellectual conversion (1) contains elements of the prior two stages, since it sublates the sense experience valued by materialism and the understanding of idealism, but it also (2) goes beyond these "stages" by adding judgment, which is attained by the critically self-transcendent act of verifying one's understanding with one's experience.

<sup>13</sup> *Method in Theology*, 238-39.

A final example of a three-part path involving intellectual conversion is the way in which Western thought has moved from its early modern obsession with necessity, universality, and certitude to a later modern/postmodern swing to the other extreme with its insistence on contingency, particularity, and skepticism, relativism, and even nihilism. As indicated in the quote from *Insight* at the beginning of this section, such relativism is part of the idealist's affirmation that we can only know our own ideas. Lonergan's synthesis<sup>14</sup> of positive elements from both extremes (such as classical laws and statistics) is found in his balanced theory of emergent probability and his famous, hope-filled plea for an emerging "perhaps not numerous center."<sup>15</sup>

### Moral Conversion

Lonergan discusses a dialectical development not only in intellectual conversion but also in moral conversion. But while the dialectic in intellectual conversion is resolved by movement from materialism through idealism to critical realism, Lonergan tends to acknowledge only two "linked but opposed principles of change"<sup>16</sup> in moral conversion. One moves from (1) inauthenticity to authenticity, (2) irresponsibility to responsibility, (3) drifting to deliberate autonomy, (4) satisfactions to values, (5) selfishness to loving concern for the other.

For sure, the first two pairs admit of no higher synthesis. Authenticity and responsibility are not to be surpassed by a third term. However, there is a dialectical character to one's becoming authentic and responsible. Lonergan discusses the dialectical process of self-transcendence from inauthenticity to authenticity:

Of itself, self-transcendence involves tension between the self as transcending and the self as transcended. So human

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<sup>14</sup> This is much too complicated for me to treat here. See Fred Lawrence's tour de force presentation of Lonergan's synthetic approach to the best elements of modern and postmodern concerns and insights: "The Fragility of Consciousness: Lonergan and the Postmodern Concern for the Other," *Theological Studies* 54 (1993).

<sup>15</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *Collection*, vol. 4 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 245.

<sup>16</sup> *Insight*, 242. Here Lonergan defines dialectic as "a concrete unfolding of linked but opposed principles of change."

authenticity is never some pure and serene and secure possession. It is ever a withdrawal from inauthenticity, and every successful withdrawal only brings to light the need for still further withdrawals.<sup>17</sup>

There is certainly a halfway house in one's movement from inauthenticity to authenticity, but this middle point is our lives, our entire lives, since human existence on this earth is ever that of a pilgrim on the way. There are withdrawals from inauthenticity, but this is certainly not for a return or rebirth to inauthenticity. (Although choices based on an ethics of achievement may seem inauthentic to legalists.) The same holds for the dialectical development of responsibility, since that is simply authentic decision-making.

The movement from drifting to deliberate autonomy does seem to follow a three-stage process like life, death, and resurrection, although such a three-part process is not mentioned explicitly in Lonergan's works to my knowledge. The "drifter" is Lonergan's name for one who has not yet begun the process of moral conversion: "The drifter has not yet found himself; he has not yet discovered his own deed and so is content to do whatever everyone else is doing."<sup>18</sup> To the degree that one makes responsible decisions based on reasonable judgments of truth and value, one becomes more autonomous. Eventually, one reaches a "critical point,"<sup>19</sup> "when the subject finds out for himself that it is up to himself to decide what he is to make of himself."<sup>20</sup>

As mentioned above, Lonergan does not, to my knowledge, explicitly identify a halfway house between drifting and deliberate, responsible autonomy. But in *Topics in Education*, he comes very close to naming adolescence as that intermediate stage, connecting it to autonomy if not to drifting:

And the intellectual crisis of adolescence is the period in which adolescents reject the precepts and evaluations that were imposed externally through precepts at a time when they were

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<sup>17</sup> *Method in Theology*, 110.

<sup>18</sup> "Existenz and Aggiornamento," 242; "Self-Transcendence: Intellectual, Moral, Religious," 315.

<sup>19</sup> "Self-Transcendence," 315.

<sup>20</sup> "Self-Transcendence," 315, *Method in Theology*, 240.

not able to think for themselves. They go through a period of disorientation due to that rejection, and to the need in that period in which they commence to reconstruct for themselves the precepts. They become themselves. Education has to prepare them for this period in which they become their own masters.... They have to move to some autonomy of their own, and they do so.<sup>21</sup>

Here, Lonergan calls this crisis of adolescence "intellectual," but it is also moral inasmuch as "precepts and evaluations" inform judgments of value, decisions, and behavior. Adolescence is that difficult period between naïve, childhood obedience, and mature, self-directed adulthood. It is a time when we typically attempt to assert our independence by doing the opposite of what our peers are doing or what our superiors command.<sup>22</sup> This middle, adolescent stage also corresponds to the aforementioned postmodern tendencies toward skepticism, relativism, and nihilism.

Although naiveté is associated with childhood and skepticism with adolescence, a person could go through these at any age, or one could remain at one of the two for one's whole life, never reaching the third stage of moral conversion.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, we do well to note as Lonergan does that mature adulthood is never completely a self-directed autonomy:

We do not know ourselves very well; we cannot chart the future; we cannot control our environment completely or the influences that work on us; we cannot explore our unconscious and preconscious mechanisms. Our course is the night; our

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<sup>21</sup> *Topics in Education*, 101. My thanks to Caroline Neish for reminding me of this passage.

<sup>22</sup> This is found in the works of René Girard, such as, *Deceit, Desire, and the Novel* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), 269. My thanks to Grant Kaplan's recent paper at the CTSA for pointing me to discussions of this in the editor's introduction into *Mimesis and Theory: Essays on Literature and Criticism, 1953-2005*, ed. Robert Doran (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2008), xvi-xvii. David Eggers comments on the adolescent rejection of authority in his novel, *A Hologram for the King* (New York: Vintage Books, 2012), 108, 112.

<sup>23</sup> Paul Ricoeur's three types of hermeneutics (naiveté, suspicion, and recovery) seem to map out to these stages as well.

control is only rough and approximate; we have to believe and trust, to risk and dare.<sup>24</sup>

Since to some degree "our course is the night," even those in the third stage of mature adulthood would admit some element of childish naiveté and some of adolescent skepticism.

Lonergan explicitly compares moral conversion to the process of maturing from a child to an adult when he discusses the shift from satisfaction to values, a central aspect of moral conversion:

Moral conversion changes the criterion of one's decisions and choices from satisfactions to values. As children or minors we are persuaded, cajoled, ordered, compelled to do what is right. As our knowledge of human reality increases, as our responses to human values are strengthened and refined, our mentors more and more leave us to ourselves so that our freedom may exercise its ever advancing thrust toward authenticity.<sup>25</sup>

In Lonergan's discussion of satisfaction and value one hears echoes of Aristotle's dialectical treatment of pleasure and virtue, and Lonergan explicitly mentioned a similarity between his converted, authentic, self-transcending subject and Aristotle's virtuous person.<sup>26</sup> Thus, I think it is appropriate and will be beneficial to withdraw to Aristotle's virtuous man to return with some clues for understanding Lonergan's moral conversion.

Early in his *Nicomachean Ethics*, when considering various views of the highest good, Aristotle affirms that people commonly mistake

<sup>24</sup> "Existenz and Aggiornamento," 242; "Self-Transcendence," 315.

<sup>25</sup> *Method in Theology*, 240.

<sup>26</sup> In fact, Lonergan mentions Aristotle's virtuous man in *Method's* treatment of judgments of value and other key aspects of moral conversion such as acts of benevolence and beneficence: "[B]y deliberation, evaluation, decision, action, we can know and do, not just what pleases us, but what truly is good, worth while. Then we can be principles of benevolence and beneficence, capable of genuine collaboration and of true love. But it is one thing to do this occasionally, by fits and starts. It is another to do it regularly, easily, spontaneously. It is, finally, only by reaching the sustained self-transcendence of the virtuous man that one becomes a good judge, not on this or that human act, but on the whole range of human goodness" (*Method in Theology*, 41). And later: "[A] rounded moral judgment is ever the work of a fully developed self-transcending subject or, as Aristotle would put it, of a virtuous man" (*Method in Theology*, 41).

pleasure for the highest good. More "cultivated and active" people believe it to be honor. But since people wish to be honored for their virtue or excellence, virtue/excellence is still a higher end.<sup>27</sup> Here we see a clear progression from caring merely about lower goods of pleasure (which Lonergan sometimes equates with satisfaction<sup>28</sup>) to focusing more on higher goods of virtue. Similarly, in his discussion of the three things worthy of affection Aristotle contrasts what is useful, what is pleasant, and what is valuable or good (Bk. 8, Ch. 2). This leads to his classification (in Bk. 8, Ch. 3) of friendship into three types: useful, pleasurable, and virtuous.

Aristotle does not posit a strong dialectical tension between pleasure and honor, nor between use and pleasure. Nor does he affirm that friendships start out useful, become pleasant, and then end up virtuous, although they might.<sup>29</sup> For our purposes, what is most interesting here is his affirmation that friendships of virtue are also useful and pleasant and that virtue tends to bring honor and pleasure.<sup>30</sup> Here again, the third category includes and goes beyond the first two. The notion that virtue includes other (as Lonergan would say, "lower" more "essential"<sup>31</sup>) goods is also clear in Socrates's admonition in Plato's *Apology* to care about virtue and the state of one's soul more than wealth and other goods and his promise that doing so will bring one wealth and other good things:

For I go around doing nothing but persuading both young and old among you not to care for your body or your wealth in preference to or as strongly as for the best state of your soul, as I say to you: Wealth does not bring about excellence, but

<sup>27</sup> Bk. 1, Ch. 5, 1095b20-30. I rely on Martin Oswald's translation *Nicomachean Ethics* (Upper Saddle, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1999).

<sup>28</sup> See *Method in Theology*, 50, for example, where he contrasts those who "have their principal motives, not in the values at stake, but in a calculus of the pleasures and pains involved."

<sup>29</sup> Aristotle actually affirms the contrary – that friendships of the young tend to be based on pleasure, while friendships of use occur most commonly among the old (Bk. 8, Ch. 3, 1156a25-33).

<sup>30</sup> Bk. 8, Ch. 3, 1156b14.

<sup>31</sup> Bernard Lonergan, "Finality, Love, Marriage," in *Collection, Papers by Bernard J. F. Lonergan, S.J.*, ed. Frederick Crowe (New York: Herder and Herder, 1967), 17, 22. Cf. *Method in Theology*, 31-39, for a full scale of values.

excellence brings about wealth and all the other public and private blessings for men.<sup>32</sup>

In a similar gospel passage, Christ exhorts people to seek values over satisfactions and promises that the lower goods will be provided if one "seeks first" the higher goods:

Do not worry and say, "What are we to eat?" or "What are we to drink?" or "What are we to wear?" All these things the pagans seek. Your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given you besides (Matthew, 6:31-33).

This is similar to how Lonergan indicates that moral conversion's shift from satisfactions to values does not demand a total rejection of satisfactions, as in this quote: "[M]oral conversion consists in opting for the truly good, even for value against satisfaction when value and satisfaction conflict."<sup>33</sup>

In Aristotle's *Ethics*, the relationship between satisfaction and value is clarified in a discussion on the role of pleasure in being and becoming morally virtuous:

A man who abstains from bodily pleasures and enjoys doing so is self-controlled; if he finds abstinence troublesome, he is self-indulgent; a man who endures danger with joy, or at least without pain, is courageous; if he endures it with pain, he is a coward. For moral excellence is concerned with pleasure and pain; it is pleasure that makes us do base actions and pain that prevents us from doing noble actions. For that reason, as Plato says, men must be brought up from childhood to feel pleasure and pain at the proper things; for this is correct education.<sup>34</sup>

The first part of the lengthy quote above indicates that pleasure and virtue are not necessarily opposed; indeed, one is morally virtuous

<sup>32</sup> Plato, "Apology," 30a6-10 in *Five Dialogues*, trans. G. M. A. Grube (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing, 1992), 34.

<sup>33</sup> *Method in Theology*, 240. Cf. 51 where Lonergan mentions that it is [h]armful, dangerous, misleading satisfactions that are to be "dropped."

<sup>34</sup> Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Bk. 2, Ch. 3, 1104b4-13. There is a footnote to Plato's writings: *Republic* III. 12, 401e-402a, and *Laws* II. 6531-654d.

only if one feels pleasure when doing what is virtuous, moral, or, in Lonergan's terms, objectively valuable. The second part makes the further claim that being morally virtuous is the fruit of a process of becoming morally virtuous and that this process involves an upbringing or education that transforms one's feelings. In Lonergan's terms, one might say that through education it is possible to feel satisfaction when making choices based on values, and Lonergan would agree that this requires a long process of education.<sup>35</sup>

Aristotle provides a few other details that might be helpful in working out this process. First, after the passage quoted above, he adds that when one is being educated or trained in virtue, a wise application of punishment (or reward) can be "a kind of medical treatment" to help one feel pleasure and pain "in the right manner, at the right time," et cetera<sup>36</sup>

Second, before the passage quoted above mentioning the opposed pairs of self-indulgence and self-control, courage and cowardliness, Aristotle introduces the very helpful, related categories of "extremes" and a "mean." He affirms that moral virtues are a mean between two extremes. Thus, for example,

the man who shuns and fears everything and never stands his ground becomes a coward, whereas a man who knows no fear at all and goes to meet every danger becomes reckless. Similarly, a man who revels in every pleasure and abstains from none becomes self-indulgent, while he who avoids every pleasure like a boor becomes what might be called insensitive. Thus we see that self-control and courage are destroyed by excess and by deficiency and are preserved by the mean.<sup>37</sup>

Even more interesting for our purposes is a third detail from Aristotle, namely that the way to become morally virtuous is a three-part, dialectical process involving two movements: from one extreme to the other and then to the mean. Aristotle writes that human beings are "naturally inclined" (sometimes generally or sometimes individually) to one of the two extremes, so to become virtuous, we must practice acts

<sup>35</sup> See in particular, *Topics in Education*, 100-103.

<sup>36</sup> Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Bk. 2, Ch. 3, 1104b15-25; cf. Bk. 2, Ch. 8, 1109a15.

<sup>37</sup> Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Bk. 2, Ch. 2, 1104a25.

that are closer to the other extreme. He likens this process famously to the method of bending a piece of warped wood from one extreme to the other in order to straighten it out.<sup>38</sup>

When speaking in particular on the virtue of self-control, Aristotle explains briefly why human beings tend toward self-indulgence: "[S]ince we are naturally more attracted to pleasure, we incline more easily to self-indulgence than a disciplined kind of life."<sup>39</sup> Applying Aristotle's teaching that punishment sometimes functions as a medicine and the need shift from one extreme to the other in order to become virtuous, it seems as though Aristotle is proposing a three-stage process of (1) the extreme of self-indulgence, (2) the extreme of self-denial, perhaps involving punishment and reward, and (3) the mean of self-control.

Since Lonergan's self-transcendent, authentic, converted person is very similar to Aristotle's virtuous person, an examination of each of Aristotle's moral virtues might be helpful for illuminating Lonergan's moral conversion. But I believe it is appropriate to say for now that one can see that due to Lonergan's identification of the self-transcendent, converted individual with Aristotle's virtuous person and the three stages involved in Aristotle's process of becoming virtuous, we might say that Lonergan's moral conversion involves three stages: (1) an original tendency to self-indulgent seeking of satisfactions, (2) a middle stage characterized by self-denial and painfully choosing values over satisfactions, perhaps with the aid of punishments and rewards, and (3) a converted state of educated self-control marked by a semi-return to self-indulgence in feeling personal satisfaction when choosing of objective values.

This connection of self-indulgence, self-denial, and self-control to the shift of one's criterion for decisions from satisfactions to values is made more appropriate in light of the fact that Lonergan discusses moral conversion as a conversion from individual, group, and general bias, all of which foster some type of self-indulgence, particularly individual bias but also group bias with its focus on "my" group and

<sup>38</sup> Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Bk. 2, Ch. 9, 1109b4-7.

<sup>39</sup> Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Bk. 2, Ch. 8, 1109a15. It may be important to note that for Aristotle, self-indulgence and self-control have perhaps a fairly narrow meaning, confined to "pleasures we share with the other animals... the pleasures of touch and taste" and even then only some touches and tastes (Bk. 3, Ch. 10, 1118a24-26).

general bias with its focus on what is practically applicable for "me" or my group right now.<sup>40</sup>

### Religious Conversion

While self-denial is likely a key component of moral conversion's shift from satisfactions to values, Lonergan mentions self-denial more explicitly in the context of religious conversion, such as when he writes that the way to religious conversion is through is "repentance, self-denial, prayer."<sup>41</sup> Further aspects of self-denial are contained in this short definition of religious conversion: "Religious conversion is being grasped by ultimate concern. It is other-worldly falling in love. It is total and permanent self-surrender without conditions, qualifications, reservations. But it is such a surrender, not as an act, but as a dynamic state that is prior to and principle of subsequent acts."<sup>42</sup>

Just as in moral conversion, it seems religious conversion follows a three-stage process of indulging the self, denying the self, and returning to the self in a transformed way. But in the context of religious conversion, the second stage's self-denial and the third stage's self-love seem to be intensified. For example, when Lonergan writes that "[r]eligiously differentiated consciousness is approached by the ascetic and reached by the mystic,"<sup>43</sup> he ties such seemingly unapproachable lifestyles as asceticism and mysticism to the second and the third stages. Even more intimidating is a phrase quote above that identifies religious conversion with "total and permanent self-surrender without conditions, qualifications, reservations." This sounds pretty extreme. It sounds not only like self-denial but self-negation. Moreover, in calling

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<sup>40</sup> *Method in Theology*, 240, 270; *Insight* 244-51. For the most part, moral conversion is a shift from self-concern. However, I believe this is a shift from a wrong-headed type of self-concern, since, as mentioned above, the critical moment is one's taking responsibility for one's own self-making, which certainly requires concern for oneself. It is also part of how moral conversion is the remedy to general bias with its narrow-minded, shortsighted concerns. More on this will be said in the following section on religious conversion.

<sup>41</sup> *Method in Theology*, 109.

<sup>42</sup> *Method in Theology*, 240.

<sup>43</sup> *Method in Theology*, 273. See also 289 where Lonergan speaks of the dynamic state of being in love that constitutes religious conversion as being "manifested" in purgative (withdraw from sin), illuminative (about discerning values and committing to them), and unitive (joy and peace) ways.

religious conversion "otherworldly,"<sup>44</sup> Lonergan seems to imply that we abandon not only ourselves but our world, and we abandon these things for something totally other, something (or someone) beyond this world.

In other passages, however, Lonergan's words are perhaps more comforting, as they imply that such abandonment of self and world are for a return to them. The key to this is the fact that otherworldly love and the otherworldly beloved transcend the world not in the sense of being completely other than the world but in the sense of including and going beyond it. This is made clear in several passages of *Method in Theology*. For example, in this passage below, Lonergan laments equally two opposed extremes that mistake the otherworldly beloved (i.e., God) as totally immanent or exclusively transcendent:

Being in love, we said, is being in love with someone. It has a personal dimension. But this can be overlooked in a school of prayer and asceticism that stresses the orientation of religious experience to transcendent mystery. The transcendent is nothing in this world. Mystery is the unknown. Without a transcendental notion of being as the to-be-known, transcendent mystery can come to be named nothing at all.

Again, at a far earlier stage, transcendence can be over-emphasized and immanence overlooked. Then God becomes remote, irrelevant, almost forgotten. Inversely, immanence can be over-emphasized and transcendence overlooked. Then the loss of reference to the transcendent will rob symbol, ritual, recital of their proper meaning to leave them merely idol and magic and myth. Then too the divine may be identified with life as universal process, of which the individual and the group are part and in which they participate.<sup>45</sup>

What one seems to need, for Lonergan, is an inclusive approach. God is not identical with the self or the world, so one should not be pantheistic or self-idolatrous. However, God is not completely unknown and unrelated to us. Nor does the love of God remove us completely from human

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<sup>44</sup> See also *Method in Theology*, 242, where Lonergan writes that the love of religious conversion "does not pertain to this world."

<sup>45</sup> *Method in Theology*, 109.

concerns and activity. As mentioned above in the section on intellectual conversion, the withdrawal into a "cloud of unknowing" is for a return to an attempt to appropriate and express one's consciousness of the divine mystery. And the fruits of religious conversion are not simply linguistic or theological: "Religious conversion is to a total being-in-love as the efficacious ground of all self-transcendence, whether in the pursuit of truth, or in the realization of human values, or in the orientation man adopts to the universe, its ground, and its goal."<sup>46</sup>

Religious conversion is a withdrawal from the pleasures and concerns, the joys and sorrows of the world, for a return to them with the strength grounded in a divine, unrestricted love that counteracts the truncated interests and shrunken concerns caused by the various biases:

Questions for intelligence, for reflection, for deliberation reveal the eros of the human spirit, its capacity and its desire for self-transcendence. But that capacity meets fulfillment, that desire turns to joy, when religious conversion transforms the existential subject into a subject in love, a subject held, grasped, possessed, owned through a total and so an other-worldly love. Then there is a new basis for all valuing and all doing good. In no way are fruits of intellectual or moral conversion negated or diminished. On the contrary, all human pursuit of the true and the good is included within and furthered by a cosmic context and purpose and, as well, there now accrues to man the power of love to enable him to accept the suffering involved in undoing the effects of decline.<sup>47</sup>

Lonergan explains that people get this "cosmic context and purpose" through religious conversion when through unrestricted love, "the isolation of the individual was broken and he spontaneously functioned not just for himself but for others as well,"<sup>48</sup> thus becoming a source of "benevolence and beneficence"<sup>49</sup> who "strives mightily to bring about

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<sup>46</sup> *Method in Theology*, 241.

<sup>47</sup> *Method in Theology*, 242.

<sup>48</sup> *Method in Theology*, 289.

<sup>49</sup> *Method in Theology*; cf. 35, 37, 104, 116.

the kingdom of God on this earth."<sup>50</sup> As the phrase about bringing about the kingdom of God on earth implies, the third stage in one's becoming religiously converted involves a return to love of the world, but this return is not a naïve, uncritical approval of all that is and occurs in the world. When one returns to the world, one brings with it an otherworldliness, prompted by "the love that was other-worldly because it admitted no conditions or qualifications or restrictions or reservations."<sup>51</sup> As Lonergan writes about a particularly human aspect of the world, namely culture: "God's gift of his love is free. It... is the principle that introduces a dimension of other-worldliness into any culture."<sup>52</sup>

So much for a withdrawal from the world in order to return to the world but in a transformed and transforming way. The love of self follows a similar pattern when transformed by the unrestricted love proper to religious conversion. In a first stage, one's self-love is disordered. One has the competitive egoism of individual bias that mistakenly views life as a zero-sum game. The unrestricted love of religious conversion replaces such egoistic, competitive views with an effective concern for the good of all things.

Lonergan notes that the harmony between love of self and love of others is also found in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. True friendship, according to Aristotle, excludes a false or improperly ordered self-love in the sense of self-idolatry or egoism. However, to be a good friend to another one must have genuine love for oneself. If one loves oneself rightly, one seeks the best things for oneself. Since wisdom and other virtues are the best things, genuine self-love seeks wisdom and other virtues, and these things are prerequisites for being a true friend to oneself and to others. Thus, true self-love can lead to true friendship. Moreover, there is a way in which one cannot be genuine friends with others if one is not first a friend or lover of oneself. Since love of self and love for others are intertwined, egoism and altruism are not ultimate categories. However, as Lonergan writes, egoism is in some sense always wrong and altruism is "its proper corrective."<sup>53</sup> I believe

<sup>50</sup> *Method in Theology*, 105.

<sup>51</sup> *Method in Theology*, 289.

<sup>52</sup> *Method in Theology*, 283.

<sup>53</sup> *Insight*, 244, citing Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Bk. 9, Ch. 8. The editors note

the distinction between proper and improper self-love is clarified by conceiving of conversion as a three-stage process of the improper self-love marked by self-indulgence (particularly in preferring satisfactions to values and lower values to higher values<sup>54</sup>), self-denial, and self-control marked by a rightly ordered self-love.

Thomas Aquinas, Lonergan's main theological influence, is also clear in his distinction between the disordered self-love which causes sin<sup>55</sup> and the rightly ordered self-love which flows from the love of God and through God to all things in the graced friendship of charity.<sup>56</sup> Christ's two (or three) fold love command also points to a rightly ordered love of self that flows from a love for God and that allows for a love of one's neighbor: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength. This is the greatest and first commandment. The second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Mark 12:31-32). If one is to love one's neighbor as oneself, can one love one's neighbor properly without first loving oneself properly?

While the unrestricted love of charity and religious conversion admits of no moderation, it is interesting that Lonergan used such language when speaking of another theological virtue, hope: "Now a desire that excludes both despair and presumption is a confident hope."<sup>57</sup>

And while we are to have hope for a future fullness of the kingdom of God, we may love even now the world and ourselves according to Lonergan, because, as he mentioned at the end of a talk, "God's own glory, in part, is you."<sup>58</sup>

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that this text of Aristotle is discussed at greater length in "Finality, Love, Marriage," 16-17.

<sup>54</sup> See *Method in Theology*, 31-39; "Finality, Love, Marriage."

<sup>55</sup> *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, 77, a. 4.

<sup>56</sup> *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, 23, a. 1.

<sup>57</sup> *Summa Theologiae*, 723.

<sup>58</sup> "Existenz and Aggiornamento," 231. Cf. *Method in Theology*, 116-17: "As the excellence of the son is the glory of his father, so too the excellence of mankind is the glory of God. To say that God created the world for his glory is to say that he created it not for his sake but for ours. He made us in his image, for our authenticity consists in being like him, in self-transcending, in being origins of value, in true love."

### LIFE, DEATH, AND RESURRECTION AS GENERAL AND SPECIAL CATEGORIES

In the fourth chapter of *Method in Theology*, Lonergan begins to develop general and special categories of theology derived from the "transcultural base"<sup>59</sup> of his transcendental method and the fact that God's love is given to all.<sup>60</sup> "General categories regard objects that come within the purview of other disciplines as well as theology. Special categories regard the objects proper to theology."<sup>61</sup> Both general and special categories form sets of interlocking terms and relations that can be used as models to analyze, as Lonergan puts it, "transcultural components in human living and operation."<sup>62</sup>

It appears to me that to the degree that the three-stage process of life, death, and resurrection sheds light on intellectual and moral conversions as achievable through means not specific to theology, such as study and moral practice, the terms and relations pertaining to the three-stage process fall under general categories. And to the degree that this three-stage process pertains to religious conversion, it falls under special categories.

When speaking of the use of the special categories Lonergan mentions that "there is set up a scissors movement with an upper blade in the categories and a lower blade in the data,"<sup>63</sup> and this movement is mutually illuminative of the categories and the data. I would like to sketch briefly to how the three stages of conversion might function as such categories when applied to the data of various texts. This application, in my opinion, can generate some fruitful, mutually illuminating insight into these texts, and insights gained from these texts can serve as the catalyst for further insights into the three stages as categories of Christian theology.

First, Plato's "Allegory of the Cave," is familiar, hopefully, to anyone who has taken an introduction to Western philosophy. The story unfolds in three major phases: (1) being imprisoned in the cave and caught up in a deceptive world of illusions, (2) an ascent out of the cave

<sup>59</sup> *Method in Theology*, 292.

<sup>60</sup> *Method in Theology*, 282.

<sup>61</sup> *Method in Theology*, 282.

<sup>62</sup> *Method in Theology*, 285.

<sup>63</sup> *Method in Theology*, 292.

up to the source of truth represented by the sun, and (3) a return to the cave prompted by the former prisoner's concerned remembrance of the prisoners he left behind in the cave. Later, Plato explains the story as an allegory for a withdrawal from the practical concerns of everyday life in society to an education in the truth for a return to society to help educate others. While both the story and the life of Socrates (on which the allegory is based) end with a literal death, the middle stage's education/ascent is also portrayed as a kind of death to one's previous life, activities, relationships, meanings, and values.<sup>64</sup>

Second, Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of Lonergan's religious order, seemed to live the three stages of conversion, particularly religious conversion. At the beginning of his *Autobiography*, Ignatius tells us he was consumed by the pursuit of "vainglory," particularly in military and romantic conquest. In his next stage he swung to the opposite extreme of self-denial with rigorous fasting, completely letting go of his appearance, and otherwise being consumed by his "scruples." Eventually, however, with the help of his confessor, he gave up both extremes and reached a healthy moderation focused on doing in each situation what God moved him to through his feelings of lasting consolation.<sup>65</sup> Such moderation in love of self and the world ordered to love of God is summarized at the beginning of his *Spiritual Exercises* in the "Principal and Foundation." Here Ignatius advocates that people cultivate a kind of moderation called "holy indifference." In such a state, a person "ought not to seek health rather than sickness, wealth rather than poverty, honor rather than dishonor, a long life rather than a short one, and so on in all matters."<sup>66</sup> God alone should be pursued. All other things are to be desired and used insofar as they help oneself and others attain God.

Third, Kierkegaard's *Fear and Trembling* contains a very similar three-step process in its explanation of how Abraham was the father of faith. Kierkegaard comes up with a three-stage process, beginning with (1) a young man who falls in love with a princess, (2) a "knight of

<sup>64</sup> A symbol of this death is the fact that when the person turns to see the light (of the fire while still in the cave and of the sun outside of the cave), it temporarily but painfully blinds the person, plunging him/her into darkness (Plato, *Republic*, Bk 7, 515d-516a).

<sup>65</sup> Ignatius of Loyola, *Ignatius of Loyola: Spiritual Exercises and Selected Works*, ed. George E. Ganss (New York: Paulist Press, 1992), 68-78.

<sup>66</sup> *Ignatius of Loyola*, 130.

infinite resignation" who gives up the actual, temporal, finite princess and loves some ideal, eternal, infinite finite, and (3) a "knight of faith" who loves the princess in both an ideal, eternal, infinite way, but also believes "on the strength of the absurd" that he will get the actual, finite princess given back to him.<sup>67</sup>

Fourth, Daoism contains a three-stage process represented by the Yang, Yin, and Dao. In the first stage, that of the Yang, people want to have control, to be strong, to live in the light. While the Yang is thought of as the masculine side of the Dao, Daoists believe that all people start life with its desires. In the second, the Yin, people need to allow themselves to be passive, weak, and in the dark. But Daoists hope eventually to reach unity with the Dao, which is a paradoxical, transcendent combination of control and passivity, strength and weakness, light and dark. Below is a chapter from Lao Tzu's *Tao Te Ching*, the primary source of Daoist scripture:

Know the masculine, keep to the feminine, and be a Brook of the World. To be a Brook of the World is to move constantly in the path of Virtue without swerving from it, and to return again to infancy.

Know the white, keep to the black, and be the Pattern of the World. To be the Pattern of the World, is to move constantly in the path of Virtue without erring a single step, and to return again to the Infinite.

Know the glorious, keep to the lowly, and be the Fountain of the World. To be the Fountain of the World is to be the abundant life of Virtue and to return again to Primal Simplicity. When Primal Simplicity diverges it becomes useful vessels, which in the hands of the sage become officers. Hence, a great tailor does little cutting.<sup>68</sup>

The three stages are represented in each stanza. The Yang is masculine, white, and glorious. People are advised to "know" the Yang, but to "keep

67 Søren Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling*, trans. Alastair Hannay (London: Penguin Books, 1985). The theme is found throughout the book but particularly on pages 66-82.

68 Lao Tzu, *Tao Teh Ching*, trans. John C. H. Wu (Boston: Shambhala Press, 1990), chap. 28.

to" the Yin, which is feminine, black, and lowly. For if one does this, one will reach unity with the Dao and become a source of goodness for the world.

Fifth, in Sartre's *Nausea*, the main character, Roquetin, exhibits his three-stage conversion of life, death, and resurrection. But, interestingly, the book begins when Roquetin is in his second stage. For the majority of the book he is in a very melancholy, selfish, nihilistic, and even hateful phase in which all is mundane, meaningless, or even nauseating. The reader eventually learns that Roquetin was not always this way. His current condition is his response to being painfully dumped by a woman he loved "with all his heart."<sup>69</sup> But at the peak of his hatred and nausea, when having dinner with the "Self-Taught Man" (with whom he is most like but whom he most hates), Roquetin is confronted with the possibility of genuine love for humanity, stumbles out of the restaurant into the presence of a great chestnut tree, and has a transcendent experience of oneness with an unknowable universe. With this experience, he begins to enter into a third stage in which he is again able to love and hope as demonstrated by his spontaneous coming to the aid of the Self-Taught Man and his desire to make others happy with his writing as he was made happy by the singer of the song, "Some of These Days."

## CONCLUSION

If intellectual conversion is a three-stage process of materialism, idealism, and critical realism, and the story of Jesus is three-stage process of life, death, and resurrection, then do moral and religious conversions follow such a process? If so, can this three-stage process function as general and special categories helpful in theology's quest for fruitful understanding in service of furthering the reign of God? I believe the answer to these questions is, Yes, and I hope this paper has provided some evidence to support this.

Now I would like to conclude with a pastoral warning and a note of hope. The warning is that three stages are ideal types. They are abstract categories like gravity or perhaps more fittingly, like the three differentials that comprise Lonergan's dialectical analysis of history:

<sup>69</sup> Jean-Paul Sartre, *Nausea* (New York: New Directions Publishing Co. 1969), 63.

progress, decline, and redemption. Just as nothing falls at nine point eight meters per second square and nothing or no one is comprised simply of nature, sin, or grace, progress, decline, or redemption, I believe it would be a mistake to apply the three-stage process heavily-handedly to one's own life or others. Since no one is fully converted, no one has made it fully to the third stage of each conversion, and we may feel comforted yet urged onward by the fact that we remain ever on the way, continually undergoing some measure of life, death, and resurrection. As Lonergan writes,

Of itself, self-transcendence involves tension between the self as transcending and the self as transcended. So human authenticity is never some pure and serene and secure possession. It is ever a withdrawal from unauthenticity, and every successful withdrawal only brings to light the need for still further withdrawals. Our advance in understanding is also the elimination of oversights and misunderstandings. Our advance in truth is also the correction of mistakes and errors. Our moral development is through repentance for our sins. Genuine religion is discovered and realized by redemption from the many traps of religious aberration. So we are bid to watch and pray, to make our way in fear and trembling. And it is the greatest saints that proclaim themselves the greatest sinners, though their sins seem slight indeed to less holy folk that lack their discernment and their love.<sup>70</sup>

But as we make our way in fear and trembling, as we watch, pray, and repent our sins, let us have hope that while life leads to death, death leads to life, after creation came the fall, but after the fall, comes redemption.

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<sup>70</sup> *Method in Theology*, 110.

## THE STATE OF GRACE AND THE LAW OF THE CROSS: FURTHER INSIGHTS INTO LONERAGAN FROM RENÉ GIRARD

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LONERAGAN'S THEOLOGICAL BREAKTHROUGHS in both Trinitarian theology and Christology involve explorations of the social and cultural consequences of the missions of the Son and the Spirit, under the headings of "the state of grace" in *De Deo Trino* and "the law of the cross" in *De Verbo Incarnato*. The state of grace is the human social situation given the two missions, while the Law of the Cross proposes an understanding of redemption and reconciliation leading, in accordance with God's wisdom, to the existence of a reconciling community in history. Lonergan's proposal in both cases needs to be transposed fully into the categories of intentionality analysis; this cannot be done here, but after presenting Lonergan's argument I hope to propose some ways forward with the help of categories borrowed from the work of René Girard, and in this way contribute to the reorientation of social and political philosophy, as well as to the dialogue between religion and the human sciences.

### THE STATE OF GRACE

Question 32 of *The Triune God: Systematics* asks: Is it by way of love that the divine persons are in the just and dwell in them? For Lonergan, there is "clearly a mutual 'being in' that implies not only the uncreated gift of God but also our acts," so that "through the grace that renders us pleasing, God is in the just as the knower is in the known and the

beloved in the lover."<sup>1</sup> Lonergan proposes to understand this reality by means of the notion of "presence," understood as a question of "psychic adaptation." In animals, this psychic adaptation is the result of spatial proximity triggering immediate sense experience. This form of presence also belongs to humans; because humans proceed by way of intellect however, their sensibility has a greater freedom: "Hence, if presence consists in a certain psychic adaptation, we must distinguish two kinds of presence in humans, one that results from spatial proximity and another that is based upon the very freedom of human sensibility" in memory, feeling, and imagination.<sup>2</sup>

Beyond presence as rooted in sensibility, presence in humans also includes the operations of knowing and willing that are proper to all persons, whether human or divine. Thus, we speak of the personal presence whereby "that which is known is in the knower with an intentional existence" and "what is loved is joined and united to the lover, as the poet says about his friend being 'half of my soul'.<sup>3</sup> The many acts that constitute knowing a person are also the foundation of a habit of knowing, and the many acts of loving by which we are led to our beloved must be rooted in a habit of loving if they are to constitute a genuine union and not mere events of limerance. "We understand personal presence, therefore," continues Lonergan, "on the basis of acts, but in such a way that the acts have their foundation in habits" that produce "that frequency [of acts] that generally results from habits."<sup>4</sup> This can be better understood in light of the elements that make up a genuine good of order, that is, persons, interpersonal relationships, cognitive and appetitive habits, many coordinated operations among many persons, and a succession and series of organically interconnected particular goods.<sup>5</sup> Personal presence, given these elements, is understood to come about when "persons, pursuing a common good of order, are mutually in one another as the known is in

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<sup>1</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics*, vol. 12 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, ed. Robert M. Doran and H. Daniel Monsour (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 503.

<sup>2</sup> *The Triune God*, 503.

<sup>3</sup> *The Triune God*, 505.

<sup>4</sup> *The Triune God*, 505.

<sup>5</sup> *The Triune God*, 505.

the knower and the beloved is in the lover."<sup>6</sup>

Loneragan then turns to a consideration of how this personal presence obtains in the life of the Trinity, by means of an analogy from friendship: "by the very fact that a friend is loved, there results a quasi-identification of the friend with the lover... For friends who pursue a common good of order, work together in an orderly way, and enjoy a succession of particular goods, are so far from living each one for himself or herself that they may rather be said to have one life in common."<sup>7</sup> The Son and the Spirit proceed in God on the analogy of knowing and loving in us, but each person in the Trinity also knows and loves the others by their common operations of knowing and loving, so that, on the analogy of friendship, "those whose being and understanding and knowing and loving are one and the same and are indeed that which they themselves are, are in one another in the most perfect way."<sup>8</sup> Thus *perichoresis* is to be understood not just at the level of being, but also as the Father, Son, and Spirit knowing and loving each other perfectly by one and the same knowing and loving.

All created things are known and loved by God, not according to the consubstantiality of persons but according to intentional existence and the quasi-identification of love. Some creatures, graced human beings, are known and loved in a special way, and "those who are loved and known in this special way are also seen to be present in God in a special way as the known is in the knower and the beloved in the lover. Therefore they are in a special way in the divine Word in which God the Father utters himself and all other things; and in a special way they are in the divine proceeding Love in which God the Father and God the Son love both themselves and all other things as well."<sup>9</sup>

This mutual indwelling leads us from a proportionate knowing and loving, with its sensitive, memorial, and imaginative concomitants, to a supernatural knowing and loving such that "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

<sup>6</sup> *The Triune God*, 507. Note that this, interestingly, is a basic definition of the Ignatian "friendship in the Lord" that characterizes the writings of the founders of the Society of Jesus.

<sup>7</sup> *The Triune God*, 507.

<sup>8</sup> *The Triune God*, 507.

<sup>9</sup> *The Triune God*, 509.

of holiness."<sup>10</sup> This mutual indwelling is a divine-human interpersonal situation, the state of grace. Lonergan unfolds his understanding of this state or situation of grace in a series of steps as follows:

1. The indwelling is better known in acts,
2. BUT, the discontinuity of acts does not terminate the indwelling;
3. SO, though "the nature of the indwelling can be better understood in each person the more he or she lives not for himself of herself but for Christ, abides in Christ, and is in the Spirit, [still] the fact of indwelling is not to be denied on the grounds that it is not seen by human eyes...."<sup>11</sup>
4. In the same way that the indwelling is understood on the basis of acts in such a way that the acts have foundations in habits producing that frequency of acts proper to them,
5. SO there is a state or situation of grace that refers to many subjects taken together and constitutes a divine-human interpersonal situation: "In accordance with this state the divine persons and the just 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 state, of course, exists more in acts and is better known in acts, yet it does not cease to exist solely because of a temporary cessation of the acts."<sup>12</sup>

This state or situation of grace, while it is always in second act on the part of the divine persons, is in the just in first act "so that under divine influence it may readily issue into second act, according to the degree of perfection of the just person."<sup>13</sup> The state or situation of grace is a genuine and genuinely new order of interpersonal intelligibility "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."<sup>14</sup>

<sup>10</sup> *The Triune God*, 513.

<sup>11</sup> *The Triune God*, 515.

<sup>12</sup> *The Triune God*, 517.

<sup>13</sup> *The Triune God*, 519.

<sup>14</sup> *The Triune God*, 511.

### TRANSPOSITION: MUTUAL SELF-MEDIATION

Lonergan's account of the state of grace in *The Triune God* remains tied to certain elements of faculty psychology which need transposition. A starting point for this transposition, I want to suggest, is the notion of mutual self-mediation, as Lonergan develops it in his 1963 lecture "The Mediation of Christ in Prayer."

The lecture approaches the notion of mutual self-mediation by means of a series of steps. The first step is to understand what Lonergan calls "mutual mediation." In a watch, the balance wheel is a center of immediacy controlling all other parts of the watch as well as itself; in the same watch, the mainspring is a center of immediacy moving itself and all other parts, including the balance wheel. Control and movement spring from different centers of immediacy whose mediations overlap, resulting in a functional whole: "If you do not have a principle of movement your watch is not going; if you do not have a principle of control it does not keep time.... When you have this mutual mediation, you have the functional whole; it closes in on itself. So a watch is not merely a material whole, a case and what is inside the case; it is also a functional whole. There are different centers of immediacy, and their mediation spreads through the other centers. The two immediate functions mediate each other."<sup>15</sup>

There are examples of mutual mediation in living organisms, but with the emergence of living organisms a new form of mediation also emerges, that of self-mediation, where "a whole.... has consequences that change the whole."<sup>16</sup> All living organisms self-mediate by means of physical parts: cell division, biological growth, the emergence of new stages of life prepared by prior stages in the development of the organism, are all examples of self-mediation by physical parts.<sup>17</sup> Lonergan calls this first form of self mediation a "displacement upwards."

There is another form of self-mediation appropriate to conscious organisms, which Lonergan calls a "displacement inwards, which is consciousness." Unlike plants, animals intend objects and in so doing mediate themselves: "the animal is an organism but it is also

<sup>15</sup> Bernard Lonergan, "The Mediation of Christ in Prayer," in *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1958-64* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 165.

<sup>16</sup> "The Mediation of Christ," 167.

<sup>17</sup> "The Mediation of Christ," 167-68.

conscious. It moves within the intentional order, and just as the self-mediation that constitutes the growth or development of the organism involves a displacement upwards, so the intentional order involves a displacement inwards to the subject of consciousness. It also involves a displacement outwards. The tree can respond only to things that act upon it, but the animal can respond to anything it perceives, to anything it apprehends."<sup>18</sup>

The human being's mediation of self by self-consciousness is of particular relevance here: "Human development is the mediation of autonomy.... [The] development that reaches its goal in the existential decision and in fidelity to that decision is the emergence of the autonomous subject."<sup>19</sup> This development occurs in two stages or times of the subject. The first time is concerned with objects and what to do with them and about them. But "this process of dealing with objects makes one what one is.... There is that reflective moment in which one discovers that one is not merely dealing with objects but also making oneself. There arises the question of finding out for oneself what one is to make of oneself, of deciding for oneself what one is to be, of living in fidelity to one's decisions."<sup>20</sup> Such an existential moment constitutes the second period of self-mediation. One mediates oneself to oneself and to the world by one's living.

It is thus that we can approach an understanding of mutual self-mediation: "One reveals one's self-discovery and commitment to another, and receives the self-revelation of the other. One opens oneself to be influenced at the depths of one's being, and others open themselves to be influenced by us."<sup>21</sup> Mutual self-mediation lies in the immediate interpersonal situation of living relations between friend and friend, fathers and sons, mothers and daughters, husbands and wives, between fellow students, between employer and employee. The fact is that existential decision "occurs in community, in love, in loyalty, in faith.... One's self-discovery and self-commitment is one's own secret. It is not a natural property that you can predicate of all the individuals in a class.... In the process from extroversion, from being poured out on

<sup>18</sup> "The Mediation of Christ," 170.

<sup>19</sup> "The Mediation of Christ," 171.

<sup>20</sup> "The Mediation of Christ," 171.

<sup>21</sup> "The Mediation of Christ," 174.

objects, to existential self commitment, to fidelity, to a destiny, we are not Leibnizian monads with neither doors nor windows. We are open to the influence of others and others are open to influence from us."<sup>22</sup>

Loneragan's methodological shift to mutual self-mediation is very suggestive for a new understanding of the notion of presence so central to the presentation of the state or situation of grace. It is easy to see how, in the context of mutual self-mediation and intentionality analysis, we can understand how the known is in the knower and the beloved in the lover: "one opens oneself to be influenced at the depths of one's being." More difficult, it seems to me, is to effect this transposition so as not to lose the elements of presence as rooted in sensibility. The work of Bob Doran on the aesthetic-dramatic operator has significantly "thickened" our understanding of the link between intentional consciousness and psyche. I propose that the work of René Girard can assist us further precisely in understanding presence as the psychic adaptation based upon human sensibility in its imaginative, memorial, and affective dimensions. Girard's understanding of interdividuality is our starting point.

### INTERDIVIDUALITY

James Williams offers a very helpful synoptic definition of Girard's notion of "interdividuality" in his translator's footnote on page 137 of *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning*: "We are constituted by the other, that is, by parents, authority figures, peers, rivals whom we internalize as models and who become the unconscious basis of our desires. This does not mean that freedom of the will is not possible. Humankind as created in the image of God is not intended to be identical to the other or exist in slavish subservience to the other. However, since we learn first and primarily through mimesis, our freedom depends on being constituted by the other."<sup>23</sup> The fact of interdividuality, then, is linked to mimetic desire: desire is not objective or subjective in the sense assumed by modern thinkers, "but in reality it rests on a third party who gives value to the objects."<sup>24</sup> When Girard first brought this mechanism to light, he was criticized for linking it too closely to conflict. Since then, he has

<sup>22</sup> "The Mediation of Christ," 174-75.

<sup>23</sup> René Girard, *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning* (Toronto: Novalis, 2001), 137n2.

<sup>24</sup> Girard, *I See Satan*, 9.

clarified that "mimetic desire does not always result in conflict."<sup>25</sup> Not all models become rivals, because in some cases the distance between my model and myself negates the possibility of genuine rivalry. Only when the effect of social, cultural, or geographical distance is less significant does conflict become a possibility: my neighbor, the one who is closest to me, is also the one with whom I enter into conflict, for "if imitation of the neighbour's desire engenders rivalry, rivalry in turn engenders imitation."<sup>26</sup>

In *I See Satan*.... Girard makes very clear that mimesis also works for good: in imitating the desire of Jesus, we turn away from mimetic rivalries.<sup>27</sup> Jesus of Nazareth's identity, unlike other human identities, is not constituted by mimetic conflict, since he is Word made flesh, perfect Image of the Father. Jesus' human desiring can never become conflictual with God's because the Father's desiring is as far removed from Jesus' human desiring as Creator from creature, and because the Father's desiring is not fixed on an object, but is the completely free desiring of the creature's good. Jesus' desiring is fixed on imitating the Father "as much as possible.... His goal is to become the perfect image of God. Therefore he commits all his powers to imitating his Father."<sup>28</sup> Jesus seeks to be "detached generosity" – Girard's phrase to mean the completely free desiring of the creature's good – made flesh. We are caught up mimetically in the presence of this desiring of Jesus, and we desire also to be and to practice the detached generosity of the Father mediated to us by the desiring of Jesus. It is in imitating God's detached generosity that we ensure that "the trap of mimetic rivalries will never close over us."<sup>29</sup>

The later Girard also affirms very clearly the intrinsic openness of mimetic desire, which is precisely the structure that liberates human beings from instinct: "Once their natural needs are satisfied, humans desire intensely, but they don't know exactly what they desire, for no

<sup>25</sup> Girard, *I See Satan*, 10.

<sup>26</sup> Girard, *I See Satan*, 10.

<sup>27</sup> What follows is reconstructed from a number of sources that span Girard's development. Girard, like Augustine, is a "thinker on the move," and what I have done here is try to pull together a coherent account of positions found in a number of texts. The most helpful resource here may be *The Girard Reader* (New York: Crossroads-Herder, 1996).

<sup>28</sup> Girard, *I See Satan*, 13.

<sup>29</sup> Girard, *I See Satan*, 14.

instinct guides them. We do not each have our own desire, one really our own. The essence of desire is to have no essential goal. Truly to desire, we must have recourse to people about us; we have to borrow their desires."<sup>30</sup>

The human-divine interpersonal situation designated by the state or situation of grace, inasmuch as it involves psychic adaptation in human sensibility, must be such that not only is the knower in the known and the beloved in the lover, but also such that my desiring moves through the detached generosity of Jesus, and is thus caught up in and imitative of the detached generosity of the Father mediated to me in Jesus the Christ. We are thus brought to the question of the Law of the Cross by which God brings about this new interdividual reality.

### THE LAW OF THE CROSS

Lonergan's theology of the cross undergoes development as he moves from a more scholastic to a more historical framework and method. The basic insights into the meaning and purpose of the cross achieved in his *De Verbo Incarnato*, however, continue to hold throughout his development. Thesis seventeen, on the "just and mysterious Law of the Cross," reads as follows: "This is why the Son of God became man, suffered, died and was raised again: because divine wisdom has ordained and divine goodness has willed, not to eliminate the evils of the human race by force, but to convert those evils into a highest good according to the just and mysterious Law of the Cross."<sup>31</sup> This position is rooted in Lonergan's creative appropriation of a series of developments in the theological tradition, which we can present here as a series of disjunctions representing key choices made by key authors in the history of Christian thought.

The first step is taken decisively by Augustine in book thirteen of the *De Trinitate*: this first disjunction can be termed justice rather than power. Augustine shows that on the cross, God chooses not to beat Satan at the power game, though well he could. The proper order for

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<sup>30</sup> Girard, *I See Satan*, 15.

<sup>31</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *De Verbo Incarnato*, 3rd ed. (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1964), 552. The English text is from the unpublished translation by Charles Hefling. Used with permission.

human flourishing is to place justice first. Contemplation of eternal and spiritual things is what keeps us properly ordered and prevents lust for one's own power. This is the wisdom which, interpreting Job, Augustine understands to be a kind of piety, a form of justice which gives what is properly due to the sources of our life, particularly in acts of respect and gratitude. Augustine defines this piety as worship of God, and the worship of God he further calls the love of God by which we now desire to see God. Satan's entrapment of us, itself the result of his lust for power, involves enmeshing us in the power game. The cross, because it is an act of perfect piety by Christ who knew not sin, preserves the right order which puts justice first, not only restoring our own justice but opening up the possibility that people would seek to imitate Christ by seeking to beat the devil at the justice game, not the power game. We have here one of the key components of Lonergan's thesis, namely God's refusal to overturn the evils of the human race by force, preferring instead "the just and mysterious Law of the Cross."

The second disjunction can be termed satisfaction instead of punishment and consists in a very careful exegesis and interpretation of Anselm and Aquinas on the notion of our redemption understood as satisfaction. Anselm's central insight, Lonergan believes, is that satisfaction is NOT punishment; Lonergan thus rejects much of the tradition that has tended to interpret Anselm as saying, in effect, "either Jesus is punished for our sins or we are punished for our sins." Following Aquinas, Lonergan insists that in order for the disjunction to be meaningful, satisfaction has to be something other than punishment. Satisfaction is a question of removing offense, renewing concord, and reconciliation.<sup>32</sup> It must be conceived, suggests Lonergan, according to an analogy taken from sacramental reconciliation. The one who approaches sacramental reconciliation seeks to restore friendship with God by expressing sorrow for sin, which is the fruit of a properly ordered mind and heart; the penitent also confesses the truth of their offense, acknowledging their responsibility; finally, they show a desire to make reparation by acts of charity which restore justice as best they can (though often these acts cannot restore directly what was lost, they offer something which the offended party loves more than what was lost, namely the person of the penitent themselves).

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<sup>32</sup> *De Verbo Incarnato*, 509.

This pattern helps us grasp what, properly speaking, Christ's satisfaction is. It is first an expression of a profound sorrow for the sin of humanity: because the will and love of the Son is also the will and love of the Father, the Son made flesh expresses on the cross, in a genuinely human fashion, the infinite opposition to and sorrow for human sin which God has. Thus a true human being expresses the infinite sorrow for sin which alone can restore friendship and restore order to human minds and hearts. This justifying knowing and loving is released for us in baptism and in the sacrament of reconciliation. Christ's satisfaction is also a speaking forth of the truth of the offense against God which human evil is. Christ chooses to take on the consequences of sin and evil, namely suffering and death, from the moment of the Incarnation. The cross reveals the true power of sin and death and their reality as a consequence of the sin of Adam. It is important here to remember that Christ, who need not have accepted it, voluntarily takes this condition to himself out of love for the Father and for us. By speaking the truth on our behalf, he enables us to speak the truth ourselves in the future, and this power is also released for us in the sacraments. Finally, Christ's death on the cross is an act of reparation, in that it offers God an infinite act of charity: the one who offers himself is infinite love, and the Father loves the Son much more than he despises the offence which sin and evil represent. This love, communicated to us in the sacrament of reconciliation, enables us to participate with our own acts of reparation and expiation, offering ourselves to God in genuine acts of piety and charity which restore the just order of the universe.

The just and mysterious Law of the Cross, then, is a transformative principle that makes of evil and death an opportunity for the expression of deeper charity and of the greatest good for all people: "inasmuch as the Law of the Cross speaks of a free and willing endurance of evil, such that evil is in some way overcome by good, it concerns the virtue and perfection that are proper to Christ. Since he himself had no fault, Christ could have been made perfect otherwise than through the enduring of evils. Yet he willed to become like us in all things, and so chose for himself the kind of perfection he knew was necessary for us..."<sup>33</sup> This law holds true for us as participants in the salvation Christ has wrought for us, and its fruits enable us to take part in the

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<sup>33</sup> *De Verbo Incarnato*, 578.

redemption which now unfolds in history. The cross is, in this sense, the shape that divine knowing and loving takes in a world of sin, whereby the new interindividual and intentional situation known as the state or situation of grace comes about.

If we turn now to Girard's account of the cross, it may appear at first to contradict Lonergan's analysis and even to condemn Lonergan's Law of the Cross as an instance of the "sacrificial reading" of Scripture that masks violence and contributes to the betrayal of the fundamental Christian intuition. To understand why this is not so, we must begin by recalling Girard's understanding of sacrifice and its relationship to his understanding of the Judeo-Christian scriptures. The material I summarize here is from *Things Hidden Since the Foundation of the World*, which I find to be a particularly complete presentation of Girard's analysis.<sup>34</sup>

Girard's ethnological study of founding myths and religious ritual in primal cultures leads him to postulate that religious ritual in primal settings serves to both repeat and cover up the foundational violence that resolved an originating mimetic crisis: the original event consisted of a transmutation of the violence of all against all into the violence of all against one, the original victim whose death restored peace in a dramatic way. Sacrifice, as the climax of the ritual that both re-presents and covers over the founding mimetic crisis, is intended to call upon that same reconciling power of the original victim. The unity of the community re-expresses itself in the sacrificial act against the scapegoat; this unity of all against one comes as the paroxysm of the ritualized chaos played out in the religious act. The community recovers itself as in complete solidarity over against a victim that is not only incapable of defending itself, but also powerless to give rise to or call for acts of vengeance on its behalf. Sacrifice is just one more act of violence, but it is the final act of violence, since the murder of the victim does not lead to retributive violence and since the community finds itself reconciled against the victim.

When he turns his attention to the biblical text, Girard finds a very different logic at work in the founding literature: Cain's murder of Abel, though still understood as founding human culture, is condemned as

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<sup>34</sup> René Girard, *Things Hidden Since the Foundation of the World* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1987), 141-62.

the unjustified murder of an innocent victim. For the biblical text, the condemnation of murder and the subsequent forbidding of retributive violence against the murderer are the most important considerations. The biblical text, over and over again, tends to side with the victim and expose violence for what it is. This movement in the biblical text is due to the efforts of post-prophetic redactors who seek to communicate clearly the prophetic insight that human culture founded on violence and murder keeps, from the beginning to the end, its murderous character which inevitably turns against it and destroys it.

The emergence of the prophetic condemnation of the sacrificial cult in a time of national crisis, along with the prophets' call for a new kind of unity not founded on murder but on a common desire to not become enemies of each other by living a law of love and compassion for the marginalized, reaches its climax in the Songs of the Servant in Isaiah's "book of the consolation of Israel." Even here, though, the condemnation of violence is not complete and unambiguous. The final and complete condemnation of violence, the unambiguous break with sacrificial logic, comes in the preaching and life of Jesus. The gospels show this unambiguous condemnation, the synoptics in the telling of the story, and John in his full and final exposing of "the Satan, who was from the beginning a murderer." Jesus' passion is told in the gospels as one long exposé of the sacrificial logic it condemns and, in Girard's early work on the bible, absolutely negates the possibility of a sacrificial reading of Jesus' passion and crucifixion. Such a reading, which Girard initially identifies with Anselm, serves to mask the truth of the gospels at the service of Christendom, which he defines as the medieval aberration whereby a political order founded on violence was established in the name of Christianity. Such a subversion of the gospels remains for the early Girard one of the greatest monstrosities of human history.

But already in Girard's rejection of a sacrificial reading of the gospels are the seeds of a later partial reversal that will converge with Lonergan's thought: the God who speaks in Jesus of Nazareth, who wants to be known of men and women, is a God who is love. Jesus is known as God precisely because he can love in response to the violence done to him. His identity is not the result of mimetic desire, but rather he has his identity securely in the imitation of his Father

in a communion of wills without mimetic conflict. But he can only be known as God by those who do as he asks of them, who undergo a truly free reconciliation with God and each other without the intermediary of a victim. The centrality of reconciliation links Girard's analysis to that of Lonergan.

Girard's early work on the scriptures leaves a question unanswered: how is Jesus' death on the cross in love something more than an act to be imitated by others? How is his suffering not only exemplary, but enabling of the reconciliation by which people come to know God who speaks to them? The cross, for the early Girard, completely disables the mechanism of sacrificial victimage by exposing it once and for all, and renders it utterly incapable of functioning again to cover up and falsify foundational violence, but how it enables the love that reconciles remains initially unclear.

More recently, Girard has recovered what he suggests is a subverted meaning of sacrifice unique to the Christ event: sacrifice understood as an offering of self in love, as an act from which love flows to others to enable a new way of being human together, a culture not based on founding violence. This is precisely the meaning specified by Aquinas in his interpretation of Anselm, and resonates with Lonergan's account of the law of the cross. My own work on Anselm suggests that Girard's early condemnation of Anselm's notion of satisfaction was not based on a close reading of the text, but rather on an uncritical acceptance of a common reading of all theories of satisfaction as being fundamentally coercively penal.

One can see now the convergence between Lonergan's and Girard's accounts of the cross. In both cases, the communion of wills in love between the Father and the Son is highlighted; in both cases, the speaking forth of the truth of evil and death is constitutive of the effectiveness of the cross; in both cases, the cross is understood as a transformative principle whereby evil is made the source of new life; in both cases, finally, there is an injunction, a call, to participate in the liberation from violence brought about by Christ by imitating him in overturning evil with love.

Lonergan's analysis, however, makes explicit one more element: the "just and mysterious Law of the Cross" is an expression of the same divine wisdom that created the present world order, and is

wisely suited to this world order in its fundamental goodness and in its subsequent corruption.<sup>35</sup> There is, in both human beings and in the order of the universe, a justice and a goodness that are not destroyed by the corruption of evil and violence; Lonergan is here inscribing himself in the tradition of St. Thomas Aquinas, namely that sin has *deprived* human nature of its good, but it has not made human nature *depraved*. It is because human beings remain capable of some good – however limited – that divine wisdom has something to work with. The Law of the Cross is not the creation *ex nihilo* of a new humanity with no continuity with the past; it is the way a healed and elevated desire faces the problem of evil.

I think that Lonergan's grasp of this additional element in the theology of the cross can help make explicit in Girard's thought the ontological grounding that is implicit in his affirmation of the goodness of mimetic desire. In other words, it helps bring to light the force of his affirmation as an affirmation of the fundamental goodness of human beings themselves, even as they are caught up in mimetic violence. This helps clarify why it should be that once the power of Satan is brought into the light, human beings are enabled to choose to imitate Christ. In turn, Girard's account of the cross from the perspective of cultural anthropology gives Lonergan's analysis a set of categories that enable a transposition from metaphysics to the realm of interiority, categories more fitted to historical consciousness and the drama of human existence.

## CONCLUSION

The missions of the Son and the Spirit bring about a new divine-human interpersonal situation, the state or situation of grace, such that divine and human persons, pursuing a common good of order, are mutually in one another, not just by intentional existence (the knower in the known) and by the quasi-identification of love between friends (the beloved in the lover) but also by an indwelling of desire whereby the detached generosity that is the divine persons' desiring for us becomes the detached generosity by which human persons imitate Christ in the Spirit. This new divine-human situation is brought about by the

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<sup>35</sup> *De Verbo Incarnato*, 553.

radical reorientation of desire, knowing and loving effected by the Law of the Cross: Christ's ultimate unveiling of the reality of violence is effected by his total offering of himself in an expression of loving sorrow, which is at the same time an enactment of God's detached generosity overcoming acquisitive mimesis. This total offering of self out of love thus functions to reorient the interpersonal knowing that has refused to acknowledge the reality of foundational violence; to express and release divine Love to constitute a community that has the form of the Suffering Servant, which is the form divine love takes in a world of sin and violence; and to mediate to the disciples in a once-for-all and total way the non-acquisitive desire that overcomes acquisitive mimesis. The state of grace is thus understood to include in an ongoing way the Law of the Cross. This means that the new divine-human interpersonal situation that is brought into being can only be properly understood, as Girard points out, from the points of view of the victims. They become the measure by which the powerful theological heuristic of the state of grace and the Law of the Cross can orient the dialogue between religion, ethics, and the human sciences.

## CHURCH PENITENT: A SACRAMENTAL RE-IMAGING OF CHURCH IN A TIME OF CRISIS

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CATHOLICS ARE PAINFULLY AWARE OF THE crisis that has engulfed the Roman Catholic Church in the last decade, especially here in Boston. Of course, those in Chicago, Louisiana, and elsewhere in the United States know that it is not a new or unique crisis. Indeed the crisis has engulfed Ireland, Belgium, Germany, et cetera. The Roman Catholic Church finds itself in the midst of a global crisis. The crisis is not simply a result of the abuse of children at the hands of clergy and religious. These horrifying crimes are the manifestation of a more deeply rooted crisis of meaning in the Roman Catholic Church and, I would argue, in the Christian community generally, that is ongoing. The crisis is an image crisis. By "image" I am not concerned with branding or good publicity. The crisis in the church emerges from a failure to develop an adequately differentiated and complex image of the Mystical Body and the resulting lack of understanding of what the church is that feeds a cycle of decline within the Christian community.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> During a discussion at the 1962 institute, "The Method of Theology," Lonergan described sacramental theology and ecclesiology as fields in which categories are not adequately developed and may be in need of doctrinal development. Audio is available at <http://www.bernardlonergan.com/archiveitem.php?id=102>. Robert M. Doran reports on the comment in his *What Is Systematic Theology?* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 222n23: "Loneragan expressed a conviction that the sacraments and the church are two areas in systematic theology in which an enormous amount of work needs to be done. In fact, he said, there is needed even doctrinal development in these areas. The fundamental developments are: the trinitarian doctrine in which the key element is the consubstantial; christological doctrine: one person and two natures; the idea of the supernatural, habit and act. There is then the field in which the categories are not yet fully developed. For example, categories as to the instrumental causality of the

When Lonergan elaborates on George Simmel's phrase "the shift to the idea," he relates it to the situation of Catholicism in the 1960s.<sup>2</sup> Vatican II is an event in which the Roman Catholic Church reflects on itself, defines its goals, scrutinizes the means it employs, recalls its origins, past achievements, and failures.<sup>3</sup> The council was an effort to come to a comprehensive grasp of the meaning of the Mystical Body, but that effort, being the result of conflicting interpretations and debate, is not yet complete. One finds in the documents sometimes diverging images of church for example in the differences between *Lumen Gentium* and *Gaudium et Spes*. One simple reason for the lack of consistency is the fact that these documents are meditations on what is properly a mystery, the mystery of the church, and are therefore limited to articulating an analogical understanding of that mystery with more or less success. Also, the documents have different goals: *Lumen Gentium* deals with the church *ad intra*, and *Gaudium et Spes* with the church *ad extra*.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, the documents attempt to articulate the meaning of the church on the level of the time, and with only some success because they emerge from a community and conversation that was still largely informed by a number of classical images of the church, such as Robert Bellarmine's *societas perfecta*.

The shift to the idea in theology, including in ecclesiology, sets the task of doing theology within the context of a modern notion of culture that attends to the concrete. Theology in its new context requires new images in order to offer a fruitful analogical understanding of the Mystical Body that accounts for the concrete reality of the church. In the context of a modern notion of culture it is no longer adequate simply

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sacraments; they have to be developed more fully. There is also everything regarding the history and the mystical body; all these need further development."

<sup>2</sup> Bernard Lonergan, "The Future of Christianity," in *A Second Collection: Papers by Bernard J. F. Lonergan*, vol. 4 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, ed. William F. J. Ryan and Bernard J. Tyrrell (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), 159.

<sup>3</sup> "The Future of Christianity," 159. See Joseph A. Komonchak, "Vatican II as an 'Event,'" in *Vatican II: Did Anything Happen?*, ed. David Schultenover (New York: Continuum, 2008), 24-51.

<sup>4</sup> Richard Gaillardetz, *The Church in the Making: Lumen Gentium, Christus Dominus, Orientalium Ecclesiarum* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2006), 14. Gaillardetz refers to the famous speech of Belgian Cardinal Leo Jozef Seunens at the council. See Richard P. McBrien, *The Church: The Evolution of Catholicism* (New York: Harper Collins, 2008), 182.

to equate the Mystical Body with the Roman Church, or to assert its objective holiness – to do so simply begs the question.<sup>5</sup> In addition, the present crisis in the Roman Church suggests that we develop more complex images that might propel a renewed understanding of the central meaning of the Mystical Body in history. I am not able to develop an adequately complex image here, but I would like to propose a simple sacramental image that borrows from an old taxonomy of the communion of saints as a starting point for working out an image of the concrete church for contemporary ecclesiology. Here I want to propose that the image of the “church penitent,” developed in relation to sacramental reconciliation, indicates the central meaning of authentic Christian faith and the constitutive meaning of the Christian church as a concrete and complex reality that participates in the reconciling and redeeming vector in human history.

### IMAGES OF CHURCH

In his classic text in ecclesiology Avery Dulles articulates five, and later six, “models” of the church: church as institution, church as mystical communion, church as sacrament, church as herald, church as servant.<sup>6</sup> Dulles’s models offer descriptions of the church taken from various experiences of the Christian community. While Dulles cautions that his models are not meant to be comprehensive, and while the models may be helpful for students approaching ecclesiology for the first time, they ultimately do not head in the direction of answering the question of ecclesiology “What is the church?” in an explanatory way. If we are to move beyond descriptions of the church and find the central meaning of the church we need to begin with images, rather than models. Three images prevailed from the time of the Council of Trent

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<sup>5</sup> See *Mystici Corporis Christi*, 13: “If we would define and describe this true Church of Jesus Christ – which is the One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic and Roman Church – we shall find nothing more noble, more sublime, or more divine than the expression “the Mystical Body of Christ” – an expression which springs from and is, as it were, the fair flowering of the repeated teaching of the Sacred Scriptures and the Holy Fathers” (emphasis added).

<sup>6</sup> See Avery Dulles, *Models of the Church* (New York: Random House, 2000). In later editions Dulles added the model “Church as Community of Discipleship,” which heads in the direction of an explanatory account in ways that the other models do not, but is not fully developed.

in theology, preaching, and worship. These images were for the most part, discarded by the Second Vatican Council's biblical images for the church, but they may yet provide valuable insights for ecclesiology.

The Catechism of the Council of Trent identifies within the communion of saints the "church militant," the "church triumphant," and the "church penitent." The church militant marches through history at war with the powers of evil: the world, the flesh, the devil. The church triumphant enjoys the beatific vision worshiping at the heavenly altar. The church penitent, or the suffering church, endures purgatory – suffering for sins, but in hope of the beatific vision. These images found their way into Catholic culture, especially in hymnody and preaching in the period after Trent. They provide the Catholic mind with a simple image of the church in its historical and eschatological reality.

The image of the church triumphant is a purely eschatological depiction of the blessed in heaven and not as helpful for getting an insight into the church of history. Indeed, associating the church in history with the church triumphant has obvious problems. The other images, however, may be more fruitful for reflection on the messy concrete history of the church.

The church militant invokes the image of spiritual warfare as constitutive of Christian living. The church militant engages in battle with the weapons described in the beatitudes: they are the meek, the lowly, the peacemakers who wrestle against sin.<sup>7</sup> But already the image labors under competing metaphors. Militancy does not easily share the stage with humility. And often enough the irascibility of Christians shaped by such an image overwhelms the Christian virtues the church is meant to militantly pursue. The image lets go its moorings in spiritual warfare and humility and begins to drift on feelings of superiority, triumphalism, even culture wars.<sup>8</sup> As an image, the church militant has, perhaps providentially, been "hoisted with its own petard." But what of the image of the suffering church or the "church penitent," can it provide an insight that might help us to answer the question, what is the church?

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<sup>7</sup> See Karl Adam, *The Spirit of Catholicism*, trans. Justin McCann (Doubleday: New York, 1954).

<sup>8</sup> Patrick Buchanan invoked the image in the journal *Human Events* to describe a new attitude among some bishops in their dealings in the American politicians. See Patrick J. Buchanan, "Is the Church Militant Back?," *HumanEvents.com* (November 2009).

Of course, the church penitent traditionally refers to those who have died in Christ but who have some debt of sin to be paid before enjoying the fullness of the beatific vision. These debts are paid in the cleansing fires of purgatory. Purgatory provides an image of the crucible of conversion, but in this case a conversion that happens after the opportunity to fully convert in this life has passed, and at least in this sense it is a positive idea. The complete conversion of the soul in purgatory is effected, perhaps like all conversions, in suffering and sorrow. The sorrow is twofold: (1) the soul suffers separation from God, (2) the soul suffers sorrow for its sins. The tears of purgatory, however, are not the same as the wailing and gnashing of teeth reserved for souls in a state of permanent separation from God, rather they are tears of sorrow mixed with joy, of penitence and hope. The suffering they endure is just punishment for their failure to do proper penance for sins in this life. And because the souls in purgatory are no longer able to offer satisfaction for their sins, they must suffer enough for the sake of purification – purgatory is essentially a place of “satispassion.”<sup>9</sup> Only the prayers of the church militant and the merits of the church triumphant can lessen their suffering, therefore historically the mass included prayers for souls in purgatory.

This was the classical tripartite description of the communion of saints, but could we recycle the image of a penitent church? Could we re-image the church in history as the church penitent? Might that image of the church generate an important insight into what the Mystical Body is concretely in history in a way that heads toward an explanatory answer to the basic ecclesiological question? Clearly, there are theological problems with the doctrines pertaining to purgatory and the particular judgment associated with the classical image of the church penitent that need not be rehearsed here. However, the image of the church as a community of penitents or a community that undergoes suffering together is certainly descriptive of our experience of church in the last decade, and indeed, as so many have testified, of the experience of the church throughout history. For example, in his preaching on the Psalms, St. Augustine highlights the role of lamentation in developing

<sup>9</sup> See Charles C. Hefling, Jr., “A Perhaps Permanently Valid Achievement: Lonergan on Christ’s Satisfaction,” *Метод: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 10 (1992).

what Michael McCarthy calls an "ecclesiology of groaning."<sup>10</sup> McCarthy writes:

Because he lives at a time of considerable ecclesial tension, of enduring scandal at the lapse of third-century Catholic bishops, of anguished debates on the nature of the Church, and of bitter challenges posed by the Donatists, [Augustine's] teaching on the *corpus permixtum* has an emotional register that far exceeds its scope simply as an account of the Church. To be a member of such a mixed body is to groan mightily at the obvious iniquities and imperfections that incorporation entails. To find oneself in such a body is to share in the laments so powerfully voiced by the Psalmist: "My heart bellows its groans. All my desire is before you, Lord, and my groaning is not hidden from you" (Psalm 37:9-10).<sup>11</sup>

While the image of the militant church is meant to include the wheat and the tares in the *corpus permixtum*, it fails to indicate the effect of that mixture on the body of the church. Moreover, Augustine's rhetoric is meant not simply to describe the church in its concrete reality but also to make his listeners feel the tension of incorporation into that body, that is, to *feel* repentance. McCarthy continues:

Like the expression of other deep emotions, however, the groaning of the Church resists certain definition: it possesses a quality that Augustine calls *ineffabilis*. The continued groaning of the Church beggars even Augustine's power to describe fully the range of problems or theological issues implicit in it. Through his exegesis, however, Augustine actively appropriates for the Church the groans which resound throughout the psalter and indicates that, by lamenting with the Psalmist and reflecting deeply and continually on that affect, the Church comes to learn what it is, comes to be what it is.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Michael C. McCarthy, "An Ecclesiology of Groaning: Augustine, the Psalms, and the Making of Church," *Theological Studies* 66 (2005).

<sup>11</sup> McCarthy, "An Ecclesiology of Groaning," 26.

<sup>12</sup> McCarthy, "An Ecclesiology of Groaning," 26-27.

By reflecting deeply and continually on its own ineffable experience of lament, repentance, longing, et cetera, the church itself moves into greater solidarity with suffering humanity.

The suffering the Mystical Body endures, today as in the past, can come from outside. It can result from encounters with cultures hostile to religion that violently persecute Christians, or that simply mock Christian faith and practice. But more burdensome at present, as in the time of Augustine, is the weight of scandal within the church. In the face of such a scandal the ideal image of church militant crumbles to reveal what is in fact a suffering, penitent church. As Pope Benedict XVI has indicated, "The greatest persecution of the church doesn't come from enemies on the outside but is born from the sin within the church."<sup>13</sup> The pope has therefore described the contemporary situation of the Roman church as a "moment of penitence" in which the church is called to "relearn penitence, accept purification, learn forgiveness but also justice."<sup>14</sup>

The concrete consequences of the pope's exhortation are not immediately clear, but one example where church leaders attempted to "learn" penitence through symbols and sacraments was the recent "Liturgy of Lament and Repentance" presided over by Cardinal Sean O'Malley and Archbishop Diarmuid Martin in Dublin's St. Mary's Pro-Cathedral. The liturgy, planned in part by victims of abuse, provided what we might call a sacramental re-imaging of the church. During the liturgy O'Malley and Martin lay prostrate at the altar in an expression of sorrow and repentance for the manifold sins of perpetrators of abuse and of church leaders. In addition these bishops washed the feet of victims in a sacramental gesture of humility and seeking of pardon. These rituals offer a symbolic evocation of a penitent church that is a helpful image for thinking about the constitutive meaning of the church in the area of ecclesiology.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Nicole Winfield, "Pope Places Blame for Sex Scandal on Catholic Church," *Washington Post*, May 12, 2010.

<sup>14</sup> Winfield, "Pope Places Blame."

<sup>15</sup> Lisa Wangsness, "Word of Pain, Contrition in O'Malley's Irish service," *Boston Globe*, February 21, 2011, available at [www.boston.com](http://www.boston.com). O'Malley is quoted as saying, "We want to be part of a church that puts survivors, the victims of abuse, first – ahead of self-interest, reputation, and institutional needs." With this example, I am not singling out O'Malley or Martin as model bishops; their dioceses have experienced significant

### FOUNDATIONS IN ECCLESIOLOGY<sup>16</sup>

Lonerger identifies the church concretely as a structured, outgoing, redemptive process of self-constitution becoming fully conscious, the substance of which is "the Christian message conjoined with the inner gift of God's love and resulting in Christian witness, Christian fellowship, and Christian service."<sup>17</sup> The Christian community like all human communities is a process of self-constitution, but the heart of that process is a conversion mediated by the outer communication of Christ's message and the inner gift of God's love through the Holy Spirit. Conversion is falling in love. But, falling in love with its joys and ecstasies is always dialectical. It is paired with repentance and sorrow over one's failures to adequately love one's beloved. In the case of the love of God poured into our hearts by the gift of the Holy Spirit, human beings pierced by divine love recognize failures to love God in return as sin. The experience of God's love prompts both consolation and desolation. For our experience of grace reveals both the lavishness of God's love given even to sinners and the probability of our own sinning even in the face of that love – "I do the thing I hate."<sup>18</sup> Indeed, the experience of God's love reveals sin *as* sin, but to cite Paul again, "Where sin abounds grace abounds all the more."<sup>19</sup> Love and penitence, then, are correlated feelings. Consolation evokes desolation and vice versa. Particularly when we are talking about falling in love with God, those feelings of love and penitence are deeper and more dramatic because the unconditional character of God's love for us reveals the horrible failure that sin is.

Related to those feelings are judgments. God's love as experienced

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upheavals during their tenures. What is at stake here is the symbolic force of the ritual act itself, which if repeated often enough could begin to have an effect on how the faithful understand the church. It must also be noted that these ritual gestures are not adequate in themselves for redressing the violence and injustice experienced by victims of abuse. The point of highlighting them here is that they provide an example of public penance that reveals constitutive meaning of the church.

<sup>16</sup> See Joseph Komonchak, *Foundations in Ecclesiology*, supplemental issue of the *Lonerger Workshop Journal*, vol. 11, ed. Fred Lawrence (Chestnut Hill, MA: Boston College, 1994).

<sup>17</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972), 363.

<sup>18</sup> Romans 7:19.

<sup>19</sup> Romans 5:20.

leads us to affirm the judgment mediated by the outer word of Christian tradition, "God is love."<sup>20</sup> But, that judgment is normally paired with the correlated affirmation "I am a sinner," which emerges from a feeling of penitence in the presence of divine love. The experience of God's love and the affirmation of the Christian message reveal moral failure as sin, and habitual moral failure as constituting an identity we call "a sinner." These two correlated judgments that indicate the existential orientation of the Christian are captured helpfully in the Eastern Christian tradition's prayer of the heart, also called the Jesus Prayer: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner." The first clause is doxological. Confessing Christ as Lord is done only by the Holy Spirit,<sup>21</sup> a confession that reveals the prior, immediate gift of God's love poured into the heart and which affirms the outer word of Christ mediated by tradition. The second clause is an act of repentance or contrition mediated by the judgment that one is in fact a sinner. The *Jesus Prayer* is, in a sense, a compact statement of Christian faith. As practiced it is the unceasing prayer of the Christian heart.<sup>22</sup> But the prayer of the heart, like any interior act of meaning, seeks opportunities for symbolic expression in ritual and sacrament.

One, though certainly not the only, symbolic expression of penitence is the sacrament of penance or reconciliation. The ongoing sacramental symbolization of penitence in the Christian community reveals the church for what it is: a penitent, suffering church, that is, a structured, outgoing, redemptive process of self-constitution undergoing religious, moral, and intellectual conversion. That conversion is manifest in praise *and* lamentation, thanksgiving *and* repentance. Those feelings are symbolized regularly in the ritual life of the church: in the sacraments and in the liturgy of the mass. In these ways the Mystical Body consents to and imitates the feelings and judgments of Christ as head: judgments and feelings which find their proper symbolic expression on the cross.

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<sup>20</sup> 1 John 4:8.

<sup>21</sup> 1 Corinthians 12:3.

<sup>22</sup> This aspect of the prayer is captured in the anonymous spiritual classic *The Way of the Pilgrim*. See *The Way of the Pilgrim*, trans. Helen Bacovcin (New York: Image Books, 1992).

### A SACRAMENTAL ANALOGY OF THE MYSTICAL BODY

Lonerger draws an analogy from the sacrament of penance in *De Verbo Incarnato*, thesis 16a to explain satisfaction. Charles Hefling's elaboration of this perhaps permanently valid chunk of Lonergan's Latin theology highlights the fact that Lonergan's interpretation of the cross transposes the notion of satisfaction into "transculturally valid categories of meaning and value."<sup>23</sup> Those transculturally valid categories allow us to talk about the passion as a communication of meaning that expresses intentional responses to value and judgments of value. Namely, the cross expresses how "Love for God combines with detestation of sins, and with the judgment that in fact sins are offenses against God, to produce sorrow."<sup>24</sup> Lonergan identifies the satisfying aspect of Christ's work on the cross in his detestation of and sorrow over sins. This is the mind of Christ to which Paul refers in Philipians 2 and which the church as the Mystical Body makes its own in bodily symbolic evocation of its detestation of and sorrow over its own sin. Understood in terms of meaning, the satisfaction of the cross is opened for our participation insofar as Christ's meanings and values expressed symbolically on the cross, become our own meanings and values expressed symbolically in sacramental penance and preeminently in the sacrifice of the mass.<sup>25</sup> This is the substance of the Christian message to which Lonergan refers which when joined with the inner gift of God's love produces Christian witness, fellowship, and service to humanity. It is the heart of the Gospel.

When Christ comes preaching the Kingdom of God he articulates the fundamental existential stance that inaugurates this new way of being in the world in terms of repentance: "the Kingdom of God is at hand, repent and believe in the Gospel."<sup>26</sup> Repentance is foundational

<sup>23</sup> Hefling, "A Perhaps Permanently Valid Achievement," 72.

<sup>24</sup> Hefling, "A Perhaps Permanently Valid Achievement."

<sup>25</sup> Lonergan elaborates the analogical relation between the cross and the altar in "The Notion of Sacrifice." *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 19 (2001): 3-34: "participating in the sacrifice of the cross by a spiritual communion and especially by a sacramental communion effects an intimate union between the Head and the members. The attitudes of the members are assimilated to those of the Head, including above all Christ's sacrificial attitude" (13).

<sup>26</sup> Mark 1:15.

for Christian discipleship; it sets the subject of conversion off in a new direction. Without repentance, there is no new course of action; without repentance, there is no hope for new possibilities, no hope for redemption. Using Lonergan's analysis of authenticity we can say that repentance makes up one half of a dialectic of religious conversion. The experience of religious conversion is not only falling in love with God, but also of recognizing one's failure to love God. It is therefore always a conversion in process, ever a withdrawal from the inauthenticity of sin in the face of such tremendous love. It is through repentance that we begin to incarnate the Gospel. We might even say that penance is the basic form of our participation in the divine plan, in the Law of the Cross.<sup>27</sup> For the Law of the Cross is made one's own in every act of penance wherein the evil of one's own sin and guilt is turned toward the good of conversion and hope through repentance. This conversion is neither isolated in time, nor complete in history. As Lonergan notes it is ever a withdrawal from inauthenticity. Because it is ongoing, conversion evokes symbols and rituals that in turn evoke feelings of love and repentance that keep one on the path of conversion.

Thomas Aquinas describes this ongoing process as "the habitual disposition of the penitent."<sup>28</sup> While actual penance cannot be continuous, Thomas proposes, "a man is said to repent habitually, and thus he should repent continually, both by never doing anything contrary to penance, so as to destroy the habitual disposition of the penitent, and by being resolved that his past sins should always be displeasing to him."<sup>29</sup> In the same question Thomas answers the objection that joy and sorrow are opposed such that one cannot rejoice and feel sorrow at the same time. The objection proposes that penance is a good work and so a source of joy not of grief. But Thomas clarifies that in the case of penance joy and sorrow pertain to the same thing but in different respects and are therefore not contrary: "In this way a man may be displeased at having sinned, and be pleased at his displeasure together with his hope for pardon, so that his very sorrow is a matter of

<sup>27</sup> See Bernard Lonergan, *De Verbo Incarnato*, 552. See also Charles C. Hefling Jr., "Lonergan's *Cur Deus Homo*: Revisiting the 'Law of the Cross,'" in *Meaning and History in Systematic Theology: Essays in Honor of Robert M. Doran, SJ*, ed. John D. Dadosky (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2009), 145-66.

<sup>28</sup> *Summa Theologiae*, III, q. 84, a.9.

<sup>29</sup> *Summa Theologiae*, s.c.

joy. Hence Augustine says: "The penitent should ever grieve and rejoice at his grief."<sup>30</sup> Penance, is therefore not to be confused with despair. Despair is an excess of sorrow in which hope is eclipsed by grief or self-hatred. The point of the sacrament of reconciliation is to continually restore hope through the communication of divine love in absolution.

The sad fact is the sacrament of reconciliation has often failed to communicate God's love and so is avoided by many Catholics.<sup>31</sup> Certainly there are many other factors that have led to the decline in sacramental repentance. Among them might be that new models of intersubjectivity within contemporary culture have led to more open relationships within which feelings of remorse, regret, guilt, and penitence are communicated directly to offended parties, or in the case of penitence for violations of relationship with God, in private tears. In addition, sacramental confession in the medieval rite was based on a model of ecclesiastical authority and of sacramental grace that emphasized priestly mediation. The mediating role of the priest in the sacrament was thoroughly criticized by the reformers without thereby minimizing the proper place of repentance, but it is still the case that the confessional for many is a source of additional guilt rather than liberation from guilt. The revised rite of reconciliation is meant to overcome this dynamic in sacramental practice, but challenges remain to the practice of confessing out loud to a priest.<sup>32</sup> Nevertheless, both Catholic and Protestant worship services retained communal penitential rites or collective confessions of guilt. The point here is that ritual symbolization of repentance in sacraments is important because it provides a relevant insight for ecclesiology and helps to understand what the church is concretely as a redemptive process: a community of penitents undergoing conversion as a result of the inner gift of God's love and the outer word of Christ "Repent and believe in the Gospel."

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<sup>30</sup> *Summa Theologiae*, ad 2m.

<sup>31</sup> For example see Mark M. Gray and Paul M. Perl, "Sacraments Today: Belief and Practice among U.S. Catholics," (Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate: Georgetown University, 2008), 57. Seventy-five percent of respondents say they either "never" go to confession, or go "less than once a year."

<sup>32</sup> Among these challenges are inadequate notions of sin, sacramental mediation, and priestly ministry. See Joseph Chapel, "Why Confess Our Sins Out Loud? Some Possibilities Based on the Thought of Ferdinand Ebner and Louis-Marie Chauvet," *Irish Theological Quarterly* 66 (2001): 141-46.

When the church leads the human community in repentance it reveals the constitutive meaning of the Gospel. But to communicate that message the whole church must learn repentance. As Lonergan remarks in *Method in Theology*, "those that would communicate the constitutive meaning of the Christian message, first of all, must live it. For without living the Christian message one does not possess its constitutive meaning; and one cannot lead another to share what one oneself does not possess."<sup>33</sup> He continues, "those that communicate the effective meaning of the Christian message, must practise it. For actions speak louder than words, while preaching what one does not practise recalls sounding brass and tinkling cymbal."<sup>34</sup> Practicing repentance in the church leads to reconciliation. By practicing repentance, especially publicly, the church incarnates the redeeming vector in history. The simple claim of this paper is that penitence in the church and by the church, especially public acts of repentance, by both church leadership and laity, reveal the self-sacrificing love of Christian charity in its basic form. Such acts bring into the open the too frequently hidden core of Christian meaning and value articulated *in nuce* in the Jesus Prayer and elaborated in the Gospel.

### RE-IMAGING CHURCH: ECCLESIOLOGY IN A TIME OF CRISIS

Times of crisis push any "large social, cultural or religious movement to reflect on itself, to define its goals, to scrutinize the means it employs, to recall its origins, past achievements and failures," including the church.<sup>35</sup> On the other hand, "the church is by definition a conservative society,"<sup>36</sup> especially at the level of the superstructure where continuity with tradition is a preeminent value. Therefore the felt need for change in a time of crisis is countered by a desire for continuity with the past. The church groans under the weight of this dialectic: at once desiring some new way of being church, but also desiring to remain faithful to a tradition that has nourished the faithful. To push through this

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<sup>33</sup> *Method in Theology*, 362.

<sup>34</sup> *Method in Theology*, 362.

<sup>35</sup> "The Future of Christianity," 159.

<sup>36</sup> John O'Malley, "Vatican II: Did Anything Happen?" *Theological Studies* 67 (2006), 8.

tension would require that we develop a new image of the church that is both continuous with tradition and responsive to present concerns. This was the goal of the Second Vatican Council and should be a goal in the present crisis. The image of the "church penitent" responds to both demands by attending closely to the redemptive process that the church is, while transposing redemption into transcultural categories of meaning that can be inculturated and incarnated in new ways.

Loneragan identifies the church in *Method in Theology* as "a process of self-constitution, a *Selbstvollzug*."<sup>37</sup> It is a community in the process of becoming itself, of realizing itself, of performing itself. Lonergan explains that the process is structured, out-going, and redemptive.<sup>38</sup> Further that process is becoming fully-conscious. But the key theological piece to Lonergan's understanding of the church as a *Selbstvollzug* is its redemptive aspect. The church as a redemptive process proclaims the message of the Gospel:

The Christian message, incarnate in Christ scourged and crucified, dead and risen, tells not only of God's love but also of man's sin. Sin is alienation from man's authentic being, which is self-transcendence, and sin justifies itself by ideology. As alienation and ideology are destructive of community, so the self-sacrificing love that is Christian charity reconciles alienated man to his true being, and undoes the mischief initiated by alienation and consolidated in ideology.<sup>39</sup>

The message of the cross, which Lonergan elucidates according to a sacramental analogy, as we noted above, transforms communities and history through the redemptive process that is the church. But for the church to accomplish this mission it must first incarnate the redemptive process in itself, or to use Benedict's more descriptive phrase cited above, "The church must re-learn penance." As Lonergan notes, "The redemptive process has to be exercised in the church as a whole and in human society generally."<sup>40</sup>

For Lonergan the church as a redemptive process is responsible

<sup>37</sup> *Method in Theology*, 363.

<sup>38</sup> *Method in Theology*, 363-64.

<sup>39</sup> *Method in Theology*, 364.

<sup>40</sup> *Method in Theology*, 364.

for undoing the mischief of decline and therefore must engage the historical context, must become a fully-conscious redemptive process.<sup>41</sup> This means that part of the pope's call to "relearn penitence, accept purification, learn forgiveness but also justice"<sup>42</sup> demands that the church "recognize that theology is no the full science of man, that theology illuminates only certain aspects of human reality, that the church can become a fully conscious process of self-constitution only when theology unites itself with all other relevant branches of human studies."<sup>43</sup> If the church is to learn justice, especially in the face of the suffering for which it as a community bears some responsibility, then that requires admission of guilt, acts of penance, and new courses of action. At the level of the superstructure the church has developed new courses of action in the form of policies, planning, and execution of those plans.<sup>44</sup> Those policies, if they are to participate in the redeeming and healing work of the church, will become an ongoing process subject to continual revision as each implementation and execution of a policy generates feedback.<sup>45</sup> What cannot be lost in the efforts to generate solutions adequate to the problems the church confronts is its awareness of itself as a process: a community within the human community in the process of conversion incarnating the redeeming and healing vector in history through repentance and hope. If the church is to fulfill its mission to communicate the cognitive, constitutive, and effective meaning of the Christian message, it must be a penitent church.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> *Method in Theology*, 364.

<sup>42</sup> See note 13 above.

<sup>43</sup> *Method in Theology*, 364.

<sup>44</sup> *Method in Theology*, 365. See, for example, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, "Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People," available at [www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/child-and-youth-protection/](http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/child-and-youth-protection/).

<sup>45</sup> *Method in Theology*, 366.

<sup>46</sup> Lonergan relates these functions of meaning to the church in *Method in Theology*, viz., "The message announces what Christians are to believe, what they are to become, what they are to do. Its meaning, then, is at once cognitive, constitutive, effective. It is cognitive inasmuch as the message tells what is to be believed. 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" (362).

## CONCLUSION

The idea that the church is fundamentally a community undergoing conversion, and therefore a penitent church, is nothing new. Michael McCarthy has identified an "ecclesiology of groaning" in the works of Saint Augustine. But too often the church as a community has neglected its own sinfulness. This is perhaps especially true of a way of rendering the mark of holiness as indicating impeccability. This is manifestly not the case. Indeed, drawing on our present analogy it might be more accurate or adequate to say that the mark of holiness is an indication of the church's penitence. If the church is holy, and it is by faith (one, holy, catholic apostolic), then its holiness is to be found in the redemptive process it incarnates in history by its participation in the universal law of the cross, that is, in repentance.<sup>47</sup> The church in the present age laments, indeed groans, under the weight of sin, both the sins of the world and its own, and so it must relearn penitence. For the church to relearn penitence in the present will include repenting our old ways of imagining the church as a juridical entity or a perfect society and to embrace the image of the Mystical Body found in the tears and groaning of the church that reveal its mind and heart of hope.

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<sup>47</sup> Gilles Mongeau, S.J. indicated the ramifications of the present inquiry for understanding the mark of holiness in discussion of this paper at the Lonergan Workshop in 2011.

## THE CLASSICAL QUESTION OF IMMORTALITY IN LIGHT OF LONERAGAN'S EXPLICIT METAPHYSICS

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FEW OF US EVEN IN THIS AGE OF secular materialism would be consoled by Epicurus's dictum: "So death, the most frightening of bad things, is nothing to us; since when we exist, death is not yet present, and when death is present, then we do not exist. Therefore it is relevant neither to the living nor to the dead."<sup>1</sup> The inevitability and sting of death cannot be overcome by thinking and philosophic reflection. As the novelist Michael Connelly puts it, "We are all circling the drain... Some are closer to the black hole than others. Some will see it coming and some will have no clue when the undertow of the whirlpool grabs them and pulls them down into darkness."<sup>2</sup> Though we may take up the question of immortality in the intellectual pattern of experience with detachment and disinterestedness, this does not allay the underlying dread. And, the more one loves the more painful and unbearable the thought of death and dying becomes.

Still, there is the hope of immortality. Alan Segal, in his compendious *Life After Death: A History of the Afterlife in Western Religion*, reports that the majority of Americans surveyed believe in immortality, and "expect the afterlife to be a continuation of life on Earth...like a really good assisted-living facility."<sup>3</sup> This comforting view is what

<sup>1</sup> Epicurus, *Letter to Menoeceus*: Diogenes Laertius 10. 125 in *The Epicurus Reader*, trans. and ed. Brad Inwood and L. P. Gerson (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing, 1994), 29.

<sup>2</sup> Michael Connelly, *The Overlook* (New York: Vision - Grand Central Publishing, 2006), 254.

<sup>3</sup> Alan Segal, *Life after Death: A History of the Afterlife in Western Religion* (New York:

Nietzsche calls the "great lie" – that (first) death is something fundamentally unreal, a mere transition which scarcely affects the core of our being, and that (secondly) life on the other side of death is nothing but a "continuance" of life here....<sup>4</sup> Yet, even belief in immortality does not completely remove the natural horror of death. For as C. S. Lewis says the dead are uncanny, both the body stripped of its soul, the corpse, and the soul stripped of its body, the "ghost." "Because the thing ought not to be divided, each of its halves into which it falls by division is detestable."<sup>5</sup>

Any speculation about the afterlife must be preceded by the prior question: Is there human immortality? Does the self, in each case my own self, survive death? In the following I will examine Lonergan's position on immortality based on explicit metaphysics in light of classical positions on the question. His treatment of the question, which is found in chapter 16 of *Insight*,<sup>6</sup> is not lengthy, descriptive, existential, or poetic. It is traced in the bloodless ballet of metaphysics.

In ancient Greek and medieval thought arguments for the immortality of the soul were based on the nature of the objects of intellect. Insofar as the Forms are eternal, so the human mind, which knows these eternal truths, must be eternal. Does this approach to the question still have force in the contemporary era, when talk about souls has been replaced by talk about the subject, the existential self; when talk of the faculty of the intellect has been replaced by talk of intelligent consciousness and its intentional acts? Does the advent of historical consciousness and the realization that concepts have dates, remove the stamp of eternal truth from the object of intellect, and hence from intellect itself? In short, is there reason to believe that we are still immortal?

While Plato devoted at least one entire dialogue and Augustine an entire book to the question, Lonergan deals with life after death rather cryptically [no pun intended]. In *Insight*, Lonergan does not provide a

Random House, 2004).

<sup>4</sup> Josef Pieper, *Death and Immortality*, trans. Richard and Clara Winston (South Bend, IN: St. Augustine's Press, 2000), 99.

<sup>5</sup> Quoted in Pieper, *Death and Immortality*, 36.

<sup>6</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, vol. 3 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 512- 52.

lengthy argument for human immortality, as he does for God's existence in chapter 19. Nevertheless, he makes his position clear in chapter 16, 4.3 "Metaphysics as Science: The Unity of Man."<sup>7</sup> He makes a case for immortality without much fanfare, based on his distinction between the material and the spiritual and his account of the metaphysical elements. This inquiry will show that the answer made possible by explicit metaphysics is consonant with classical positions on the question.

For Plato, in the *Phaedo*, the soul (*psyche*) just is the mind (*nous*). In the last hours of his life as he awaits execution, Socrates tries to convince his friends and in particular his two young Pythagorean interlocutors, that he has nothing to fear as his final hour approaches. In fact, he has reason to rejoice that he will soon be joining his divine masters. Rather than reassure and console their beloved teacher, Simmias and Cebes pester Socrates with questions about the nature of the soul. Socrates relays the common belief that the soul falls from Hades into life, is clothed in a body which eventually dies, then returns to Hades, and is eventually reincarnated. Socrates insists, however, that this ancient myth alone is not sufficient for them: "To believe this requires a good deal of faith and persuasive argument" (70b-d).<sup>8</sup> He proceeds to offer four distinct arguments or proofs for the immortality of the soul.

The most powerful of the four is called the Kinship Argument, which is based on the Empedoclean principle, "Like is known by like":

1. Forms remain the same; particulars never remain the same.
2. Forms are grasped by the mind; particular, by the senses.
3. There are two kinds of existences: the visible and the invisible. The invisible always remains the same; the visible never does.
4. By the Empedoclean principle, the soul is more akin to the invisible (the forms), and the body is more akin to the visible (the particulars).
5. Therefore, the soul is more like that which is divine and intelligible (i.e., eternal). The body dissolves at death, but the soul is indissoluble. (78b - 80b),<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> *Insight*, 512-52.

<sup>8</sup> Plato, *Phaedo*, in *Five Dialogues*, trans. G. M. A. Grube (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing)

<sup>9</sup> Plato, *Phaedo*, 116-19.

Of the four arguments, this one is most powerful, not because it is unassailable (in fact, in the dialogue *Simmius* immediately raises an objection to it), but because it has had the most lasting influence in the history of philosophy.

The same basic argument underlies Aristotle's provocative statements about the separate and eternal nature of the active intellect in *de Anima* III, 4 and 5. Aristotle echoes the Empedoclean principle when he states: "Mind must be related to what is thinkable [the intelligible], as sense is to what is sensible" (429a).<sup>10</sup> He elaborates that "insofar as the realities it knows are capable of being separated from their matter [the realities it knows being abstract objects – forms], so it is also with the powers of mind" (429b). "The thinking part of the soul must be, while impassable, capable of receiving the form of an object; that is, must be potentially identical in character with its object without being the object" (429a). Not only is the mind capable of understanding abstract, unchanging objects, in addition: "Once the mind has become each set of its possible objects, as a man of science has...the mind too is then able to think itself" (429b). Thus, like Plato, Aristotle here characterizes the mind and its objects as separable from matter. He goes further than Plato's view that the soul is akin to the Forms. He argues that in the strictest sense the mind becomes its objects, is identical with its objects [the identity of the knower and the known]. If its objects are separable and impassable, so the intellect must be separable and impassable. And, finally, the separable and impassable mind is even capable of thinking itself, which implies an active life of the intellect after death. His discussion of the eternity of the intellect in these passages is notoriously obscure and in places seemingly inconsistent; consequently, it has been interpreted variously over the centuries.

Thomas chooses to interpret *de Anima* III, 4 and 5 in light of Aristotle's arguments for the indivisibility of the soul in Book I. So, when Aristotle concludes: "Mind is not at one time knowing and at another not. When mind is set free from its present conditions it appears as just what it is and nothing more: this alone is immortal and eternal (...mind in this sense is impassable, mind as passive is destructible)" (430a), Thomas does not interpret this as a splitting of

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<sup>10</sup> Aristotle, *de Anima* in *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. Richard McKeon (New York: Random House, 1941).

the intellect with only the active intellect being eternal. Not only is the intellect indivisible, although it has two aspects, so also the soul as Aristotle argued earlier is indivisible. If one of its faculties is eternal, then the whole soul must be eternal. The so-called destruction of the passive intellect is simply its dormancy after separation from the body, just as the senses must be dormant without their organs. This interpretation allows Thomas to read Aristotle's text as consistent with the immortality of the individual human soul. Averroes and Avicenna, Aristotle's Arab interpreters, on the other hand, argued for one eternal intellect distinct from the individual man.

In his *Disputed Questions on Spiritual Creatures*, Thomas presents his own argument for the immortality of the individual soul. As in the case of Plato and Aristotle, it rests on the nature of the intellect and its proper object. He begins his discussion by referring back to the Philosopher, and by stating a metaphysical principle:

It must be the case that the principle of that activity which is understanding should be in "this man" [the individual man] in the way of a form. Now the principle of this activity is not a form whose actual being is dependent on matter and tied down to or immersed in matter, because this activity is not effected by means of the body as is proven in III *de Anima* [4, 429a]; and hence the principle of this activity possesses an activity that has nothing in common with corporeal matter. Now, the way in which each thing acts is a consequence of its being. Hence the actual being of that principle must be an actual being which is raised above corporeal matter and not dependent on it.<sup>11</sup>

The metaphysical principle embedded in this passage is a principle of isomorphism: "the way in which each thing acts is a consequence of its being." This principle plays an axiomatic role in Thomas's extended proof for immortality, which can be paraphrased in the following steps:

1. Since the agent [active] intellect can grasp the immaterial (the intelligible species [form]), it must be immaterial; and since the intellect is a faculty of the rational soul, the rational soul must be immaterial [by the principle of isomorphism].

<sup>11</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *On Spiritual Creatures*, trans. M. C. Fitzpatrick and J. J. Wellmuth (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 1949).

2. That which is immaterial does not depend upon matter [the body] for its existence, and the immaterial is abstracted from time and hence eternal.
3. Therefore, the human soul is not intrinsically dependent upon the body – not dependent for its existence.
4. However, the human soul is extrinsically dependent upon the body – dependent for its operation. [For example, the agent intellect naturally abstracts the intelligible species from a phantasm, the object of the act of imagination, and the imagination is dependent upon some organ to operate.] Thus, the soul is the form of the body.
5. After death [destruction of the body], the immaterial soul survives, but in an unnatural [i. e., a supernatural] state. In this state only one's agent intellect continues to act.
6. The resurrection of the body [one's own unique body] is necessary in order to restore the soul to its natural state.<sup>12</sup>

The last step of this argument is theologically based. Thomas can prove the intrinsic independence of the soul and its survival in an unnatural state after death on the basis of rational argument alone without the doctrine of the resurrection of the body.

We can make a few observations about these three classical arguments for immortality. First, Plato, Aristotle, and Thomas all propose rational argumentation for the immortality of the soul (or at least the intellect) based on the Empedoclean principle that "Like is known by like." They base their arguments on the nature of the object known (the universal and abstract form or intelligible species) and the nature of the act of intellect. Secondly, Socrates and Thomas, at least, were men of faith, yet they articulate their arguments independently of their religious beliefs. It turns out that the immortality of the human soul can be proven on the basis of the nature of the human mind, prior to an ontological argument for the existence of the gods or God. It could even be argued, but in a truncated way, that the human mind is immortal whether or not there is a God. Thirdly, for Plato as a dualistic thinker, the existence of the soul after death was richly imagined. Socrates looked forward with confidence and joy to his death as blessed release from the prison of the body with all its cares and distractions.

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<sup>12</sup> See Thomas, *On the Soul*, trans. J. P. Rowan (New York: B. Herder Book Company, 1959), Article I.

The two hylomorphic thinkers Aristotle and Thomas, on the other hand, conclude with a spare view of a separated soul or intellect continuing to exist and to think and to understand, but unable to perform any other operation. In this state, there would be no seeing, hearing, sense of where one is, imagining, remembering, et cetera, just thinking one's own knowledge and one's one mind. Josef Pieper highlights the fact that Thomas rejected the view that "after death, in the state of bliss, the soul will finally be liberated from the body, and thereby be similar to God, the Pure Spirit. Rather, Thomas replies to this view that "The soul united with the body is more like God than the soul separated from the body, because it possesses its nature more perfectly" (Quaest. disp. de potentia Dei 5, 10 ad 5)."<sup>13</sup>

Lonergan's treatment of the question of immortality is found in chapter 16, "Metaphysics as Science." He states at the outset that he does not intend in this chapter to write a metaphysical treatise, but rather to explore the power and efficacy of his method. His metaphysical account of human immortality is a succinct and effective exercise in explicit metaphysics. But its brevity belies its richness. Appearing late in one of the later chapters of *Insight*, Lonergan's treatment of immortality presupposes terms and distinctions painstakingly articulated in earlier chapters. Before we consider Lonergan's treatment of immortality further, it would be helpful to briefly review key terms of his analysis.

From chapter 15, we have the six basic metaphysical elements: central potency, form, and act, and conjugate potency, form, and act. Central potency and central form are the two elements most relevant to the present analysis. They are defined implicitly. Potency in general corresponds to:

The component of proportionate being to be known in fully explanatory knowledge by the intellectually patterned experience of the empirical residue; ...the empirical residue lies in the individuality, the continuity, the coincidental conjunctions and successions, and the nonsystematic divergence from intelligible norms, which are to be known by experiencing and only by experiencing.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Quoted in Pieper, *Death and Immortality*, 31-32.

<sup>14</sup> *Insight*, 457.

"Prime potency" is the metaphysical ground of the empirical residue. This prime potency can be divided into central and conjugate potency. Central form is the intelligible unity of data as individual, and its corresponding central potency is the individuality of the empirical residue. Conjugate forms are terms defined implicitly by their empirically verified and explanatory relations, and their corresponding conjugate potency includes spatiotemporal continua, conjunctions, and successions.<sup>15</sup> In considering the immortality of the human self, it is also helpful to recall that in a strict epistemological sense the self is a thing. A thing we learn in chapter 8 is "a unity, identity, whole" grasped by insight in data."<sup>16</sup> Lonergan defines the self more fully in chapter 15 as "an individual, existing, unity differentiated by physical, chemical, organic, psychic, and intellectual conjugates."<sup>17</sup>

In addition to the metaphysical elements and Lonergan's definition of the self as an existing unity, his distinction of the material and the spiritual is central to his analysis. Lonergan differentiates the material and the spiritual in terms of intelligibility and intelligence rather than in terms of the tangible and the ephemeral. The material is what is intelligible, while the spiritual is what is both intelligible and intelligent. He defines the material more fully as "whatever is constituted by the empirical residue or is conditioned intrinsically by that residue."<sup>18</sup> The spiritual, on the other hand, is neither constituted nor conditioned by the empirical residue. In the human self there are material levels of integration (the physical, chemical, organic, and psychic) and spiritual levels of integration (the intelligent, the rational, and the rationally self-conscious). The self though is a unity, identity, whole. The question is whether the ground of that unity is material or spiritual. If the ground of the unity of the self is material, in other words if it is one's body that unifies and individuates the self, then clearly the self ceases to exist at death.

Lonergan first poses the question of immortality in terms of the metaphysical elements: "Is or is not man's central form conditioned intrinsically by prime potency? Can man exist as a unity without prime

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<sup>15</sup> *Insight*, 462.

<sup>16</sup> *Insight*, 271.

<sup>17</sup> *Insight*, 495.

<sup>18</sup> *Insight*, 540.

potency?"<sup>19</sup> He then formulates the question in terms of his distinction of the material and the spiritual: "But the question is whether the breakdown of his organic and sensitive living necessarily is the end of his identical existence. For if his central form is spiritual, then it is not conditioned intrinsically by prime potency; and then, absolutely speaking, his central form could be separated from prime potency without ceasing to ground an existing unity and identity."<sup>20</sup>

Lonergan answers these questions by focusing on the intelligible unity which is the self in its central form. "Now it is central form that constitutes the metaphysical ground of the truth of affirming [the] unity."<sup>21</sup> As explained in chapter 11, there is unity on the side of the object and corresponding unity on the side of the subject. The subject who grasps the virtually unconditioned and judges, must be identical with the subject who understands and formulates, senses and imagines. At issue is whether this one unity is conditioned intrinsically by prime potency, for if that were the case, then the self could not exist separated from its material. First, no central form is constituted by prime potency, because central form is the object of an act of understanding and, as such, is abstracted from the empirical residue. Secondly, Lonergan argues that central form is not conditioned intrinsically by prime potency, the empirical residue from which understanding abstracts. Lonergan basis his position on the principle that "material reality cannot perform the role or function of spiritual reality but spiritual reality can perform the role or function of material reality."<sup>22</sup> The self's central form as spiritual, that is, as intelligent, unifies and grounds the underlying physical, chemical, organic, and psychological conjugates. As intelligent the self can comprehend its material dimensions. The reverse is not the case; the merely physical or organic, as such, cannot comprehend human intelligence and rationality. As Kierkegaard explains the somatic is contained in the psychic, and the psychic is contained in the spirit (self-consciousness).<sup>23</sup> It is not as commonly

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<sup>19</sup> *Insight*, 542.

<sup>20</sup> *Insight*, 543.

<sup>21</sup> *Insight*, 542.

<sup>22</sup> *Insight*, 543.

<sup>23</sup> Søren Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Anxiety*, trans. Reidar Thomte (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980), 136.

imagined that the body contains a soul, but that the soul contains a body, and self-consciousness contains both soul and body. Thus, for Lonergan, the central form of the human being is the metaphysical ground of the unity of the self. While the self is the center of sensitive experience, it is also the center of inquiry and insight, reflection and judgment. As an intelligent unity, the self is the spiritual center that comprehends its materiality. The self is thus not intrinsically dependent on, that is dependent for its existence on, its physical, chemical, organic being. So, Lonergan concludes, "absolutely speaking, his central form could be separated from prime potency [the bodily] without ceasing to ground an existing unity and identity."<sup>24</sup>

Lonergan's metaphysical account of human immortality is consonant with the classical arguments of Aristotle and Thomas. Central to all three of their positions is the nature of the act of understanding as abstracting from materiality and as itself immaterial. Aristotle states in III.4: "In so far as the realities it knows are capable of being separated from their matter, so it is also with the powers of mind."<sup>25</sup> Thomas concurs when he states that the activity of understanding has "nothing in common with corporeal matter."<sup>26</sup> As we have seen in chapter 16, for Lonergan the act of understanding abstracts from the empirical residue. He elaborates the nature of this abstraction in chapter 19:

[The act of understanding] is immaterial, for it abstracts from the empirical residue, yet of the material, for it advances in understanding this universe. Again, while it is involved in an ordinal time, for it develops, it is not involved in the continuous time of local motion, for its development is not through a sequence of non-countable stages. Finally, while it pertains to a spatially conditioned subject, it is non-spatial, for it deals with the non-countable multiplicity of space through invariants that are independent of particular spatial standpoints.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> *Insight*, 543.

<sup>25</sup> Aristotle, *de Anima*, III. 4. 329b.

<sup>26</sup> Thomas, *Disputed Questions*, article 2.

<sup>27</sup> *Insight*, 668-69.

In *Verbum* Lonergan outlines the three degrees of abstraction possible for human understanding: (1) in science understanding abstracts from the here and now; (2) in mathematics understanding abstracts from sensible qualities; and (3) in metaphysics understanding abstracts from any limiting condition of imagination.<sup>28</sup> So, the self in its act of understanding already in this life abstracts from material conditions and limitations – space, time, sensible qualities, even imagination.

A second similarity in the accounts of immortality in Thomas and Lonergan can be noted. Lonergan focuses his treatment on the issue of man's central form – whether it is spiritual or material. Concluding that the center and ground of the unity must be spiritual because intellectual acts can comprehend material reality, but man's material conjugates do not comprehend spiritual reality. Form also plays a central role in Thomas's argument. He argues that the act of understanding has a principle, which is a form in the individual man. Since the activity of understanding has nothing in common with corporeal matter, so the form, which is the principle of this activity, is not dependent on matter; further, it follows that since the form is not dependent on matter, so the being of the individual man is not dependent on matter. In this reasoning Thomas moves from the immaterial nature of the act, to the form, to actual being of the individual man.

While Lonergan's account of immortality has elements in common with classical arguments, his approach also differs. Plato, Aristotle, and Thomas, perhaps, to a lesser degree, begin with the nature of the object of understanding, reason to the immortality of the intellect, and then to the soul possessing that intellect. Lonergan, on the other hand, with his generalized empirical method begins with the data of consciousness; in this case specifically, insight, and the nature of our intelligent operations.

I asked at the outset whether the classical arguments for immortality are still convincing given historical consciousness and the ongoing process of the revision of human knowledge. In what sense are the objects of our understanding eternal truths? It has become clear that immortality does not rest on the eternality of the object of

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<sup>28</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas*, vol. 2 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1997), 53-56.

understanding, but on the freedom of the act of understanding from material conditions. One of those material conditions from which understanding abstracts is "the now" of immediate temporality. The objects of understanding, ideas, are abstract from time, but this is not sufficient to ensure their eternal truth. As Lonergan says, "Insights are a dime a dozen." Objective truth requires rational reflection and a grasp of the virtually unconditioned. But, the understanding does not have to attain absolute, eternal truth in order to abstract from the empirical residue, to be independent of prime potency. I am not holding that we cannot attain absolute, eternal truths just that Lonergan bases his solution to the question of human immortality on the nature of the act of understanding rather than on the eternity of its objects.

Lonergan's explanatory account of immortality leaves one further question unanswered. Let us imagine our continued existence after death prior to the resurrection. (All that has been explained so far is that the self is immortal; the doctrine of the resurrection has not entered into the philosophic account.) Imagine that you are still existing but without a body or any material presence. It is not the happy dualistic picture of a ghost floating through space, but the hylomorphic supposition of a self thinking, which actually cannot be imagined. You have no brain, sense organs, or nervous system, so you cannot see anyone or anything, you cannot hear, you lack any sense of where you are. In addition, because you cannot imagine without a brain and nervous system, you cannot remember. But you are still existing and thinking. Now, let's suppose that there is another human being in a similar state (or for that matter 10,000 others). How are you different from the other? What is it that would differentiate two immaterial selves?

Lonergan writes that, "Man is an individual existing unity."<sup>29</sup> He thoroughly accounts for the unity of the central form and its spiritual nature, but he does not directly treat the individuality of the existing unity. What individuates you and me in the afterlife? Lonergan discusses the problem of individuation in chapter 16. He illustrates with the example of the three points A, B, and C, of an equilateral triangle separated by three equal line segments AB, BC, and CA. What makes one point different from the other two? – The different lengths

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<sup>29</sup> *Insight*, 495.

that separate them. But what makes the equal line segments different from each other? They terminate and begin at different points. The circularity of this answer reveals the meaninglessness of mere empirical difference. "Such difference would not be grounded in any assignable reason, in anything to be known by a direct act of understanding.... Its metaphysical ground is potency."<sup>30</sup> If the metaphysical basis of individuation is potency or the empirical residue, and empirical residue does not condition intrinsically man's central form, then how is the self as separated from material individuated?

I propose that the solution to the problem of the individuation of the separated self lies in its consciousness. Different kinds of cognitional acts are qualified by different kinds of consciousness. Acts of understanding and other intelligent acts are qualified by intelligent consciousness. Acts of judgment and other rational acts are qualified by rational consciousness. And these acts are self-conscious as well as conscious, for consciousness is always self-conscious. After death, then, the self as operating intelligently is intelligently self-conscious. So, you might suppose yourself thinking: here I am, still existing, thinking about what I know and my knowing. And let's suppose that there is another self, who is also still existing, understanding, conscious, and self-conscious. Both think "I" and thereby individuate themselves. It remains true that it is experience that individuates, but in the separated state the experience is of oneself as engaged in conscious activity. This solution depends upon Lonergan's generalized meaning of experience, experience that is not limited to sense experience but includes experience of one's consciousness.<sup>31</sup>

Lonergan once said that he was not interested in arguments or in providing arguments as a style of philosophy, so I am reluctant to

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<sup>30</sup> *Insight*, 528.

<sup>31</sup> I would like to thank Neil Ormerod for a reference that supplies an ambiguous confirmation of this idea. Fred Crowe quotes the following passage in his introduction to Lonergan's *Grace and Freedom* (1971): "(man's) higher powers are the spiritual counterpart of *materia prima*, and their indeterminate potentiality points at once in all directions" (xi). The "indeterminate potentiality" of man's higher powers has a broader connotation than the potentiality of the experience of one's intellectual and rational consciousness, because it includes the unrestricted to-be-known. That is, it refers to the noetic/noematic potentiality as well as the noetic experience. This observation of Lonergan does not contradict the view I put forth here, but it does not explicitly deal with intellectual consciousness as experience.

conclude that Lonergan proves the immortality of the human self.<sup>32</sup> Nevertheless, we can recognize in the strength and clarity of his metaphysical treatment of the issue a well-reasoned, unique position on immortality, which remains consonant in the main with classical arguments.

I realize that this reflection on the question of immortality, has not established much more than the fact that we are all going to die, and that we are going to continue to exist and be conscious after death – a rather uncanny prospect. For any more satisfying picture of life after death, faith is required, a faith that we are created, loved, and held in existence by God. As Marcel memorably wrote “To love a being is to say, ‘Thou, thou shalt not die!’”<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Bernard Lonergan, “On Insight,” delivered at the Canadian Philosophical Association Meeting (Toronto, 1974). (On cassette tape in the Lonergan Center, Loyola Marymount University)

<sup>33</sup> Gabriel Marcel, *The Mystery of Being*, Vol. II: *Faith and Reality* (Chicago: Gateway – Henry Regnery Company, 1960), 171.

LOVE AND LIGHT:  
A HYPOTHESIS REGARDING  
LONERGAN'S FOUR-POINT HYPOTHESIS

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**THE GAZE OF LOVE: DEVELOPING LONERGAN'S  
THEOLOGY OF GRACE AND GLORY**

THIS ESSAY IS AN EXERCISE IN WHAT LONERGAN calls the functional specialty "systematics." As an exercise in systematic theology, my principal purpose is, in the words of Charles Hefling, "to set out possibly relevant hypotheses that shed explanatory light on mystery."<sup>1</sup> In what follows, I will formulate a possibly relevant way of thinking about the light of glory in a methodical theology.<sup>2</sup> My hypothesis has grown out of the rich soil of Lonergan's thought and, in my modest estimation, does not represent a radical departure from it. While hypotheses about supernatural realities will not enjoy the security of virtually unconditioned judgments (which can only be approximated by theology), they can enjoy the limited security of probable judgments when further relevant questions have been adequately asked and answered. With that caveat in place, I offer my insight so that others can ask and answer the further pertinent questions, that at the present moment I cannot ask and answer on my own, and arrive at a probable judgment that will either confirm or deny the hypothesis in question. It may be determined that my hypothesis is not relevant and

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<sup>1</sup> Charles Hefling, "On the (Economic) Trinity: An Argument in Conversation with Robert Doran," *Theological Studies* 68 (2007): 643.

<sup>2</sup> A "methodical theology" is a theology that derives its terms and relations not from the theoretical context of metaphysics but from a more phenomenological examination of intentional consciousness.

does not shed explanatory light on mystery. But as Lonergan says in the context of a discussion about the use of models: "the discovery of [its] irrelevance may be the occasion of uncovering clues that otherwise might be overlooked."<sup>3</sup> It is my hope that whether the hypothesis is considered relevant or not, its formulation will raise the further relevant questions that will move the conversation forward.

### RELEVANCE OF THE QUESTION TO RECENT LONERGAN SCHOLARSHIP

In *De Deo Trino*, Lonergan formulated what Robert Doran has called the "four-point hypothesis." In the four-point hypothesis, Lonergan speaks of the four absolutely supernatural created realities: sanctifying grace, charity, the light of glory, and the secondary act of existence (by which Christ as human exists). Lonergan speaks of these absolute supernatural realities not only as created participations in the essence of God, as Aquinas did, but as created participations in the four real relations that constitute the reality of God as Father, Sons, and Holy Spirit.<sup>4</sup> With this hypothesis, Lonergan develops Aquinas's theology of divine participation in a distinctively Trinitarian direction. According to Bob Doran, Lonergan's four-point hypothesis holds great promise for the future of systematic theology. In an essay entitled, *The Starting Point of Systematic Theology*, Doran lays out what he sees as the tremendous explanatory potential of the four-point hypothesis that has, in his own words, "lain hidden for nearly fifty years in the pages of two dusty Latin tomes on the systematics of the Trinity."<sup>5</sup> In Doran's view, the four-point hypothesis, which presupposes and builds on the theorem of the supernatural, will become a vital component in a forthcoming theological synthesis – a unified field structure – that will, in a contemporary theological context, parallel the systematic achievement of Thomas Aquinas. But because of its scholastic mode of

<sup>3</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 285.

<sup>4</sup> See Bernard Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics*, vol. 12 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert M. Doran and H. Daniel Monsour (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 471-73.

<sup>5</sup> Robert Doran, "The Starting Point of Systematic Theology," *Theological Studies* 67 (2006): 750.

expression, discovering its explanatory potential for a contemporary systematic theology will require, as Doran puts it, "massive transposition." Unlike transposing a piece of music from the key of A to the key of G, transposing Lonergan's four-point hypothesis into terms and relations derived from an analysis of conscious intentionality is a labor-intensive and daunting task that has demanded and continues to demand a collaborative theological effort. I offer my hypothesis as a way of joining this collaborative effort – an effort that seeks to explore and exploit the explanatory potential of Lonergan's four-point hypothesis for a contemporary systematic theology.

### RAISING THE QUESTION

To what degree can metaphysical categories have explanatory potential or heuristic value for a theology that derives its terms and relations from conscious intentionality? Can we retain all the distinctions of an older theology or do they require radical revision if they are to function as valid terms within a methodical or contemporary theology? In what follows, I will draw upon the work of Charles Hefling not to endorse his conclusions, but as a way of framing the relevant issues and raising the relevant questions involved in considering the light of glory as a special category within a methodical theology. Hefling argues that a methodical theology cannot preserve all the distinctions of a theology whose terms are metaphysical. He does not support, as many Lonergan scholars do, a strict proportionality or isomorphism such that every metaphysical term and relation lines up with some parallel element in intentional consciousness. In Hefling's view, one example of a distinction that a methodical theology cannot validate is the distinction between sanctifying grace and charity. Now according to the theorem of the supernatural, the entitative habit of sanctifying grace is rooted in the essence of the soul, while the operative habit of charity is rooted in the will as one of its potencies. In scholastic theology, the real distinction between the essence of the soul and its potencies grounds a real distinction between sanctifying grace and the habit of charity. But in Hefling's opinion,

The distinction between "sanctifying grace" and "habitual charity" is not a distinction that a methodologically grounded

theology has any reason to affirm... It seems clear that Lonergan himself saw no reason to distinguish between an "entitative habit" of sanctifying grace and an "operative habit" of charity once he had moved away from the faculty psychology on which such a distinction rests... My thesis is that if Lonergan had himself reconsidered the "four-point hypothesis" in the light of his later *Method in Theology*, he would have found a three-point hypothesis to be a more intelligible organization of the material relevant to the deification of history.<sup>6</sup>

Hefling's claim is not without basis in Lonergan's writings. In the context of a discussion about the transition from a scholastic to a methodical theology, Lonergan says that "metaphysical psychology had to think in terms of potencies, or faculties, that were not among the data of consciousness."<sup>7</sup> Hefling seems to be drawing out the implications of Lonergan's statement for special theological categories. His point is, to put it another way, if, in a methodical theology, there is no distinct faculty called "will," then there is no appropriate metaphysical soil in which the habit of charity, as distinct from sanctifying grace, can take root. More to the point, Hefling's article, though not explicitly, raises questions about the scholastic concept of *lumen gloriae*.

### A SCHOLASTIC THEOLOGY OF ILLUMINATION

For Aquinas, intellectual light is neither the content of what is known nor the act by which it is known. It is, rather, according to Fred Crowe,

the native endowment and power of the intellect... It is an active power, operative and self-sufficient in the whole range of knowledge pertaining to natural reason. It is a participation, a created offprint, of God's intelligence... Just as corporeal light is not a determined color (in the Thomist conception) but is able nevertheless to make all colors visible, so intellectual light is not particular knowledge but is able to bring all particular knowledge to actuation.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Hefling, "On the (Economic) Trinity," 648.

<sup>7</sup> Bernard Lonergan, "Mission and the Spirit," in *A Third Collection* (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), 28.

<sup>8</sup> Frederick Crowe, "Eschaton and Worldly Mission," in *Appropriating the Lonergan*

Aquinas worked out a spectrum of supernatural light, conceived on the analogy of light as it operates in the natural order, as part of what might be called a theology of illumination. In the *Summa Theologiae*, Aquinas argues that the natural light of intellect is sufficient for knowledge of proportionate being – knowledge that comes through the senses. But there are required additional lights by which the intellect comes to know divine *esse*. In the case where knowledge of divine *esse* is analogical and mediated through human propositions (e.g., sacred Scripture, Church doctrines), the light of faith is sufficient.<sup>9</sup> But in the case of immediate knowledge of divine *esse*, there is required the “light of glory” – a higher and more resplendent light that, by participating in the divine light more fully, surpasses both the natural light of intellect and the light of faith in its power of illumination.<sup>10</sup>

Light, for Aquinas, both natural and supernatural, is a disposition in the intellect. But if Hefling is right that “will” and “intellect” are not relevant categories in a methodical theology, at the very least, it raises questions about the explanatory value of special categories that rely on these faculties as their metaphysical basis. If, as Hefling claims, a methodical theology cannot affirm a distinct metaphysical basis for the habit of charity as an operative habit distinct from the entitative habit of sanctifying grace, what happens to the light of glory in a theology that does not think in terms of distinct metaphysical faculties? If a theology that derives its terms and relations from an analysis of conscious intentionality cannot warrant a metaphysically distinct faculty called “intellect,” how does the “light of glory” get transposed?

### THE STARTING POINT AND METHOD OF TRANSPOSITION

For good reasons, much of the conversation, over the last twenty years, about the correct transposition of the four absolutely supernatural components within Lonergan’s four-point hypothesis has been focused on sanctifying grace and charity. Now since most of us, I presume, are neither hypostatically united to a divine person nor experiencing the beatific vision, we lack the conscious data required for a direct

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*Idea* (Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1989), 205.

<sup>9</sup> See Aquinas, STh II-I 109. 1.

<sup>10</sup> See Aquinas, STh I 12. 2.

verification of the *esse secundarium* and the *lumen gloriae*. On the contrary, what the scholastics called *gratia gratum faciens* and *caritas* are more commonly operative in this life; and so we can more reasonably anticipate elements within the field of consciousness that correspond to these supernatural realities. Of the four absolutely supernatural realities enumerated in Lonergan's hypothesis, two of them, namely sanctifying grace and charity, are, with the exception of those in possession of beatific understanding,<sup>11</sup> more known to us in this life. But even if there are conscious elements that correspond to sanctifying grace and charity, still insights that emerge on the basis of this conscious data cannot enjoy an invulnerable status in the present life. In *Mission and the Spirit*, Lonergan writes,

since potency is known by its act and relation by its term, it follows that vertical finality to God himself can be known only in the measure that God is known, that it can be revealed only in the measure that God himself has been revealed, that it can be intimated perhaps but hardly in a manner that is unambiguous since vertical finality is multivalent and obscure, and intimations are not apt to make clear which of many possibilities lies in store.<sup>12</sup>

Since sanctifying grace and charity dynamically relate us to God in a supernaturally transformed finality, what applies to vertical finality, in the order of nature, seems to apply in greater measure to sanctifying grace and charity. In other words, even if there are elements in the data of religious consciousness that correspond to what scholastic theology called sanctifying grace and charity, all of our insights regarding these supernatural realities remain incomplete and provisional, not just unverified but unverifiable possibilities that await their final verification in the data of eschatological consciousness. We might say that sanctifying grace, charity and, in a comparatively greater way, the light of glory are, to use Lonergan's turn of phrase, "shrouded in mystery;" or, to use a trite metaphor, the conscious data on sanctifying

<sup>11</sup> Aquinas speculated that both Moses and Paul were in possession of beatific understanding in this life. In my view, it is possible and perhaps probable that spiritual leaders outside the boundaries of the Judeo-Christian faith tradition (e.g., Buddha) also possessed beatific understanding in this life.

<sup>12</sup> "Mission and the Spirit," 26-27.

grace and charity are the tip of a supernatural iceberg whose vast reality lies largely within the depths of an ocean of transcendence that is, for the time being, out of our view. In other words, because our conscious data on the light of glory is totally absent and our conscious data on sanctifying grace and charity is only partial, we still, as in the older theology, require the use of controlling analogies.

Scholastic theology worked out the theorem of the supernatural as an extended analogy of proportion with an order of nature that was understood and expressed in terms derived from metaphysical psychology. A methodical theology also requires one to extrapolate a conception of the supernatural as an extended analogy of proportion with nature, but nature as it is understood and expressed in terms derived from an examination of intentional consciousness. As Lonergan indicates in his discussion of heuristic methods in *Insight*, investigation requires one to "Name the unknown. Work out its properties. Use the properties to direct, order, and guide the inquiry."<sup>13</sup> "Being-in-love unrestrictedly" is the name for the unknown reality of grace to be discovered more fully. Working out its properties, will require us to formulate a controlling analogy on the basis of intentionality analysis. The analogical conception of properties will be the 'upper blade' that directs and guides the investigation, bringing to light the relevant data of religious consciousness; the relevant data of religious consciousness will be the 'lower blade' that adds further determinations to the analogy and serves as an experiential basis for its correction, modification, and development.<sup>14</sup>

### DERIVING A CONTROLLING ANALOGY FROM THE ORDER OF NATURE

In Fred Crowe's estimation, the notion of being or detached, disinterested, and unrestricted desire is the way to transpose the Thomist

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<sup>13</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, vol. 3 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 68.

<sup>14</sup> See Bernard Lonergan, "The Philosophy of History," in *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1958-1964*, vol. 6 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert C. Croken and Frederick E. Crowe (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 61.

concept of intellectual light. In *Eschaton And Wordly Mission*, Crowe says, "[the] Thomist doctrine [of light] is transformed by Lonergan into a doctrine of the spontaneously operative notion of being, or the pure notion of being."<sup>15</sup> But Lonergan not only identifies the notion of being with the pure and unrestricted desire,<sup>16</sup> he thinks about the unrestricted desire as the proper transposition of what the scholastics called "nature." In *Natural Right and Historical Mindedness*, Lonergan says: "Now Aristotle defined a nature as an immanent principle of movement and rest. In man such a principle is the human spirit as raising and answering questions. As raising questions it is an immanent principle of movement. As answering questions and doing so satisfactorily, it is an immanent principle of rest."<sup>17</sup> What is suggested by these passages is that the notion of being or detached and unrestricted desire is the proper way of transposing both "nature" and "light." As a conscious, upward and indeterminate finality that unfolds across intellectual, rational, and affective domains of consciousness and intends a transcendent term, it is desire; as unrestricted source of questions and answers by which the subject apprehends intelligibility, being, and value, it is intellectual light. In the Thomist analysis, light is the natural power of the intellect; and so the real distinction between intellectual light and nature rests on the real distinction between the soul and its potencies. In place of a faculty psychology that distinguishes nature and light, intentionality analysis reveals a single pure and unrestricted operator that is at once desirous love and intellectual light. In other words, in a methodical theology, the distinction between what the scholastics called intellectual light and nature is not real but notional.

In *Natural Right and Historical Mindedness*, Lonergan, discusses the transition from the natural to the supernatural. He states:

And is not that deeper more comprehensive principle itself a nature, at once a principle of movement and rest, a tidal movement that begins before consciousness, unfolds through sensitivity, intelligence, rational reflection, responsible deliberation, only to find rest beyond all of these? I think so...

<sup>15</sup> Crowe, "Eschaton and Worldly Mission," 205.

<sup>16</sup> See *Insight*, 352.

<sup>17</sup> Bernard Lonergan, "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness," in *A Third Collection* (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), 172.

The point beyond is being in love, a dynamic state that sublates all that goes before, a principle of movement at once purgative and illuminative, and a principle of rest in which union is fulfilled.<sup>18</sup>

What becomes clear in this passage is that Lonergan not only transposes nature as the pure and detached desire, but also thinks about the pure and detached desire as an analogy for the dynamic state of being-in-love unrestrictedly.<sup>19</sup> But if the pure, detached, and unrestricted dynamism of consciousness is both love, as eros, and light, can we think about being-in-love unrestrictedly as a dynamism within consciousness that is at once both love, as union, and light? I think that we can.

### HYPOTHESIS

I propose the following as a possibly relevant hypothesis: as the unrestricted dynamism of consciousness that mounts upward from below is both natural desire and light, what scholastic theology called sanctifying grace and what Lonergan calls the dynamic state of being-in-love unrestrictedly is, at once, both supernatural love and light. If one were to transpose these terms and relations in a methodical theology, the distinction between what the scholastics called sanctifying grace and the light of faith, as well as the distinction between sanctifying grace and the light of glory would be notional not real distinctions. In other words, being-in-love unrestrictedly is notionally distinct from but really identical to what an older theology called the light of faith and the light of glory. I am not suggesting that we abandon the concept "light of glory." I am suggesting that the distinction between supernatural love and light may be a notional, not a real, distinction. I am suggesting that being able to distinguish the light of glory from other supernatural elements is important, but in order to transpose the distinction, it may require revision.

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<sup>18</sup> "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness," 175.

<sup>19</sup> As the pure and detached desire is a principle of operations in the natural order, the dynamic state of being-in-love is a principle of operations in the supernatural order.

### EXCURSUS ON LONERGAN'S POST-METHOD IN THEOLOGY SENSE OF "FAITH"

*Method in Theology* marks a turning point in the development of Lonergan's thinking. According to Fred Crowe, in *Method in Theology*, one sees "a shift from the cognitional to the affective, from the dynamism of 'mind' intent on knowing God to the dynamism of the 'heart' oriented to him in love and bent on union with him, from a three-level structure of conscious intentionality to one with four levels, from an emphasis on what is reasonable in conduct to an emphasis on what is responsible."<sup>20</sup> While this shift in thought – this turn to affectivity, values, responsibility – is not fully worked out, it has impacted the way that Lonergan talks about "Faith." In *Method in Theology*, Lonergan expresses "faith" as a "knowledge born of religious love"<sup>21</sup> and goes on to identify this kind of "knowledge" with Pascal's "reasons of the heart." By reasons of the heart, Lonergan means "feelings that are intentional responses to values."<sup>22</sup> For Lonergan, it is in and through feelings that one apprehends and discerns values. While Lonergan does not exactly put it this way, faith, in a post-*Method in Theology* sense, consists in the apprehension and discernment of value that emerges in and through religious feelings. Religious feelings, such as the "deep-set joy that can remain despite humiliation, failure, pain, betrayal, desertion" or the "radical peace...that the world cannot give"<sup>23</sup> arise from the experienced fulfillment of "our unrestricted thrust to self-transcendence," from "our actuated orientation towards the mystery of love and awe."<sup>24</sup> This "experienced fulfillment" or "actuated orientation" is what an older tradition called "sanctifying grace" and what Lonergan called the "dynamic state of being-in-love in an unrestricted fashion." The dynamic state of being-in-love unrestrictedly generates an affective response (deep-set joy, radical peace, other worldly love) in which apprehensions of transcendent value occur and form an interior conscious basis from which flow the judgments of value that regard the beliefs of a particular religious community. According to Lonergan, judgments of fact and

<sup>20</sup> Crowe, "Lonergan's New Notion of Value," 54.

<sup>21</sup> *Method in Theology*, 115

<sup>22</sup> *Method in Theology*, 115

<sup>23</sup> *Method in Theology*, 105

<sup>24</sup> *Method in Theology*, 115

value have a proper and a borrowed content. The proper content is the operation of assent itself, while the borrowed content is the object about which one assents.<sup>25</sup> Judgments of value that arise in the context of faith also have a proper and a borrowed content. While the assent to particular beliefs is the proper content of the judgments of value, the conceptual content of the beliefs form the borrowed content. But the judgments of value with their proper and borrowed content emanate from a prior apprehension of transcendent value. The transcendent value apprehended is not mediated by the limitations and specificity of images, concepts, or language, but becomes present in and through religious feelings that intend something higher and more global than ordinary objects in the world. In other words, since the occurrence of these religious feelings develop out of a dynamic state of being-in-love that is not intrinsically or even extrinsically conditioned by space and time, the apprehension of transcendent value, as the originating act of faith, is not only a global and undifferentiated presence of goodness, but spans religious and cultural boundaries.<sup>26</sup> This originating apprehension of faith can be described, in the words of Fred Crowe, "as a global view, a 'sense' of rightness that we cannot easily put into words."<sup>27</sup> Beliefs, rituals, sacred narratives, and icons approximate in language and images what, properly speaking, cannot be expressed at all. Both inner and outer words communicate, analogically and inadequately, the ineffable content – Crowe's "sense of rightness" – apprehended in this originating act of faith. On the current hypothesis, since being-in-love in an unrestricted fashion can be understood as the dynamic state through which one apprehends and discerns transcendent and religious values, as well as the dynamic state through which one understands the essence of God directly, being-in-love unrestrictedly functions as the light of faith and the light of glory.

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<sup>25</sup> See Bernard Lonergan, "Judgment," in *Understanding and Being: The Halifax lectures on Insight*, vol. 5 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Elizabeth A. Morelli and Mark D. Morelli (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 114.

<sup>26</sup> Faith, in this sense, would be present in authentically practicing Buddhists, Hindus, etc.

<sup>27</sup> Crowe, "Eschaton and Worldly Mission," 208.

### DEVELOPING THE HYPOTHESIS IN AN EXPLANATORY CONTEXT

In *Openness and Religious Experience*, Lonergan uses the unrestricted dynamism of consciousness as an analogy to conceive the supernatural order of grace. He writes,

But there is also an ultimate enlargement, beyond the resources of every finite consciousness, where there enters into clear view God as unknown, when the subject knows God face to face, knows as he is known. This ultimate enlargement alone approximates to the possibility of openness defined by the pure desire; as well, it is an openness as a gift, as an effect of grace, and, indeed, of grace not as merely *sanans* but as *elevans*, as *lumen gloriae*.<sup>28</sup>

In the natural order, the successive expansions of consciousness result from the pure and unrestricted dynamism as illuminative power, promoting the subject from empirical to intelligent to rational to responsible self-consciousness. By analogy, grace as a principle of supernatural illumination effects further expansions of consciousness that begin with a global and undifferentiated loving apprehension of value that one discovers in faith;<sup>29</sup> the very same grace or being-in-love unrestrictedly can, in Lonergan's words, "draw people out of the world and into the cloud of unknowing."<sup>30</sup> In other words, much like the unrestricted and detached desire that, as natural light, "pulls man out of the solid routine of perception and conation, instinct and habit, doing and enjoying"<sup>31</sup> as it raises and answers intelligent and rational questions, the illuminative power of being-in-love unrestrictedly, draws people out of the world as it grounds transcendent insights that are not intrinsically or extrinsically conditioned by space and time. Finally, according to the present hypothesis, being-in-love as supernatural light can prompt an ultimate enlargement of consciousness that consists in

<sup>28</sup> Bernard Lonergan, "Openness and Religious Experience," in *Collection* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 187.

<sup>29</sup> I am using the term here the way Fred Crowe uses it and the way Lonergan uses it in his later writings.

<sup>30</sup> *Method in Theology*, 342.

<sup>31</sup> *Insight*, 373.

a perduring global and undifferentiated loving apprehension of divine *esse* that, perhaps, does not replace the global apprehension of value discovered in faith but sublates it.<sup>32</sup>

By prompting subjects to raise intelligent, rational, and responsible questions, the detached and disinterested desire, as unrestricted dynamism of human consciousness, is a single remote operator of human development that disposes subjects to a range of successively higher intentional objects within the domain of proportionate reality. What the scholastics called "light," as a power of the "intellect," becomes, in the contemporary transposition, the pure and unrestricted desire as it both disposes and gives rise to apprehensions of intelligibility, being, and value in and through our intelligent, rational, and responsible questions and answers. If one were to express intellectual desire and light in the terms and relations of conscious intentionality, there is a *single* light; it is the illuminative power of the remote operator of development – the illuminative power of the pure and unrestricted desire. When we become more proximately disposed to and apprehend value by asking and answering responsible questions, we need not acquire some additional and more brilliant light beyond the light by which we apprehend being. As the remote operator of natural development, the pure and unrestricted desire is a *single* light that disposes subjects to a range of qualitatively distinct objects by prompting a series of more penetrating questions and insights. By analogy, being in love unrestrictedly is a single remote operator that, as light, disposes subjects initially to the transcendent value, apprehended in faith, and finally to the transcendent intelligibility, apprehended in vision, as distinct moments within the arc of supernatural development. In the supernatural order, there is a single light; it is the illuminative power of the remote operator of supernatural development – the illuminative power of being-in-love unrestrictedly. Perhaps we can think about being-in-love unrestrictedly as a single dynamism that, as it unfolds more and more fully, mounts in its power of illumination – beginning as the light of faith and, by a process of intensification, growing into the light of glory.

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<sup>32</sup> Hans Urs von Balthazar speaks of a faith in Christ despite vision.

### MOVING BEYOND FACULTY PSYCHOLOGY

The fact that being-in-love unrestrictedly is "conscious on the fourth level of intentional consciousness" and "is the type of consciousness that deliberates, makes judgments of value, decides, acts responsibly and freely"<sup>33</sup> does not mean that it cannot also function as the light of faith and the light of glory. The reflective insights of faith as well as mystical and beatific insights are intellectual operations, but all occur on the fourth level of intentional consciousness. The distinction between level four, on the one hand, and levels two and three, on the other, does not correlate to the scholastic distinction between "will" and "intellect." The fourth level of intentional consciousness does not exclude intelligent and rational operations; it sublates them, so that when the subject performs intelligent and rational operations, she become present to herself as responsible.<sup>34</sup> In the context of religious love, when the subject performs intelligent and rational operations, she becomes present to herself not only as responsible, but as responding to sacred mystery.

Being-in-love unrestrictedly is the remote operator that gives rise to religious feelings, apprehensions of transcendent value, and disposes the subject to charitable decisions as a first response to the divine initiative; at a later stage of this supernatural development, being-in-love unrestrictedly disposes the subject to a direct and enduring apprehension of divine essence. From an authentically Lonerganian viewpoint, all of these supernatural apprehensions of value and being would occur on the fourth level of intentional consciousness.<sup>35</sup> From the perspective of a theology that derives its terms and relations from an analysis of intentional consciousness, a single dynamism can dispose the subject to an ascending range of qualitatively different intentional objects along the continuum of self-transcendence. As the pure and unrestricted desire proportions subjects to intelligibility, being, and value in the natural order, being-in-love unrestrictedly can proportion

<sup>33</sup> *Method in Theology*, 106-107.

<sup>34</sup> See Patrick Byrne, "Consciousness: Levels, Sublations, and the Subject as Subject," *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 13 (1995): 138-40.

<sup>35</sup> In "Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon," Lonergan also speaks of a fifth level of intentional consciousness in relation to religious experience, but in *Method in Theology*, he speaks of religious experience within the ambit of the fourth level.

subjects to the transcendent value that one attains in faith and to the divine essence that one attains in beatific insight.

### ON THE CONTINUITY AND DISCONTINUITY OF GRACE AND GLORY

In scholastic theology, sanctifying grace disposes the human person to glory. But because scholastic theology conceived grace as an entitative and not an intellectual disposition, the person still required two additional supernatural lights that would dispose human intelligence to the content of transcendent realities. Moreover, the light of glory was distinguished not only from grace but even from the light of faith, as a distinct and higher light, to make sense of the discontinuity between the content of faith and the content of vision. In other words, a proponent of scholastic theology may grant that being-in-love unrestrictedly is the light of faith, but argue that it cannot be the light of glory because of the radical disproportion between acts of faith and the act of understanding the divine essence directly. But in the natural order, apprehensions of value are relatively supernatural in relation to the preceding reflective insights that grasp the sufficient conditions for judgments of fact; reflective insights are relatively supernatural in relation to the prior insights that grasp intelligible unities. In the process of coming to know and discern value, one single unrestricted desire releases a stream of insights, each one, in some sense, disproportionate to the requisite insight preceding it. On the current hypothesis, grace (being-in-love unrestrictedly) is the seed of future glory that will bloom in eschatological life. Being-in-love unrestrictedly, like the pure and unrestricted desire in the natural order, unfolds in successive stages and gives rise to a series of apprehensions culminating in a vision of God that is not only disproportionate to natural operations but also disproportionate to other operations within the supernatural trajectory of grace.

In the natural order, there are remote and proximate operators of development. The pure and unrestricted desire is the remote operator of human development, while the questions it prompts are the proximate operators. In intellectual and moral development, the pure and unrestricted dynamism raises intelligent questions: "What is it?" "Why?"

As the pure and unrestricted desire unfolds, it begins to raise more critical questions: "Is it really so?" As it unfolds more fully, questions regarding value emerge. While the pure and unrestricted desire or what Aristotle would call "wonder" remotely disposes the subject a range of distinct intentional objects, questions are the proximate operators that dispose subjects more immediately. In other words, questions render the subject "ready" to receive or apprehend intelligibility, being, and value; questions open up the subject to intentional objects. While the detached and disinterested desire disposes one to value, for example, an apprehension of value requires a more immediate disposition generated by the questions raised during the deliberative process.

The upshot of distinguishing remote and proximate operators of development is that we are now in a position to identify the unrestricted desire as a single operator that, through the questions it raises, opens the subject to a hierarchical range of intentional objects, not all at once but as it unfolds over time. In a similar manner, being-in-love unrestrictedly (grace) is a single operator that, as light of faith, opens the subject to global and transcendent value, and, as light of glory, opens the subject to the global and transcendent intelligibility of beatific understanding; it does this not all at once but as it flowers over time. What the scholastics called sanctifying grace and what Lonergan called being-in-love unrestrictedly is a single light that becomes more brilliant as the human person migrates from this life to the next. Furthermore, since the movement from being-in-love unrestrictedly in its initial stages in this life to the final stage of beatific vision is an instance of development "from above," it does not contain the restrictions of development "from below." To put it in less descriptive and more explanatory terms, supernatural development is not conditioned either intrinsically or extrinsically by space and time, but by the self-communication of God. Without the restrictions of natural development, there is no sufficient reason why the self-communication of God cannot inspire a single unrestricted love (grace) in the human person that begins as the light of faith and matures into the light of glory. Within the context of supernatural development, the disposition for glory, even though it is radically disproportionate to dispositions of faith and charity, can be, in some inchoate way, already present in the gift of grace.

Analogies can be adduced from the natural order of development. The disposition for rational operations, even though radically disproportionate to the biological operations within the early stages of human life, is already present, in some sense, at the moment of conception. While rational operations require images and language acquired from human communities, there are no additional extrinsic dispositions that a human organism must acquire for intelligence. The disposition for rational operations develops out of an internal principle. On the current hypothesis, the light of glory develops out of the internal principle of what the scholastics would call sanctifying grace and what Lonergan would call being-in-love unrestrictedly. In other words, grace is a supernatural principle of love and light, in this life, that becomes the light of glory in the next.

### RELATIONSHIP TO KARL RAHNER

Bringing Lonergan and Rahner into conversation on the question of grace and glory can be illuminating for scholars of Lonergan and Rahner. Despite his attempts to use familiar metaphysical categories to express the relationship between uncreated and created grace, Rahner demonstrates, especially with his language about the growth and development of grace into glory, that he is thinking beyond the boundaries of the faculty psychology on which the scholastic theology of grace is built. I think that Rahner's theology can offer Lonergan scholars a general framework for thinking about grace and glory in a way that transcends the restrictions of a faculty psychology and meets the demands of what Lonergan calls a methodical theology. But the categories of scholastic metaphysics, regardless of how Rahner employs them, cannot adequately express the development from grace into glory because scholastic method cannot grasp and express the notion of development in an explanatory way.<sup>36</sup> In *Insight*, Lonergan employed a genetic method to work out an explanatory account of development. As I have tried to show, there are resources in Lonergan's writings for elaborating a natural analogue for supernatural growth and development. For this reason, Lonergan's writings can offer the

<sup>36</sup> See Jeremy Wilkins, "Grace and Growth: Aquinas, Lonergan, and the Problem of Habitual Grace," *Theological Studies* 72, no. 4 (2011): 741-42.

Rahner scholar a more adequate set of explanatory terms and relations in which to understand and express the relationship between grace and glory.

In my view, the authentically Lonerganian answer to the question regarding the relationship between grace and glory, that I have tried to work out in this essay, is congruent with the position of Karl Rahner. In "Some Implications for the Scholastic Concept of Uncreated Grace," Rahner argues for continuity between the life of grace and glory. In his own words:

The intrinsic supernaturality of grace, for instance, is shown to follow from the supernaturality of the beatific vision and is characterized in terms of it; since the latter is supernatural simply speaking and in its inner nature, so must grace be, for it is a commencement of the blessed life, homogenous with the ontological presuppositions of the vision (*inchoatio formalis*). The life of grace, that is to say, and the life of future glory do not stand in a purely moral or juridical relation to each other, such that the latter is the reward of the former as merit; the life of glory is the definitive flowering (the manifestation, the disclosure) of the life of divine sonship already possessed and merely "hidden" for the moment. Hence grace, as the ontological basis of this supernatural life, is also an inner entitative principle (at the least a partial principle) of the vision of God.<sup>37</sup>

Lonergan also understands what the scholastics called sanctifying grace as a partial realization of what will be more fully realized in the beatific vision. When Lonergan speaks of grace in relation to nature, it is expressed as a state of perfection and completion because it actuates the unrestricted potency of human nature and enables it to serve ends far beyond its natural scope. But in relation to the uncreated grace of God attained more fully in the beatific vision, the transposed equivalent of sanctifying grace – being-in-love unrestrictedly – can be expressed as a beginning, an incomplete and imperfect state, a dynamic openness to God. In Lonergan's words, being-in-love unrestrictedly is "...an

<sup>37</sup> Karl Rahner, "Some Implications of the Scholastic Concept of Uncreated Grace," *Theological Investigations* 1 (Baltimore: Helicon, 1965), 326.

under-tow of existential consciousness,...a *vocation* to holiness;<sup>38</sup> as "...a direction, a pattern, a thrust, a *call*, to unworldliness;<sup>39</sup> as an experience of "a charged field of love and meaning; [that] here and there...reaches a notable intensity; but...ever unobtrusive, hidden, *inviting* each of us to join."<sup>40</sup> The language of "call" and "invitation" is strikingly similar to Rahner's description of created (sanctifying) grace as "supernatural existential." Being-in-love unrestrictedly is being caught up in an orientation to an absolute mystery in which, even prior to total transformation, intimations of deep-set joy and other-worldly serenity become conscious as an experience of holiness that will be deepened and enriched more pervasively and intensely as conversion becomes more perfect. In other words, the state of spiritual joy and other-worldly peace evoked by the experience of the holy mystery does not in itself indicate a total and permanent spiritual achievement. Being-in-love unrestrictedly gives rise to an affective experience of being swept up in the tidal movement of the holy mystery that invites and calls and draws one to exercise a measure of kindness and fidelity, gentleness and self-control even prior to one's total and permanent self-surrender that will elevate one to a perfect state of loving in the beatific vision.

Rahner goes on to explain the relationship between grace and glory in terms of scholastic metaphysical categories. Rahner remarks:

just as grace in general as an entitative supernatural elevation of man can be described in more precise detail only in terms of its definitive unfolding, the *visio* (though this 'unfolding and 'disclosure' are not just a "growth" to a final stage arising out of an inner impulse but are also a new eschatological intervention of the God who is still in himself concealed), so too uncreated grace is only to be determined in terms of the *visio*: it is the homogenous commencement, already given though still concealed and still to unfold, of that communication of the divine Being taking place by way of formal causality to the created spirit which is the ontological presupposition of the *visio*.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>38</sup> *Method in Theology*, 240.

<sup>39</sup> *Method in Theology*, 290.

<sup>40</sup> *Method in Theology*, 290.

<sup>41</sup> Rahner, "Some Implications of the Scholastic Concept of Uncreated Grace," 335.

As with Lonergan, Rahner accords priority to uncreated rather than created or sanctifying grace.<sup>42</sup> For Rahner, uncreated grace is nothing less than the self-communication of God to the human person. But unlike Lonergan, Rahner conceives the relationship between the self-communication of God and created or sanctifying grace on the analogy of formal and material causality.<sup>43</sup> For Rahner, the divine self-communication effects the material conditions (created/sanctifying grace) to receive God *uti in se est*. Sanctifying grace is the principle of receptivity or supernatural disposition that is born out of the act of divine self-communication to the human subject.<sup>44</sup> In this analogical conception, God functions as formal or "quasi" formal cause.<sup>45</sup> According to Rahner, the beatific vision is the event by which the self-communication of God to the human subject is intensified. For Rahner, when created or sanctifying grace as the dynamic openness of the human spirit receives God fully, such that the divine intelligibility is grasped in the absence of any mediating concept, it becomes the light of glory.

Because of the limitations of theology, one cannot be certain how this "growth" of grace into glory transpires. Rahner explains:

whether we should interpret it as a difference in degree of this increasing communication in itself, or as a difference derived from the difference in the material disposition to this communication. In other words, we do not intend to take up the question whether the growth from uncreated grace to the possession of God as the basis of the *visio* beatific is an inner

<sup>42</sup> See Robert Doran, "Consciousness and Grace," *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 11 (1993): 70-72.

<sup>43</sup> For Lonergan, the relationship between uncreated and created grace is an instance of efficient causality and understood as a "consequent condition." For a more detailed account, see Doran, "Consciousness and Grace," 70-75.

<sup>44</sup> In *Foundations of Christian Faith*, Rahner refers to this created grace as "supernatural existential."

<sup>45</sup> Rahner says, "it cannot be impossible in principle to allow an active formal causality (*eine formale Wirkursachlichkeit*) of God upon a creature without thereby implying that this reactively impresses a new determination upon God's Being in itself, one which would do away with his absolute transcendence and immutability. One may explicitly draw attention to this meta-categorical character of God's abidingly transcendent formal causality by a prefixed "quasi..." (Rahner, "Some Implications of the Scholastic Concept of Uncreated Grace," 330).

growth of this possession in itself or just the "growth" (always understood with the restriction indicated above) of created grace into the light of glory – or whether this either-or is really not justified at all in a more precisely worked out ontology of the relationship between *causa formalis* and *causa materialis*.<sup>46</sup>

Rahner expresses not only continuity between grace and glory, but also discontinuity. There is, as he says, an "eschatological intervention." This does not mean (at least for Rahner) that the contingent term or created effect of such an intervention is a created supernatural disposition distinct from the created reality of (created or sanctifying) grace already given. For Rahner, the created effect (of the intervention) is either a deepening of the principle of receptivity (sanctifying grace) already given, or an intensification of the self-communication of God, also already happening in the life of grace. So "eschatological intervention" implies that created grace as material cause or self-communication of God as formal cause increases by degree. It does not, for Rahner, imply some other created disposition, namely the light of glory as something distinct from (sanctifying) grace and divine self-communication. Both Rahner and the post-*Method in Theology* Lonerganian theology of grace that I have tried to work out suggest a grace that grows into glory.

But in the final analysis, there is return to mystery. From a Rahnerian and Lonerganian point of view, the reason why grace has not yet grown into glory is hidden within the providential wisdom of God. For reasons unknown to us, God has, in the words of Fred Crowe, "exercised some self-restraint, some self-imposed limitation, on the Spirit's reign over our hearts;" and so, as through a glass darkly, we wait in joyful hope for a time when there will be a complete release of the Spirit, with its power of union and illumination so great that we will see God through, what Rahner calls, the "gaze of love."<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Rahner, "Some Implications of the Scholastic Concept of Uncreated Grace," 337.

<sup>47</sup> Rahner, "Some Implications of the Scholastic Concept of Uncreated Grace," 336.

## MEANING, LANGUAGE, AND THE MYSTERY OF THE HUMAN PERSON: A CONVERSATION WITH WALKER PERCY AND BERNARD LONERGAN

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THE LIFE OF THE AMERICAN CATHOLIC novelist and philosopher Walker Percy (1916-90) dramatically illustrates "the Mind and Heart of Hope." Although Percy was raised in a noble, affluent, and prominent Southern family, his background was also marked by a family history of melancholy, depression, tragedy, and suicide.<sup>1</sup> As Paul Elie explains: "There was a suicide in nearly every generation. One Percy man dosed himself with laudanum; another leaped into a creek with a sugar kettle tied around his neck. John Walker Percy – Walker Percy's grandfather – went up to the attic in 1917 and shot himself in the head."<sup>2</sup> His father, Leroy Pratt Percy, committed suicide in the attic in 1929. Percy remarked, "The central mystery of my life is to figure out why my father committed suicide." In fact, wondering if he were destined for the same fate, he often referred to himself as an "ex-suicide." As Grant Kaplan notes, "the question was how to get on living after deciding to live."<sup>3</sup>

This essay is envisioned as a small part of a much larger project that explores the work of Percy as a relevant and viable voice in a Catholic engagement with contemporary culture. In doing so, one must engage Kieran Quinlan's highly critical argument that Walker Percy

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<sup>1</sup> For an eloquent account of the Percy family, see Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *The House of Percy: Honor, Melancholy, and Imagination in a Southern Family* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

<sup>2</sup> Paul Elie, *The Life You Save May Be Your Own: An American Pilgrimage* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003), 10.

<sup>3</sup> Grant Kaplan, "Diagnosing Modernity: Eric Voegelin's Impact on the Worldview of Walker Percy," *Religion and the Arts* 15 (2011): 341.

is the "last Catholic novelist" in the sense "that his vision of the world has been profoundly shaped by a particular period in recent Catholic history" and furthermore, that this vision is "no longer viable."<sup>4</sup> Quinlan argues that Percy was "the most self-consciously Roman Catholic novelist in America during the last several decades" and more importantly, "his version of Catholicism continued right up to the end to bear much – though certainly not all – of the ambience of the era in which he was converted, the 1940s."<sup>5</sup> Quinlan charitably states his own place at the time of the book's writing: "My background has been in philosophy and theology in a Roman Catholic setting, subsequently in the British and American analytic tradition, and later still in literature."<sup>6</sup> He adds, however, with reference to David Lodge, that his present religious convictions are demythologized, provisional, and theologically agnostic.<sup>7</sup> Quinlan's work helpfully illuminates the degree to which Percy's Catholicism both frames and permeates his writings. For Quinlan, the Catholic influence is problematic; for a systematic theologian, however, this fact opens up many connective possibilities. Quinlan's categorization of Percy fails, in my estimation, to capture his complexity and to make a space for a retrieval of his "viable voice" for this generation.

This essay explores several connections between the work of Walker Percy and Bernard Lonergan. As far as I can tell, neither thinker ever referred to one another.<sup>8</sup> In a 1986 interview with Charlotte Hays, Percy remarked:

I'm not much of a theologian. I'm a novelist, a pretty low-grade profession. I guess I'm pretty old-fashioned. The last

<sup>4</sup> Kieran Quinlan, *Walker Percy: The Last Catholic Novelist* (Baton Rouge and Louisiana: Louisiana State University Press, 1996), 9.

<sup>5</sup> Quinlan, *Walker Percy*, 218.

<sup>6</sup> Quinlan, *Walker Percy*, 14.

<sup>7</sup> Quinlan, *Walker Percy*, 14.

<sup>8</sup> After a query to the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill library, which houses Percy's own library, I received the following reply: "I cannot find Bernard Lonergan's *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding* in our collection of books owned by Walker Percy. The only Lonergan is a copy of Bernard Lonergan: 3 Lectures, edited by R. Eric O'Connor, number 75 of the Thomas More Institute Papers without any annotations by Percy. (The three lectures are: The Redemption, Time and Meaning, and Healing and Creating in History.)"

theologian I read was John of St. Thomas, who was a 17<sup>th</sup> century commentator on Aquinas...He's been revived as an early founder of the very popular discipline of semiotics. Recent theologians who have meant the most to me are Maritain, Guardini, and some of Rahner. But I'm not really competent in theology.<sup>9</sup>

Why the connection? I would like to suggest that Walker Percy exemplifies, in part, Lonergan's conviction that a historical tradition "can live and function" in several cultures "only if it thinks of itself, only if it effects its shift to the idea, in harmony with the style, the mode of forming concepts, the mentality, the horizon proper to each culture."<sup>10</sup> Percy was working in what Lonergan called the "third stage of meaning." Recall that for Lonergan in this stage "science asserts its autonomy from philosophy, and there occur philosophies that leave theory to science and take their stand on interiority."<sup>11</sup> As scientists develop "ongoing processes" and a "succession of formulations" to explain "all sensible data," one might assume that "philosophy has nothing to say."<sup>12</sup> Yet, for Lonergan, the "primary function" of philosophy is "to promote the self-appropriation that cuts to the root of philosophic differences and incomprehension." It also possesses the task of "distinguishing, relating, grounding the several realms of meaning and, no less, in grounding the methods of the sciences and so promoting their unification."<sup>13</sup>

Lonergan differentiates two phases within the third stage of meaning. The first phase – recognizing the differentiation between science and philosophy – focused on human cognition and the task of knowing the universe through the empirical sciences (Galileo, Descartes, Spinoza, and Kant). The second phase – cognizant of "Kant's Copernican revolution" and Hegel's "turn from substance to

<sup>9</sup> *More Conversations with Walker Percy*, ed. Lewis A. Lawson and Victor A. Kramer (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1993), 118.

<sup>10</sup> Bernard Lonergan, "The Future of Christianity," in *A Second Collection*, ed. William F. J. Ryan, S.J. and Bernard J. Tyrrell, S.J. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), 159.

<sup>11</sup> *Method in Theology*, 85.

<sup>12</sup> *Method in Theology*, 94.

<sup>13</sup> *Method in Theology*, 95.

subject" – focused on human freedom, will, decision-making, and action (Kierkegaard, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Blondel, Brentano, Husserl).<sup>14</sup>

Key themes emphasized in this brief explanation of the third stage of meaning permeate Walker Percy's philosophical and literary writings. Let me suggest four. First, the tension between the respective emphases of the two phases of the third stage of meaning frame the trajectory of Percy's work. As we shall indicate below, Percy articulated his own shifting of horizons with reference to Hegel and Kierkegaard, the objective scientist and the existential self, the theorist and the castaway. Second, Percy was a physician deeply learned in the scientific, maintaining his love for science throughout his life. Third, although he was committed to science, he also believed that the predominant scientific attitude, while committed to an objective explanation of reality, also failed to account for the normative interior operations and intersubjective activities that scientists share with other kinds of knowers. "The embarrassment occurs," remarked Percy, "when the natural sciences, so spectacularly successful in addressing the rest of the cosmos, address man himself," including "psychology, psychiatry, linguistics, developmental anthropology, sociology."<sup>15</sup> Finally, in a modest attempt to ground this gap, Percy examines, not intellect and will, nor any other terms rooted in faculty psychology, but consciousness, language, meaning, intersubjectivity, and symbol.

I have explored elsewhere some connections between Lonergan on faith, reason, and belief and Percy's treatment of the same themes in his novels.<sup>16</sup> Here we focus on Percy's philosophical essays. After a brief description of Percy's intellectual broadening of horizons, this essay explores several Percy-Lonergan connections: (1) the influence of Susanne Langer, (2) the relationship between language, meaning,

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<sup>14</sup> *Method in Theology*, 96; Paul St. Amour, "Kierkegaard and Lonergan on the Prospect of Cognitive-Existential Integration," in *Lonergan Workshop Journal*, vol. 18, ed. Fred Lawrence (Chestnut Hill, MA: Boston College, 2005): 2-3.

<sup>15</sup> Walker Percy, "The Fateful Rift: The San Andreas Fault in the Modern Mind," *Signposts in a Strange Land*, ed. Patrick Samway (New York: The Noonday Press, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1991), 273.

<sup>16</sup> This manuscript, entitled "The Human Quest and Divine Disclosure in Walker Percy: An Examination in light of Lonergan," was presented at the 2011 American Catholic Philosophical Association in St. Louis, Missouri.

and the mystery of the human person, and finally (3) the inadequacy of conceptualism, drawing on Percy's treatment of metaphor.

### PERCY'S BROADENING OF HORIZONS<sup>17</sup>

Early in his life Percy had an inclination toward science. As Jay Tolson observes, even in his high school years in Greenville, Mississippi, in the wake of deep tragedy, Percy was "looking for certainties, and though he attended Greenville's Presbyterian church along with his brothers," he found them, not in religion or in his Uncle Will's Stoicism, but "in science – or, more accurately, in that exaggerated faith in science that is called scientism."<sup>18</sup> Attracted by its elegance, beauty, and simplicity, science exhibited for him a "constant movement" in the "direction of ordering the endless variety and the seeming haphazardness of ordinary life by discovering underlying principles."<sup>19</sup> Trained at Columbia University's College of Physicians and Surgeons, Percy contracted pulmonary tuberculosis while working as a pathologist at Bellevue Hospital in New York City. As a result of this diagnosis, he was forced to spend a significant amount of time in a sanatorium in the Adirondack Mountains. This forced exile deeply transformed his inner life, and indeed, shaped the intellectual and existential trajectory of the rest of his life.

What were the consequences of this misfortune and interruption? Although Percy never abandoned his allegiance to and a love for the "rigor and discipline of the scientific method," he experienced "a shift of ground, a broadening of perspective, a change of focus."<sup>20</sup> On his sick bed, he began to read Dostoevsky, Camus, Jaspers, Marcel, Heidegger, among others. Indicative of his expanding horizons, Percy became less interested in the physiological and pathological processes of the human body and more fascinated by questions concerning the nature and destiny of human persons, and more specifically, by the peculiar

<sup>17</sup> "The Retrieval of Religious Intellectuality: Walker Percy in Light of Michael Buckley," *Renascence: Essays on Literature and Values* 63, no. 3 (Spring 2011): 211-28.

<sup>18</sup> Jay Tolson, *Pilgrim in the Ruins: A Life of Walker Percy* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 96.

<sup>19</sup> Percy, "From Facts to Fiction," 187.

<sup>20</sup> Percy, "From Facts to Fiction," 188.

predicament of human persons "thrown" (to use Heidegger's image) into a modern technological society. Percy writes:

If the first great intellectual discovery of my life was the beauty of the scientific method, surely the second was the discovery of the singular predicament of man in the very world which has been transformed by science. An extraordinary paradox became clear: that the more science progressed, and even as it benefitted man, the less it said about what it was like to be a man living in the world. Every advance in science seemed to take us further from the concrete here-and-now in which we live.<sup>21</sup>

This paradox illuminates what Percy considered a gaping hole in a reductionist scientific view of the world: that however beautiful and legitimate in its own right, it failed to fully account for the very human being doing the science. Percy recounts that after many years of scientific education he "felt somewhat like the Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard when he finished reading Hegel. Hegel, said Kierkegaard, explained everything under the sun, except one small detail: what it means to be a man living in the world who must die."<sup>22</sup> In fact, as Percy later observes in *Lost in the Cosmos* (1983), our advances in "an objective understanding in the Cosmos," in reality, distances the self "from the Cosmos precisely in the degree of the advance – so that in the end the self becomes a space-bound ghost which roams the very Cosmos it understands perfectly."<sup>23</sup> After his stay in the sanatorium and in the wake of these shifting horizons, Percy left medical practice and pursued a career as a writer.

### THE INFLUENCE OF SUSANNE K. LANGER

In terms of common influence, both Percy and Lonergan were influenced by the philosopher Susanne K. Langer. In fact, Percy's first published article was a review of Langer's work: "I remember I read

<sup>21</sup> Percy, "From Facts to Fiction," 188.

<sup>22</sup> Percy, "From Facts to Fiction," 188.

<sup>23</sup> Walker Percy, *Lost in the Cosmos: The Last Self-Help Book* (New York: The Noonday Press, Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1983), 12-13.

Susanne Langer's book *Philosophy in a New Key*, which was for me a very, very exciting book. But I thought it went wrong at the end. And so I just thought I would write and say how it went wrong, and I wrote a long review and sent it to *Thought Quarterly*, and lo and behold, it was published."<sup>24</sup> This 1954 review entitled "Symbol as Need" was later published in *The Message in the Bottle*. Although Percy read *Feeling and Form*, the book on which Lonergan grounds his own reflections on art, he engages *Philosophy in a New Key* most explicitly in the article. In this review, he praises Langer for sharing her new insight into "symbolic transformation." This essay exemplifies Percy's aim to integrate the emphases of a variety of philosophical positions. Here he engages the "revisionary positivism of Susanne Langer with the Thomistic metaphysics of Jacques Maritain and the existentialist personalism of Gabriel Marcel."<sup>25</sup> Contrary to a positivist account of meaning, human communication of meaning is not limited to the discursive word or symbol:

The art symbol conveys its most appropriate meaning, a meaning inaccessible to the discursive form. In each medium, the virtual space of the painting, the virtual life of the poem, the virtual time of the music, the form which is created represents, *symbolizes* – not just the thousand and one subject matters of the various arts but rather the *feelings*, the *felt life* of the artist and so of the observer.<sup>26</sup>

Percy expresses astonishment at how close Langer "comes to a Scholastic view of art" and furthermore that "there is not a single reference to Maritain or any other Scholastic source..."<sup>27</sup> In fact, Percy situates several passages from Maritain's *Art and Scholasticism*, and one from Aquinas himself, alongside Langer's, remarking with a hint of irony that it is "apparently Saint Thomas and not Mrs. Langer or Cassirer who had the first inkling of the mysterious analogy between

<sup>24</sup> *Conversations with Walker Percy*, ed. Lewis A. Lawson and Victor A. Kramer (Jackson: The University Press of Mississippi, 1985), 57-58.

<sup>25</sup> Quinlan, *Walker Percy*, 63.

<sup>26</sup> Percy, "Symbol as Need," *The Message in the Bottle: How Queer Man Is, How Queer Language Is, and What One Has to Do with the Other* (New York: The Noonday Press, Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1985), 289.

<sup>27</sup> Percy, "Symbol as Need," 289.

the form of beauty and the pattern of the inner life."<sup>28</sup> Although Ernst Cassirer must be credited "with the clearest explanation of the peculiar nature of the symbol," Susanne Langer, in fact, "rescued it from the toils of idealism."<sup>29</sup>

After a shrewd look at the metaphysical antecedents of the insight, she saw clearly that there is no reason why it must remain as the end product of speculation on a world spirit and whatnot, that in fact it only achieved its true vitality when seen as detached: as a finding, a human activity, and the beginning rather than the end of science.<sup>30</sup>

Langer identifies, for Percy, "the universal symbolic function of the human mind" and the human capacity for meaning – a capacity for which a behaviorist, in his view, cannot adequately account. At the same time, Percy strongly criticizes Langer's reduction of the human capacity for symbolization to a basic human "need." Because of her use of the term "need," he questions whether she is explaining the act of symbolization, in a reductive manner, with biological categories. In contrast, Percy argues that "symbolic transformation" represents not "an end in itself, a 'need'" but rather a "means" of "knowing."<sup>31</sup> Percy proceeds to specify the kind of knowing he had in mind – the kind of knowing that opens up fruitful connections to Lonergan's work.

For it will be knowledge, not in the sense of possessing "facts" but in the Thomist and existential sense of identification of knower with the object known. Is it not possible that this startling semantic insight, that by the word I *have* the thing, fix it, and rescue it from the flux of Becoming around me, might not confirm and illuminate the mysterious Thomist notion of the interior word, of knowing something by becoming something? that the "basic need of symbolization" is nothing more or less than the first ascent in the hierarchy of knowledge, the eminently "natural" and so all the more astonishing instrument by which I transform the sensory content and appropriate it

<sup>28</sup> Percy, "Symbol as Need," 290.

<sup>29</sup> Percy, "Symbol as Need," 293.

<sup>30</sup> Percy, "Symbol as Need," 294.

<sup>31</sup> Percy, "Symbol as Need," 296.

for the stuff of my ideas, and therefore the activity of knowing cannot be evaluated according to the "degree to which it fills a biological need," nor according to the "degree to which the symbol is articulated," but by nothing short of Truth itself.<sup>32</sup>

Kieran Quinlan dismissively notes that one finds in this passage "a full-blown Thomism indeed, a version of what Bishop Fulton Sheen once referred to in a revealing moment as 'supernatural biology,' enough to cause even the most sympathetic positivist to withdraw from the debate, at least temporarily, in despair."<sup>33</sup> We will comment further on Percy's multiple references to this dimension of Thomist epistemology in a subsequent section of the paper. For now, it will suffice to make a connection between Percy's reference and Lonergan's significant reflections on the "interior word" and "knowledge by identity" in *Verbum* and other places. Furthermore, despite Quinlan's dismissal of Percy's connection to the interior word, it must be noted that Lonergan provides the resources for situating these acts of the mind within the context of "supernatural development" in a universe marked by emergent probability – an account of the universe which engages seriously the claims of modern science.<sup>34</sup>

Similar to Percy, Lonergan's appropriation of Susanne Langer's *Feeling and Form* helped him learn "a great deal more about the concrete process of artistic creation and appreciation."<sup>35</sup> Lonergan's appropriation, however, also transcended her naturalistic limits. Langer expresses her naturalism quite succinctly in *Philosophy in a New Key*:

That man is an animal I certainly believe; and also that he has no supernatural essence, "soul" or "mind stuff," enclosed in his skin. He is an organism, his substance is chemical, and what he does, suffers, or knows, is just what this sort of chemical

<sup>32</sup> Percy, "Symbol as Need," 297.

<sup>33</sup> Quinlan, *Walker Percy*, 66.

<sup>34</sup> See Bernard Lonergan, "Mission and Spirit," in *A Third Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe, S.J. (New York: Paulist Press, 1985).

<sup>35</sup> Richard Liddy, "What Bernard Lonergan Learned from Susanne K. Langer," in *Lonergan Workshop Journal*, vol. 11, ed. Fred Lawrence (Chestnut Hill, MA: Boston College, 1995), 87.

structure may do, suffer, or know. When the structure goes to pieces, it never does, suffers, or knows anything again.<sup>36</sup>

Initially Richard Liddy, who wrote his dissertation on Langer's thought, "overlooked" her "naturalist bias" and "concentrated instead on all the fine and interesting things she was writing about aesthetic and artistic experience." As he proceeded, however, reading her writings proved to be "an occasion of real intellectual crisis," for she maintained reasonable positions that conflicted with his own "Christian faith" and "religious commitments."<sup>37</sup>

Lonergan's use of Langer reveals his concern with primarily mapping out the "distinct carriers or embodiments of meaning" that constitute the life-world.<sup>38</sup> Not unlike Percy's emphasis on "meaning inaccessible to the discursive form," Lonergan also isolates art's connection to the complexity of human consciousness and articulates his own version of this nondiscursive kind of meaning. For Lonergan, it is not primarily the kind of meaning we would associate with scientific demonstration; rather, it is an "elemental" meaning. Similar to Percy's connection to the "Thomist and existential sense of identification of knower with the object known," Lonergan describes this experience as engaging an "intelligibility in a more concrete form than is got hold of on the conceptual level."<sup>39</sup> Lonergan also refers to the Aristotelian and later Thomist notion of the identification of the knower with the known: "Sense in act is the sensible in act. Intelligence in act is the intelligible in act; and perceiving the picture is the identity in act of the perceptive capacity of the subject and the what-is-there-to-be-seen."<sup>40</sup> Further differentiations of consciousness, of course, usher in the distinction between subject and object, but elemental meaning captures this moment of identification, prior to a any distinction between meaning

<sup>36</sup> Susan Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key* (New York: New American Library, 1948), 44; cited in Richard M. Liddy, *Startling Strangeness: Reading Lonergan's Insight* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2007), 61.

<sup>37</sup> Liddy, *Startling Strangeness*, 61-62.

<sup>38</sup> *Method in Theology*, 64.

<sup>39</sup> Bernard Lonergan, "Art," in *Topics in Education: The Cincinnati Lectures of 1959 on the Philosophy of Education*, vol. 10 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 219.

<sup>40</sup> "Art," 224. See also *Method in Theology*, 74.

and what is meant.<sup>41</sup> Elemental meaning is the transformation of one's world. It occurs when one slips out of the ready-made world of one's everyday living – one's functions in society, ordinary conversation, the media, et cetera. It is the opening up of a new horizon which presents something that is "other, different, novel, strange, remote, intimate – all the adjectives that are employed when one attempts to communicate the artistic experience."<sup>42</sup> Lonergan describes this slip out of the ready-made world as a "withdrawal for return." It is an invitation to participate, to explore a symbolic world. Art is a

withdrawal from practical living to explore possibilities of fuller living in a richer world. Just as the mathematician explores the possibilities of what physics can be, so the artist explores the possibilities of what life, ordinary living, can be. There is an artistic element in all consciousness, in all living. Our settled modes have become humdrum, and we may think of all our life simply in terms of utilitarian categories. But in fact the life we are living is a product of artistic creation. We ourselves are products of artistic creation in our concrete living, and art is an exploration of potentiality.<sup>43</sup>

Art communicates the dramatic artistry of human living through the language of symbol. For Lonergan, symbolic consciousness does not express itself dispassionately with univocal terms or propositional theses. The symbol is concerned with representative figures and multiple meanings reinforced "by repetition, variation, and all the arts of rhetoric."<sup>44</sup> As we will see below, Percy also emphasizes the connection between the symbolic and the human capacity to know, emphasizing metaphor and analogy as ways of capturing the rich complexity of the human knowing process. Lonergan is also unsympathetic with Langer's reductive naturalism, without neglecting the natural yearning of the human person. Lonergan referred, for example, to human beings as "products of artistic creation." Lonergan framed his presentation of art

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41 Liddy, "What Lonergan Learned," 66.

42 "Art," 216.

43 "Art," 217.

44 "Art," 220.

with an openness to its transcendent orientation:<sup>45</sup>

But the fundamental meaning important to us in art is that, just as the pure desire to know heads on to the beatific vision, so too the break from the ready-made world heads on to God. Man is nature's priest, and nature is God's silent communing with man. The artistic movement simply breaks away from ordinary living and is, as it were, an opening, a moment of new potentiality.<sup>46</sup>

In this passage, Lonergan isolates two fundamental human experiences which he believes naturally orient us to the transcendent: the mysterious and unquenchable desire to know and the artistic break from the ready-made world into a world of transcendent possibility. The former is tied to our quest for the truth and the latter to the aesthetic-dramatic fabric of human living.

Finally, art, for Lonergan, bears a kind of sacramentality. Lonergan acknowledges that this withdrawal may be illusory; but he also suggests that it may be regarded as "more true and more real."<sup>47</sup> Just as our mysterious and unquenchable desire to know ultimately reveals our transcendent orientation within the intellectual pattern of experience, the artistic experience can reveal our orientation to the divine within the aesthetic and dramatic patterns. For Lonergan, good art has an ulterior significance. It presents "the beauty, the splendor the glory, the majesty, the 'plus' that is in things and that drops out when you say that the moon is just earth and the clouds are just water."<sup>48</sup> Art has the capacity to direct our attention to the reality "that the world is a cipher, a revelation, an unveiling, the presence of one who is not seen, touched, grasped, put in genus, distinguished by difference, yet is *present*."<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> For my treatment of Lonergan on Art elsewhere, see Randall Rosenberg, "The Drama of Scripture: Reading Patristic Biblical Hermeneutics through Bernard Lonergan's Reflections on Art," *Logos: A Journal of Catholic Thought and Culture* 11, no. 2 (Spring 2008): 126-48 and "Lonergan on the Transcendent Orientation of Art," *Renascence: Essays on Values in Literature* (Spring 2009): 141-51.

<sup>46</sup> "Art," 224-25.

<sup>47</sup> *Method in Theology*, 63.

<sup>48</sup> "Art," 222.

<sup>49</sup> "Art," 222.

This brief examination of Percy's and Lonergan's respective encounters with Langer's thought reveals a serious engagement with a modern philosopher working outside of traditional Catholic and Thomist circles. Unafraid of a modern "style" and a modern "mentality," Percy and Lonergan expressed indebtedness to her work. Nevertheless, they appropriated Langer's thought without embracing her reductive naturalism. Both accounts situate her thought within a horizon that remained open to the transcendent orientation of the human person. We noted both authors' inclusion of the Aristotelian-Thomist account of knowledge by identity. In his discussion of symbolism, the mysterious identification of the knower with the known reveals, for Percy, our orientation to "Truth itself." Lonergan suggests that art also reveals, not only our withdrawal into a symbolic world, but a withdrawal which discloses our transcendent orientation, opening up a space for a kind of sacramental disclosure. Furthermore, this connection with Langer also suggests the importance of the category of "meaning" for both Percy and Lonergan. As we turn to Percy's connection between language and the mystery of the human person, we will elaborate further on the importance of "meaning" in the work of both thinkers.

### **A WORLD MEDIATED BY MEANING**

While Percy was a fairly well-known novelist – winning the National Book Award in 1962 – his work in semiotics is not as well-known. One finds in Percy's essays on language significant attention to symbol, consciousness, and intersubjectivity. Language for Percy reveals the uniqueness of being human; it was also the locus of his consistent critique of dualism, behaviorism, and scientism. For our purposes, this essay will give special attention to Percy's final statement on, what he judged to be, the radical incoherence of the sciences as well as his semiotic solution, found in his 1989 NEH Jefferson Lecture in Washington, D.C. We will draw on earlier pieces, insofar as they help clarify and enrich our analysis.

In "The Fateful Rift: The San Andreas Fault in the Modern Mind," the title of his Jefferson Lecture, Percy offers two propositions. First, that the modern scientific view of the world is "radically incoherent."<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Percy, "The Fateful Rift," 271.

This incoherence is rooted in the incoherence of modern science, "not when it seeks to understand things and subhuman organisms and the cosmos itself, but when it seeks to understand man, not man's physiology or neurology or his bloodstream, but man *qua* man, man when he is peculiarly human."<sup>51</sup> For Percy, the predominant scientific view inadequately regards the human person as a "locus of bio-psycho-sociological needs."<sup>52</sup> Second, Percy argues that the solution to this incoherence lies within science itself; he defines science, it must be noted, in "the root sense of the word, as the discovery and knowing of something which can be demonstrated and verified within a community."<sup>53</sup> In other words, he proposes an alternative to the prevailing scientific model: namely, the study of the human person as a "sign-using creature" and specifically "the study of the self and consciousness as derivatives of the sign-function."<sup>54</sup>

For Percy, the semiotic theory of the scientist and logician, Charles Sanders Peirce, provides the groundwork on which to develop a coherent foundation for the human sciences. Percy believes that we are still "hung up on the horns of the ancient dualism of Descartes," who divided "all reality between the *res cogitans*, the mind, and the *res extensa*, matter. God alone, literally, knew what one had to do with the other."<sup>55</sup> According to Percy, Peirce "preserved the truth of philosophical realism from Aristotle to the seventeenth century, salvaged it from the medieval language of the Scholastics, which is now all but incomprehensible to us, and recast it in terms familiar to scientists, to the most simpleminded empiricist, and even to us laymen."<sup>56</sup> He adds that Peirce's realism cannot be "fobbed off as Scholastic mumbo jumbo."<sup>57</sup> The locus of overcoming this "great modern rift" between mind and matter was "the only place they intersect," namely "language."<sup>58</sup> In order to show the bridging capacity of language, Peirce distinguishes

51 Percy, "The Fateful Rift," 271.

52 Percy, *Lost in the Cosmos*, 82.

53 Percy, "The Fateful Rift," 272-73.

54 Percy, *Lost in the Cosmos*, 82.

55 Percy, "The Fateful Rift," 274.

56 Percy, "The Fateful Rift," 271.

57 Percy, "The Fateful Rift," 279.

58 Percy, "The Fateful Rift," 279.

between two types of natural events: dyadic and triadic. Constituted by the "familiar subject matter of the physical and biological sciences," dyadic events involve "mutual action between two things" – "molecules interacting with other molecules, a billiard ball hitting another billiard ball, one galaxy colliding with another galaxy, an organism responding to a stimulus."<sup>59</sup> While dyadic events are certainly complex, they can be diagrammed adequately "by a simple drawing which shows structure (dog, neurons, axones, glandular cells) and arrows connecting them (energy exchanges, sound waves, electrical impulses)."<sup>60</sup> The mystery of human language, on the other hand, can only be accounted for by a triadic model. The example Percy regularly offered was the child's early acquisition of language, which is marked by the sudden insight that things have names. Whereas a dyadic explanation views language more as a stimulus-response occurrence, a triadic explanation recognizes that meaning and intersubjectivity are central to the linguistic event. In order to clarify this, Percy, following Peirce, distinguishes between "sign" and "symbol."<sup>61</sup> Take, for example, the word "ball." A dog reacts to the word "ball" as a sign, that is, an "index to go fetch the ball." "But if I say the word "ball" to you, you will receive it as a symbol; that is, look at me with puzzlement and the suspicion that sure enough he's gone over the hill, and perhaps say "Ball? What about it?"<sup>62</sup> For Percy, the experience of Helen Keller sharply illustrates the difference between sign and symbol, between dyadic and triadic events. The subtitle to his essay "The Delta Factor" offers a clue to the importance of this example: "How I Discovered the Delta Factor Sitting at My Desk One Summer Day in Louisiana in the 1950's Thinking about an Event in the Life of Helen Keller on Another Summer Day in Alabama in 1887."<sup>63</sup> Percy refers to "the memorable event in the pump house" when it dawned on Helen Keller that "the word 'water' spelled in one hand *meant* the water running over the other." He adds, "It was nothing less than the beginning of her life as a person."<sup>64</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Percy, "The Fateful Rift," 279.

<sup>60</sup> Percy, "The Fateful Rift," 280.

<sup>61</sup> See also Percy, "Semiotic and a Theory of Knowledge," 251-64.

<sup>62</sup> Percy, "The Fateful Rift," 281.

<sup>63</sup> Percy, "The Delta Factor," 3.

<sup>64</sup> Percy, "The Fateful Rift," 281.

Eight-year-old Helen made her breakthrough from the good responding animal which behaviorists study so successfully to the strange name-giving and sentence-uttering creature who begins by naming shoes and ships and sealing wax, and later tells jokes, curses, reads the paper, writes *La sua volontade e nostra pace*, or becomes Hegel and composes an entire system of philosophy.<sup>65</sup>

The mystery of language reveals more than a dyadic pointing; the "thirdness" of the triad, for Percy, is the dimension of "meaning," which is always experienced as intersubjective. In fact, naming or denotation is "an exercise in intersubjectivity," because "every symbolic formulation, whether it be language, art, or even thought, requires a real or posited *someone else* for whom the symbol is intended as meaningful."<sup>66</sup> We are not merely related as "organisms in a nexus of interaction" but as "a namer and hearer of a name, an I and a Thou, co-conceivers and co-celebrants of the object beheld under the auspices of a common symbol."<sup>67</sup> The "I think" is only made possible by the "prior mutuality" of "*we name*."<sup>68</sup>

What implications does this have for consciousness? Percy supposes that "it may turn out that consciousness itself is not a 'thing,' an entity, but an act, the triadic act by which we recognize reality through its symbolic vehicle."<sup>69</sup> According to Percy, the fact that C. S. Peirce insists that this "third" is real and yet immaterial is of "critical importance to natural science because its claim to reality is grounded not on this or that theology or metaphysic but on empirical observation and the necessities of scientific logic."<sup>70</sup> Since linguistic behavior and "symbol-mongering" fall within the scope of natural science, Peirce's triadic account provided a tool for progression "beyond the present incoherence of the social sciences"; it cannot be dismissed "as such traditional notions of 'mind,' 'soul,' 'ideas' have been ignored."<sup>71</sup> There are clear openings

<sup>65</sup> Percy, "The Delta Factor," 35.

<sup>66</sup> Percy, "Symbol, Consciousness, Intersubjectivity," 270-71.

<sup>67</sup> Percy, "Symbol, Consciousness, Intersubjectivity," 271.

<sup>68</sup> Percy, "Symbol, Consciousness, Intersubjectivity," 275.

<sup>69</sup> Percy, "The Fateful Rift," 287.

<sup>70</sup> Percy, "The Fateful Rift," 287.

<sup>71</sup> Percy, "The Fateful Rift," 288. In an interview with Marcus Smith, Percy remarked:

here between Lonergan's "generalized empirical method" and Percy's wish to ground the sciences with a more adequate account of the human person – an account which includes language, self-consciousness, meaning, and intersubjectivity as constitutive dimensions.

In his essay, "Naming and Being" (1960), Percy captures the way language and naming reveal both the emergence and uniqueness of being human. The act of naming "brings about a new orientation to the world." Prior to this mysterious act, "the individual is an organism responding to his environment." When a person emerges as "a name-giver or a hearer of a name, he no longer coincides with what he is biologically."

An organism exists in the normative scale of flourishing-not-flourishing; a person exists in the scale of authentic-inauthentic. The scales are not the same. A person may flourish biologically while, at the same time, living a desperately alienated and anonymous life, or a person may be sick biologically and, at the same time – perhaps even as a result of it – live authentically. In the joy of naming, one lives authentically.<sup>72</sup>

Percy connects the emergence of language to the demand for human authenticity. In other words, the human capacity for language, self-consciousness, and intersubjectivity disclose a human being who not only transitions from the biological to the intellectual, but also to the moral.

The triadic nature of human language revealed for Percy a nonmeasurable, immaterial dimension to human consciousness – a dimension that made possible the human quest for meaning and discloses the rich possibilities inherent in our inner- and intersubjective worlds. As we noted in the last section of the paper, the category of

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"...neither Aquinas nor Scotus are acceptable to twentieth century scientists, because their realism depends on positing a psyche, an immaterial psyche or soul, so that in order for you or me to know something, we know it by some operation in this immaterial substance. This may or may not be true, but the twentieth century behavioral sciences just can't make head or tail of it. It doesn't do any good to go back and talk about Aristotle's immaterial way of knowing, even though for all I know it's probably true... Once you open your mouth about Aquinas and how you know things by their essences and by the unions of the immaterial elements in the psyche, communication ceases for most scientists" (*Conversations*, 135).

<sup>72</sup> Percy, "Naming and Being," in *Signposts in a Strange Land*, 134.

"meaning" is also central to Lonergan's account of the human person. In his specific analysis of the multiple dimensions of meaning, Lonergan, unlike Percy, does not engage in an explicit polemic against behaviorism and naturalism. Still, his account of meaning achieves a similar aim: namely, to illuminate the experience of living in a distinctively human world – a world mediated by meaning and motivated by value. The aim here is show how Lonergan treats many similar themes as Percy, but in a more orderly and explanatory manner, hence providing clarity to Percy's account.

A crucial distinction, for Lonergan, is the human transition from the "world of immediacy" to a "world mediated by meaning." The world of immediacy – exemplified by the infant or "the world to which the adult returns when with an empty head he lies in the sun" – is "the world of immediate experience, of the given as given, of image and affect" without the further performance of intellectual, rational, and moral acts.<sup>73</sup> The world mediated by meaning initially emerges through the "revelation of a larger world than the nursery that comes through pictures, speech, and stories" and expands to "a universe of being" that is knowing through experience, understanding, and judging – the world of literature and science, philosophy and history, religion and theology.<sup>74</sup> For Lonergan, not only is the world mediated by meaning but it is also "constituted by meaning": "Language is constituted by meaning: it is not just articulated sound; it has to have meaning; and that meaning can be incorporated in print no less than sound."<sup>75</sup>

From *A Third Collection* on, Lonergan stated that the world is not only mediated and constituted by meaning but also motivated by value – a development which has connections to Percy's own link between the emergence language and the call for authenticity.<sup>76</sup> Recall that Percy distinguished between a biological scale of flourishing/not flourishing and a human scale of authenticity/inauthenticity. Authenticity is of course an important term in Lonergan's language of

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<sup>73</sup> Bernard Lonergan, "Existenz and Aggiornamento," in *Collection*, vol. 4 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 25.

<sup>74</sup> "Existenz and Aggiornamento," 25.

<sup>75</sup> "Existenz and Aggiornamento," 25.

<sup>76</sup> *A Third Collection*, 211

the human good.<sup>77</sup> The development of knowledge and moral feeling, for Lonergan, “head to the existential discovery of oneself as a moral being, the realization that one not only chooses between courses of action but also thereby makes one an authentic human being or an unauthentic one.”<sup>78</sup> For Lonergan, echoing the language of Percy, the life of moral authenticity is marked, in part, by choosing according to a scale of preference. Lonergan, however, expands Percy’s biological-moral distinction by offering a more differentiated account of the scale of values – a distinct yet related web of vital, social, cultural, personal, and religious values.<sup>79</sup> “When each member of the community both wills authenticity in himself and, inasmuch as he can, promotes it in others,” writes Lonergan, “then the originating values that choose and the terminal values that are chosen overlap and interlace.”<sup>80</sup>

In addition to the human transition from the world of immediacy to a world mediated by meaning and motivated by value, Lonergan distinguishes intersubjective and linguistic meaning – two themes that are part and parcel of Percy’s semiotic project. Intersubjective and linguistic meaning, however, presuppose human intersubjectivity as a constitutive feature of the life-world. Prior to the “we” that develops from a conscious, free, and loving union between “I and thou” there is an even deeper primordial “we” that Lonergan calls “spontaneous intersubjectivity.” “It is as if,” Lonergan writes, ‘we’ were members of one another prior to our distinctions of each from the others.”<sup>81</sup> Lonergan offers a personal example from his daily walk around Rome. As he entered the Borghese Gardens, a child running to his mother stumbled, and though he was “at least thirty feet away” he

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<sup>77</sup> For a discussion of Lonergan on “authenticity,” see Brian J. Braman, *Meaning and Authenticity: Bernard Lonergan and Charles Taylor on the Drama of Authentic Human Existence* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008). Braman argues that “what is needed is not some uncritical acceptance, nor wholesale condemnation of the idea of authenticity, but a more adequate understanding of the real meaning to authentic human existence, one that takes seriously the intellectual, moral, religious aspirations of the person” (6).

<sup>78</sup> *Method in Theology*, 38.

<sup>79</sup> *Method in Theology*, 31.

<sup>80</sup> *Method in Theology*, 51.

<sup>81</sup> *Method in Theology*, 57.

spontaneously leaned forward to prevent the child from falling.<sup>82</sup> Lonergan connects intersubjectivity to the way in which our feelings are communicated and shaped. Borrowing from the phenomenologist Max Scheler, Lonergan distinguishes between a "community of feeling" and "fellow-feeling." Both experiences are "intentional responses that presuppose the apprehension of objects that arouse feeling."<sup>83</sup> Lonergan distinguishes these two types of feeling as follows: "So community of feeling would be illustrated by the sorrow felt by both parents for their dead child, but fellow-feeling would be felt by a third party moved by their sorrow." In a community of worship, "there is community of feeling inasmuch as worshippers are similarly concerned with God, but there is fellow-feeling inasmuch as some are moved to devotion by the prayerful attitude of others."<sup>84</sup>

In light of his discussion on intersubjectivity, Lonergan proceeds to a discussion of "intersubjective meaning," wherein he contrasts "intersubjective" and "linguistic meaning." He explores intersubjective meaning in terms of a "phenomenology of a smile," which captures the spontaneous, irreducible, and multivalent nature of our encounter with others. For Lonergan, however, meaning "finds its greatest liberation" through "its embodiment in language."<sup>85</sup> In a way similar to Percy, Lonergan explains that the significant moment of the emergence of language in human development is "most strikingly illustrated by the story of Helen Keller's discovery that the successive touches made on her hand by her teacher conveyed names of objects." This profoundly emotional episode was "the beginning of an incredible career of learning." According to Lonergan, the example of Helen Keller also illustrates why the act of naming was so important for ancient civilizations: "Prizing names is prizing the human achievement of bringing conscious intentionality into sharp focus and, thereby, setting about the double task of both ordering one's world and orientating oneself within in."<sup>86</sup> Language transitions us from a kind of "impersonal

<sup>82</sup> "The Analogy of Meaning," in *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1958-1964*, vol. 6 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert C. Croken and Frederick E. Crowe (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 187.

<sup>83</sup> *Method in Theology*, 58.

<sup>84</sup> *Method in Theology*, 58.

<sup>85</sup> *Method in Theology*, 70.

<sup>86</sup> *Method in Theology*, 70.

presence" to a more specifically human way of being in the world.<sup>87</sup> Language molds our "developing consciousness" but also "structures the world about the subject."<sup>88</sup> The rich interplay of spatial adverbs and adjectives, varied moods corresponding to the speaker's intention, active and passive voice, as well as grammar, impact our emotional, and intellectual experience of the world.<sup>89</sup>

Loneragan further differentiates linguistic meaning into ordinary, technical, and literary language. Whereas ordinary language is "the vehicle in which the human community conducts its collaboration in the day-to-day pursuit of the human good," technical language involves the specialization of language employed by experts and specialists "when they speak among themselves."<sup>90</sup> Literary language employs both the laws of discursive thought and the laws of image and affect. In other words, it employs concepts and propositions, on the one hand, and intersubjective, artistic, incarnate, and symbolic meaning, on the other hand. As Lonergan states, "Literary meaning floats somewhere in between the two."<sup>91</sup>

In this section, we have pointed out convergences, at times striking, between Percy and Lonergan on such themes as language, intersubjectivity, consciousness, authenticity, and meaning. Affirming his larger concerns, let me suggest that the Percy's thought might benefit from Lonergan's (in this context) in at least two ways. First, cognizant of Percy's consistent rallying cry for a deeper, more adequate reflection on the uniqueness of the human person in terms of language, intersubjectivity, and meaning, Lonergan affirms and extends Percy's emphases with his more differentiated account of meaning, its connection to authenticity, and the scale of values. In fact, a review of Percy's vast corpus shows his preoccupation with many kinds of linguistic meaning, from everyday language to the language employed by poets, philosophers, fiction writers, and scientists. Lonergan's more precise mapping out of the distinctions between ordinary, technical, and literary language might bolster and clarify many of Percy's arguments.

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<sup>87</sup> *Method in Theology*, 70.

<sup>88</sup> *Method in Theology*, 71.

<sup>89</sup> *Method in Theology*, 71.

<sup>90</sup> *Method in Theology*, 72.

<sup>91</sup> "The Analogy of Meaning," 192.

Second, Percy expressed the need for a more normative, less reductive account of the human person as the coherent ground on which to ground the human and natural sciences. In light of the deep convergences outlined above, let me suggest that Lonergan's writings, especially *Insight*, contain significant resources for embracing the discoveries of modern science without resorting to the kinds of dualism and reductionism of which Percy was so critical. *Insight* offers a normative account of related and recurrent operations of human consciousness within an intelligible world process explored through classical, statistical, genetic, and dialectical heuristic structures. In terms of avoiding reductionism, Lonergan's genetic method, for example, explores "development." There Lonergan specifies the peculiar activities of human beings: "In the plant there is the single development of the organism; in the animal there is the twofold development of the organism and the psyche; in man there is the threefold development of the organism, the psyche, and intelligence."<sup>92</sup> The aim of metaphysics, for Lonergan, is to outline "in heuristic categories" the many "organic, psychic and intellectual systems-on-the-move that constitute the levels of the human person."<sup>93</sup> Furthermore, metaphysics provides the resources for overcoming the fragmentation of knowledge and for integrating the sciences: "Just as the notion of being underlies and penetrates and goes beyond all other notions, so also metaphysics is the department of human knowledge that underlies, penetrates, transforms, and unifies all other departments."<sup>94</sup> We now proceed to analyze one instance of "linguistic meaning" found in Percy's essay "Metaphor as Mistake."

### METAPHOR, ELEMENTAL MEANING, AND THE POVERTY OF CONCEPTUALISM

Percy's essay "Metaphor as Mistake" offers an intriguing analysis of misnaming as a means of knowing. Percy offers several examples of misnaming, misunderstanding, and misremembering. Yet, we ironically "somehow know it better, conceive it in a more plenary fashion, have

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<sup>92</sup> *Insight*, 484.

<sup>93</sup> Liddy, *Startling Strangeness*, 164.

<sup>94</sup> *Insight*, 415.

more immediate access to it, than under its descriptive title." One of the central examples he develops is an episode that occurred while a boy and his father were hunting. Intrigued by a "wonderful bird" who "flew as swift and straight as an arrow" and then who suddenly "folded his wings and dropped like a stone into the woods," the boy asked what the bird was and the guide responded that it was a "blue-dollar hawk." Later, the father remarked that it was really a "blue darter hawk." Percy notes his disappointment upon learning of the error. Part of the discussion hinges on the function of a metaphor and the kind of meaning it communicates. Moreover, Percy acknowledges that many philosophers dismiss the use of a literary function that posits a "wrong" as a means communicating truth; or, to put it differently, the act of asserting "an identity between two different things."<sup>95</sup>

Percy raises the following question: Does the use of metaphor or symbol simply reveal a mode of biological adaption or psychological satisfaction? Or, are we "dealing with that unique joy which marks man's ordainment to being and the knowing of it"? In other words, should these acts of both questioning and naming – acts which reveal our "cognitive orientation in the world" – be regarded as biological, psychological, or ontological acts? We now return to the example of the blue-dollar hawk. When given the initial name, his ontological hunger, as Percy put it, had something to feast on. Part of the "success" of this initial naming pertains to the authoritative voice from which it was given. If his brother offered the name, Percy would not have believed it. And Percy was upset by the descriptive nature of the correct name, "the blue darter hawk." He writes, "The boy can't help but be disappointed by the logical modifier, blue darter hawk – he feels that although he has asked what the bird *is*, his father has only told him what it *does*." After all, beneath the boy's original question was not simply a desire for the name or label of the bird, but a deeper ontological hunger to know what the bird is; in other words, one might say that the boy yearned for an insight into the bird and not simply a label. For Percy, this "ontological pairing" or if you like this "error" in identifying the word and thing, is "the only possible way in which the apprehended nature of the bird, its inscape, can be validated as being what it is."<sup>96</sup>

<sup>95</sup> Percy, "Metaphor as Mistake," 66.

<sup>96</sup> Percy, "Metaphor as Mistake," 73.

Percy borrows the term "inscape" from the Jesuit poet Gerard Manley Hopkins, who was deeply influenced by Scotus.<sup>97</sup> Walter Ong explains the meaning of two fundamental neologisms of Hopkins's thought, "inscape" and "instress":

Of Hopkins' many neologisms, these are undoubtedly the most commented on. The "inscape" of a being is the distinctive controlling energy that makes the being itself and connects it instinctively with all else. "Instress" is the action that takes place when the inscape of a given being fuses itself in a given human consciousness in a contact at a given moment with the being.<sup>98</sup>

He adds that inscape "can refer to an individual existent," but "it can refer also to species, a common nature..." Ong concludes, "Inscape, with its corresponding instress, refers to distinctiveness of being not as simply analyzed but as intuited in an insight deeper than analysis can go."<sup>99</sup>

Glenn Hughes, in his very rich essay on Hopkins and Lonergan, examines, among other things, Hopkins's use of inscape and instress in light of Lonergan's elemental meaning.<sup>100</sup> In many ways, Percy's essay makes the same connection to elemental meaning and reiterates the "mysterious connection" between the knower and the known, a point

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<sup>97</sup> In an interview with Bradley R. Dewey in 1974, Percy remarked: "If you are talking about literary sources – and if you want a contrast with what the novels owe Kierkegaard – they owe something to an entirely different source: the English poet, Gerard Hopkins, who was a great nature poet and who wrote some beautiful nature diaries. And this is a much more, I guess, consciously Catholic attitude toward nature – nature, created nature, as a sacramental kind of existence. Hopkins made a great thing in poetry of being able to look at a cloud or a leaf or even a piece of rock and see in it what he called a certain "inscape," and thinking always that if your gaze was sufficiently fresh and if you could see it sufficiently clearly, you would see it as an act of existence, a gratuitous act of existence which was evidence of God's existence. He saw it in a very sacramental and religious way, which really owes a lot more to Aquinas than it does to the Kierkegaardian tradition" (*Conversations*, 124).

<sup>98</sup> Walter Ong, *Hopkins, the Self, and God* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986), 17.

<sup>99</sup> Ong, *Hopkins, the Self, and God*, 17.

<sup>100</sup> Glenn Hughes, "Gerard Manley Hopkins and Lonergan's Notion of Elemental Meaning," in *Lonergan Workshop Journal*, vol. 19, ed. Frederick Lawrence (Chestnut Hill, MA: Boston College, 2006): 107-36.

discussed in the section above on the influence of Langer. That said, I also think that a close examination of "Metaphor as Mistake" helps the reader discover the limits of what Lonergan calls naïve realism and its consequent conceptualist account of knowing.

For Percy, what many semioticists ignore is the actual rich and complex performance of knowing. It is not adequate, Percy writes, to imagine "naively that I know what this is and then give it a label." Instead, "I cannot know anything at all unless I symbolize it. We can only conceive being, sidle up to it by laying something else alongside."<sup>101</sup> In fact, Percy argues for a "space between name and thing" and that the "essence of metaphorical truth and the almost impossible task of the artist" is "to name unmistakably and yet to name by such a gentle analogy that the thing beheld by both of us may be truly formulated for what it is."<sup>102</sup> Hence, Percy highlights the contingent nature of language: that words undergo changes in meaning and contain "an unmerited potency."<sup>103</sup>

For Percy, "the cognitive dimension of metaphor which is usually overlooked, because cognition is apt to be identified with conceptual and discursive knowing." The likeness and difference operative in analogical thinking, which is both cognitive and poetic, communicate the "discovering power" of analogy.<sup>104</sup> Percy emphasizes, in this context, the intentional character of human knowing, the mysterious orientation of knowing to being: "The mind is off to its favorite project, a casting about for analogies and connections."<sup>105</sup> Whereas semanticists suggest that we know directly and without mediation and behaviorists "imply that we do not know at all but only respond," Percy points out the "mystery connection which the mind fastens upon, a connection which, since it is not a kind of univocal likeness, must be a kind of analogy."<sup>106</sup>

Does not Percy's analysis, with his emphasis on the discovering power of the knowing process, the contingency of concepts, and the inadequacy of naively "slapping" labels on objects, help us to explore

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101 Percy, "Metaphor as Mistake," 72.

102 Percy, "Metaphor as Mistake," 73.

103 Percy, "Metaphor as Mistake," 76.

104 Percy, "Metaphor as Mistake," 77.

105 Percy, "Metaphor as Mistake," 81.

106 Percy, "Metaphor as Mistake," 79.

more deeply the limits of what Lonergan calls naïve realism and an impoverished conceptualist account of knowing?<sup>107</sup> As Fred Lawrence writes, a conceptualist account of knowing stresses “universal concepts, propositions, and syntheses to the exclusion of the network of pre-conceptual conscious acts of inquiry and insight, and of questions for reflection and indirect understanding that are indispensable for meaningful conception, definition, formulation, balanced judgment and affirmation.”<sup>108</sup> Lonergan’s critical realism, in contrast to naïve realism’s uncritical objectivity, attempts to do justice to the complexity of the knowing process, attentive to both the limitation and transcendence operative in the human discovery of being. For Lonergan, the spirit of inquiry operates from sense and imagination to understanding, from understanding to judgment, from judgment to authentic performance. In “Metaphor as Mistake,” Percy gives priority to the spirit of inquiry and to insight, and at the same time critiques the reduction of cognition to conceptual and discursive knowing.

## CONCLUSION

This essay’s larger aim was to open up a conversation between two twentieth-century Catholic intellectuals, Walker Percy and Bernard Lonergan. As indicated above, there are further areas of conversation

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<sup>107</sup> We must be mindful, however, that Hopkins was deeply influenced by Scotus, and so it is fair to raise this same question in the context of Percy’s use of “inscape.” Hughes writes: “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 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” (122).

<sup>108</sup> “Is the Distinction between Reason and Revelation/Faith Obsolete?” Unpublished. Permission granted by the author.

to be explored that engage Percy, other nonfiction essays, as well as his novels, including the dynamic of faith, reason, and belief in a postmodern age. This essay focused on features of Percy's philosophical work, highlighting areas of common concern with Lonergan's work.

1. Their respective encounters with the thought of Susanne K. Langer revealed a serious engagement with a modern philosopher working outside of traditional Catholic and Thomist circles. Both thinkers appropriated Langer's thought without embracing her reductive naturalism, situating her thought within a horizon that remained open to the transcendent orientation of the human person. Furthermore, in the context of Langer, Percy and Lonergan made connections to the importance of the Aristotelian-Thomist account of knowledge by identity.
2. Percy, in his work in semiotic theory, especially in his appropriation of the thought of Charles Sanders Peirce, attempted to overcome a reductionist account of the human person. The triadic nature of human language revealed for Percy the reality of "meaning" and a nonmeasurable, immaterial dimension to human consciousness – a dimension that made possible the human quest for meaning and discloses the rich possibilities inherent in our inner- and intersubjective worlds. We indicated where Lonergan's differentiated account of meaning and its connection to authenticity both affirmed Percy's concerns and placed them in a more explanatory context.
3. Finally, in our treatment of Percy's essay, "Metaphor as Mistake," we suggested that Percy's reflection might allow us to explore more deeply the shortcomings of an impoverished conceptualist account of knowing that Lonergan so trenchantly critiques. Percy's account gave priority to the discovering power of the knowing process and illuminated the contingent nature of concepts, along with the inadequacy of "slapping" labels on objects.

In sum, this Percy-Lonergan conversation provided a heuristic for exploring the rich complexity of being human: that we are not simply organisms in an environment, nor theoreticians appropriating universal knowledge. Rather, through concrete dramatic, meaningful,

intellectual, and authentic performance, we are, to use Percy's categories, castaways in a predicament, shaped by an intersubjective milieu, and open to transcendence. As Percy observed with his usual witty demeanor, the human person is "a strange name-giving and sentence-uttering creature who begins by naming shoes and ships and sealing wax, and later tells jokes, curses, reads the paper, writes *La sua volontade e nostra pace*, or becomes Hegel and composes an entire system of philosophy."<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Percy, "The Delta Factor," 35.

## LONERAGAN'S ECONOMICS AND THE CATHOLIC SOCIAL JUSTICE TRADITION

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Perhaps enough has been said on the properties and aspects of our X named cosmopolis for a synthetic view to be attempted. It is not a group denouncing other groups; it is not a superstate ruling states; it is not an organization that enrolls members, nor an academy that endorses opinions, nor a court that administers a legal code. It is a withdrawal from practicality to save practicality.<sup>1</sup>

PATRICK BROWN IN HIS RECENT ARTICLE in *Theological Studies*, "Aiming Excessively High and Far': The Early Lonergan and the Challenge of Theory in Catholic Social Thought," makes the case that, although Lonergan made only a handful of explicit references to the Catholic social justice tradition, his early work is highly relevant to Catholic social thought.<sup>2</sup> Brown comments: "[O]ne may read Lonergan's early thought as an effort to *shift and lift* the tradition of Catholic social thought forward into a more adequate theoretic context by developing the virtualities of the tradition while remaining true to the tradition."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study in Human Understanding*, vol. 3 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 266.

<sup>2</sup> Patrick Brown, "Aiming Excessively High and Far': The Early Lonergan and the Challenge of Theory in Catholic Social Thought," *Theological Studies* 77, no. 3 (September 2011): 620-44. I made, more briefly, a similar claim concerning economics in "Economic Analysis within Redemptive Praxis: An Achievement of Lonergan's Third Decade," *Loneragan Workshop Journal*, vol. 14 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1998): 243-64 and more recently in *Loneragan's Discovery of the Science of Economics* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010) See especially, chapters 2 and 8.

<sup>3</sup> Brown, "Aiming Excessively High and Far'": 633 (emphasis added). You may want

As is now well-known, during the 1930s and the first half of the 1940s Lonergan devoted much time and energy to working out a dialectic theory of history and a macroeconomic theory. The results of this work were carried forward and developed in his latter work: The dialectic of history was a significant influence in the composition of *Insight* and *Method in Theology*<sup>4</sup> and was instrumental as the first step on the path that led to the discovery of functional specialization.<sup>5</sup> The influence of the economics is subtler, less obvious. There are the explicit references to economy in *Insight*, especially in chapter 7,<sup>6</sup> but I would suggest that Lonergan's creative effort in economics had an important influence on his understanding of the human sciences and their differentiation from and relationship to common sense, his understanding of development that informs chapter 15 of *Insight*, and of the relationship of the human sciences to theology, as it appears, for instance, in the epilogue of the same volume.<sup>7</sup>

Other questions emerge: How much did this research in economics prepare the mature Lonergan's refined *empirical* focus and his formulation of generalized empirical method? Was Lonergan's decision to study Aquinas on *Verbum* prepared by questions about the relationship of subject to object that emerged in his persistent drive for pure formulation in "An Essay on Circulation Analysis"?<sup>8</sup> How much did his study of economics help his understanding and

to extend the title a bit.

<sup>4</sup> In a Thomas More Institute interview, *Dialogues in Celebration*, ed. Cathleen M. Going, Thomas More Institute Papers, no. 80 (Montreal: Thomas More Institute of Adult Education, 1980), Lonergan says, "I have a general theory of history, implicit in *Insight* and in *Method*" (305).

<sup>5</sup> I make this case in "Let Us Be Practical" – The Beginnings of the Long Process to Functional Specialization in the "Essay in Fundamental Sociology," ed. John Dadosky, *Meaning and History in Systematic Theology: Essays in Honor of Robert M. Doran, S.J.* (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2009); See also chapter 8 of *Lonergan's Discovery of the Science of Economics*.

<sup>6</sup> See Patrick Brown, "Insight as Palimpsest: The Economic Manuscripts in *Insight*," *The Lonergan Review* 2, no. 1 (2010): 130-49.

<sup>7</sup> *Insight*, 767-68. See also *Lonergan's Discovery*, 226-27.

<sup>8</sup> *For a New Political Economy*, 231-318 and Bernard Lonergan, *Macroeconomic Dynamics: An Essay in Circulation Analysis*, vol. 15 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Patrick H. Byrne and Frederick G. Lawrence (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000).

specification of the various acts of cognition? Further research into the development of Lonergan's thought will no doubt "deepen and widen"<sup>9</sup> our understanding of the influence of the economics in Lonergan's thought. Brown elaborates on some of these developments in the latter half of "Aiming Excessively High and Far." He writes:

So where did all the theoretic efforts and accomplishments in the service of a Christianity that would assist in a reconstruction of the social order go, after this early flowering in Lonergan's thinking? The short answer is that they seem to have streamed slowly but steadily into his larger attempts to bring method, historical scholarship, the developing human sciences, and historical process itself into philosophy and theology as empirical, critical, and normative disciplines. The theory of emergent probability, the dialectic of history, the structure of the human good, the critiques of conceptualism and classicism, the discovery of structures for methodic, functional collaboration and functional specialization – all these themes from the later Lonergan represent so many fruits of the early direction of his quest for an empirical and critical theoretical framework for the "reconstruction of the social order."<sup>10</sup>

In any case, it is quite clear to me that economics is not peripheral in his life's work, nor is it to be divorced from his theology.<sup>11</sup> This holds whether we consider the development of Lonergan's basic positions, its various foundational, doctrinal, systematic, or pastoral expressions, or his methodology. As Lonergan himself held, theology is relevant to

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<sup>9</sup> In the essay "For a New Political Economy," Lonergan introduced the notions of economic "deepening and widening." Widening increases "the number or size of existing units of production," while deepening increases 'the efficiency of existing units of production.' *For a New Political Economy*, 17. The analogy seems appropriate for intellectual development as well.

<sup>10</sup> Brown, "Aiming," 639-40.

<sup>11</sup> This is a question Charles Tackney addressed in his 2011 Lonergan Workshop presentation "A Theology of the Workplace: Agenda for Analysis." The article drawn from this presentation will appear in *Theoforum* as "A Theology of the Workplace: Japanese Industrial Relations and the Roman Catholic Social Question."

the practice of economics and economics is relevant to the practice of theology.<sup>12</sup>

I am pointing toward large, complex issues. Nonetheless, I think it safe to say that Lonergan's discovery of the science of economics in 1942 was a uniquely significant contribution to the ongoing development and transposition of the Catholic social justice tradition. This development has implications for the advance of that tradition, both theoretically and practically. Implementing these developments should significantly alter how we conduct business, among many other things,<sup>13</sup> and I am particularly interested in setting up a discussion on the application of Lonergan's economics to business ethics.<sup>14</sup> Specifically, I have three points I wish to make; all relate to Lonergan's effort to "shift and lift" the social justice tradition; and I'll include a few comments on the future of Lonergan's economics.

My first point is biographical, relating to Lonergan's own shift into the social question. The key events are the 1929 Stock Market crash and the Great Depression that followed in its wake. Lonergan's response to these events significantly deepened and widened his intellectual quest and raised very serious questions in him about the relationship of Catholic theology to Catholic practice.<sup>15</sup>

Let me, then, situate this claim in the context of his intellectual development. Lonergan was at Heythrop College from 1926 to 1930,

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<sup>12</sup> How the relationship between theology and economics transposes into the context of functional specialization remains a further question. I would note, however, that "general categories regard objects that come within the purview of other disciplines as well as theology" (*Method in Theology*, 28). Also, Lonergan indicated the possibility of a functionally specialized framework for working out this question when he notes "the possibility of each integration [of theology and all other relevant branches of human studies] is a method that runs parallel to the method in theology" (*Method in Theology*, 364).

<sup>13</sup> That Lonergan discovered the science of economics is my claim in *Lonergan's Discovery of the Science of Economics*. For the record, there is no movement that I know of to award him a posthumous Nobel Prize in Economics for this achievement!

<sup>14</sup> This paper was initially intended to complement a workshop presentation for the Business and Ethics workshop at the 2001 Lonergan Workshop. A related paper, "The Contribution of Lonergan's Economics to Business Practice," will appear in *Theoforum* under the general editorship of Kenneth Melchin.

<sup>15</sup> See Frederick E. Crowe, "Bernard Lonergan as Pastoral Theologian," in *Appropriating the Lonergan Idea*, ed. Michael Vertin (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1989), 127-44

and while he was uncertain about the direction his future studies might take him, his declared interest was in methodology, which at that time was handled as a subdivision of logic. As he reported in *Caring about Meaning*: "I was very much attracted by one of the degrees in the [University of] London syllabus: Methodology, I felt there was absolutely no method to the philosophy I was being taught; it wasn't going anywhere. I was interested in method."<sup>16</sup> The Blandyke Papers, written at this time, confirm the early influence of Newman as well as Lonergan's own early preoccupation with cognitional theory, a theme that is the most noted one in his canon of work.<sup>17</sup> The trajectory of this development from Lonergan's early interest in method through his two studies of Thomas Aquinas and his writing of *Insight* and *Method in Theology* is well marked in the Lonergan secondary literature.<sup>18</sup> However, whatever future Lonergan envisaged at Heythrop was profoundly altered and enriched by the Crash of October 1929 and the Great Depression that it precipitated.<sup>19</sup> Most obviously, he took up the

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<sup>16</sup> Pierrot Lambert, Charlotte Tansey, and Cathleen Going, eds., *Caring About Meaning: Patterns in the Life of Bernard Lonergan*, Thomas More Institute Papers 82 (Montreal: Thomas More Institute, 1982), 10.

<sup>17</sup> The "Blandyke Papers" written in 1928 and 1929 while Lonergan was a student at Heythrop are in Bernard Lonergan, *Shorter Papers*, vol. 20 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007).

<sup>18</sup> The theme is developed in William Mathews, *Lonergan's Quest: A Study of Desire in the Authoring of Insight* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005); Frederick E. Crowe, *Lonergan* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, and Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1992); and Richard M. Liddy, *Transforming Light: Intellectual Conversion in the Early Lonergan* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1993). A more recent biography comes at Lonergan's life trajectory from a different and wider angle. See Pierrot Lambert and Philip McShane, *Bernard Lonergan: His Life and Leading Ideas* (Vancouver: Axial Publishing, 2010), especially chap. 10 ("The Dominant Context of Lonergan's Life") and chap. 11 ("Lonergan's Three Major Cultural Shifts").

<sup>19</sup> For the biographical context from Heythrop and his student years in Rome, see *Lonergan's Quest*, chapters 3-7. There is a need, for the sake of accuracy, to recast the standard narrative of Lonergan's development to take into account more fully his deep concern with implementation reflected in his work in economics and history. In "Questions with Regard to Method: History and Economics," in *Dialogues in Celebration*, ed. Cathleen Going, Thomas More Institute Papers 80 (Montreal: Thomas More Institute, 1980), Lonergan says: "I was interested in economics long before I was interested in theology" (307). As, well, commenting on the received narrative in "Theories of Inquiry" (1967), in *A Second Collection*, ed. William F. J. Ryan, S.J. and Bernard J. Tyrrell, S.J. (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1974), Lonergan remarked: "I just add, however,

study of economics. Lonergan was providentially prepared for the shift in focus by a course in ethics at the University of London he took from Lewis Watt, the author of *Capitalism and Morality* and *Catholic Social Principles: Commentary on the Papal Encyclical Rerum Novarum*.<sup>20</sup> Watt had a keen interest in economic ethics. Lonergan's interest in economics was however soon part of a larger project to develop an integrative theology of the Mystical Body of Christ.<sup>21</sup> Lonergan's response to the Depression went further than his decision, however fruitful, to study economics.<sup>22</sup>

Lonergan's larger concern was "to make economics moral" and this led him quite naturally as a Catholic to engage the Catholic social justice tradition. There is much that can be said about Lonergan's

that my interest in Aquinas came late" (38).

<sup>20</sup> Lewis Watt, *Capitalism and Morality* (London: Cassell and Co., 1929) and *Catholic Social Principles: Commentary on the Papal Encyclical Rerum Novarum* (London: Burns Oates & Washbourne, 1929).

<sup>21</sup> Lonergan's interest in the theology of the Mystical Body of Christ would seem to be, on the face of it, primarily an interest of his student years at the *Gregorianum*, as evidence in his early efforts to develop a theology of Catholic Action, most notably in the 1934 "An Essay in Fundamental Sociology" in Michael Shute (ed.), *Lonergan's Early Economic Research* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 15-44 and the 1935 essay *Pantôn Anakephalaiôsis* (The Restoration of All Things), ed. Frederick E. Crowe. *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 9, no. 2 (1991): 139-72. A good case can be made, however, for understanding Lonergan's philosophical and theological works as all contributing to the hope for Theology of the Mystical Body he articulated in these essays. From this point of view, *Insight* is the philosophy of history that provides the philosophical component of the thesis. On this, see *Insight*, 763-64. Functional specialization is the collaborative methodology relevant to its expression in the third stage of meaning. For this reason I find it interesting that after completing *Method in Theology* Lonergan was torn between working on Christology or Economics for what he undoubtedly understood as his final project.

<sup>22</sup> Lonergan was not alone in his interest in economic theory at this time. George Shackle in *The Years of High Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967) writes about a remarkable period of creativity in economic theory emerging in response to the Great Depression. Notable efforts in this creative surge cited by Shackle himself include works by John Maynard Keynes, Piero Sraffa, Roy Harrod, Joan Robinson, Edward Chamberlin, Gunnar Myrdal, Erik Lindahl, and Wassily Leontief. Shackle favors those efforts aligned with the so-called Keynesian revolution. To his list we should add the substantial work of the Austrian economists, especially Friedrich Hayek and Joseph Schumpeter, and the American Frank Knight, all studied closely by Lonergan. On this, see *Lonergan's Early Economic Research*, chaps. 2, 5-7.

relationship to the Catholic social justice tradition,<sup>23</sup> but I think there is little doubt that we can situate Lonergan, and that Lonergan situated himself, within this tradition. However, as you might expect, his engagement of the tradition, while respectful, was critical. There a few things in this regard I would highlight.

Much of my own research over the past twenty-five years has been on Lonergan's work from 1930 to 1944, and I have found that the early period reveals more clearly than his later period the extent to which Lonergan was a social thinker. For example, Lonergan highlighted the social preconditions of human acts. In "An Essay in Fundamental Sociology" he writes: "Intellectual achievement is not the achievement of individual men [sic,] for individual men are unintelligibly different; intellectual achievement is the achievement of the race, of the unity of human action; the individual genius is but the instrument of the race in its expansion."<sup>24</sup> There are many examples from this and other essays from the 1930s. With this in mind we might enrich the meaning we have of *self-appropriation*. Certainly, Lonergan spoke of *Insight*, or at least the first eleven chapters, as a set of five-finger essays in self-appropriation. But Lonergan never dissociated this effort from the historical or social context in which the self finds itself, nor, *all things considered*,<sup>25</sup> did he elevate the individual over the social context, nor did he elevate the person over the world order in which persons find

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<sup>23</sup> The topic has been dealt with in a number of articles and books. Besides Brown's article above in footnote 1, for a good survey of the field see Stephen Martin, *Healing and Creating in Economic Ethics: The Contribution of Bernard Lonergan's Economic Thought to Catholic Social Teaching* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2008).

<sup>24</sup> *Lonergan's Early Economic Research*, 20-21.

<sup>25</sup> I allude here to Lonergan's use of Ephesians 1:10 in the title of his 1935 essay *Pantôn Anakephalaiôsis* (The Restoration of All Things). I have always been a little puzzled by Frederick's Crowe decision to translate the phrase "*pantôn anakephalaiôsis*" as "the restoration of all things." Certainly "restoration" is the typical translation of the phrase in Ephesians 1:10 and it resonates with theme of the 1931 encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno* – The Reconstruction of the Social Order – which was certainly on Lonergan's mind at the time. However, Lonergan also used "reintegration," as in the following from the essay: "Christ as the new head of humanity, as the reunification and *reintegration* of what is torn asunder by sin, is the originator of the absolute *Geist* of dogma, is the absolute of intellect in which participates the church, the *koinônia*, the communion" (158 [emphasis added]). Perhaps his preference for "integration" is a reflection of his use of the calculus analogy at the time in both history and economics?

themselves.<sup>26</sup> Consider the following from "Essay in Fundamental Sociology": "Men turn out in ever much the same proportion of good, indifferent and bad. What differentiates one social epoch from another does not lie in the individual wills of the time but in the upper and lower limits set these wills by the previous age. No man can be better than he knows how and no man can be worse than his temptations and opportunities."<sup>27</sup> William Mathews was on the mark when he wrote on the topic "Method and the Social Appropriation of Reality."<sup>28</sup> Lonergan's search for a social philosophy sufficient for Catholics to meet the crisis of the age *and* his insistent search for a guide for implementation of such a philosophy were an integral part of Lonergan's reach by 1934 and this reach remains a central preoccupation throughout his life. As he wrote in 1976:

It has long been my conviction that if Catholics . . . are to live and operate on the level of the times, they must not only know about theories of history but also must work out their own... To put it bluntly, until we move onto the level of historical dynamics, we shall face our secularist and atheist opponents, as the Red Indians, armed with bows and arrows, faced European muskets.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>26</sup> In chapter 7 of *Insight* Lonergan writes: "Accordingly one might say that a single dialectic of community is related to a manifold of individual sets of neural demand functions through a manifold of individual dialectics. In this relationship the dialectic of community hold the dominant position, for it gives rise to the situations that stimulate neural demands, and it molds the orientation of intelligence that preconsciously exercises the censorship" (243). In the diagram of the structure of the human good in *Method in Theology*, the individual and individual goods are located on the first line, institutions and the structure of the good are on the second line, and personal relations are on the third line. For Lonergan's position on the priority of world order to persons, see his discussion of personalist theology in *De ratione convenientiae eiusque radice, de excellentia ordinis, de signis rationis systematicae et universaliter ordinatis, denique de convenientia, et fine incarnationis. Supplementum schematicum* with Appendix: *Aliqua solutione possibilis* (St Francis Xavier College [Gesu] Rome [1953-54]).

<sup>27</sup> *Lonergan's Early Economic Research*, 19.

<sup>28</sup> William Mathews, "Method and the Social Appropriation of Reality," in *Creativity and Method: Essays in Honor of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Matthew Lamb (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 1981), 425-41.

<sup>29</sup> Bernard Lonergan, "Questionnaire in Philosophy," in *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1965-1980*, vol. 17 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Robert C. Croken and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 366. Lonergan

My second point relates to the nature of Lonergan's shift in response to the events of the Great Depression. I have already alluded to this point in referring to Lonergan's efforts to develop a theology of the Mystical Body. Lonergan's way of being practical was to withdraw from practicality for the sake of a later, more enlightened, return to practicality. To understand what an effective and just social order might be, starts with the "turn to the Idea," the theme of this conference. As Lonergan wrote in 1935: "Any reflection on modern history and its consequent 'Crisis in the West' reveals unmistakably the necessity of a *Summa Sociologica*."<sup>30</sup> Lonergan conceived this overarching Idea as a theory of Catholic Action. Integral to a theory of Catholic Action in the midst of The Great Depression was the task of working out a new science of economics, a higher viewpoint, "a scientific generalization of the old political economy and of modern economics that will yield the new political economy which we need."<sup>31</sup> Lonergan did precisely that with his theory of macrodynamic economics.<sup>32</sup> The shift he had in mind was the shift to theory, to understanding systematically. In his Nottingham lecture on Method, Lonergan writes:

Understand systematically. By it I mean, first, that one's efforts at understanding must aim at the ideal goal of understanding, and secondly, that they must make explicit the structure through which understanding naturally moves toward this goal.

This ideal goal of understanding is completeness. Common sense operates within a cultural horizon. It settles for a mode and measure of understanding that suffice to enable one to live

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frequently addressed the theme of *praxis* in essays written in the 1970s. See especially Bernard Lonergan, *A Third Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (New York: Paulist Press, 1985), *passim*.

<sup>30</sup> In *Pantón Anakephalaiôsis* (The Restoration of All Things), 156. The phrase "crisis in the West" comes from Peter Wust, "Crisis in the West," in *Essays in Order 2*, ed. Christopher Dawson (London: Sheed & Ward, 1931). On this see, Joseph Komonchak, "Lonergan's Early Essays on the Redemption of *History*," in *Lonergan Workshop Journal*, vol. 10, ed. Fred Lawrence (Chestnut Hill, MA: Boston College, 1994), 158-77, see especially page 161.

<sup>31</sup> *For a New Political Economy*, 7.

<sup>32</sup> Two versions emerged: The first essay "For a New Political Economy" was completed in 1942; the second "An Essay in Circulation Analysis" was completed in 1944. Both appear in *For a New Political Economy*.

intelligently. But human intelligence wants more; it heads for the complete explanation of all phenomena; it would understand the universe. It distinguishes endlessly; but it does so only to relate intelligibly; and ideally the network of relations is to embrace everything. It is this complete network of relations, making intelligible every aspect of the concrete universe, that is to be thought of when I say understanding is to be systematic.<sup>33</sup>

The shift cuts to the bone of his criticism of the Catholic approach to economic ethics in 1931.

In this regard, let us turn for a minute to his early criticism of the just wage argument. Lonergan wanted to "make economics moral," but he was not impressed with Catholic moral theology when it came to economic questions. As Watt presented it, there are two fundamental conditions for determining a just wage. The first was the recognition of a hierarchy of skills in society. Skilled labor was of higher value than unskilled, and certain skills were proportionately of higher value than others. Justice demanded the right proportion of skill-power to wages. Furthermore, workers required the means to fulfill whatever duties were "imposed on them by the moral law." Workers needed to be able to live decently, so as to fulfill their own obligations to raise and educate their children and contribute to the well-being of the community. The notion of the "just" or "family wage" means that employers have a moral duty to provide, at the minimum, a wage that would meet the requisite standards for justice. The just-wage ideal differs from the idea that wages ought to be set by the law of supply and demand. It assumes that economic transactions are embedded in a matrix of reciprocal responsibilities that go beyond their pure exchange value. Problems arose for Catholic employers when just-wage demands conflicted with the normal business practice, which required employers to "make a profit." In a market economy, if a business cannot turn a profit, it fails. Given the nature of the business cycle, employers in capitalist economies often have the choice of either providing a just wage and

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<sup>33</sup> Bernard Lonergan, "Method in Catholic Theology," *METHOD: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 10, no. 1 (1972): 7-8. In this 1959 essay Lonergan elaborates a series of precepts for method of which the first two are *understand* and *understand systematically*. See also Philip McShane, "Lonergan's Meaning of Complete in the Fifth Canon of Scientific Method," *Journal of Macrodynamical Analysis* 4 (2004): 53-81.

risk going out of business, or staying in business and risk starving the worker. In 1930, as the reality of the Great Depression hit home, this dilemma was acutely present for Catholic employers. It is one thing, then, to proclaim the moral high ground that employers ought to pay a just wage. It is another thing to show how they might both fulfill their moral duty and stay in business. If the good is always concrete, then proclaiming abstract moral principles on the economy without understanding *what* an economy is, is to heap abstractions on top of abstractions. Lonergan writes: "The whole point to the process of cumulative insight is that each insight regards the concrete while the cumulative process heads towards an ever fuller and more adequate view. Add abstraction to abstraction and one never reaches more than a heap of abstractions."<sup>34</sup> A concrete and systematic approach to economic ethics requires economic science.

This brings me to a final point: the "turn to the idea" is not enough. As Lonergan succinctly phrased it: "How can ideas rule the world? People with ideas do nothing."<sup>35</sup> Why? Again, because "What is good, always is concrete."<sup>36</sup> The "Idea," as he put it in 1934, is a "differential calculus for history" whose purpose is to direct our collective action.<sup>37</sup> He returns to this theme forty years later in "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness" when he directs his attention to the need to realize collective responsibility.<sup>38</sup> It is this search for an intelligent

34 Bernard Lonergan "Healing and Creating in History," in *A Third Collection*, 104.

35 "Education. Philosophy of," in Lonergan Archives, 31700DTE040, at 3 (dated 1949). Lonergan is directly referring here to the famous line at the very end of Keynes's *General Theory*: "... the ideas of economists and political philosophers, both when they are right and when they are wrong, are more powerful than is commonly understood. Indeed the world is ruled by little else." John Maynard Keynes, *The General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money* (New York: Harcourt, 1964 [originally, 1936]), 383.

36 *Method in Theology*, 27.

37 Bernard Lonergan, "Essay in Fundamental Sociology," in *Lonergan's Early Economic Research*, 20.

38 In "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness," in *A Third Collection* (New York: Paulist Press, 1985). Lonergan writes:

The notion of collective responsibility is not without its difficulty. One may claim that, as men individually are responsible for the lives they lead, so collectively they must be responsible for the resultant situation. But this claim is too rapid to be convincing. No doubt, single elements in the resulting situation are identical with the actions or the effects for which individuals are responsible. But the resulting situation as a whole commonly was neither foreseen nor intended or, when it does happen that it was, still

control that is "the differential calculus of history" that lies behind Lonergan's discovery of functional specialization. And functional specialization is his notion of how theoreticians and scientists might efficiently collaborate in implementing the "Idea" in the concrete reality of human history.

What then can we say in conclusion about Lonergan's relationship to the social justice tradition? Well, what do people mean by the Catholic social justice tradition? It can refer to the set of papal social encyclicals beginning in 1891 with *Rerum Novarum* and continuing forward to the most recent *Caritas in Veritate* in 2009. More fully, Catholic social teaching is a set of teachings or policies concerning social issues as injustice, poverty, and social organization. Enduring notions are the principles of charity, the dignity of work, subsidiary, solidarity, the common good, and more recently the "preferential option for the poor," championed in liberation theologies initially and eventually in papal encyclicals, together with strategies such as "the third way" (between socialism and capitalism) in politics and economics. Finally, the Catholic social justice tradition is a tradition of social activism characterized by an interesting variety of mostly lay movements. In the 1920s and 1930s these movements were under the umbrella of Catholic Action. More recently it has been reflected by political and liberation theologies and by organizations such as Development and Peace in Canada, the Catholic Worker Movement in the United States, base communities in Latin American, and lay Catholic involvement in secular social justice and ecology movements.

As to the first meaning, Lonergan took note of papal encyclicals. The publication of *Quadragesimo Anno*, the fortieth anniversary celebration of *Rerum Novarum*, was a significant event for Lonergan if only for its mention of the importance of "technical matters," which he took as an endorsement for his plan to do economic theory.<sup>39</sup>

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such foresight and intention are apt to reside not on the many but in the few and rather in secret schemes and machinations than in public avowal.

It remains that if collective responsibility is not yet an established fact, it may be a possibility. Further, it may be a possibility that we can realize. Finally it may be a possibility that is desirable (169).

<sup>39</sup> Lonergan kept the notes he took in 1933 of Edward J. Coyne's article "National Economic Councils," *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review* 22 (June 1933): 288–306. The notes, which quote Coyne's critical comments on *Quadragesimo Anno* are available in

Nonetheless, as far as I can tell, Lonergan was not preoccupied with the social encyclicals. His interest was more broadly in Catholic social philosophy, something he regarded as an underappreciated achievement. In 1934 he wrote: "Catholic social theory has existed since the middle ages, but the degree to which Catholics were conscious of the importance of social philosophy has been small almost up to the present time."<sup>40</sup> That he conceived of his own effort as a contribution to social philosophy may in part explain the dearth of explicit reference to the social justice tradition. This approach is consistent with his interest in understanding systematically.

As to social justice as a policy, while understandably Lonergan had nothing to say about the preferential option for the poor, it is clear from his writings in the 1930s that he was influenced by and wrote about the principles of subsidiary and solidarism. And what else could his economic theory be but a "third way" between capitalism and socialism? Finally, in the context of functional specialist collaboration policy is handled in the specialty doctrines.<sup>41</sup>

Finally, Lonergan was by no means a political activist, but he spoke highly of movements like the Antigonish movement in Canada, which worked to improve the lot of the working poor. Lonergan's compelling interest was not social action per se but in the overarching framework for building up the Mystical Body of Christ. Lonergan mentions social justice just once in his early writing, and the context is revealing as to what he meant by social justice:

The nature of progress is to reconquer through Christ the loss nature sustains through sin. For from sin we derive a double evil: ignorance of the intelligible, and difficulty in obeying the intelligible. The function of progress is to increase leisure, that men may have more time to learn; to conquer material evil in privation and sickness, that men have less occasion to fear

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*Lonergan's Early Economic Research*, 12-15.

<sup>40</sup> From "Essay in Fundamental Sociology," *Lonergan's Early Economic Research*, 40.

<sup>41</sup> In *Method of Theology* Lonergan writes: "Corresponding to doctrines, systematics, and communications in theological method, integrated studies would distinguish policy, planning, and the execution of plans. Policy is concerned with attitudes and ends. Planning works out the optimal use of existing resources for attaining the ends under given conditions. Execution generates feedback" (365-66).

the merely factual and that they may have more confidence in the rule of intellect; to struggle against the inherited capital of injustice, which creates such objective situations that men cannot be truly just unless first the objective situation is changed; and, finally, I am not certain I speak wildly, out of the very progress itself to produce a mildness of manners and temperament which will support and imitate and extend the mighty power of Christian charity. This then is the virtue of progress, the virtue of social justice, by which man directs his action so that it will be easier for his neighbors and his posterity to know and to do what is right and just.<sup>42</sup>

The framework he envisaged for concrete progress, which he located in a *Theory of Catholic Action* in 1934, was realized in 1965 with the discovery of functional specialization. Functional specialization and the theory of macrodynamic economics were Lonergan's contributions to the Catholic social justice tradition. He wanted an effective social justice that promoted freedom and order. In my view both contributions, if implemented, will positively transform the Catholic social justice tradition.

I will conclude, however, with a cautionary note. Just because an idea is a good one does not mean that it will be a successful one. There are both "probabilities of emergence" and "probabilities of survival." I often think in this regard of Akhenaten: he had the idea of one God and he had the power: what he did not have was the real consent of the Egyptian people. His idea of one God (Aten) only survived in the Egyptian empire as long as he was alive. The world had to wait for the Hebrew tribes who fled Egypt for the idea to take proper hold. Lonergan's economic theory emerged in 1942 as the solution to the confusion in economic theory and a way forward to reverse the economic disorder of his times. We are now a year away from the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of that event; the global economy is still massively disordered; and his discovery of the science of economics is still well on the margins of the collective consciousness of our global community. Likewise, the problem of implementation, which emerged in the theory of Catholic social action in the 1930s, and which found its satisfactory

<sup>42</sup> From "Essay in Fundamental Sociology," in *Lonergan's Early Economic Research*, 42-43.

formulation as the method functional specialization remains (to paraphrase Chesterton's comment on Christianity) mostly "not tried and not wanted." The question before us is this: How do we improve the probabilities of survival?

## THE POLYMORPHISM OF CONSCIOUSNESS AS A HIGHER VIEWPOINT ON MODERN PHILOSOPHY

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THE AIM OF THIS PAPER is to show how Lonergan's notion of a polymorphic consciousness is a higher viewpoint on modern consciousness. Of course Lonergan's notion involves a reconsideration of all the history of philosophy, but I will focus my attention on modern authors, trying to underline the limit of modern consciousness that the notion of polymorphic consciousness clarifies. I will follow the development of the notion of modern consciousness mainly in *Insight* considering however other work from Lonergan, if necessary.

The comparison with modern philosophy is also a self-authentication of the polymorphic consciousness that makes Lonergan's thought able to face the problems of contemporary philosophy that combining classical and modern approach in a higher viewpoint allows to avoid the double mistake from one hand of a blind traditionalism, from the other hand of relativism and the nihilism. Classicist culture is normative and abstract, modern culture instead conceives a method that is able to recognize cultural variations, differences, developments, and basically seeks to understand what in the classicist approach was seen as uncultivated or barbaric. Modern culture is a reinterpretation of the role of the man in this world that brings a new order in society, an increasing capacity of control over nature and a new sense of power. But modern culture is not just a realm of sweetness and light,<sup>1</sup> the crimes and the destructive powers generated by the twentieth century

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<sup>1</sup> See "*The Absence of God in Modern Culture*," in Bernard Lonergan, *A Second Collection* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press), 1974.

definitely destroy the myth of an indeterminate and continuous progress that has a birth and grows up in the modern age. Moreover, modern culture conceives a being as an isolated individual, forgetting the knowing as activity of the community. Lonergan defines Man's process of understanding as a "group enterprise"<sup>2</sup> not a work of an isolated individual. Furthermore, modern culture recognizes a huge role to the individualism-egoism in the political theory (Adam Smith). The self-authenticated subject, instead, sees the community as a concrete possibility of getting over the individual egoism. It is only the transcending individual and group egoism that man can pass more and more from a habitat to a universe. Consciousness as a process of auto-appropriation is to overcome egoism that puts individual interests before group interests and group interests to Human Being. The critical realism of the auto-appropriated subject refuses from one hand the abstractness of the modern individualism that generates an historic concept of profit as fulfilment of social good, but on the other hand an abstract collectivism that generates a blind bureaucracy trying to determine the social good with empty abstractions that are not able to reach the concrete. A free and responsible subject discovers that he lives in a world mediated by meanings that other subjects contribute to create. That makes impossible the conversion of the individual and group appetite in the will of seeking value:

Though being and the good are coextensive, the subject moves to a further dimension of consciousness as his concern shifts from knowing being to realizing the good. Now there emerge freedom and responsibility for common or complementary action that resides the principal constituent of the collective subject referred to by "we" "us" "ourselves" "ours." The condition of possibility of the collective subject is communication, and the principal communication is not saying what we know but showing what we are.<sup>3</sup>

But if we misunderstand the trajectory of the subjectivity in the modern age we risk to see it as a pejorative term, that is a freedom

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<sup>2</sup> "The absence of God in Modern Culture," 115.

<sup>3</sup> Bernard Lonergan "The Subject," in *The Subject Collection* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), 219.

detached from any criterion of objectivity transforming itself in pure will and on the other side an instrumental rationality able to know only objects and not considering finality as relation of subjectivity to Human Being and to the virtually unconditioned.

Modern consciousness develop on the basis of absolute autonomy, but the human world, the world constituted by meaning is the world of community not of isolated individuals not even of single generations. The classical mediation of meaning has broken down but modern culture has not yet reached its maturity, this matter of fact leaves the contemporary subject disorientated and bewildered but seeking for a higher viewpoint.

The analysis of the modern consciousness has three essential steps:

1. The Cartesian ambiguity which gives rise to the problem of modernity and the split into the two main currents of empiricism (Hume) and rationalism (spinoza).
2. The synthesis of Kant that with its *a priori* find a higher viewpoint in the contradiction between empiricism and rationalism.
3. The Hegel dialectic grasping the higher viewpoint of the pure desire to know that inspires the creativity of the subject but on the other unable to grasp the virtually unconditioned, and the matter of fact as independent from the system.

### THE CARTESIAN AMBIGUITY

The problem of modernity begins with the Cartesian ambiguity. Descartes's thought is the end of the process of separation between philosophy and theology that began in the Middle Age but reaches his fulfilment only in the beginning of modern thought and above all with the Cartesian philosophy. But what is not clear in the modern thought, rising up from one of the main problems of modern philosophy is the distinction between philosophy and science.<sup>4</sup> This minimally clarified

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<sup>4</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *Topics in Education: The Cincinnati Lectures of 1959 on the Philosophy of Education*, vol. 10 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 11.

distinction is one of the reasons of the ambiguous dualism of Descartes philosophy. On the famous formula *cogito ergo sum* we have basically two positions which are not really combined. On one hand the position is rational *cogito* is an appeal to reason as human capacity. On the other hand the distinction between *res cogitans* and *res extensa* basically underline the extroversion and the experience as essential elements of the process of knowing. The Cartesian ambiguity outlines the two main currents of thought of the modern philosophy, the rationalist side developed by Spinoza, Leibniz, Wolff, and the empiricist one developed by Hobbes, Locke, Berkeley, Hume.

In Descartes, however, we can find the coexistence of the rational reflection: *cogito* the judgement: *ergo sum* and the experience: *res extensa*. But these elements are simply juxtaposed,<sup>5</sup> the relation between the rational *cogito* and the unquestioning extroversion of the *res extensa* is not clear. There is simply a separation, an alienation that will continue on the modern thought until the Kantian criticism.

The material substance is identical with spatial extension is not related to the subject, its "already out now real."<sup>6</sup> The permanent footprint of Descartes forces modern philosophy to focus on cognitional analysis and basically on the conflict between objectivity as extroversion and intelligence as knowledge.

Cartesian dualism had been a twofold realism, and both the realisms were correct, for the realism of the extroverted animal is no a mistake and the realism of rational affirmation is no mistake. The trouble was that, unless two distinct and disparate types of knowing were recognized, the two realism were incompatible. For rational affirmation is not an instance of extroversion, and so it cannot be objective in the manner proper to the "already out there now." On the other hand the flow of sensible contents and acts is neither intelligent nor reasonable, and so it cannot be knowledge of the type exhibited by science and philosophy. The attempt to fuse disparate forms of knowing into a single whole ended in the destruction of each

<sup>5</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, vol. 3 of the Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 11-12.

<sup>6</sup> *Insight*, 277

by the other; and the destruction of both forms implied the rejection of both types of realism. The older materialism and sensism were discredited, but there was room for positivism and pragmatism to uphold the same viewpoint in a more cultured tone. German idealism swung through its magnificent arc of dazzling systems to come to terms with reality in relativism and neo-kantian analysis. But if a century and a half have brought no solution it would seem necessary to revert to the beginning and distinguish two radically distinct types of knowing in the polymorphic consciousness of man.<sup>7</sup>

The Cartesian dualism separates the *res cogitans* and the *res extensa* but it doesn't fully explain what "Think" is, the process of thinking is seen as a *res*. If in the classical thought (Aristotle) a *substantia* is a form with a merely nominal value, an intelligible unity, a *unum per se*, in the modern thought (Descartes) there is a confusion between *substantia* and body for that substance is identified with extension, it's just a body "already out now real," losing an intellectual meaning.

Moreover, the Cartesian doubt as common root of scientific and philosophical thought doesn't give account to the huge contribution that belief has in the process of knowledge. The modern subject seem to be alone facing all the history of philosophy and doubting everything to reach a self-authentication of his own position. Getting over that means to understanding, as a polymorphic consciousness does, that knowledge is a process of human collaboration in which believing in others is, most of the time, the first step to self-authentication.

The Cartesian ambiguity produces from one hand the Humean world of mere impressions that basically clarify that human experiencing is a essential step in the process of human knowledge, but is not the only step, experiencing is also grasping intellectually, criticizing rationally, and finally judging. The Humean position then is also a counterposition, only experiencing cannot reach a theory of knowledge, but Hume, a very smart man, did it.

On the other side there is Spinoza's rationalism, the "geometric style"<sup>8</sup> of his *Ethics* deducing everything from self-evident principles. But analytic principles are not far from tautologies, and in this

<sup>7</sup> *Insight*, 439

<sup>8</sup> *Insight*, 18

a-temporal order finality, the will of self-authenticated subject, is just a mistake because premises prove directly conclusion.

The lack of Spinoza's deductive method is the necessary isomorphism between the dynamic structure of knowing and his proportionate being the right parallel between *ordo rerum* and *ordo idearum* is to be done not between what is and what is known but between the dynamic structure of knowing and the structure of proportionate being. This brings us to intentionality as a concrete exercise of the freedom of a responsible and self-authentic subject, casualness, therefore can explain the word of nature but not the pure desire to know as a characteristic of man.

"But while animals live in a habitat, man lives in a universe. He does sow because he asks endless questions, because he draws on the experience and memories of his contemporaries and their predecessors, because he cannot live humanly without forming some view concerning the facts and the possibilities of human existence."<sup>9</sup>

### THE KANTIAN CRITICISM

Kantian criticism tried to bring together the two different kind of knowledge just juxtaposed in Cartesian dualism and separated and alienated in the subsequent rationalist and empiricist philosophies. But the polymorphism of consciousness that recognizes the necessary relation between the dynamic and heuristic structure of knowledge and the proportionate being seem to be the answer to the main question of Kantian criticism: How is a judgement both synthetic and *a priori* possible? Basically every *insight* is *a priori* and synthetic is *a priori* because it goes beyond what is merely given by the sense (empiricism) but at the same time it's synthetic because it adds to the "already out now real," an explanatory unification or organization (rationalism).

With Kant it's clear that there exists two kinds of knowledge, or better, two different forms of knowledge, but, what are these two different forms? And what are relations between them?. The Kantian criticism helps the development of the polymorphic consciousness posing more deeply and precisely the epistemological question.

<sup>9</sup> *Second Collection*, 152.

For Kant, as the empiricist predecessors, all sensible is phenomenal but space and time are the *a priori* form of human sensibility that makes the phenomenon intelligible. For this reason there is a noumenon inaccessible to scientific knowledge. That's makes the modern consciousness able to distinguish between things and bodies that in the Cartesian epistemology were confused but also to distinguish different pattern of experience.

Therefore Kantian criticism has been a progress in clarifying the difference between scientific knowledge and philosophical one, basically the problem unsolved by Descartes. But what's the failure of Kantian criticism? And what's the difference between Kantian criticism as a step of modern consciousness and Lonergan's polymorphism as a higher viewpoint?

In *Insight* Lonergan outlines five basic points that differentiate Kantian schematism from the polymorphism of consciousness.

1. Kant asks for the *a priori* conditions of knowing an object the question posed by the polymorphism of consciousness is about the conditions of a possible occurrence of a judgement of fact. Knowing and judging are no two distinct activities (Critique of pure reason-Critique of judgement)<sup>10</sup> but involved in the same activity of the dynamic structure.
2. The thing for itself is considered by Kant as noumenon basically not accessible to the knowledge. The polymorphism of consciousness make instead a distinction between description and explanation. There is no space for a noumenon in the theorem of the isomorphism between the dynamic structure of knowledge and the proportionate being.
3. The universal and necessary judgement plays a huge role in the Kantian criticism, involved in his battle against Hume's experiential atomism. In the polymorphism of consciousness the main emphasis is on the judgement as matter of fact, universal and necessary judgement can be merely an abstract possibility without relevance to the central context of judgement. Judgement as matter of fact instead is an increment of knowledge, that is

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<sup>10</sup> To deepen the relation between Lonergan and Kant, see Giovanni B. Sala, *Lonergan and Kant: Five Essays on Human Knowledge* (Toronto: University Press, 1994).

terms of universal and necessary judgement are existential if they occur in judgements as matter of fact.

4. The polymorphism of consciousness refuse the schematism of categories. Beyond experience and understanding there is a third constitutive level of human knowledge that is self-authenticating and decisive. Rational reflections demands and reflective understanding grasps a virtually unconditioned. What is *a priori* or in the human nature is not a system of defined categories but the pure desire to know that makes human able to grasp the virtually unconditioned, or the isomorphism between the dynamic structure of knowledge and the proportionate being. Knowledge as Being doesn't end. Every system make possible further questions. Basically the schematism is simply an application of the virtually unconditioned.
5. Kant postulated an original synthetic unity of apperception as the *a priori* condition of the "I think." But there is no room in the Kant's philosophy to investigate on the generative principles of the categories, looking behind them, for their source. In the polymorphic consciousness instead the virtually unconditioned is a constituent component in the genesis of the judgement.

This lack of the Kantian criticism make possible the rise of the Hegelian idealism with his ambiguities that the polymorphism of consciousness solve expressing an higher viewpoint in modern philosophy:

Finally, from a genetic standpoint, Hegel's dialectic has its origin in the Kantian reversal both of the Cartesian realism of the *res extensa* and of the Cartesian realism of the *res cogitans*; but where Kant did not break completely with extroversion as objectivity, inasmuch as he acknowledged things themselves that, though unknowable, caused sensible impressions and appeared, Hegel took the more forthright position that extroverted consciousness was but an elementary stage in the coming to be of mind; where Kant considered the demand of reflective rationality for the unconditioned to provide no more than a regulative ideal that, when misunderstood generates antinomies, Hegel affirmed an identification of the real with a rationality that moved necessarily from theses through

antitheses to higher syntheses until the movement exhausted itself by embracing everything; where Kant had restricted philosophy to a critical task; Hegel sought a new mode, distinct from Cartesian deductivism that would allow philosophy to take over the functions and the aspirations of universal knowledge.<sup>11</sup>

The virtually unconditioned combined with the relevance of fact both correct Kantian criticism and Hegel's dialectic. The third level of knowledge is judgement, through the judgement the subject pass from the shaded field of thinking to the determinate field of the concrete knowledge. Judgement keep together the virtually unconditioned and the relevance of fact.

### HEGEL'S DIALECTIC

Hegel's dialectic basically denotes a process involving the concrete, the dynamic and the contradictory. Hegel employs dialectic as holistic method in different realm of knowledge, simply in a dialogue, in the history of philosophy, or generally in all the historical process. Hegel's dialectic is able to grasp a pure desire to know with an unrestricted objective getting over, from one hand, to the Kantian schematism, but he doesn't identify that objective with a universe of being. The objective of the pure desire to know is for Hegel a universe of all inclusive concreteness unable to grasp the virtually unconditioned. Moreover, the Absolute idea is not a universe of being virtually unconditioned.

Hegel System is not afraid of facts: it explains any fact alleged against it by showing it to be a manifestation of an incomplete viewpoint included within the System. Hegel's System is not afraid of contradictions: it explains any contradictions alleged against it by revealing what opposed and incomplete viewpoints, accounted for by the System, yield the alleged contradictory terms. The only thing the System has to fear is that it itself should be no more than some incomplete viewpoint, and in fact that is what it is.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> *Insight*, 447-48.

<sup>12</sup> *Insight*, 397.

Hegel rehabilitates the speculative reason that Kant has not considered, but incapable to understand the virtually unconditioned he identifies the pure desire to Know with a static Absolute idea. The System, however becomes an Absolute that you cannot get over with an higher viewpoint, no more question can raise up no more change is aloud. Hegel basically doesn't understand that the isomorphism between the dynamic structure of knowledge and the proportionate being is of course dynamic evolving and not static as the Absolute idea.

The notion of dialectic is also employed in Lonergan's *Insight* but he clarifies what the differences are between Hegel's concept of dialectic and his own notion.

Hegelian dialectic is conceptualist, closed, necessitarian and immanent. The relations of opposition and sublation are pronounced necessarily. Lonergan's notion of dialectic is intellectualist, open, factual and normative it deal not with determinate conceptual contents but with heuristically defined anticipations, the product are not necessary relations but cumulative succession of insights. Lonergan's notion of dialectic is not immanent embracing all position but normative and discriminating between advance and aberration. Finally Hegel sublates everything in a concept, for Lonergan concept is a byproducts of the development of understanding and understanding play a role of intermediation between experience and critical reflection.

The dialectical opposition is not in a conceptual field but is a conflict between the pure desire to know and others human desires:

Hegel absolute is a terminal concept that generates no antithesis to be sublated in higher synthesis; we recognize a manifold of instances of the virtually unconditioned, and through them attain knowledge of proportionate being in its distinction and relations. Hegel's concrete is an integrated whole of determinate conceptual contents, but our concrete is a prospective totality to be known by answering correctly the totality of questions for intelligence and reflection.<sup>13</sup>

Moreover, Hegel's dialectic is a universal and undifferentiated tool having the same relevance in logic, scientific knowledge, or philosophy. Lonergan's dialectic is restricted and differentiated admitting separate

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<sup>13</sup> *Insight*, 447.

application in different realms of knowledge but is not a logic tool, explaining instead, the movement from one logically formalized position to another. The Hegel identification of the real with rationality makes the movement through antitheses to higher synthesis necessary and not possible and normative.

However, systematic knowledge is a necessary step of understanding, but judgement as a third level of the process of understanding is the link between the self-authenticated subject and knowledge that makes the subject free and responsible but also makes philosophy impossible as static system, clarifying the always present possibility of an higher viewpoint that can be a progress but also an aberration.

Marxism from one end and the existential thought from the other will break Hegel's conceptualism ending modern philosophy, discovering a new matter of fact and a new subject will allow the polymorphic consciousness to discover a new horizon of meaning:

The Catholic admits neither the exclusive rationalism of the Enlightenment nor, on the other hand, the various irrationalist tendencies that can be traced from the medieval period through the reformation to their sharp manifestation in Kierkegaard reaction to Hegelianism and in contemporary dialectical and existentialist trends. But this twofold negation involve a positive commitment. If one is not to affirm reason at the expense of faith or faith at the expense of reason, one is called upon both to produce a synthesis that unites two orders of truth and to give evidence of a successful symbiosis of two principle of knowledge.<sup>14</sup>

### THE EXISTENTIAL SUBJECT AS A HIGHER VIEWPOINT<sup>15</sup>

Finally I would like to outline what modern consciousness is missing. I believe that to understand the lack of modern consciousness it is

<sup>14</sup> *Insight*, 754-55.

<sup>15</sup> To deepen the relation between Lonergan and contemporary philosophy, see Ivo Coelho, *Heremutics and Method: The Universal Viewpoint in Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001); see also Gerald Walmsley, *Lonergan on Philosophic Pluralism* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008).

also an important step to grasp Lonergan's higher viewpoint. I guess on that topic, the "The Subject" (1968) is a very important clue that can help our investigation. The work of Husserl and the existential thought, the philosophy of history with his different developments and the Freud discovery of the unconscious puts the contemporary subject in a completely different horizon that constitutes the basis of Lonergan's discovery of an higher viewpoint.

Modern consciousness is abstract but is only potentially the existential subject fix a Horizon to his interest that confines himself but make him able to reach the concrete. Intentionality is subjective determination of the pure desire to know as proper of human nature he delimitates a horizon in the life of a subject. Intentionality as constituting a polymorphic consciousness go beyond the modern contradiction between subjectivity and objectivity. The process of knowing is also a process of doing always involving a conscious subject and a concrete objectivity (experience) that is always mediated by the meaning of the conscious subject (the levels of the polymorphic consciousness).

Modern consciousness is conceptualist and conceptualism has three basic defects:

1. The first is an anti-historical immobilism. Man develops a consciousness of a child is not a consciousness of an adult, a world mediated by meaning of a generation is not a world of another. Human understanding develops, a complete system always hides the possibility of further questions and the rise of a higher viewpoint, but conceptualism as it disregards insights is unable to show development of concepts. Concepts as the Kantian *a priori* or the Hegel Absolute Idea stand aside the spatiotemporal world they cannot change. Notion instead is able to grasp both the explanatory-normative and the changing experience.
2. The second is an excessive abstractness. Modern consciousness is able to grasp only the first of the two distinct manners in which our knowledge is related to concrete reality. Modern consciousness grasp the relation of the universal to the particular but not the relation of the intelligible to the sensible that is a unity grasped by insight to the data in which the unity or pattern is grasped. The intelligibility grasped by insight is imminent to the sensible.

For conceptualism instead, the only link with the concrete is the relation of universal to particular, that basically leave always the contradiction between a fix concept and a changing experience.

3. The third has to do with the notion of being. Conceptualism finds a concept of being implicit in every concept but thought once again as an abstraction. The notion of being instead is concrete. The notion of being first appear in questioning showing the pure desire to know as proper of human nature. The notion of being is essentially dynamic but also an virtually unconditioned anticipation of the totality.

Moreover, Knowledge involve an intentional self-transcendence of the subject that the conceptual modern consciousness is unable to grasp. Modern consciousness is dualist, it recognizes the objectivity of the scientific truth but he neglects the subject's world transforming the intentionality in a pure and unrestricted will loosing every link with the concrete. For that the merely immanent subject is a neglected and truncated subject. In the doctrines of immanence there is an inadequate notion of objectivity. The polymorphism of consciousness looks at the knowledge as a compound of many operations of different kinds. The doctrines of imminence are unable to grasp knowledge as authentic self-transcendence. Being is absolutely transcendent because is the content of and act of unrestricted understanding that for men knowledge is only potentially. Modern culture comes to the notion of emergent probability and to the employment of statistics but is a systematic culture that doesn't reach the autonomy of different sciences and the always possible intelligibility of an higher viewpoint. Modern culture doesn't reach the third or absolute type of objectivity that come to the fore when we judge. Judgement as matter of fact is a free and responsible act of an authentic self-appropriated subject. Understanding grasp not only data but also an intelligible unity of patterns necessarily relevant to the data but not perceived. What modern culture see as a developing contradiction between objectivity and subjectivity is the dynamic and heuristic structure of a polymorphic consciousness that experience, understand and finally judge. Basically modern culture develop the philosophy of the subject as a knower, but the existential subject is also a doer, a concrete man that judge deliberate evaluates and finally

chooses.<sup>16</sup> The notion of existential subject overlooks the modern culture and the categories, for example the distinction between intellect and will. The existential subject is the end of categories he is aware that he has a key role in making himself. The existential subject sublates the experiential goes beyond it by degree expressing finally inventions and discoveries. The pure desire to know as human nature promote the existential subject from experiential to intellectual. The intention of the intelligible become also the intention of the good, the question of value that sublates the egoism of modern subject considering a self-authenticated subject as both the product and the builder of his community and the community as developing a universe of meaning in the history. The transcendental notion of the good regards value and is distinct from a particular good that satisfies individual appetite. The existential subject discover beyond the particular good and the good of order the good of value. The notion of value is a transcendental notion like the notion of being, the modern culture of immanence is unable to grasp the transcendence of the notion of value, is a dynamic principle that direct the activity of a self-authenticated subject. The existential subject freely and responsibly make himself, can make himself good or evil it can act in the right or wrong way. The determination of the good cannot be a schema or a category because is the work of freedom that everyone of us is requested to do.

The existential subject is not only rational, he sublates the rational modern consciousness, the intention as seeking the good is also a "being in love," the existential subject is not only rational as the modern consciousness but incarnates feelings and symbols. The human world is a world of existential subjects who evaluate, decide and act. Existential subject is human in his concrete and historical living it sublates the modern problem of cognitional theory passing from a abstract context to a concrete context.

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<sup>16</sup> "The existentialist focus would be the subject in a concrete flow of consciousness, a flow of consciousness orientated on knowing, on trying to know, or orientated on choosing. The significance within existentialism of the flow of consciousness orientated on choosing is enormous. That is the flow of consciousness relevant to being a man. That is the existential flow." Bernard Lonergan, "On Being Oneself," in *Phenomenology and Logic: The Boston College Lectures on Mathematical Logic and Existentialism*, vol. 18 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Philip McShane (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 235.

Finally to become a free, responsible and self-authenticated subject is a huge task which involves all our life, but there is good news that we are not alone, there is the Grace of God helping us with this enormous effort to be human as Lonergan reminds us in *The future of Christianity*:

If with some contemporary thinkers one distinguishes between particular items of knowing or believing or doing and, on the other hand the total context within which these acts occur, I think, one will conclude that it is being in love that determines the total context, the *Weltanschauung*, the horizon while faith is, so to speak, the eye of love, discerning God's hand in nature and his self-disclosure in revelation. Similarly, love is connected with hope, for hope is the security and the confidence of those to whom God has given his love <sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> *A Second Collection*, 154.

## PERFORMING DIFFERENTLY: LONERAGAN AND THE NEW NATURAL LAW

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TAKING A CUE FROM THE EPIGRAPH for this year's Workshop, I'm trying to think through natural law theory "performed differently," that is, by imagining natural law related to concrete human subjects rather than mere metaphysical substances.<sup>1</sup> I'm beginning to find considerable assistance in this project from the proponents of the so-called new natural law theory (NNL) – Germain Grisez, Joseph Boyle, Robert P. George, but especially John Finnis – even though it is my impression of a somewhat uneasy relationship between the Lonergan community and natural law theory in general, and an even greater unease with NNL, *especially* as represented by Finnis.<sup>2</sup> At least some accounts of the natural law seem determined to live in a world existing no longer, and resistant, even hostile, to empirical culture, emergent probability, and historical consciousness. As for Finnis, despite borrowing from Lonergan, he is sharply critical of Lonergan on feelings and appears to blame Lonergan's account of historical consciousness and the classicist/empirical distinction for a great deal of what went wrong in Roman Catholic moral theology of the last decades. Further, there's something about the ethos of the new natural lawyers – analytic, polemical, seemingly absolutist – at odds with the impulses of many Lonerganians.

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<sup>1</sup> I am grateful for the Earhart Foundation's kind support of the research and writing of this essay.

<sup>2</sup> Since the Workshop of 2011, Oxford University Press has released five volumes of John Finnis's *Collected Essays*, many of which are relevant to the argument here. I have left the essay substantially as it was delivered, however, and will use the newly available texts in forthcoming work.

I am not interested here in either defending or criticizing Finnis or addressing his controversial judgments on sexuality, contraception, or nuclear deterrence, but I would like to suggest that interesting elements of the new natural law theory borrow substantially from Lonergan – although in a somewhat truncated version – and that conversation with the new natural lawyers is a reasonable step in thinking through a natural law “performed differently.” To that end, I (1) examine the stages of meaning as they relate to versions of natural law differentiated by common sense, theory, and interiority; (2) suggest that the new natural law, especially as articulated by Finnis, attempts natural law from within the stage of interiority; (3) end with some provisional criticisms and further questions. I will not here address Finnis’s criticisms of Lonergan.

### NATURAL LAW THEORY AND RISING TO THE LEVEL OF OUR TIMES

The distinction between what is just by nature as opposed to mere convention has served a foundational role in moral and political thought and institutions. Without the distinction, many fear, custom becomes king, and custom can be a brutal tyrant. Leo Strauss describes the implications of custom as ruler in drastic terms: “... all societies have their ideals, cannibal societies no less than civilized ones. If principles are sufficiently justified by the fact that they are accepted by a society, the principles of cannibalism are as defensible or sound as those of civilized life.”<sup>3</sup>

Despite its pedigree, natural law as a theory is often met with confusion and suspicion. For a moral theory historically so important and which claims to be based on self-evident truths, it seems somewhat odd that the theory is unpersuasive to so many, even sinister. Recall Justice Thomas’s confirmation hearings, with then-Senator Biden claiming that concerns about the natural law would be “the single most important task” of the hearings.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Leo Strauss, *Natural Right and History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953), 2-3.

<sup>4</sup> In John S. Baker, Jr, “A Tribute to Justice Clarence Thomas: Natural Law and Justice Thomas.” *Regent University Law Review* 12 (2000) at <<http://www.lexisnexis.com/>>.

The causes of natural law's decline as a popular theory are manifold, and explanations vary depending on the viewpoint and commitments of the interpreter. Legal positivism, secularism, postmodernism, relativism, individualism, contraception, the sixties – all are proposed as explanations – along with nominalism, voluntarism, modern science's rejection of teleology and metaphysical biology, the turn to the subject, and any number of villainous (or heroic) modern thinkers.<sup>5</sup> Additionally, the expansion of meaning from classical laws to statistical probability, the rise of empirical culture, and the acknowledgement of historical consciousness all contribute to a certain picture of the natural law as odd and out of date.<sup>6</sup>

Alasdair MacIntyre explains that the cultural conditions simply are against the theory. Even though the theory holds that "plain persons all have within themselves an authoritative knowledge of the content of law ... we find a remarkable difference between how matters are or were conceived by the exponents of these older views of natural law and the beliefs dominant in modern cultures."<sup>7</sup> In keeping with his

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<sup>5</sup> Charles E. Rice, "Natural Law in the Twenty-First Century," in *Common Truths: New Perspectives on Natural Law*, ed. Edward B. McLean (Wilmington, DE: ISI Books, 2000), 293-305; Etienne Gilson, *The Unity of Philosophical Experience* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1937); Andreas Kinneging, *The Geography of Good and Evil: Philosophical Investigations*, trans. Ineke Hardy (Wilmington, DE: ISI Books, 2009); Heinrich A. Rommen, *The Natural Law: A Study in Legal and Social History and Philosophy*, trans. Thomas R. Hanley (Indianapolis, IN: Liberty Fund, 1998); Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*, 2nd ed. (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984); J. Budziszewski, *The Line through the Heart: Natural Law as Fact, Theory, and Sign of Contradiction* (Wilmington: ISI Books, 2009); Hadley Arkes, *First Things: An Inquiry into the First Principles of Morals and Justice* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986).

<sup>6</sup> Cynthia S. W. Crysdale, "Revisioning Natural Law: From the Classicist Paradigm to Emergent Probability," *Theological Studies* 56 (1995): 464-84. See also John Finnis, "Historical Consciousness" and *Theological Foundations* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1992); John Finnis, "Nature and Natural Law in Contemporary Philosophical and Theological Debates: Some Observations," in *The Nature and Dignity of the Human Person as the Foundation of the Right to Life: The Challenges of the Contemporary Cultural Context, Proceedings of the Eighth General Assembly, Pontifical Academy for Life* (2002) at <[http://www.academiaivita.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=211%3Aj-finnis-natura-e-legge-naturale-nel-dibattito-filosofico-e-teologico-contemporaneo&catid=53%3Aatti-della-viii-assemblea-della-pav-2002&Itemid=66&lang=en](http://www.academiaivita.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=211%3Aj-finnis-natura-e-legge-naturale-nel-dibattito-filosofico-e-teologico-contemporaneo&catid=53%3Aatti-della-viii-assemblea-della-pav-2002&Itemid=66&lang=en)> (accessed January 29, 2010).

<sup>7</sup> Alasdair MacIntyre, "Theories of Natural Law in the Culture of Advanced

analysis in *After Virtue* on the context dependency of moral concepts, it is unsurprising that MacIntyre concludes that it "follows that we should not expect those older conceptions of natural law to continue to flourish ... they do not."<sup>8</sup> This is not to say that all admit the failure of natural law as a theory. Very capable proponents of the natural law have defended and developed the theory admirably, and one might even claim its renaissance in certain circles,<sup>9</sup> but MacIntyre suggests that the developments are guilty of falsely hoping that "adaptation to what is distinctively modern in modern culture" will allow the theory to succeed despite "an understanding of the natural law that is in the sharpest contrast to the understanding of it proposed in the high Middle Ages by Aquinas...."<sup>10</sup> Reminiscent of his attack in *Three Rival Versions* on those "too many Thomisms" following modern threads of thought to confused error, MacIntyre baldly states that these newer attempts "all fail."<sup>11</sup> In fact, he claims that the more "nearly one ... approaches to the truth [in natural law theory], the less likely it is to be acceptable to modern persons."<sup>12</sup> In other words, MacIntyre claims an inverse relationship between true theories of natural law (Maritain) and the ability of contemporary persons to understand and accept the theory; attempting to render the theory understandable renders the theory false, apparently.

Further, and important given his understanding of the rationality of a tradition, a natural law theory cannot be defended if it fails to meet two conditions: "first, that it must furnish an adequate explanation of the failure of the natural law to secure widespread assent ... and, second, that it must identify the grounds for assent ... available to all rational persons, *even in our own culture, even if those grounds*

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Modernity," in *Common Truths: New Perspectives on Natural Law*, ed. Edward B. McLean (Wilmington, DE: ISI Books, 2000), 93.

<sup>8</sup> MacIntyre, "Theories of Natural Law," 93.

<sup>9</sup> As an example, the so-called "new natural law theory" associated with Grisez, Boyle, Finnis, and George. See John Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980) and Robert P. George, *In Defense of the Natural Law* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

<sup>10</sup> MacIntyre, "Theories of Natural Law," 93.

<sup>11</sup> MacIntyre, "Theories of Natural Law," 93.

<sup>12</sup> MacIntyre, "Theories of Natural Law," 94.

are in very large part either flouted or ignored."<sup>13</sup> MacIntyre then acknowledges the new natural law theorists Germain Grisez and John Finnis as attempting to meet the first condition, albeit unsuccessfully, and failing entirely the second. For MacIntyre, very little is gained by amending the older conception of natural law or expressing an allergy to its understandings of nature and reason, and since we can explain and expect contemporaries formed in the social conditions of advanced modernity to reject it, sticking with the older version already meets the first test. In fact, MacIntyre claims, attempts at accommodation deprive proponents of the natural law "the only account ... that not only is able to explain its own rejection, but also justifies plain persons in regarding themselves as already having within themselves the resources afforded by a knowledge of fundamental law..."<sup>14</sup>

### STAGES OF MEANING AND NATURAL LAW

Of course, one need not read all historical change as "accommodation," as some desperate attempt to stay relevant despite the failure to do so. MacIntyre himself identifies the historical situatedness of the natural law tradition which may allow us to analyze the historical changes in light of a changing dimension of meaning. While the natural law may be known by all persons, things are known according to the mode of the knower, which means that even for natural law truth is not so objective as to exist without the human subject. Natural law is the rational beings participation in eternal law, but this does not imply that natural law *is* eternal law or that the mode and self-awareness of that rational participation cannot develop. In fact, it seems odd to think of rationality not developing. Consequently, that the natural law is known by all does not, it seems to me, imply that it is known by all in the same way; rather, it is known by all in the mode of their knowing, which is historical. Historical consciousness, properly understood, need not threaten natural law theory but is central to the theory.

Following a heuristic given by Lonergan, I'd suggest, here rather briefly, that the natural law can be meaningful in a variety of ways, just as there are stages of meaning in every domain of human knowing.

<sup>13</sup> MacIntyre, "Theories of Natural Law," 104 (emphasis added).

<sup>14</sup> MacIntyre, "Theories of Natural Law," 113.

Stages need not be understood in strict chronological sequencing, of course, as if the stages move from one to the next without blurring or repetition, and any given society would contain individuals and groups in all the stages. The first stage is that of common sense, the second is theory, and the third interiority.<sup>15</sup>

Without intending this to be an exhaustive list, I distinguish three variations of *common sense* renditions of natural law. The first version, common sense 1, tends to reduce nature to the experience of my inclinations or my wants. If I have an inclination towards some end, then it is, after all, only natural to seek it. If I, or if we, experience ourselves as having certain impulses, then they are natural. We could find this, I think, in some versions of self-justification for actions – think, for example, of the “boys will be boys” defense<sup>16</sup> – also in certain types of sociobiology, and in the harsher version of Callicles where nature teaches that the stronger impulse can, and ought, defeat the weaker. In each, the fact of inclination is thought to justify the inclination and actions towards its satisfaction – “it’s only natural.” This version operates on some version of the regularities of nature, whether those regularities are found in individuals or species.

The natural law of common sense 2 strikes me as a naïve version of teleology linked closely with an uncritical extroversion. The account goes something like this: “if substance *s*, has as its purpose *p*, then it is natural to seek *p* and unnatural to impair *p*.” The common sense objections to contraception or sodomy – arguments sometimes termed “the perverted faculty arguments” – are examples. “Look,” the argument goes, “the purpose of the sex act, given the nature of the sexual organs and their functions, is irreducibly procreative, at least in potency, and sexual activity outside that function is unnatural.” Function is just somehow “in things,” and so purpose – law – also lurks “in things,” in roughly the same way that naïve extroversion thinks of reality already out there now. As Lonergan thinks of extroversion committing the cognitional myth, I think this commits a kind of value-myth, namely, those functions I can observe equal what is right by nature for this substance or act.

<sup>15</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (New York: Seabury Press, 1972), 85.

<sup>16</sup> The recent Dominique Strauss-Kahn scandal provides ample evidence of this.

Very briefly, common sense 3 also considers law as “out there,” but with the slight revision of giving the primacy of source not to the function of form but to mind; that is, law exists “in” the will or intellect – or in the expression of the same through statute – of the legislator as a kind of quasi-substance. Law is whatever is “in” the mind of God, or law is whatever was contained “in” the text of the law (or perhaps “in” the original intention of the lawgiver). The important element, I’d note, is again the patterning of law as a quasi-substance, an item or list of items, which is out-there or in-here or up-there in whatever nuanced form this might take.

Michael Novak identifies the commonsense version of the natural law in an early article on the promise of Lonergan for understanding the natural law. He writes:

The meaning of “objective” is not, then, “absolute code written in heaven out there or on the human heart in here. The meaning of the word “ought” is not derived from conformity to some external standard “out there”, not to some arbitrary, whimsical standard “in the heart.”<sup>17</sup>

It seems to me that at least one indication that natural law is understood in the mode of common sense would be how much anxiety of the Cartesian sort was occasioned by Novak’s following statement: “Natural law is not constituted by an ‘objective code;’ it is constituted by a set of dynamically related operations on the part of each individual person.”<sup>18</sup> Should this cause worries about subjectivism then I would take this as a mark of natural law grasped in common sense; put differently, as natural law for the unconverted.<sup>19</sup>

Besides the meanings of common sense, there is a second stage of meaning, *theory*, distinguished by a differentiation of consciousness with less emphasis on the appearances of events to me but rather the truth of things, especially as things relate to other things, governed by a more specialized language use and controlled with logic. I’d suggest

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<sup>17</sup> Michael Novak, “Bernard Lonergan: A New Approach to Natural Law,” in *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association* (1967): 246-49, at 248.

<sup>18</sup> Novak, “Bernard Lonergan,” 248-49.

<sup>19</sup> For Lonergan’s understanding of intellectual conversion and the difference it makes, see *Method in Theology*, 237-44.

that a good deal of natural law reflection is theoretical, given its explicitly metaphysical and classicist articulation.

Heinrich Rommen writes of the history of natural law: "natural law obtains general acceptance only in the periods when metaphysics, queen of the sciences, is dominant. It recedes or suffers an eclipse ... when being ... and oughtness ... are separated.... The natural law depends on the science of being, on metaphysics."<sup>20</sup> For Rommen, as in much Thomism, the object of cognition is not the individual but the essence of the thing "which lies hidden in the core of phenomena as an idea in everything of the same kind ... the form."<sup>21</sup> Further, Rommen continues, since we know essence, and we know that "the teleological conception, grounded in the metaphysics of being" is "the basic of the essential unity of being and oughtness," we then know the telos, or finality of a thing, insofar as we know its form.<sup>22</sup> Without form, there is no meaningful finality and no natural law, as Rommen states, the "perfection or fulfillment of the things is their essence: formal cause and end are one."<sup>23</sup> With form, the natural law is equivalent to acting in conformity with nature.

Consequently, the main tasks for the natural law would appear to be (1) determine human nature and (2) determine what is unique to human nature, or to combine the tasks, determine proper function. This task of philosophical anthropology is theoretical, an account of human nature grasped metaphysically, whereby the unique function or characteristic of the human is the *sine qua non* of ethics. However, since a grasp of human nature is theoretical and metaphysical, it is not rooted in practical reason, and so the *sine qua non* of ethics is not ethical; ethics is grounded in the discipline of metaphysics.<sup>24</sup> To grasp the proper function argument of *Nicomachean Ethics* I.7, then, one must first read *Nicomachean Ethics* I.13, the division of the parts of the soul. One should read *Physics* or *Metaphysics* first, then *De Anima* and only then turn to the *Ethics*. Similarly, Aquinas can provide an

<sup>20</sup> Rommen, *Natural Law*, 141.

<sup>21</sup> Rommen, *Natural Law*, 145-46.

<sup>22</sup> Rommen, *Natural Law*, 150.

<sup>23</sup> Rommen, *Natural Law*, 40.

<sup>24</sup> For a helpful summary of this, see John Finnis, *Fundamentals of Ethics* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 1983), 10-17.

account of the law in I-II. 94 only because of previous discussions in the "Treatise on Happiness" and of the powers of the soul.

Such derivationist accounts – whereby knowledge of the human good is "derived from theoretical judgments regarding human nature" are not unique to Rommen.<sup>25</sup> MacIntyre turns back to metaphysical biology as a necessary condition of ethics and proper functioning; Henry Veatch, Anthony Lisska, J. Budziszewski, Russell Hittinger, Ralph McInerny, and many other competent scholars do so as well.<sup>26</sup> So prevalent is this position, that I consider it the default explanation of the natural law, although it comes in a variety of shades and textures.

### NATURAL LAW AND INTERIORITY

In his *Concept of Law*, the famed legal theorist H. L. A. Hart, who also happens to be John Finnis's teacher, takes up the question of the essence of law. Echoing the frustration of *The Critique of Pure Reason*, Hart indicates the persistency of the problem of the essence of law:

No vast literature is dedicated to answering the questions "What is chemistry?" or "What is medicine?", as it is to the question "What is law?" ... No one has thought it illuminating or important to insist that medicine is "what doctors do about illness," or "a prediction of what doctors will do," ... [y]et in the case of law, things ... as strange as these have often been said, and not only said but urged with eloquence and passion, as if they were revelations of truths about law, long obscured by gross misrepresentations of its essential nature.<sup>27</sup>

The primary context for Hart's reflections is J. L. Austin's "command theory" of law where law is essentially a command backed by force.<sup>28</sup> Hart finds it difficult to exclude from this definition the barked statements of a gunman robbing a bank, for they give commands

<sup>25</sup> Mark C. Murphy, *Natural Law and Practical Rationality* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 6.

<sup>26</sup> For a helpful discussion, including summaries of other thinkers, see Anthony J. Lisska, *Aquinas's Theory of Natural Law: An Analytic Reconstruction* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996).

<sup>27</sup> H. L. A. Hart, *The Concept of Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961), 1.

<sup>28</sup> Hart, *The Concept of Law*, 18-25.

backed by the threat of force, but presumably (hopefully) human law has a bit more legitimacy than this.

In developing his analysis, Hart enquires into the distinction between habit and rule, "of going to the cinema on Saturday nights, and saying that it is the rule ... that the male head is to be bared on entering a church."<sup>29</sup> Three distinctions matter: (1) rules do not simply predict behavior, but treat divergence as a fault, a lapse, something for which one could be criticized; (2) not only will divergence result in criticism, but the derivation from the rule is thought as a good, or legitimate, reason for criticism; (3) rules have an internal aspect or point of view.<sup>30</sup> A merely external habit may allow some prediction of regular behavior, whereas for a rule to exist at least some people must reflexively consider the rule as having legitimacy:

What is necessary is that there should be a critical reflective attitude to certain patterns of behavior as a common standard, and that this should display itself in criticism (including self-criticism), demands for conformity, and in acknowledgements that such criticism and demands are justified, all of which find their characteristic expression in the normative terminology of "ought," "must," and "should," "right," and "wrong."<sup>31</sup>

Such rules, including law, depend on the social practice of the internal point of view, for only from that perspective can we distinguish habitual and predictable behavior from the sense of compulsion.

Of course, this grants importance to one's own position relative to the law. If someone views a law from an external point of view – say a scholar studying the social rules and law of a community not their own – they do not experience rules as rules, strictly speaking. They understand that members of the community tend to follow the rules and view deviance from the rule as a fault merely insofar as they deviate from the rules, but for the scholar the rules are not rules – observers have no rules.<sup>32</sup> For a member of the community, however, the rule is

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<sup>29</sup> Hart, *The Concept of Law*, 55.

<sup>30</sup> Hart, *The Concept of Law*, 55-56.

<sup>31</sup> Hart, *The Concept of Law*, 57.

<sup>32</sup> Hart, *The Concept of Law*, 87-91.

not merely a prediction that some punishment will result "but a *reason* for hostility."<sup>33</sup>

In *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, Finnis objects that Hart has not differentiated the internal point of view nearly enough. Hart maintains that capturing the essence of law with a strict definition of species and difference is rather difficult. Such a method assumes that all members of the class share common, and essential characteristics, but there is no such genus in the instance of law.<sup>34</sup> The best candidate would be the general family of rules of behavior, but the concept of rule is itself sufficiently vague as to prove unhelpful. Further, even in simple cases the problem of the borderline case emerges, and in common usage the term law is used very broadly to include instances not obviously sharing identical characteristics (he identifies international law as an example).<sup>35</sup> All things considered, Hart suggests that various instances are "linked together in quite different ways" to some central use. That is, it is by analogy in which rather different types are included.<sup>36</sup>

Finnis notes the *pros hen* nature of this approach as well as its departure from the approach of Kelsen and others looking for a univocal definition of law.<sup>37</sup> Like Aristotle on friendship, the concept can be expanded, albeit always with some principle or rationale of relation to what Finnis terms *the central case* providing focal meaning.<sup>38</sup> All this allows one to distinguish "the mature from the undeveloped ... the sophisticated from the primitive, the flourishing from the corrupt ... the 'without qualification' from the 'in a sense,' 'in a manner of speaking' ... all without ignoring or banishing to another discipline the undeveloped, primitive, corrupt, deviant or other qualified sense."<sup>39</sup>

Obviously such a method requires some means of determining the central case and differentiating the secondary types and their relations. The question, then, is from what viewpoint to make these determinations. On the most basic level the viewpoint must be practical

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<sup>33</sup> Hart, *The Concept of Law*, 90.

<sup>34</sup> Hart, *The Concept of Law*, 15.

<sup>35</sup> Hart, *The Concept of Law*, 15.

<sup>36</sup> Hart, *The Concept of Law*, 16.

<sup>37</sup> Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, 9.

<sup>38</sup> Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, 10.

<sup>39</sup> Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, 11.

or that viewpoint of thinking what will be, and ought be, done or accomplished, on those goods potentially accomplished through human action.<sup>40</sup> Hart narrowed this practical point of view to that internal point of view of those within the social practices of rules, a method Finnis describes as "[r]ather obviously ... unstable and unsatisfactory."<sup>41</sup> However, they do not differentiate the central and periphery cases of the internal point of view itself. For example, there would seem to be a significant difference between the revolutionary and the law-abiding citizen even if both could be somehow positioned within the internal point of view, and Hart seems to minimize differences between the pre-legal social order of custom and the law itself.<sup>42</sup>

From this, Finnis concludes that only from the point of view where legal obligation is treated also as a moral obligation will law emerge as significantly distinct from other forms of social order, but since the notion of morality is itself somewhat broad the best viewpoint, he thinks, is *practical reasonableness*.<sup>43</sup> One can differentiate even more, however, since some accounts of practical reasonableness are more reasonable than others, and here the Lonerganian begins to take note of Finnis's description: "... the central case viewpoint itself is the viewpoint of those who not only appeal to practical reasonableness but also *are* practically reasonable,"<sup>44</sup> and he describes various qualities of the sort of person he identifies as akin to Aristotle's *spoudaios*, "the mature man of practical reasonableness."<sup>45</sup>

Consequently, Finnis argues that the standard for evaluating the central case cannot be separated from the theorist themselves, for the theorist must decide for themselves the standards of practical reasonableness.<sup>46</sup> The immediate worry, one might suppose, is that such jurisprudence "is inevitably subject to every theorist's conceptions and prejudices,"<sup>47</sup> a worry Finnis responds to by acknowledging, first,

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40 Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, 12.

41 Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, 13.

42 Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, 13.

43 Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, 15.

44 Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, 15.

45 Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, 15n37.

46 Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, 16.

47 Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, 17.

that there is no escaping the fact that a judgment regarding the central case must be made, and second, by claiming that the theorist's search for knowledge "is an important help to the reflective and critical theorist in his effort to convert his own ... practical 'prejudices' into truly reasonable judgments ... Descriptive knowledge this can occasion a modification of the judgments ... with which the theorist first approached his data, and can suggest a reconceptualization."<sup>48</sup> What results is a back and forth movement between assessments of the human good and explanatory descriptions of human flourishing.<sup>49</sup> Now, a reader of Lonergan cannot help but perk up at language such as data and conversion, and the back and forth movement sounds something like the self-correcting process of knowing, and the entire positioning of the judging person, properly functioning, as *the* standard sounds something like an account of genuine objectivity. All this happy suspicion is encouraged by the notes at the end of the chapter where Finnis remarks that the theorist judging as he has described would be one "whose systematic viewpoint approximated the 'universal viewpoint' postulated by B. J. F. Lonergan."<sup>50</sup>

With this as point of departure, I'd like to suggest that we read the project of Finnis as a radicalization of Hart's internal point of view, or as one member of the new natural law community describes, a "first person standpoint."<sup>51</sup> In fact, I'd like to suggest that with the new natural law of Grisez, Boyle, Finnis, and others, that the metaphysical mode of classical natural law is transposed into interiority, that human nature is of less interest than the human reality of intelligible meaning.

### NEW NATURAL LAW AS TURN TO INTERIORITY – A PHENOMENOLOGY OF INTELLIGIBLE GOOD

Perhaps *the* key difference of the new natural law theory from other articulations of the natural law is its relation to metaphysics. Accepting Hume's criticism that one cannot derive an ought from an

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<sup>48</sup> Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, 17.

<sup>49</sup> Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, 17.

<sup>50</sup> Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, 21-22.

<sup>51</sup> Christopher Tollefsen, "Is a Purely First Person Account of Human Action Defensible?," *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 9 (2006): 442.

is, Finnis puts his version in stark contrast to the tradition: "... the most popular image of natural law has to be abandoned," although as he sees it, abandoning the theoretical foundation of natural law rescues the theory since "the corresponding and most popular objection to all theories of natural law has to be abandoned too, and the whole question ... thought through afresh."<sup>52</sup> Contrary to the normal view, the principles of natural law

... are not inferred from speculative principles. They are not inferred from facts. They are not inferred from metaphysical propositions about human nature, or about the nature of good and evil, or about "the function of a human being," nor are they inferred from a teleological conception of nature or any other conception of nature.<sup>53</sup>

Luckily for the tradition, apparently Aristotle and Aquinas agree with him, although, to be sure, this requires a great many in the tradition to admit they have misread the masters by being more interested in "systematizing the results of their respective master's investigations than in retracing those investigation, subscribed to drastic simplifications of the method of those investigations ... misread their masters' epistemology."<sup>54</sup> This is the sort of statement only a fan of Voegelin or Lonergan could read without suspecting hubris on the part of the author!

In *Fundamentals of Ethics* Finnis fundamentally re-reads Aristotle, or at least reads him differently than I was taught; Aristotle, he says, "is not a neo-Aristotelian who believes that ethical truths are attained by an inventory ... of aspects of human nature."<sup>55</sup> Having rejected human nature as a grounding for ethics, Aristotle makes minimal use of human function or any "peculiar characteristic" of humans from which to derive ethics.<sup>56</sup> While Aristotle does refer to human function, this is an "erratic boulder" and not the "deep structure of Aristotle's critical method" where

<sup>52</sup> Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, 33.

<sup>53</sup> Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, 33-34.

<sup>54</sup> Finnis, *Fundamentals of Ethics*, 13.

<sup>55</sup> Finnis, *Fundamentals of Ethics*, 14.

<sup>56</sup> Finnis, *Fundamentals of Ethics*, 14-16.

"facts about the natural order" do not "play a role" ... or not "usually."<sup>57</sup>

The more basic strategy of Aristotle, says Finnis, is found where "[t]ime and time again [he] appeals to what 'everyone would say', or 'no one would say....'"<sup>58</sup> This is not some uncritical appeal to convention, however, but a reminder of our own experience of being human, even a kind of intentionality analysis:

... you and I, doing ethics, need to *appropriate* that just appropriation of the human situation. We make that appropriation, not by parroting common opinions, nor by appeals to the fact that most people agree ... but by attending to precisely those aspects of our experience ... of which our language serves as a reminder and in which human good(s) become or can now become intelligible to us.<sup>59</sup>

This is not an appeal to metaphysics, nor to common sense, but rather to intelligibility as discovered by attending to our own selves as we attempt to make the world intelligible. He stresses the performative and operational element in such knowledge, claiming that it is only "when one is considering ... when one is thinking practically" that one has the data to which to advert.<sup>60</sup>

New natural law is often read as rejecting the relevance of metaphysics entirely, a charge leveled at it repeatedly – and again, this is an accusation which might sound familiar, having had it used against us from time to time – and is a charge the new natural lawyers reject. While theoretical anthropology does not provide justification for morality without an illicit leap from fact to value, ontology does *ground* intelligibility. As Finnis puts it, if our nature differed, so too would our duties, but our duties are not derived from our nature. Most interesting, for our purposes, is his reference to Lonergan in explaining what he means, a reference footnoted in *Fundamentals of Ethics* and then entering into new natural law as a commonplace without much reference. He writes, citing *Collection*, "in the 'ontological order,' no doubt, 'the essence of the soul grounds the potencies, the potencies

<sup>57</sup> Finnis, *Fundamentals of Ethics*, 17.

<sup>58</sup> Finnis, *Fundamentals of Ethics*, 17.

<sup>59</sup> Finnis, *Fundamentals of Ethics*, 18.

<sup>60</sup> Finnis, *Fundamentals of Ethics*, 12.

ground the acts, and the act ground knowledge of objects. But if you ask how we come to know human essence or nature ... one must first know the objects, and thus one can fully know the characteristic human acts....<sup>61</sup> In other words, to understand *what* we are, we first attend to what we intend, and such attention reveals the acts by which we attend.

A major contention of new natural law is the notion of underived basic human goods. In the article which we could say started the movement, Germain Grisez pointed out the analogy Aquinas makes in I-II. 94. 2 of the *Summa* between first principles of theoretical reason and the first precepts of natural law. *Just as* the first principles of theoretical reason are self-evident, and thus not deduced or derived from any previous premise, so too the first principles of practical reason.<sup>62</sup> This is not to say that the first principles are intuited, but rather that they are *understood* by attending to what we intend as the ultimate for-the-sake-of-which of an intelligible desire; the basic goods are those ultimate objective(s) which are the reason we do or want anything, and they are intelligible and understandable. Listen to Grisez's language:

... it would be a mistake to suppose that practical knowledge, because it is prior to its object, is independent of experience. Even in theoretical knowledge, actual understanding and truth are not discovered in experience and extracted from it by a simple process of separation. Experience *can be* understood, and truth *can be* known about the things of experience, but understanding and truth attain a dimension of reality that is not actually contained within experience, although experience touches the surface of the same reality ... Our minds use the data of experience as a bridge to cross into reality in order to grasp the more-than-given truth of things.<sup>63</sup>

The experience of our inclinations does not ground the natural law, as naïve versions seem to think, but the experienced inclinations ground that which is understood. Nor is the intelligibility intuited, but

<sup>61</sup> Finnis, *Fundamentals of Ethics*, 21.

<sup>62</sup> Germain Grisez, "The Principle of Practical Reason: A Commentary on the *Summa Theologiae*, 1-2, Question 94, Article 2," *Natural Law Forum* 10 (1965): 169-75.

<sup>63</sup> Grisez, "The Principle of Practical Reason," 176.

understood. As Finnis explains in *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, it is "only by an effort of reflection"<sup>64</sup> about "our own thinking"<sup>65</sup> that one is able to grasp this intelligibility. Take the basic good of knowledge as an example, and again note the language:

The principle that truth ... is worth pursuing is not somehow innate, inscribed on the mind at birth. On the contrary, the value of truth becomes obvious only to one who has experienced the urge to question, who has grasped the connection between question and answer, who understands that knowledge is constituted by correct answers to particular questions, and who is aware of the possibility of further questions and of other questioners...<sup>66</sup>

In fact, his dedication to the claim that first principles are not innate, neither derived from theoretical anthropology, neither intuited, but grasped by insight into the data of our own consciousness, and that this is confirmed only *when* we advert to our own performance of intending intelligible goods, is remarkable. I multiply passages from a variety of sources here, but the explanation is throughout his work, committed as he is to the idea that "First principles are insights into the data of experience and understood possibility."<sup>67</sup> He continues:

Each of the several substantive first principles of practical reason picks out and directs one towards a distinct intelligible good ... called basic. Aquinas regards each of the first practical principles as self-evident (*per se notum*: known through itself) and undeducted (*primum* and *indemonstrabile*). He does not, however, mean that they are data-less "intuitions"; even the indemonstrable first principles in any field of human

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<sup>64</sup> Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, 61.

<sup>65</sup> Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, 64.

<sup>66</sup> Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, 65.

<sup>67</sup> John Finnis, "Aquinas' Moral, Political, and Legal Philosophy," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2008 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2011/entries/aquinas-moral-political/>> (accessed May 17, 2010).

knowledge are knowable only by insight (*intellectusi*) into data of experience....<sup>68</sup>

Aquinas neglects to spell out how these first principles come to be understood. But he holds that they are understood and accepted by everyone who has enough experience to understand their terms. The process of coming to understand a first practical principle may be exemplified as follows, in relation to the basic good of knowledge. As a child one experiences the inclination to ask questions, and to greet apparently satisfactory answers with satisfaction and failure to answer as a disappointment. At some point one comes to understand – has the insight – that such answers are instances of a quite general standing possibility, namely knowledge, coming to know and overcoming ignorance. By a distinct though often well nigh simultaneous further insight one comes to understand that this – knowledge – is not merely a possibility but also a good [*bonum*], that is to say an opportunity, a *benefit*, something desirable as a kind of improvement (a *perfectio*) of one's or anyone's condition, and as to be pursued.<sup>69</sup>

By reflexively analyzing human volitions – one's own and other people's – with their intelligible objects, one can uncover a number of basic purposes.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>68</sup> Finnis, "Aquinas' Moral, Political, and Legal Philosophy," Cf. These natural dispositions, insofar as they are experienced, provide data for the insights in which one knows the first, self-evident principles practical knowledge ... Although the insights whose content is the self-evident principles of practical knowledge have for their data one's natural inclinations, one's understanding of the substantive goods does not remain forever as limited as it is at first (Grisez, Boyle, and Finnis, "Practical Principles...", 108-109).

<sup>69</sup> Finnis, "Practical Principles." Cf. "I think that the practical insight, say, that knowledge is good and pursuitworthy, has as its data – the data to which the insight will add something original – the awareness not only of the urge (inclination) to question and the experience of satisfaction when a question is answered but also the "theoretical" insight that knowledge is possible" (John Finnis, "Symposium on Natural Law and Natural Rights: Foundations of Practical Reason Revisited," *American Journal of Jurisprudence* 50 (2005): 109-31.)

<sup>70</sup> John Finnis, *Moral Absolutes* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1991), 42. Cf. "Self-evident principles are *per se nota* – known just by knowing the

... people can know the basic goods in two ways ... one ... by asking questions about the aims of specifically human acts ... the other way ... is how everyone first comes to know them: by insights that grasp the self-evident truth of the practical principles ... neither groundless intuitions nor the product of analyzing the meanings of words.<sup>71</sup>

Now, all of this language could be the mere accident of words but for Finnis's description of objectivity.

The basic human goods are known by adverting to our questions and the intelligibility such questions provide. When questions reach their limit, beyond which it no longer makes sense to ask "Why?", then a basic human good is reached, and these goods constitute the human good. Now, whatever limits such a method might have, it does assume a certain notion of intellectual conversion, and Finnis is explicit about this. In a nice essay entitled *Natural Law and the Ethics of Discourse* he insists that "this reality to which true propositions correspond is not something accessible or intelligible (still less is it adequately imaginable) otherwise than by questions and answer, coherent, self-consistent thought, attention to all relevant evidence, all pertinent considerations."<sup>72</sup> That sounds an awful lot like genuine objectivity to me, especially when in just a few paragraphs he defines knowledge as "the connectedness of answers with questions, and with further questions and further answers ..." and which "originates in an act of that kind of undeduced (though not datafree!) understanding ... insight."<sup>73</sup>

In keeping with a grasp of knowledge as a relation of question to answer, he references Lonergan in stating the importance of distinguishing experienced and intelligible goods, a distinction every bit as important as "that 'intellectual conversion' by which we overcome

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meaning of the terms. This does not mean that they are mere linguistic clarifications, not that they are intuitions - insights unrelated to data ..." (Grisez, Boyle, and Finnis, "Practical Principles...", 106).

<sup>71</sup> Germain Grisez, "Symposium on Natural Law and Human Fulfillment: Natural Law, God, Religion, and Human Fulfillment," *American Journal of Jurisprudence* 46 (2001): 3-36.

<sup>72</sup> John Finnis, "Natural Law and the Ethics of Discourse," *American Journal of Jurisprudence* 43 (1998): 53-73.

<sup>73</sup> Finnis, "Natural Law and the Ethics of Discourse," 57.

empiricism in general philosophy.<sup>74</sup> That this occurs in the midst of several pages attacking Lonergan for the utilitarianism supposedly required by a misuse of feelings in apprehending value should not over alarm us. Some of this can be addressed through articulating what Lonergan means, as done already by Ormerod and Vertin, and we can appeal moreover to dialectics since Finnis has already accepted at least some of the broad strokes of Lonergan's cognitional theory, with its "penetrating analysis" from "the philosopher who most helpfully expounds the reality and power of human understanding."<sup>75</sup>

In accepting the broad outlines already, Finnis commits himself to intellectual conversion and the objectivity so demanded. He writes "it is a form of that intellectual conversion, in which we come to understand how understand grasps intelligibilities in experience and thus attains knowledge, by a process which is not like opening one's eyes."<sup>76</sup> He runs with this rejection of extroversive quite often, actually, articulating that self-evidency as he construes it requires grasping that such knowledge comes from understanding of our own objectives, and these are known by introspection even though they "cannot be verified by opening one's eyes and taking a look,"<sup>77</sup> it is not "just like opening one's eyes and perceiving the black marks on this page, or even 'seeing' those marks as words with meanings."<sup>78</sup>

Finally, retorsion. I would suggest that a good test of a position as distinct from a counterposition is some friendliness to the retorsion argument. If genuine objectivity is genuine subjectivity, properly understood, and if one comes to realize such objectivity through a referentially consistent, invariant, non-revisable account based upon the appropriation and affirmation of a nexus of operations and performances, then one can appeal to no foundation or defense beyond that foundation itself; that is, the operations of cognitional theory are self-evident, *per se nota*, which is not to say that they are not understood or that there is not data or understanding or judgment from which this self-evidency is grasped. But to any skeptic of the theory, there is no

<sup>74</sup> Finnis, *Fundamentals of Ethics*, 42.

<sup>75</sup> Finnis, *Fundamentals of Ethics*, 42.

<sup>76</sup> Finnis, *Fundamentals of Ethics*, 42.

<sup>77</sup> Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, 69.

<sup>78</sup> Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, 71.

court of adjudication other than the self-evidency of the process and the performative impossibility of denying the account. Such objectivity seems to suggest strongly the dialectical method of retorsion. And new natural law accepts this robustly. In the previously mentioned essay on the ethics of discourse, Finnis argues that while basic human goods are underived they can be defended dialectically, and this is accomplished by pointing out not any logical contradiction but rather the performative contradictions in the denial: "One's argumentative ... denial would be performatively inconsistent; what is asserted would be inconsistent with what is instantiated in and by the activity of seriously asserting it, arguing for it..."<sup>79</sup> Such attempts, he says in *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, are "operationally self-refuting."<sup>80</sup> Reflexivity provides "the only reliable critique ... by reflecting on one's own wanting, deciding and acting; and this reflection must not be an attempt to peer inside oneself, or to catch oneself as it were in a mirror out of the corner of one's eye...."<sup>81</sup>

### FURTHER QUESTIONS

Of course I've not discussed a variety of major issues related to new natural law, but I would suggest that despite some of the serious differences between new natural law and Lonergan, and Finnis's stringent (and debatable) criticisms of Lonergan, the new natural lawyers use an approach somewhat similar to Lonergan's in its broad strokes and so ought to be engaged productively, along with conversations with the understandings of John Paul II and Martin Rhonheimer, for example. Perhaps I could put it this way: If the natural law is to be brought to the level of its times, then it cannot molder away in its commonsense and theoretical varieties but should be transposed methodically, and new natural law, *in its own way*, makes this very attempt. I suggest new natural law can be looked to as sharing a basic impulse with descriptions of natural law rooted in Lonergan's method. Take, for example, Patrick McKinley Brennan's description of the natural law as fundamentally beholden to a previous inner law,

<sup>79</sup> Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, 58.

<sup>80</sup> Finnis, *Natural Law and Natural Rights*, 74.

<sup>81</sup> Finnis, *Fundamentals of Ethics*, 51.

governed by the further question, and "generated by and only by human operators faithful to the foundational operator that is inner law. For that desire, rather than something external to us, is our 'natural law.'"<sup>82</sup>

Second, a natural law understood through interiority might relieve us of those wooden, rationalistic, and deductive accounts of natural law. Not only might this allow the theory a new lease on life in advanced modernity, whatever MacIntyre might think, but correct the tendency of natural law toward absolutist claims sometimes more concerned with exceptionless moral norms than with the life of virtue. In fact, interiority might smooth the tensions between virtue theory and natural law, although Finnis himself seems to resist the "suppleness" demanded of that approach, although I wonder how much of this can be accounted for by the form of analytical jurisprudence and the linguistic and argumentative forms of that genre.

Third, one of the supposed virtues of natural law is that it can be known by anyone; in fact, some might say that it cannot not be known by anyone. The public nature of natural law changes somewhat in interiority, for while it is accessible to anyone who adverts to themselves, not all have converted, not all horizons are the same, and dialectics might be necessary just to arrive at the point where public discourse is possible. The possibility exists, as Voegelin knew, rendering him somewhat suspicious of natural law, for individuals to live in revolt against primary reality – and public debate with those individuals or groups is not as simple as appealing to reason, whatever the natural law tradition may have supposed.

Fourth, as an evangelical Protestant, I still encounter those who reject the natural law because it overlooks sin as well as the changed economy of the gospel and resurrection. At the same time, another segment of evangelicalism (which is not a monolithic culture) has embraced natural law closely, I fear, at times, to support conclusions already held on a variety of social issues. This is bad philosophy and is not enquiry of natural law. A natural law of interiority would render both positions strange, more evangelical even, as conversion and properly ordered love became central. Also, all this raises the possibility of natural law rooted in religiously differentiated consciousness,

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<sup>82</sup> Patrick McKinley Brennan, "Asking the Right Questions: Harnessing the Insights of Bernard Lonergan for the Rule of Law," *Journal of Law and Religion* 21 (2006): 3.

although I admit to failing to envision what this would look like as natural law proper.

Fifth, if we are to reverse counterpositions, I would provisionally suggest dialectical engagement with the work of Professor Finnis. It seems to me, and this is a point suggested also by Neil Ormerod, that Finnis tends to equate knowledge of the basic goods with understanding, with insight, rather than with judgments. He will occasionally use the term judgment, but even then the judgment seems to follow automatically from understanding. The danger of self-evidence is thinking that grasping the meaning of a proposition is equivalent to grasping the truth, but this requires a further and distinct operation. Failing to make that distinction risks moving only partly into critical realism, stalling out in idealism, risking also a kind of intuitionism with which Finnis is often charged. It is in judgment, not understanding, that we are forced to deal with the likely, the probably, the virtually, the usually – as Aristotle, taught us some time ago, the well-schooled person knows the exactitude required of a discipline, and a thorough going turn to the subject would reveal the centrality of prudence, even in the natural law.

## INCOME INEQUALITY AND THE PROBLEM OF THE BASIC EXPANSION

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THIS PAPER CONSIDERS A WELL-DOCUMENTED current macroeconomic trend in the United States which has been referred to (perhaps a bit hyperbolically, or at least prematurely) as the "disappearance of the middle class." While little more than a preliminary exploration of the potential applicability of Lonergan's macroeconomic work, this analysis of income disparity in light of circulation analysis hopes to generate fresh insights into phenomena that have proven not insignificant in the dialectic of history.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Two important preliminary points should be kept in mind. First, when reference is made to "the American standard of living" it should be noted that economists define standard of living as "real GDP per member of the population, or 'real output per capita'." [Robert J. Gordon, *Macroeconomics*, 10<sup>th</sup> ed. (Boston: Addison Wesley, 2006), 352.] While mention of a standard of living tends to evoke descriptive imagery of all the material things that furnish a desirable lifestyle, economically considered the concept of standard of living is expressed explanatorily, as Y/Q. As a mathematical mean, Y/Q prescind entirely from all questions concerning the *distribution* of output. As Y/Q is a mean, it does not indicate *median* distribution. Hence any connotations of a *shared* egalitarian enjoyment of the fruits of labor that the expression "American standard of living" may suggest are potentially misleading. Given wide enough inequality in the distribution of GDP, it is possible for a nation statistically to have a higher standard of living, yet also have a majority of its population experiencing no difference (or even declines) in their material well-being. In his forward to *The Report by the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress*, President Nicolas Sarkozy of France put it this way: "Our measuring systems make us reason on the basis of averages. But if we go on reasoning in averages, we will forge our beliefs and build our decisions on data that are increasingly divorced from real life. The average individual doesn't exist, and heightening inequality is detaching this average even more from the real experience of life, for talking about the average is a way to avoid talking about inequality" (Joseph Stiglitz, Amartya Sen, and Jean-Paul Fitoussi, *Mismeasuring Our*

According to Princeton economist Paul Krugman, the trend toward income equality that led to the emergence of an American middle class was not a shift that developed slowly over a long period of time, but rather was created, by political means, quite rapidly. Despite the efforts of the Progressive Era, levels of income inequality characteristic of the Gilded Age more or less persisted into the late 1920s. It was the policies and institutions of the New Deal in the 1930s, and the wage and price controls adopted during World War II, Krugman claims, that fostered a more egalitarian income distribution. Economic historians Claudia Goldin and Robert Margo termed this more egalitarian period "the Great Compression," and it persisted into the 1970s. Beginning around 1980 however, there began a reversal of this trend, which Goldin and Margo termed "the Great Divergence."<sup>2</sup> Recent trends in income distribution can be observed in the following data. This first graph plots median household income, adjusted for inflation:<sup>3</sup>

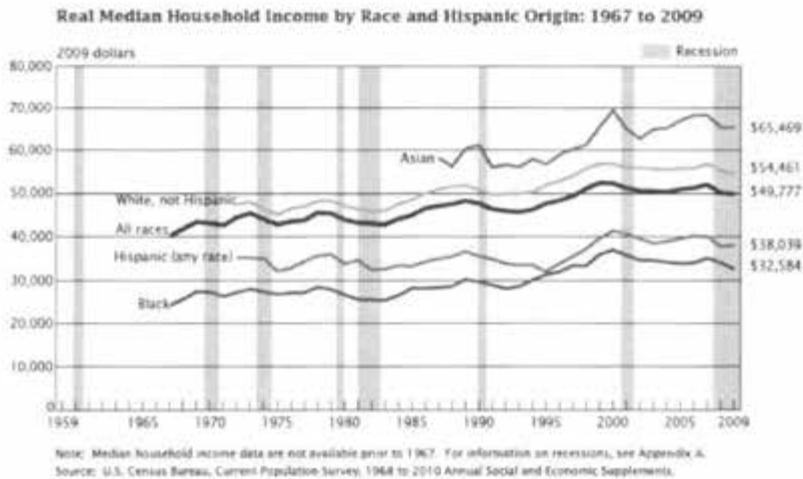
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*Lives: Why GDP Doesn't Add Up* (New York: The New Press, 2010), xiv). For further clarification of this mean-median distinction, and an argument for the importance of considering distribution of income, consumption, and wealth in economic analysis and policy, see pages 44-48.

Second, it should also be noted that the "hollowing out" of the middle class has occurred over a period of *increasing* labor productivity. Labor productivity is defined as "real GDP per hour of work or 'real output per hour'" (Gordon, *Macroeconomics*, 352). It is expressed as  $Y/N$ , where  $Y$  is the same measure of output used in the definition of standard of living, and  $N$  is total hours labor. The *level* of labor productivity has increased from 73.809 in 1995 Q1 to 112.610 in 2011 Q1. [Bureau of Labor Statistics, Series ID PRS84006093. Index 1995-2011 (2005 = 100). Output per hour, business sector.] Following a series of low labor productivity *rates of increase* from 1973 to 1995, annual *rates of increases* in labor productivity trended sharply higher in the U.S. from 1996 to 2004, and again in 2009 and 2010 Bureau of Labor Statistics Series ID PRS84006092. Percent change quarter ago, at annual rate. Output per hour, business sector). While high productivity rates during the late 1990s have been attributed to the tech boom, increasing productivity rates in 2002-2004 were significantly due to the cost-cutting and layoffs of the so-called "jobless recovery." This same dynamic of firms trying "to do more with less" at least partially explains the high labor productivity increases in 2009 and 2010, following the financial crisis of 2008. The *relevance* of these statistics in the present context is that stagnation of middle and lower class incomes can be attributed neither to any long-term economic contraction nor to decreasing labor productivity. As labor productivity rate increases have generally *accelerated* since 1995, it is reasonable to seek an explanation for income disparity in changes that have occurred in the various channels of income distribution.

<sup>2</sup> See Paul Krugman, *The Conscience of a Liberal* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2007).

<sup>3</sup> Carmen DeNavas-Walt, Bernadette D. Proctor, and Jessica C. Smith, *Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2009*. U.S. Department



Over the period from 1980 to 2009, there is a slight increase, from \$43,892 to \$49,777. The change over this 30-year period amounts to a compounded annual rate of growth of .42% – certainly nothing to write home about, especially given the remarkable innovations over this period, and significantly higher rates of increase in both real GDP per capita (i.e., in the so-called “standard of living”) and productivity.<sup>4</sup> Given that since 2000 there has actually occurred a .55% compounded annual *decline* in median household income, allegations of income “stagnation” do not seem overblown.<sup>5</sup>

The next graph is a series with data back to 1917 that indicates share of total income (including realized capital gains) flowing to those in the top income decile. Note the wide U shape of the graph. In the 1920s and 1930s those in the top decile received roughly a 45% share

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of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010: 6. Amounts are in 2009 CPI-U-RS adjusted dollars).

<sup>4</sup> Paul Krugman states “if gains in productivity had been evenly shared across the workforce, the typical worker’s income would be about 35 percent higher now [2007] than it was in the early seventies” (Krugman, *Conscience of a Liberal*, 128). See also second paragraph of footnote 1.

<sup>5</sup> For more sophisticated methods of median income analysis, see Joseph R. Meisenheimer II, “Real Compensation, 1979 to 2003: Analysis from Several Data Sources,” *Monthly Labor Review Online* 128, no. 5 (May 2005).

of total income. Around 1940 this declined to about 33%, and that level persisted for about four decades. Beginning around 1980 however, the share of income received by those in the top decile rose precipitously. By 2007 the top decile received nearly 50% of total income.<sup>6</sup>



Figure 1. The Top Decile Income Share in the United States, 1917-2007.

Notes: Income is defined as market income including realized capital gains (excludes government transfers). In 2007, top decile includes all families with annual income above \$109,000.

Source: Piketty and Saez (2003), series updated to 2007.

Considering just the top *percentile*, we find the same general pattern as with the top decile, but note an even steeper incline since 1980. In 2010, the top 1% of income earners received 21% of aggregate income, compared with under 10% in the late 1970s.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Anthony B. Atkinson, Thomas Piketty, and Emmanuel Saez, "Top Incomes in the Long Run of History," *Journal of Economic Literature* 49, no.1 (2011): 6.

<sup>7</sup> Sherle R. Schwenninger and Samuel Sherraden, "The American Middle Class Under Stress," New America Foundation, April 2011: 19. (<http://www.newamerica.net/sites/newamerica.net/files/policydocs/26-04-11%20Middle%20Class%20Under%20Stress.pdf>. Henceforth, AMCUS.)

### Income Share of the Top 1% of Earners\*



\* Including capital gains

Source: Top Incomes Database, UC Berkeley

Even more striking, the Atkinson, Piketty, and Saez study indicates that of the *growth* that has occurred in U.S. real income per family over the period from 1976 to 2007, a 58% share has been captured by the top 1 percentile.<sup>8</sup>

### POSSIBLE CAUSES OF INCOME DIVERGENCE

Columbia University economist Jeffrey Sachs asserts that we now face the greatest inequality in income and wealth in U.S. history. Economists offer multiple explanations for possible causes of this trend. While it will not be possible to discuss these at length (much less to formulate virtually unconditioned judgments concerning their plausibility), it may be of some interest simply to list the various lines of explanation that have been proposed. These include:

- The globalization of labor markets, immigration policy, trade agreements that displace American workers, and the outsourcing of domestic jobs (especially in manufacturing).

<sup>8</sup> Atkinson, Piketty, and Saez, "Top Incomes in the Long Run of History," 8.

- The decline of labor unions in the United States, both in influence and membership.
- An educational system that has failed to prepare enough students for an economy transformed by technological innovations that have both reduced the value of unskilled labor and increased the need for specialized skills.<sup>9</sup>
- The widening of the income gap between those who possess a college degree and those who do not.<sup>10</sup>
- The decrease of private sector middle-income jobs and the increase of private sector low-income jobs, measured as a share of total employment.<sup>11</sup>
- Erosion of the minimum wage relative to inflation.
- Net regressive changes in income, capital gains, corporate, and inheritance tax rates.<sup>12</sup>
- The transition from defined benefit to defined contribution retirement plans.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>9</sup> See Claudia Golden and Lawrence Katz, *The Race between Education and Technology* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap/Harvard University Press, 2008).

<sup>10</sup> Raghuram Rajan suggests that “much of the 90/10 differential [income gap between those in the 90<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> percentiles] can be attributed to what economists call the ‘college premium.’ The ratio of the wages of those who have only a bachelor’s degree to those who only have a high school degree has risen steadily since 1980” (Raghuram Rajan, *Fault Lines: How Hidden Fractures Still Threaten the World Economy* [Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010], 24).

<sup>11</sup> Interestingly, this explanation seems somewhat incompatible with the previous one, which suggests that there is a demand for highly skilled workers, but insufficient educational quantity and quality to meet that demand. This explanation suggests that high-paying jobs simply are not available. Private sector middle-income jobs decreased from 51%, as a share of total employment in 1980 to 42% in 2010. Private sector low-income jobs, on the other hand, have risen from 30% to 41% over this same period (Schwenninger and Sherraden, AMCUS, 5).

<sup>12</sup> Between 1979 and 2006 the top tax rate on earned income was reduced from 70% to 35%. The tax rate on long-term capital gains was cut from 28% to 15%. The top tax on corporate profits was reduced from 48% to 35%. (Krugman, *Conscience of a Liberal*, 257).

<sup>13</sup> This transition has been almost total in the private sector. In 1979, 28% of private sector workers had a defined benefit retirement plan; 7% had a defined contribution plan. In 2008, only 3% had a defined benefit plan; 31% had a defined contribution plan (Schwenninger and Sherraden, AMCUS, 17). It is generally acknowledged that defined contribution plans mitigate long-term pension obligations of firms and shift risk of investment underperformance to employees. Defined contribution plans also generate tremendous revenue for the financial institutions that invest employee retirement funds.

- Corporate boards of directors at large American firms (typically selected by corporate CEO's) have allowed significant expansion of executive compensation packages.<sup>14</sup>
- The monetary policies of the Federal Reserve.<sup>15</sup>
- The deregulation and growth of the financial services sector has resulted in salaries and bonuses disproportionately high relative to other sectors.
- Financial crises resolved by government financial assistance and guarantees result in a transfer of debt and contingent liabilities from the private to the public sector, from the owners and bondholders of banks to taxpayers.<sup>16</sup>
- Not least, there is widespread belief that the anti-egalitarian shift is attributable to a dysfunctional political system in which money buys disproportionate access and influence.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Paul Krugman cites a Federal Reserve study comparing CEO pay at 102 major companies. In the 1970s, CEOs were paid 40 times what the average full-time U.S. worker was paid. By the early 2000s CEO pay had grown to 367 times the pay of the average worker (Krugman, *Conscience of a Liberal*, 142).

<sup>15</sup> Alan Greenspan presided over a period of massive credit expansion, a period that perhaps not coincidentally was concomitant with a dramatic widening of the income differential. Credit expansion tends to generate pure surplus income both for those working in finance who allocate credit, and for owners and upper management of firms that benefit from increased financial leverage. I discuss other aspects of monetary policy later in this paper.

<sup>16</sup> The crisis of 2008 was merely the largest and most recent of a series of crises; it was by no means the first, and will not likely be the last. The total cost of the 2008 crisis in terms of direct assistance, assumption of bad debt, contingent liabilities associated with the nationalization of mortgage agencies, potential monetary ramifications; lost employment, wages, and tax revenues in the "real economy," etc., has yet to be determined and may never be known. The public perception however, that bailouts of this sort involve a considerable anti-egalitarian shift of income is most likely accurate. Concerns about the unfairness of this are only exacerbated by the fact that financial crises are *caused*, to some degree, by incentive structures determined by the financial services industry itself, either directly or through its powerful and effective political lobby.

<sup>17</sup> See, for example, Paul Pearson and Jacob Hacker, *Winner Take All Politics: How Washington Made the Rich Richer and Turned Its Back on the Middle Class* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2010).

### THE IDEOLOGICAL DIVIDE ON INCOME AND WEALTH INEQUALITY

I have presented evidence for a trend of increasing income inequality, and have noted some possible causes. There is a lived reality behind the statistics however, and there exist people either satisfied or suffering in the grip of such statistics who come to *reflect* upon why this is so and whether it should be so. By such reflection there emerge ideological superstructures in which justifications and criticisms of inequality are formulated. It is said that "ideas matter." Probably nowhere is this more true than with regard to ideas concerning inequality. The twentieth century has witnessed its ideologies and resentments turn to blood. Hence it may be salutary to present a general overview of the ideological divide concerning income and wealth inequality, with the intent of perhaps working our way beyond any current narrowness.

Analyses by Marxists and progressives account for skewed income and wealth distribution by exposing histories of expropriation, ongoing structures of social privilege, a politics hardwired for exploitation, a cultural superstructure that ideologically covers over the insights and initiatives that might induce the needed reversal, an "opium" religiosity that renders workers and citizens numb to possibilities of economic and social justice.

Conservative analyses, on the other hand, attempt to justify skewed income and wealth distributions by emphasizing the fact that there do exist real personal, social, and cultural differences – and that such differences tend to generate more or less successful outcomes quite independently of any ethical considerations. Differences in ability, initiative, and achievement are inextricable features of the human and subhuman world alike. Robust property rights are a necessary bulwark against those who refuse to acknowledge this fact. In conservative economic analyses, the initiative and hard work of the successful are underscored. The risk-taking and foresight of the financier and the entrepreneur are praised. The indispensability of both is clarified. Conversely, conservative analyses not infrequently dismiss the protest of the poor, and their demands for equality, as mere resentment. In its uglier forms the poor are blamed for their own lack of success, typically through accusations of laziness, but sometimes by imputation of social, intellectual, or moral incompetence.

There is no need here to examine the proliferation of species that currently populate this gaping ideological divide. Multiple forms of each are familiar. The point I wish to make is this: despite their polar opposition, both left and right share a common assumption. This assumption is that fundamental explanations are to be sought at the sociopolitical level, and at this level there is little to be understood about inequality except that it is the result of a clashing of class interests. So calls from the left for a more egalitarian distribution of wealth are fundamentally based upon the notion that the current nonegalitarian state of affairs came about through some immoral process of expropriation. From the perspective of the right, the current nonegalitarian state of affairs came about through real differences that separate the successful from the unsuccessful. On this view calls for a more egalitarian distribution of wealth amount merely to resentment. It is this shared assumption of a *deficit of intelligibility* in income and wealth distribution that I would like to challenge in this paper.

Without attempting to adjudicate the progressive-conservative debate concerning income inequality; and while in no way precluding complementary analyses at the social, political, cultural, and/or theological levels; and certainly with no intention of downplaying the lived existential supra-economic significance of poverty in the concrete lives of those who suffer it – what this paper hopes to contribute is an explanation of income and wealth distribution as manifesting an intelligibility at the properly *economic* level.

Any explanation of income inequality offered on a purported “properly economic level” however, runs the risk of coming across as itself ideological. To the extent that it seems to justify the skewed income distribution, it will be suspect by the left. To the extent that it calls for a more egalitarian distribution, it will be suspect by the right. Lonergan’s account, by arguing for *both* distributions (albeit at different phases of the economic cycle), will surely appear conservatively ideological by left, and progressively ideological by the right. Appearances however, may be just that – mere appearances. There is more to it than ideology.

In his account of circulation analysis, Lonergan argued that there exists an intelligibility of economic circuits, incomes, and expansions. He argued that understanding this intelligibility could generate normative prescriptions for cultivating necessary conditions for the

successful negotiation of an economic "pure cycle" that would be both optimal and sustainable in the long run. Insofar as Lonergan's appeal is to a rationally verifiable understanding of the productive process as such, the explanation of income distribution arising in this context would not in fact be reducible to mere ideology. While Lonergan by no means denies that group bias has been vigorously present in economic history, it is only in light of understanding the normative intelligibility of the productive process that the inauthenticity of group bias can be dialectically identified as such.

In the present context it is hoped that Lonergan's distinctive theoretic framework (specifically his analysis of savings rate requirements in the context of an economic pure cycle) can both provide a normative basis for discerning the intelligibility (or lack thereof) immanent in the income-distribution data presented in the first section of this paper and help to critically bridge the seemingly intractable ideological divide presented in this second section.

My argument will require some familiarity with Lonergan's macroeconomic theory – ideally with his analysis of the economy into distinct but interdependent basic and surplus circuits, with the notion of basic and surplus expansions, and with the possibility of a "pure cycle." The next section attempts a brief introduction to some central features of Lonergan's circulation analysis. Readers already familiar with this may wish to skip ahead to the section titled "Anti-egalitarian Shift of Income as Condition of Surplus Expansion."

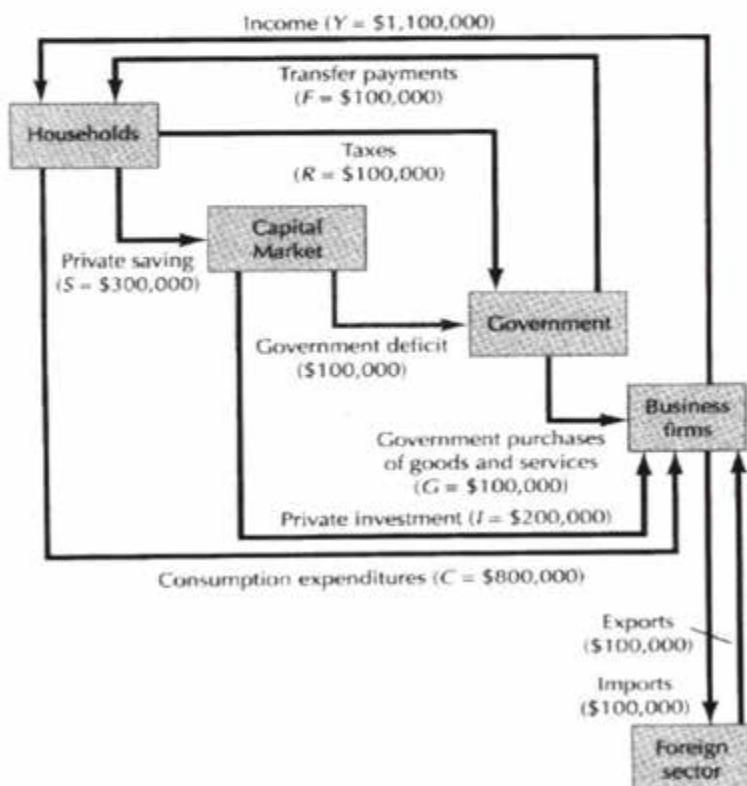
### THE BASIC-SURPLUS DISTINCTION

An economy is not an undifferentiated whole. It has parts which are related to other parts such that the sustainable functioning of the whole depends upon the ongoing mutual conditioning of all the parts.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup> The financial crisis of 2008 provides an example of the ecological nature of economics. If bankers come to doubt the solvency of other banks, interbank lending ceases to function. As bank lending drops off, credit markets no longer have the liquidity they need to match sellers of credit with buyers, and these markets "freeze up." Companies that depend on credit suddenly find they are unable to finance capital expenditures, or even meet short-term operational needs. New hiring is curtailed, workers are laid off, hours and benefits are cut. Consumers decrease spending. The government responds by sending out unemployment checks, engaging in deficit spending, bailing out key enterprises. The Federal Reserve lowers interest rates, increases the money supply, absorbs toxic assets,

Understanding an economy is similar to understanding an ecological system. The primary task is to properly identify the parts, the relations that obtain between the parts, the various ways the parts mutually and dynamically condition the functioning of each other and the whole.

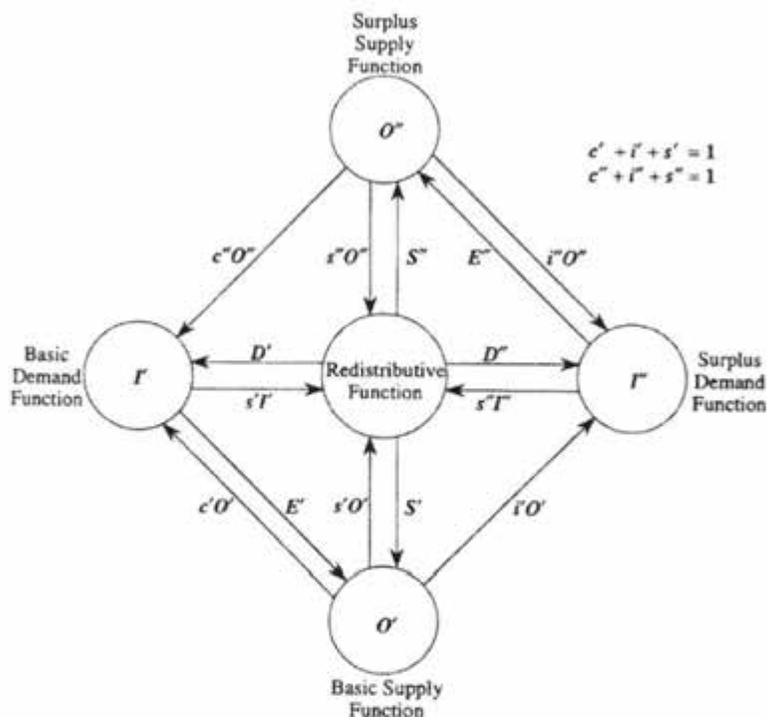
Loneragan suspected that this task of identifying and relating the *fundamental* variables of economic science was not as simple as it might seem. The following is a fairly standard "circular flow diagram" of the sort that can be found in almost every macroeconomics text book.<sup>19</sup> Such diagrams purport to identify the main parts of an economy and their relations. They are used as a core heuristic in standard macroeconomic analysis.



attempts to reinstate confidence. And so forth...

<sup>19</sup> Photocopy of Robert J. Gordon, *Macroeconomics*, 10<sup>th</sup> ed. (Boston: Addison Wesley, 2006), 33.

Lonerger's "Diagram of Rates of Flow" from *Macroeconomic Dynamics: An Essay in Circulation Analysis* is represented below<sup>20</sup>:



While it will not be possible to adequately explain the differences between these two heuristics, I will attempt at least to identify some of these.

- In circulation analysis the parts of the economy are not specified as familiar "households" or "business firms" but rather as *functions*: Basic Demand Function ( $I'$ ), Basic Supply Function ( $O'$ ), Surplus Demand Function ( $I''$ ), and Surplus Supply Function ( $O''$ ). The apparent abstractness of these functional variables relative to the more picturable entities populating the circular flow diagram

<sup>20</sup> Photocopy of Bernard Lonergan, *Macroeconomic Dynamics: An Essay in Circulation Analysis*, vol. 15 of the *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick G. Lawrence, Patrick H. Byrne, and Charles C. Hefling, Jr. (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1999), 55.

stems from the fact that Lonergan seeks variables that are explanatory rather than descriptive. Explanatory variables are related "to each other," rather than "to us" in our commonsense mode of apprehension. Explanatory variables are not abstract in an impoverishing sense. The diagram intends to capture all operative and redistributive monetary flows that occur in the productive process over a period of time, even if the economy is dynamically expanding.

- Basic Demand Function ( $I'$ ) represents the aggregate of rates of basic income. Basic income is money allocated for goods and services that will exit the productive process and enter into someone's standard of living when purchased (e.g., bread, piano lessons, plasma TVs not used for business purposes). Basic Supply Function ( $O'$ ) represents the aggregate rates of outlay for the production of basic goods and services. Surplus Demand Function ( $I''$ ) represents the aggregate of rates of surplus income. Surplus income is money allocated for expenditure on goods and services that will be *used within the productive process* (e.g., bread ovens, machine tools used make bread ovens, CAD software used to design machine tools). Surplus Supply Function ( $O''$ ) represents the aggregate rates of outlay for the production of surplus goods and services. As a whole, the diagram indicates the relations that obtain between these functions. An understanding of these relations can help clarify how optimal and sustainable macroeconomic functioning requires the timely fulfilling of various conditions.
- Capital markets, government, and foreign sector are combined in circulation analysis into a single "redistributive function." This simplification is justified by the rather remarkable assertion there exists a kind of functional equivalence of these institutions with respect to their relation to the productive process itself. Savings and lending, government spending and taxation, importing and exporting, do interact with  $I'$ ,  $O'$ ,  $I''$ , and  $O''$  (by arrows coming to and from redistributive function), but these are redistributive rather than operational transactions constitutive of the productive process as such. International trade is analyzed by flows through the redistributive function of the domestic economy connecting with the redistributive function of its trading partners.

- What went under the rubric of "business firms" in the circular flow diagram, becomes functionally differentiated in circulation analysis into three distinct functions, O', I", and O." Firms can supply basic goods and services, demand surplus goods and services (i.e., their own capital expenditures), and/or supply surplus goods and services to other firms. This desimplification or differentiation of "business firms" into three distinct functions, while an obvious fact of microeconomic practice, typically goes unexploited in macroeconomic analysis.
- The economy as a whole is comprised not of one circuit, but rather of two distinct circuits, basic and surplus. Lonergan argued that this differentiation of circuits is extremely important theoretically. Because surplus goods and services are innovations in the productive process itself, increasing the rate of flow of surplus goods should, after a time lag, *accelerate* the rate of flow of basic goods. Expansion of the surplus circuit should eventually accelerate the flow of production in the basic circuit. The long-term growth of an economy, according to Lonergan (and following Schumpeter), is a matter of implementing innovation in the productive process itself. This is the task of the surplus expansion – which will be discussed presently.
- The surplus and basic circuits, though distinct, are interdependent insofar as they are linked by two "crossovers," i'O', outlays by firms in basic supply function making capital expenditures either for replacement of existing equipment or for expansion of their own productive capacity, and c"O," outlays by firms engaged in surplus supply function, mainly as wages to workers, which then becomes available in basic demand.

### SURPLUS EXPANSIONS

Most fundamentally, an economy is a vast totality of interconnected activities that transform the potentialities of nature into a standard of living. Economic progress and the attainment of a higher standard of living has been possible over human history because of a long series of improvement to the productive process itself. Commonsense insights apprehend better ways of making and doing. The new ways are

implemented, but eventually insights into their limitations generate phantasms needed for fresh insights into modes of production that are better still.

A surplus expansion is a ramping up, an acceleration, of the producing of the means of production. They may be minor or major. A minor surplus expansion makes more efficient use of existing surplus production capacity. Major surplus expansions historically have been justified by the desire to implement new efficiencies made possible by significant technological innovations in the areas of energy, transportation, manufacturing, communications, social organization, data processing, et cetera. Major surplus expansions can not simply occur at will, for they require "the emergence both of new ideas and of the concrete conditions necessary for their practical implementation." They require extensive planning and widespread modification of the entire productive process. They are "a massive affair," "settling one's fate for years to come."<sup>21</sup>

The purpose of any surplus expansion is not to increase efficiency or implement innovation for its own sake, but rather eventually to bring about the means of a greater flow (in quantity and/or quality) of basic goods in the basic circuit.<sup>22</sup> "While each higher stage [of surplus production] is for the long-term acceleration of the next lower stage, the basic stage is for the standard of living, and the standard of living for its own sake."<sup>23</sup> For Lonergan, the *telos* of an economy, and indirectly also of surplus expansions, is a widely shared and sustainable heightened standard of living.

### ANTI-EGALITARIAN SHIFT OF INCOME AS CONDITION OF SURPLUS EXPANSION

Surplus expansions have not only technical preconditions, but significant and ongoing financial conditions that must be maintained if the expansion is to be fully implemented. A major expansion of the means of production is not something that can happen if all available

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<sup>21</sup> *Macroeconomic Dynamics*, 35-36.

<sup>22</sup> For an account of the phases of the major surplus expansion and their influence on the basic circuit, see *Macroeconomic Dynamics*, 77-78.

<sup>23</sup> *Macroeconomic Dynamics*, 39.

monies are absorbed by consumption of basic goods. A surplus expansion requires a partial deferral of current consumption, that is, a rate of aggregate savings that allows for adequate fixed capital investment. "A surplus expansion calls for saving, and a massive surplus expansion calls for massive savings."<sup>24</sup> If there is to occur an *acceleration* of the surplus circuit, this requires not merely a high rate of savings, but a series of ever higher rates from interval to interval.

How can such savings be achieved? Lonergan's analysis makes it clear that if a surplus expansion is to occur there must occur a channeling of money from basic income (I') to surplus income (I"). But what is conducive to that? How could there occur a shift in consumption, from basic goods to surplus goods? Lonergan straightforwardly admits that the condition most conducive to such a shift is inherently anti-egalitarian.<sup>25</sup> "The simplest way to obtain great savings, and so promote a surplus expansion, is to increase the income of the rich, who can hardly spend more on their standard of living."<sup>26</sup> "While they may be too distant from the current operations of the economic process to judge, at least they can put their money into the bank or bonds or stocks, and perhaps others there will see how it can be best used."<sup>27</sup>

This is not so much a deliberate policy preference as it is an uncontroversial statement of economic reality. The wealthy simply have more to save and invest. "The higher any individual's total income, the smaller will be their fraction  $w$  of total income going to basic expenditure," and therefore the larger their fraction of total income going to surplus expenditure, either directly or indirectly.<sup>28</sup> Hence distributions of income favoring the wealthy "are a means of providing adjustments in the community's rate of savings" that facilitate the surplus expansion.<sup>29</sup>

On the supposition that income and wealth inequality are socially and politically detrimental (not least because inequality tends to undermine conditions for the preservation of meaningful democracy),

<sup>24</sup> *Macroeconomic Dynamics*, 135.

<sup>25</sup> "The surplus expansion is anti-egalitarian, inasmuch as that expansion postulates that increments in income go to high incomes" (*Macroeconomic Dynamics*, 135).

<sup>26</sup> *Macroeconomic Dynamics*, 119.

<sup>27</sup> *Macroeconomic Dynamics*, 135.

<sup>28</sup> *Macroeconomic Dynamics*, 135.

<sup>29</sup> *Macroeconomic Dynamics*, 135.

we may raise an objection at this point concerning the necessity of an anti-egalitarian shift. Would it be possible for surplus expansions to be financed in the absence of income and wealth inequality? Granted that a shift to surplus demand from basic demand is required, couldn't this shift be elicited from a population in which there was a more egalitarian income and wealth distribution? If many or all could save and invest, in aggregate this might equal or exceed the larger individual investments of the wealthy few under an anti-egalitarian distribution.

While there is an obvious appeal to this objection, there seem to be a number of problems. The first, although not insurmountable, is that the objection posits a set of conditions that are contrary to present and persistent facts of income and wealth inequality. This obstacle would have to be overcome for the proposal to be practicable. Second, if wealth and income inequality were completely overcome, it may be the case that a perfectly egalitarian wealth and income distribution would leave *no* surplus income (*I*<sup>30</sup>) whatsoever. This would depend on the average per capita rate of basic income, and would require the rate of average *total* income to be greater than that rate, such that there would be sufficient a remainder rate to channel to surplus income. Third, if a perfectly egalitarian distribution were un conducive to a surplus expansion for the above reason, even a *relatively* more egalitarian wealth and income distribution might still be inadequate. With lower total income the "propensity to consume" rises. A critical amount of income *not* susceptible to this propensity is needed if there is to be a remainder of surplus income. If there were a relatively less skewed income and wealth distribution, median total incomes would indeed rise. Yet considered dynamically, it is likely that this rise in median incomes would invite both a "wealth effect" on the part of consumers, and, on the part of basic producers, a flow of new goods, services, and advertising to entice higher basic consumption. In the absence of informed resistance, basic demand would rise to absorb most or all of the higher median incomes.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> After the presentation of this paper, in separate conversations with Ken Melchin and Gene Ahner, it was suggested that an egalitarian shift of incomes might be compatible with surplus expansion if gains in median incomes were channeled to pensions and retirement saving plans. To the extent this could be done in a manner that is not optional, and does not allow for early redemptions, it would seem this arrangement would not subvert the financing needs of the surplus expansion by diverting higher

Any justification of an anti-egalitarian shift of income is bound to evoke suspicion. It is therefore important to point out that Lonerger's affirmation of the need for surplus income is not ideological. Surplus income is a necessary condition for the possibility of surplus expansion. It is from a purely functional standpoint that Lonerger argued it is "simplest" to have large incomes in the hands of those who are more or less immune to the propensity to consume. While any such claim to a non-ideological, "purely functional" stance is itself bound to arouse suspicion, a defense can perhaps be established on the following basis. For Lonerger the anti-egalitarian shift, although necessary, is also: (1) relative, (2) conditional, and (3) impermanent.

First, the shift is *relative* in the sense that it is normative *only* during the surplus expansion phase of the pure cycle, when it is functionally necessary to finance the surplus expansion.

Second, the shift is *conditional*. Lonerger often spoke of surplus income as the "social dividend." At the time of the surplus expansion, those who possess surplus income ought not to spend it on basic consumption, and they ought not to save it in a nonproductive manner. Pure surplus income is only for the sake of surplus circuit investment.<sup>31</sup> Surplus expansions are somewhat hard on people.<sup>32</sup> They are times time of hard work, saving, suppressed wages, deferred consumption, and inflation. The surplus expansion is for the sake of a basic expansion

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median incomes to basic consumption in the manner noted above. Under this proposal there would exist *widespread* ownership (in the form of equity or credit securities) of future cash flows from corporations receiving the surplus income. Those managing pension and retirement funds would need not only to uphold their fiduciary duty to their clients, but also invest savings in a phase-appropriate manner over entire pure cycles. To the extent this proposal obviates the functional necessity of an anti-egalitarian shift of income, it is certainly worthy of further investigation.

31 "It remains that the excess of bills receivable over bills payable [profits] during the surplus expansion is not in its entirety a contribution to personal income. The part that would be profit in the stationary state still is profit. But the excess over that part is a social dividend. It is not money to be spent. It is not money to be saved. It is money to be invested either directly or, through the redistribution area, indirectly. For it is the equivalent of the money that, if not invested, contracts surplus production, [and] that, if invested, keeps surplus production at its attained volume; [moreover,] if a further appropriate sum is added interval by interval, surplus production will not merely level off but keep accelerating" (*Macroeconomic Dynamics*, 81-82).

32 Harder relative to a pure cycle basic expansion, but easier relative to a trade cycle depression.

to emerge in the future, for the sake of a future higher standard of living, characterized not least by greater leisure and richer cultural opportunities for everyone. If the wealthy squander the social dividend on personal consumption the surplus expansion opportunity will be lost and the subsequent basic expansion it ought to have facilitated will never come to pass.

Third, surplus expansions must eventually come to an end.<sup>33</sup> As the surplus expansion is *not permanent*, neither is the anti-egalitarian shift of incomes that was functionally justified on an economic basis only because it fulfilled a necessary condition for the surplus expansion. With the waning of the surplus expansion, a more egalitarian distribution of incomes becomes functionally imperative as the condition for the possibility of a successful basic expansion.

### THE PROBLEM OF THE BASIC EXPANSION

Although surplus expansions inevitably come to an end, economic slumps (the familiar recessions and depressions of the trade cycle) are not inevitable. Slumps tend to occur however, if this transition period is not both illuminated by adequate macroeconomic theory and navigated by commensurate practice. Lonergan attempted to clarify the conditions for an ideal but nevertheless practicable normative economic cycle, "a pure cycle or wave that has no necessary implications of negative

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<sup>33</sup> There are several reasons why surplus explanations must end. The first has to do with a principle of intrinsic limitation: "economic developments are finite, and so no economic development will accelerate indefinitely" (*Macroeconomic Dynamics*, 14). In the nineteenth century, more miles of railroad tracks were laid than made economic sense. In the late 1990s the same error was made with overinvestment in fiber optic cable. Marginal returns on investment diminish as the low-hanging fruit is plucked. Second, Lonergan argued that surplus expansions operate against an increasing resistance imposed by the need for ever more maintenance and replacement of surplus equipment. The portion of surplus income that must be devoted to this can not also be employed for new fixed investment (*Macroeconomic Dynamics*, 34, 123, 127). Third, the surplus expansion propagates a wave-like structure with price and wage phenomena that tend to bring the surplus expansion to an end. During the transitional phase "for a while surplus outlay and income will increase. But sooner or later the self-development of the surplus sector will begin to taper off; the principal source of the basic price spread ceases to be a gusher [from wage flows down crossover c"O"]; and at the same time the demand for labor in the basic sector will begin to exact an increase in wage rates. In this fashion begins the closing phase of the major surplus expansion" (*Macroeconomic Dynamics*, 79).

acceleration. A pure cycle of the productive process is a matter, simply, of the surplus stage accelerating more rapidly than the basic, then of the basic stage accelerating more rapidly than the surplus."<sup>34</sup>

What does this pure cycle heuristic indicate about the conditions for transition from surplus to basic acceleration? The recently consummated surplus expansion has implemented productive innovations and thereby optimized the productive potential of the economy, including that of the basic circuit. Having run its course, surplus production should taper off to a level that sustains maintenance and replacements at the now higher level of production that has just been achieved. The only way a negative acceleration can be avoided however, is by a compensatory positive acceleration of the basic circuit, by an expansion of production directly for the sake of the standard of living. This expansion of the basic circuit would make full use of the newly increased productive capacity installed by the recent successfully completed surplus expansion. The acceleration of expenditures for basic goods and services would both sustain the economy and allow at last the enjoyment of a higher standard of living. It was for this purpose that there was initiated a surplus expansion in the first place. Production is not for its own sake.

But how is increased basic consumption and production possible? Lonergan specified necessary monetary conditions that would have to be fulfilled to avoid contraction subsequent to the surplus expansion. The main requirement is that there occur an adjustment in the aggregate rate of savings. This "adjustment" is not a simple matter. The surplus expansion, over a long period of time, had channeled an ever increasing rate of savings into the surplus circuit. If the basic expansion is to occur, there must now be effected and sustained an opposite flow, from the surplus circuit into the basic circuit. The only way there can occur an acceleration of the basic circuit however, is if there occurs an acceleration of the rate of basic demand,  $I'$ , that allows basic production to clear the final basic market.

Net positive flows from the surplus to the basic circuit face considerable resistance however. Given constant money supply in the basic circuit with respect to the redistributive function ( $D' + S' = 0$ ), and also given balanced net savings and lending with respect

<sup>34</sup> *Macroeconomic Dynamics*, 38.

to the redistributive function ( $s'I' + s'O' = 0$ ), the basic circuit would nevertheless be liable to a "draining" from: (1) decreased wages coming into basic demand,  $I'$ , from surplus supply,  $O'$ , along the crossover  $c'O'$ , (2) increased maintenance and replacement requirements in the basic circuit itself, requiring monetary departure from the basic circuit *via* the crossover  $i'O'$ , and (3) *perhaps most significantly*, the persistence of relatively "invulnerable" sources of pure surplus income.

Pure surplus income is the fraction of total surplus income directed to new fixed investment, rather than to maintenance and replacement of existing productive capacity. While maintenance and replacement expenditures are necessary to maintain current levels of basic production, pure surplus income, by definition, is neither for maintenance and replacements, nor expended on basic consumption. "Pure surplus income, as distributed, is the remainder of income that is not spent at the basic final market either directly by its recipient or equivalently through the action of others spending more than they earn."<sup>35</sup> Lonergan describes some sources of pure surplus income:

Today, with increasing specialization of function, pure surplus income is distributed in a variety of ways: it enters into [the] very high salaries of general managers and top-flight executives, into the combined fees of directors when together these reach a high figure, into the undistributed profits of industry, into the secret reserves of banks, into the accumulated royalties, rents, interest receipts, fees, or dividends of anyone who receives a higher income than he intends to spend at the basic final market.<sup>36</sup>

Pure surplus income can not help the basic expansion because, by definition, it is not spent in the basic final market. As channeling money away from basic income,  $I'$ , it is detrimental to the basic expansion. Pure surplus income is channeled to surplus demand function, either directly, or through the mediation of the redistributive function.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>35</sup> *Macroeconomic Dynamics*, 153.

<sup>36</sup> *Macroeconomic Dynamics*, 153.

<sup>37</sup> Lonergan suggests that pure surplus income, at least that generated by owners operating in basic supply function, departs the basic circuit *via* the crossover  $i'O'$ : "there are large salaries and large profits to be had, at least at times, by contributors to the standard of living, and so there can be some fraction, say  $i'$  of  $O'$ , that heads to the

While the exigencies of an economic pure cycle would normatively require pure surplus income to taper off to zero during the transition to a basic expansion, the persistence of sources of pure surplus income at this time tends to drain the basic circuit by channeling income from the basic circuit to surplus demand function,  $I'$ .<sup>38</sup> This counter-flow subverts the basic expansion.

Lonergan argued that the only remedy to the draining of the basic circuit, the only long-term solution to the obstinate problem of "insufficient consumer demand," is to effect an "egalitarian shift" of incomes.

Just as the surplus expansion is anti-egalitarian in tendency, postulating an increasing rate of saving, and attaining this effectively by increasing, in the main, the income of those who already spend as much as they care to on basic products, so the basic expansion is egalitarian in tendency; it postulates a continuously decreasing rate of saving, a continuously decreasing proportion of surplus income in total income; and it achieves this result effectively by increasing, in the main, the income of those who have the maximum latent demand for consumer goods and services.<sup>39</sup>

The same theoretic functional justification for the anti-egalitarian shift of incomes during the surplus expansion now requires an *egalitarian* shift during the basic expansion. While during the surplus expansion an egalitarian income distribution was incompatible with an increasing savings rate and the channeling of an accelerating monetary flow from basic to surplus demand, now – during the basic expansion – the persistence of an anti-egalitarian income distribution

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surplus demand function" (*Macroeconomic Dynamics*, 49). Lonergan acknowledges it is also possible that money depart the basic circuit through the redistributive function. But in this case he suggests that flow will eventually be channeled to surplus demand function as well. "It is possible to divert pure surplus [income] from the circuits to the redistributive function without causing a negative ( $D' - s'I'$ ) because in the redistributive function there is an organization of promoters, underwriters, brokers, and investors who there mobilize sums of money and move them along ( $D' - s'I'$ ) from the redistributive function to the surplus demand function where they are spent as new fixed investment" (*Macroeconomic Dynamics*, 147).

<sup>38</sup> See *Macroeconomic Dynamics*, 144-56.

<sup>39</sup> *Macroeconomic Dynamics*, 139.

would be incompatible with a decreasing savings rate and the need to channel an accelerating monetary flow to basic demand. Simply stated: "To decrease the rate of saving, increase the income of the poor."<sup>40</sup> This is merely a corollary of the requirement that pure surplus income revert to 0.

If the egalitarian shift of incomes fails to occur, the increased productive potential that had been made possible by the surplus expansion will be wasted. A lack of effective basic demand tumbles the economy into a depression which ultimately benefits neither the wealthy nor the poor. An egalitarian shift may eventually be effected by such a depression, but this is at a lower level; it is certainly not the "higher plateau" Lonergan claimed was possible with successful transition to basic expansion. It is safe to assume that what Paul Krugman calls the "Great Compression," the more egalitarian income distribution of the 1930s through 1970s (which appears in the U-shaped graph presented in the first part of this paper), is *at least initially* a shift of that former sort, and not the egalitarian shift characteristic of a successful basic expansion.<sup>41</sup> Conservative economists speculating on the causes of the income differential during this period advert to punitive taxation, anti-trust legislation, post-Roosevelt anticompetitive policies, war-time price controls, excessive business regulation, inflexibility in finance and banking, and a monetary system tied to the gold standard.

More could be said about many relevant issues: about the misinterpretation of price signals, about the regarding of profit as a criterion of business success, about how invulnerable sources of pure surplus income relentlessly exact a rate of losses, about

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<sup>40</sup> *Macroeconomic Dynamics*, 135.

<sup>41</sup> Yet as the egalitarian distribution lasted four decades, the question warrants further empirical investigation. Krugman argued that the political response to the Great Depression brought on changes in institutions and norms that effected a Great Compression persisting into the 1970s. It is likely that the later portion of this period was characterized by basic expansion dynamics (i.e., income shifts from  $I''$  to  $I'$ ). Comparing the period from the 1920s to the mid-1950s, Krugman states that the rich got poorer (a 20-30% decline in real after-tax income) and the poor got less poor (median family income doubled from 1929) (Krugman, *Conscience of a Liberal*, 41-42). While from the perspective of circulation analysis questions regarding the normativity of income shifts are impossible to answer in the absence of a basic-surplus expansion mapping of economic history, it is clear that a severe depression as such benefits neither the rich nor the poor.

the destructiveness of the self-preservational instinct, about the historically recurrent evaporations of potential basic expansions into crises and depressions. Suffice it to say that "we have yet to master the basic expansion."<sup>42</sup>

### **"REDISTRIBUTIONAL OPTIMISM": RECENT PALLIATIVES FOR BASIC INCOME STAGNATION**

With the end of the surplus expansion, especially if this is not recognized as such, there occurs considerable resistance to the decline of pure surplus income, and considerable efforts to find sources of replacement. Lonergan provides an analysis of two forms of surrogate surplus income: (1) establishment of a favorable balance of trade, and (2) deficit spending. Both seem to defer the negative consequences of insufficient basic income in the domestic economy. A favorable balance of trade maintains domestic employment, by producing surplus and basic goods and services for markets outside the domestic economy. Deficit spending borrows against the future so as not to strain diminishing current incomes with the burden of current taxation. Lonergan refers to both strategies as mere "palliatives." While they cover over the problem of insufficient basic income in the short run, both compensate for the lack of an organic basic expansion. Both are inflationary. Both create large and problematic imbalances in the future. Both eventually have to face that future because they are unsustainable.<sup>43</sup>

Clearly a prolonged trend of stagnation in median incomes will negatively impact effective basic demand at some point, and thereby lead to economic weakness. While the correct response to this trend (on the assumption that the surplus expansion is completed) is to adopt policies that foster a basic expansion, there typically occur other responses that are easier in the short run but ultimately ineffective or harmful. I consider three current palliatives that bear upon the present topic of income distribution. While in the absence of further research we can not know for certain our present location with respect to the surplus

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<sup>42</sup> *Macroeconomic Dynamics*, 119.

<sup>43</sup> While Keynes pointed out that "in the long run we are all dead," policy with respect to long-term consequences all comes down to what one means by "we." Lonergan emphasized a solidarity of human persons that embraces the full sweep of history.

expansion, we do find that in recent decades there have been established monetary channels that seem to attempt to compensate for a stagnation of median incomes, in an artificial and unsustainable manner.<sup>44</sup>

### Government Transfer Payments

Keynesian policy prescribes that in the face of ineffective demand during times of economic weakness, governments should attempt to countercyclically stimulate demand by deficit spending. Initial public expenditures generate a “multiplier effect” as they circulate through the economy, and this, it is hoped, will precipitate a self-sustaining recovery. The primary channel for supplementing basic income in this way is government transfer payments. There is evidence that increases in government transfer payments have partially offset decreases in wages and salaries as a percentage of personal income. In 1980, wages and salaries constituted 60% of personal income. By 2010, wages and

#### Share of Personal Income



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, New America Foundation

<sup>44</sup> By “artificial” I mean merely redistributive and extrinsic to properly productive channels of obtaining income, mainly wages and salaries received for productive activity. By “unsustainable” I mean that the channels of redistribution must eventually cease, as they eventually lead to debt levels that can not be sustained, or financial crisis triggered by anticipation of defaults.

salaries constituted only 51% of personal income. During this same period however, government transfer payments increased as a share of personal income, from 11.7% to 18.4%, a post-war high.<sup>45</sup>

The converging trend of these two lines suggests a compensatory maneuver.<sup>46</sup> The sustainability of this trend is questionable, especially given historically high public debt levels, and current (somewhat belated) concerns about how these fiscal obligations might possibly be met. Current transfer payments are certainly not being funded through current taxation, but rather through deficit spending, and at record levels. On the assumption that U.S. public debt will eventually be repaid, current transfer payments for consumption are being funded at the expense of some combination of future (basic) consumption, future (surplus) expansion, and/or future depreciation of the U.S. currency (insofar as the debt is gradually discharged through inflation). Additionally, whereas wage and salary income is received for contributions to production of goods or services, and hence is not inflationary insofar as the quantity of goods and services is increased, the provision of income *via* government transfer payments typically requires no such production, and hence tends to be inflationary. Inflation inherently imposes a lower standard of living (quite simply because it is by definition a reduction in *real* income – the same nominal income purchases less). The *telos* of the basic expansion however is the enjoyment of a higher and sustainable standard of living. A regime of government transfer payments that are both inflationary and unsustainable is a poor surrogate for a basic expansion that could be *self-sustained* by recurrent flows of adequate basic income (I) exchanged for productive activity in the basic circuit. Many have also raised concerns about the compatibility of the welfare state with conditions optimal for autonomy, responsibility, and liberty.

<sup>45</sup> Schwenninger and Sherraden, AMCUS, 8.

<sup>46</sup> Insofar as the trend was present *during* the *surplus* expansion, circulation analysis would question its appropriateness from a functional perspective. Was this diversion toward basic consumption consistent with the financing needs of the surplus expansion? There is more to the issue however, than a functional and purely economic perspective, as important as this is. Many transfer payments sustain the most vulnerable members of society, and at a basic level of vital values (e.g., food stamps, heating oil, medical expenses, rent subsidies, etc.). The principle of benevolence is not to be cast aside during the surplus expansion.

## Consumer Credit

During a surplus expansion, it is normative that the savings rate increase, and that basic consumption remain moderate. This serves to finance the surplus expansion, provides a margin of safety in prudent anticipation of the inevitable ending of the surplus expansion, and also allows for the possibility of drawing down savings for basic expenditures during the subsequent basic expansion. While further research would be required to determine the beginning and end dates of the last surplus expansion, it is likely that the U.S. economy has not been in timely conformity with the exigencies of an economic pure cycle. Household debt as a percentage of disposable income has increased from 68% in 1980 to 116% in 2010.<sup>47</sup> It is likely that debt was *increasing* during the most recent surplus expansion.<sup>48</sup> Furthermore, assuming the surplus expansion has now ended, whatever semblance of a basic expansion may be occurring has been financed, not by drawing down savings, but by households taking on increasing levels of debt. Expansion of consumer credit has been compensating for stagnation of median incomes.

This flow (a negative  $s'I$ ) into basic income (at least at the present ratios to current disposable income) seems inconsistent with the requirements of a genuine basic expansion. While consumer lending does increase flow to basic demand function, at some point interest and amortization on such loans requires a repayment flow *away* from basic demand, to redistributive function. Such repayments cut the basic expansion short, relative to what it could have been if consumption were funded instead by drawing down savings. Such repayments also preclude savings necessary for a subsequent *surplus* expansion. Debt payments made for basic consumption that occurred during the *prior* surplus expansion diminish the vitality of a current basic expansion, simply because money that must be channeled to debt repayment can not be channeled to basic expenditures ( $E'$ ) and on to basic production ( $O'$ ).

<sup>47</sup> Schwenninger and Sherraden, AMCUS, 15.

<sup>48</sup> Bill Zanardi suggests that Thorstein Veblen's notion of conspicuous consumption might offer insight into this problem, which resides, at least in part, on the cultural level. William J. Zanardi, "Obstacles to a Basic Expansion," *Loneragan Review* 2, no.1 (Spring 2010): 121-29.

Most disruptive is the possibility that significant defaults on consumer loans could precipitate another financial crisis. Beyond a certain threshold it becomes increasingly difficult to meet outstanding debt obligations, especially when households must contemporaneously confront headwinds of stagnant wages; high unemployment; increasing food, energy, education, and health care costs; falling real estate values, et cetera.

The hypothesis that a trend of increasing consumer debt in the U.S. plays a compensatory role with respect to a concurrent trend of increasing income inequality finds considerable support in a recent book by Raghuram Rajan of the University of Chicago. In the opening chapter of *Fault Lines: How Hidden Fractures Still Threaten the World Economy* (aptly titled "Let Them Eat Credit"), Rajan explains how rising income inequality set the stage for the reckless mortgage lending that precipitated the 2008 financial crisis. Rajan believes that the primary cause of the income gap (at least of the 90/50 and 90/10 percentile differentials) is mainly attributable to the so-called "college premium" and to an educational system that has failed to keep pace with demand for ever more skilled workers needed in the wake of recent technological innovations.<sup>49</sup> The solution to the income gap, he believes, would be better quantity and quality of education, with quality educational opportunities more widely distributed. Implementing this solution is problematic politically however. Although elected politicians are generally sensitive to the economic insecurity and financial anxiety of their constituents, genuine reform of the education system would have to overcome both vested interests and deeper underlying social problems. The results of educational reform, even if successful, would take decades to remedy the problem of income inequality.

Thus politicians have looked for other, quicker ways to mollify their constituents. We have long understood that it is not income that matters but consumption. Stripped to its

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<sup>49</sup> This hypothesis that the income gap is due to an education gap is rejected by Paul Krugman. Krugman points out for example, that both hedge fund managers and high school teachers typically have advanced degrees. In 2007 however, the highest paid hedge fund manager earned \$3.7 billion dollars, roughly equivalent to the salaries of all 80,000 New York City school teachers. Both Krugman and Rajan agree however, that the income gap itself is an undesirable condition, despite their differences concerning the cause of the gap and the role of government in closing it.

essentials, the argument is that if somehow the consumption of middle-class householders keeps up, if they can afford a new car every few years and the occasional exotic holiday, perhaps they will pay less attention to their stagnant monthly paycheck. Therefore, the political response to rising inequality – whether carefully planned or an unpremeditated reaction to constituent demands – was to expand lending to households, especially low income ones. The benefits – growing consumption and more jobs – were immediate, whereas paying the inevitable bill could be postponed into the future. Cynical as it may seem, easy credit has been used as a palliative throughout history by governments that are unable to address the deeper anxieties of the middle class directly.<sup>50</sup>

Rajan offers an account of U.S. government intervention in the housing market from the Great Depression forward. He cites speeches from both Clinton and Bush that support the thesis that home ownership (and the mortgage debt that makes it possible) was deliberately promoted to remedy the popular perception that the American standard of living was fading. The results of the policies and institutional practices that followed are well-known: a deterioration of lending standards, lax regulation, increasing debt levels (not only from increased mortgage lending but also from a remarkable drawing down of existing home equity and an expansion of nonmortgage forms of credit), dubious securitization and ratings practices, excessive leverage of banks, bank holdings of MBSs and derivatives, et cetera – all followed by the eventual collapse.

While the enabling of easy consumer credit is a *response* to the

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<sup>50</sup> Rajan, *Fault Lines*, 8-9. This is a wonderful example of what Lonergan calls general bias. And if you would like another: "Politicians love to have banks expand housing credit, for credit achieves many goals at the same time. It pushes up house prices, making households feel wealthier, and allows them to finance more consumption. It creates more profits and jobs in the financial sector as well as in real estate brokerage and housing construction. And everything is safe – as safe as houses – at least for a while. Easy credit has large, positive, immediate, and widely distributed benefits, whereas the costs all lie in the future" (Rajan, *Fault Lines*, 31). It is also noteworthy that Rajan uses the term "palliative" to describe the easy credit policy. This is the precise term that Lonergan employed in his discussion of various maneuvers to generate new sources of pure surplus income in the context of resistance to a basic expansion.

political problem of stagnant basic incomes, revenues generated by the consumer finance sector also perversely tend to perpetuate and exacerbate the income gap by effecting a significant and steady transfer of income from consumers to banks and financial institutions (and their shareholders) in the form of interest, fees, and insurance premiums. To the extent that consumer credit serves to sustain a source of pure surplus income during the basic expansion it functions as a drag upon the emerging basic expansion. That drag would in turn tend to make consumer credit all the more indispensable, as an anemic basic expansion only increases credit demand. A self-reinforcing feedback loop may have been initiated along these lines.

### Monetary Policy

During the surplus expansion those working in the surplus circuit receive salaries and wages, some portion of which is spent in the basic circuit. This flow into basic demand function,  $I'$ , down the crossover  $c''O''$ , will tend to induce inflation in the basic circuit during the surplus expansion. The reason for this inflation is that there is a time delay between the ramp up period of the surplus expansion and the commencement of production of an increased flow of basic goods and services that the surplus expansion makes possible. This is a period of more money ( $c''O''$ ) chasing a quantity of basic goods and services that has not increased proportionately.

When the surplus expansion comes to an end however, the rate of flow to basic demand function will decrease, and this decrease will tend to be disinflationary, or mildly deflationary. Deflation is standardly regarded as dangerous, not least because deflation occurred during the Great Depression. As deflationary expectations take root, firms become concerned about maintaining their profit margins, investors are spooked, consumers defer purchases on the calculation that they might pay lower prices later, borrowers find their debt burden increased in inflation-adjusted terms, banks worry about the solvency of their borrowers, central bankers worry about the solvency of the banks, and macroeconomists worry about the possibility of a self-sustaining deflationary spiral.

Loneragan's understanding of deflation – or more precisely, of the disinflation that occurs at the beginning of the basic expansion – is quite unconventional. While he certainly understands the damage that can be wrought by a full-blown deflationary spiral, circulation analysis interprets this narrowing of the price spread as due merely to what should be an *expected* tapering off of the surplus expansion. A deflationary spiral is something different. It results from a *misinterpretation* of the declining price level, from a failure to recognize that a *generalized* decline of the price level is not a signal indicating absence of demand. A deflationary spiral is avoidable if there occurs an understanding of, and adaptation to, the exigencies of the pure cycle.<sup>51</sup> Properly interpreted and responded to, disinflation contributes to a higher standard of living by effectively increasing the purchasing power of available basic incomes. This is especially important for those on fixed incomes, such as retired persons. Workers who normatively may have saved, moderated their consumption, and endured inflation during the surplus expansion, now receive something back in the form of higher purchasing power as consumers.

Over the last decade however, the Federal Reserve has reacted to disinflation, and to fears of deflation, in a manner that suggests it considers deflation to be an unequivocal evil. After the bursting of the technology bubble, the Federal Reserve pushed short-term interest rates to extremely low levels for an extended period of time.<sup>52</sup> While this bolstered the equity and bond markets, it also made available the

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<sup>51</sup> These adaptations include the acknowledgement that pure surplus income ought to decline, ideally to zero. Owners of firms ought to expect that the extraordinary profit margins characteristic of the surplus expansion will shrink. Nevertheless they ought to maintain basic circuit employment and basic production, as it is possible to remain viable “going concerns” even in the absence of pure surplus income. (This presupposes, however, that “invulnerable” sources of pure surplus income have also been phased out. If they have not, they will exact “a rate of losses” on otherwise viable enterprises.) Basic consumption should be encouraged, and should be increasingly accessible at this time, both because the prior surplus expansion has made possible an increased flow of basic goods, and because a disinflationary trend now increases real income. If net savings had occurred during the prior surplus expansion, and if firms in the surplus circuit prudently anticipated the impermanence of the expansion in which they participated, appropriate financing decisions would have been made such that debt burdens at the time of transition to basic expansion should be manageable.

<sup>52</sup> The Federal Funds rate in May of 2000 was 6½%. By June 2003 it had been lowered to 1%. The rate was held below 3% until May 2005 (Federal Reserve Bank of New York).

cheap credit that fueled what would subsequently become a bubble in housing.<sup>53</sup> Both effects run against the grain of a basic expansion. Support to equity and bond markets increases capital gains income, a significant portion of which would be pure surplus income, not contributing to basic demand. Credit flowing into the expanding mortgage markets might seem to be consistent with the spirit of a basic expansion, but the analysis of consumer credit offered above explains why this is merely apparent. Also, the liquidity-driven housing boom, by pushing house prices *higher*, actually served to make houses *less* affordable, not more affordable.<sup>54</sup>

After the bursting of the real estate bubble and ensuing financial crisis in 2008, the Federal Reserve again pushed down interest rates, to an unprecedented level; the Federal Funds rate has remained at 0 to .25% since December of 2008.<sup>55</sup> Low rates have punished savers by reducing interest income on savings, checking, and money market accounts – a significant portion of which contributes to basic income. These same low rates also make possible wider lending spreads for the banks, restoring their profitability, but also sustaining a not insignificant flow of pure surplus income. The Federal Reserve has also engaged in two major rounds of quantitative easing, a practice that has been criticized for several reasons.<sup>56</sup> As a monetization of Federal debt, Quantitative easing enables deficit spending even in the absence of willing bond market participants.<sup>57</sup> As an expansion of the money supply, Quantitative easing risks triggering high future inflation. Quantitative easing also weakens the U.S. dollar, an end widely

<sup>53</sup> Credit was also available from a global savings glut generated by imbalanced global trade.

<sup>54</sup> Although from a cash flow perspective low rates increase affordability on a monthly basis, from a long-term total cost perspective affordability is lower if house prices have risen, and all the more so to the extent that ARMs eventually revert to higher rates. A study by Atif Mian and Amir Sufi of the University of Chicago found that neighborhoods with *lower* income growth received *more* mortgage loans in 2002-2005 than neighborhoods with higher income growth, and that these neighborhoods (with low income growth and more loans) experienced *higher* increases in house prices (Rajan, *Fault Lines*, 40-41).

<sup>55</sup> Federal Reserve Bank of New York.

<sup>56</sup> See Paul St. Amour, "Economic Slums: Diagnoses – and Prevention?" *Loneragan Review* 2, no. 1 (2010): 38-74.

<sup>57</sup> See Loneragan's analysis of the palliative of deficit spending (*Macroeconomic Dynamics*, 173-76).

considered to be tacitly intentional as a weak dollar both increases the relative price competitiveness of U.S. exports and lessens the inflation-adjusted burden of outstanding debt obligations.<sup>58</sup>

These policies have again bolstered the equity and bond markets, and have preserved, for the moment, capital gains income.<sup>59</sup> But this does little to channel funds to basic income. Low interest rates do tend to encourage speculation however. Given that returns on conservative bonds and savings accounts have inflation-adjusted yields that are actually negative, and having grown accustomed to abnormally high returns on investment during the surplus expansion, investors continue to expect and seek such returns. A combination of low interest rates and mistaken expectations creates the impression for investors that there are severe opportunity costs to be paid by *not* speculating. After the departure of the surplus expansion however, such expectations serve only to entice investors into ever more speculative ventures – especially given the likelihood of a slump if a basic expansion is not forthcoming.

It is widely believed that low rates and quantitative easing have recently set the conditions for excessive speculation in commodities (e.g., grains, meats, industrial and precious metals, oil). Commodity price inflation is particularly prohibitive of a basic expansion precisely because commodities are the materials needed as inputs in that “point to point” correspondence by which Lonergan explanatorily defines basic production.<sup>60</sup> As commodity price inflation passes into higher prices for basic goods, nondiscretionary spending (e.g., food, energy) remains fairly inelastic, and so discretionary spending must be curtailed. This lowers the standard of living as people learn to “do without,” or settle for lower quantities of cheaper products. Hence commodity price inflation undermines the basic expansion by requiring a decrease in production of discretionary basic goods and services.

One economic justification for central bank bolstering of capital markets involves the notion that when such markets have risen there is generated a “wealth effect.” Given that the top 20% of income earners

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<sup>58</sup> See Lonergan's analysis of the palliative of a favorable balance of trade (*Macroeconomic Dynamics*, 165-73).

<sup>59</sup> By “the moment” is meant June 2011.

<sup>60</sup> See *Macroeconomic Dynamics*, 23-28.

engage in almost 40% of consumption, if owners of stocks and bonds can be made to feel secure because they have capital gains, at least on paper, this should increase what Keynes called their "propensity to consume." To the extent that increased consumption actually occurs, and enjoys a multiplier effect, the effect of a low rate policy upon financial markets can be said to have a positive effect upon the real economy. There are weaknesses to this "wealth effect" argument however, from the perspective of circulation analysis.

First, it is reasonable to suppose that a high proportion of actualized capital gains income will not flow to basic demand function but to redistributive function. Investment gains are typically reinvested, used to purchase some other financial asset from someone else. Such exchanges are purely redistributive; they merely change titles of ownership and are extrinsic to the productive process as such.

Second, even when the propensity to consume is exercised, especially among the wealthy it need not be exercised within basic demand function, in a manner that would require new basic production. Certain kinds of consumption can occur within redistributive function, for example, in the purchase of existing houses, land, boats, airplanes, commercial real estate, antiques, artwork, jewelry, and so forth. Purchases of items already outside the productive process do not contribute directly to an increase in the rate of  $I'$ .<sup>61</sup>

Third, during the time of a basic expansion, if realized capital gains find their way into surplus demand function, for example, in purchase of initial public offerings or bond issuances of firms engaged in surplus production, such investments does nothing to bolster the basic circuit and will only compound an overcapacity problem that persists in the face of anemic basic demand.

Fourth, financial markets support by Central Bank intervention is necessarily temporary. A time will inevitably come when rates will need to be raised. At that point there is likely to occur an *inverse* wealth effect. Lonergan's remarks on this possibility:

A speculative boom in the stock market which encourages basic spending may be represented by a positive ( $D' - s'I'$ ): there is an excess release of money from the redistributive function

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<sup>61</sup> Services associated with facilitating such transactions (e.g., real estate brokerage) admittedly do contribute some portion of incomes to  $I'$  however.

to the basic demand function. . . . A movement of this type with its basis in redistributive optimism will offset any tendency towards a contraction of the price spread and will reinforce any tendency of the price spread to expand. On the other hand, the subsequent stockmarket break intensifies the crisis of the circuits, removing the props that had hitherto swollen expansive tendencies, and leaving the system with a greater height from which to fall.<sup>62</sup>

While I appreciate the complexity of this issue, and remain not entirely confident in my own ability to reach virtually unconditioned judgments given this underlying complexity, I would at least like to raise a question of possibility. If Lonergan is correct regarding the need to interpret price signals in light of the phase in which an economy is temporally situated in the economic cycle, and if he is correct in his theoretic argument that deflation is innocuous or even beneficial during the basic expansion, and if it is correct the most recent surplus expansion (absent extrinsic stimulants) is more or less over,<sup>63</sup> do the actions of the Federal Reserve not amount to a mode of resistance to the basic expansion? And if so, does this resistance not widen the existing gap in income distribution, a gap that may have been justified during the surplus expansion but which ought to be closing subsequent to its ending?<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> *Macroeconomic Dynamics*, 162.

<sup>63</sup> Empirical business cycle research is needed to come to definitive judgments concerning our present location in the economic cycle with reference to basic and surplus expansions. Such research faces difficult data collection problems. Any prescriptions made in the absence of an accurate location judgment are problematic insofar as they are founded upon fallible assumptions and judgments of probability, qualified, for example, by the proviso "if the surplus expansion has ended," "if at this time a basic expansion ought to have begun," etc. I realize such limitations permeate the speculations offered in this paper.

<sup>64</sup> The normativity of the "ought" here is based upon a consideration of macroeconomic functional sustainability alone, and prescind from ethical considerations which, if admissible, would likely make the imperative even *stronger*. In other words, my argument is that the persistence of a skewed income distribution subsequent to a surplus expansion is not only bad ethics, it is bad economics. If this is so, the present argument should be valid even for those who (mistakenly) consider economics to be an amoral science.

## CONCLUSION

This paper has presented data on U.S. income distributions that indicates a trend of income divergence over the last three decades. An attempt was made to assess the significance of this trend in light of various facets of Lonergan's circulation analysis and business cycle theory, and most especially his understanding of the need and difficulty of transitioning to a basic expansion.

While future empirical efforts will be required to date the beginning and ending of periods of surplus expansion, insofar as the period under consideration (1980 to the present) was a period of surplus expansion, some portion of income divergence during this period might be justified in terms of the financing requirements of that expansion. If the surplus expansion has now terminated however, the modes of diverting pure surplus income from basic demand function that I have described constitute a harmful resistance to the basic expansion. The draining of the basic circuit subverts the very *telos* of our economy, which is a stable and higher standard of living for all. This resistance pushes the world economy closer to an absurd state in which there will be found both global productive overcapacity and widespread global poverty.<sup>65</sup>

It is hoped that the present effort to consider the issue of income inequality from the perspective of circulation analysis might serve both to depolarize the ideological debate and shift concern to theoretical and empirical issues that have been neglected. With respect to the debate over income inequality, both conservative justifications and progressive condemnations tacitly assume a static view, insofar as both tend to argue that inequality is more or less always acceptable or always unacceptable.<sup>66</sup> If Lonergan is correct regarding the necessity of *both* anti-egalitarian and egalitarian shifts in income distribution

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<sup>65</sup> This will happen if surplus and basic circuits are allowed to become imbalanced over time. Repeated resistance to the basic expansion effectively drains the basic circuit.

<sup>66</sup> In the absence of an adequate theory, to the extent that some perspectives attempt not to be static, to take into consideration the volatility of profits over the business cycle, it is likely that this will actually lead to even *worse* policy than a static perspective. High profitability and inflation during the surplus expansion will be thought to justify wage increases, thus unintentionally rendering a suboptimal surplus expansion. Low profitability and deflation subsequent to the end of the surplus expansion will be thought to justify layoffs, cutbacks, and lower wages, thereby undermining the possibility of a basic expansion.

(to regulate the savings rate) this entails that *both* the left and the right are mistaken insofar as both assert that *either* an egalitarian or an anti-egalitarian distribution ought to obtain in a permanent manner. On Lonergan's account, the issue of income inequality is to be settled neither by simple rejection nor by simple acceptance (i.e., not ideologically). The normative intelligibility of income distribution will be *relative to the phase* of the economy as it is intelligently and responsibly guided through a pure cycle.

Lonergan's circulation analysis gives us a way of thinking about the issue of income equality in a manner that is based upon the intelligibility of optimal and sustainable economic functioning. It offers a basis for thinking about issues of distributive justice that does not simply collapse into shrill accusations of group bias, and a countervailing will to power. It clears a path for moving beyond ideological differences through cooperation with the rationally verifiable intelligibility of the productive process itself. It is empirical and dynamic insofar as policy imperatives will vary relative to the savings rate requirements of distinct business cycle phases. It is not oversimplified by vague moral imperatives. It is not predetermined by ideological or moral theory preferences. It is not a slave to individual and group self-preservational instincts. It is not condemned to "muddle through" history under the darkness of general bias.